

# City of Saratoga General Plan 2040



## 1. INTRODUCTION

[This Land Use Element begins with background information on the General Plan and then focuses on land use in Saratoga.](#) The Saratoga 2040 General Plan seeks to maintain the predominantly small-town residential character of Saratoga, which includes larger residential parcels, long established neighborhoods, scenic hillsides, and open space areas, while encouraging the economic viability of the city's established commercial and office areas. The General Plan strives to encourage healthy, active living, reduce traffic congestion and fossil fuel use, and improve the safety and quality of life of residents.

The General Plan includes; broad goals for the future of Saratoga, policies for meeting the goals, and implementation measures that will help accomplish the policies and guide development within the Planning Area.

### 1.1 PURPOSE

The General Plan is a long-range and comprehensive planning document that sets policy affecting lands within the city and Sphere of Influence. It is a comprehensive document that communicates the City's vision for the character of the residential neighborhoods, natural environments, and commercial areas. The 2040 General Plan provides goals, policies, and implementation measures that inform how the City manages land use patterns, circulation, open space resources and environmental conservation, safety from natural and man-made hazards, noise control, and housing needs.

The 2040 General Plan is a focused update to the 2007 Land Use Element and 2007 Open Space and Conservation Element, and the 2010 Circulation and Scenic Highways Element. It further integrates the Saratoga Village Plan adopted in 1988 and updated 2010, and combines the current 2014 Housing Element, the 2013 Noise Element, and the 2013 Safety Element into a single document.

Saratoga's low-density residential land use pattern is well-established and is a significant factor in the city's character and identity. This Element describes the history of land use planning in Saratoga, discusses the major issues that face the city, and presents the goals and policies that will determine how land use and growth will be managed in Saratoga over the next 20 years or more.

Pursuant to State Law, this Land Use Element describes the general location and extent of land uses within Saratoga for housing, businesses, parks and open spaces, civic, and other uses. It also includes standards for population density and land use intensity for the various

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types of land uses encompassed in the Element. This Element is intended to serve as a central framework for the entire General Plan and [with the other Elements to serve](#) as a guide to the future desired pattern of development for the city.

## 1.2 GENERAL PLAN CONTENTS

The State of California requires that General Plans contain seven mandatory elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Noise, Safety, and Conservation. These mandatory elements may be organized in a combined manner that best suits the city's needs. Saratoga's comprehensive General Plan was first prepared in 1983. Since that time, the City has updated the General Plan Elements one or two at a time based on current State requirements. The Saratoga 2040 General Plan includes all the State-mandated elements.

The **Land Use Element** describes the general location and extent of land uses within Saratoga for residential, commercial/office, open spaces, community facilities, and other uses. It also includes standards for population density and land use intensity for the land uses encompassed in the element. No land use changes are proposed in the 2040 General Plan Update.

The **Circulation Element** addresses all modes of travel throughout the city and informs the development and maintenance of the transportation system. Scenic highway designations and corridor preservation are also addressed.

The **Open Space and Conservation Element** aims to maintain open space resources of local and regional significance accessible to the public, preserve hillside lands and scenic open spaces, protect existing watercourses, and preserve and enhance sensitive vegetation and wildlife habitat. This element includes provisions for parks, trails and recreational facilities throughout the city.

The **Safety Element** describes the natural and human activity-related hazards that exist in the city and presents guiding policies to protect people and natural resources. This element addresses geologic, seismic, flood, and fire hazards, as well as hazards created by human activity such as hazardous materials and waste and incidents that call for emergency response. The Safety Element was adopted in February 2013 and is carried forward in the General Plan.

The **Noise Element** provides a basis for comprehensive local programs to control and abate noise and to protect citizens from excessive noise exposure. This element quantifies the community noise environment in terms of noise exposure contours for both the near- and long-term levels of growth and traffic activity. The Noise Element was adopted in March 2015 and is carried forward in the General Plan.

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The **Housing Element** identifies and analyzes existing and projected housing needs and contains the official policies for the preservation, conservation, rehabilitation, and production of housing in the city. This element provides a detailed analysis of the city's demographic, economic, and housing characteristics as required by State law. The current Housing Element was adopted in November 2014 and covers the planning period from 2015 through 2023; it is carried forward in the Saratoga 2040 General Plan and is expected to be updated in 2022.

## 1.3 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

Consistent with State Planning Law, each Element is distinct, and all the Elements together comprise the General Plan. All Elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree, and certain goals and policies of each Element may also address issues that are the primary subjects of other Elements. The integration of overlapping issues throughout the Elements provides a strong basis for implementation of plans and programs, and achievement of City goals.

This Land Use Element establishes the planned land use pattern for Saratoga based on historic development and the community's vision for the future. Land use planning takes into consideration housing needs identified in the Housing Element, natural and manmade hazards and development constraints identified in the Safety Element, and the open space and conservation goals and policies that are outlined in the Open Space and Conservation Element. The other Elements ensure that infrastructure, utilities and public facilities are available to accommodate planned land uses, and that the unique qualities of Saratoga are safeguarded and enhanced. A circulation plan is established in the Circulation Element to accommodate increased [pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile](#) traffic from expected growth in the city and the region.

Since the last comprehensive update of the General Plan in 1983, Saratoga has updated Elements of the General Plan one or two at a time based on State laws and requirements. By keeping the General Plan up to date in this way, no single Element became outdated. However, the General Plan had not benefitted from a unifying format for readability.

The 2040 General Plan update focused on refinements to the Goals and Policies of the Land Use, Open Space and Conservation, and Circulation Elements and on creating a unifying format for all components of the Plan.

Current state laws and regional policies are incorporated throughout the document. These changes affect Accessory Dwelling Units (formerly Secondary Dwelling Units), wood-burning fireplace regulations and sustainability measures.

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The community was engaged throughout the General Plan update process through a series of public meetings, study sessions, and public hearings involving the City Council, Planning Commission, and Traffic Safety Committee. The City prepared an Environmental Impact Report on the Plan and that report was certified by the City Council in connection with adoption of the Plan.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 REGIONAL SETTING

Saratoga is 12.78 square miles nestled between the Santa Cruz Mountains and Silicon Valley. Despite its proximity to San Jose, the third most populous city in California, Saratoga retains its character as a small close-knit residential community with a downtown district center known as The Village. The city reflects the overall cultural diversity of the region and has a unique local history within the Santa Clara Valley. Saratoga's peaceful setting, good schools, and neighborhood character have made it a desirable place to live for families with school age children and long-time residents alike.

The north, south, and easterly portion of the city is sited on an alluvial plain shared with the adjacent communities of Cupertino, San Jose, Los Gatos, and Monte Sereno. The westerly portion occupies low-lying foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains and is adjacent to unincorporated Santa Clara County. The city is located within the San Tomas Aquino Creek, Calabazas Creek, and Saratoga Creek watersheds. Saratoga Creek, even though part of the San Tomas Aquino Creek Watershed, is considered a separate waterbody. The major tributaries to San Tomas Aquino Creek include Saratoga, Wildcat, Smith and Vasona Creeks. Major tributaries to Calabazas Creek include Prospect, Rodeo, and Regnart Creeks. The major tributaries within the Saratoga Creek watershed include Sanborn, Bonjetti, and Booker Creeks. Santa Clara Valley Water District is responsible for balancing flood protection needs with the protection of natural watercourses (i.e., creeks) and habitat within the City.

Major regional access to the city is provided by State Route (SR) 85, a six-lane highway that connects Saratoga and San Jose to the South and Mountain View to the north. Northbound SR 85 connects to Interstate 280 freeway and the US 101 freeway. Southbound SR 85 also connects to US 101 and SR 17. State Route 17 provides northbound connections to San Jose and southbound to Santa Cruz County.

State Route 9, also known as Big Basin Way through the Saratoga Village, is considered a major gateway to the redwood parks of Sanborn, Castle Rock and Big Basin State Park. Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga-Los Gatos Road, and Saratoga Avenue are local roadways that connect Saratoga to the neighboring cities of Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Cupertino, San Jose and Sunnyvale.

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 **SARATOGA GENERAL PLAN 2040**  
**FIGURE LU-1 REGIONAL LOCATION**



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## 2.2 SARATOGA'S PLANNING AREA

Saratoga's Planning Area consists of all properties located within the incorporated boundary of the city, as well as lands within the Saratoga Sphere of Influence. (See Figure LU-2.) As of 2020, lands within the city limits consists of approximately 12.78 square miles, the Sphere of Influence consists of approximately 4 square miles of unincorporated lands. Approximately 0.32 square miles of unincorporated land within the Sphere of Influence lies within the City's Urban Service Area and may be annexed to the City by action of the City Council. Land within the Sphere of Influence but outside the Urban Service Area must be included within the Urban Service Area before annexation. (All annexations must comply with applicable legal requirements.)

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## 2.3 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SARATOGA

The Saratoga area's earliest inhabitants were the indigenous Muwekma Ohlones, who built a settlement near the mouth of the canyon along Saratoga Creek. Ohlone artifacts have been found near Saratoga Creek where the Ohlones camped while on their way through the mountain pass to the ocean beyond.

In the mid-1800s the area witnessed an influx of European settlers. Saratoga was first recognized as a community in 1848 when William Campbell built a sawmill, about 2.5 miles west of the present Village, along what is now Highway 9. In 1850-51, Martin McCarty, who had leased the sawmill, built a toll road connecting it to The Village, to expedite the hauling of lumber. McCarty made a survey, laying out the town of McCartysville, and a post office was established under that name in 1855.

The town's brief industrial production, a short-lived furniture factory, grist mill, tannery, paper, and pasteboard mills, was commemorated in the post office name of Bank Mills in 1863. The discovery of mineral springs with a content similar to that of Congress Spring at Saratoga Springs, New York, led to the renaming of the town to Saratoga in 1865. Pacific Congress Springs inspired the construction of an elaborate resort hotel, which flourished for almost forty years (about two miles above The Village), until it was destroyed by fire in 1903.

