

OPEN SPACE TASK FORCE STAFF REPORT



DATE: February 13, 2012
TO: Open Space Task Force
FROM: Debbie Chamberlain, Division Manager, Planning Services
SUBJECT: Identification of Properties for Preservation

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Provide direction to staff.

DISCUSSION:

The primary charge of the Task Force is to “establish priorities for open space preservation contiguous to the City of San Ramon.” The General Plan 2030 provides guidance that the evaluation of properties for open space preservation should be based on an evaluation of

- Biological or ecological significance
- Historical significance
- Visual quality, including preservation of significant ridgelines, viewsheds, and scenic vistas
- Presence of significant waterways and associated riparian habitat
- Recreation opportunities (e.g., hiking, photography, nature study, bicycling, horseback riding, bird watching, etc.)

While this is not an exhaustive list, it provides a framework for the Task Force discussion and ultimately recommendation to the Parks and Communities Services Commission (PCS) and City Council. On January 9 and February 13, 2012 staff provided an overview of properties that have been preserved as open space through the approval of development applications at no cost to the City and noted that there may be limited opportunities to acquire open space within San Ramon city limits. Following the presentation at the January 9, 2012 meeting, the Task Force focused their discussion on four (4) properties within the Westside area; Laborer’s Camp, upper Gelderman, Wiedemann and Norris Canyon Road area properties.

The maps below depict each property/area and identify the acreage, if it is within the City Urban Growth Boundary or County Urban Limit Line, or both, Jurisdiction and General Plan 2030 and Westside Specific Plan land use designation.

Jurisdictional Boundaries

At the January 9, 2012 meeting the Task Force requested an explanation of the various jurisdictional boundaries and their spatial relationship. Simply, a political boundary is a boundary that limits a jurisdiction's authority over land use decisions, with each boundary providing a city with greater assurance as to what lands are under their control.

The four boundaries are: Planning Area, Sphere of Influence, Urban Growth Boundary/Urban Limit Line and City Limits.

Planning Area

The area which, in a planning agency's judgment, bears relation to a city or county's planning needs. This area may extend outside the city or county's boundaries. The planning area is established as part of the preparation of a general plan or amendment for a city or county. A city has no land use authority if lands are solely located within this boundary.

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

A SOI is the area representing the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). A County LAFCo is an independent agency that is run by a commission that is separate and distinct from the County Board of Supervisors. Its principal function is to establish responsibilities for municipal and other services. A LAFCo has no functional relationship to planning and is not coordinated with County land use planning. SOI's are intended to determine which government agencies can provide services in the most efficient way for the residents and property within a given area. A city has no land use authority if lands are solely located within this boundary.

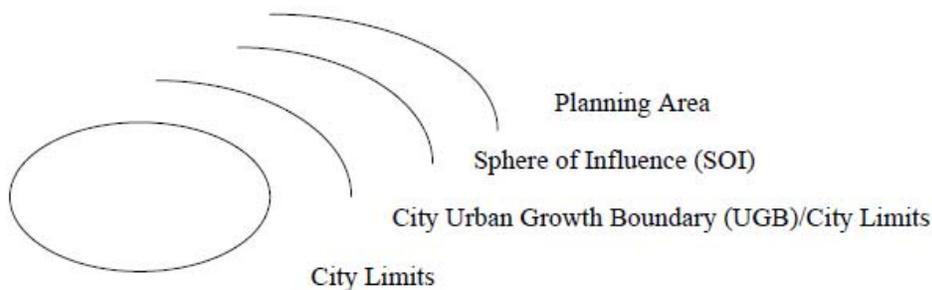
Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)/Urban Limit Line (ULL)

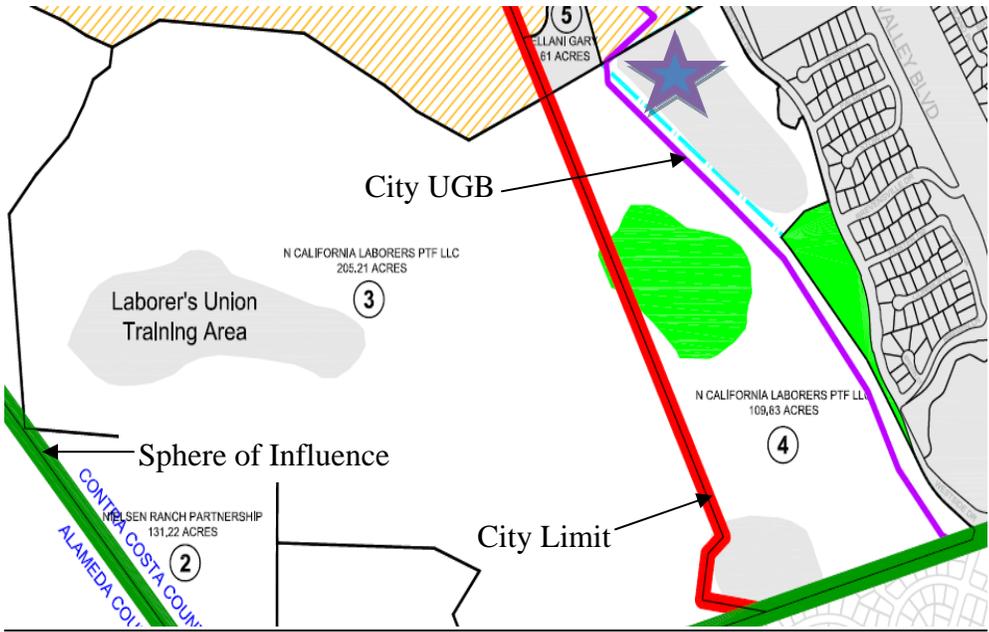
The primary purpose of the UGB/ULL is to limit the extent to which urban development and services are provided and to serve as a tool to protect scenic and natural resources, preserve open space, encourage infill development, and encourage the efficient development of municipal services such as sewer and water for a specific period of time. A city may have land use authority if lands are solely located within this boundary.

