

## Should San Mateo County tree policies vary based on geography?

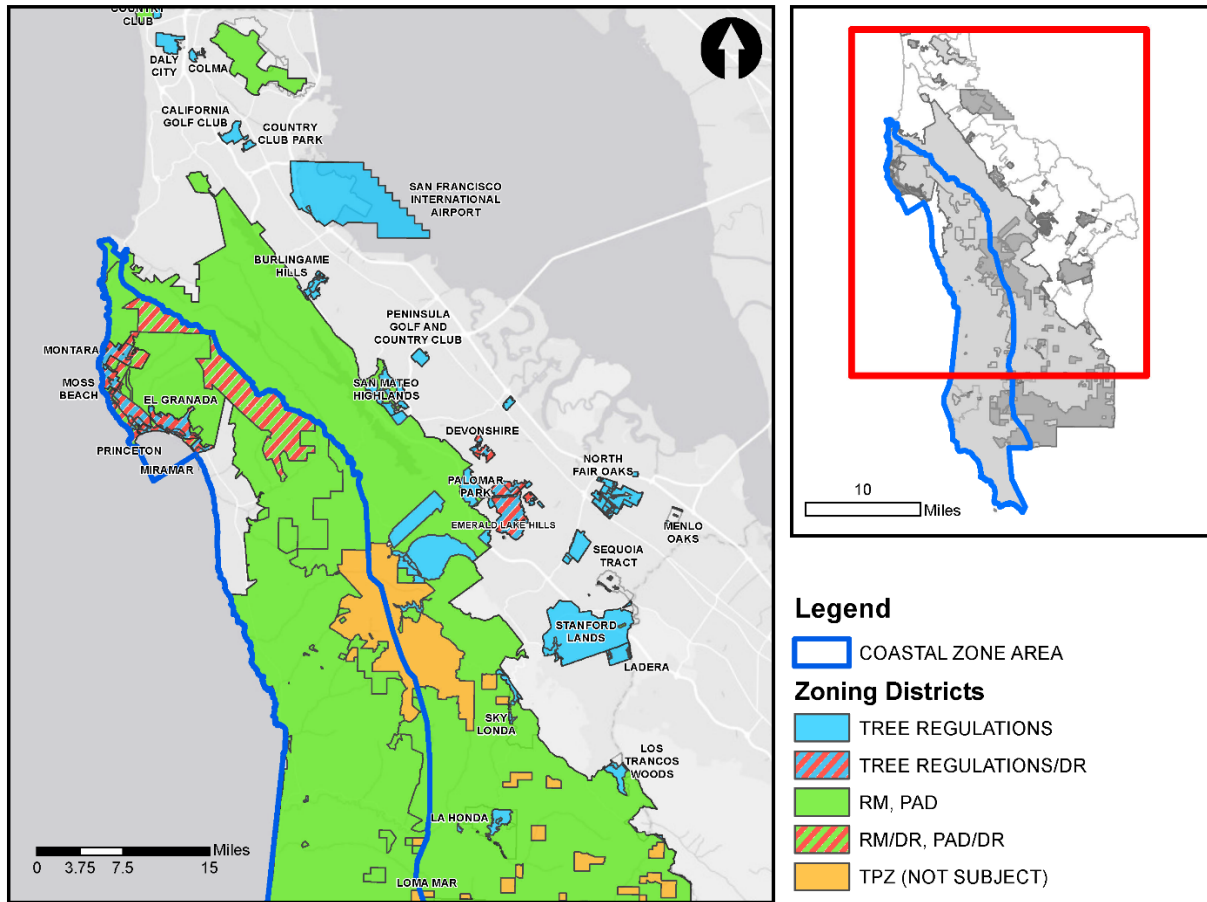
One of the issues in the Steering Committee’s work plan is resolving whether some areas of the County should have different tree protection policies because they have different conditions in terms of development and tree canopy or different attitudes regarding tree protection in comparison to other parts of the County. This staff report examines current tree protection and removal policies and how they differ geographically in the County. This information is important to frame the discussion of policy options at the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Although staff is not providing the Steering Committee with policy options on this topic at this time, understanding the locations where the different tree protection policies apply will assist committee members to make recommendations on policy options for other policies. The following table summarizes County’s tree protection and removal policies and the geographic areas where each policy applies:

