

# 1. Introduction and Framework

This document is the Land Use Plan component of the City of Half Moon Bay's Local Coastal Program. It was comprehensively updated in 2020 and contains the primary policies governing land use and development within the city limits.

This chapter introduces the updated Land Use Plan. It includes an overview of the Land Use Plan's regulatory framework, organization, relationship to other City plans and regulations, and administration. The chapter lays out the primary land use issues for Half Moon Bay, and summarizes existing land use conditions and trends, as well as changed circumstances since the Land Use Plan was first certified. The chapter further acknowledges the planning priorities stemming from the extended community engagement process that was conducted with oversight by a community advisory committee, the Planning Commission, and City Council. It concludes with foundational policies for the Land Use Plan.

## Land Use Plan Framework

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### **CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT**

The California Coastal Act of 1976 requires every coastal city and county to have a Local Coastal Program (LCP) to plan for and regulate land use in the coastal zone. LCPs implement Coastal Act policies within local jurisdictions. LCPs contain land use policies, programs, maps and implementing ordinances. The California Coastal Commission reviews LCPs for compliance with the Coastal Act. Once an LCP is certified by the Commission, the local government is delegated the authority to issue coastal development permits consistent with its LCP.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the LCP is to locally implement the Coastal Act and the State's overarching goals for the coastal zone, which are to:

- (a) Protect, maintain, and, where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources.
- (b) Assure orderly, balanced utilization and conservation of coastal zone resources taking into account the social and economic needs of the people of the state.
- (c) Maximize public access to and along the coast and maximize public recreational opportunities in the coastal zone consistent with sound resources conservation principles and constitutionally protected rights of private property owners.

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<sup>1</sup> California Public Resources Code (PRC) 30001 et seq.; PRC 30500.

- (d) Assure priority for coastal-dependent and coastal-related development over other development on the coast.
- (e) Encourage state and local initiatives and cooperation in preparing procedures to implement coordinated planning and development for mutually beneficial uses, including educational uses, in the coastal zone.<sup>2</sup>

**BASED ON THE CHAPTER 3 POLICIES OF THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT SECTIONS 30200-30265, COASTAL RESOURCES CAN INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:**

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

COASTAL WATER BODIES (E.G. WETLANDS, ESTUARIES, LAKES, ETC.) AND THEIR RELATED UPLANDS

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE HABITAT AREAS, INCLUDING RARE HABITATS, WILDLIFE CORRIDORS, AND OTHER AREAS THAT ARE ESPECIALLY VALUABLE BECAUSE OF THEIR SPECIAL NATURE OR ROLE IN AN ECOSYSTEM

GROUND WATER RESOURCES

MARINE RESOURCES

NATIVE TREES

NATURAL LANDFORMS

PUBLIC ACCESS AND PUBLIC ACCESS FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

RECREATION AREAS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES (INCLUDING RECREATIONAL WATERORIENTED ACTIVITIES)

SCENIC PUBLIC VIEWS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

SHORELINE PROCESSES/SAND SUPPLY & TRANSPORT

SPECIAL COMMUNITIES

TIMBERLANDS & SOILS

VISITOR-SERVING USES

WATERCOURSES (E.G., RIVERS, STREAMS, AND CREEKS, ETC.) AND THEIR RELATED CORRIDORS AND UPLANDS

WETLANDS

*Source: Agriculture in the Coastal Zone: An Informational Guide for the Permitting of Agricultural Development, Ca Coastal Commission, Sept. 29, 2017, Page 12*

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<sup>2</sup> CA PRC 30001.5

An LCP must include a Land Use Plan and an Implementation Plan. The Land Use Plan specifies the allowable kinds, locations, and intensities of development in the jurisdiction's coastal zone, and the resource protection and development policies necessary to meet the requirements of the Coastal Act. These policies include requirements to protect wetlands, riparian and other sensitive coastal resources; protect and maximize public access to and along the shoreline; concentrate new development in existing developed areas and assure adequate public services for new growth; protect agricultural lands, scenic landscapes and cultural resources; manage environmental hazards; and provide for certain priority coastal land uses, such as visitor-serving and coastal-dependent development. The Implementation Plan must include zoning, development standards and permitting procedures consistent with and adequate to carry out the Land Use Plan for any new development located above the mean high tide.<sup>3</sup> The Coastal Commission retains permitting jurisdiction below the mean high tide and on public trust lands, and has appellate oversight of locally-issued coastal development permits in specific geographic areas and over major public works or energy projects that may be permitted by a local jurisdiction pursuant to its LCP. Specific geographic areas in the appeals jurisdiction include land between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea or within 300 feet of the inland extent of any beach or the mean high tide line, whichever is the greater distance; lands within 100 feet of any wetland, estuary, or stream; and lands within 300 feet of the top of the seaward face of any coastal bluff.<sup>4</sup>

The City of Half Moon Bay lies entirely within the coastal zone (Figure 1-1) and is therefore subject to the California Coastal Act. The Coastal Commission first approved the City's Land Use Plan in 1985. It was updated in 1993 and effectively certified with the complete LCP when the Commission approved the Implementation Plan in 1996. Hereinafter referred to as the "1996 Land Use Plan," the City's first certified Land Use Plan established the extent and distribution of intended land uses based on the conditions at that time. The 1996 Land Use Plan included land use designations and policies specifying the allowable types, locations and intensities of development in the city, consistent with the Coastal Act. The plan sought to meet the social and economic needs of Half Moon Bay residents while achieving the mandates of the Coastal Act through coastal resource protection and development policies that addressed coastal access and recreation, environmentally sensitive habitat areas and water resources, coastal hazards, archaeological and paleontological resources, visual resources, agriculture, development, and public works.

The Implementation Plan included a revised zoning code and map, subdivision code, and other programs and actions necessary to implement the various provisions of the 1996 Land Use Plan.<sup>5</sup> Since certification, both the 1996 Land Use Plan and the associated Implementation Plan of the LCP have been amended numerous times, mostly to refine project-specific land use and zoning designations or add new procedures. The City has

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<sup>3</sup> CA PRC 30108.5; 30512, 30513.

<sup>4</sup> CA PRC 30603.

<sup>5</sup> City of Half Moon Bay Titles 18 (zoning) and 17 (subdivisions). See, also, California Coastal Commission, *Approval with Modifications of City Half Moon Bay LCP Proposed Implementation Plan*, December 13, 1995, <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/1995/12/W14c-12-1995.pdf>.

issued well over one thousand coastal development permits since LCP certification. Amendments to the LCP made between 1996 and 2020 as well as appeals of City actions made to the Coastal Commission are summarized in Appendix D.

### **COASTAL ZONE PRIORITY USES**

Coastal Act policies prioritize coastal-dependent and coastal-related development over other development on the coast. With respect to private lands suitable for development, priority uses relevant to Half Moon Bay include commercial recreational facilities and other uses supportive of coastal tourism such as restaurants, retail, and accommodations geared toward visitors. Lower-cost visitor-serving uses, especially overnight room rentals, are encouraged. Coastal-dependent, visitor-serving, and recreational uses, including no-cost uses such as regional public coastal recreation, are addressed further in Chapter 5. Coastal Access and Recreation. Coastal Act Priority Uses take priority over most residential, general industrial, or general commercial development under the Coastal Act; however, Coastal Act Priority Uses are not prioritized over agriculture or coastal-dependent industry. Community interest in environmental resource and agricultural preservation are consistent with Coastal Act priorities.

While Coastal Act Priority Uses provide many benefits to local residents, visitor-serving facilities such as restaurants, hotels, and retail are generally considered to be service industry businesses. These businesses provide employment opportunities for local residents, but are typically set at lower wages. Combined with high housing prices on the coast, it has become difficult for local residents to support themselves with local jobs. In order to provide housing affordable to the local workforce and maximize opportunities for people of all income levels to access and live on the coast, this LCP establishes affordable housing as a Local Priority Use and introduces a Workforce Housing Overlay land use designation; which are Coastal Act Priority Uses when specifically associated with agricultural uses, as is all farmworker housing.

This Land Use Plan comprises the City's reexamined and updated policy approach for carrying out the Coastal Act in a manner that addresses changed conditions since certification of the 1996 Land Use Plan. The updated Land Use Plan reflects current conditions and community priorities, and anticipates future needs with a new planning horizon of 2040. The foundational considerations for this update are presented later in this chapter. Comprehensive updates to the Implementation Plan were incorporated with the Land Use Plan update to ensure that the zoning regulations, maps, subdivision code, and other applicable provisions are consistent with the updated Land Use Plan and the Coastal Act.

### **REGIONAL SETTING AND PLANNING AREA**

Half Moon Bay is situated along the San Mateo County coastline approximately 23 miles south of downtown San Francisco and at the edge of the Bay Area region (Figure 1-1). It is connected to Pacifica and San Francisco to the north and to Santa Cruz to the south by Highway 1, and is connected to San Mateo, the Peninsula, and the East Bay to the east by Highway 92. As one of the earliest settlements in San Mateo County, Half Moon Bay has a

traditional downtown and unique agricultural heritage. The city is a popular recreational destination due to its plentiful beaches and parks and its scenic setting on the Pacific Ocean with a backdrop of open bluffs and forested hills.

The Planning Area for the City's LCP extends approximately six miles along the Pacific coast and encompasses approximately 4,267 acres (Figure 1-2). It includes the entire City of Half Moon Bay as well as some unincorporated land along the Highway 92 corridor east of the City, nurseries and agricultural land located directly east of Highway 1 and north of Miramontes Point Road, and the Moonridge neighborhood of affordable farm labor housing on the south side of Miramontes Point Road. These unincorporated areas are governed by the County of San Mateo but are included in the Planning Area for consideration because they are directly related to planning concerns in Half Moon Bay.

Beyond the Planning Area, Half Moon Bay's "sphere of influence" extends into the unincorporated communities of El Granada, Miramar, Princeton, Moss Beach, and Montara (Figure 1-1). The purpose of the sphere of influence is to ensure the provision of efficient services while discouraging urban sprawl and conversion of agricultural and open space lands by preventing overlapping jurisdictions and duplication of services. Half Moon Bay's sphere of influence area is similar to the San Mateo County Midcoast LCP planning area and relies on many shared services, such as Highway 1 and the Cabrillo Unified School District, as well as similar services such as the municipal water and sewer providers.

The City's Planning Area interfaces with San Mateo County in other ways as well. The County area beyond City limits has a direct impact on drainage, circulation, and habitat concerns in Half Moon Bay as it shares the larger San Mateo Coastal Hydrologic Area, limited highway system, and endemic habitat for many sensitive species. The planning and conservation efforts of San Mateo County can affect that of Half Moon Bay, and vice versa. As such, this Plan has been coordinated with the efforts of the San Mateo County LCP to promote consistency and maximize coastal resource protection.

