SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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DATE: May 18, 2015

TO: JoAnna Bullock, Senior Regional Planner
Association of Bay Area Governments

FROM: AnMarie Rodgers (Matthew Dito for AnMarie Rodgers)
Senior Policy Advisor, SF Planning Department

CC: Honorable Supervisor Eric Mar, ABAG Delegate for San Francisco
Nicole Elliott, Mayor Edwin Lee's Legislative Director
Amber Crabbe, SFCTA Assistant Deputy Director for Policy

RE: Priority Conservation Areas in San Francisco

Attached is San Francisco Board of Supervisors File No. 150316, adopted by the Board on April 21, 2015, and signed by Mayor Edwin Lee on April 30, 2015, which authorizes the nominations of five Priority Conservation Areas in San Francisco: Palou Phelps Natural Area, Bayview Hill Natural Area, Green Connections: McLaren Park Pivot, Crosstown Trail: Connecting Twin Peaks Bio-Region/Glen Canyon (aka Twin Peaks Bio-Region), and the San Francisco Bay Water Trail. In this packet you will find applications and support for the first four, while the State Coastal Conservancy will be submitting the application for the San Francisco Bay Water Trail.

Previously, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors authorized the nullification of the four original Priority Conservation Areas so that the Planning Department could coordinate a citywide effort to study the program and determine the best selections for San Francisco.

Enclosed you will find the following:

1. Board File No. 150316
2. Summary of nominations, including descriptions, locations, opportunities, and policy support for each Priority Conservation Area
3. Applications and maps for each Priority Conservation Area
4. A list of private parcels within each Priority Conservation Area
5. Urban Bird Refuge Map

The Planning Department has coordinated this process for the City and County of San Francisco. Matthew Dito led this effort. He may be reached at (415) 575-9164 should you have any questions.

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2015 Priority Conservation Area Nominations

City and County of San Francisco

Prepared by the San Francisco Planning Department, in consultation with the Department of the Environment, Recreation and Parks Department, the California Native Plant Society, the Nature Conservancy, and the Greenbelt Alliance.

Introduction: The opportunity to select new areas for designation has allowed the Planning Department to coordinate with other City agencies and non-profit groups to re-evaluate the previous Priority Conservation Areas (hereinafter "PCA"), while also looking at new ones, against a newer, more complete set of criteria. In addition, this opportunity allowed us to incorporate more recent City policies into the rationale for selecting or maintaining the selection of a Priority Conservation Area.

Previously, San Francisco had four PCA designations in the following areas:

1) Palou Phelps Natural Area
2) Bayview Radio Property
3) Aquavista/Twin Peaks
4) Sutro Tower

Following a collaborative process with all the aforementioned parties, a selection of four PCAs was made. A group of potential sites was developed through a meeting with all parties, and open communication thereafter to determine the tentative selections.

The working group recommends the following four PCAs:

1) Palou Phelps Natural Area
2) Bayview Hill Natural Area
3) Green Connections: McLaren Park Pivot
4) Crosstown Trail: Connecting Twin Peaks Bio-Region/Glen Canyon

These areas reflect a science-based mapping approach on the part of the Department of the Environment and the Greenbelt Alliance, to supplement the hands-on and observational work done in these areas by the California Native Plant society, while the Planning Department and the Recreation and Parks department provided policy support. In the end, two PCAs remained (Palou Phelps Natural Area and Bayview Radio Property, with the latter getting a slight name change), with a third PCA being developed based on recent policies and the working group (Green Connections: McLaren Park Pivot), and the fourth becoming an amalgamation of the Twin Peaks and Sutro Tower PCAs (Crosstown Trail: Connecting Twin Peaks Bio-Region/Glen Canyon).

These four PCAs provide a full range of conservation functions, including natural landscapes with functioning habitats and aquatic ecosystems; urban greening opportunities that increase habitat connectivity improve community health and may daylight urban creeks; and regional recreational assets such as bayland parks and regional trails. Each of the PCAs is described below with policy support from adopted policy documents of the City and County of San Francisco.