<b>San Mateo County Tree Protection Policies Geographic Limits</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Geographic Extent</b>
Regulation of Removal of Significant Trees and Regulation of the Removal of Heritage Trees	All Bayside Land Use Districts excluding RM, Skyline residential zoning districts, Midcoast “urban” areas and other coastside residential and commercial areas including LaHonda, Pescadero, Butano Creek, Loma Mar, and Dearborn Park
San Mateo County Zoning Regulation Chapter 28.1 DR	<u>Bayside</u> : Emerald Lake Hills/Oak Knoll Manor, Palomar Park, Devonshire, Middlefield Road and Commercial Properties  <u>Coastside</u> : Resource Management Districts within the Coastal Zone near the Midcoast, “urbanized” and commercial and residential districts in Moss Beach, Montara, Princeton, El Granada, Miramar and Pescadero
County of San Mateo Local Coastal Program	Coastal Zone per California Coastal Act
San Mateo County Zoning Regulations Sections (Chapter 20.2 Resource Management Development Review Criteria and Chapter 28.1 Design Review Districts)	All lands zoned RM, RM/CZ, PAD, and PAD/CD

The County has developed tree protection and removal policies to manage different areas of the County based on the unique characteristics of those areas, and the needs of property owners because the land management issues differ among the many areas of the County’s jurisdiction. The Heritage and Significant Tree ordinances apply primarily in urbanized areas on both the Bayside and the suburbanized Midcoast on the Coastside. The Design Review ordinance applies in select areas of the County. On the

Bayside, DR districts are concentrated in the central County in the Emerald Lake Hills, Middlefield Road, Devonshire, Palomar Park, and Oak Knoll. On the Coastside, DR districts include the suburban midcoast, including surrounding RM and PAD lands, and a small area in the commercial heart of Pescadero. The attached map shows the areas where the County's tree policies apply.

In the RM, RM/DR, RM/CZ, PAD and PAD/DR zones the RM tree policies (Sections 6324 through 6326.4) apply. On lands designated Timber Production Zone (TPZ), the County authorizes tree removal pursuant to timber management plans certified by CalFire and approved by the County.



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Tree canopy conditions in San Mateo County vary widely. The County staff's assessment of tree canopy characteristics demonstrate that these policies to some extent reflect the development patterns and land use policies for these different geographic areas.

### Current Tree Canopy Characterizations in County Unincorporated Areas

Neighborhood	Current Canopy Characteristics	Pre-development Characteristics
<b>Olympic Country Club</b>	Olympic Country Club: evergreen conifers and broadleaf trees at the margins of fairways; Coastal scrub w/o trees; some scattered canopy trees in rear yards of homes-mostly mixed exotics; relatively sparse canopy	Lower reaches of southern portion of watershed draining to Lake Merced.
<b>Broadmoor</b>	Several wide swaths of mixed conifers Monterey Pine/Cypress or Eucalyptus located in rear yards, and/or on land-locked lots: (N. of 87 <sup>th</sup> ; Pinehaven-Maddux; Gilman to McArthur; Larchmont to Nimitz; Beechwood to Thornhill;	Headwaters of southern portion of watershed draining to Lake Merced.
<b>Colma</b>	Small copse of Eucalyptus and Monterey Pines behind Mid-Pen's Colma Ridge housing project; Small copse of Eucalyptus at the western terminus of A Street, and Acacia and Monterey Pine near west side Colma BART station	Headwaters of Colma Creek
<b>California Golf Club</b>	Mix of broadleaf and conifer evergreens on golf course; dense copse of trees along southern edge of Westborough Boulevard mainly Monterey Pine/Cypress; Corner of Westborough and Junipero Serra, Dense stand of Monterey Pine/Cypress, Eucalyptus, Oaks and Acacia	Westborough Blvd. built atop Twelve Mile Creek-tributary of Colma Creek.
<b>Country Club Park</b>	Large-lot Single family neighborhood with ½-acre lots with large mature trees in most rear yards- Eucalyptus, Monterey Pine/Cypress, some street trees adjoining rolled curbs w/no sidewalks	Drained to Colma Creek wetlands