FIGURE 1-1: REGIONAL SETTING

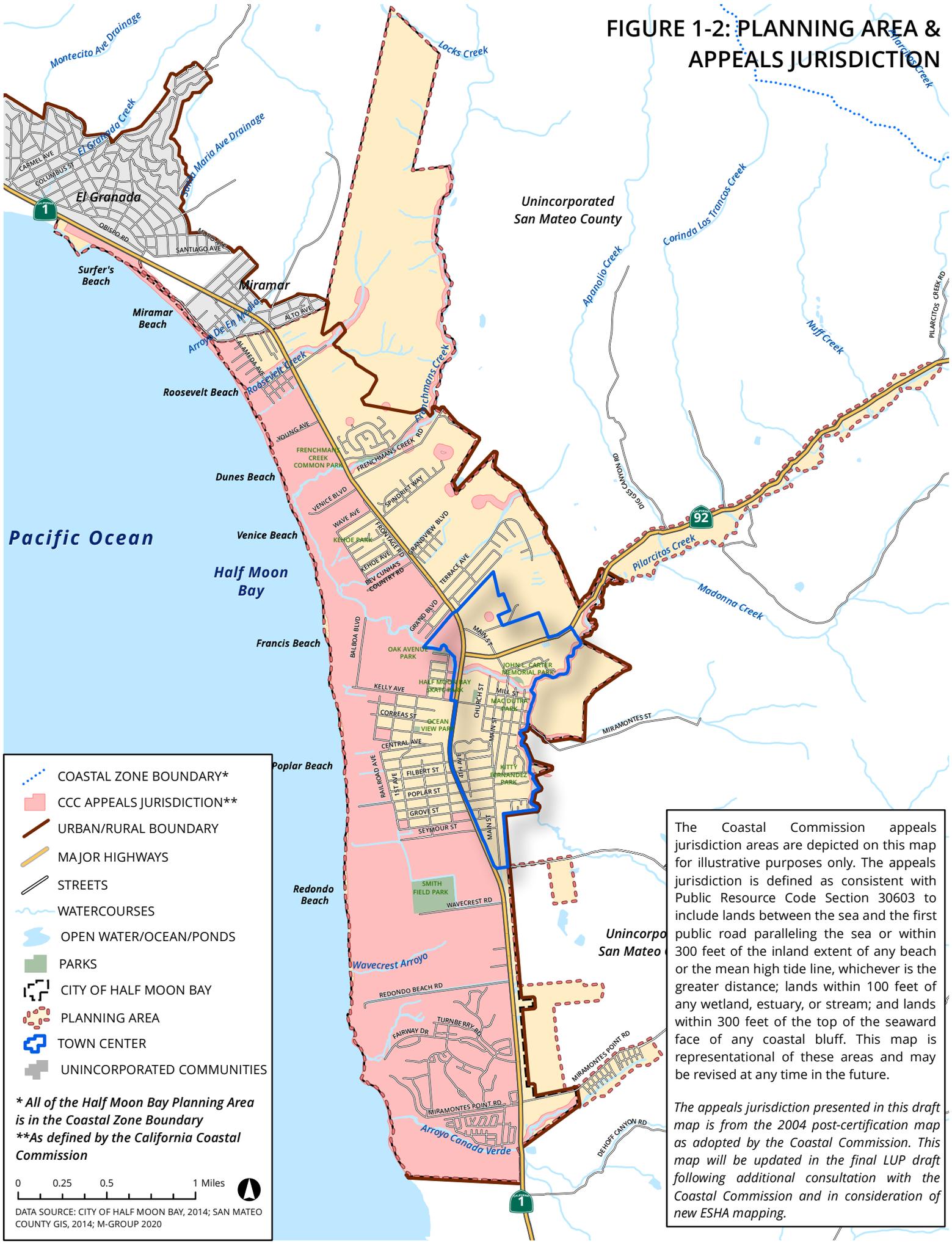


-  FREEWAYS
-  MAJOR HIGHWAYS
-  RAIL LINE
-  CALTRAIN STATIONS
-  BART STATIONS
-  COASTAL ZONE BOUNDARY
-  OPEN WATER/OCEAN/PONDS
-  CITY OF HALF MOON BAY
-  PLANNING AREA
-  SPHERE OF INFLUENCE (SOI)
-  COUNTY BOUNDARY LINES
-  URBANIZED AREAS
-  OPEN SPACE AREAS

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles 

DATA SOURCE: CITY OF HALF MOON BAY, 2014; SAN MATEO COUNTY GIS, 2014; M-GROUP 2019

**FIGURE 1-2: PLANNING AREA & APPEALS JURISDICTION**



- COASTAL ZONE BOUNDARY\*
- CCC APPEALS JURISDICTION\*\*
- URBAN/RURAL BOUNDARY
- MAJOR HIGHWAYS
- STREETS
- WATERCOURSES
- OPEN WATER/OCEAN/PONDS
- PARKS
- CITY OF HALF MOON BAY
- PLANNING AREA
- TOWN CENTER
- UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

\* All of the Half Moon Bay Planning Area is in the Coastal Zone Boundary  
 \*\*As defined by the California Coastal Commission

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

DATA SOURCE: CITY OF HALF MOON BAY, 2014; SAN MATEO COUNTY GIS, 2014; M-GROUP 2020

The Coastal Commission appeals jurisdiction areas are depicted on this map for illustrative purposes only. The appeals jurisdiction is defined as consistent with Public Resource Code Section 30603 to include lands between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea or within 300 feet of the inland extent of any beach or the mean high tide line, whichever is the greater distance; lands within 100 feet of any wetland, estuary, or stream; and lands within 300 feet of the top of the seaward face of any coastal bluff. This map is representational of these areas and may be revised at any time in the future.

*The appeals jurisdiction presented in this draft map is from the 2004 post-certification map as adopted by the Coastal Commission. This map will be updated in the final LUP draft following additional consultation with the Coastal Commission and in consideration of new ESHA mapping.*

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## Land Use Plan Organization

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### Land Use Plan Chapters

As brought forward and updated from the original plan, the 2020 Land Use Plan presents each subject area by chapter. The organization of the Land Use Plan has been modified in two ways: the chapters have been re-ordered to improve sequencing of the Land Use Plan's narrative, and the Land Use Plan no longer includes a chapter referring to the City's General Plan Housing Element because the Housing Element, although consistent with and supported by the Land Use Plan, is not a part of the Land Use Plan. This updated Land Use Plan contains nine chapters as follows:

**Chapter 1. Introduction and Framework.** This chapter summarizes the Land Use Plan's regulatory framework; reviews the history and background for land use planning in the City; identifies land use issues of primary significance; presents an overview of existing conditions, trends, and other changed circumstances; acknowledges the robust community participation process that established the foundation for the Land Use Plan; and describes the existing land use pattern of the City. The chapter concludes by bringing forward the broadest foundation policies from the 1996 Land Use Plan.

**Chapter 2. Development.** This chapter presents the City's land use map and describes each land use designation. Policies for the Town Center and Planned Developments are detailed to support and regulate development in a way that carries out Coastal Act and community priorities.

**Chapter 3. Public Works.** This chapter considers the capacity of public works infrastructure and systems and provides detailed policies to ensure that capacity is adequate to serve existing and potential development including priority land uses without inducing growth. In conjunction with the Town Center, Highways 1 and 92 are identified as the Town Boulevard.

**Chapter 4. Agriculture.** This chapter provides policies for protection of prime soil resources and support for the long-term viability of Half Moon Bay's agricultural uses in context with the City's approach to development and growth management.

**Chapter 5. Coastal Access and Recreation.** This chapter features policies to ensure that maximum public access to the coast is maintained, enhanced and sustainable. This chapter also contains policies relating to regional open spaces and beaches, the trail system, City parks and recreation, and commercial coastal recreation as they pertain to Coastal Act policies to ensure the public has adequate access to coastal recreation.

**Chapter 6. Natural Resources.** This chapter includes policies to protect, manage and restore environmentally sensitive habitat areas, wetlands, and marine and riparian habitats; protect water quality; and preserve beaches and bluffs. This chapter features a comprehensive update to the City's sensitive habitat map.

**Chapter 7. Environmental Hazards.** Climate change related hazards including sea level rise and drought are described along with other environmental hazards pertinent to Half Moon Bay such as seismic and geologic hazards, erosion and sedimentation, flooding, and wildland fires. This chapter provides detailed policies that respond to Coastal Act provisions for hazard avoidance and minimizing adverse impacts.

**Chapter 8. Cultural Resources.** This chapter includes policies to protect cultural resources including paleontological and archaeological resources.

**Chapter 9. Scenic and Visual Resources.** This chapter identifies visual elements of the City's coastal environment and includes policies to protect scenic resources and enhance the visual quality of Half Moon Bay.

### **Land Use Plan Policies**

Each chapter of the Land Use Plan includes narrative and policies. The narrative provides explanation of and justification for the policies and is considered to be part of the Plan. The policies establish planning requirements, programs, and standards for development project review. The use of "shall" indicates that a policy statement is binding; whereas the use of "should" or "would" is not mandatory but is strongly recommended to provide flexibility for consideration of how the policy statement may be better addressed; and "may" is permissive.

### **Maps and Land Use Designations**

Maps in the Land Use Plan illustrate a number of policies relating to land use, public works, coastal access, coastal recreation, natural resources, coastal hazards, cultural resources, and scenic and visual resources. The Land Use Map, land use designation descriptions, and other figures are important parts of this plan that contain unique information not presented elsewhere.

### **Appendices, Glossary and List of Acronyms**

The following appendices are provided for reference, some of which are adopted parts of the Land Use Plan as noted below:

**Appendix A.** A summary of the amendments needed to bring the Implementation Plan into conformance with the updated Land Use Plan, as well as a summary of procedures and other State and federal regulations related to carrying out the Local Coastal Program and coastal development permit review. This is an adopted part of the Land Use Plan.

**Appendix B.** Additional information regarding the Land Use Plan buildout calculations and infrastructure modeling for buildout scenarios summarized in Chapter 3. Public Works. This is an adopted part of the Land Use Plan.

**Appendix C.** Tables of plant and animal species found in the planning area and referenced in Chapter 6. Natural Resources. This table is expected to be amended over time and is therefore not an adopted part of the Land Use Plan.

**Appendix D.** The history of amendments made to the 1996 certified LCP since adoption, as well as a summary of Coastal Commission actions taken on coastal development permit appeals. This listing is for informational purposes only and is expected to be amended over time as additional amendments and/or appeals are heard by the Coastal Commission. Therefore, it is not an adopted part of the Land Use Plan.

**Appendix E. Public Engagement.** A summary of the public outreach events, public study sessions, and public hearings held throughout the Land Use Plan update process. This is an informational appendix and is therefore not an adopted part of the Land Use Plan.

**Glossary and Acronyms.** The plan concludes with a glossary to define important terms and concepts, and a list of acronyms that appear throughout the chapters of the Land Use Plan. The glossary and list of acronyms are an adopted part of the Land Use Plan.

A comprehensive update to the City's General Plan was prepared in coordination with this Land Use Plan update. The General Plan update embodies the expressed goals of the community and establishes concrete and achievable actions for the 2040 planning horizon. For Half Moon Bay, the Land Use Plan serves as the land use element of the Half Moon Bay General Plan.

## Relationship between Plans and Regulations

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Half Moon Bay has numerous plans and regulations in addition to the LCP, often with topics that relate to development and coastal resource protection. All of these plans and regulations are meant to be consistent with each other. In the event that these policies are ambiguous, the City shall interpret them in the way that best protects sensitive habitat and other coastal resources and maximizes public access and recreation opportunities.

### GENERAL PLAN

State law requires the City to adopt a general plan that provides comprehensive policy direction for the long-term physical development, preservation, and conservation of the city. The General Plan must address at least seven elements: land use, housing, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, and safety.<sup>6</sup> Optional elements are also allowed.

Special requirements apply to the general plan's housing element, including that it address affordable housing and that the City update it every five to eight years.<sup>7</sup> At the time of the Land Use Plan update, the housing element had been certified by the Department of

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<sup>6</sup> CA Government Code 65000 et seq.

<sup>7</sup> Article 10.6 (Sections 65580 to 65589.8) of the Government Code.

Housing and Community Development in October 2015. The housing element will be updated several times over the course of the 2040 planning horizon of this Land Use Plan.

In addition to mandating housing policy and other planning requirements, California passed SB 375 to better align the State's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with regional housing and transportation planning. The nine-county Bay Area region, which includes San Mateo County, implemented this law by adopting and subsequently updating "Plan Bay Area," a regional transportation and sustainable community strategy. The City considers this regional plan when implementing its General Plan and LCP.

The Land Use Plan carries out the policies of the Coastal Act as well as the land use objectives of the Half Moon Bay General Plan. Therefore, it is important that the City's General Plan and Land Use Plan are well-integrated and internally consistent, and that the City's long-range planning also aligns with regional Bay Area planning.

### **Relationship Between the Land Use Plan and General Plan**

The Land Use Plan and General Plan are standalone policy documents with overlapping subjects. As previously stated, Half Moon Bay's Land Use Plan is incorporated into the City's General Plan as the Land Use Element and covers many issues that must be addressed by the General Plan. The General Plan also contains the following separate elements, consistent with State General Plan law:

**Housing.** This element was certified by the State in 2015 and fulfills the City's policy obligations with regards to the provision and protection of affordable housing. The next update will be in 2023.

**Circulation.** Building upon the Coastal Access and Recreation chapter of the Land Use Plan, the Circulation Element includes additional policies to support circulation for all modes of travel.

**Conservation and Open Space.** Consistent with the Natural Resources chapter of the Land Use Plan, this element includes policies relating to open space preservation and resource conservation.

**Noise.** This element includes policies to limit the impacts of noise and vibration sources through land use planning, site planning, building design requirements, and other measures.