1. **Palou Phelps Natural Area**

   - **Description:** This small park has a playground at its northern entrance, the only place where it is flat. The rest of the park is primarily steep grasslands intersected with low-impact trails, city views, and habitat supporting a variety of bird species. During summer and early fall the land is parched and golden brown, as native grasses drop their seeds and await the winter rains. By February the hills transform to a verdant green, punctuated in the spring with a variety of color bursts by native wildflowers, including California poppy, blue-eyed grass, checkerbloom, and mule's ears.

   - **Location:** This small park lies in the Southeastern portion of San Francisco, in the Bayview neighborhood. The park is bordered by Palou Avenue to the South, Newhall Street to the East, and Bridgeview Drive to the South. The park bisects Quesada Avenue, which runs Northwest to Southeast.

   - **Opportunities:** This area contains several private lots with the potential to be developed. The lots are adjacent, and in some cases, on the park. This makes these lots a high priority for acquisition. In addition, the park is home to a vibrant and diverse assemblage of plants and wildlife, which face high risk from potential development. The area is easily accessible with several Muni bus lines, and the KT-light rail line serving the neighborhood.

   - **Policy Support:**
     - Designated Open Space Area
     - Part of the Natural Areas Program
     - Policy 3.2 in Recreation and Open Space Element of the General Plan (hereinafter "ROSE"): Establish and implement a network of Green Connections that increases access to parks, open spaces, and the waterfront. (Area is one block from Green Connections Route #21)
     - Designated as a Bird Refuge Area by Planning Code Section 139

2. **Bayview Hill Natural Area**
   - **Description:** Bayview Park supports perhaps the most diverse assemblage of plants and animals in the City's natural areas system. Its grassland has some of the most beautiful wildflower displays in San Francisco. Other plant communities here include coastal scrub, eucalyptus and oak groves, and the largest Islais cherry population in the city. On a sunny day a visitor will likely encounter western fence lizards, California alligator lizards, or one of many non-poisonous snakes, such as the common garter snake, Pacific gopher snake, or Pacific ring-neck snake. Red-tailed hawks are often seen soaring overhead. Great horned owls rest in the notches of trees during the day, and woodpeckers can be heard hammering for an insect snack.

     The primary trail is a paved road that loops through the park, beginning and ending at the eastern end of Key Avenue. Remnants of stairs and retaining walls built by the Works Progress Administration during the Depression can still be seen along the roadway.

The radio tower on the northwest end of this site was among the four former San Francisco PCAs. The Natural Areas Program manages their property on Bayview Hill, as well as – in cooperation with the California Native Plant Society, who has permission from the landowner – occasionally the radio tower property since it stands among the richest grasslands in San Francisco. Bayview Hill is a critically important natural area in the city, both biologically for rare plants and wildlife habitat and endangered species habitat, but also for the potential to connect more thoroughly the Bayview community to the site.

- **Location:** This large natural area lies in the Southeastern portion of San Francisco, in the Bayview neighborhood. This is an easily accessible area, in close proximity to Highway 101, and the Muni KT-light rail line with a drop off point one block from the area. Bayview Hill is bounded by Le Conte Avenue to the North, Jamestown Avenue to the East, the Highway to the West, and is bisected by both Key Avenue and Bayview Park Road.

- **Opportunities:** Bayview Hill is a critically important natural area in the city, both biologically for rare plants and wildlife habitat and endangered species habitat, but also for the potential to connect more thoroughly the Bayview community to the site. The hill is a patchwork quilt of multiple City and private landowners as well as CalTrans, and so it is important to be a focus of the PCA program, so that future efforts can be made to permanently secure the private and state lands from development and to engender ongoing stewardship. Please see the attached table for more details about the private lots on Bayview Hill.

- **Policy Support:**
  - Designated Open Space Area
  - Part of Natural Areas Program
  - ROSE Policy 2.1: Prioritize acquisition of open space in high needs areas. (Area has several parcels of high ecological value in private ownership)
  - ROSE Policy 3.2: Establish and implement a network of Green Connections that increases access to parks, open spaces, and the waterfront. (Green Connections #23 runs through area)
  - High needs area (Map 07 in ROSE)
  - Prioritized for acquisition as an open space in a high need area
  - Designated as a Bird Refuge Area by Planning Code Section 139

3. Green Connections: McLaren Park Pivot

- **Description:** This Priority Conservation Area encompasses McLaren Park and Green Connections routes #10, #11, #12, #20, #21, and #24. McLaren Park acts as a central pivot point for the Green Connections routes, which use the Park as a central hub as they disperse throughout the City. The Green Connections serve to help connect McLaren Park to nearly every section of the City. For example, Green Connections Route #24 uses Route #12 as a starting point and runs the around the entire coast of San Francisco, providing a connection to Ocean Beach, which also provides numerous conservation opportunities.