The resort image lingered through succeeding years, even as agriculture became the dominant industry in Saratoga and the Santa Clara Valley. Vineyards and a few scattered orchards remain as a reminder of this era, which ~~was~~ ended with the valley's rapid urbanization following World War II. Saratoga became incorporated as a City in 1956 when residents voted to establish their own government to avoid potential annexation ~~from by~~ San Jose. During the 1950's and throughout the 1970's the City developed as the predominantly single-family residential community we know ~~it as~~ today.

Saratoga's first master plan was adopted in 1969. Subsequently the City adopted comprehensive General Plan updates in 1974 and 1983. Since that time, the City has updated the Elements based on State requirements as follows; Land Use (2007), Open Space and Conservation (2007), Circulation & Scenic Highways (2010), Safety Element (2013), Housing Element (2014), and Noise Element (2014).

## 2.4 LOCAL PLANNING INITIATIVES

Several ~~provisions-policies affecting land use in Saratoga have been adopted have become part of Saratoga's planning practice~~ through the initiative process.

Initiative powers are guaranteed in the California constitution, and permit citizens to place any legislative matter on the ballot by gathering signatures.

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**Saratoga Neighborhood Preservation Initiative Measure G:** In March 1996, the voters of Saratoga approved an initiative, known as Measure G, to change the text of the Land Use Element of the 1983 General Plan to require that certain amendments to the Land Use Element may only be made by a vote of the people. On April 23, 1996, the City Council certified the results of the March 26, 1996 election and adopted a resolution incorporating the Measure G amendments in the Land Use Element. These land use policies were set forth to protect the character of Saratoga’s residential neighborhoods.

This initiative provides assurance by giving greater stability to Saratoga’s General Plan, to protect the residential and recreational open space areas in the city. The initiative requires, with certain exceptions, a vote of the people to permit General Plan amendments that: (1) re-designate residentially designated lands to commercial, industrial, or other land use designations, (2) increase densities or intensities of residential land use on residential lands, or (3) re-designate recreational open space lands to other land use designations. This initiative does not affect the City’s existing regulations that authorize the creation of accessory dwelling units, nor does the initiative interfere with the City’s obligation, under State Law, to revise the Housing Element every five years.

The text of Measure G is incorporated in the Land Use Element by this reference [and is included in Appendix](#) .

**Saratoga Northwest Hillside Initiative Measure A:** In April 1980, the voters of Saratoga adopted an initiative directing preparation of a specific plan for the Northwest Hillside of Saratoga and adjacent County lands in accordance with the initiative and the Community Planning Objectives of the 1974 General Plan.

The primary goal of the initiative was “to conserve the City’s natural rural character” by controlling the density of development in the hill areas and allowing development in an environmentally sensitive manner. Special development problems were noted, such as street slopes, potential landslide, and difficult access. Citizen participation was required at all stages.

In accordance with the requirements of Measure A, in June 1980 the City Council designated an 11-member Citizens Advisory Committee. The committee began bi-monthly meetings on June 26, 1980, inspecting the Study Area, reviewing related City and County documents, and meeting with various experts from responsible agencies and land use consultants, which led to the adoption of the Hillside Specific Plan [which is incorporated by reference in this Land Use Element and is included in Appendix](#) .

**Stadium Initiative:** In 1977, the voters of Saratoga adopted an initiative [ordinance prohibiting amending the zoning ordinance to prohibit](#) stadiums of any size or any other facilities with a similar use within any zoning district. The initiative ordinance provided for temporary portable equipment for cultural events on any track or field upon two-thirds vote of the City Council after a duly noticed public hearing and a finding that the particular event

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will not be unduly disturbing to the city. Facilities at elementary or secondary schools or facilities built by private, nonprofit, youth-oriented organizations such as Little League or the American Youth Soccer Organization are exempt from these limitations.

## 2.5 FOCUSED PLANNING EFFORTS

**Hillside Specific Plan:** [As discussed above](#), The Hillside Specific Plan was prepared to meet the requirements of the Measure A Initiative and State Law. However, more importantly its purpose is to set up guidelines for the development of the northwestern hillsides, including policies and action programs with land use maps that are more detailed than the General Plan. It is intended to better link the Saratoga General Plan with subdivision and zoning regulations, while not being a site-specific development plan. The Specific Plan was reviewed and updated by the Saratoga City Council in 1994. The Specific Plan is incorporated by reference in the Land Use Element [and is included in Appendix](#).

**Saratoga Village Specific Plan:** The Saratoga Village has been identified for many years as an area of ongoing community interest because of its special historic and environmental assets, and the desire to build upon these assets to maintain and enhance its unique character. In 1987, a Saratoga Village Planning Program was completed and was the basis for the Saratoga Village Plan, which was adopted by the Saratoga City Council in May 1988.

[On May 24, 2016 the City Council considered the results of the Village Visioning project, a community outreach initiative that gathered the viewpoints and opinions of the community about the Village. After reviewing the results, the Council confirmed that the Village Specific Plan had served its useful life, and that future policy guiding land use, development and building modifications in the Village should be incorporated into the General Plan. As part of the Village Visioning effort, the City](#) expanded boundary for the Village Plan area. The Village Plan area is shown on **Figure LU-3 Focused Planning Areas**. Land use related policy changes from the Village Plan are included in the Land Use Element of the General Plan 2040. A separate Village Design Guidelines document [was](#) adopted in 2019.

**Saratoga-Sunnyvale Gateway District:** The Saratoga-Sunnyvale Gateway District comprises the commercially designated properties on Saratoga- Sunnyvale Road between Prospect Road and the railroad tracks. In 2003, the City Council adopted the Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road Gateway Improvement Master Plan to guide improvements within the public street right-of-way within the District. In addition, the City Council adopted Guidelines to provide direction for the design of mixed-use projects that include commercial and residential uses, as provided for in the General Plan Housing Element. The Gateway Design Guidelines are incorporated by reference.

**Saratoga Woods Neighborhood Single Story Overlay:** In 2002, at the request of the Saratoga Woods Neighborhood, the City Council established through the zoning ordinance a single-story limitation for residences in the Saratoga Woods Neighborhood. This neighborhood is

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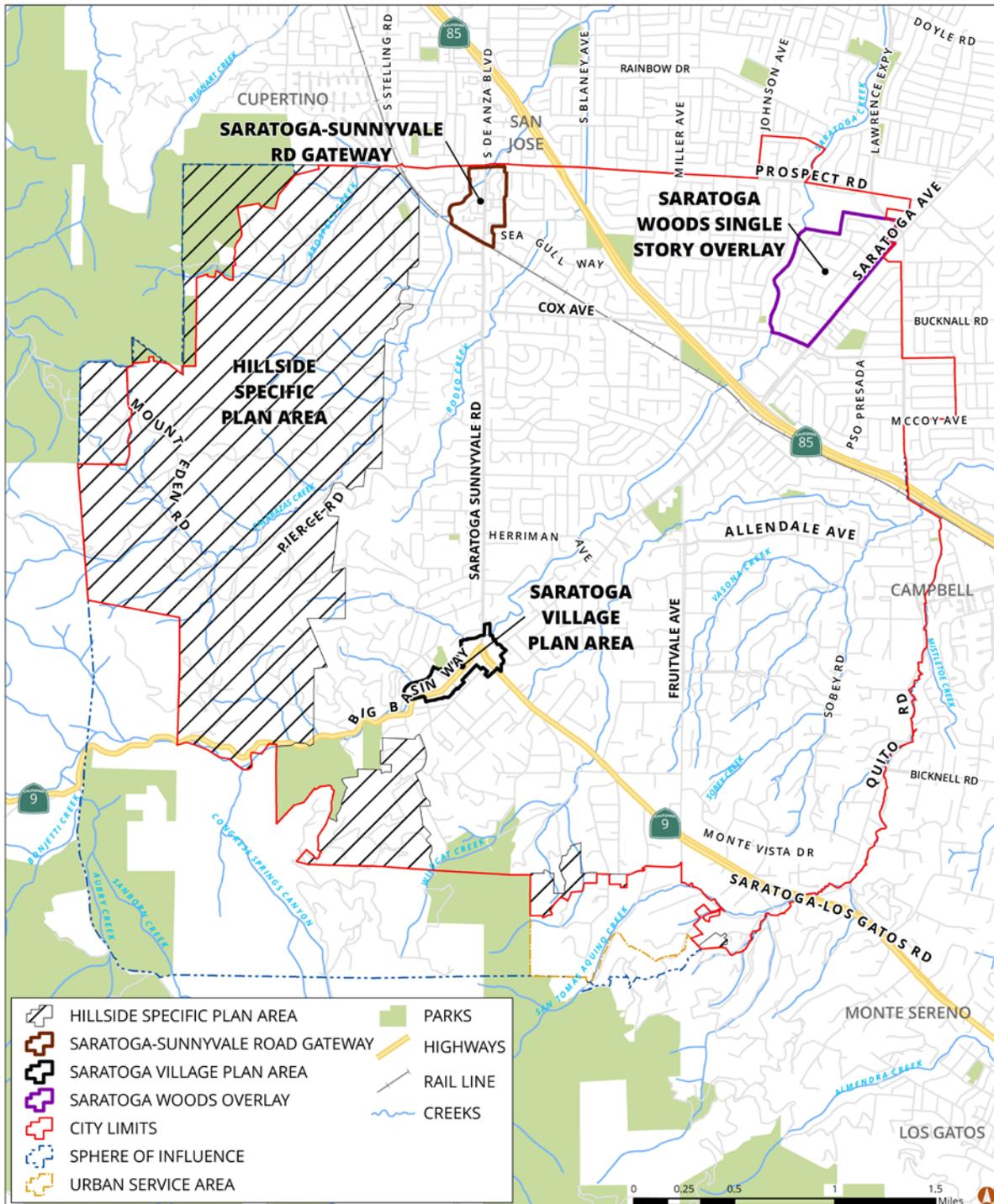


bordered by Cox Avenue to the south, Saratoga Avenue to the east, Saratoga Creek to the west, and Prospect High School to the north. This restriction precludes any new two-story homes and second story additions to existing homes. The existing second story dwellings are exempt from this restriction. The Saratoga Woods Neighborhood is shown in **Figure LU-3 Focused Planning Areas**.

