



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-24-149
Meeting 24-32
December 11, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 5

AGENDA ITEM

2025 Legislative Program

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the 2025 Legislative Program as recommended by the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee, with any final changes from the Board of Directors, to set the Calendar Year 2025 legislative priorities and policies for Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

SUMMARY

Each year, staff reviews numerous legislative proposals at the local, state, and federal levels to identify opportunities that further the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) mission, strategic and action plan priorities, and key projects. Though most bills are considered on a case-by-case basis, the annual Board-approved Legislative Program provides a publicly accessible, transparent, and proactive summary of priorities and policies to guide legislative activities for the year. The Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) received an overview of the Draft 2025 Legislative Program on November 5, 2024 and provided comment and guidance on the legislative policy proposals. Staff incorporated LFPAC comments into the revised 2025 Legislative Program (Attachment 1) now under consideration by the full Board of Directors (Board).

DISCUSSION

Annual Legislative Program

The Legislative Program serves as the touchstone for all legislative activities during the session, articulating to the public and focusing staff on the priorities of the Board, consistent with Board Policy 1.11 (Attachment 2). It also provides an opportunity for staff to think about its work in policy terms, beyond strictly project execution, helping to promote interdepartmental coordination and a culture of continuous improvement.

Legislative Program Structure

The Legislative Program is broken into several sections:

- **Legislative Priorities** – These are the District's top state and local legislative priorities, grouped by key strategic areas. These priorities are organized by and consistent with the Board's Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives, reinforcing organizational alignment with Board priorities. Annual priority setting is informed by Board-approved projects and initiatives, opportunities to support or oppose state legislative initiatives sponsored by others that affect the District's mission, and other issues identified by the Board or

District staff as particularly significant. Bond measures and actions to allocate existing funding sources or create new ones are the most common of these priorities.

- **Legislative Policy Positions** – The District’s ability to deliver on its mission and remain a sustainable organization can be impacted by legislation proposed at the local, state, or federal level. To effectively respond to legislative developments, Board-approved proactive policy positions that respond to a variety of issues can help crystalize thinking among Board members and staff to ensure consistent and timely advocacy. These policy positions are first organized by the Board’s Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives and then grouped into key themes.
- **Regional and Federal Legislative Priorities** – These are the top regional and federal legislative priorities for the District. Action is considered on a case-by-case basis and may be subject to staff capacity.

Legislative Priorities

The proposed policy positions and priorities in the 2025 Legislative Program are as follows:

State-Level Priorities:

Goal 1: Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners

- **Climate Adaptation Strategy:** Support and influence the development and implementation of the state's various climate adaptation, resiliency, and biodiversity initiatives to incorporate District priorities, including the California Climate Adaptation Strategy, Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, California Air Resources Board (CARB) Scoping Plan, and Pathways to 30x30 Strategy.

Goal 2: Protect the positive environmental values of open space and agricultural lands

- **Ecologically Sensitive Vegetation Management:** Promote effective guidelines, streamlining, and funding for wildland fire fuel reduction efforts that minimize potential impacts to rare and endangered species and the spread of invasive species.
- **Permit Streamlining and Cutting the Green Tape:** Support efforts by the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to streamline permitting processes for environmental restoration and stewardship projects. This includes the extension of California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) program to include ongoing site maintenance work of existing facilities that serves to protect natural resource values.
- **Sustainable Patterns of Development:** Encourage state agencies that regulate community growth plans to focus new development in ways that prevent an increase in wildland fire hazards and protect landscape-scale ecosystems and their ability to adapt to climate change. Promote policies that encourage patterns of growth that do not further encroach into wildland and fire hazard areas.

Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision

- **Equitable Public Access:** Enhance funding resources that support expanding access to greenspace opportunities and a sense of belonging and inclusion for under-resourced communities and individuals with disabilities.

- **Multimodal and Public Access Infrastructure:** Prioritize multi-benefit active transportation modes that safely connect people with parks, open space and trails. Expand funding and resources for the District to pursue strategies to address parking and traffic congestion issues, manage visitation, increase greener modes of transportation, improve accessibility for users with limited mobility and provide new transit connections to communities, including expanding transit-to-trails programs, shuttles and ride hail programs.

Goal 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

- **General Manager Purchasing Authority:** Partner with East Bay Regional Park District to increase the general manager’s purchasing authority in light of increased inflation to maintain effective and timely project implementation and operations.
- **State Funding:** Pursue ongoing funding that benefits a wide range of open space priorities and promotes landscape-level climate resilience, staffing capacity, conservation workforce development and equitable access to nature, particularly in the Bay Area. This includes the expected [reauthorization](#) of the state’s [cap and trade program](#).
- **Workforce Development:** Support the strengthening and proliferation of land stewardship workforce development programs that expand employment opportunities and increase the diversity of applicants. This also supports the state’s [Outdoors for All Strategy](#) (#1.5.2: Explore bolstering California’s capacity to meet deferred maintenance needs through technical skill-building programs that ultimately lead to state employment opportunities).

Regional-Level Priorities:

Self-Permitting for Local Permits

Support efforts by the District and its partners enabled under PRC 5500 to streamline and/or establish exemptions for local permitting processes.

Plan Bay Area 2050

Monitor to ensure that the implementation of Plan Bay Area 2050’s environmental strategy, Expand Access to Parks and Open Space, continues to pursue urban growth boundaries, protect and manage high-value conservation and agricultural lands, and expand parks, trails and recreation facilities. In addition, monitor developments regarding subsequent revisions of Plan Bay Area (Plan Bay Area 2050+) to ensure the District’s interests are maintained.

Regional Funding

Monitor and engage with regional bodies pursuing funding sources that benefit the District’s mission.

Regional Collaboration

Participate in regional collaboration and coordination efforts that focus on land conservation, resource protection, and ecologically sensitive public access.

Active Transportation Programs

Promote funding for the construction of bicycle/pedestrian paths, installation of bike racks, pedestrian safety improvements (e.g., signalized street intersections, roadway crossings, etc.) and

other projects and programs (e.g., Vision Zero, Complete Streets, Safe Routes to Schools, etc.) that make multi-modal access to parks and open spaces, including walking and biking, easier, safer and more convenient.

Promote funding and support for natural surface recreational trails as a means for the public to access and enjoy natural landscapes, as well as the expansion of funding for transit options to access public open space, parks and trailheads.

Federal-Level Priorities:

While federal priorities may be specific to federal initiatives, the broader policy positions contained in the legislative program apply to all levels of government. In general, federal priorities complement the state priorities identified above.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommendations. In the future, staff will summarize the financial impact for individual legislative initiatives in reports to LFPAC and the Board.

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

This item was reviewed by LFPAC on November 5, 2024. The proposed 2025 Legislative Program under Board consideration incorporates LFPAC feedback.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. No additional notice is required.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, the General Manager and staff would proceed with implementing the 2025 Legislative Program. LFPAC and the Board will receive periodic updates on the status of the legislative priorities and policies throughout the year.

