

# SCENIC ROADS AND HIGHWAYS ELEMENT

Adopted by the City Council  
Resolution 68-75  
September 15, 1975

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# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE

The Scenic Roads and Highways Element is intended to provide for the protection and preservation of attractive views from scenic routes for the enjoyment of the public and to enhance the scenic qualities of Burlingame. The element, consisting of text and a map, is a guide for actions needed to carry out this purpose.

The policy objectives for maintaining scenic roads and highways are:

SR(A): To retain a system of arterials and local roads that are beautiful and useful to local residents.

SR(B): To harmonize roads and highways with adjacent land use and roadside development.

SR(C): To enhance the traveler's "view from the road."

## LEGAL BASIS FOR THE SCENIC ROADS ELEMENT

### 1. State Planning Law

California Government Code Section 65302(h) requires a Scenic Highways Element as part of a comprehensive long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city and of any lands outside its boundary which may bear some relation to the planning. The code requirement is as follows:

"The plan shall include a Scenic Highway Element for the development, establishment, and protection of scenic highways pursuant to the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 260) of Chapter 2 of Division I of the Streets and Highways Code."

In Section 260 of the Streets & Highways Code the intent of the Legislature is expressed as:

"... in designating certain portions of the state highway system as State scenic highways to establish the State's responsibility for the protection and enhancement of California's natural scenic beauty by identifying those portions of the State highway system which, together with the adjacent scenic corridors, require special scenic conservation treatment. It is further declared to be the intent of the Legislature in designating such scenic highways to assign responsibility for the development of such scenic highways and for the establishment and application of specific planning and design standards and procedures appropriate thereto and to indicate, in broad statement terms, the location and extent of routes and areas requiring continuing and careful

coordination of planning, design, construction, and regulation of land use and development, by State and local agencies as appropriate, to protect the social and economic values provided by the State's scenic resources."

Section 263 of the Code includes Route 280 from Route 17 in Santa Clara County to Route 80 near First Street in San Francisco as a portion of the State Scenic Highway System. Furthermore, Section 154 of the Code provides that the State Department of Transportation shall encourage the development of County Scenic Highways when such county highways meet prescribed standards for official scenic highways. When properly approved as County Scenic Highways these routes may be included on maps and other publications. As of this time the County of San Mateo is preparing a Scenic Roads Element of the San Mateo County General Plan.

## **2. CIR Guidelines**

The Legislature in 1972 directed the Council on Intergovernmental Relations to draft advisory guidelines for General Plan Elements. These guidelines indicate the Scenic Highways Element is the initial step leading toward official designation as a scenic highway.

Consideration may be given to special features such as city entrances, bayfront arterials and important natural or landscaped and beautified arterials. Inclusion of bike paths within a scenic highway corridor may also be considered.

The guidelines suggest identification of scenic corridors, policies and programs to enhance and protect them.

## **SCOPE AND NATURE**

The primary emphasis of the Scenic Roads and Highways Element is on the designation of State Highway Routes as "scenic" routes. The County of San Mateo Scenic Road Element recognizes the importance of a system of scenic roads throughout both rural and urban areas. There are many other scenic roads within the City of Burlingame and surrounding areas that offer pleasant visual experiences. All scenic routes merit protection.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Scenic Roads and Highways Element relates directly to the Open Space and the Circulation Element and indirectly to the Land Use Element. It is also related to urban design, beautification, landscaping, street trees and review of signs and buildings.

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# BACKGROUND

## AREA COVERED

The Scenic Roads and Highways Element of the Burlingame General Plan extends beyond the city limits to include adjacent unincorporated territories. The Junipero Serra Freeway, Route 280, which is located within the San Francisco PUC Watershed lands is immediately adjacent to the Burlingame City limits at Skyline Boulevard and Trousdale Drive. Burlingame is a portion of the scenic corridor along the crest of hills west of the urbanized area. This corridor includes Route 280 and Skyline Boulevard, the two lane scenic highway which preceded the freeway.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Scenic Corridor:** The visible land area outside the highway right-of-way and generally described as "the view from the road."

**Official State Scenic Highway and Official County Scenic Highway:** Scenic highways officially designated by the Scenic Highways Advisory Committee after application from local jurisdictions and only if on list of eligible highways found in Section 263 of the Streets and Highways Code.

**Rural Designated Scenic Highway:** A route that traverses a defined corridor within which natural scenic resources and aesthetic values are protected and enhanced.