For all other neighborhoods two-stories are permitted, but no single-family dwelling shall exceed twenty-six feet in height. On parcels that exceed 20,000 square feet in net lot area, the Planning Commission may approve heights up to 30 feet with the findings that: the additional height is a necessary component of an identifiable and well documented architectural style, and the design of the structure will be similar in scale with structures in the surrounding neighborhood.

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**SARATOGA GENERAL PLAN 2040**  
**FIGURE LU-3 FOCUSED PLANNING**



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## 2.6 EXISTING LAND USES

The predominant land use in Saratoga is residential, most of which is low density, single-family homes. Medium density residential uses, comprised primarily of townhome and condominium units, are found near the intersections of Saratoga Avenue and State Route 85, Prospect Road and Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, and adjacent to the Saratoga Village.

The commercial and shopping areas are primarily resident-serving and include the Saratoga Village located along Big Basin Way, at the intersection of Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga-Los Gatos Road, and Saratoga Avenue. The Village includes a range of restaurants, specialty retail, professional offices, and personal services. Commercial areas are located along Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road between Prospect Road and the railroad tracks, Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road south of Cox Avenue, near the intersection of Saratoga Road and Cox Avenue, and west of Saratoga Avenue south on Prospect Road. Small office complexes including medical and dental offices are located along Cox near the intersection of Saratoga Avenue, and on Saratoga Avenue near the intersection of Saratoga Sunnyvale Road.

There are no sites within Saratoga used or designated for industrial purposes.

## 2.7 PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Other major land uses in the city include the Saratoga Civic Center and Theater, located on the west side of Fruitvale Avenue, the Saratoga Community Library, located on Saratoga Avenue near at the intersection with Fruitvale Avenue, and West Valley College, located at the north east corner of Fruitvale Avenue and Allendale Avenue. Public meeting space is available for rent at the Community Center located within the Civic Center.

Saratoga is served by a significant amount of land devoted to parks, trails and natural areas that are available to the public for recreational use. These lands are located both within the city- limits and in the adjacent unincorporated hillside areas of the Sphere of Influence. They include city-owned parks and open spaces, as well as public lands that are owned and operated by Santa Clara County Parks and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

## 2.8 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Saratoga is served by four elementary school districts (Cupertino Union, Moreland, Campbell Union Elementary, and Saratoga Union), three high school districts (Fremont Union, Campbell Union High School, and Los Gatos-Saratoga Union), and two community college districts (Foothill-De Anza and West Valley-Mission). Only one school district, Saratoga Union School District, is located entirely within the city. All the other districts serve other cities as well.

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Currently, in addition to the public schools listed above, there are three private elementary (K-8) schools, and several nursery schools and daycare centers serving the Saratoga community.

## 2.9 OPEN SPACE, PARKS AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS

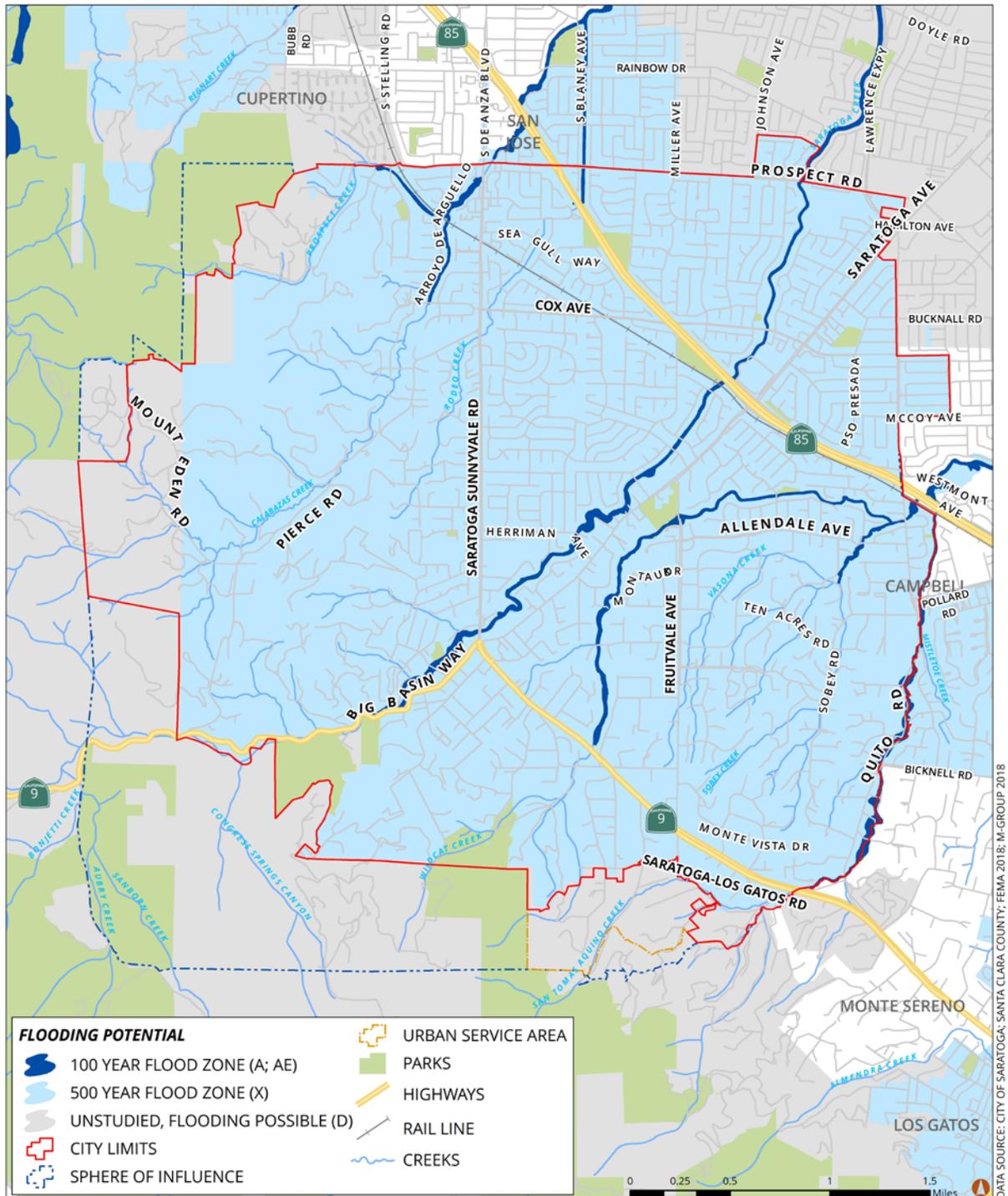
There are approximately 900 acres of vacant land in Saratoga. Of these, approximately 540 acres are in hillside areas and 360 acres are under Williamson Act contracts. Lands within the hillside areas are generally subject to significant constraints such as steep slopes and unstable soils. Agricultural lands in Saratoga are primarily comprised of wine grapes, and a few remaining orchards raising stone fruits including apricots and plums.

## 2.10 AREAS SUBJECT TO FLOODING

Saratoga is located in the North Central Flood Zone of the Santa Clara County Water District. The creeks in the city that are under District jurisdiction are Calabazas, Rodeo, Saratoga, Wildcat, Vasona, and San Tomas Creeks. In general, flooding from these creeks has been confined to the relatively narrow flood plain directly adjacent to the creeks.

**Figure LU-4 Flooding Potential** shows the location and extent of the 100-year flood plain as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

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## SARATOGA GENERAL PLAN 2040 FIGURE LU-4 FLOODING POTENTIAL



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## 3. LAND USE PLAN

### 3.1 SARATOGA'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A General Plan provides common principles to which the city strives. These become the vision by which future decisions concerning land use and other changes are made.

