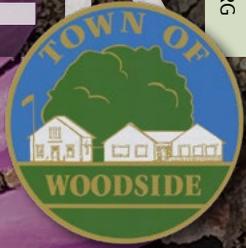


NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF WOODSIDE

WOODSIDER



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MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Welcome

It has been a season of change in the Town of Woodside.

Many of you have participated in the Town Council meetings devoted to the Town's required update to its housing plan, known as the Housing Element. The Town is required to plan for an additional 328 housing units over the next eight years, a five-fold increase over the last eight years. This is a challenge faced by all cities and towns in California. While the Town remains focused on increasing housing supply through the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), as has been done historically, new housing prototypes are being actively considered.

The Council also had good participation during the redistricting process. To comply with the California Voting Rights Act, the Town hired a demographer to lead the community in the establishment of a "by-district" election system. This replaces the previous "from-district" election system. Following the statutory requirements for the establishment of Council districts, this year's election will begin the transition to the new five-member Council. Over the next two elections in 2022 and 2024, voters in each district will only vote for Councilmembers from their own district. This November, Woodsiders in Districts 2 and 3 will be electing the first ever "by-district" members to the Town Council.

/ CONTINUED ON BACK COVER

HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

by Jackie Young, AICP CEP, Planning Director

What is a Housing Element?

A Housing Element is one of the seven mandatory elements required by the State of California in a General Plan (a blueprint for development and conservation). A Housing Element is updated every eight years, and to be certified by the State, must be reviewed and approved by local decisionmakers and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). A Housing Element contains goals, policies and strategies for meeting the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). RHNA is assigned by the State by region. Regional governments (for Woodside this is the Association of Bay Area Governments, or ABAG) then assigns RHNA allocation to individual municipalities.



CYCLE 5 HOUSING ELEMENT

Woodside's current Housing Cycle (Cycle 5) covers 2015-2022, and the Town's RHNA allocation is 62 units (the Town's portion of the RHNA of 187,990 units assigned to the nine Bay Area counties). This allocation is further distributed by income affordability level. The breakdown for our 62 units is: 23 very low, 13 low, 15 moderate, and 11 above moderate income. The Town's State-certified Housing Element recognizes ADUs as the Town's affordable units — according to a formula which was State approved. The affordability formula approved by HCD for the Cycle 5 Housing Element is: 60% extremely low, 10% very low, 15% low, 10% moderate, and 5% above moderate income (with no required use/rent cost disclosure required). **The Town met the Cycle 5 RHNA target by the end of 2021. In Fiscal Year 2021/2022, building permits were issued for 21 ADUs.**

CYCLE 6 HOUSING ELEMENT

For Cycle 6 (2023- 2031), the Bay Area has been assigned 441,176 units (2.3 times increase from Cycle 5). San Mateo County has been assigned 47,687 units; of which, Woodside's allocation is **328 units**. The assigned 328 units are further broken down by income level, in a manner similar to previous cycles: 90 very low, 52 low, 52 moderate, and 134 above moderate income.

The Town's recent highest two fiscal years of unit production (2019 and 2022) averaged 23 units per year (the sum of new main residences and new ADUs), which, if projected over an eight-year period, would only yield 184 units (HCD requires recent historical data for housing projections, with increases only being accepted with substantive programs). The Town therefore held a series of public meetings to consider higher density rezoning and additional policies and strategies to meet the 328-unit allocation for 2023-2031. On July 12, 2022, the Town Council approved the draft Cycle 6 Housing Element, with revisions responsive to comments, and directed transmittal to HCD. The revisions were completed on July 16, 2022, and the draft Housing Element (posted under "What's New" on the Town website home page) was sent to HCD on July 17, 2022. HCD acknowledged receipt on July 18, 2022. This initiates a 90-day HCD review period. A comment letter will follow from HCD, to which the Town must respond to the satisfaction of HCD to obtain State certification.

The draft Cycle 6 Housing Element (an 8-year cycle) contains a RHNA plan for the 328 housing units, which includes: ADUs (160 units); single-family dwellings (48 units); pipeline projects (20 ADUs and 8 sfds, not finalized by June 30, 2022), projected SB9 projects (16 units); land divisions in process (13 sfds and 9 ADUs); an approved land division (2 sfds and 3 ADUs); redevelopment of one condemned property (1 sfd and 1 ADU); Cañada College faculty and staff housing (80 units); and rezoning to higher density of (3) Town-owned sites and (1) private property (40 units). This plans for 401 units, which reflects a 22% buffer (HCD recommends including a 20% buffer for planning purposes).

