



Plan Bay Area 2050: Regional Growth Framework Update

Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) - Overview and Eligibility Criteria

Program Information

The Priority Conservation Areas (PCA) complement PDAs by protecting a network of locally-identified at-risk open space, farmland, and habitat. Along with PDAs, PCAs were the centerpiece of the Regional Growth Framework that shaped the first two iterations of Plan Bay Area. The goal of the nominating PCAs is to:

- **Protect key open spaces** under pressure from urban development and other factors.
- **Preserve the lands necessary** to maintain the region's quality of life, ecological diversity, and agricultural production capabilities.
- **Provide opportunities for partnerships** and coordination in open space protection and preservation efforts, focusing available resources within a regional framework.
- **Create a regional vision** for open space conservation and preservation needs.

Eligible Areas

For an area to be eligible for nomination as a PCA, it must:

- Provide **regionally significant** agricultural, natural resource, scenic, recreational, and/or ecological values and ecosystem functions, demonstrated through adopted plans and recognized data sources such as the Conservation Lands Network (CLN);
- **Require protection** due to pressure from urban development or other factors; and
- Fall into **one or more PCA designation category**: Natural Landscapes, Agricultural Lands, Urban Greening, and Regional Recreation.

Nomination Process

Similar to the proposed process for PDAs, applicants would have the option of submitting a letter of interest prior to full application for staff review, or submitting a full application.

Letters of interest would include: a) a completed checklist demonstrating consistency with eligibility criteria; b) a narrative description of the proposed area; and c) a map of the area.

Full applications would include all of this information as well as an adopted resolution by the jurisdiction or special district with primary land use control - typically a city, county or park/open space district.

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