



Los Ranchitos Improvement Association
P.O. Box 4146
San Rafael CA 94913 - 4146

April 29, 2019

Barry Miller, Consulting Project Engineer
City of San Rafael
Community Development Department
1400 Fifth Street
San Rafael, CA, 94901

Subject: General Plan 2040 and Downtown Precise Plan EIR

Dear Mr. Miller:

The Los Ranchitos Improvement Association (LRIA) represents over 160 homes in the 94903 area. We have the following three requests for the EIR on SR's 2040 GP update:

1. Consider impacts of removing Los Ranchitos from San Rafael's Sphere of Influence (SOI)
2. Consider impacts of Los Ranchitos being a designated Community Separator in the Marin County General Plan consistent with the 2008 Marin County Open Space District's Strategic Master Plan
3. Align San Rafael's General Plan Open Space policies with the 2008 Marin County Open Space District's Strategic Master Plan

Background for removal from SOI

Reasonably Foreseeable Conditions: The County General Plan Open Space Element and the MCOSD Strategic Master Plan

Since inception in 1949, Los Ranchitos has been zoned for rural agriculture / light farming, equestrian use, 1-acre minimum size parcels, as recognized in the Marin County Agricultural Lands map filed with the state (see attached). During San Rafael's piecemeal annexation of the Terra Linda area, *prior to the formation of LAFCO in 1963*, Los Ranchitos was bypassed. The County created CSA#19 and, in conjunction with San Rafael, Los Ranchitos was placed into SR's SOI **solely** to supply the area with paramedic and fire protection services from the city of San Rafael.

Los Ranchitos is not expected to be annexed to the City within the time frame of the plan due to:

- Existing required services are adequately provided to Los Ranchitos, and *no reasonably foreseeable conditions indicate a future need for any additional urban services*
- Urban improvement upgrade costs associated with conversion of existing and satisfactory rural conditions (no sidewalks, no curbs, few streetlights) to urban standards
- Existing zoning and historical land uses supporting agricultural, light farming, and equestrian uses that are incompatible with urban usage
- *Any proposal for city annexation would pose a direct conflict with the County General Plan Open Space Element and the MCOSD Strategic Master Plan*
- Existing Ridge and Upland Greenbelt (RUG) designation over part of Los Ranchitos shows its role as community separator contiguous with priority MCOSD lands
- Strong landowner opposition precludes annexation

Email: Iriaboard@gmail.com

Background for Community Separator status and Open Space policies:

The MCOSD Open Space Strategic Master Plan

The MCOSD Strategic Master Plan was developed after San Rafael developed their 2020 General Plan. The 2040 GP will need to be consistent with the goals and priorities of this Master Plan.

The Land Conservation element of the 2008 MCOSD Strategic Plan targets preservation of lands within the Central Marin Ridglands as a priority. From the MCOSD Plan, *"Targeted lands serve as community separators and greenbelts as defined in the Countywide Plan, as wildlife corridors, and as links to other public lands."* The Marin County General Plan Open Space element currently overlays the hilly terrain of Los Ranchitos with the Ridge and Upland Greenbelt (RUG) designation; is contiguous with MSOSD's priority Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow divide lands; and serves as an important community separator between Terra Linda and San Rafael. The landowners of Los Ranchitos are actively working with Marin LAFCO, the MCOSD, and the Board of Supervisors to establish the entire Los Ranchitos area as a designated community separator in the update of the Marin County General Plan Open Space element, in order to be consistent with the MCOSD Open Space Strategic Master Plan and to remove the entire area from the City of San Rafael's sphere of influence.

Note: This conservation action is supported by the North Bay office of Greenbelt Alliance.

San Rafael's NOP and city planning maps only show the SOI city boundaries but do not break out this important Open Space/RUG distinction. LR is not an island but an extension, or peninsula, of the West Marin rural corridor. Our agricultural designation via zoning is part of the extension. Maps attached.