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS)

The draft Cycle 6 Housing Element relies on ADUs for approximately half of the Town's RHNA plan. Our ADU Ordinance was updated in July 2020, to reflect new State law which became effective and was implemented by the Town on the effective date of January 1, 2020.

The new State law allows all lots to have, by right, (1) 800 sf ADU, and (1) Junior ADU (i.e., a maximum 500 sf ADU, which is a part of the main house and easy to incorporate, e.g., no fire wall required); and reduced setbacks (4-foot side and rear). The Town of Woodside further allows the following: on lots 1-1.5 acres: (1) attached and (1) detached ADU, up to 1,500 sf; and, on lots > 1.5 acres: (2) ADUs — both can be detached — up to 1,500 sf. Every "single-family" parcel in Town is therefore allowed 3 units (a main residence and two ADUs, in varying forms).



ACTIONS TO SUPPORT RHNA GOALS

Code amendments can address permitting challenges and remove unnecessary obstacles to development. The draft Cycle 6 Housing Element contains programs to assist in achieving the RHNA goal (pages 3-35 through 3-43), including but not limited to:

ADUs:

- Program H1.3.a: Consider allowing more than two ADUs on parcels > 2 acres.
- Program H1.3.b: Consider modifying Town regulations that remove barriers to constructing ADUs and JADUs (e.g., septic, slope, ...).
- Program H1.3.c: Consider reducing permit fees for ADUs and JADUs.
- Program H1.3.d: Expedite processing for ADUs and JADUs.
- Program H1.3.e: Develop an amnesty program for unpermitted ADUs and JADUs.

Higher Density Housing:

- Program H2.1.a: Establish higher density zoning near freeway access (to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as there is no mass transit in Town).
- Program H2.1.b: Revisit the SB9 development standards (e.g., increase the allowable unit size).
- Policy H3.1: Support independent housing at Cañada College.
- Program H3.2.d: Rezone sites identified for higher density housing.
- Program H3.3.a: Consider reducing fees for higher density housing.
- Program H3.3.b: Expedite processing for higher density housing.

Upcoming meetings to consider Housing Element related topics, including higher density rezoning, General Plan amendments, zoning code changes, Specific Plan amendments, and Housing Element programs, are calendared for **September 21, 2022** (Planning Commission) and **September 27, 2022** (Town Council).

ADU WORKSHOPS

In past Housing Element cycles, the Town relied solely on the construction of ADUs to meet State housing requirements and affordability assignments. Given the five-fold+ increase in the Town's mandated housing target, the Town is promoting the construction of ADUs to an even greater degree in Cycle 6.

On five consecutive **Thursday evenings (dates below) at 6pm in Independence Hall (2955 Woodside Road, Woodside)**, the Town will host ADU Workshops for residents by their five newly adopted Town Council Districts (the link to a District locator by property address is posted on the registration link below).

District 1: 09/15/22, District 2: 09/22/22, District 3: 09/29/22,
District 4: 10/06/22, District 5: 10/13/22

At the ADU Workshops, recent Town Code updates compliant with new State laws (e.g., reduced setbacks and increased site coverage allowances) will be reviewed, and registered property owners will receive individual attention on ADU planning for their property (i.e., pre-registration, **two weeks in advance**, allows staff to have registrants' property records available at the workshop).

Register for your ADU Workshop at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TOWADUWorkshop>

ADOPTED HOUSING LEGISLATION

SB379 and SB99 require that the Housing Element update be coordinated with an update to the Safety Element or Local Hazards Mitigation Plan. The Town of Woodside adopted a Local Hazards Mitigation Plan on November 16, 2021, as part of the San Mateo County Multijurisdictional LHMP. This is included as **Appendix D** in the Draft Cycle 6 Housing Element.

SB9 was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 16, 2021, and became effective for all local jurisdictions on January 1, 2022. SB9 allows a property owner to split most any single-family lot into two and develop two units on each resulting lot with ministerial and objective design review only. The Town adopted an SB9 Ordinance, along with Objective Design Standards, on December 14, 2021.

KNOW YOUR ZONE

Zonehaven //

By knowing your Zone, you can help streamline the evacuation process by supporting personal readiness for hazardous weather events. In addition to helping you avoid unnecessary evacuation travel, this tool can also ease overcrowding at local shelters and increase public safety.