Consistent with the Land Use Element Goals and Policies, the City's guiding principles are expressed in the following statements:

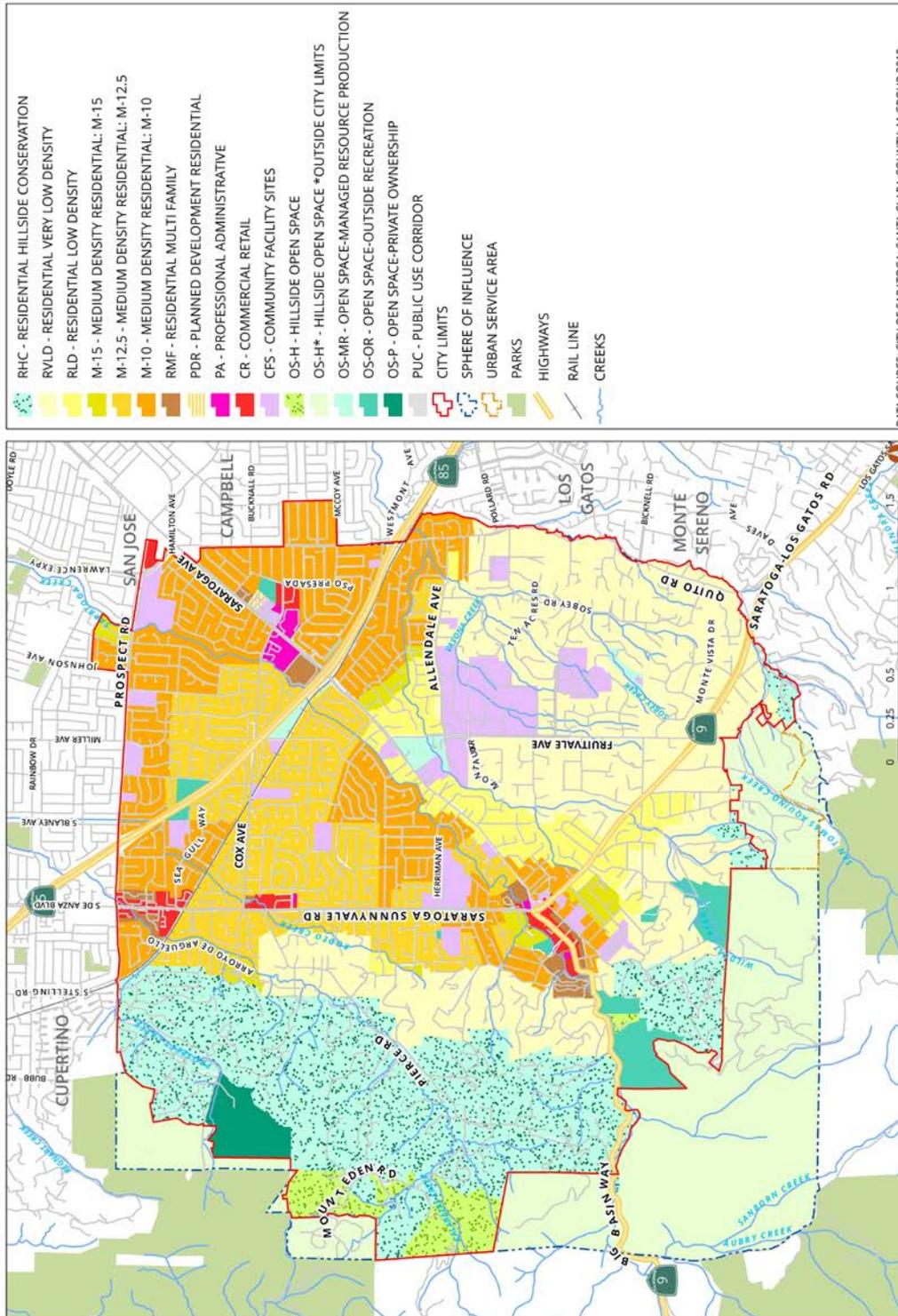
1. Protect and preserve the natural beauty of the City its hillsides, creeks and natural features.
2. Promote environmentally sound development that preserves the city's natural beauty and scenic resources.
3. Preserve and protect historic resources throughout the city.
4. Strengthen and enhance Saratoga's small-town residential character, open space areas and quality of life.
5. Provide quality educational facilities, neighborhood parks for recreation, cultural opportunities and community involvement for residents of all ages.
6. Protect Saratoga Village as an important community asset and the center for civic activity, shopping and dining in the city.
7. Preserve the existing quality and quantity of local-serving commercial areas.
8. Strengthen connections between neighborhoods and key destinations
9. Provide a range of transportation opportunities for all modes of travel. Increase bicycling and pedestrian opportunities.
10. Increase personal safety and emergency preparedness.
11. Build strong connections between residents, business, and community groups by fostering civic engagement.

### 3.2 LAND USE CATEGORIES

The Land Use Element identifies the land use composition throughout the Saratoga Planning Area to achieve the desired city character as expressed in the Guiding Principles.

All properties within the Saratoga Planning Area have been grouped into land use categories as shown on the Land Use Map, which is included as an integral part of the Land Use Element as **Figure LU-5 Land Use Map**.

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DATA SOURCE: CITY OF SARATOGA; SANTA CLARA COUNTY; M-GROUP 2019

**SARATOGA GENERAL PLAN 2040**  
**FIGURE LU-5 LAND USE MAP**

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Listed on the following pages are the land use categories that appear on the Land Use Map, along with the type and intensity of use allowed in each category. Land use densities are per net area, and net area is generally defined as the remaining portion of the gross site area after deducting portions within the right-of-way of existing or future public streets, private streets, access easements or Santa Clara Valley Water District easements, or areas which are classified by the City Geologist as “Md” (moving deep landslide). Impervious coverage limitations are intended to minimize runoff resulting from development of the parcel. Impervious coverage is defined as any structure or constructed surface that disrupts the aesthetics of the landscape.

TABLE LU-1 – LAND USE CATEGORIES

LAND USE	MAXIMUM DU/ACRE OR PEOPLE PER ACRE	MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE COVERAGE	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF USE
<b>RESIDENTIAL LAND USES</b>			
Residential Hillside Conservation (RHC)	0.5 du/ac or 1.55 people/acre	25% of net site area, or 15,000 s.f, whichever is less	Single-family dwellings
Residential Very Low Density (RVLD)	1.09 du/ac or 3.38 people/acre	35% of net site area	Single-family dwellings
Residential Low Density (RLD)	2.18 du/net acre or 6.76 people/acre	45% of net site area	Single-family dwellings
Medium Density M-10 M-12.5 M-15	4.35 du/net acre or 13.5 people/acre 3.48 du/net acre or 10.8 people/acre 2.90 du/net acre or 9.0 people/acre		Single-family dwellings
Residential Multi-Family (RMF)	14.5 du/ac or 27-24 people/acre	40% of net site area	Detached and attached single-family dwellings, condominiums, duplexes and apartments.
Planned Development Residential (PDR)	4.35 - 12.45 du/acre or 13.5 - 38.6 people/acre	25-35% of net site area	Mix of single-family and multi-family densities and housing types.
<b>COMMERCIAL LAND USES</b>			
Commercial Retail (CR)	**	60% of net site area, except as regulated by an applicable specific plan.	Commercial uses/centers serving community and/or neighborhood; not regional in orientation. Refer to Saratoga <a href="#">Village Specific Plan for uses, height and lot coverage permitted in Specific Plan area</a> . High density mixed use projects and emergency shelters, transitional housing, and supportive housing for homeless individuals and families are appropriate in the commercial area near

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			Prospect and Lawrence consistent with applicable zoning. (updated per Resolution 11-036, June 1, 2011)
Professional Administrative (PA)	**	30% of net site area	Professional offices uses permitted; serves as transition zone between commercial and residential areas.
<b>PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC FACILITIES LAND USES</b>	<b>MAXIMUM DU/ACRE OR PEOPLE PER ACRE</b>	<b>MAXIMUM BUILDING COVERAGE</b>	<b>SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF USE</b>
Community Facilities Sites (CFS)	1.09 du/ac or 3.38 people/acre	35% of net site area	Public, civic and quasi-public (private institutional uses, including but not limited to, religious uses (churches, synagogues, religious schools, and the novitiate), convalescent homes, private schools, the cemetery, the electrical substation, and the Odd Fellows Home.
<b>OPEN SPACE LAND USES</b>			
Open Space – Outdoor Recreation (OS-OR)	1 du/ 4 acres	25%	City or County parks or lands designated for those uses. Only recreational facilities (i.e. playground equipment, recreational courts, etc.), structures necessary to support the parks or structures of particular historic value are permitted in these areas. These sites are considered to be of particular value for recreational purposes.
Open Space – Private (OS-P)	01 du/ac	25% of net site area	Consists of open space resources under private ownership (i.e. Saratoga Country Club Golf Course)
Open Space – Managed Resources (OS-MR)	1 du/ 4 acres	25%	Consists primarily of City. Only single-family dwellings or structures directly associated with agricultural use are permitted.
Hillside Open Space (OS-H)	1 du/20 acres to 1 du/160 acres (based on a slope density formula subject to stringent criteria)	25% or 12,000 square feet whichever is less	Covers all areas within the City limits (OS-H) and areas outside of the City limits but within the Sphere of Influence (OS-H*) not designated as parks or OS-MR. Uses include agricultural, mineral extraction, parks and low intensity recreational facilities, land in its natural state, wildlife refuges and very low intensity residential development and support uses of those listed above.
Public Use Corridor (PUC)	N/A	N/A	Applies to the railroad corridor and allows multi-use trails.

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•Overall Height Limit – No structure permitted over two stories in height except for structures located within the Saratoga Village boundary (as defined by the Saratoga Village Specific Plan, (2017) which shall be regulated by the “Village Specific Plan”) or for quasi-public uses, a three-story structure is allowed provided the slope underneath the three-story area is 10% or more and a stepped pad is used.

•• Mixed residential/commercial uses are permitted in all commercial lands, with a maximum of 20 dwelling units per acre except the commercial area near Prospect Avenue and Lawrence Expressway which allows mixed use development at a minimum of 30 dwelling units per acre excluding density bonuses for very low-income, low-income, or senior housing. The residential portion shall not exceed 50% of the total floor area, ( 850 sq. ft. for a one-bedroom unit-1,250 sq. ft for a two-bedroom unit), with an increase of 10% of the total floor area permitted for the site, for projects that provide below-market-rate housing. Total site coverage may also be increased by 10% for a project containing below market-rate housing. (Updated per Resolution 14-069, November 19, 2014)

## RESIDENTIAL

Residential land use is broken down into six subcategories and intensity of uses permitted in these subcategories are as follows:

- A. **Residential Hillside Conservation (RHC):** Maximum density of 0.5 dwelling units (DU)/net acre (du/ac) or 1.55 people/acre. Maximum intensity of building and impervious surface coverage: 15,000 square feet or 25 percent of site area, whichever is less.
- B. **Residential Very Low Density (RVLD):** Maximum density of 1.09 du/ac or 3.38 people/acre. Maximum intensity of building and impervious surface coverage: 35 percent of net site area.
- C. **Residential Low Density (RLD):** Maximum density of 2.18 du/acre 6.76 people/acre. Maximum intensity of building and impervious surface coverage: 45 percent of net site.
- D. **Residential Medium Density (M10, M12, M15):**
  1. M-10-maximum density of 4.35 du/ac or 13.5 people/acre.
  2. M-12.5-maximum density of 3.48 du/ac or 10.8 people/acre.
  3. M-15-maximum density of 2.90 du/ac or 9.0 people/acre.