Sincerely,



Leyla R. Hill, President

Los Ranchitos Improvement Association (LRIA)

Preserving and Maintaining Los Ranchitos's unique way of life since 1952

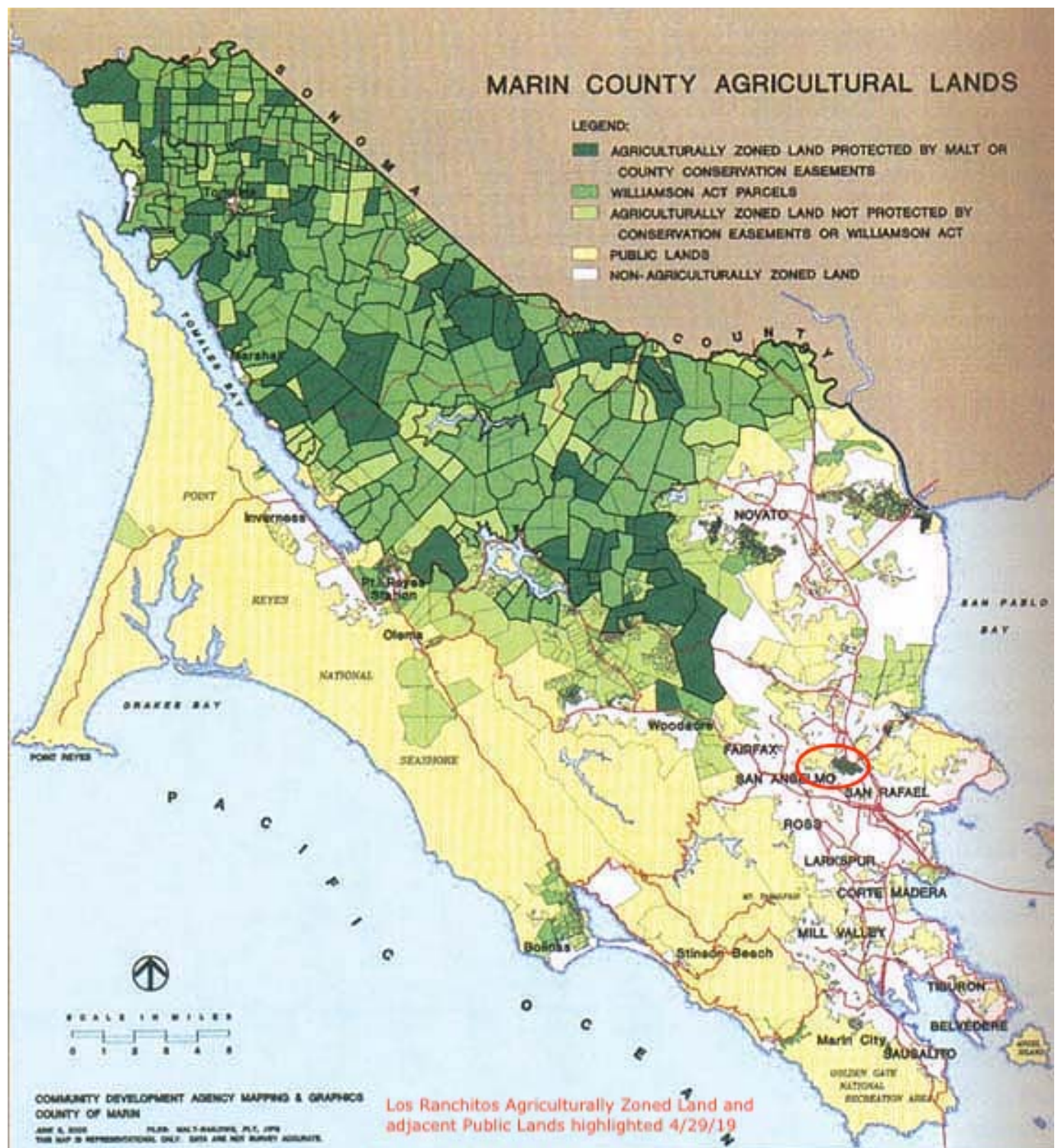
Maps attached:

Marin County Agricultural Lands (Los Ranchitos highlighted)

Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Divide Open Space Preserve (Los Ranchitos highlighted)