Evacuations are only called for when the lives and safety of those in the area being evacuated will be at risk. Once an evacuation has been called, gather your belongings (including your emergency supply kit) and leave as soon as possible for your personal safety. If time allows, secure your home by locking doors and windows. By following evacuation orders, you are protecting both yourself and first responders.

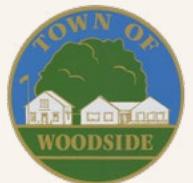


Find Your **Zone**

- 1 Go to **community.zonehaven.com**
- 2 **Enter your address** into the search bar
- 3 Find your zone in the pop-up window and **write it down**

TOWN OF WOODSIDE

Invites Applications for Architectural and Site Review Board



This appointment is for a vacant seat expiring February 2025.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
Friday, September 2, 2022,
by 5:00 p.m.

**INTERVIEW AND APPOINTMENT
BY TOWN COUNCIL:**
Tuesday, September 13, 2022,
at 7:00 p.m.

The Architectural and Site Review Board reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Director regarding community character, site planning, building design and landscape elements on residential and commercial applications.

The ASRB meets on the first and third Monday of the month at 4:30 p.m.

Interested residents may request information and applications from the Town Clerk, Jennifer Li, by e-mailing jli@woodsidetown.org.

How Woodside Properties Could Become Fire-safe by Unearthing Wildflowers

BY CRAIG DREMANN



Many long-time residents living in the Glens near Woodside's 14-acre Kite Hill Preserve say they recall when the meadows were filled with spring wildflowers, but over the years the hilly serpentine area was crowded out by flammable weeds.

As a boy living in Woodside, I recall playing among the flowers and butterflies in many parts of Woodside, but the landscape has come to look so different than I remembered in the past 50 years—drier, browner, and fewer spring wildflowers and more tall, flammable weed grasses and thistles.

Having restored 800 acres of grasslands since 1992 back to native plants in areas as diverse as the high desert and the coast, I thought that we could restore the tapestry of native plants at Kite Hill in a similar fashion. Since 2016, with crews from Frank Manocchio and Rook Nolan's company, Land Escapes, we've been re-establishing the fire-safe native wildflower meadows at Kite Hill.

If you are visiting the preserve, located behind the Jane Drive gate or along the top of Alta Vista, and you hear the sound of Echo string trimmers, you'll find us at work. We're peeling back the layers of weeds to allow the dormant native seeds to sprout into seedlings, then grow into robust plants that are capable of replacing the weeds.

Unearthing dormant native seeds from the soil began in earnest when I was working on a 70-acre property in La Selva Beach, California. Working with the property owner, we found that with judicious mowing at least monthly at a height of eight inches and no lower, we could unearth the dormant native seed bank, and give the natives a fighting chance against the weeds.

At the beginning, 99% of the plants on the 70-acre La Selva property were flammable weeds. Some were so thick and thorny they could not be waded through without wearing a pair of protective rain pants against the spines. But when we were done, the property was converted to 94% native cover without sowing a single native seed. We estimated the age of the dormant wildflower seedbank on this property was between 100 and 250 years old.

Frequent mowing is one component of the restoration process, but a very important one. The purpose of frequent mowing is to never allow weeds to make additional mature seeds. Most people mow once a year for fire protection after the weeds turn brown. But the ripe seeds have

already fallen, only creating additional seeds that readily sprout the next year, perpetuating the cycle of weed regrowth.

Frequent mowing helps disrupt this cycle. The seeds of the weedy wild oats and ryegrass, for example, are fairly short-lived in the soil. If the plants are not allowed to make new seeds, the plants will be reduced in number and can eventually be eliminated altogether as the seed bank in the soil is depleted.

The dormant native seeds, having less competition have a chance to sprout again, and they can do so densely, taking up the spaces to prevent recolonization by the weeds. As a general rule, the dormant native plant seeds can sprout at the rate of five to 10 seeds per square inch when they don't have weeds interfering with their growth.

Cutting the weeds frequently, also helps reduce the amount of weed thatch on the ground that produces fuel for fires, since the plants don't get a chance to grow to their full potential. Weed thatch of some nonnative grasses produce between one and three tons of fire fuel per acre — all available and ready to burn at any time until December rains (if we get any).

Converting weedy areas back to native plants has a huge benefit for homeowners and wildlife alike. Native plants produce less fire fuel than many nonnative species. With time and patience, one can permanently eliminate 98% of the fire fuels that weeds produce each year. In addition, the native plants provide food and nectar for many dwindling native species of pollinating insects, including native bumblebees and butterflies.