**Urban Designated Scenic Highway:** A route that traverses a defined visual corridor which offers an unhindered view of attractive urban scenes.

**Scenic Connector:** A segment of a scenic route where abutting properties are commercially or industrially zoned.

## INFORMATION SOURCES

- State Standards for scenic corridor protection: "The Scenic Route -A Guide for the Official Designation of Eligible Scenic Highways".
- State Guidelines for scenic highways in urban areas.
- Scenic Roads Element of the San Mateo County General Plan.
- Resource Management District Regulations of the County Zoning Ordinance and applicable development review criteria.
- General Plan for City of Burlingame and Open Space Element.

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# SCENIC ROADS AND HIGHWAYS IN BURLINGAME

## STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY MASTER PLAN DESIGNATED ROUTES

Interstate Highway 280 traverses the western edge of the Burlingame Planning area. Because of its location in the established City and County of San Francisco Watershed, these lands are designated as permanent open space. The corridor for this freeway is proposed as an Official State Scenic Highway. In Burlingame only residential and public uses will be permitted to abut the Watershed.

## COUNTY OF SAN MATEO SCENIC ROADWAY

Skyline Boulevard has been designated as an Official State Scenic Highway south from the Half Moon Bay Road, Route 92. The link along Route 92 down to Crystal Springs Lakes and the portion of Skyline Boulevard that extends north from Route 92 to Black Mountain Road might also be designated a Scenic Roadway. From Black Mountain Road north to Trousdale there is a frontage road that includes portions of the route that was previously Skyline Boulevard.

There is one County Scenic Road that permits a loop trip through the City of Burlingame. It is designated on the map. The route follows Skyline Boulevard to Canyon Road, down a narrow winding county road to Easton Drive and via Easton Drive to El Camino Real; then southeasterly out of Burlingame into the City of San Mateo to Crystal Springs Road; and then return to Skyline Boulevard via Crystal Springs Road.

El Camino Real from Easton Drive to Murchison Drive and Skyline Boulevard from Canyon Road to Trousdale deserve the same consideration and protection as other county scenic roads.