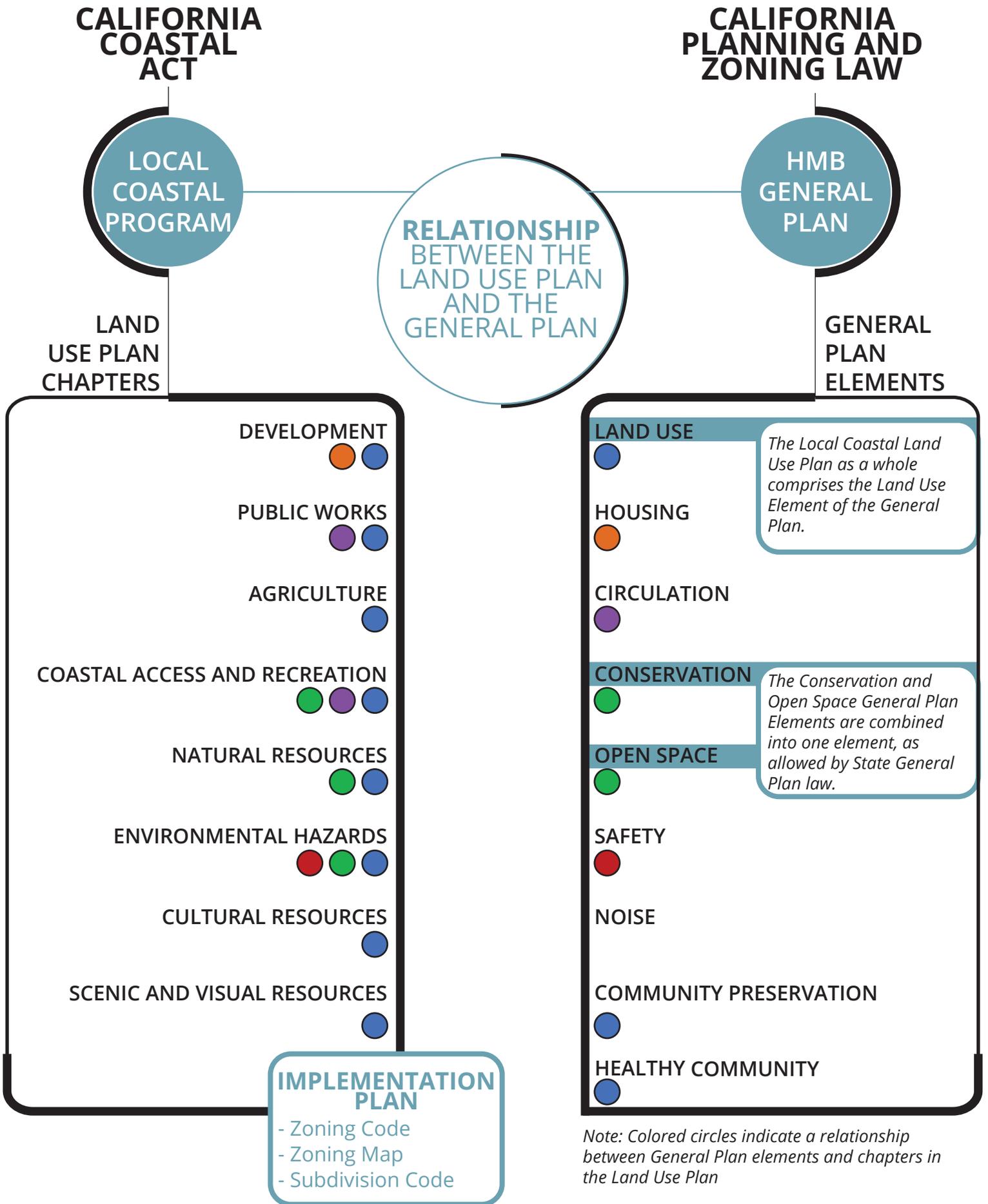
**Safety.** The Safety Element incorporates the Environmental Hazards chapter of the Land Use Plan. This element also includes policies guiding the City's emergency preparedness and response obligations and strategies.

**Optional Elements.** The General Plan will include two optional elements. The Healthy Community Element establishes community priorities for wellness, including a healthy food system, active living, healthcare, and City parks and recreation facilities and programs. This element will include mandatory environmental justice policies as well. The Community

Preservation Element covers historic resources, community character, and neighborhood design and preservation.

Each of the General Plan elements are intended to be supportive of and consistent with the Land Use Plan. Figure 1-3 graphically illustrates the relationship between the Land Use Plan and General Plan elements.

FIGURE 1-3: LAND USE PLAN AND GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS RELATIONSHIPS



### **Relationship to Other Plans**

Several other plans had been or were pending adoption at the time of this Land Use Plan update. These plans are implementation tools that are meant to be updated more frequently than the Land Use Plan. Although these plans are not considered to be part of the LCP for purposes of governing coastal development permit decisions, they are intended to be consistent with the LCP, and any inconsistencies must be corrected in reasonable time. Examples of such plans include:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Parks Master Plan
- Engineering Standards
- Green Infrastructure Plan
- Storm Drain Master Plan
- Capital Improvements Program (updated annually)
- Sewer Master Plan
- Urban Water Management Plan (Coastside County Water District)

Additional plans and programs will likely be prepared over the course of the planning horizon and will need to be consistent with Land Use Plan policy.

### **Relationship to Ordinances and Implementing Actions**

The Land Use Plan and General Plan provide the policy basis for the City's land use regulations and programs. As previously described, the LCP's Implementation Plan includes the necessary zoning ordinances and other implementing measures to implement the Land Use Plan. State law requires consistency between the Implementation Plan and Land Use Plan. Any ambiguity in these Plans' policies can be interpreted in the way that best protects ESHA and other coastal resources and public coastal access.

### **Other Regulatory Planning Considerations**

**Uses and Standards.** The Land Use Plan land use designations are more general than the Zoning Ordinance districts. Multiple zoning districts may be consistent with a single land use designation, as long as all of the densities, intensities and use types allowed in each zoning district are also permitted in the relevant Land Use Plan land use designation.

**Spatial Correlation.** The Zoning Map should reflect the general pattern of land use depicted on the Land Use Plan's Land Use Map. However, the two need not be identical. Land use designations of developed areas are well defined on the Land Use Map. For undeveloped areas such as for Planned Development designation, land use designation details will be established through adoption of master plans.

**Timing.** State law allows a "reasonable time" for updating and reconciling the zoning ordinance with the General Plan. This applies to the Land Use Plan in so far as it is the City's General Plan Land Use Element.

**Other Regulatory Agencies.** Other agencies have jurisdiction over the City's land use planning and permitting requirements, including the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Department of Housing and Community Development, California Department of Transportation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California State Water Resources Control Board. The policies of this plan are intended to be consistent with the mandates of these regulatory agencies.

## Original Certified 1996 Land Use Plan

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In addressing its land use planning obligations, the City has long faced challenging infrastructure constraints including limited water supply, sanitary sewer capacity, stormwater management, and traffic capacity on Highway 1. The City has also struggled with a fragmented land use pattern that includes both agricultural land and other undeveloped large tracts of land west of Highway 1. The possible development of these lands with more urban uses has raised potential conflicts with the growth-management and resource protection requirements of the Coastal Act and the City. This section provides background discussion of these issues and the City's voter-enacted growth management policy, which is carried forward by this Land Use Plan.

The 1996 Land Use Plan acknowledged the fragmented land use pattern within the city limits and identified three main land use issues at that time:

*The City's pre-Coastal Act development history has not always been consistent with resource protection policies of the Coastal Act. The existing land use pattern, involving several diverse neighborhoods separated by undeveloped areas, development on hazardous and sensitive areas, and numerous conflicts between residential and recreational uses, poses significant problems for the City in its efforts to balance the need for economic growth and development and the specific resource protection policies of the Coastal Act...*

*The most significant planning issues involve (1) provision of adequate sites for the development of housing to meet the City's share of existing unmet and projected regional housing needs, (2) actions the City can and should take to encourage the achievement of Coastal Act goals, including the preservation of prime agricultural, open space, and recreational lands in the unincorporated areas of the San Mateo County coastside, by concentrating development within the boundaries of the City . . . , and (3) limiting future residential population growth to a maximum annual increase of 3%.<sup>8</sup>*

In 2009, the LCP was amended to incorporate Measure D, which lowered the allowable annual growth rate in the city from the originally approved 3 percent to 1 percent, or 1.5 percent under certain circumstances (see below for more detail).

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<sup>8</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan, p. 18.

Land use planning and growth management in the City must consider natural resource protection, shoreline and hazards management, maximizing public access and recreation, assuring adequate affordable housing, and protecting community character. Three core policy issues addressed in the 1996 Land Use Plan continue to be important: (1) concentrating development and protecting agriculture; (2) determining appropriate land uses in areas designated for “planned development”; and (3) managing growth and providing public services. These policy concerns still shape the basic land use planning constraints and opportunities for the City. These issue areas are discussed further below, and are addressed through policies in subsequent chapters of this plan in a manner consistent with the resource protection, hazard management, and coastal access policies of the Coastal Act.

While many of the issues addressed in the original Land Use Plan are enduring, many changes to land use characteristics, development trends, and regulations governing environmental preservation, housing, land use, and other planning issues also have taken place. Since 1985 the LCP has been amended numerous times to address changing conditions, laws and issues. Notably, the Land Use Plan was amended in 1993 to include the annual residential population growth limitation policy known as Measure A, later amended by Measure D. This comprehensive Land Use Plan update in 2020 addresses climate change and environmental hazard concerns related to sea level rise, as well as changed circumstances since 1985 when much of the Land Use Plan was first established, although not yet certified.

### **Concentration of Development and Protection of Agriculture**

One of the most important land use policies of the Coastal Act is the requirement that new development be concentrated in already-developed areas that have adequate public services for existing and planned new development. Coastal Act section 30250 states:

*New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources. In addition, land divisions, other than leases for agricultural uses, outside existing developed areas shall be permitted only where 50 percent of the usable parcels in the area have been developed and the created parcels would be no smaller than the average size of surrounding parcels.<sup>9</sup>*

This policy works in conjunction with other Coastal Act policies to limit urban sprawl and protect rural agricultural lands throughout the coastal zone. For example, Coastal Act section 30241 requires the protection of coastal agriculture through the establishment of stable urban-rural boundaries and other means:

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<sup>9</sup> CA PRC 30250(a).

*The maximum amount of prime agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production to assure the protection of the areas' agricultural economy, and conflicts shall be minimized between agricultural and urban land uses through all of the following:*

*(a) By establishing stable boundaries separating urban and rural areas, including, where necessary, clearly defined buffer areas to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses.*

*(b) By limiting conversions of agricultural lands around the periphery of urban areas to the lands where the viability of existing agricultural use is already severely limited by conflicts with urban uses or where the conversion of the lands would complete a logical and viable neighborhood and contribute to the establishment of a stable limit to urban development.*

*(c) By permitting the conversion of agricultural land surrounded by urban uses where the conversion of the land would be consistent with Section 30250.*

*(d) By developing available lands not suited for agriculture prior to the conversion of agricultural lands.*

*(e) By assuring that public service and facility expansions and nonagricultural development do not impair agricultural viability, either through increased assessment costs or degraded air and water quality.*

*(f) By assuring that all divisions of prime agricultural lands, except those conversions approved pursuant to subdivision (b), and all development adjacent to prime agricultural lands shall not diminish the productivity of such prime agricultural lands.<sup>10</sup>*

When the Land Use Plan was originally being developed, it was recognized that Half Moon Bay's pattern of developed and undeveloped areas, some of which were in agricultural production, raised some challenging land use questions under the Coastal Act (see Figures 1-4 and 1-5).<sup>11</sup> The Land Use Plan originally concluded that overall, the City of Half Moon Bay is an urban area where new development should be concentrated, in order to protect the rural and agricultural lands of San Mateo County outside the city limits. At the same time, the Land Use Plan acknowledged the need to protect resources on undeveloped lands within city limits:

*Half Moon Bay, as a result of prior development patterns and very early subdivisions, is an urban area. It is, in fact, the only urban center for its sub-region, the San Mateo County coastside. Therefore, Coastal Act policies would favor concentration of new development within the City as an urban area in lieu of development in substantially more rural areas to the north, east, or south. On the other hand, Half Moon Bay also*

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<sup>10</sup> PRC 30241. Coastal Act Section 30242 addresses other agricultural lands not governed under Section 30241.