City Limit

In general, a city limit is the limits of the area occupied by the city or town. This boundary provides a city with ultimate control over land use decisions.

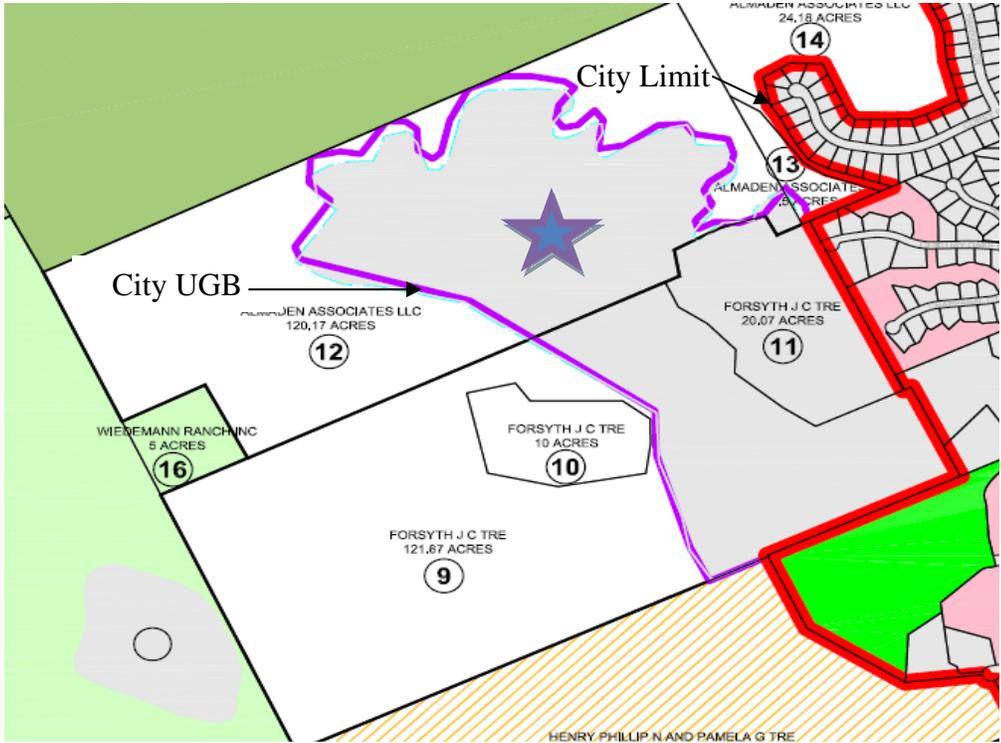
Spatial Relationship of Jurisdictional Boundaries