The maximum intensity of building and impervious surface coverage for Medium Density Residential listed above are 50 percent, 55 percent, and 60 percent, respectively.

- E. **Residential Multi-family (RMF):** Maximum density of 14.5 DU/net acre or 27-45 people/acre. Maximum intensity of building coverage: 40 percent of site area.
- F. **Planned Development Residential (PDR):** Maximum density of 4.35 to 12.45 DU/net acre or 13.5 to 38.6 people per acre. Maximum intensity of building coverage is 25-percent to 35-percent of site area. All projects proposed on sites with this designation shall require use permit approval a provided for in Article 16 of the Zoning Ordinance.

It should be noted that discussion of the number of people per acre is meant to describe building intensities, not to act as a limit to family size or maximum number of people

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permitted to live on a site. The population densities are meant to act as an estimate to the average number of people likely to occupy a given area.

## COMMERCIAL/OFFICE

Commercial land is broken into two general subcategories. Densities and intensities of uses permitted in these subcategories are as follows:

**Commercial Retail (CR):** There are five main commercial areas in Saratoga with this designation. The main commercial areas are The Village (including Neale's Hollow), Argonaut Shopping Center, the Gateway (along Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road between the railroad and Prospect Road), Quito Shopping Center, and several small centers on Prospect Road between the intersections of Lawrence Expressway and Saratoga Avenue (including the Westgate Corner Center to the Big Tree Center). Most of these commercial areas serve the local community or the immediate neighborhood. The Westgate area of Prospect Road serves a broader area due to its placement within a commercial shopping district bordering San Jose. These commercial centers are not regional in orientation and tend to be located in small to medium size complexes. The maximum intensity of building coverage is 60-percent of net site area, except as regulated by an applicable specific plan.

Commercial uses in The Village are regulated by the Village Design Guidelines.

**Professional Administrative (PA):** The maximum intensity of building coverage for this designation is 30-percent of net site area. This designation may conditionally allow small scale professional offices and similar uses.

In 2004, the City implemented a residential mixed-use ordinance, which establishes standards for mixed use development. Mixed uses are allowed by use permit in commercial and office zones. Mixed use is defined as the development of a lot or building with two or more different land uses, such as residential, commercial, office, or public. The purpose of the mixed-use development standards is to further accommodate the city's fair share of the regional housing need, and to implement the policies of the Housing Element of the General Plan, adopted in 2014, in a consistent manner throughout the various commercial and office zoned districts of the city. It is further the goal of these standards to protect existing and future commercial development by establishing standards to ensure compatibility of adjoining commercial and residential uses.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES SITES

**Community Facility Sites (CFS):** All institutional, educational, public, and quasi-public uses fall into this category.

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Elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and West Valley College are uses within this category. The open space and recreational areas of the public-school sites are part of the City's open space inventory and help supplement city park use.

Public facilities, such as, the Civic Center, the Saratoga Library, and fire stations, are also included in this category. They are under government control and provide a public service.

Private but quasi-public uses, including religious uses (churches, synagogues, religious schools), skilled nursing homes, private schools, Madronia Cemetery, the electrical substation, and retirement communities are all included in this category. These are uses that provide a public service but are not controlled by a publicly elected governing board.

All uses or their expansions, including building intensity, are evaluated through the use permit process as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and must comply with criteria indicating their compatibility with adjacent uses.

## OPEN SPACE/RESOURCE PROTECTION

Open space land use is broken down into five designations. The density and intensity of the uses permitted in these designations are as follows:

**Managed Resource Production Open Space (OS-MR):** This designation consists primarily of Heritage Orchard and Library, water reservoirs, Congress Springs Park, and San Marcos Wilderness Park. Single-family dwellings associated with agricultural uses are permitted at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 4 acres. Only structures directly related to the maintenance of these open space uses are permitted on the sites within this designation.

**Outdoor Recreation Open Space (OS-OR):** This designation consists of City or County parks or lands designated for those uses. Only recreational facilities (i.e. playground equipment, recreational courts, etc.), structures necessary to support the parks or structures of particular historic value are permitted in these areas. These sites are considered to be of particular value for recreational purposes. Some parks, such as Hakone Gardens, Quarry Park, and Villa Montalvo, preserve significant vegetation features.

**Hillside Open Space (OS-H):** This designation covers all areas within the City limits (OS-H) and areas outside of the City limits, but within the Saratoga Sphere of Influence (OS-H\*). This designation allows uses which support and enhance the rural hillside character, promote the wise use of natural resources, and avoid natural hazards. Uses include agriculture, parks and low intensity recreational facilities, land in its natural state, wildlife refuges, and very low intensity residential development. Other support uses related to the uses already listed may also be permitted. Allowed residential is

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between 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres to 1 dwelling unit per 160 acres based on a slope density formula subject to stringent criteria.

**Private Ownership Open Space (OS-P):** This designation covers privately owned lands used primarily for recreation and open space. Allowed uses include indoor and outdoor recreation, private gathering facilities, lodging accommodations, dining, entertainment, agriculture, and other similar commercial activities and compatible uses.

**Public Use Corridor (PUC):** The PUC designation is applied to the former railroad corridor extending through the northerly portion of Saratoga in a northwest to southeast direction. This designation allows public multi-use recreational trails.

## 3.3 OVERALL HEIGHT LIMIT

In general, no structures in Saratoga are allowed over two stories in height as specified in Table LU-1. Exceptions include structures located within The Village. The Prospect Road Commercial Retail sites (located between Lawrence Expressway and Saratoga Avenue) are identified in the Housing Element for Residential High-Density development and have a maximum height limit of three-stories and 35 feet.

On sites used for quasi-public uses, a three-story structure may be allowed provided the slope underneath the three-story area is ten-percent or more and a stepped building pad is used.

## 4. GENERAL PLAN GROWTH TO 2040

### 4.1 RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

#### SINGLE FAMILY GROWTH

Parcel records show 439 vacant residential parcels located within the City limits. While many parcels may have constraints that make development unfeasible, for purposes of environmental impact analysis, a maximum-growth assumption has been made. Therefore, potential exists for construction of an additional 439 new single-family homes over the General Plan time horizon.

The Saratoga Housing Element provided a more detailed look into the constraints of all the vacant residential parcels and identified 66 parcels as unconstrained and buildable. These 66 parcels total 284 acres and could sustain development of 77 new single-family residences.

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Based on Saratoga's historic development patterns, it is expected that 77 new single-family residences would be built over the 2040 General Plan time horizon.

## ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) GROWTH

As of 2018 the City had approximately 86 accessory dwelling units with the potential to create as many as 8,000 new units on qualifying parcels. Unlike new residences, ADUs are not considered residential units per state law, but are considered ancillary to single-family homes. Therefore, potential impacts from ADU growth is not calculated in the same way as new single-family residences.

While it is estimated that 8,000 ADUs could be built in Saratoga under a maximum-growth assumption, Saratoga has experienced ADU growth of approximately 3-4 units per year in the past. The Saratoga 2015-2023 Housing Element estimated that with more information about ADUs available on the City website ADU growth would increase to 4-5 units per year. In the years 2014 to 2018 following the Housing Element update, the City saw an average of 11 ADU units per year. The City has experienced a correlation between redevelopment of aging single-family residences and new ADU construction. In the year 2014 to 2018 the City saw reconstruction of an average of 27 homes per year. Based on this development pattern it is expected that the City would see ADU growth of 10-15 units per year over the 2040 General Plan time horizon.

## MULTI-FAMILY GROWTH

The 2015-2023 Housing Element identified opportunities for development of several residential projects at densities considered to be multi-family. This includes redevelopment of commercial sites on Prospect Road (zoned for Residential High Density mixed-use) with a minimum density of 30 dwelling units per acre. It is anticipated over the time horizon of the 2040 General Plan that these sites could develop with 173 units mixed with ground floor commercial.

There are two sites in the Village which could be expected to develop as mixed-use residential over retail within the 2040 General Plan time horizon, adding 22 new units. Four mixed use sites on Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road (the Gateway) could also develop as residential mixed-use with an additional 65 new units.

The Fellowship Plaza, within the Saratoga Retirement Community, has the further potential to develop 75 new units for seniors over the time horizon of the 2040 General Plan.

## 4.2 COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE GROWTH

Currently in Saratoga there are approximately 1,132,000 square feet of commercial structures on properties in the Commercial Retail land use, and about 188,000 square feet

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of office structures within the Professional Administrative land use in the City. Under a maximum-growth assumption if many of the outdated, but non-historic structures on these parcels were to redevelop at their maximum capacity, the City would see growth of about 860,000 square feet of new commercial space and 395,000 square feet of new professional administrative office space. This represents an 75% increase in commercial space and a 100% increase in professional administrative office space.

This maximum-growth assumption is made to serve the environmental impact analysis of the General Plan and not necessarily an expected growth scenario. Factors that may constrain this level of development include; the condition of existing commercial and office buildings in the city; architectural design constraints; and land available for parking and landscaping to serve new development.

For purposes of this analysis it is assumed that all commercial or office buildings constructed more than 45 years ago are likely to redevelop over the time horizon of the 2040 General Plan, except for historic resources. All commercial and office structures built or remodeled after 1973 are assumed to remain unchanged.