<sup>11</sup> For background, see, Dickert et al., *Collaborative Land-Use Planning for the Coastal Zone: Volume II, Half Moon Bay Case Study*, University of California (1976).

*has some characteristics of a semi-rural community. Substantial open land exists interspersed with urban development, some of it in marginal agricultural use.<sup>12</sup>*

The original Land Use Plan concluded that Half Moon Bay is an “urban area” for purposes of the Coastal Act by stating: “the Urban/Rural Boundary shall be the City Limit boundary of the City of Half Moon Bay.”

The original Land Use Plan also discussed in detail the future viability of agricultural lands within city limits (Figure 1-5), and observed that over the long run there may be limited if any potential for productive agriculture in the city except for greenhouse-related production:

*The City is already an urban area . . . Severe urban conflicts have already irreversibly impaired virtually all open field agricultural land use. While it may be feasible to maintain a few of the existing field flower operations in the short term, the existing operators do not foresee any growth. The economics of modern farming require a unit size larger than any available in the City. If expansion is to occur, it will occur in more attractive and less urbanized areas elsewhere.*

Nonetheless, in light of other available and more logical areas for new development within the city, the Land Use Plan specifically included policies requiring that existing agricultural and open space lands be put “in reserve” and only developed according to a phasing scheme.

**FIGURE I-4: DEVELOPED AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS, 1970**

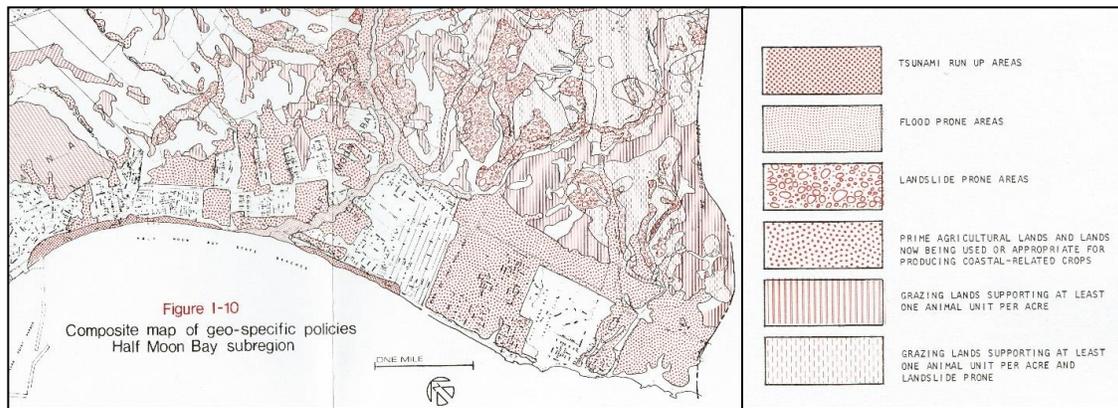


*(Source: UCSC aerial photo collection, composite.)*

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<sup>12</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan, p. 127.

**FIGURE I-5: AGRICULTURAL LANDS, CIRCA 1976**



(Source: Dickert, et al. 1976.)

This phasing scheme was reflected in the 1996 Land Use Plan by tying expanded development of urban reserve lands to the expiration of any Williamson Act agricultural preservation contracts or ten years from Land Use Plan approval; and limiting development of open space reserve lands until all other areas appropriate for infilling development have been developed.<sup>13</sup> The Implementation Plan repeated these requirements and further clarified that LCP amendments would be necessary to convert lands in reserve to other development uses. It also added a standard for urban reserve lands, which required that other developable areas in the city undergo “substantial development” before the City considers conversion of urban reserve lands to residential or commercial designations. This additional standard was added into the code by the Coastal Commission when the Implementation Plan was certified to assure that the Commission would be able to review whether conversion of reserve lands was warranted in light of development trends in the city.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, the original Land Use Plan included policies to protect greenhouses and water supply for the floriculture industry; and to promote the enhancement of agriculture within the city limits by potentially retiring or transferring development rights, leveraging partial development of agricultural lands for preservation of the remainder, and deferring development fees for lands kept in production.

### Undeveloped Land and Planned Development Areas

In addition to identifying areas that should be put “in reserve” for potential future development, the 1996 Land Use Plan categorized undeveloped city land based on its development and subdivision status, contiguity to existing developed areas, risk from hazards, and coastal resource value. Six resulting categories were used to analyze the

<sup>13</sup> The Williamson Act provides a tax incentive to keep agricultural lands in production by enabling local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use.

<sup>14</sup> California Coastal Commission, Approval of HMB IP (1995), pp. 24-5.

residential buildout potential and identify areas where coastal resource issues were more important to consider. The categories were defined as follows:

**Category 1.** Existing neighborhoods;

**Category 2.** Undeveloped “paper” subdivisions (i.e., undeveloped areas for which maps have been recorded showing the land divided into lots, roads, etc.);

**Category 3.** Un-subdivided lands, either contiguous with existing development or generally surrounded by development, without significant habitat value;

**Category 4.** Un-subdivided lands not contiguous with existing development and having agricultural, recreational, or habitat value;

**Category 5.** Un-subdivided lands contiguous with existing development and having agricultural, coastal recreation, or habitat value; and

**Category 6.** Un-subdivided lands not contiguous with existing development and having agricultural, coastal recreation, habitat, and scenic value.

Although Categories 2 and 3 were thought to have little to no habitat value at the time, subsequent studies indicate that some lands with these designations have been found to contain environmentally sensitive habitat or have the potential for such habitat to be present.

The original 1996 Land Use Plan identified 17 areas out of these six categories, located both inside and outside of the city’s downtown area, where a Planned Development (PD) land use designation would be used. The purpose of the PD designation was to ensure that any future development was well-planned:

*The purpose of the Planned Development designation is to ensure well-planned development of large, undeveloped areas planned for residential use in accordance with [the Coastal Act’s] concentration of development policies. It is the intent of this designation to allow for flexibility and innovative design of residential development, to preserve important resource values of particular sites, to ensure achievement of coastal access objectives, to eliminate poorly platted and unimproved subdivisions whose development would adversely affect coastal resources, and to encourage provision for low and moderate income housing needs when feasible. It is also the intent of the Planned Development designation to require clustering of structures to provide open space and recreation, both for residents and the public. In some cases, commercial development such as convenience stores or visitor-serving facilities may be incorporated into the design of a Planned Development in order to reduce local traffic on coastal access roads or to meet visitor needs.<sup>15</sup>*

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<sup>15</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan Policy 9.3.2.

The 17 PDs were all assigned a maximum buildout potential based on circumstances at the time of original certification. When the Land Use Plan was first certified, most of these PDs were considered “paper subdivisions,” meaning they were undeveloped areas for which maps had been recorded showing the land divided into lots, roads, etc., well before the Coastal Act was passed. Under the Subdivision Map Act, it is likely that some of the lots are not legal or are not separate lots at all. The Land Use Plan recognized that these areas needed to be re-planned in order to meet the requirements of the Coastal Act. In some cases, the Land Use Plan specifically identified land acquisition or leaving an area undeveloped as the preferred outcome, considering the resources and circumstances of the particular cases. The 1996 Land Use Plan specifically stated:

*In order to resolve conflicts between the future potential of all these subdivisions and relevant Coastal Act policies, all but two of the undeveloped subdivisions are proposed to be designated Planned Development Districts for low density development. **This designation will require re-planning and replatting of the areas and substantial reductions in permitted densities to achieve reasonable patterns of development protective of coastal resources consistent with modern development standards** [emphasis added].*

In addition, the 1996 Land Use Plan required that a specific plan be completed for all but four of the PDs, to assure that the entire PD was planned before any development took place. Each of the PDs also had policy conditions tailored to their circumstances. Policy conditions specified potentially allowable land use, maximum buildout thresholds, access requirements, infrastructure needs and site constraints.

Since certification of the PD areas, eight PDs have obtained approved specific plans and/or have been effectively built out. These include Miramar Beach, Guerrero Avenue, Dykstra Ranch, Matteucci, Andreotti, Country Club, South Main Street/Cassinelli, and Wavecrest Restoration South (part of the Wavecrest Restoration PD). At the time of this Land Use Plan update, the remaining PDs were substantially undeveloped and include Nurserymen’s Exchange, Surf Beach/Dunes Beach, Venice Beach, Public Facility, Pilarcitos West Urban Reserve, Carter Hill, Podesta/Silvera, L.C. Smith Estate, Arleta Park/West of Railroad, and Wavecrest Restoration North (part of the Wavecrest Restoration PD). The updated Land Use Plan comprehensively reconsiders the PDs in Chapter 2. Development.

### **Growth Management and Public Services**

In addition to requiring the concentration of development in existing developed areas, Coastal Act Section 30250 requires that new development have adequate public services, and Section 30254 requires that new public services be sized to support a level of development that would be consistent with the growth allowed by the policies of the certified LCP. Coastal Act Section 30250(a) effectively defines an existing developed area as one with adequate public services:

*New residential, commercial, or industrial development . . . shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to*

*accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services . . .*

Coastal Act Section 30254 specifically states that:

*New or expanded public works facilities shall be designed and limited to accommodate needs generated by development or uses permitted consistent with the [Coastal Act] . . .*

In this way, new development of public infrastructure in the City should not induce growth that would be inconsistent with the Coastal Act.

The 1996 Land Use Plan addressed these requirements with a specific focus on water, wastewater and road capacity, acknowledging limited capacity in all three of these critical services at the time of LCP certification:

*Water supply, sewage treatment, and roads, the basic public works which are required for new development, all have limited capacity at present. New development is presently limited because of the lack of available connections to the public water system.<sup>16</sup>*

Several policies in the 1996 Land Use Plan were fundamental for addressing public services and development in the city. First, consistent with Coastal Act 30250, the LCP required that all new development have adequate public services at the time of approval:

*. . . No permit for development shall be issued unless a finding is made that such development will be served upon completion with water, sewer, schools, and road facilities, including such improvements as are provided with the development.<sup>17</sup>*

Accordingly, the 1996 Land Use Plan specifically required the planning commission or city council to make a finding that services will be available for new development and stated that the “[l]ack of available services or resources shall be grounds for denial of the project or reduction in the density otherwise indicated in the Land Use Plan.”

Second, the LCP required that new public works facilities be limited to a capacity that does not exceed the requirements for projected build-out of the 1996 Land Use Plan, but also that any particular service capacity expansions be phased with other services and according to the development phasing set out in the development chapter of the Land Use Plan (i.e. develop existing infill lots and appropriate PD areas *before* Urban and Open Space Reserve lands).<sup>18</sup> In 1993, the Coastal Commission approved an amendment to the LCP requiring that development and service expansions stay within the limits of 3 percent annual growth pursuant to Measure A (now 1 - 1.5 percent pursuant to Measure D, see below).<sup>19</sup> Notably,

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<sup>16</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan, p. 193.

<sup>17</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan Policy 9-2, p. 144.

<sup>18</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan Policy 10-3, p. 205.

<sup>19</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan Policy 10-6 states that “[t]he City shall limit the size of each permitted public works facility to that size and capacity required for the extent and amount of development existing and proposed within the first two phases of development as shown on Table 9.3”.

additional units allowed pursuant to density bonuses for the provision of affordable housing were exempted:

*9.4 Residential Growth Limitation*

[...]

*c. The following developments shall be exempt from the limitation in subsection 9.4(a):*

- 1. Replacement of existing units on a one-for-one basis;*
- 2. Density bonuses for the provision of low or moderate income dwelling units as required by State law.*

Third, 1996 Land Use Plan Policies 10-4 and 10-13 required that public service capacities be reserved for Coastal Act Priority Uses. These use categories include marine-related, commercial-recreational, equestrian facilities, hotel/motel, restaurant, public recreational, local recreation, campsites, beaches, indoor floriculture, and field flowers and vegetables.<sup>20</sup>

Chapter Ten of the 1996 Land Use Plan also included specific discussion and policies to implement the overarching public services policies in the areas of water, wastewater and road capacity. This included limiting service expansions to the growth contemplated in the Land Use Plan and phasing any expansions with the required growth phasing of the Land Use Plan and other available services. Each discussion also specifically contemplated the appropriate level of capacity. For example, with respect to road capacity, the Land Use Plan originally established Level of Service (LOS) C as the acceptable level to maintain consistency with the Coastal Act, except during peak commuting and recreational hours, when LOS E was acceptable. Water and sewer capacity were allowed to expand to a level to serve anticipated LCP buildout, except that it had to be phased so as to not induce growth, particularly through increased service costs.