Attachments:

1. Proposed 2025 Legislative Session Program
2. Board Policy 1.11: Positions on Ballot Measures and Legislative Advocacy
3. FY25 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Responsible Department Head:
Lori Low, Public Affairs Manager

Prepared by:
Joshua Hugg, Governmental Affairs Program Manager, Public Affairs Department

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Legislative Program 2025

DRAFT

Adopted: XXXX



Contents

Introduction 4

 Advocacy of the District’s Interests..... 4

State Legislative Priorities..... 6

 Goal 1: Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners..... 6

 Goal 2: Protect the positive environmental values of open space and agricultural lands..... 6

 Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision..... 7

 Goal 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission..... 7

Legislative Policy Positions 8

 Goal 1: Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners:..... 8

 Goal 2: Protect the positive environmental values of open space and agricultural lands:..... 8

 Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision..... 10

 Goal 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission..... 11

2025 Regional Priorities..... 14

 Self-Permitting for Local Permits..... 14

 Plan Bay Area 2050 14

 Regional Funding..... 14

 Regional Collaboration..... 14

 Active Transportation Programs 14

2025 Federal Policy and Funding Priorities 15

Appendix A: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Strategic Plan for FY2024-25..... 16

 Goal 1 – Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners..... 16

 Goal 2 – Protect the positive environmental and biodiversity values of open space and agricultural lands 16

 Goal 3 – Connect people to open space and agricultural lands, a regional environmental protection vision..... 16

 Goal 4 – Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission 17

Appendix B: District County, State and Federal Delegation Maps 18

 County Delegation – San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties 19

 State Delegation - Senate..... 20

 State Delegation - Assembly 21

 Federal Delegation – House of Representatives 22

Appendix C: 2025 State Legislative Calendar 23

Appendix D: 2025 Federal Legislative Calendar 25

DRAFT

Introduction

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Mission:

To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

As part of the Coastside Protection Area Service Plan, a Coastside mission was adopted in 2004:

To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

To further these missions, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) annually reviews opportunities and challenges and establishes legislative priorities and policy statements to guide its advocacy activities at the regional, state and federal levels.

Advocacy of the District's Interests

While this document attempts to cover a wide variety of legislative issues that may impact the District, it is not comprehensive, complete or final. Throughout the state and federal legislative sessions, the District will review and act on various proposed policies and state or federal budget items. In instances where time is so short that neither the full Board, nor LFPAC, can be convened to consider a particular legislative position, the General Manager will take action and report back to the Board through Board Policy 1.11 utilizing appropriate due diligence and consideration of public sensitivity, which may include consultation with the Board President.

Per Section 2.0 of Board Policy 1.11, legislative advocacy is considered in the following manner:

Section 2.0: Local, State, and Federal Legislative Advocacy

- a. The Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) receives periodic updates throughout the year regarding the District's legislative program. When LFPAC determines that proposed legislation may affect District business, it may direct the General Manager to prepare a recommendation for consideration by the full Board or may direct the General Manager to take action to support or oppose the legislation without full Board approval when there is not adequate time to convene the full Board. In such cases, the General Manager or designee shall report to the Board any actions taken to support or oppose legislation at or before the next Board meeting.
- b. When time is so short that neither the full Board nor LFPAC can be convened to consider positions to support or oppose local, state or federal legislation, the General Manager is authorized to take a position on behalf of the District if the legislation:
 - i. Is related to the District's mission; AND

- ii. Would directly impact the District's business, such as project delivery, operations, finances, legal authority, or other District responsibilities; AND
- iii. The position being taken is consistent/inconsistent with existing District policy, past action, or the District's annual Strategic Plan
https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/Attachment_2_FY24_Strategic_Plan_Goals_and_Objectives.pdf; OR
- iv. The legislation carries other considerations that make it contrary to the District's interests.

In such instances, the General Manager or designee shall report to the Board any actions taken to support or oppose the legislation at or before the next Board meeting.

- c. Full Board action is required regarding legislation that is not clearly within the criteria listed above under Section 2.b. or guided by direction previously given by LFPAC.

All legislation on which the District takes a position will be closely tracked by the General Manager's Office (GMO) and reported to the Board of Directors. Public Affairs staff will be responsible for reporting similar information to key departments. Contracted state and federal legislative consultants will represent District interests based upon the policies contained in this Legislative Program. In addition to District position letters, Board members and District staff may be asked to testify before or meet with relevant legislators or members of the executive branch to discuss issues requiring heightened advocacy. If this is the case, District staff must first notify and/or confirm approval from the GMO to ensure that positions taken are consistent with the Board-approved Legislative Program.

State Legislative Priorities

The following are the legislative priorities for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District during the 2025 State Legislative Session. Annual priority-setting considers a combination of issues that relate directly to important District-led projects or initiatives, opportunities to support or oppose state legislative initiatives sponsored by others that affect the District's mission, and any issues that are identified by the Board as particularly significant. Funding measures are the most common of these priorities and are generally tied to the creation of new funding sources or the processes that prescribe the allocation of existing funding sources. The 2025 legislative priorities are listed and grouped below consistent with the Board's annual Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives (See Appendix A) to provide a clear connection to agency priorities:

Goal 1: Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners

- **Climate Adaptation Strategy:** Support and influence the development and implementation of the state's various climate adaptation, resiliency, and biodiversity initiatives to incorporate District priorities, including the California Climate Adaptation Strategy, Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, California Air Resources Board (CARB) Scoping Plan, and Pathways to 30x30 Strategy.

Goal 2: Protect the positive environmental values of open space and agricultural lands

- **Ecologically Sensitive Vegetation Management:** Promote effective guidelines, streamlining, and funding for wildland fire fuel reduction efforts that minimize potential impacts to rare and endangered species and the spread of invasive species.
- **Permit Streamlining and Cutting the Green Tape:** Support efforts by the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to streamline permitting processes for environmental restoration and stewardship projects. This includes the extension of California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) program to include ongoing site maintenance work of existing facilities that serves to protect natural resource values.

- **Sustainable Patterns of Development:** Encourage state agencies that regulate community growth plans to focus new development in ways that prevent an increase in wildland fire hazards and protect landscape-scale ecosystems and their ability to adapt to climate change. Promote policies that encourage patterns of growth that do not further encroach into wildland and wildfire hazard areas.

Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision

- **Equitable Public Access:** Enhance funding resources that support expanding access to greenspace opportunities and a sense of belonging and inclusion for under-resourced communities and individuals with disabilities.
- **Multimodal and Public Access Infrastructure:** Prioritize multi-benefit active transportation modes that safely connect people with parks, open space and trails. Expand funding and resources for the District to pursue strategies to address parking and traffic congestion issues, manage visitation, increase greener modes of transportation, improve accessibility for users with limited mobility and provide new transit connections to communities, including expanding transit-to-trails programs, shuttle and ride hail programs.