## 4.3 POPULATION GROWTH

In 2018, the California Department of Finance reported Saratoga's population at 31,435 residents. These population totals are sums of the persons per household and group quarters populations, which are based on the 2010 Census Bureau counts. The City's population has generally grown at a slower rate than the surrounding cities in Santa Clara County due to the City's historically lower-density land use policies. Saratoga grew at a rate of 7% between 1990 and 2000 but experienced just a 1% growth rate from 2000-2010. Between 2010-2018 the growth rate jumped up to 5%. Increases to the average household size from 2.77 in 2010 to 2.85 in 2018 explain that the city has experienced growth in the number of households living with children or in multi-generational households.

## 4.4 EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Saratoga's predominant low-density residential pattern provides limited employment opportunities. There are no industrial or manufacturing plants, large-scale research and development facilities, or "big box" commercial development. The largest employers are West Valley College, the elementary, middle and high school districts, the Saratoga Retirement Community on Fruitvale Avenue, several board and care facilities, Safeway, and the City Government Center. This trend may change over the time horizon of the 2040 General Plan with the potential redevelopment of Professional Administrative office and Commercial Retail sites. The General Plan anticipates redevelopment of these sites if existing structures are older than 45 years, and not considered historic.

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Potential growth under the General Plan could yield up to 863,946 new square feet of commercial space and 395,890 new square feet of professional administrative office space within the City. This could bring in approximately 2,160 new employees in the Commercial Retail sector and approximately 1,585 new employees in the Professional Administrative office sector. Therefore, a total of 3,745 new employees could be introduced from potential buildout of the 2040 General Plan.

## 5. LAND USE ISSUES OF STATEWIDE CONCERN

### 5.1 MINERAL RESOURCES

Mineral resources in the Saratoga vicinity are limited primarily to sandstone and shale. While there are several closed quarries within the Planning Area, currently, there are no mines or quarries operating in Saratoga or the Sphere of Influence.

### 5.2 TIMBER PRODUCTION

Section 65302 (a) (1) of the California Government Code requires that General Plans address timber production in their land use elements. There are no timber production areas in the Saratoga Planning Area that would be affected by the Land Use Element. The City regulates all tree removal operations through its Tree Preservation Ordinance.

### 5.3 MILITARY FACILITIES

Section 65302 (a) (2) of the California Government Code requires that land use elements address military facilities. There are no military facilities in or adjacent to the Saratoga Planning Area that would be affected by the Land Use Element.

### 5.4 SOLID AND LIQUID WASTE DISPOSAL PROVISION

Solid and liquid waste material is managed by the West Valley Sanitation District and the Cupertino Sanitary District. It is treated and disposed of outside of the Saratoga Planning Area at the San Jose-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility in San Jose.

## 6. ADMINISTERING AND IMPLEMENTING THE LAND USE ELEMENT

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The Land Use Element, like all other Elements of the General Plan, is not a static document. State Law allows the City to approve amendments to the Land Use Element up to four times per calendar year. The Land Use Element is implemented through a variety of methods, including the Saratoga Zoning Ordinance, specific plans, annexation policies, and the City's Capital Improvement Budget. These are described below.

### 6.1 ZONING ORDINANCE

The Zoning Ordinance of the Saratoga Municipal Code classifies properties within the community into a series of zoning districts. Each district contains a list of permitted and conditionally-permitted land uses and development regulations that provide for review of development applications to ensure consistency with the Zoning Ordinance.

### 6.2 DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

Saratoga has adopted Design Review Guidelines for the Village ~~Specific Plan area~~, for commercial properties along Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road in the Gateway District between Prospect Road and the railroad tracks, and the Single-Family Residential Design Review Handbook for the residential areas throughout Saratoga, including the hillsides. The purpose of these Guidelines is to guide new development and construction in a manner that enhances the unique character of each neighborhood or area. The Gateway District Guidelines provide direction for the design of mixed-use projects that introduce a component of residential uses within the Gateway District.

In recognition of the city's unique character and the desire to protect the residential characteristics of its neighborhoods, the City Council has adopted the Single-Family Residential Design Review Handbook. This handbook serves to guide homeowners, architects, developers, and builders in designing new single-family homes or remodeling of existing homes, in a manner that is compatible with surrounding properties. The Handbook embodies and illustrates the intent of the Design Review Findings found in City Code 15-45.080, and serves as a guide to City staff, the Planning Commission and the City Council in the single-family design review process.

The City of Saratoga Single-Family Residential Design Review Handbook provides Findings, Design Techniques, and Illustrations to assist architects, homeowners, and developers with the design and construction of new homes and additions in Saratoga. The Handbook is laid out with five primary topic areas including: Neighborhood Context, Site Planning, Building Design, Landscaping, and specific Hillside Guidelines.

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## 6.3 HILLSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN

The Hillside Specific Plan (originally the Northwestern Hillside Specific Plan), adopted in 1981, is included in **Appendix XX** of the 2040 General Plan. The Hillside Specific Plan covers residential development in approximately 2,100 acres of hillside area, primarily within City boundaries but also including some adjacent lands within Santa Clara County. The Plan contains policies to protect the scenic hillside resources by limiting the intensity of residential development, limiting the impacts of new developments on the environment and regulating the expansion of City utilities to these sites.

## 6.4 ANNEXATIONS

In accordance with State law, Saratoga may annex properties within the unincorporated portion of Santa Clara County into the City. To be considered for annexation, properties must be located within the boundaries of the adopted Sphere of Influence and [the Urban Service Area](#) and [must](#) meet other requirements set by state law. Upon annexation, the City may extend urban services to these areas, and the properties annexed are subject to [this General Plan](#), zoning requirements and all other land use regulations adopted by the City. Adjustments to the City's Urban Service Area must be approved by the Santa Clara County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

## 6.5 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The City of Saratoga has adopted a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that establishes priorities for the maintenance, rehabilitation, expansion, or construction of new capital facilities within the community. This includes parks, public buildings, infrastructure, and similar facilities. By State Law, the City must find that the CIP is consistent with the General Plan prior to the adoption of the CIP.

# 7. GOALS AND POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

The following goals, policies, and implementation measures have been adopted to ensure that the vision of Saratoga can be achieved. A Goal is broad description of the desired outcome that the City hopes to achieve through the implementation of the General Plan. A Policy is a specific direction that guides and informs the decision making of City staff, Commissioners, and the City Council toward a goal. It indicates a commitment by the City to a course of action. The term Implementation measure describes specific methods or actions that the City can take to achieve each goal and related policies.

## 7.1 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

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## GOAL

**Goal LU-1:** Maintain the predominantly small-town residential character of Saratoga, which includes a mix of larger residential parcels, long established neighborhoods, scenic hillsides, and open space areas.

## Policies

**Policy LU-1.1:** Affirm that the city shall continue to be predominately a community of single-family detached residences.

**Policy LU-1.2:** Continue to review all residential development proposals to ensure consistency with Land Use Element Goals and Policies.

**Policy LU-1.3:** Ensure that existing undeveloped sites zoned single-family detached residential remain so designated.

**Policy LU-1.4:** Ensure that all development proposals are consistent with the spirit and requirements established by the Saratoga Neighborhood Preservation Initiative ~~or~~ (Measure G) passed in 1996.

## Implementation:

**IM LU-1.a:** Utilize the Single Family Residential Design Review Handbook and design review process to ensure consistency with residential land use Goals and Policies.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** Development Fees

**Time Frame:** Ongoing

**Related Policies:** LU-1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4

## 7.2 COMMERCIAL, OFFICE AND PUBLIC LAND USE

### GOAL

**Goal LU-2:** Encourage the economic viability of Saratoga's existing commercial and office areas and their accessibility by residents, taking into account the impact on surrounding residential areas.

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## *Policies*

**Policy LU-2.1:** Non-residential development shall be confined to sites presently designated on the General Plan Map for non-residential uses. Existing non-residential zoning shall not be expanded, nor new non-residential zoning districts added.

**Policy LU-2.2:** Non-residential uses shall be buffered from other uses by methods such as architectural features or other methods as determined through the design review process.

**Policy LU-2.3:** Cooperate with commercial property owners and merchants to encourage appropriate modernization and upgrading of retail establishments consistent with the historic character of the community to provide pleasant shopping experiences.

**Policy LU-2.4:** Monitor Zoning Ordinance standards to ensure that non-residential parking standards are adequate to minimize spillover of parking into adjacent neighborhoods or other commercial areas.

## *Implementation:*

**IM LU-2.a:** Utilize the design review process when considering applications for non-residential developments to ensure consistency with Commercial and Office Land Use Goals and Policies.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/Planning Commission.  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4

**IM LU-2.b:** Continue to utilize the design review process to ensure residential uses are buffered from other uses through means such as architectural features or other methods.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/Planning Commission.  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-2.2

**IM LU-2.c:** Amend Article 15-35 of the Zoning Regulations to include off-street parking standards to prevent vehicle parking in commercial areas to impact adjacent neighborhoods.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department.  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** FY 2019-2020  
**Related Policies:** LU-2.4

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## GOAL

**Goal LU-3:** Promote the long-term fiscal soundness of the City of Saratoga through careful analysis of land use decisions and fiscal practices.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-3.1:** Consider the economic impact of all land use decisions on the City budget through the preparation of fiscal impact analyses for non-single family residential proposals.

**Policy LU-3.2:** Continue to collect fees or require improvements from developers to compensate the City for their fair share of direct and indirect impacts that arise from proposed development and to insure implementation of the General Plan.