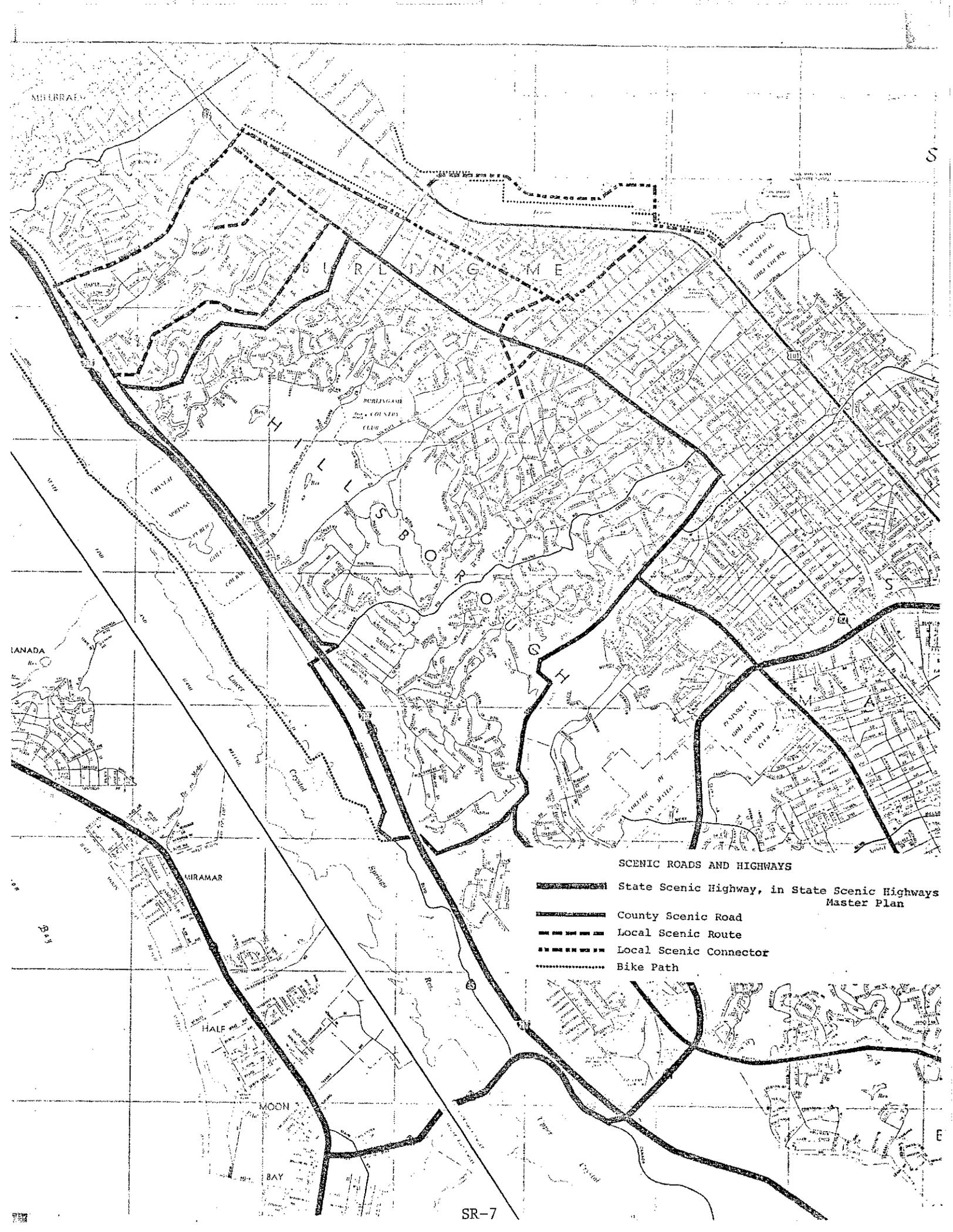
## OTHER SCENIC ROUTES

There are a number of alternate scenic roads between Skyline Boulevard and El Camino Real that have segments in Burlingame: Chateau Drive, Ralston Avenue, Hillside Drive and Trousdale Drive.

These collector streets are shown as arterials in the adopted Part III General Plan Diagram. It is proposed that the City of Burlingame protect the visual quality of these local roads and the corridors through which they pass.

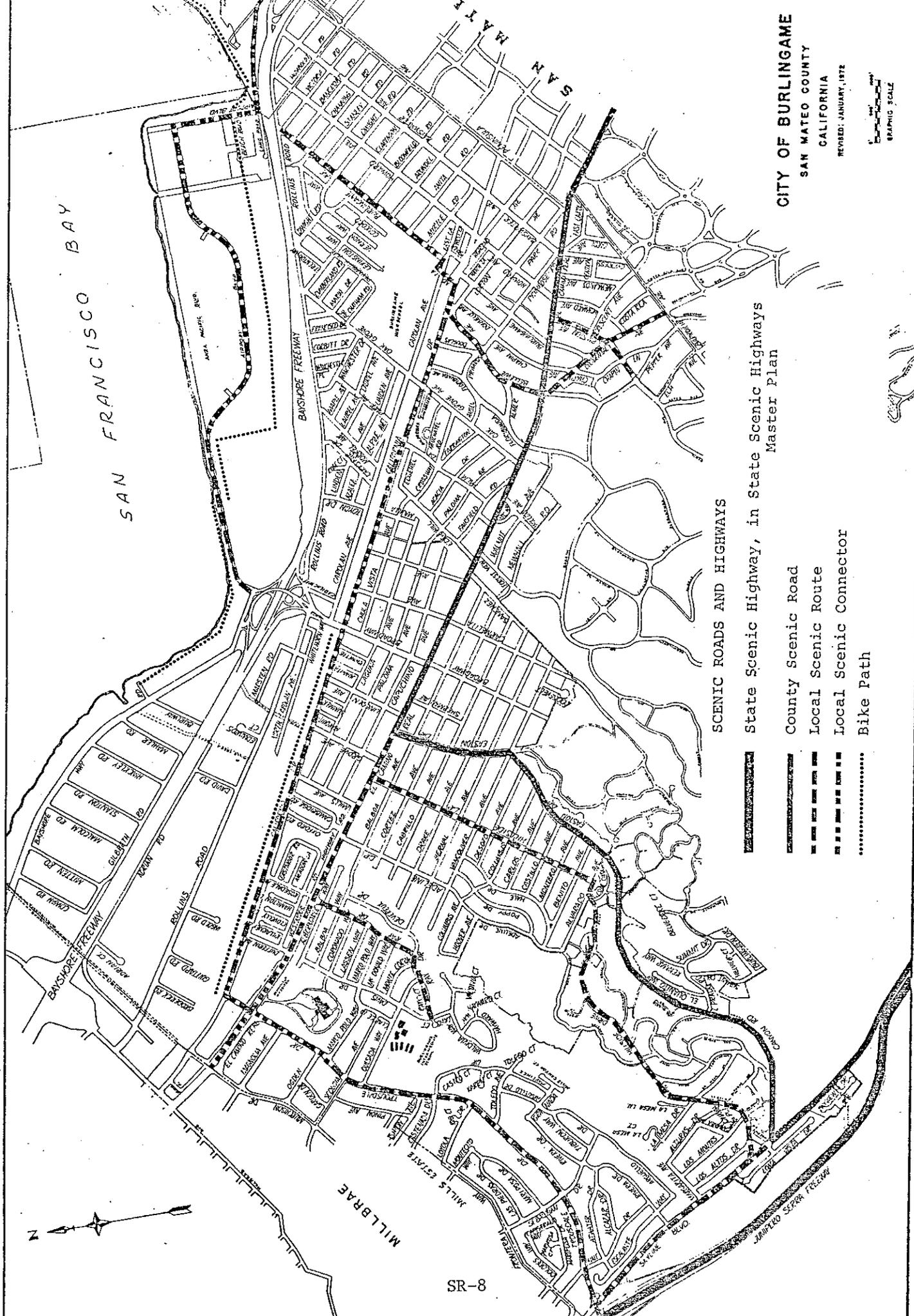
Actually the last four blocks of Trousdale from Sequoia Drive to California Drive may be called a scenic connector. The abutting property is zoned commercial and it is improved with office buildings and retail stores.