## Changed Land Use Circumstances

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The land use issues identified by the original Land Use Plan must also be considered in light of changed circumstances since the LCP was first approved. This section summarizes important changes in population growth, public services, land use trends and ownership, the environment and habitat assessments, and public policy that shape the policies of this updated Land Use Plan.

### Population Trends and Measure D

Between 1980 and 2000 Half Moon Bay's population increased by 63 percent, with annual average (compound) growth rates of 2.0 percent in 1980s and 2.9 percent in 1990s. However, growth slowed in the years that followed. Between 2000 (Census 2000

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<sup>20</sup> 1996 Land Use Plan, p. 205; 207. Also, see Table 10-3, p. 218.

population 11,842) to 2017, the average growth rate was just over one-third percent, resulting in an estimated population of 12,565 in 2017<sup>21</sup>. This small growth rate and estimated population is reflected in the annual allocation of Measure D certificates further described in this section.

Half Moon Bay's population has also grown older. Between 1990 and 2017, the proportion of children (ages 0 to 17) dropped slightly from 24.1 percent of the population to 18.8 percent. Adults in their higher education and working years (18 to 64) represented 67 percent of Half Moon Bay's population in 1990, and 60 percent in 2017. Meanwhile, the 65 and older segment grew from 9.6 percent of the population in 1990 to nearly 21 percent in 2017. Looking at the smaller age ranges tracked by the Census Bureau since 2000, each segment up to and including age 45 to 54 declined as a share of Half Moon Bay's population between 2000 and 2017, while each segment from 55 to 64 and higher grew.

The 3 percent annual population growth in Half Moon Bay between 1980 and 2000 put pressure on the City's infrastructure, particularly Highway 1 and available water service. Concern grew about the ability of the City to provide and finance public services for new development. In 1999 City voters passed Measure D, which reduced the maximum allowed annual residential growth rate in the city to 1 - 1.5 percent. Previously, Measure A had stipulated a maximum annual residential growth rate of 3 percent (Figure 1-6). Measure D was submitted to the Coastal Commission as an LCP amendment, with additional implementation measures, and was certified in 2009. As summarized by the Commission:

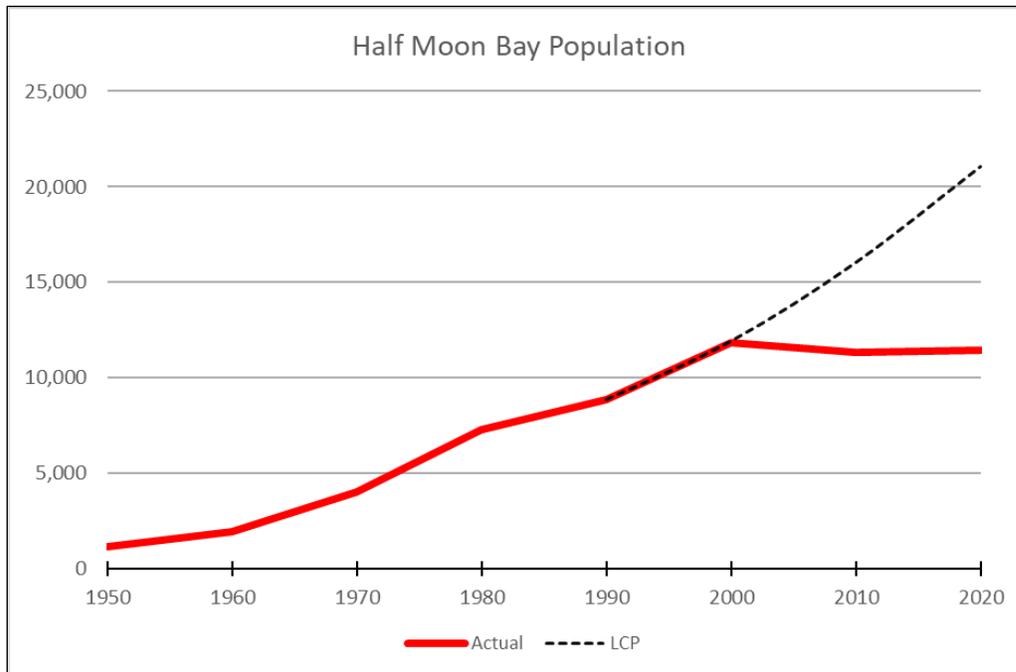
*... the property taxes and development fees generated by new residential development [in Half Moon Bay] are not sufficient to cover the cost of expanding infrastructure and services to meet the needs of new residents, especially in terms of road capacity, water supply, sewer services, school facilities and open space. Therefore, the decrease in the 3% residential growth rate allowed in Measure A to the 1% - 1.5% residential growth rate allowed in Measure D will protect the City and coastal resources by helping to ensure that new residential development does not outpace the expansion of infrastructure and public services.<sup>22</sup>*

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<sup>21</sup> All population demographics in these two paragraphs from American Community Survey 2013-2017 and the US Census.

<sup>22</sup> California Coastal Commission, Approval of Measure D, Half Moon Bay LCP Amendment 2-05 Parts A and B (Major), March 12, 2009, <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2009/3/Th6b-3-2009.pdf>, p. 8.

**FIGURE I-6. PROJECTED 3% AND ACTUAL POPULATION GROWTH**



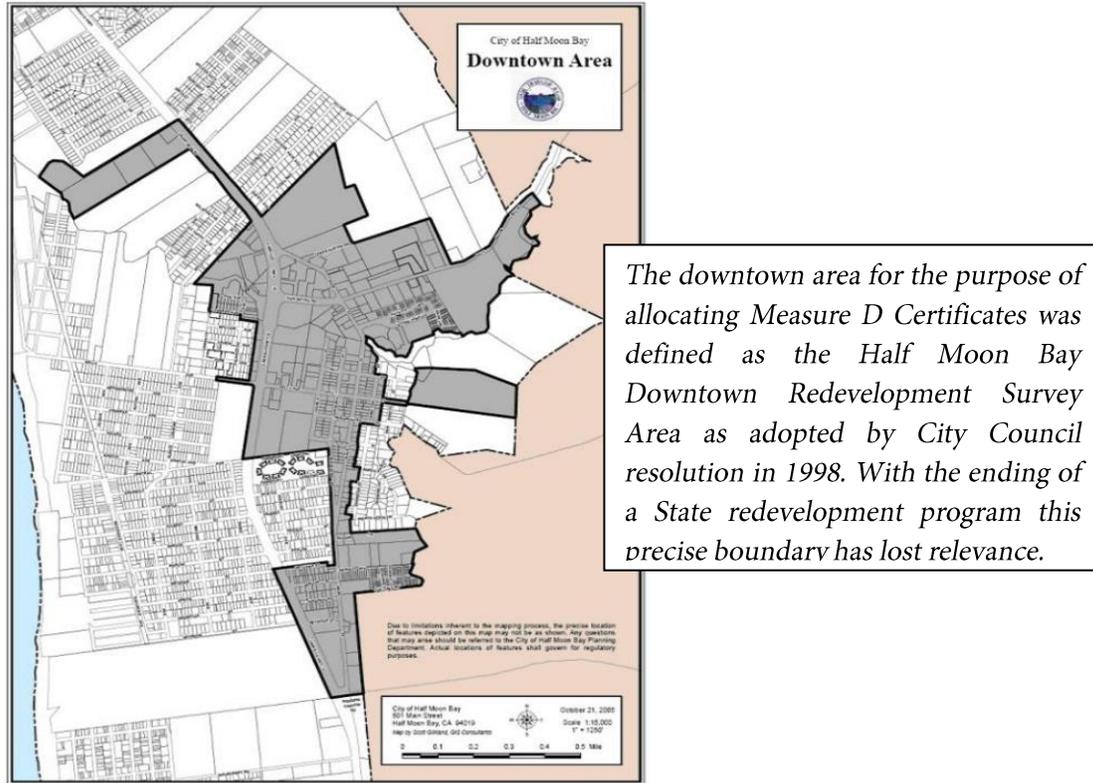
Source: MTC-ABAG Library, Bay Area Census data

Measure D reduced the base maximum annual residential growth rate from 3 percent to 1 percent, but allowed the City to increase this rate an additional 0.5 percentage points for new units in a defined “downtown” area only (Figure 1-7). The measure also directed that at least half of the 1 percent growth be reserved for units outside of the downtown, but allowed this growth to be allocated in the downtown if there were insufficient applications for development outside the downtown. Like Measure A before it, Measure D exempted from the growth limitation the replacement of existing units on a one-for-one basis and density bonuses for the provision of lower income housing.<sup>23</sup>

The Measure D growth policy is implemented by IP Chapter 18.04 and the subdivision code, Chapter 17.06. Chapter 18.04 restates the basic requirements of Measure D and the 2009 amended Land Use Plan policies. Chapter 17.06 establishes the procedures for the City Council to determine the amount of growth allowed in the downtown and surrounding areas every year. Chapter 17.06 also establishes a point system for prioritizing applications for new dwelling units. The system prioritizes development in the downtown and infill development (e.g. vacant lots surrounded by existing development with existing public services). Other criteria to gain points include affordability, provision of open space, pedestrian improvements, design excellence and other measures that promote environmentally sound growth. Measure D allows the City to update these procedures where necessary to address changing conditions and priorities, provided the procedures are consistent with Measure D.

<sup>23</sup> See, *Id.* The amended Policy 9-4 is implemented by updated IP sections 18.04.10, 18.04.20 and 18.04.30.

**FIGURE I-7. MEASURE D DOWNTOWN AREA**



### **Social Equity and Environmental Justice**

In 2016, the Coastal Act was amended giving the Coastal Commission authority to specifically consider environmental justice when making permit decisions. In part, Section 30107.3 of the California Coastal Act defines environmental justice as the “fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoptions, implementation, and enforcements of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

To implement the amendment, the Commission approved a comprehensive environmental justice policy in March 2019. The policy states:

*“Coastal Development should be inclusive for all who work, live, and recreate on the California’s coast and provide equitable benefits for communities that have historically been excluded, marginalized, or harmed by coastal development.”*

The policy is supported by a Statement of Principles, all of which must be considered in the Commission’s oversight of policy and project review within the Coastal Zone. The Statement

of Principles address tribal concerns, meaningful engagement and participation in the planning process, coastal access, housing, local government, accountability and transparency, climate change, and habitat and public health. The Land Use Plan includes a new foundation policy to ensure that Half Moon Bay's LCP implementation decisions are consistent with these principles. The Land Use Plan also includes several important provisions of such equitable benefits in the city. Most notably, a Workforce Housing Overlay is established to support affordable housing options for individuals who work in agricultural and service industries in the Planning Area. Workforce Housing Overlay units would be Local Priority Uses under this LUP. As established through policy, all farmworker housing, including Workforce Housing Overlay units that support agriculture, and public coastal recreation, are also considered Coastal Act Priority Uses by the Coastal Commission.