  Finally, just over the county line from these routes/parks in San Mateo, a network of open lands could connect this PCA to San Bruno Mountain, the crown jewel of the

Franciscan Bioregion (also proposed to be a Priority Conservation Area). Green Connections Route #24 traverses many important natural areas and open spaces in Bayview Hunters Point, including India Basin, the Hunter's Point serpentine hillside wildlflower site, Heron's Head Park, and other Port of San Francisco properties that are part of the planned Blue Greenway.

- **Location:** John McLaren Park resides in the Central Southern portion of the City, surrounded by the Excelsior, Portola, and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods. Access to the park is bolstered by its proximity to both Highway 280 on the West, and Highway 101 to the East. In addition, Bay Area Rapid Transit services the region blocks from the park. The Green Connections routes traverse most areas of the City and provide more access to the park.

- **Opportunities:** These connections are particularly important for underserved communities, and they connect to other extremely important open spaces and natural areas, such as Lake Merced and Candlestick State Park, which has a new General Management Plan and a massive wetland restoration at Yosemite Slough. Route #12, in particular, has important DPW open space along Brotherhood Way, where an urban farm is proposed, as well as unique canyon live oak habitat further west behind the churches on the way to Lake Merced. There is also another urban farm proposed for midway on this route, at the southwestern most corner of the McLaren Park native grasslands.

- **Policy Support:**
  - Green Connections
  - ROSE Policy 1.1: Encourage the dynamic and flexible use of existing open spaces and promote a variety of recreation and open space uses, where appropriate. (Area would serve as both a recreational area through the Green Connections, and as open space due to the wildlife in the area)
  - ROSE Policy 1.5: Prioritize the better utilization of McLaren Park, Ocean Beach, the Southeastern Waterfront and other underutilized significant open spaces. (McLaren Park serves as the center of this PCA)
  - High needs area (Map 07 in ROSE)
  - ROSE Policy 2.1: Prioritize acquisition of open space in high needs areas.
  - Part of Natural Areas Program
  - Designated as a Bird Refuge Area by Planning Code Section 139

4. Crosstown Trail: Connecting Twin Peaks Bio-Region/Glen Canyon

- **Description:** Two previous PCAs were located in this region of the city, where the densest concentration of small- and medium-sized open space exists in the San Francisco. The area is named for the iconic Twin Peaks, which is a very important natural area, in addition to being the city's most iconic hilltop. Twin Peaks is habitat for the federally-listed mission blue butterfly and supports a rare coastal grassland habitat type. The region overall is a larger patchwork quilt of natural areas and open spaces, owned by as many as nine different City departments. The region includes sites as diverse as UCSF Mt. Sutro Open Space Preserve, the Garden for the Environment, the landscape surrounding Laguna Honda Hospital and Glen Canyon Park. Several creeks originate and flow out of the bioregion, and each of these needs conservation attention.

- **Location:** The Twin Peaks Bio-Region is located in the heart of San Francisco, surrounded by the Twin Peaks, Diamond Heights, and Inner Sunset neighborhoods. The area has numerous public transportation options, including two nearby light rail stops at Castro Station and Forest Hill Station. The Crosstown Trail runs from the northern part of the San Francisco, starting in the Presidio, all the way to John McLaren Park in the Southern portion of the City, part of the Green Connections PCA.

- **Opportunities:** Planners, advocates and stewards have identified the Twin Peaks Bioregion as an important conservation priority and a spectacular opportunity to create an intentional bioregional park preserve in the heart of the city. The Bay Area Ridge Trail, the Creeks to Peaks Trail and the proposed Crosstown Trail (Green Connection #23) traverse the area, and people hope to create a loop trail through the region as well. The section of the creek that runs through Glen Canyon Park presents an opportunity for urban creek daylighting, a technique that would restore the creek to a more natural state, connect residents to the natural hydrologic processes, and in turn improve the riparian environment. As described by the Native California Plant Society, this area is of the utmost importance because here "biological diversity is at an irreducible minimum".