Goal 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

- **General Manager Purchasing Authority:** Partner with East Bay Regional Park District to increase the general manager's purchasing authority in light of increased inflation to maintain effective and timely project implementation and operations.
- **State Funding:** Pursue ongoing funding that benefits a wide range of open space priorities and promotes landscape-level climate resilience, staffing capacity, conservation workforce development and equitable access to nature, particularly in the Bay Area. This includes the expected [reauthorization](#) of the state's [cap and trade program](#).
- **Workforce Development:** Support the strengthening and proliferation of land stewardship workforce development programs that would expand employment opportunities and increase the diversity of applicants. This also supports the state's [Outdoors for All Strategy](#) (#1.5.2: Explore bolstering California's capacity to meet deferred maintenance needs through technical skill-building programs that ultimately lead to state employment opportunities)

Legislative Policy Positions

The ability of the District to deliver its mission and remain a sustainable organization can be impacted by legislation proposed at the local, state or federal level. To this end, proactive policy positions taken by the District on a variety of relevant issue areas help to ensure consistency in advocacy. District policy positions are grouped by Board-approved strategic plan goals. The District supports policy that:

Goal 1: Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners:

1. Promotes and enhances the ability to acquire open space and agricultural lands consistent with District policies and goals, as well as supports land protection and biodiversity goals set forth by Executive Order N-82-20, 2020. This order elevates the role of natural and working lands and the advancement of biodiversity conservation in the fight against climate change as an administration priority. It also commits California to the goal of conserving 30 percent of statewide lands and coastal waters by 2030.
2. Protects public open space and associated property rights, interests and easements.
3. Enhances or funds regional collaboration and coordination of conservation efforts.
4. Promotes urban infill and urban growth boundaries to prevent sprawl and increased pressures to develop open spaces and further encroach upon the wildland-urban interface, riparian areas, working lands and open space buffer areas.
5. Ensures that the zoning of permanently protected lands supports activities that further the District's mission (preservation, natural resource protection, public access and education, agriculture).
6. Expands and restores protected open space lands to enhance biodiversity, climate change resilience, and scenic, rural character.
7. Promotes the use of green infrastructure and natural solutions in promoting climate resiliency and combating the effects of climate change.

Goal 2: Protect the positive environmental values of open space and agricultural lands:

1. Ensures reasonable setback requirements that allow minimum defensible space clearances to be met by private property owners to prevent catastrophic fires that damage habitats and pose a high public safety hazard.
2. Furthers implementation of state greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals, such as Senate Bill 32 (Pavley, 2016), the Global Warming Solutions Act, that establishes a GHG emissions target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, and Assembly Bill 1279 (2022),

that establishes a target to reach statewide net carbon neutrality no later than 2045. Maintains an emphasis on reduction of emissions and nature-based sequestration over capture and storage technologies.

3. Furthers the implementation of Assembly Bill 1757 (Garcia, 2022), which recognizes the importance of natural and working lands for the purpose of carbon sequestration and storage and requires the California Natural Resources Agency to establish a range of targets for natural carbon sequestration for 2030, 2038, and 2045.
4. Supports effective and comprehensive Districtwide, regional and statewide measures that respond to sea level rise and other effects of climate change and enhance ecological and community-wide climate resilience.
5. Enhances or streamlines the integration of wildlife corridors into transportation infrastructure planning and construction projects; promotes the protection, installation, and maintenance of wildlife corridors and related infrastructure.
6. Promotes advance mitigation programs to enhance wildlife corridor networks.
7. Connects habitats that support a diverse array of native plants and animals.
8. Encourages public road management agencies to control invasive plant populations and incorporate safe pedestrian and wildlife crossings across transportation networks.
9. Eliminates the use of first- and second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides.
10. Supports increased knowledge, management and ultimately the eradication of Sudden Oak Death disease.
11. Provides permit exemptions and streamlining for natural resources protection and restoration projects and minor trail reroutes and small trail improvements that avoid sensitive resource areas, resolve erosion and sedimentation issues and improve the health of the watershed.
12. Supports maintaining state and federal lists of endangered species justified through conclusive biological evidence.
13. Helps efforts to protect, conserve, restore and enhance the natural resources of the District, its coast, and connecting waters for environmentally sustainable and prudent use by current and future generations.
14. Engages Native American communities in cultural and land management practices to restore and protect natural and cultural resources and enhance landscape resilience; supports existing and future Native American-led conservation and climate resilience initiatives.
15. Protects and restores watersheds, water quality, natural water courses, wetlands and hydrologic processes consistent with the District's Resource Management Policies.

16. Promotes expedited removal of select trees and brush by public agencies for fire protection, public safety and enhanced climate resilience, while protecting rare and endangered species and avoiding the spread of invasive species.
17. Removes barriers to carrying out prescribed fires and cultural burns as a natural component of a healthy ecosystem, such as prohibitive liability standards.
18. Supports working farms and ranches on public open space land that further conservation and climate resilience goals.
19. Supports the creation of and repairs to farm labor housing to foster farm operation sustainability that ultimately furthers conservation and climate resilience goals.
20. Incentivizes agricultural operations to invest in energy-efficient and water-efficient irrigation technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and water use.
21. Provides economic support for agricultural infrastructure maintenance and improvements.
22. Protects natural lands from the destruction caused by illegal marijuana grows, prohibits marijuana grows on public lands, and restores damaged habitats.
23. Supports efforts to create and make available more complete sets of data for managing natural and working lands.
24. Promotes access to peer-reviewed data and modeling of climate change impacts to California's natural and working landscapes and use of these resources to plan and prioritize work to enhance landscape resilience.

Goal 3: Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision

1. Helps expand educational opportunities for under-resourced and non-English speaking communities about the natural resources and benefits of open space and increases public appreciation for the environment.
2. Promotes volunteer involvement and engagement of diverse communities in ongoing conservation, restoration, enhancement and interpretation of the District's natural and cultural resources.
3. Engages children and parents in the enjoyment and appreciation of outdoor open spaces to inspire the next generation of conservation champions.
4. Funds and enables programs that hire youth to work in parks and open space and encourages them to consider careers in conservation.

5. Keeps preserves safe, clean, accessible and inviting for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.
6. Promotes awareness and equitable access to open space programs and activities that include tools and measures for addressing language, physical and transportation barriers.
7. Protects cultural resources located on natural open space and working lands.
8. Helps fund and streamline emergency repairs to District infrastructure, including trails and public access amenities.
9. Supports federal, state and regional programs that provide local mobility/multi-modal transportation alternatives for all residents.
10. Facilitates linkages between preserve trails and regional trails and ultimately to the places where people live and work.
11. Improves local transportation and promotes cleaner transportation options to enable better connectivity between communities and open space preserves.
12. Limits public use of drones (unmanned aerial vehicles) consistent with Board policies, ordinances or District permitting to preserve the tranquility of outdoor experiences, prevent disruptions and impacts to the natural resources and minimize wildfire risk.
13. Supports advances in broadband and telecommunications technology that provide cell phone reception and internet access in open space.
14. Supports electric vehicle charging infrastructure that facilitates the Governor's Executive Order N-79-20, which directs agencies to require that, by 2035, all new cars and passenger trucks sold in California be zero-emission vehicles. In addition, support the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) effort to convert all government fleets to 100% zero-emission by 2035.
15. Supports policies that facilitate meaningful engagement of tribal communities in stewardship actions and opportunities for incorporating cultural land practices.
16. Supports policies that facilitates improved access to parks and open spaces for people with disabilities

Goal 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

1. Preserves existing tax revenues and tax authority.
2. Lowers the voter threshold for locally imposed special taxes from two-thirds to 55%.
3. Preserves tax-exempt status for municipal bonds on a state and federal level.