Bayside Neighborhood	Current Canopy Characteristics	Pre-development Characteristics
<b>SFO Airport/San Bruno</b>	San Antonio Avenue, eastern street edge west of Bayshore property: between San Felipe and San Juan Avenues: Dense stand of mixed evergreen with Monterey Pine/Cypress, Eucalyptus, some Oaks; and Acacias along eastern side of street; no street trees small stands of Monterey Pine/Cypress and Eucalyptus along San Bruno Creek just south of I380/US101 interchange; No trees on SFO. Lower reaches of San Bruno and Colma Creeks.	Built atop Colma, San Bruno and El Zanjon Creeks wetlands
<b>San Francisco Watershed Lands</b>	Mix of Coastal Scrub, and mixed Evergreen Forest—no need to regulate?	Drain mostly to reservoirs (e.g., San Mateo Creek), and include headwaters of Pilarcitos Creek, and southern half of San Pedro Creek Watershed
<b>Burlingame Highlands</b>	Very similar in character to Emerald Lake Hills and San Mateo Highlands, except the tree canopy is more diverse. Considerable number of Oak, Redwood, Monterey Pine, Eucalyptus, some Cedar and Cypress, Acacia and lots of exotics, e.g., palms, olives, magnolia. Headwaters and northern flank of Easton Creek watershed.	Headwaters/northern half Easton Creek Watershed
<b>San Mateo Highlands</b>	Very similar in character to Emerald Lake Hills, except Monterey Pines predominate instead of Oaks, although many oaks present; mix of ornamentals/exotics; some street trees at front property line behind sidewalk on some streets-mainly deciduous.	Entire Polhemus Creek Watershed, tributary to San Mateo Creek
<b>Peninsula Golf and Country Club</b>	Evergreen conifers and broadleaf trees at the margins of fairways-mainly Monterey Pine and Redwood. Dense canopy at margin along Hwy 92, Madera Lane and western edge adjoin US Postal Facility.	Drains to Borel Creek, no stream channel
<b>Devonshire</b>	Mixed Oak/Buckeye/Madrone/Bay/Monterey Pine, Redwood with some exotics in landscaped yards	Headwaters Pulgas Creek
<b>Palomar Park</b>	Oak studded grasslands; coastal scrub; Monterey Pine, exotics in yards; in easternmost parts, e.g., along Scenic and Palomar, Acacia, Redwood, Liquidambar,	Partial Headwaters Cordilleras Creek

	Magnolia and other exotics	
<b>Emerald Lake Hills</b>	Oak Woodland with some Monterey Pine and Redwood as well as exotics, including some dense areas of Acacia	Headwaters Arroyo Ojo de Agua
<b>Kensington Square</b>	Sparse suburban tree canopy. Mix of primarily exotics, and a few large redwoods. Short segment of Arroyo Ojo de Aqua creek (concrete channel). Few street trees.	Segment of Arroyo Ojo de Agua
<b>North Fair Oaks</b>	Patchwork of industrial areas with no trees (+/- 25% of area), suburban tree cover with trees mostly in yards front and/or rear with few (<40%) street trees (+/- 50%) and areas with Dense canopy, w/many (.40%) street trees (+/- 25% of area); tree species vary widely although dense areas have many oaks, redwood and exotics. Suburban areas mostly exotics w/some remnant heritage oaks	Scattered oaks in southern portion, draining partially to Redwood Creek but mostly to the bay.
<b>Menlo Oaks</b>	Very Dense Oak canopy (Coast Live and Valley) mixed with Redwood, Monterey Pine and exotics	Moderately dense oak woodland, drainage to the bay
<b>Sequoia Tract</b>	Suburban tree canopy with varying density. Some streets have street trees, most do not. Some areas have dense canopy, in others canopy is sparse. Many Redwood, some Oak and Monterey Pine, many exotics	Partially drains to Redwood Creek
<b>West Menlo Park</b>	Suburban tree canopy, with substantial number of Oaks (Coast Live and Valley), Redwood, some Monterey Pine, and wide variety of exotics. Some street trees, but most outside public ROW.	Drainage to San Francisquito and Atherton Creeks. Scattered oaks, especially in southeastern portion
<b>Stanford Lands</b>	Horse Park, Jasper Ridge, SLAC and related buildings, and open grasslands. Natural Oak woodland, coastal scrub and oak studded, non-native grasslands. Riparian corridor, oak covered, tributary to San Francisquito Creek.	Predominantly savannah with large patches of dense oak woodland. Corte Madera Creek supported marsh habitat in western portion, which feeds San Francisquito Creek
<b>Ladera</b>	Suburban tree canopy, predominantly Coast Live Oak, Redwood and exotics. Some Valley Oak, Heteromeles, and Monterey Pine. Separated from creek corridor by Alpine Rd. and commercial uses.	Steep slopes drain to Los Trancos Creek and northern slope partially drains to San Francisquito Creek
<b>Weekend Acres</b>	Suburban tree canopy, predominantly Coast Live Oak. Adjoins San Francisquito	Drainage to San Francisquito Creek

	Creek with characteristic riparian corridor tree density. Some Valley Oak, Redwood, Monterey Pine and exotics	
<b>Skyline North - Bayside</b>	Dominated by Conifers west of Crystal Springs Reservoir, including Monterey pine and cypress. Stand of eucalyptus, scrub and chaparral. Areas east and south of the reservoir are mostly grassland with some chaparral	Natural drainage to Crystal Springs Reservoir basin
<b>Los Trancos Woods, Skyline South-Bayside and Vista Verde</b>	Approximately 50% dense forest made up of redwood, doug-fir, pines, oaks, laurel, buckeye, etc., and 50% grassland	Drainage feeds Corte Madera and Los Trancos Creeks
<b>Loma Mar - Bayside</b>	Approx. 90% conifer canopy cover and some exposed grassland	Drains to Pescadero Creek