- **Policy Support:**
  - Designated Open Space Area
  - Green Connections
  - ROSE Policy 1.2: Prioritize renovation in highly-utilized open spaces and recreation facilities and in high needs areas.
  - Part of Natural Areas Program

ATTACHMENT 1

Priority Conservation Area Designation Application Form

Enter information in the spaces provided. E-mail this completed application form and attachments requested as part of this form to ABAG Planning **by May 30, 2015**. If e-mailing is not possible, a hard copy of materials can be mailed to PCA Applications, Association of Bay Area Governments, P.O. Box 2050, Oakland, CA 94604-2050.

PART 1: AREA INFORMATION

Proposed Name	Palou Phelps Natural Area
Description	SEE ATTACHED
Location (include map and text description)	Palou Avenue and Phelps Street, San Francisco, CA
Total Acreage	2.60 acres

PART 2: SPONSOR(S)

Lead Nominating Agency/Organization	San Francisco Planning Department
Staff Person	Matthew Dito
Address	1650 Mission Street
Phone Number(s)	(415) 575-9164
E-mail address	matthew.dito@sfgov.org
Partnering Agency(ies)/Organization(s)	SF Department of the Environment

PART 3: DESIGNATION

Selected Designation – Select one or more designation for the proposed PCA

☑ **Natural Landscapes** ☐ **Agricultural Lands** ☐ **Urban Greening** ☑ **Regional Recreation**

PART 4: BENEFITS

Primary Benefit(s) – Select one or more benefits and co-benefits for the proposed PCA

Community Health, Recreation, Compact Growth

PART 5: ATTACHMENTS

Required

1. Copy of adopted resolution by City Council, Board of Supervisors, or Open Space or Park District Board.
2. Attach a map showing the proposed general area boundaries and location. Include other relevant information, such as topography or an aerial photograph, to show the context for protection of this area.
3. Provide text, data, maps, etc. that demonstrate primary benefit(s) of the relevant designation and co-benefit(s).

Optional

4. Letters of Support from partner agencies or organizations.
5. Additional data, maps, supportive local policies.

Palou Phelps Natural Area

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0 0.015 0.03 0.06 Miles

Printed: 20 April, 2015

Palou Phelps Natural Area

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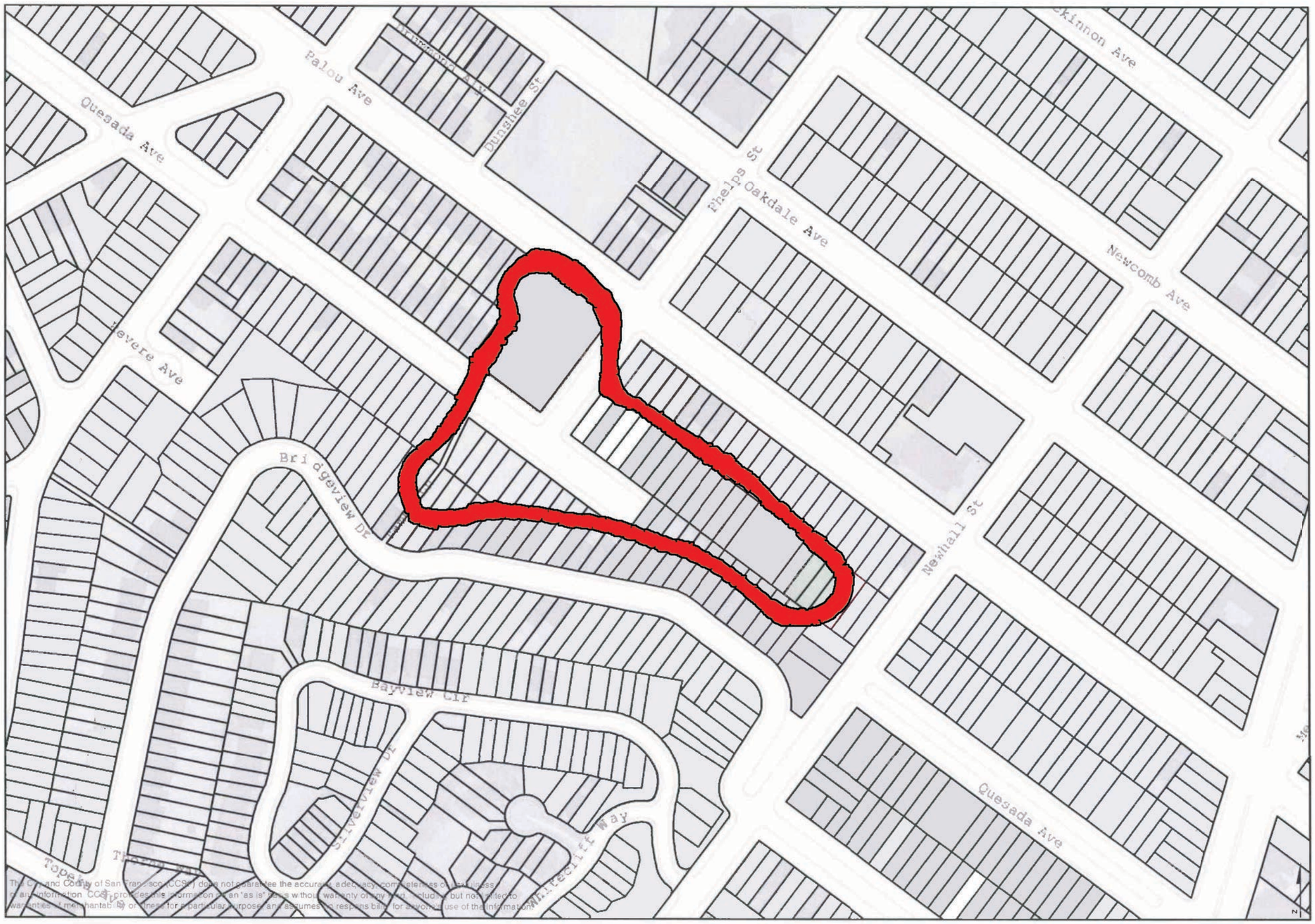