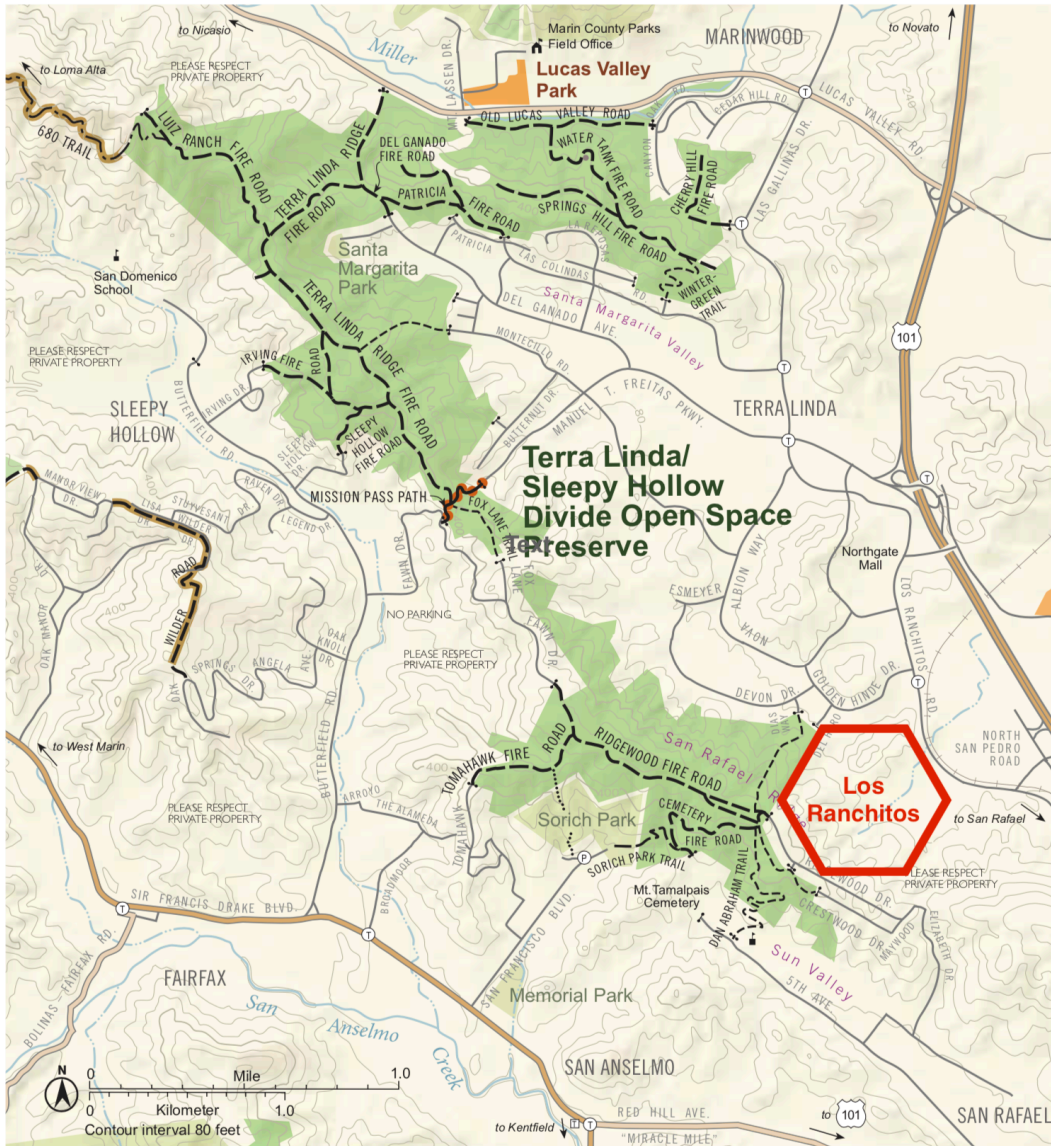
MCOSD (Marin County Open Space District) Roads (Los Ranchitos highlighted)