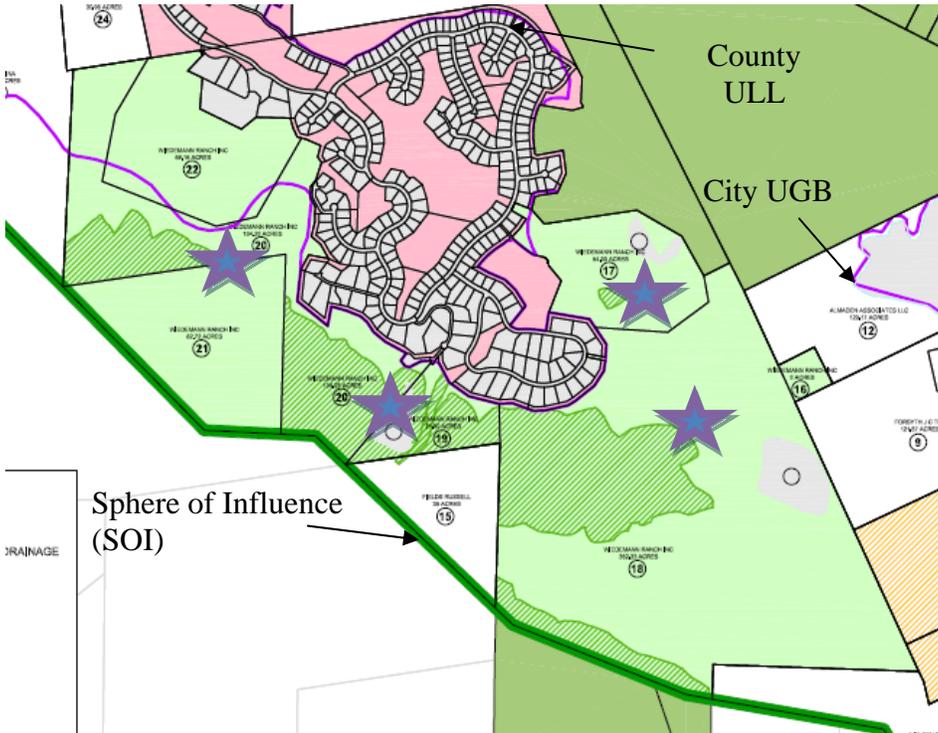
- Property Characteristics**
- 7.6- acres (grey area)
 - Within City UGB
 - Jurisdiction - San Ramon
 - San Ramon General Plan 2030 Designation Hillside Residential

Gelderman Property



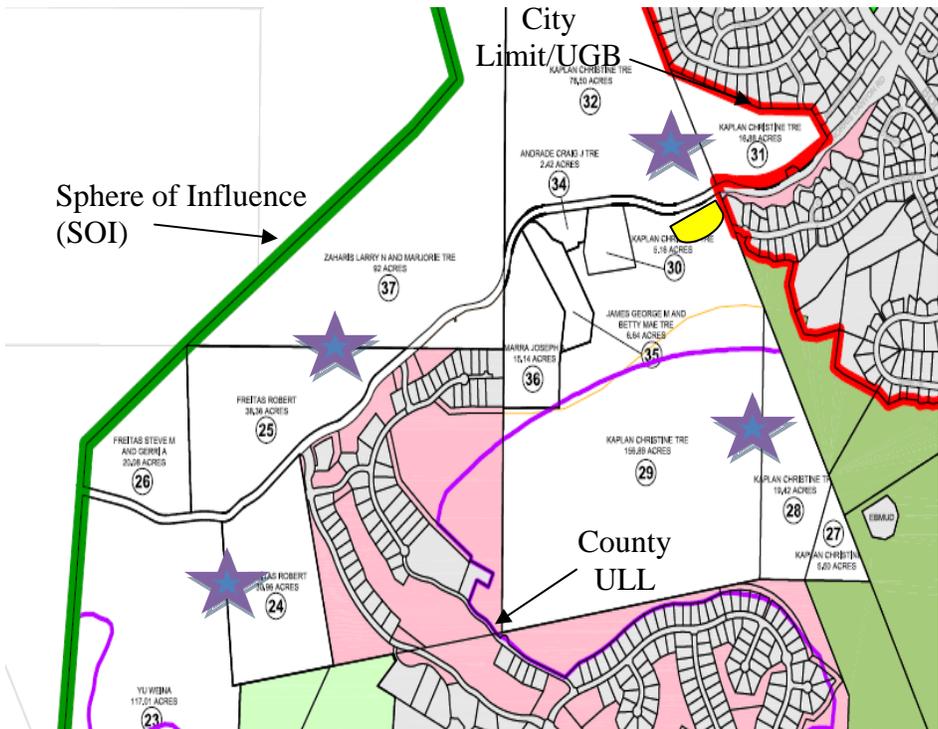
- Property Characteristics**
- 105- acres (grey area)
 - Within City UGB
 - Within County ULL
 - Jurisdiction - Contra Costa County
 - San Ramon General Plan 2030 Designation Hillside Residential

Wiedemann Property



- Property Characteristics
- 726 - acres outside (excluding NC Estates)
 - Outside City UGB
 - Within County ULL
 - Within City SOI
 - Jurisdiction Contra Costa County
 - San Ramon General Plan 2030
 - Westside SP Designation - Open Space

Norris Canyon Road Area Properties



- Property Characteristics
- 612 - acres (excluding NC Estates)
 - Outside City UGB
 - Inside County ULL
 - Within City SOI
 - Jurisdiction Contra Costa County
 - San Ramon General Plan 2030 – Open Space & Single Family Low Density (up to 3 du/ac) – shown in yellow
 - Westside SP Designation - Open Space & Residential Estates (up to 3 du/ac) – shown in yellow.

Staff would encourage the Task Force to identify two to three properties of interest and over the course of

the next few months staff will be inviting those property owners to discuss future plans for their properties. Finally, representatives from the East Bay Regional Park District and local land trust have been invited to future meetings to discuss their approach to acquiring open space and long term maintenance.