At Kite Hill, with frequent mowing efforts, the wildflowers I remembered as a boy in Woodside are returning. Each year we are seeing successive species of native plants coming back in layers: first, the tidy tips; then owl's clover, yarrow, and lotus. A couple of years later, native grasses started appearing, such as the purple needlegrass — our state grass — the same one seen on the California flag below the grizzly bear's feet.

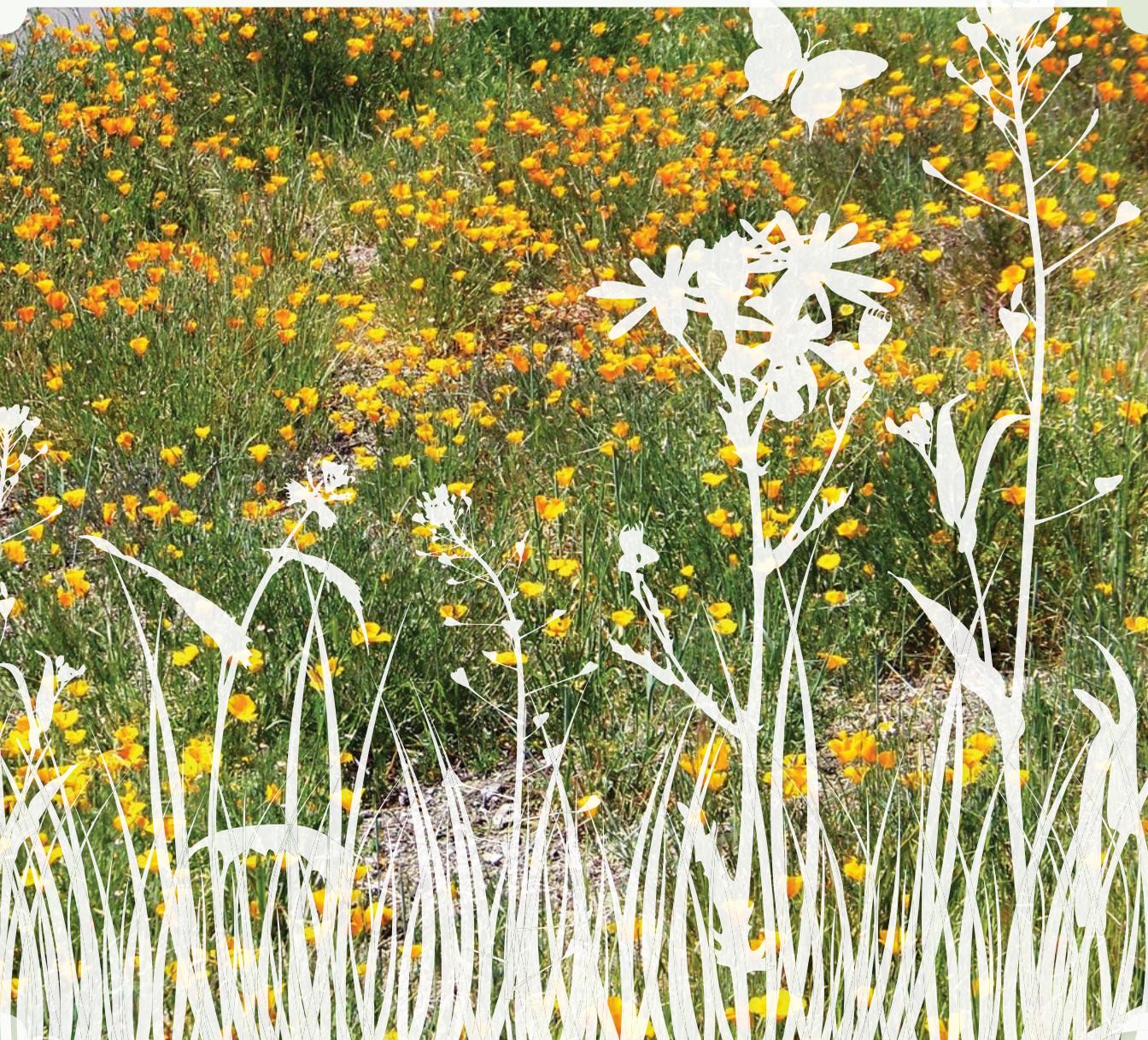
The yellow and white Calochortus lilies and California poppies are increasing every year, with this year, despite the drought, being one of the most prolific.

The weeds, in turn, are slowly receding over time. Eventually they should all be replaced by the natives.