San Rafael Planning Area Boundary Map



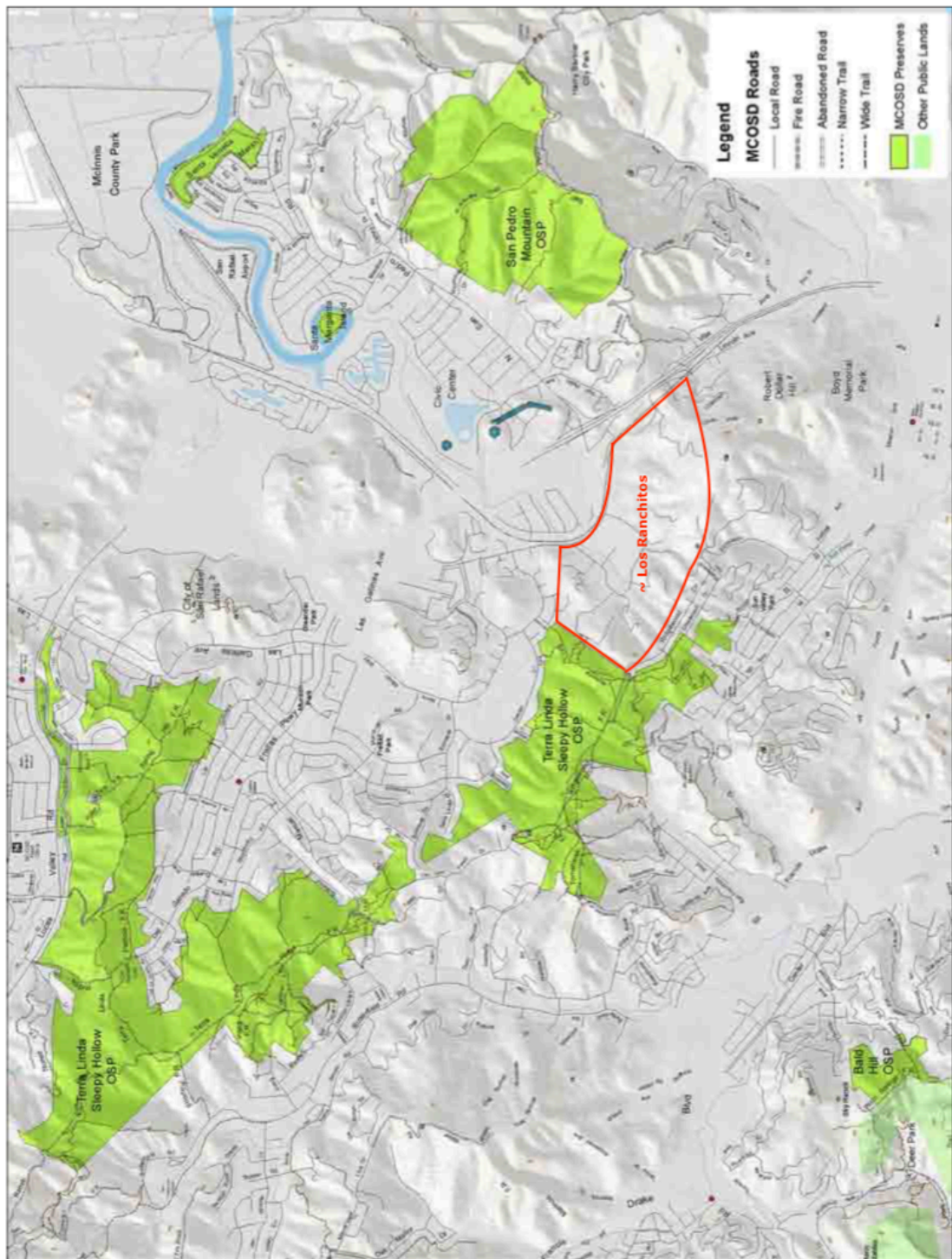


TERRA LINDA/ SLEEPY HOLLOW DIVIDE OPEN SPACE PRESERVE



| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Featured Open Space Preserve | Multiuse Fire Road (Hikers, Bicyclists & Equestrians) | Parking Lot | Major Road |
| County Parks | Multiuse Trail (Hikers, Bicyclists & Equestrians) | Golden Gate Transit | Local Road |
| Adjacent Open Space Preserve | Trail (Hikers & Equestrians) | West Marin Stage | County Trail Easements |
| Other Public Land | Hiking-only Trail | Gate | County Multiuse Pathways |
| | Bike Path | School | Regional Trails |

marincountyparks.org



Marin County Open Space District
Figure 5-6
Region 5

SOURCE: Marin County Open Space District, 2012



Figure 2
San Rafael Planning Area Boundary Map