4. Expands state and federal incentives that promote the issuance of green bonds.
5. Preserves and promotes managerial discretion in effective and productive recruiting, hiring, onboarding, professional development, firing and day-to-day oversight of staff at all levels.
6. Preserves and promotes open, transparent, accountable government administrative practices that enable efficient and timely delivery of public services, facilitate public involvement, and support effective and timely decision-making.
7. Maintains prevailing wage and workers compensation exemptions for volunteers.
8. Preserves and promotes streamlined, cost-effective, fair, and efficient contracting practices that give taxpayers the best value for their dollar and attracts greater contractor and vendor competition, particularly among local providers.
9. Enables contracting methods that aid greenhouse gas emission reductions and support the implementation of the Board-adopted Climate Action Plan.
10. Provides funding and funding flexibility, like block grants, to achieve mission-related goals, including, but not limited to:
 - a. District operations and infrastructure.
 - b. Integrated Pest Management and ecologically sensitive vegetation management, including approaches like conservation grazing.
 - c. Wildfire prevention and fuel reduction and prescribed fire implementation.
 - d. Research and action on climate change impacts, carbon sequestration and carbon storage on natural and working lands.
 - e. Programs that hire youth to work in parks and open space and encourages them to consider careers in conservation.
 - f. Environmental education partnerships and public outreach efforts at local, regional and state levels.
 - g. Complete improvements that meet the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and other accessibility standards in District preserves.
 - h. Protect prime and sustainable agricultural lands, including investments in agricultural-support infrastructure.
 - i. Funding for local partners to receive technical support for agriculture and natural resources enhancements.
 - j. Wildlife corridors and crossing infrastructure.
 - k. Provide low-intensity, ecologically sensitive public access opportunities.
 - l. Public interpretation of natural, cultural and historic resources.

- m. Public outreach and engagement planning of equitable public access opportunities for diverse communities.
11. Promotes closer collaboration and coordination between regulatory agencies to enhance permit processing efficiencies and reduce overall project costs.
 12. Improves and streamlines permitting, CEQA and NEPA review and compliance processes for emergency repairs, routine maintenance, habitat restoration, and public access projects.
 13. Builds organizational capacities of regulatory/resource agencies from whom the District needs permitting approvals for our projects
 14. Provides open space districts the authority to utilize a variety of contracting methods to construct projects, including design-build methodologies.
 15. Promotes implementation of and education about sustainable design and construction, including, but not limited to LEED buildings, stormwater treatment and runoff reduction, local (within 50-mile radius of a project) contractor/consultant hiring, construction material reuse/recycling, and use of green/energy efficient materials and equipment.
 16. Supports the District's diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

2025 Regional Priorities

Though there is a growing recognition of the importance of regional planning and coordination, local land use authority dominates California planning processes in both the built and natural environments.

In 2025, the District will focus on the following regional topics:

Self-Permitting for Local Permits

Support efforts by the District and its partners enabled under PRC 5500 to streamline and/or establish exemptions for local permitting processes.

Plan Bay Area 2050

Monitor to ensure that the implementation of Plan Bay Area 2050's environmental strategy, Expand Access to Parks and Open Space, continues to pursue urban growth boundaries, protect and manage high-value conservation and agricultural lands, and expand parks, trails and recreation facilities. In addition, monitor developments regarding subsequent revisions of Plan Bay Area ([Plan Bay Area 2050+](#)) to ensure the District's interests are maintained.

Regional Funding

Monitor and engage with regional bodies pursuing funding sources that benefit the District's mission.

Regional Collaboration

Participate in regional collaboration and coordination efforts that focus on land conservation, resource protection, and ecologically sensitive public access.

Active Transportation Programs

Promote funding for the construction of bicycle/pedestrian paths, installation of bike racks, pedestrian safety improvements (e.g., signalized street intersections, roadway crossings, etc.) and other projects and programs (e.g., Vision Zero, Complete Streets, Safe Routes to Schools, etc.) that make multi-modal access to parks and open spaces, including walking and biking easier, safer and more convenient.

Promote funding and support for natural surface recreational trails as a means for the public to access and enjoy natural landscapes, as well as the expansion of funding for transit options to access public open space, parks and trailheads.

2025 Federal Policy and Funding Priorities

Great uncertainty persists regarding the political composition of the federal legislature and presidency. Depending on the outcome, the ability to pursue certain federal priorities may be either enhanced or diminished. However, earlier funding legislation like the 2022 [Inflation Reduction Act](#) and the 2021 [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) should still provide funding opportunities. In general, federal priorities will complement the state priorities identified above. Participation in federal focus areas are considered on a case-by-case basis and subject to staff capacity.

DRAFT

Appendix A: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Strategic Plan for FY2024-25

Online at:

[https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/Attachment 2 FY24 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives.pdf](https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/Attachment%20FY24%20Strategic%20Plan%20Goals%20and%20Objectives.pdf)

Goal 1 – Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners

Objective 1 – Continue implementation of the District’s Vision Plan and communicate progress on projects through reporting results and building partner relationships

Objective 2 – Build and strengthen diverse partnerships to implement a collaborative and science-based approach to regional environmental protection

Objective 3 – Build and strengthen relationships with legislators and other elected officials to advocate environmental protection goals

Objective 4 – Preserve and connect open space and agricultural lands of local and regional significance

Goal 2 – Protect the positive environmental and biodiversity values of open space and agricultural lands

Objective 1 – Take a regional leadership role in promoting the benefits of open space

Objective 2 – Protect and restore the natural environment to preserve healthy natural systems and biodiversity

Objective 3 – Implement the Climate Action Plan, expand regional resiliency, and implement climate change adaptation strategies

Objective 4 – Work with fire agencies and surrounding communities to strengthen the prevention of, preparation for and response to wildland fires for enhanced ecosystem resiliency and public safety

Objective 5 – Support the viability of sustainable agriculture and protect the character of rural communities

Goal 3 – Connect people to open space and agricultural lands, a regional environmental protection vision

Objective 1 – Engage the public in realizing the benefits and responsibilities of a regional environmental protection vision to further the District’s achievements in protecting open space and agricultural lands

Objective 2 – Implement and sustain diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategies to build and strengthen partnerships, increase broad and inclusive public outreach and engagement, and instill DEI values across all levels of the organization

Objective 3 –Expand opportunities, including multimodal options, to equitably connect people to their public open space preserves in balance with the protection of natural resources

Objective 4 – Reflect the diverse communities we serve in the District’s visitors, staff, volunteers, and partners

Goal 4 – Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

Objective 1 – Provide the necessary resources, tools, training, and infrastructure, including technology upgrades and capacity building

Objective 2 – Update the financial and operational sustainability model to guide strategic growth and areas of focus to effectively and efficiently deliver Vision Plan projects and priority initiatives

Objective 3 – Maintain a state of readiness for potential disruptions and leverage new resiliency practices and procedures to improve business operations, public participation, and communications

Objective 4 – Remain financially sustainable by preparing for, pursuing, and cultivating discretionary funding opportunities and partnerships