### *Implementation:*

**IM LU-3.a:** Develop a protocol for requiring development feasibility studies, to be completed by all development applications on commercial parcels.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding Source:** General Fund  
**Time Frame:** FY 20XX-20XX  
**Related Policies:** LU-3.1

**IM LU-3.b:** Update the fees schedule on a yearly basis to compensate the City for economic effects of development.

**Responsible Agency:** Planning Commission/City Council  
**Funding Source:** General Fund  
**Time Frame:** Yearly  
**Related Policies:** LU-3.2

## GOAL

**Goal LU-4:** Provide sufficient land area for public, quasi-public, and similar land uses in Saratoga.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-4.1:** Periodically monitor the amount and type of land needed for City public uses and facilities and report to City Council through the annual City budgetary process and Capital Improvement Program.

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## **Implementation:**

**IM LU-4.a:** Update the City-owned Properties Report (2003) and gather public input on status and use of properties for report to City Council to help set priorities and determine funding for improvements at facilities.

**Responsible Agency:** Public Works/City Council  
**Funding Source:** Capital Improvement Budget  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-4.1

## 7.3 NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION

### **GOAL**

**Goal LU-5:** Maintain and enhance the character of residential neighborhoods by reviewing new development proposals for potential adverse impacts.

### **Policies**

**Policy LU-5.1:** Development proposals shall be evaluated against City standards and guidelines to ensure that the related traffic, noise, light, appearance, and intensity of the proposed use have limited adverse impact on the area and can be fully mitigated.

**Policy LU-5.2:** Analyze the capacity of existing streets and ensure new development is designed to minimize disruption caused by an increase in through or heavy traffic prior to subdivision or project approval.

**Policy LU-5.3:** Through the development review process, ensure that adjoining neighborhoods are protected from noise, light, glare, and other impacts resulting from new or expanded non-residential developments.

## **Implementation:**

**IM LU-5.a:** Through the design review and subdivision review process, require that all major development projects include traffic and environmental review to ensure adherence with Neighborhood Protection Goals and Policies.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-5.1, LU 5.2, 5.3

## 7.4 ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESOURCE PROTECTION

### GOAL

**Goal LU-6:** Protect natural resources and amenities through appropriate land use and related programs.

### Policies

**Policy LU-6.1:** Incorporate specific standards and requirements into the Zoning Ordinance to preserve and protect sensitive watershed areas on hillsides within the community.

**Policy LU-6.2:** Development proposals shall incorporate stormwater quality features, including Low Impact Development (LID) site design, source control and treatment measures, such as infiltration and biotreatment to protect surface and subsurface water quality consistent with the City's stormwater NPDES permit and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Plan.

**Policy LU-6.3:** Continue to implement the City's Construction Materials Recycling Program to reduce the quantity of construction debris in local landfills.

**Policy LU-6.4:** Continue to prioritize the protection of native tree species through the development review process.

### Implementation:

**LU.6.a.:** Continue to apply standard conditions of project approval to ensure development applications conform to stormwater pollution prevention best management practices consistent with the City's stormwater NPDES permit and GSI Plan.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department

**Funding Source:** General Fund

**Time Frame:** [FY 2008-2009](#) Ongoing

**Related Policies:** LU 6.1, 6.2

**IM LU-6.b:** Continue to distribute information regarding the City's Construction Materials Recycling Program during the building permitting process.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department

**Funding Source:** General Fund

**Time Frame:** Ongoing

**Related Policies:** LU-6.3

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**IM LU-6.c:** Continue to require arborist review for all development projects in accordance with the City's Tree Ordinance.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-6.4

## 7.5 WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACTS AND AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION

### GOAL

**Goal LU-7:** Protect existing agricultural resources.

### Policies

**Policy LU-7.1:** Encourage renewal of Williamson Act contracts to preserve agricultural lands.

**Policy LU-7.2:** Encourage agricultural and open space landowners to voluntarily protect their land.

**Policy LU-7.3:** Encourage agricultural use on suitable land with protection for nearby residences as appropriate.

### Implementation:

**IM LU-7.a:** Support cancellation of Williamson Act contracts only if the City can verify consistency with General Plan policies and Department of Conservation requirements for cancellations.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission/  
City Council  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-7.1, 7.2

**IM LU-7.b:** Continue to utilize the design review process to ensure appropriate buffers are provided where residential properties are adjacent to agriculturally designated lands.

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**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-7.3

## 7.6 HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT

### GOAL

**Goal LU-8:** The natural beauty of the West Valley hillsides area shall be maintained and protected for its contribution to the overall quality of life of current and future generations.

### Policies

**Policy LU-8.1:** Development proposals shall minimize impacts to ridgelines, significant natural hillside features, including but not limited to steep topography, major stands of vegetation, especially native vegetation, oak trees, and watercourses.

### Implementation:

**IM LU-8.a:** Continue to utilize the design review process for all development in the western hillsides and ensure adherence to the Hillside Specific Plan.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/Planning Commission  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-8.1, 8.2

**IM LU-8.b:** Adhere to the Hillside Specific Plan (derived from Measure A) ~~which is incorporated herein by this reference.~~

### GOAL

**Goal LU-9:** Preserve the scenic beauty of the hillsides by limiting incompatible development.

### Policies

**Policy LU-9.1:** Limit the amount of grading within hillside areas to the minimum amount needed for dwellings, other allowed uses, and site access.

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## **Implementation:**

**IM LU-9.a:** Ensure protection of the hillside areas by designating medium density, multi-family residential, and non-residential land uses in Land Use Map in the flatland areas only, where they are considered more appropriate. Parks in the hillsides may be permitted provided they are planned in a manner that is compatible with the scenic beauty of the area.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** Development Fees

**Time Frame:** Ongoing

**Related Policies:** LU-9.1

**IM LU-9.b:** Require that all development applications in the hillsides include a grading plan, that cut and fill quantities be provided, and that access roads and dwelling size be consistent with the objective of minimizing grading.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** Development Fees

**Time Frame:** Ongoing

**Related Policies:** LU-9.2

**IM LU-9.c:** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to provide the Planning Commission with greater oversight and approval authority for grading plans where cut and fill quantities, depths, and/or graded areas exceed specified thresholds.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** Development Fees

**Time Frame:** 2020-2021

**Related Policies:** LU-9.2

## **GOAL**

**Goal LU-10:** Minimize the visual impacts of hillside development, especially on ridgelines.

## **Policies**

**Policy LU-10.1:** Require development proposals in hillside areas to undertake visual analyses and mitigate significant visual impacts, especially to ridgelines.

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## **Implementation:**

**IM LU-10.a:** Continue to adhere to the Single Family Residential Design Review Handbook during design review for residential developments in the hillside areas.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/Planning Commission  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-10.1

## **GOAL**

**Goal LU-11:** Foster closer interjurisdictional cooperation and coordination concerning land use and development issues.

## **Policies**

**Policy LU-11.1:** Adhere to Joint Hillside Land Use Objectives that will assure basic consistency of hillside land use policies among the West Valley jurisdictions. The West Valley Cities and the County should work together to achieve the shared goal of preserving the natural beauty of the West Valley Hillsides.

**Policy LU-11.2:** Continue to work within the adopted Joint Planning Objectives and Land Use principles for West Valley Hillsides Areas to reinforce existing policies.

## **Implementation:**

**IM LU-11.a:** Continue to coordinate with West Valley cities to work toward the preservation of the West Valley Hillsides, consistent with Measure A.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-11.2

## **7.7 HISTORIC CHARACTER/CULTURAL RESOURCES**

## **GOAL**

**Goal LU-12:** Recognize the heritage of the City by protecting historic and cultural resources, where feasible.

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## *Policies*

**Policy LU-12.1:** Enhance the visual character of the City by encouraging compatibility of architectural styles that reflect established architectural traditions.

**Policy LU-12.2:** Develop zoning and other incentives for property owners to preserve historic resources and seek out historic designations for their respective properties.

**Policy LU-12.3:** Continue to participate in the Mills Act program which allows property owners of historic residences a reduction of their property tax.

**Policy LU-12.4:** Encourage public knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the City's past and foster civic and neighborhood pride and sense of identity based upon the recognition and use of the City's heritage resources.

**Policy LU-12.5:** The Heritage Preservation Commission shall regularly update the City's Historic Resources Inventory.

**Policy LU-12.6:** Development proposals impacting any of the City's heritage land and/or any historic resources listed on any local or state inventory shall be reviewed by the Heritage Preservation Commission and the Planning Commission, as required by the Zoning Ordinance.

**Policy LU-12.7:** For any project development affecting structures that are 50 years of age or older, conduct appropriate analysis as required by CEQA.

**Policy LU-12.8:** Protect significant archeological, prehistoric, and paleontological Native American resources as required by CEQA.

**Policy LU 12.9:** Cooperate with the County of Santa Clara and property owners of historic resources within the Sphere of Influence and Urban Service Area to ensure that resources in these areas are provided the same high level of review and appropriate preservation as other historic resources within the City limits.

**Policy LU 12.10:** The City recognizes that since 1878 the Mountain Winery, located within the City's sphere of influence in Santa Clara County, has been an important part of Saratoga's history and seeks to maintain the property's prominence and cultural relevance to the community.

## *Implementation:*

**IM LU-12.a:** Continue to utilize the design review process and Historic Preservation Ordinance to ensure preservation of significant cultural resources.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/  
Heritage Preservation Commission

**Funding Source:** General Fund

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**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-12.1, 12.6, 12.7, 12.8

**LU-12.b:** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to enable the Planning Commission authority to grant exceptions to standards for historic structures in all Zoning Districts in the City, as is presently allowed in C-H Districts per 15-19.050 (i).

