

October 10, 2007

**To:** Members, Formation Commission

**From:** Martha Poyatos  
Executive Officer

**Subject:** Report & Recommended Determinations- Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Review for the Town of Portola Valley

The attached report examines the nine municipal service review areas of determination and the four sphere of influence determinations in regard municipal services for the Town of Portola Valley. This service review process included circulation of a draft report for comment and presentation of the draft report at a Portola Valley Council meeting. Staff recommends that the Commission accept the report, adopt the municipal service review determinations (Exhibit A) and sphere of influence determinations (Page 13 of the report) and reaffirm the sphere of influence of the Town of Portola Valley to include unincorporated Ladera, adjacent Stanford Lands and Los Trancos/Vista Verde as shown on the map on Page 3.

## Municipal Service Review

Town of Portola Valley

October 10, 2007

### Introduction

Government Code Section 56430 requires that LAFCo complete municipal service reviews and sphere of influence reviews on all cities and special districts. This report is a municipal service review and sphere of influence review for the Town of Portola Valley. This municipal service review is not a proposal for reorganization of agencies, rather a State-mandated study of service provision in regard to nine areas of determination as set forth in Section 56430:

- (1) Infrastructure needs or deficiencies
- (2) Growth and population projections for the affected area
- (3) Financing constraints and opportunities
- (4) Cost avoidance opportunities
- (5) Opportunities for rate restructuring
- (6) Opportunities for shared facilities
- (7) Government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers
- (8) Evaluation of management efficiencies
- (9) Local accountability and governance

This State-mandated study is not a proposal for reorganization, rather it provides an opportunity for the public and affected agencies to comment on service provision and costs prior to LAFCo adoption of required determinations. Once adopted, LAFCo uses determinations in updating spheres of influence which is a plan for boundaries and governance of a public agency.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo): LAFCo is a State-mandated, independent commission with countywide jurisdiction over the boundaries and organization of cities and special districts including annexations, detachments, incorporations, formations and dissolutions. The Commission includes two members of the Board of Supervisors, two members of city councils, two board members of independent special districts, a public member, and four alternate members (county, city, special district and public). LAFCo adopts a budget and contracts with the County of San Mateo

for services. The Executive Officer serves as LAFCo staff reviewing boundary change applications and preparing municipal service reviews and sphere of influence studies. LAFCo's net operating budget is apportioned in thirds to the County of San Mateo, the 20 cities in the County and the 24 special districts.

**Areas under Study:** While the study area focuses on Town of Portola Valley it also includes information on adjacent unincorporated areas within the Town's sphere of influence, including Los Trancos Woods/Vista Verde and Ladera.

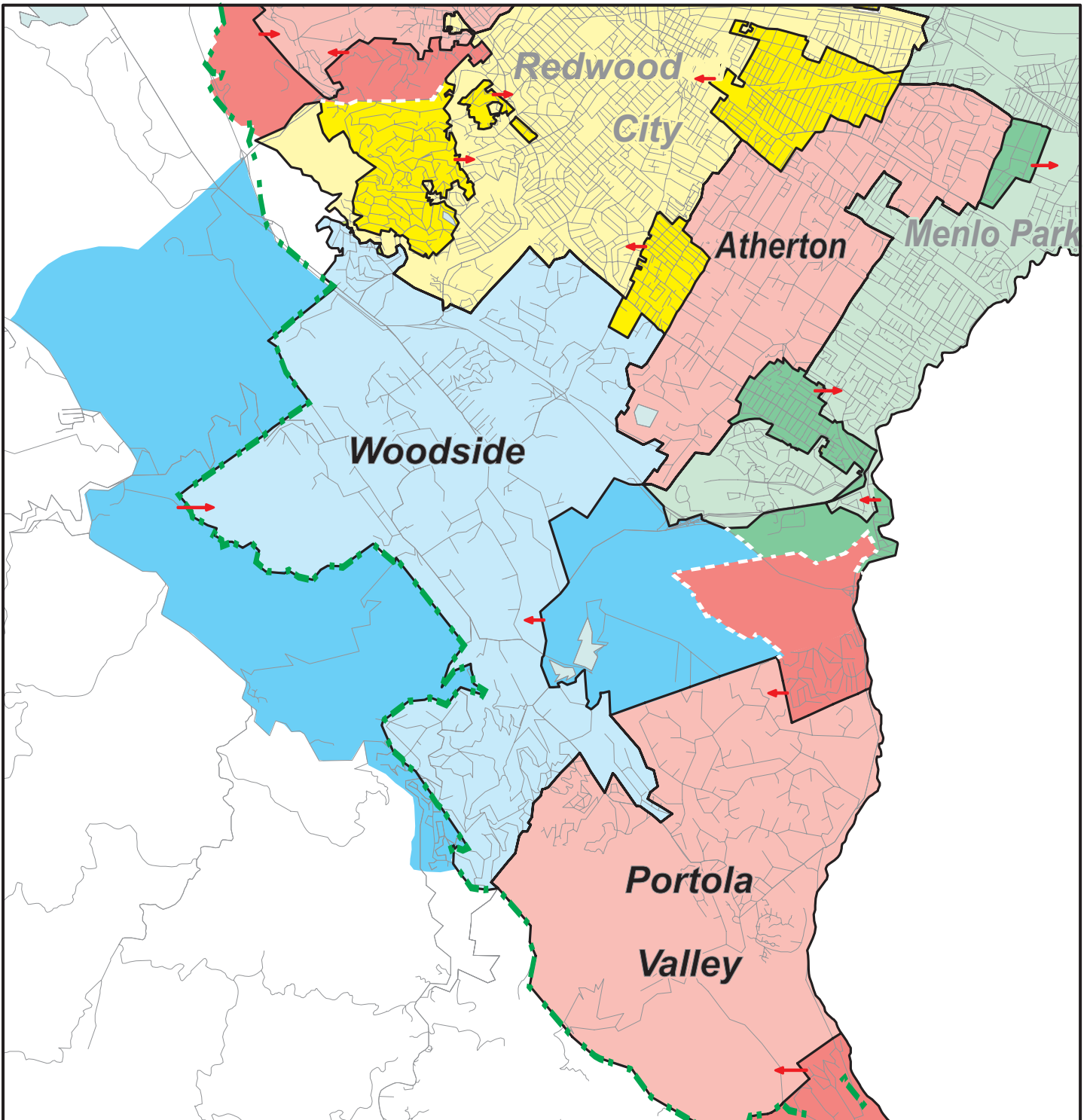
	Town of Portola Valley	Ladera	Los Trancos Woods/Vista Verde
<b>Police</b>	Town of Portola Valley <sup>1</sup> via Contract with County Sheriff	County Sheriff	County Sheriff
<b>Fire</b>	Woodside Fire Dist.	Woodside Fire Dist.	Woodside Fire Dist.
<b>Streets</b>	Town of Portola Valley	County of San Mateo	County of San Mateo
<b>Street Lights</b>	Town of Portola Valley	County of San Mateo	County of San Mateo
<b>Park &amp; Rec.</b>	Town of Portola Valley	Ladera Recreation District (LRD) (See LRD service review)	County of San Mateo
<b>Sewer</b>	West Bay Sanitary District / Septic	West Bay Sanitary District	West Bay Sanitary District/Septic
<b>Water</b>	CalWater <sup>2</sup>	CalWater	CalWater <sup>3</sup>
<b>Garbage</b>	GreenWaste	Allied Waste	Greenwaste