Objective 5 – Ensure large operational and capital expenses, including land acquisitions, associated public access and land management costs, are evaluated within the long-term financial model and remain financially sustainable

Objective 6 – Continue to recruit, develop and retain talented staff to implement the District's mission and strengthen our organizational capacity

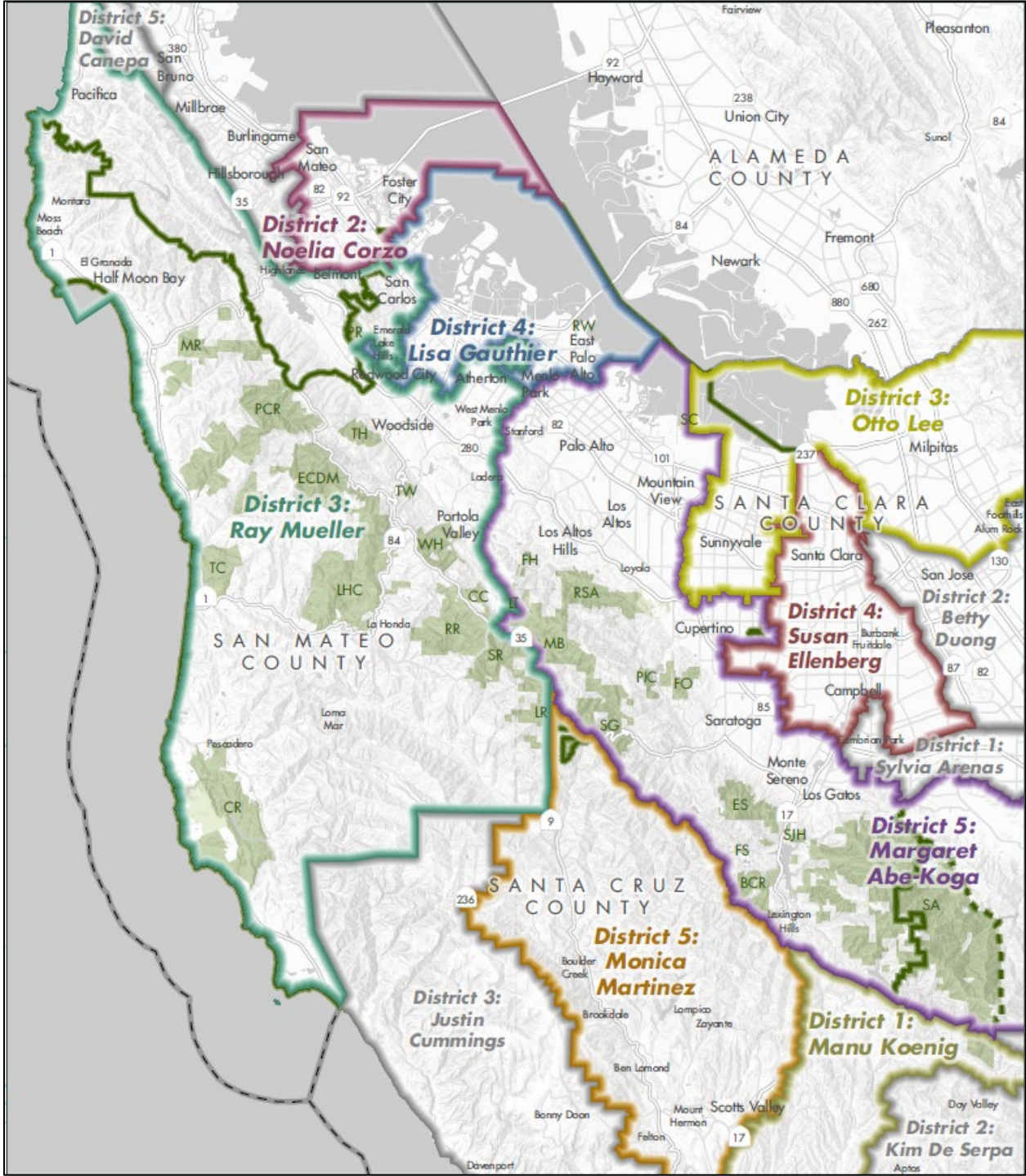
Appendix B: District County, State and Federal Delegation Maps

Within the 550-square mile boundary of the District, it overlaps with a variety of jurisdictions that comprise its legislative delegation. Seventeen cities reside within the District – eight in San Mateo County and nine in Santa Clara County. At the county level, the District intersects three counties, each with five board supervisors. The County of San Mateo also has three appointed “community councils” for their North Fair Oaks, Midcoast and Pescadero unincorporated areas. At the state level, the District intersects with four Senate and four Assembly districts. And then at the federal level, the District has four members of the House of Representatives and two United State Senators as part of its delegation. Maps for these legislative districts can be found below.

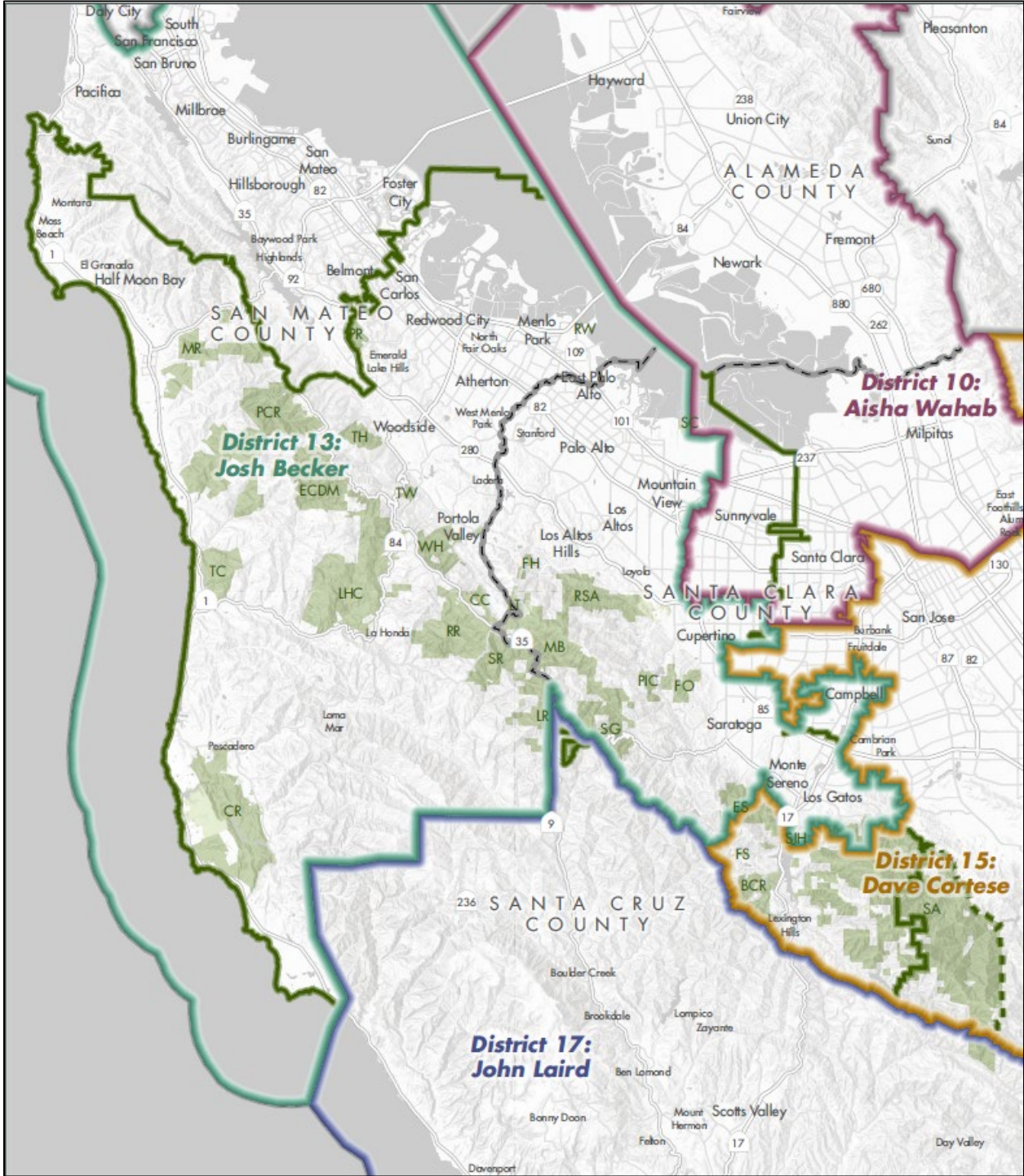
Based on the results of the November 5, 2024, general election, the maps below will be updated to reflect the latest delegation composition.