0 0.015 0.03 0.06 Miles

Printed: 20 April, 2015

Private Land Sites within the proposed PCA Nomination Regions

These parcels represent the opportunities for conservation easements to ensure these holdings do not face the risk of development

Area/Region	Number	Address	Parcel Number	Ownership	Parcel Size (sq ft)	Near to Managed Natural Areas Program Site	Near a Trail	Historical Note about The Area/Parcel:	Habitat and Biodiversity
Bay View Hill	1	1 **Bayview Park Road**	4991001C	C&E Haas development Co LLC	158,340	Yes, Next to NAP	No, (but relatively close to the proposed Bay Trail)	In 1997, SF County acquired 16 acres of upper northeast slope for open space use	Rare Plants
	2	Bayview Park Road	4991703	SF Executive Park FCL	910,840	Yes next to NAP	No, (but relatively close to the proposed Bay Trail)	Executive Park Redevelopment project, and the Hill side is to re main wild, undeveloped according to the approved plans	Calippe Silverspot (Federally-listed butterfly)
	3	James Town Ave.	4991277	New James Town LP	299,175	Yes, Next to NAP	Yes, Near proposed Trail map as part of Hunter's Point Redevelopment Project	Hill side undeveloped, serpentine Rock and Landslide hazard. Much of the land is developed and has structure on it, except for hill side	
	4	James Town Ave.	4991276	Jamestown Co LLC	299,138	Yes, Next to NAP	Yes, Near proposed Trail map as part of Hunter's Point	Hill side undeveloped, serpentine Rock and Landslide	

							Redevelopment Project	hazard. Much of the land is developed and has structure on it, except for hill side	
Mt. Sutro/UCSF	1	Medical Center Way	2634A005	Upton and Oliver Funding Corp.	122,847	Next to Mt. Sutro Open Space,	Yes, outlet for Proposed new Bay Area Ridge Trail; near Farnsworth Trailhead; Crosstown Trail	Part of the parcel has UCSF buildings on it. Large Hillside Potential natural area	Some remaining habitat
	2	Stanyan Street	*2644009A*	Carla W. Reiter 1988 Trust	43,167	Yes, next to NAP on Mt. Sutro	Yes, adjacent to Mt. Sutro Historic Trail	Slope 20% or greater. This property is within 300' of a possible urban bird refuge. The PCR 18406 established policies for this property. Also, zoned for one residential house	Woodland creek
	3	Kirkham Street	2636001	Westlake Kirkham heights LLC	247,697	Next to Mt. Sutro Open Space	Yes, near Mt. Sutro Historic Trail	In 1950 build 86 units. Building area 71,000 Sq ft	Some remaining habitat
	4	6-8 Locksley Ave.	2636003	Avalon Bay Communities Inc	146,697	No	No	Large hillside	
	5	Crestmont Drive	2636025	SF Overlook Development	50,183	No	Yes, near Mt. Sutro Historic Trail	Zoned as Urban bird Refuge. In 2014 approved plans to build 34 dwellings and 40 off-street parking spaces. Slope	