Airport Boulevard is another scenic connector except the portion within Bayside Park and along the shoreline of San Francisco Bay. Other local streets that have scenic qualities worthy of recognition and protection include Occidental Avenue, Ray Drive, Bellevue Avenue, Burlingame Avenue (east of Myrtle) and segments of California Drive.



**SCENIC ROADS AND HIGHWAYS**

-  State Scenic Highway, in State Scenic Highways Master Plan
-  County Scenic Road
-  Local Scenic Route
-  Local Scenic Connector
-  Bike Path



SAN FRANCISCO BAY

SR-8

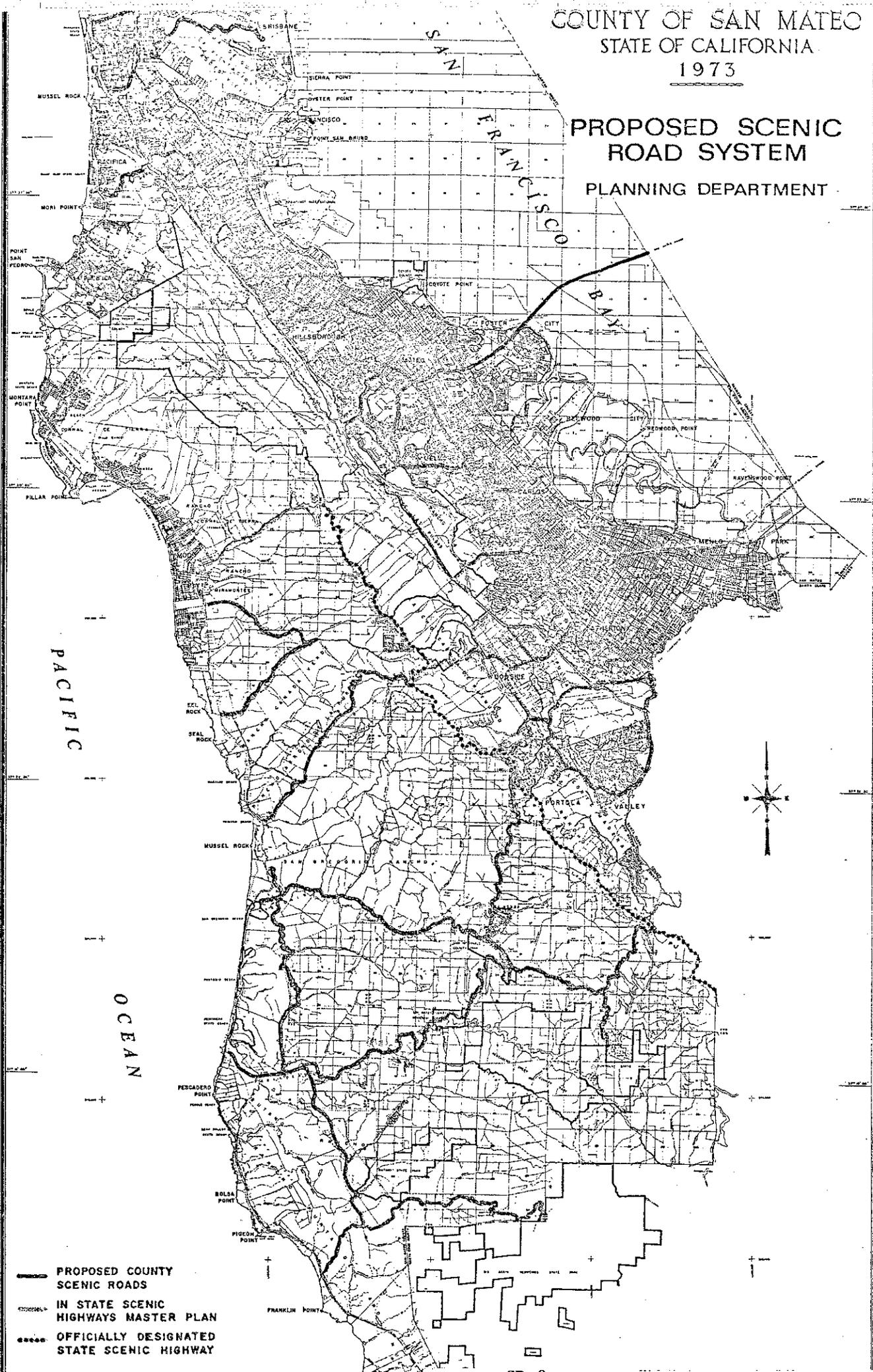
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CITY OF BURLINGAME  
 SAN MATEO COUNTY  
 CALIFORNIA  
 REVISED: JANUARY, 1972