### **Water Supply and Highway Capacity**

Since the Land Use Plan was first approved in 1985 and later certified in 1996, water supply and traffic capacity for new development have become even more constrained. In 2003, the Coastal Commission approved a coastal development permit for a major water pipeline replacement/expansion project by the Coastside County Water District (CCWD), within which the City of Half Moon Bay is located. The Commission evaluated the public service constraints at the time and concluded that the road capacity on Highways 1 and 92 was deficient under the LCP, and that it was important that any pipeline replacement project not induce growth beyond this limited road capacity. The Commission also recognized that after CCWD had sold "Phase 1 Crystal Springs" water connections created in 1987 to finance improvements to its system, there were 1,324 unused connections remaining for new development at that time. Therefore, to assure that the pipeline project did not induce growth further, the Commission limited the use of the new pipeline to existing connections until other infrastructure, particularly transportation, was adequate for the growth that would be served by any expanded water supply. The Commission placed a special condition on the pipeline project that stated:

*No increase in water supply or distribution capacity shall be permitted within the CCWD Service District in excess of the Phase I limitations specified . . . above, unless the existing or probable future capacity of other related infrastructure, including but not limited to the San Mateo County Mid-Coast and City of Half Moon Bay regional transportation system, is sufficient to adequately serve the level of development that would be supported by the proposed increase in water supply and/or distribution capacity.<sup>24</sup>*

The Commission's permit also required the CCWD to monitor and annually report on the status of these water connections as they were installed. This permit effectively limited the number of new residential units that could be permitted in the CCWD service area to approximately the number of remaining sold, but not yet installed, non-priority water

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<sup>24</sup> CCC, A-1-HMB-99-20, Special Condition 4D, p. 15.

connections.<sup>25</sup> At the time of this Land Use Plan update, CCWD informed the City that this number was approximately 820, some subset of which might serve development in Half Moon Bay, until the capacity of transportation and other infrastructure is deemed adequate to support additional growth beyond this number.<sup>26</sup>

The traffic capacity concerns raised by the Coastal Commission's review of the CCWD pipeline project were again squarely framed by the Coastal Commission's approval of the San Mateo County Midcoast LCP Update in 2012 and subsequent planning actions. The Commission's review of the County's proposed update examined growth issues closely, including water supply and traffic capacity. The approved LCP update limited residential growth to 1 percent in the unincorporated Midcoast coastal zone, which equated to approximately 40 units a year. This number includes affordable and second units. The growth limitation must stay in effect until a comprehensive congestion management plan that accommodates projected traffic demand is completed and approved as part of the County's LCP. The LCP also requires mitigation to offset vehicle trips from new development and supports in-lieu mitigation fees and mandatory merger of substandard lots.<sup>27</sup>

## **Agriculture**

Another significant land use change since the 1996 Land Use Plan concerns agriculture. First, there is renewed interest in community-level agriculture, which potentially requires reconsideration of the original LCP's determination that continuing agriculture within the city limits was not likely to be feasible. Notably, in 2017 POST purchased the 18.5-acre Andreotti property on Kelly Avenue west of Highway 1. This property is one of the last remaining farms in the city, and the purchase enabled the property to continue in agricultural use.<sup>28</sup> Second, like many local governments in California, Half Moon Bay is actively addressing the emerging cannabis economy, including considering what types of cultivation and ancillary uses may be appropriate and in which locations. Voter approved ballot measures in 2018 allowed for commercial cannabis nursery starts in existing greenhouses and also established a commercial cannabis business tax.

## **Land Acquisitions**

Many significant land acquisitions have occurred in some of the PD and Urban Reserve areas. For example, both the Peninsula Open Space Land Trust (POST) and the Coastside Land Trust have acquired significant numbers of parcels and acreages of land in the Wavecrest PD (Figure 1-8). Other significant land acquisitions include the Beachwood and

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<sup>25</sup> Typically, one water connection is required per each single-family home. Larger homes with more water fixtures may require additional connections or partial connections; multi-family development, especially with smaller units and fewer fixtures, may require fewer than one connection per unit.

<sup>26</sup> CCWD, Urban Water Management Plan, September, 2016, p. 3-4. In addition, according to the CCWD's 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, there were about 202 unsold connections available for affordable housing and another 209 for Coastal Act priority Uses in the whole service area. See discussion in Chapter 3 for more detail.

<sup>27</sup> San Mateo County LCP, Policy 1.23 and 2.53.

<sup>28</sup> Peninsula Open Space Trust News Archive. "POST Protects 18-acre Farm in Half Moon Bay." August 2, 2017. Accessed at <https://openspacetrust.org/post-news/post-protects-18-acre-farm-in-half-moon-bay-2/>

Glencree property by the City, and the Halstead property by POST. This Land Use Plan considers changed land use opportunities and potential buildout in relation to new ownership opportunities since 1985, especially within the undeveloped PDs (see Chapter 2).

**FIGURE I-8: LAND ACQUISITIONS**



### Lot Retirement

The limited capacity of Highways 1 and 92 has also led to the implementation of lot retirement measures in Half Moon Bay through various coastal development permit actions. In 2001, the Coastal Commission staff recommended that the proposed Wavecrest subdivision retire vacant lots within the City to offset traffic impacts associated with the development of proposed new residential lots. Ultimately, the Wavecrest project was withdrawn, but in the subsequent Pacific Ridge subdivision, approved by the Coastal Commission following a settlement agreement that included the City, lot retirement was required.<sup>29</sup> This action authorized 63 new homes in the Dykstra Ranch PD. The permit

<sup>29</sup> CCC, A-1-HMB-99-022-A-1 (Pacific Ridge), October 15, 2008.

required the developer to pay an in-lieu fee to the City for the purposes of lot retirement, again to offset the cumulative traffic impacts of the new development.

In 2007, the Carnoustie subdivision in Ocean Colony was approved by the City. As proposed by the applicant, the project included the retirement of vacant lots on a one-for-one basis for each of the 34 newly created lots. The Coastal Commission found on appeal that the subdivision did not raise any substantial issues, in part because of the inclusion of lot retirements to address cumulative traffic impacts.<sup>30</sup> Finally, the 2014 Gibraltar Capital subdivision (later referred to as the Creekside subdivision) was approved on appeal to the Coastal Commission, and it too required the retirement of vacant lots to offset the impacts associated with the creation of 10 lots.<sup>31</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2, lot retirement policy is brought into the Land Use Plan to address the cumulative impacts of growth, especially on the City's highly constrained circulation system.

### **Climate Change and Hazard Planning**

The effects of climate change on environmental hazards, especially planning for sea level rise, were not anticipated in the 1996 Land Use Plan. Consideration of climate change provides overarching context for hazard planning. Extreme weather conditions are expected to intensify worldwide as global temperatures rise, disrupting past climate patterns. For coastal communities, it is foreseeable that the effects will be especially severe because extreme weather conditions – such as severe storms - exacerbate hazards already present in coastal settings. Such hazards, particularly when exacerbated by sea level rise, pose a number of concerns related to existing and new development capacity, safeguarding of major infrastructure, and protection of public access and sensitive habitat areas. The Land Use Plan addresses climate change and sea level rise in consideration of environmental hazards and the associated land use and infrastructure planning implications. The Plan also supports the City's approach to sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction through policies that facilitate alternative modes of transportation, clean energy options, and urban forest protection and enhancement.

### **Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas**

While the goal of maintaining the natural beauty of the city is not a changed condition from the 1996 Land Use Plan, the continuous need to ensure resilient, properly functioning ecosystems has evolved the City's approach to habitat protection over the years. For the 2020 Land Use Plan update, the City prepared an extensive evaluation of natural resource areas, including wetlands, riparian areas, and other sensitive habitats. This effort produced the updated habitat maps in the Natural Resources chapter of the Land Use Plan. The updated maps replace the Water Resources Overlay Map from the 1996 Land Use Plan, which had only been revised once since certification. This research and mapping of changed environmental conditions significantly informed policy options for this Land Use Plan, particularly concerning undeveloped lands. These policies have a broader, ecosystem-based

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<sup>30</sup> CCC, A-2-HMB-07-034, November 16, 2007.

<sup>31</sup> CCC, A-2-HMB-12-011, July 2014. This permit subsequently expired and the City recently re-approved the subdivision. In consideration of the Coastal Commission's policy direction regarding lot retirements in Half Moon Bay, the applicant included lot retirements as part of the project application.

approach for considering habitat functionality and vulnerabilities, from a cumulative perspective, as they relate to existing and new development.

### **Hydrology**

The 1996 Land Use Plan acknowledged that extensive runoff from the coastal hills results in significant drainage problems. This occurs where natural contours, swales and gullies, or channelized areas are unable to handle the volume of water. Development and its associated impermeable surfaces make matters worse by increasing flow volume and velocity. This further contributes to erosion along watercourses, downstream sedimentation, and risk of localized flooding. These conditions have been documented in several watercourses in Half Moon Bay. The Seymour Watercourse, for example, has been excessively undercut, eroded, and widened. Climate change and sea level rise will likely exacerbate these hydrologic issues with intensified storm events, increased flood risk, and potential sea water intrusion. The updated Land Use Plan recognizes the need to address existing conditions which have worsened since 1996, as well as future conditions. One significant new approach introduced in the updated Land Use Plan is identification of City-owned properties suitable for large-scale stormwater detention and infiltration.

Several sustainability planning concepts have emerged to address hydrology and stormwater runoff management in recent years. The “one water” approach considers all water as a resource within the context of an integrated system. Sources include the municipal potable water supply, ground water, watercourses including creeks and drainages, stormwater runoff, wastewater, and recycled water. Green infrastructure is an implementation method for the one water approach utilizing natural systems and low-impact development to manage stormwater. As discussed in later chapters, the Land Use Plan incorporates green infrastructure approaches and requires that development provide adequate land area for implementation of green infrastructure systems.

### **Complete and Green Streets**

The Land Use Plan is consistent with the Circulation Element of the City’s General Plan, which enumerates policies for “Complete Streets.” These policies ensure that the City routinely designs and operates the right-of-way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation, including active modes such as cycling and walking. Complete Streets make it easier to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work, and make it safer for people to walk to and from bus stops. As the practice advances, green infrastructure is being incorporated into complete streets which are thereby evolving into “green streets.”

### **Regional Planning Context**

As discussed above, Plan Bay Area is the “sustainable communities strategy” for the nine-county regional planning area overseen by the Bay Area Association of Governments (ABAG). In 2017, Plan Bay Area was updated with a 2040 planning horizon and an update to 2050 was underway at the time of this Land Use Plan update. With respect to Half Moon Bay and San Mateo County, the recent plan notes:

*San Mateo County is strategically located between San Francisco and Silicon Valley. The Coast Range divides the county into two distinct parts: the bayside and coast. Ninety percent of development in the county is located on the bayside. The communities along the bayside of the Peninsula are home to Fortune 500 headquarters, globally significant firms and research entities as well as many charming town centers and residential neighborhoods. **Jobs and housing growth is expected to concentrate in bayside communities, which will reduce growth pressures on the coast and allow the county to retain its agricultural, scenic and natural resource areas in the hills and coastside.**"<sup>32</sup> [emphasis added]*

It is important for the City to consider regional growth and planning dynamics in the Land Use Plan, particularly with respect to housing and transportation needs.

## Existing Land Use Pattern and Distribution

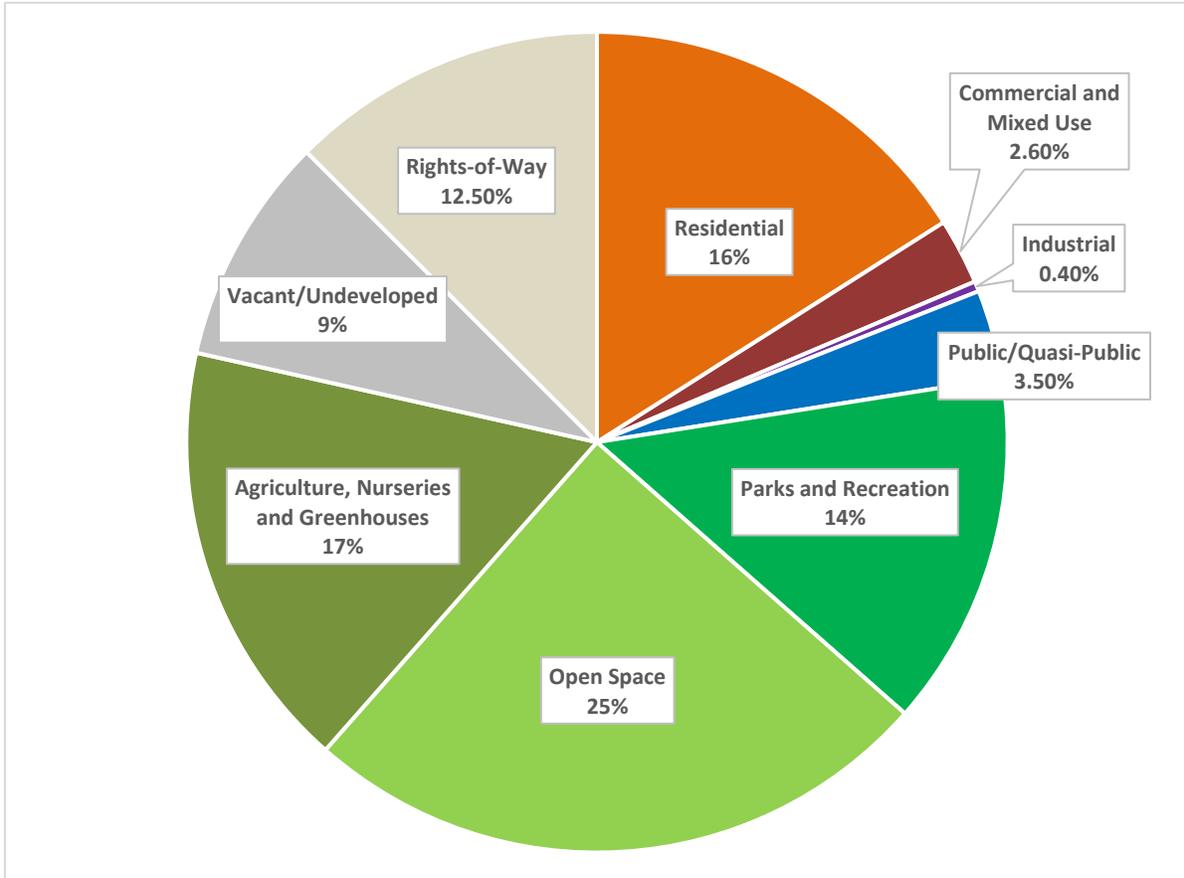
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The City's existing land uses are important factors in considering changes since the Land Use Plan was first certified in 1996. Figure 1-9 presents the distribution of existing land uses in the Planning Area; and Table 1-1 provides a more detailed breakdown of existing land uses in the City, unincorporated County land, and the Planning Area as a whole. As shown in the pie chart, almost half of the entire Planning Area is undeveloped—the amount of vacant land, open space, and parks and recreational space totals 48 percent. These types of undeveloped lands are all distinct uses and are described further below. Figure 1-10 indicates that the Planning Area contains an alternating mix of urban and undeveloped or rural land uses clustered around Highways 1 and 92. Vacant land, agricultural land, parks and recreational land, open space, and residential uses are the most dominant land uses. Large tracts of land are used for agricultural, nursery and greenhouse operations around the edges of the city and along Highway 92, although the majority of land that is undeveloped is vacant rather than in agriculture or agriculture-related use. A greater diversity of other land uses is found in the City's Town Center. Existing land uses were determined using spatial analysis and data from the San Mateo County Assessor.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.planbayarea.org/counties/focus-san-mateo-county>.