	6	Crestmont Drive	2636028	SF FMLY HMS LLC	24,015	No	Yes, near Mt. Sutro Historic Trail	20% or greater. Zoned as Urban bird Refuge. In 2014 approved plans to build 34 dwellings and 40 off-street parking spaces. Slope	
	7	Locksley ave.	2635046	Mt. Sutro Terrace Ass. LTD	64,468	No	No	20% or greater. Has 86 units build on it in 1978. Slope of 20% or greater on the green hill site	
	8	Crestmont Drive	2635046	Lex Company LLC	22,000	No	No	Back in 1987, plans to build Duplex and family Homes	
Laguna Honda Reservoir	1	Laguna Honda BLVD	2043002	Wood Eugena	55,852	Yes, next to PUC land managed by NAP	Potential community connection		Coastal sage scrub
	2	Laguna Honda Blvd	2643A025	Porter Sandy	74,997	Yes, next to PUC Land Managed by NAP			Coastal sage scrub
Sutro Tower	1	**1 La Avanzada Stree**t	2724003	Suto Tower Inc.	224,996	In between Sutro Open Space Reserve and Twin Peaks	Along proposed Bay Area Ridge Trail alignment, Crosstown Trail	In 1974, 22,000 Sq ft were built/tower station. Undergoing antennae additions.	Water feature
	2	2 La Avanzada Street	2724002	Pacific Coast Construction	9,909	In between Sutro Open Space Reserve and Twin Peaks	Along proposed new Bay Area Ridge Trail alignment, Crosstown	Zoned as One-single family Detached dwelling.	Water feature

	3	Dellbrooke Ave	2724004	Pacific Coast Construction Co H	125,496	In between Sutro Open Space Reserve and Twin Peaks	Trail Along proposed new Bay Area Ridge Trail alignment, Crosstown Trail	Zoned as One-single family Detached dwelling.	
Twin Peaks	1	**Aquavista Way**	2798029	Inouye Joyce	51,945	Yes, next to NAP	Bay Area Ridge Trail, Crosstown Trail, Creeks to Peaks Trail	Zoned as Residential House	Mission blue butterfly, coastal scrub
Palou Phelps Area	1	Quesada Ave	5328027	Michael J. Shannon Revoc Lvg	2,500	Yes, right next to NAP	GC #21	Under Rec and Park QUESADA Jurisdiction	Native grassland
	2	Quesada Ave	5328026	Michael J. Shannon Revoc Lvg	2,500	Yes, right next to NAP	GC #21	Under Rec and Park QUESADA Jurisdiction	Native grassland
	3	Quesada Ave	5328024	Sherrod William H Touati Ni	2,495	Yes, right next to NAP	GC #21	Under Rec and Park QUESADA Jurisdiction	Native grassland
	4	**Quesada Ave**	5336047	Wu Shu Zhen	3,454	Yes	GC #21		Native grassland
	5	**Quesada Ave**	5336048	Wu Shu Zhen	2,495	Yes	GC #21		Native grassland
	6	**Quesada Ave**	5336049	Wu Shu Zhen	2,495	Yes	GC #21		Native grassland
	7	**Quesada Ave**	5336001	Wu Shu Zhen	3,197	Yes	GC #21		Native grassland
	8	1970 Revere Ave	5336059	Revere LLC	11,247	No, but very close	GC #21	Large apparently whole, undeveloped private lot, landlocked	
Total Number of Parcels	26								

Bolded sites are from the previous PCA process. Green sites are also a high priority.

