

# Let the City know that you don't want our open space turned into housing!

The Freitas permanent open space is being carved up for development according to the new General Plan and the supporting EIR. The east 3 acres of the property will have a new land use as Residential Very Low (RVL) which will allow an additional 2 houses to be built. The remainder of the property will have land use of Open Space Preservation (OS/P) which appears to be consistent with the existing land use.

As a reminder – this property was designated permanent open space as a condition of approval for the building of the Pine Meadow subdivision. It was never meant to be developed further. In fact, the condition of approval states that a 250-300 scenic easement from Vine Hill Way is required to preserve the scenic corridor.

Visualizations done a few years ago are included in the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR.) They are included here – the draft EIR states that “additional residences could be accommodated ... without significantly impacting public views of the existing open space.” That would appear to be impossible with the new houses sitting on the very open space that the public views.

The public input time for the General Plan is until October 29, 2015. If you care about preserving Martinez Open Space, please take the time to let the City know before the 29<sup>th</sup>.

Comments can be addressed to:

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## Don't delay – Make sure your voice is heard!

Keep Our Open Space Committee  
[keepouropenspace.org](http://keepouropenspace.org)

**Residential Very Low (RVL)**

This designation is typified by the rural residential neighborhoods that were developed under the County's jurisdiction, such as Muir Oaks and Franklin Canyon. Development within these areas is limited to single-family homes and related accessory uses that have low intensity characteristics.

*Residential Development Density: From 0 to 1 dwelling unit per acre.*

**Open Space Preservation (OS/P)**

Designation for public and private lands preserved as a scenic or environmental resource, either by public or common interest ownership, or through dedication of scenic open space or other easements or through conditions of development approval or previous designation and zoning action. While alteration of such properties for active recreation is typically not envisioned, naturalistic and agricultural plantings, and trails, may be possible if consistent with the intent of preserving the intended scenic resource and as may be permitted by any easements.

*Non-Residential Floor Area Ratio: Up to 0.1*

Area in red is where the new houses would be placed



Draft EIR discussion of this property.

While the proposed General Plan has been developed to be largely consistent with adopted plans and regulations, the General Plan Land Use Map designates lands for residential development that are identified as open space, including an existing Open Space-Private parcel at 635 Vine Hill Way (APN 162420003). In 1976 an EIR was prepared as part of the development of Pine Meadows and Muir Heights residential subdivisions. The 1976 EIR for Tract 4744 Pine Meadows and Tract 4774 Muir Heights identified an area along Vine Hill Way as a scenic and open space area that would mitigate adverse visual impacts along Vine Hill Way associated with residential development. The proposed change in the land use designation to the property located along Vine Hill Way would modify the mitigation adopted in association with the 1976 EIR. Currently the site has one single family residence in the northeast area of the property. The proposed General Plan would designate an approximately 3-acre portion of the scenic open space area as RVL. With the RVL designation, this site could accommodate two additional residential units. As part of the proposed General Plan discussions regarding this site, it was determined that additional residences could be accommodated on a portion of the site without significantly impacting public views of the existing open space from Vine Hill Way. Figures 3.1-1 through 3.1-3 depict views of APN 162420003 from Vine Hill Way under existing conditions and with residential development. The simulated views with landscaping were prepared prior to completion of the proposed General Plan and do not reflect siting, massing, and landscaping requirements included in the proposed General Plan.

### 3.1 AESTHETICS

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Policy LU-P-6.1 would ensure that structures blend into, rather than dominate, the natural setting and that massing of new structures is compatible with the natural setting. Implementation measure LU-P-6.1c requires hilltop ridges, rock outcroppings, mature stands of trees, and other natural features to be preserved to the greatest extent possible in the design of new projects; this policy would ensure that existing trees would be preserved and provide for shielding of development beyond that depicted in Figures 3.1-1 through 3.1-3. Future residential development on this site would be required to be consistent with the proposed General Plan as well as mitigation measure Vis-1, which would reduce potential impacts to existing visual character by ensuring that new development is compatible with the natural setting, that existing features are preserved to the greatest extent feasible, and that new development is designed, massed, and landscaped to minimize visual impacts.

Mitigation measure Vis-1 has been added to ensure that new development is designed, landscaped, and sited to reduce impacts associated with the loss of open space and changes in visual character. Mitigation measure Vis-1 would apply to all development under the General Plan, including the 635 Vine Hill Way site. However, even with the implementation of the policies and implementation measures in the General Plan, the potential for new development to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Planning Area and its surroundings would remain. The existing visual character or quality of the Planning Area and its surroundings would be diminished or obscured as the General Plan is built out. While the General Plan policies and actions would ensure that impacts are reduced to the greatest extent feasible, the only method to completely avoid impacts to the visual character and quality of the Planning Area would be to severely limit the development potential on all undeveloped lands, including development of jobs-generating uses near the Interstate 680 corridor east of the city limits. Therefore, the impact would be significant and unavoidable.

Mitigations discussed in previous section

## **MITIGATION MEASURES**

**Mitigation Measure Vis-1:** The City shall add a policy and supporting implementation measure that specifically address the potential for new development to impact existing views and scenic resources.

- *Policy: New buildings which are proposed in highly visible and scenic areas, such as on hillsides, shall be sited, designed, and landscaped so that the building mass, supporting columns, piers, and building undersides, and paved site improvements such as private roads and driveways are not visually dominant.*
- *Implementation Measure: New development should complement the existing environment in terms of form, scale, and physical appearance. Structures shall complement the existing topography to the greatest extent possible while reducing visual impacts of such development through the use of landscaping, screening, and siting techniques.*





View 1  
Existing Site - View from  
Vine Hill Way/Ashwood  
Drive



View 1  
Simulated View of Site with  
Residential Development -  
View from Vine Hill  
Way/Ashwood Drive



View 1  
Simulated View of Site with  
Residential Development  
and Landscaping - View  
from Vine Hill  
Way/Ashwood Drive

**Figure 3.1-1 – Existing and Simulated Views of Vine Hill Way Site – View 1**



View 2  
Existing Site - View from private road along eastern border of site at Vine Hill Way



View 2  
Simulated View of Site with Residential Development - View from private road along eastern border of site at Vine Hill Way



View 2  
Simulated View of Site with Residential Development and Landscaping - View from private road along eastern border of site at Vine Hill Way

Figure 3.1-2 - Existing and Simulated Views of Vine Hill Way Site - View 2





View 3  
Existing Site - View from  
Vine Hill Way



View 3  
Simulated View of Site with  
Residential Development -  
View from Vine Hill Way



View 3  
Simulated View of Site with  
Residential Development  
and Landscaping - View  
from Vine Hill Way

**Figure 3.1-3 – Existing and Simulated Views of Vine Hill Way Site – View 3**