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding Source:** General Fund  
**Time Frame:** FY ~~2019-2020~~ 2020-2021  
**Related Policies:** LU-12.2

**IM LU-12.c:** Continue to allow owners of designated historic landmarks to participate in the Mills Act.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/  
Planning Commission/City Council  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-12.2, 12.3

**IM LU-12.d:** Update Historic Resources Inventory and Landmark List and publish on the City Website information regarding incentives for preservation of heritage properties.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/  
Heritage Preservation Commission  
**Funding Source:** General Fund  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-12.4, 12.5

**IM LU-12.e:** Continue to ensure that if construction or grading activities result in the discovery of unique paleontological resources, including individual fossils or assemblages of fossils, all work within 100 feet of the discovery shall cease and the Planning Department shall be notified. The resources shall be examined by a qualified paleontologist, and work may only resume when appropriate protections are in place and are approved by the Planning Department.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding Source:** General Fund  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing

# City of Saratoga General Plan 2040



**Related Policies:** LU-12.8

## 7.8 DESIGN REVIEW

### GOAL

**Goal LU-13:** Use the design review process to assure that new construction and major additions thereto are compatible with the site and the adjacent surroundings.

### Policies

**Policy LU-13.1:** Utilize the design review process and the California Environmental Quality Act in the review of proposed residential and non-residential projects to promote high quality design, to ensure compliance with applicable regulations, to ensure compatibility with surrounding properties and uses, and to minimize environmental impacts. Special attention shall be given to ensuring compatibility between residential and non-residential uses (e.g., land use buffering).

**Policy LU-13.2:** When considering development proposals, including new construction, remodeling and/or additions to existing buildings, the city shall adhere to applicable adopted design guidelines, such as, but not limited to, the Single Family Residential Design Review Handbook, the Village Design Guidelines, , and the Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road Gateway Design Guidelines, as may be adopted and revised by City Council from time to time.

### Implementation:

**IM LU-13.a:** Continue to use the design review process for all development applications and ensure that all projects adhere to applicable design guidelines, including the Single Family Design Review Handbook, Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road Gateway Area Design Guidelines, and Village Design Guidelines).

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/  
Heritage Preservation/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** Development Fees

**Time Frame:** Ongoing

**Related Policies:** LU-13.1, 13.2

## 7.9 ANNEXATIONS

# City of Saratoga General Plan 2040



## GOAL

**Goal LU-14:** Seek to achieve appropriate and contiguous City boundaries to provide for the efficient delivery of public services and to create a greater sense of community.

## Policies

**Policy LU-14.1:** Land shall not be annexed to Saratoga unless it is contiguous to the existing city limits, within the Sphere of Influence, and it is determined by the city that public services can be provided without unreasonable cost to the City and dilution of services to existing residents.

**Policy LU-14.2:** Evaluate the existing Urban Service Area boundary to determine if the boundary should be expanded or contracted in compliance with the County's Local Agency Formation Commission Policies.

**Policy LU-14.3:** Periodically review annexation policies and procedures to ensure compliance with most current land use changes.

## Implementation:

**IM LU-14.a:** Coordinate all applications for annexations with LAFCO to ensure that annexations are consistent with current LAFCO policies.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department/Planning Commission  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-14.2, 14.3

## 7.10 AIR QUALITY

## GOAL

**Goal LU-15:** Support regional efforts to improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from both stationary and non-stationary sources.

## Policies

**Policy LU-15.1:** Require development projects to comply with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) measures to reduce fugitive dust emissions due to grading and construction activities.

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**Policy LU-15.2:** Encourage use of trip demand measures as part of major commercial and office development projects to reduce dependence on auto use.

**Policy LU-15.3:** Require compliance with BAAQMD's guidelines for wood-burning fireplaces.

**Policy LU-15.4:** Strive to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through a multi-pronged approach, including coordination with regional agencies, project-level review for new development proposals, and public education programs.

## **Implementation:**

**IM LU-15.a:** Revise standard conditions of approval to require that all projects comply with BAAQMD dust emission reduction measures and to encourage trip demand measures for major non-residential projects.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** General Fund

**Time Frame:** ~~FY 2007-2008~~ Ongoing

**Related Policies:** LU-15.1, 15.2, 15.4

**IM LU-15.b:** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to adopt the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Model Ordinance for Wood Burning Devices to prohibit in Saratoga the installation of new indoor or outdoor wood burning fireplaces in accordance with the BAAQMD's guidelines for wood-burning devices.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** General Fund

**Time Frame:** FY 20~~2019~~-2021~~0~~

**Related Policies:** LU-15.3, 15.4

**IM LU-15.c:** Promote, on the City website and through other means, the Silicon Valley Clean Energy service that provides clean and renewable electricity choices to residents.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission

**Funding Source:** General Fund

**Time Frame:** FY 20~~2019~~-2021~~0~~

**Related Policies:** LU-15.4

**IM LU-15.d:** Continue to partner with Our City Forest and promote, on the City website and through other means, local tree planting initiatives and efforts.

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**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/Planning Commission  
**Funding Source:** General Fund  
**Time Frame:** [FY 2019-2020](#)Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-15.4

**IM LU-15.e:** Establish a public education program providing information on ways to reduce and control emissions; and continue to provide information about alternative commutes, carpooling, and restricting exacerbating activities on “Spare the Air” high-emission days.

**Responsible Agency:**  
**Funding Source:**  
**Time Frame:**  
**Related Policies:**

## 7.11 ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

### GOAL

**Goal LU-16:** Amend the Municipal Code to provide consistency with the General Plan updates, new state legislation, and court decisions.

### Policies

**Policy LU-16.1:** Consider Municipal Code amendments that implement the use and development of goals, policies, and plan objectives identified in the adopted General Plan 2040.

### Implementation:

**IM LU-16.a:** Amend the Municipal Code and Zoning Map to ensure consistency with the Goals and Policies of the General Plan 2040 Land Use Element.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Dept/  
Planning Commission/City Council  
**Funding Source:** General Plan Fund  
**Time Frame:** [FY 2007-2008](#)Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-16.1

## 7.12 SARATOGA VILLAGE

# City of Saratoga General Plan 2040



## GOAL

**Goal LU-17:** Value and protect the human scale and historic context of downtown Saratoga.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-17.1:** The physical form and scale of The Village is connected with its rural origin capturing the charm of its 19<sup>th</sup> century roots. The City shall ensure that the integrity and character of Saratoga Village continues to reflect this familiar identity and retain the quaint qualities that have characterized its architectural form over the years.

**Policy LU-17.2:** Property development and building improvements shall fully utilize and respect the natural hillside and creek setting of The Village.

### *Implementation:*

**IM LU-17.a:** Use City Council actions, the City Code, Zoning Ordinance, Village Design Guidelines, and the design review process to ensure compliance with the Saratoga Village Goals and Policies.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-17.1, 17.2

## GOAL

**Goal LU-18:** To encourage and support the tenets of a vibrant and commercially successful downtown.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-18.1:** Encourage an interesting and diverse mix of ground floor businesses that appeal to the community and the broader marketplace, and that enhance the shopping and dining experience and make the area more inviting to shoppers and diners, while ensuring the success and sustainability of The Village as a viable commercial center.

### *Implementation:*

**IM LU-18.a:** Consider the impacts to the economic viability of The Village in all land use decisions affecting properties in The Village.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department

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**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-18.1

## GOAL

**Goal LU-19:** The Village shall serve as a center of community and civic activity.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-19.1:** The City shall consider The Village an important venue for civic events and community activities and will pursue opportunities to create and utilize public plazas and gathering places.

**Policy LU-19.2:** The City shall cultivate opportunities for incorporating public art and music in The Village as a means of enhancing The Village experience and emphasizing its place as a primary focal point in the community.

### *Implementation:*

**IM LU-19.a:** Develop a program to incorporate public art in The Village and expand the variety of community events, including music.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding Source:** General Fund  
**Time Frame:** 2019-2020  
**Related Policies:** LU-19.1, 19.2

## GOAL

**Goal LU-20:** Improve the effective and efficient use of public and private parking and implement available circulation alternatives.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-20.1:** Consider development of a Parking Management Plan that outlines a strategy for the efficient and effective use of parking resources necessary to the commercial success of The Village.

**Policy LU-20.2:** The City shall review the planned "turnaround" at the western end of Big Basin Way to more effectively navigate automobile circulation through The Village.

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## *Implementation:*

**IM LU-20.a:** Prepare a Parking Management Plan in coordination with the Saratoga Village Development Council and Village businesses to optimize on-street and off-street parking resources in The Village.

**Responsible Agency:** Community Development & Public Works Department  
**Funding Source:** Development Fees  
**Time Frame:** 2019-2020  
**Related Policies:** LU-20.1

## 7.13 PUBLIC SERVICES

### **GOAL**

**Goal LU-21:** Continue to support needed public services and service systems.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-21.1:** Coordinate with the Santa Clara County Library District to determine appropriate mitigation fees necessary to provide adequate library services.

**Policy LU-21.2:** As part of the development review process, ensure that appropriate school impact fees are paid.

**Policy LU-21.3:** Continue to work cooperatively with surrounding jurisdictions to provide needed services in efficient and cost-effective ways.

### **GOAL**

**GOAL LU-22:** Maintain a high quality of life for residents of all ages and continue to partner with organizations who provide services and information to sensitive populations.

### *Policies*

**Policy LU-22.1:** Support community partnerships that help meet the daily needs of older residents to maintain their quality of life by ensuring they have access to services that allow them to age in place.

**Policy LU-22.2:** Support organizations that provide services to residents with limited mobility or disabilities who need support in several areas to maintain their quality of life by ensuring they have access to services, the ability to socialize, and can take care of day to day activities.

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**Policy LU-22.3:** Promote access to City buildings, parks, and amenities by maximizing compliance with accessibility standards.

**Implementation:**

**IM LU-22.a:** Support the operations of local organizations that provide services for vulnerable senior and disabled populations.

**Responsible Agency:** City Manager's Department  
**Funding Source:** General Fund, Capital Improvement Program  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Related Policies:** LU-22.1, 22.2

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ADMIN DRAFT