<b>Coastside Neighborhood</b>	<b>Current Canopy Characteristics</b>	<b>Pre-development Characteristics</b>
<b>Montara</b>	Built atop portions of Kanoff, Montara and Dean Creeks watersheds.	Built atop San Bruno and Dean Creeks wetlands
<b>Moss Beach</b>	Mix of Coastal Scrub, and mixed Evergreen Forest—no need to regulate? Stands of eucalyptus and cypress	Drains to the ocean
<b>El Granada</b>	Primarily grass and scrubland with stands of eucalyptus.	El Granada Creek is primary drainage and empties into the ocean. Native tree canopy only occurs along the creek
<b>Princeton</b>	Half Moon Bay Airport and agricultural land, two stands of Monterey pine, some coastal scrub habitat	Denniston Creek drains to the ocean, coastal scrub
<b>Miramar</b>	Stands of eucalyptus and cypress throughout residential areas	Arroyo De En Medio drains into the ocean. Native tree canopy only occurs along the creek
<b>Rural Mid-Coast</b>	Ecologically valuable watershed lands with varying traits. Some portions have rolling hills with hummocky topography near the coast, while other areas are steep and moderately dissected. Many reservoirs have been created in stream valleys to serve agricultural and municipal needs. Tree canopy is dense with native conifers in many portions, but scrubland dominates elsewhere	Green Valley Creek, Martini Creek in the north portion. Headwaters of Montara, San Vicente, Denniston, El Granada, Arroyo De En Medio, Locks, Frenchmans, Apanolio, Corinda Los Trancos, Nuff, Pilarcitos, Mills, Arroyo Leon, Whittemore, and Arroyo Canada Verde Creeks
<b>San Gregorio</b>	Lower watersheds sustain densely vegetated riparian corridors. Small groves of redwood trees can be found but eucalypti are more prevalent. Landscape	Walker Gulch drains to Whittemore Creek. Lobitos Creek and Purisima Creek are the primary watersheds in the

	<p>is generally open with agriculture and ranching as primary land use. Upper watersheds are home to healthy redwood forest with full canopy. Large sections of rolling hills and grassland</p>	<p>north and both drain to the ocean. Tunitas Creek drains to the ocean. El Corte De Madera, Bogess, Clear, and Coyote Creeks all contribute to the San Gregorio Creek watershed, which has a natural lagoon before emptying into the ocean</p>
<b>Pescadero-East and West</b>	<p>-Pescadero West is dominated by agricultural and ranching lands as well as grassland. Scattered pines and cypress throughout, dense riparian vegetation along stream corridors -Pescadero East is dominated by redwood forest with full canopy</p>	<p>Bradley Creek and Honsinger Creek feed into lower Pescadero Creek, which empties into the ocean. Butano Creek empties into the same lagoon as Pescadero Creek. Arroyo De Los Frijoles feeds into Bean Hollow Lakes and then to Lake Lucerne on the coast. Whitehouse, Cascade, and Green Oaks Creeks drain the southern portion</p>
<b>La Honda</b>	<p>Dense tree canopy composed of redwood, pine, fir, madrone, and others</p>	<p>La Honda Creek and Alpine Creek converge to form San Gregorio Creek</p>
<b>Loma Mar- Coastside</b>	<p>Agricultural lands surrounded by dense mixed redwood forest with full canopy</p>	<p>Pescadero Creek runs through</p>
<b>Dearborn Park</b>	<p>Dense redwood forest with full canopy surrounding small family gardens. Some exotic trees lining the streets</p>	<p>Drainage to Pescadero Creek</p>
<b>Skyline North – Coastside</b>	<p>Primarily forested, mountainous terrain with large portions of dense canopy and many patches of grassland. Forest composed of many native species, conifer and deciduous. Small communities scattered around with some exotic trees</p>	<p>Headwaters of San Gregorio, El Corte De Madera, and Purisima Creeks. Large area draining into the southern end of Crystal Springs Reservoir.</p>
<b>Skyline South - Coastside</b>	<p>Primarily forested, mountainous terrain with large portions of dense canopy and several large patches of grassland. Forest composed of many native species, conifer and deciduous. Small communities scattered around with some exotic trees</p>	<p>Headwaters of San Gregorio, Pescadero, and Butano Creeks.</p>