DRAFT

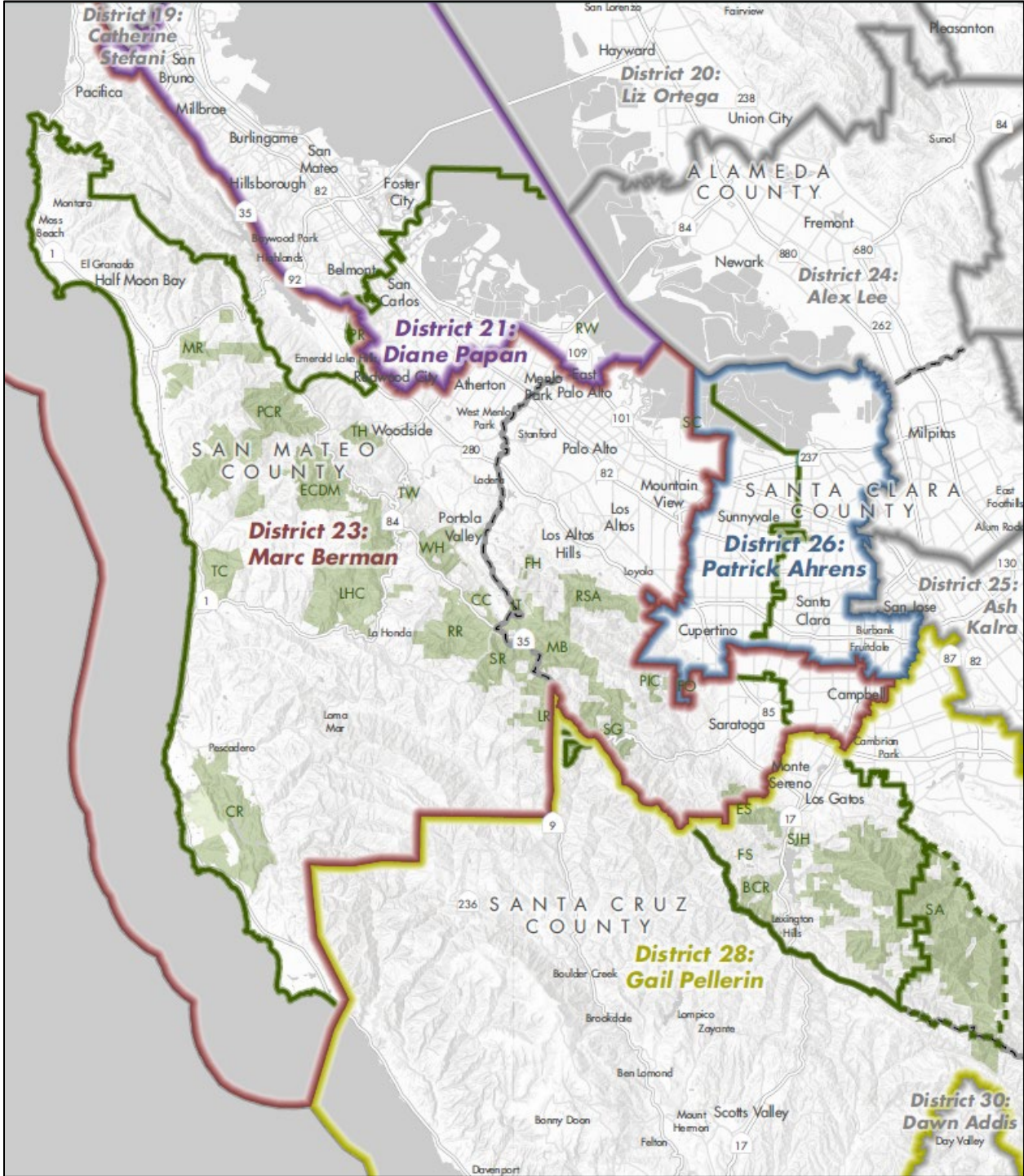
County Delegation – San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties



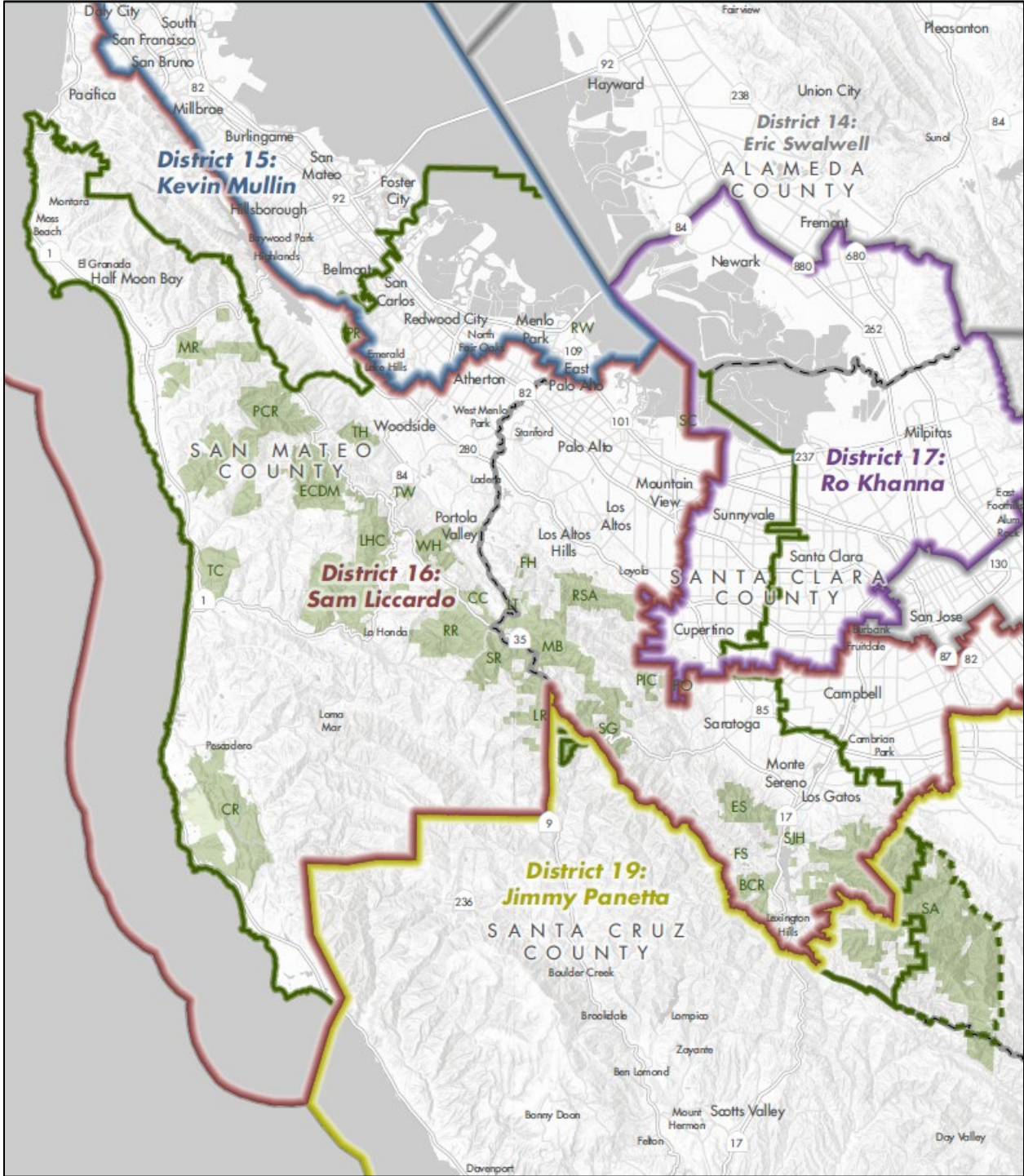
State Delegation - Senate



State Delegation - Assembly



Federal Delegation – House of Representatives



Appendix C: 2025 State Legislative Calendar

2025 TENTATIVE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR
 COMPILED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ASSEMBLY CHIEF CLERK AND THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE
 Revised 10-16-24

DEADLINES

JANUARY							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3	4
Wk. 1	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Wk. 2	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Wk. 3	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Wk. 4	26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
Wk. 4							1
Wk. 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Wk. 2	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Wk. 3	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Wk. 4	23	24	25	26	27	28	

MARCH							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
Wk. 4							1
Wk. 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Wk. 2	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Wk. 3	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Wk. 4	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Wk. 1	30	31					

APRIL							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
Wk. 1			1	2	3	4	5
Wk. 2	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Spring Recess	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Wk. 3	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Wk. 4	27	28	29	30			

MAY							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
Wk. 4					1	2	3
Wk. 1	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Wk. 2	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Wk. 3	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Wk. 4	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- Jan. 1** Statutes take effect (Art. IV, Sec. 8(c)).
- Jan. 6** Legislature reconvenes (J.R. 51(a)(1)).
- Jan. 10** Budget bill must be submitted by Governor (Art. IV, Sec. 12(a)).
- Jan. 20** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observed.
- Jan. 24** Last day to submit bill requests to the Office of Legislative Counsel.

- Feb. 17** Presidents' Day observed.
- Feb. 21** Last day for bills to be introduced (J.R. 61(a)(1), J.R. 54(a)).

- Mar. 31** Cesar Chavez Day observed.

- Apr. 10** Spring Recess begins upon adjournment (J.R. 51(a)(2)).
- Apr. 21** Legislature reconvenes from Spring Recess (J.R. 51(a)(2)).

- May 2** Last day for policy committees to hear and report to fiscal committees fiscal bills introduced in their house (J.R. 61(a)(2)).
- May 9** Last day for policy committees to hear and report to the Floor nonfiscal bills introduced in their house (J.R. 61(a)(3)).
- May 16** Last day for policy committees to meet prior to June 9 (J.R. 61(a)(4)).
- May 23** Last day for fiscal committees to hear and report to the Floor bills introduced in their house (J.R. 61(a)(5)).
- Last day for fiscal committees to meet prior to June 9 (J.R. 61(a)(6)).
- May 26** Memorial Day observed.

*Holiday schedule subject to final approval by Rules Committee.

2025 TENTATIVE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR
 COMPILED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ASSEMBLY CHIEF CLERK AND THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE
 Revised 10-16-24

JUNE							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
No Hrgs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wk 1	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Wk 2	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Wk 3	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Wk 4	29	30					

June 2-6 Floor Session only. No committee may meet for any purpose except Rules Committee, bills referred pursuant to A.R. 77.2, and Conference Committees (J.R. 61(a)(7)).

June 6 Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house (J.R. 61(a)(8)).

June 9 Committee meetings may resume (J.R. 61(a)(9)).

June 15 Budget bill must be passed by midnight (Art. IV, Sec. 12(c)(3)).

JULY							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
Wk 4			1	2	3	4	5
Wk 1	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Wk 2	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Summer Recess	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Summer Recess	27	28	29	30	31		

July 4 Independence Day observed.

July 18 Last day for **policy committees** to hear and report bills (J.R. 61(a)(10)).

Summer Recess begins upon adjournment, provided Budget Bill has been passed (J.R. 51(a)(3)).

AUGUST							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
Summer Recess						1	2
Summer Recess	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Summer Recess	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Wk 3	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Wk 4	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
No Hrgs.	31						

Aug. 18 Legislature reconvenes from **Summer Recess** (J.R. 51(a)(3)).

Aug. 29 Last day for **fiscal committees** to hear and report bills to the Floor (J.R. 61(a)(11)).

SEPTEMBER							
	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
No Hrgs.		1	2	3	4	5	6
No Hrgs.	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Interim Recess	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Interim Recess	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Interim Recess	28	29	30				

Sept. 1 Labor Day observed.

Sept. 2-12 Floor session only. No committees may meet for any purpose, except Rules Committee, bills referred pursuant to Assembly Rule 77.2, and Conference Committees (J.R. 61(a)(12)).

Sept. 5 Last day to **amend** on the Floor (J.R. 61(a)(13)).

Sept. 12 Last day for each house to pass bills. (J.R. 61(a)(14)).

Interim Recess begins upon adjournment (J.R. 51(a)(4)).

IMPORTANT DATES OCCURRING DURING FINAL RECESS

- 2025**
 Oct 12 Last day for Governor to sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature before Sept. 12 and in the Governor's possession on or after Sept. 12 (Art. IV, Sec. 10(b)(1)).
- 2026**
 Jan. 1 Statutes take effect (Art. IV, Sec. 8(c)).
 Jan. 5 Legislature reconvenes (J.R. 51(a)(4)).

*Holiday schedule subject to final approval by Rules Committee.