Many Woodside properties are normally mowed once in late spring for fire-fuel management. A simple training, plus more frequent mowing and starting mowing earlier in the spring in February — and mowing at the right height — increases the chance of permanently getting rid of flammable weeds.

Nearly every property in Woodside has at least one native plant species with potentially still-dormant seeds underneath the weeds. Unearthing these seeds by the more frequent mowing without spending any money on native seeds or native plants could help produce a more fire-safe environment — and drought-tolerant landscaping that will not need any watering.



COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

WOODSIDE ENVIRONMENT: Open Space, Conservation & Sustainability Committee

Submitted by Alayna Vandervort, Chair



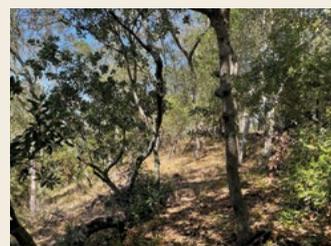
Trail cameras capture deer, coyote, quail, fox, mountain lion, bobcat, and turkey photos.

What is the primary purpose of your committee?

Our committee advocates for a sustainable Woodside by educating residents on what they can do in their homes and properties to prevent climate change and enhance wildlife, and advising the Town of Woodside on sustainable actions. The Environment Committee focuses on the environmental elements of the General Plan: Open Space, Conservation, and Sustainability.

What is an exciting project your committee has worked on recently?

An exciting program that our committee works on regularly is the Backyard Habitat Award program. The Town of Woodside is in the unique position of being almost completely surrounded by natural areas which provide food and shelter for wildlife. We are home to some of the most diverse flora and fauna in the world, and our open-space tracts support hundreds of species of plants and wildlife, some of which are endangered. In this world of ever-shrinking habitat, Woodside residents have the opportunity to re-create avenues and havens for wildlife on their own properties. The Backyard Habitat program acknowledges honorees with the gift of a 3-foot tall, forged metal sign to be displayed near the entrance to their property. Applications and information can be found on the Town website.



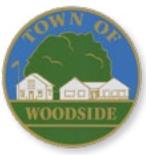
From a recent Backyard Habitat honoree, property owned by Environment Committee member Donna Howe, and her husband Juan Loaiza. Native and ornamental gardens attract and feed butterflies, honeybees, bumblebees, and hummingbirds. High grasses are managed by three friendly goats who return to their barn for safety every night.

What is a project that your committee is looking forward to working on in the future?

Our Environment Committee is working to set up another similar program called the Heritage Tree Award. The Heritage Tree Award program will focus on the identification of specimen trees, promote tree awareness, advocate for the protection of mature tree benefits, and educate community members about the Town's heritage trees. The major criteria for heritage tree award designation are age, rarity, and size, as well as aesthetic, botanical, ecological, and historical value. Further details will be provided on the Town website as our committee finalizes this work. We also host regular events and educational webinars, such as our "Living with Mountain Lions" talk with Dr. Quinton Martins on September 30, 2022, in Independence Hall. Check out the resources for residents at: <https://www.woodsidetown.org/bc-eoscsc>.

What characteristics or attributes would make the ideal candidate to join your committee?

We would welcome community members who are passionate about improving the natural environment of Woodside.



TOWN OF WOODSIDE

2955 Woodside Road
Woodside, CA 94062

(650) 851-6790

WELCOME / CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

Passing through the center of Town you will have noticed the fencing around Fire Station 7 on Woodside Road. The Woodside Fire Protection District will be building a new Station 7 at the same location. The new station will be a much-needed modernization of the station, providing the men and women who serve the community an improved base of operations.

All of these represent change in the community. However, it is important to keep in mind that change is a constant. All of the tangibles and intangibles that make Woodside a special place were new at one time or another. Communities are made up of individuals who come together to give it its own character and flavor. Even with more housing in Woodside, I look forward to seeing horses out on the Town trails, or tied to one of the hitchracks around the town center. Even with five instead of seven Councilmembers, I know that you will still be able to stop them in the market or around town and ask a question, put in a request, or provide your two cents. And when the Fire District personnel move back from their temporary station at Portola and Sand Hill Roads into their new station, we'll celebrate the magnificent job they do on our behalf.

Change is eternal. But so is, I believe, the place we know and love as...Woodside.

Stay safe,

Kevin Bryant
Town Manager



COVER PHOTO /
Lewisia by Craig Dremann

One of the rarest wildflowers on the preserve, only grows in three places of serpentine gravel, with magenta flowers that are almost as large as the succulent plant.