Urban Bird Refuge *

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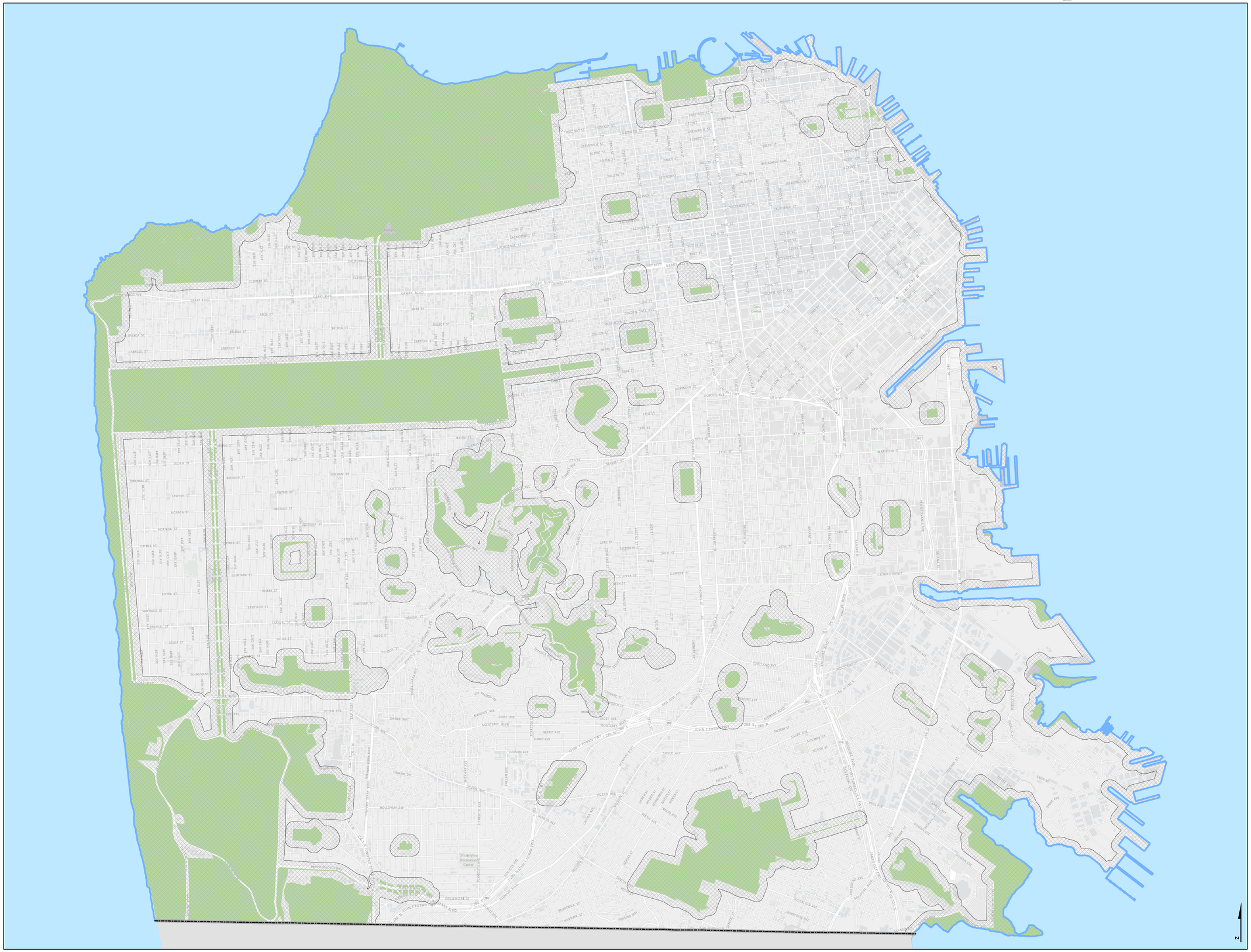
Areas within 300ft of the following:

- Open Water
- Inland Waterbodies Greater Than 2 Acres in Size
- Open Spaces Greater Than 2 Acres in Size
- Shoreline



0 600 1,200 2,400 Feet

City & County of San Francisco Planning Department
Printed July 23 2014

* Areas indicated are within 300 feet of an urban bird refuge. Planning staff will need to verify if the subject parcels are within an unobstructed line from the refuge to determine if Section 139(c)1 Planning Code controls apply. This map is subject to change.