GRAPHIC SCALE

PROPOSED SCENIC  
ROAD SYSTEM  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT



- PROPOSED COUNTY SCENIC ROADS
- IN STATE SCENIC HIGHWAYS MASTER PLAN
- OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY

## **ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES**

### **SCENIC HIGHWAYS**

SR(1): The City of Burlingame recommends that Interstate Highway 280 be designated as a State Scenic Highway, because of the beauty of the countryside through which it passes, and because of the relative sensitivity and skillfulness of its design.

SR(2): El Camino Real, state highway Route 82, is a scenic highway where views from the road are contained. The Burlingame portion of this historic road is lined with huge elm and eucalyptus trees that form a tunnel of foliage. These heritage trees give Burlingame a distinctive image. The segments of El Camino Real where abutting property is zoned first commercial are defined as scenic connectors. Commercial buildings and signs along El Camino Real should receive design review and satisfy all municipal codes. Trim abutting properties along the road provide a scenic character and add to the Burlingame image.

SR(3): Except where traffic hazards might be created, median strips, traffic islands, and excess highway rights-of-way should be landscaped.

### **SCENIC ROADS**

SR(4): The County of San Mateo proposes the loop via Skyline Boulevard, Canyon Road, Easton Drive, El Camino Real and Crystal Springs Road back to Skyline Boulevard be designated a County Scenic Roadway and part of the proposed Scenic Road System.

SR(5): Explore fully all practicable regulatory approaches intended to protect views along scenic highways and Burlingame's scenic routes.

SR(6): Consider a program to provide appropriate identification for Burlingame's scenic routes: highways and roads for motorists; routes, lanes and separate paths for bicyclists.

### **ENHANCEMENT**

SR(7): Utility lines should be undergrounded wherever possible; and sensitively sited where placement must be aboveground.

SR(8): Plant materials should be used to screen or hide objectionable views.

SR(9): A design study should be prepared to include a San Francisco Bay viewscape plan for Airport Boulevard from Broadway to Coyote Point Drive.

SR(10):An integrated plan for hiking, riding and bike trails should be coordinated with the scenic road system. Plan for separate bike paths to be constructed along scenic road and highway routes whenever and wherever economically feasible, reasonable and practical.

SR(11):Previously adopted General Plan Elements express as public policy the other actions needed to help carry out this Scenic Roads and Highways Element.

## **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

The City of Burlingame does not have an adopted Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan. The adoption of this element will, of its self, have no environmental impact on the City or its surroundings. Adoption of the Scenic Roads and Highways Element of the General Plan will provide policies and guidelines for protecting attractive views from scenic highways and scenic routes in and adjacent to the City of Burlingame.