**FIGURE 1-9: EXISTING LAND USES IN THE PLANNING AREA**



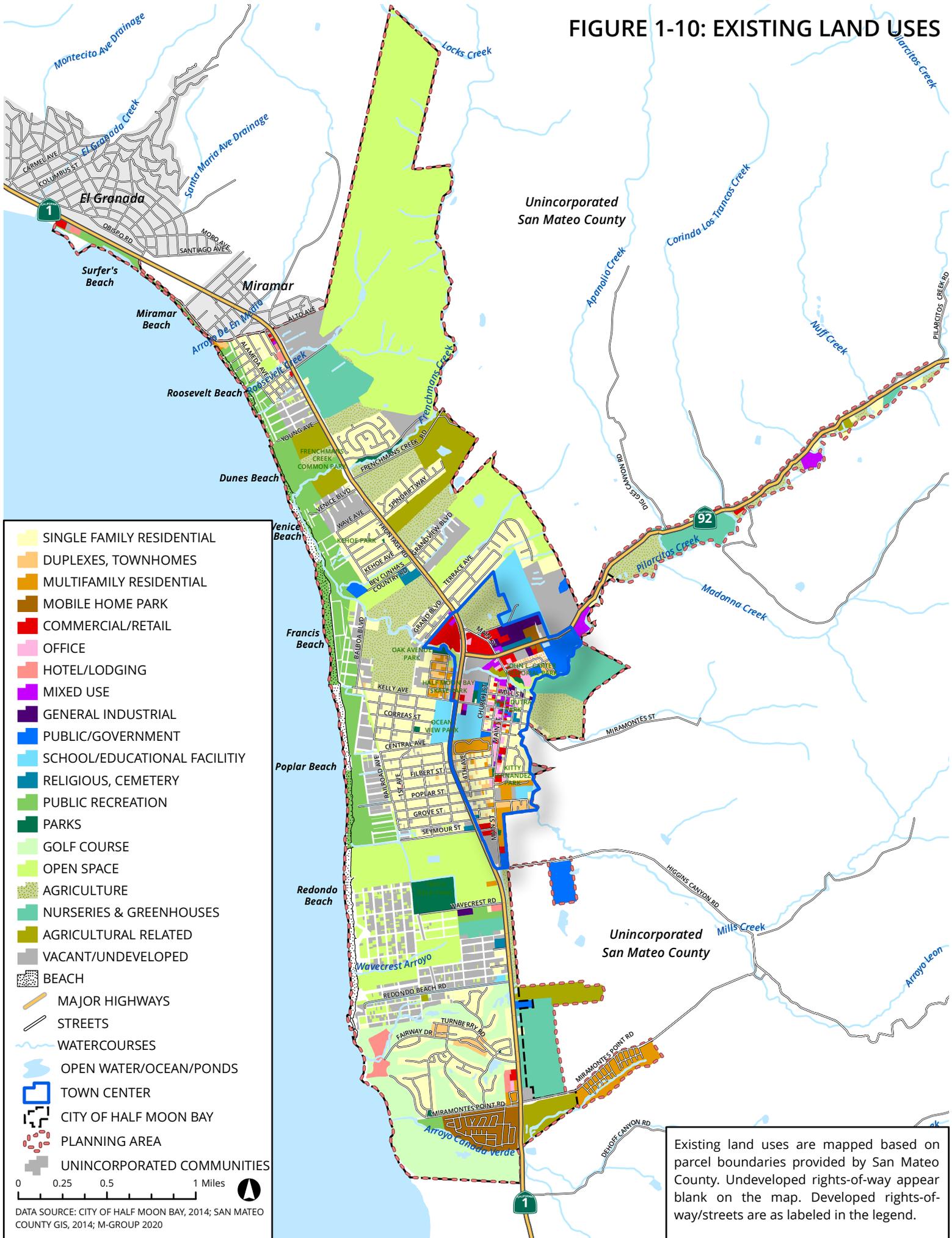
Source: San Mateo County Assessor's Office, 2014; M-Group, 2019

**Table 1-1: Existing Land Uses in the Planning Area**

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Acres</i>		
	<i>City</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Residential</b>			
Single Family Residential	511	15	526
Duplexes, Townhomes	48		48
Multifamily Residential	26	40	66
Mobile Home Park	55		55
<i>Residential</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>695</i>
<b>Commercial and Mixed Use</b>			
Commercial/Retail	43	3	46
Office	18		18
Hotel/Lodging	24		24
Mixed Use	16	6	22
<i>Commercial and Mixed Use</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>110</i>
<b>Industrial</b>			
General Industrial	18		18
<b>Public/Quasi-Public</b>			
Public/Government	38	20	58
Schools/Educational Facility	78		78
Religious, Cemetery	17		17
<i>Public/Quasi-Public</i>	<i>133</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>153</i>
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>			
Beaches and Public Recreation	306		306
Parks	38		38
Golf Course	258		258
<i>Parks and Recreation</i>	<i>602</i>		<i>602</i>
<b>Open Space</b>			
Open Space	1,067		1,067
<b>Agriculture, Nurseries and Greenhouses</b>			
Agriculture	273	50	323
Nurseries & Greenhouse	137	107	244
Agriculture Related	138	32	170
<i>Agriculture, Nurseries and Greenhouses</i>	<i>548</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>737</i>
<b>Vacant/Undeveloped</b>			
Vacant/Undeveloped	375	21	396
<b>ROW, Others</b>			
Streets, Rights-of-Way, Easements	507	26	533
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,990</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>4,310</b>

Source: San Mateo County Assessor's Office, 2014; M-Group, 2019

**FIGURE 1-10: EXISTING LAND USES**



- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- DUPLEXES, TOWNHOMES
- MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MOBILE HOME PARK
- COMMERCIAL/RETAIL
- OFFICE
- HOTEL/LODGING
- MIXED USE
- GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
- PUBLIC/GOVERNMENT
- SCHOOL/EDUCATIONAL FACILITY
- RELIGIOUS, CEMETERY
- PUBLIC RECREATION
- PARKS
- GOLF COURSE
- OPEN SPACE
- AGRICULTURE
- NURSERIES & GREENHOUSES
- AGRICULTURAL RELATED
- VACANT/UNDEVELOPED
- BEACH
- MAJOR HIGHWAYS
- STREETS
- WATERCOURSES
- OPEN WATER/OCEAN/PONDS
- TOWN CENTER
- CITY OF HALF MOON BAY
- PLANNING AREA
- UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

DATA SOURCE: CITY OF HALF MOON BAY, 2014; SAN MATEO COUNTY GIS, 2014; M-GROUP 2020

Existing land uses are mapped based on parcel boundaries provided by San Mateo County. Undeveloped rights-of-way appear blank on the map. Developed rights-of-way/streets are as labeled in the legend.

## **Residential**

Residential land uses cover about 16 percent of the Planning Area (excluding streets and other rights of way). Single-family residential makes up 76 percent of the Planning Area's residential land and 12 percent of all land. Multifamily residential, townhomes, duplexes and mobile home parks make up the remainder of residential uses. North of Kelly Avenue and in the Arleta Park subdivision, most single-family residential land exists in pockets surrounded by agricultural fields, vacant land, and open space.

In the Town Center, single-family residential development is interspersed with other residential uses as well as mixed-use and non-residential uses such as commercial, office, and institutional. In the southern part of the city, most single-family development is located in the Ocean Colony subdivision.

Most of the other residential housing types are located in the Town Center and the Pilarcitos neighborhood, including a mix of duplexes and multifamily development and the Hilltop Mobile Home Park on Highway 92. These housing types are also found at the southern end of the city in Ocean Colony and Cañada Cove.

## **Commercial and Mixed Use**

Commercial and mixed-use development covers about 2.6 percent of land in the Planning Area. Commercial/retail uses comprise 42 percent of this area and are concentrated near the junction of Highways 1 and 92 and in the Town Center. Office and mixed-use lands are also concentrated in this area. Hotel and lodging uses are found in the northern and southern ends of the city along Highway 1.

## **Industrial**

Industrial uses account for less than one percent of the Planning Area, and include warehouses, storage, light manufacturing, a concrete batch plant, and a power substation, primarily concentrated near Highway 92.

## **Public/Quasi-Public**

Public/quasi-public uses include schools and educational facilities, public and government uses, churches, and cemeteries, and account for about 3.5 percent of the Planning Area. Within the study area, all public/quasi-public uses are located within City limits except for the historic Johnston House site along Higgins Canyon Road. The largest share of these uses belongs to schools and educational facilities, located mostly in the center of the city.

## **Parks and Recreation**

Recreational uses include both public and private recreational areas that cover a total of 602 acres (14 percent) of the Planning Area, all of which are located within City limits. The majority of these uses are located to the west of Highway 1. Public areas include City and regional beaches, parks, and recreational land, while private areas include commercial

recreation such as golf courses. Golf courses account for 43 percent of the City's total recreational land, located in the southern portion of the city. Beaches and public recreation make up 51 percent of all recreational land uses, covering 306 acres along the coast. There are approximately 38 acres of City parks (some of this land, at Smith Field, is undeveloped). Some of this recreational land is classified here as another use, such as public/government (e.g. the Johnston House) or open space, but includes some City park characteristics and is counted toward the City's park land standards. This is covered further in Chapter 2. Coastal Access and Recreation.

### **Open Space**

Open space constitutes approximately 1,067 acres, or 25 percent of the Planning Area, making this the largest land use in the Planning Area. This category includes dedicated open space lands, such as the Pacific Ridge open space parcels, as well as undeveloped land held as open space by conservation trusts such as Coastside Land Trust. Open space lands are concentrated west of Highway 1 along the bluffs adjacent to Poplar Beach and in the Wavecrest area in southern Half Moon Bay.

### **Agriculture, Nurseries and Greenhouses, and Other Agriculture-Related Uses**

Agriculture and related uses cover close to 17 percent of the Planning Area (737 acres). A dominant form of agricultural use is open field production, though on some large tracts, portions of the land may be left vacant. Nurseries and greenhouses have a substantial presence in the Planning Area and are located mainly at the edges of the city and along Highway 92. Other agriculture-related uses include lumber yards and soil farming. These agriculture and agriculture-related uses are distributed throughout the Planning Area.