Appendix D: 2025 Federal Legislative Calendar

To be added when available

DRAFT

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Board Policy Manual

Positions on Ballot Measures and Legislative Advocacy	Policy 1.11 Chapter 1 – Administration and Government
Effective Date: 4/13/16	Revised Date: N/A
Prior Versions: N/A	

Purpose

To establish a policy governing positions on local and state ballot measures/propositions and state and federal legislative advocacy. It is intended to cover all matters before the Legislature and the voters.

Definitions

For the purposes of the *Positions on Ballot Measures and Legislative Advocacy* policy, the following terms and definitions shall be used:

Measure – may be included on a municipal, county, or district ballot and includes ordinances, initiatives, referenda, advisory measures, issuance or refunding of bonds, city or county charter amendments, or any other measure or proposition a legislative body may submit to the voters within the body’s jurisdiction.

Ballot Proposition – can be a referendum or an initiative measure that is submitted to the electorate for a direct decision or direct vote. Propositions may be placed on the ballot by the California State Legislature or by a qualifying petition signed by registered voters.

Initiative – power of the electors to propose legislation, and to adopt or reject them. Any proposed ordinance may be submitted to the legislative body by means of a petition.

Referendum – applies to the process for repealing newly enacted legislation. Within specified time limits, the electors may file a petition protesting the adoption of that legislation.

Local Legislation – typically ordinances, which are the laws of a city, charter, or district, often having the force of law, but only within the local jurisdiction.

State or Federal Legislation – bills or proposed legislation under consideration by the legislature at the state or federal level.

Policy

1. Positions on Matters Before the Voters
 - a. From time to time the Board of Directors may be asked or may desire to take a position on local or state measures. The Board may consider taking a position on the measure/proposition if the measure/proposition:
 - i. Would directly impact the District's finances, responsibilities, legal authority, or operations; AND
 - ii. Is in line with or inconsistent with the District's mission and/or commitment to preserve open space within its boundaries and sphere of influence.

The Board, by majority vote, may direct the General Manager to research the measure/proposition and return to the Board at a future meeting with information and a General Manager recommendation. At that time, the Board may vote to take a position on a measure/proposition.
 - b. Measures/propositions determined to not impact District business may nonetheless be analyzed by the General Manager when directed by a majority vote of the Board, of which the analysis report would include possible alternatives for Board action, but no position recommendation.

2. Local, State, and Federal Legislative Advocacy
 - a. The Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) receives periodic updates regarding the District's legislative program. When LFPAC determines that proposed legislation may affect District business, it may direct the General Manager to prepare a recommendation for consideration by the full Board or where there is not adequate time to convene the full Board, may direct the General Manager to take action to support or oppose the legislation without full Board approval. In such cases, the General Manager or designee shall report to the Board any actions taken to support or oppose legislation at or before the next Board meeting.
 - b. When time is so short that neither the full Board nor LFPAC can be convened to consider positions to support or oppose local, state or federal legislation, the General Manager is authorized to take a position on behalf of the District if the legislation:
 - i. Is related to the District's mission; AND
 - ii. Would directly impact the District's business, such as project delivery, operations, finances, legal authority, or other District responsibilities; AND
 - iii. The position being taken is consistent/inconsistent with existing District policy, past action, or District Strategic Plan; OR
 - iv. The legislation carries other considerations that make it contrary to the District's interests.

In such instances, the General Manager or designee shall report to the Board any actions taken to support or oppose the legislation at or before the next Board meeting.
 - c. Full Board action is required regarding legislation that is not clearly within the criteria listed above under Section 2.b. or guided by direction previously given by LFPAC.

3. Full Board action is required to support or oppose any type of grassroots advocacy action, such as social, political, or economic movements, that are not legislation.
4. Board members representing the District in their official capacity on regional or other bodies may, at his or her discretion, take actions based on the principles above consistent with previously approved Board positions and policies.
5. This policy is not intended to limit the prerogative of individual Board members from expressing their individual support for or opposition to any local ballot measure, State proposition, State or Federal legislation, or grassroots advocacy actions. However, in doing so, the member should clearly state they are speaking for themselves, and not in an official capacity on behalf of the Board or the District. Individual Board Members who take a position in support or opposition to ballot measure or legislation for which the Board has not previously taken a position are encouraged as a professional courtesy to include the language *for identification purposes only* parenthetically following their signature referencing their position on the Board.



FY25 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Promote, establish, and implement a regional environmental protection vision with partners

Objective 1 – Continue implementation of the District’s Vision Plan and communicate progress on projects through reporting results and building partner relationships

Objective 2 – Build and strengthen diverse partnerships to implement a collaborative and science-based approach to regional environmental protection

Objective 3 – Take a leadership role in advocating for environmental protection goals by building and strengthening relationships with legislators and other elected officials

Objective 4 – Preserve and connect open space and agricultural lands of local and regional significance

Goal 2 – Protect the positive environmental and biodiversity values of open space and agricultural lands

Objective 1 – Take a regional leadership role in promoting the benefits of open space

Objective 2 – Protect and restore the natural environment and implement wildlife corridors to preserve healthy natural systems and biodiversity

Objective 3 – Lead by example to reduce the impacts of climate change: implement the Climate Action Plan to reduce operational emissions, expand regional landscape resiliency through partnerships, protect the capacity for long-term carbon storage of open space lands, and pursue climate change adaptation strategies to protect viable populations of local native species

Objective 4 – Work with fire agencies and surrounding communities to strengthen the prevention of, preparation for and response to wildland fires for enhanced ecosystem resiliency and public safety

Objective 5 – Support the viability of sustainable agriculture and protect the character of rural communities

Goal 3 – Connect people to open space and agricultural lands, and a regional environmental protection vision

Objective 1 – Engage the public in realizing the benefits and responsibilities of a regional environmental protection vision to further the District’s achievements in protecting open space and agricultural lands

Objective 2 – Implement diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategies to build and strengthen partnerships, increase broad and inclusive public outreach and engagement, engage tribal groups in the District’s work, and instill DEI values across all levels of the organization

Objective 3 – Expand opportunities, including multimodal options, to equitably connect people to their public open space preserves and enhance the visitor experience in balance with the protection of natural resources

Objective 4 – Develop strategies to reflect the diverse communities we serve in the District’s visitors, staff, volunteers, and partners.

Goal 4 – Strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission

Objective 1 – Provide the necessary resources, tools, training, staff facilities, and infrastructure, including technology upgrades and capacity building

Objective 2 – Effectively and efficiently deliver Vision Plan projects and priority initiatives by implementing recommendations in the updated 2023 financial and operational sustainability model to guide operational growth and areas of focus

Objective 3 – Maintain a state of readiness for potential disruptions and leverage new resiliency practices and procedures to improve business operations, public participation, and communications

Objective 4 – Remain financially sustainable by preparing for, pursuing, and ensuring discretionary funding opportunities and partnerships

Objective 5 – Ensure large operational and capital expenses, including land acquisitions, associated public access and land management costs, are evaluated within the long-term financial model and remain financially sustainable

Objective 6 – Ensure the District remains competitive in the labor market and able to recruit, develop, and retain diverse and talented staff to implement the mission. Pursue opportunities to enhance professional development training and career ladders to strengthen our organizational capacity and succession planning efforts