### **Vacant/Undeveloped Land**

Vacant or undeveloped land covers 396 acres, or 9 percent of the Planning Area. Vacant or undeveloped land primarily presents in small parcels scattered among residential land uses, undeveloped PDs, and larger properties east of Highway 1 and north of Highway 92.

### **Streets, Rights-of Way, Easements**

Streets, other public rights-of-way, and access and utility easements cover about 12.5 percent of land in the Planning Area. This includes "paper streets," which are streets that are not developed but are included on recorded maps showing land divided into lots, roads, etc.

## **Policy Direction**

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Comprehensively updating the City's LCP provided an opportunity to revisit fundamental land use policies and continuing planning challenges in Half Moon Bay. These include growth management measures, land use designations and policies, and specific zoning designations, rules and procedures to facilitate an environmentally sustainable,

economically strong, community development strategy consistent with the Coastal Act and other State land use requirements. The update process was overseen by a General Plan Advisory Committee from 2014 through January 2017 and afterwards by the Half Moon Bay Planning Commission and City Council.

### **COASTAL COMMISSION PLANNING GUIDANCE**

The Coastal Commission provides guidance for updating LCPs consistent with the Coastal Act and community-specific conditions and needs. With respect to each Coastal Act topic area, as covered here and in the following chapters of the Land Use Plan, the Commission's guidance acknowledges the need to address population growth projections, development patterns and local needs, public facilities constraints, new pressures on coastal resources and public access, and new regulatory laws or scientific information that affect land use decisions and planning.<sup>33</sup>

In this light, community priorities and local context are essential to the LCP update process. The intent of the Land Use Plan update is to represent the City's changed conditions, growth patterns, priorities and needs since original LCP certification and to guide land use and new development accordingly. As described above, the City's residential growth limitation, public service constraints, and local priorities of protecting natural resources, supporting agriculture operations, and preserving community character illuminate the ongoing need for coastal resource protections.

### **COMMUNITY PLANNING CONTEXT**

During the extensive Land Use Plan update public engagement process, community members clearly expressed their interest in maintaining and enhancing community character. Their input indicated concern about the fragility of the historic Downtown area, the need to protect neighborhood integrity, and the overall experience of Half Moon Bay's scenic and visual resources including agriculture, open space, and sensitive habitat areas. This led to the development of optional General Plan elements including a Healthy Community Element and Community Preservation Element to address these community planning needs.

In parallel with the Land Use Plan update process, several community planning efforts were advanced. Residential design guidelines, consistent with the Zoning Ordinance were adopted. Approval and construction of a new library followed an in-depth community input process. Two master plans prioritizing local circulation and recreational needs – the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and the Parks Master Plan – were prepared with direction from a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Both master plans were well received by the local community. Through implementation, they will support the needs of the local population while also improving coastal access and recreation consistent with the Coastal Act.

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<sup>33</sup> California Coastal Commission Local Coastal Plan Update Guide, Part I – Introduction.

Through these efforts, the Half Moon Bay community expressed a desire for a higher level of sensitivity to local needs in the Land Use Plan. The Land Use Plan thus includes policies that support protection and improvement of community character to address these community concerns.

#### **GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Early in the update process, the General Plan Advisory Committee established Guiding Principles for the Land Use Plan, summarized here:

1. Maintain Half Moon Bay's small-town character and quality of life, and strengthen community connections through activities and improved public gathering places.
2. Enhance the city's scenic visual quality and coastal landscape setting, and ensure protection of environmental and surrounding agricultural resources through conservation and sustainable development.
3. Foster a complete and balanced community, with enhanced local commercial options, business incubation and growth, and diverse residential opportunities.
4. Promote pedestrian, bicycle, and transit mobility; increased connectivity between the city's neighborhoods; and enhanced coastal and open space access.
5. Encourage Downtown vitality with a more diverse array of uses and amenities.
6. Promote visitation and the city's development as a hub for the Midcoast. Gracefully accommodate tourism, balancing it with local needs and the community's character.

The advisory committee strived to work to consensus and in their final meetings they identified key policy direction for the Planning Commission to consider.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

The Planning Commission's oversight began in early 2017 and included reviewing working drafts of every chapter of the Land Use Plan. They considered and incorporated the policy direction recommended by the General Plan Advisory Committee. The Commission developed the Town Center as defined by City Council as the Planning Area's land use foundation. The Commission further supported Town Center planning for the benefit of visitors and residents with the Town Boulevard, to improve multi-modal circulation along the Highway 1 and 92 corridors where roadway capacity is highly constrained. They also confirmed the hierarchy of priorities for land development and conservation, specifically with respect to the challenge of regulating development with special focus on residential, commercial, and agricultural land uses, as follows:

### **Residential**

- Refine the Land Use Plan’s concentration and phasing of development through policies that prioritize new development in the Town Center and existing neighborhood infill sites.
- Consider developing additional policies and procedures to streamline infill and Town Center development, including consideration of categorical exclusion areas.
- Consider opportunities for mixed-used and multi-family developments in the Town Center, including the Podesta PD.
- Prioritize infill and designate affordable housing as a Local Priority Use eligible for affordable housing priority water connections.
- Facilitate development of more affordable housing types including multi-family, mobile homes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to support local housing needs and minimize public service demands (i.e. water, traffic).
- Consider a lot retirement program and policy options to better address undeveloped PD and urban reserve areas in light of continued limited urban services.
- Update PD policies for undeveloped areas to reflect updated resource mapping and other land use constraints (acquisitions, hazards, recreational demands, etc.)

### **Commercial**

- Develop policies to incentivize infill retail, mixed-use, visitor-serving lodging, light industrial, research and development, and cottage industries to address jobs-housing balance and match within the Town Center.
- Provide for home occupations and limited neighborhood services in existing neighborhoods while maintaining neighborhood character.
- Develop policies and ordinances to address short-term vacation rentals.
- Consider infill and redevelopment options along the Highway 1 and 92 corridors, including retail, lodging and light industrial uses.
- Update the PDs where applicable to provide for appropriate retail and visitor-serving lodging.

### **Agriculture**

- Consider opportunities to support community-level agriculture, as well as agriculture compatible and ancillary uses in urban and open space reserve and PD areas.
- Accommodate City Council direction in the event they seek to allow cannabis cultivation in greenhouses as infrastructure and community character constraints allow.

The Planning Commission’s input addressed every topic area covered by the Land Use Plan and included careful consideration of consistency with the California Coastal Act, policy consistency within and between all of the Land Use Plan chapters, and consistency with the General Plan. They emphasized the importance of carrying forward and updating the principles in five foundation policies from the 1996 Land Use Plan, which conclude this Framework chapter below.

## **CITY COUNCIL**

### **Town Center**

In 2017, the City confirmed the downtown core map relevant to the Land Use Plan and the identification of the Town Center. The Half Moon Bay City Council determined that the central portion of the City would be the area where future development should be concentrated to support a vibrant town center with a diverse mix of businesses, shops, housing types (including affordable housing), and public spaces. The area is comprised of the historic Downtown, and the mixed use and commercial areas to the north and south (Figure 1-2). More specifically, the Town Center includes all of the land designated Commercial – General, including the Main Street area and the land around the intersection of Highways 1 and 92, as well as adjacent residential and mixed-use neighborhoods with other land use designations. The Town Center concept is a foundation of the Development chapter of the Land Use Plan, which contains policies that differentiate between lands inside and outside of the Town Center.

### **Affordable Housing**

Affordable housing continues to be a central issue in Half Moon Bay. At the time of the Land Use Plan update, the State of California had certified the City's General Plan Housing Element in October 2015. The regional housing need allocated to the city for the 2015-2023 Housing Element cycle totaled 240 units (52 very low, 31 low, 36 moderate, 121 above moderate). In conjunction with the Land Use Plan update, the City Council identified affordable housing as a top priority for several consecutive years. In study sessions the Council focused on providing permanent affordable housing, preserving existing inventory, and encouraging other activities to support affordable housing. Associated issues that need consideration include providing water connections for affordable housing, partnering with developers for lower income affordable housing, and addressing the short-term vacation rentals trend. Perhaps most significantly from an implementation perspective, City Council directed that this update designate affordable housing as a Local Priority Use eligible for water connections reserved for affordable housing.

The backdrop of the City's focus on affordable housing was a statewide housing shortage. A significant amount of housing legislation came out of that timeframe. Some of the legislation was applicable to Half Moon Bay, including changes to State accessory dwelling unit ordinance. Other laws, such as SB 35 (affordable housing streamlining enacted in 2017) and SB 330 (Housing Crisis Act of 2019), included substantial exemptions for the Coastal Zone. Despite these allowances, the City Council sought to address local housing needs within the confines of Measure D and specifically directed that the Land Use Plan update facilitate production of more affordable and diverse housing options.

State law on accessory dwelling units (ADUs) was rapidly developing at the time of the 2020 Land Use Plan update. ADUs provide a form of affordable housing with their smaller size, and support infill in residential neighborhoods that have already been developed and where infrastructure is provided, consistent with Coastal Act policy for concentrating development (Section 30250). This Land Use Plan recognizes the need to comply with State ADU law

where consistent with protection of coastal resources as another means of affordable housing options.

### **Community-Based Planning**

Community involvement was the hallmark of the Land Use Plan update process. The extensive community input introduced a range of topics and policy needs relevant to community character and the changing needs of the City's population, such as the aging of the local community, beyond the scope of the Coastal Act. However, these considerations, especially affordable housing, are so important to the community that City Council ensured that they are addressed in policy embedded into the Land Use Plan. This Land Use Plan update establishes that the community's needs are necessities supportive of Half Moon Bay's obligation to provide for visitor-serving priority uses, even though the community's needs in some cases, especially for diverse and more affordable residential development, are traditionally considered to be non-priority. Community engagement efforts for the Land Use Plan update are summarized in Appendix E.

### **Sustainability and Resilience**

Leading up to the Plan update, the Half Moon Bay City Council emphasized sustainability and resilience through climate adaptation planning, emergency preparedness programs and identification of infrastructure investments that would withstand future conditions anticipated to be exacerbated by climate change. Policies in every chapter of the Land Use Plan align with these City priorities and are consistent with the Coastal Act and Coastal Commission guidance.

## **Land Use Plan Framework Policies**

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This Framework chapter has given an overview of the legal framework for the City of Half Moon Bay LCP, the context and primary issues addressed in the original Land Use Plan, and the City's changed land use circumstances and existing conditions since certification of the Land Use Plan in 1996. This overview is provided to set the context for the chapters and policies that follow that will govern land use and development in Half Moon Bay. The original Land Use Plan contained five foundational policies that are brought forward, updated, and supplemented here to guide policy application and decision making.

- 1-1. Coastal Act Guiding Policies.** The Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act (Sections 30210-30264) are the guiding policies of the Land Use Plan and are incorporated herein by reference and set forth in full.
- 1-2. Coastal Resource Protection Priorities.** Protection of ESHA, public access and other coastal resources are a high priority for the City. To the extent that any policies in this Land Use Plan (which serves as the City's General Plan Land Use Element) and other elements of the City's General Plan are ambiguous, the City shall interpret them in the way that best protects ESHA and other coastal resources and maximizes public access. In advance of updating the Implementation Plan for

conformance with the policies of the 2020 Land Use Plan, the policies of the Land Use Plan shall provide the standard of review for any proposed new development, including where these policies are more protective of ESHA and other coastal resources and maximize public access as consistent with the Coastal Act.

- 1-3. Findings for Development Approval.** The City shall make the findings for all development that requires a discretionary permit that the development meets the standards set forth in all applicable Land Use Plan policies. The City shall not issue a development permit if it cannot make the required findings.
- 1-4. Plan Narrative.** The narrative of the Land Use Plan is intended as elaboration of and justification for the Plan policies and map designations. Therefore, the narrative shall be considered a part of the Land Use Plan, serving as interpretive guidance and findings justifying the specified policies and maps.
- 1-5. Social Equity and Environmental Justice.** Implementation of the LCP shall promote social equity and environmental justice, including the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures and incomes.
  - a. When acting on a coastal development permit, amending the LCP, or otherwise implementing the LCP, the City shall consider environmental justice and, where applicable, the equitable distribution of environmental benefits throughout the state. The City shall encourage equitable civic engagement and social inclusion in public decision-making regarding coastal development, prioritizing efforts to reach low-income households and limited English-speaking households.
  - b. No person shall be discriminated against by implementation of the LCP on the basis of race, national origin, ethnic group identification, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, color, genetic information, or disability.