Please see map next page.

<sup>1</sup> The Town of Portola Valley contracts with the County of San Mateo Sheriff's Department





<sup>2</sup> California Water Service Company is an investor-owned public utility and is not subject to LAFCo jurisdiction.

<sup>3</sup> California Water Service Company purchased the water system from Los Trancos County Water District. See Los Trancos County Water District Municipal Service Review at [www.sanmateolafco.org](http://www.sanmateolafco.org).



# San Mateo County SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

*Portola Valley - Woodside - Atherton*

-  Indicates City Sphere of Influence
-  Urban/Rural Boundary
-  City Boundaries
-  Sphere of Influence Line Between Areas



## **Municipal Service Review**

Service review criteria as set forth in Government Code Section 56430 are examined below for each agency. Discussion provides background on each agency and is organized under the nine areas of determination required by Government Code Section 56430. Recommended determinations will be drafted after comment by the affected agencies, residents and interested parties.

### **Town of Portola Valley:**

The Town of Portola Valley incorporated in 1964 in response to fast-paced residential development after World War II. Portola Valley residents voted to incorporate in order to have local control over development with the goals of preserving the beauty of the land, fostering low-density housing, keeping government costs low through volunteerism, and limiting services to those necessary for local residents.<sup>4</sup>

Portola Valley is a general law city with five elected council members. The Council selects the Mayor and appoints the Town Administrator and Town Attorney. The State Department of Finance January 2007 estimated population for the Town was 4,618 persons (Census 2000 population was 4,462 for Portola Valley and surrounding areas in the Town's sphere was 2,520). Portola Valley encompasses approximately eleven square miles and is bounded by the Town of Woodside, Unincorporated Stanford lands, unincorporated areas along the Skyline area and the County boundary (Los Trancos Creek). Town boundaries include primarily residential land uses with some commercial/office, institutional and open space.

Town services, which are provided directly or by contract, include administration, police protection, recreational services, street maintenance (35.5 road miles), planning and building inspection. As noted above, fire protection and paramedic service is provided by Woodside Fire Protection District, water service is provided by California Water Service Company and properties are either served by septic system or West Bay Sanitary District. Ambulance service is provided through a countywide joint

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<sup>4</sup>Town of Portola Valley website ([www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net))

power agreement<sup>5</sup>. The Town is included in the Portola Valley School District, Sequoia Union High School District and San Mateo County Community College District.

**(1) Infrastructure needs or deficiencies**

Town facilities and lands include Town Center Buildings and land, Historic Schoolhouse, adjacent Springdown parcels, soccer and softball fields and approximately 26 parcels totaling 75 acres at different locations. The Town maintains approximately 35.5 road miles and 34 miles of trails. The Town's chief infrastructure need is reconstructing permanent offices for Town administration because the San Andreas Fault runs through the existing site. The Town Center Complex project, to include Town Hall, library, community hall and play area, is estimated at approximately \$20 million and will be funded with majority funding from outside donations through the Portola Valley Community Fund (anticipated to reach \$16 million) and approximately \$4 million in Town contributions. With construction in progress and because the Foundation contributions pledged may not be fulfilled until 2009, the County of San Mateo granted the Town a \$4 million loan (with 4% interest) against tax revenues due the Town to bridge a funding gap in the event cash flow and/or projections fall short of the budgeted amount.

In addition to the Town Center Project, the Town's Capital Improvement Program includes road resurfacing, trail improvements and park improvements which are funded with road impact fees, general fund contribution, intergovernmental road funds and for trail and park improvements, grants and donations.

**(2) Growth and population projections for Town of Portola Valley**

Based on the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) "Projections 2007", the Town of Portola Valley 2000 population and surrounding sphere is projected to grow by 14% by 2035. While the following table applies ABAG

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<sup>5</sup> San Mateo County fire agencies participate in the San Mateo County Pre-hospital Emergency Services Joint Powers Authority (ALS-JPA), the San Mateo Operational Area Emergency Services JPA and the Fire Net Six providing centralized dispatch and a move-up-and-cover plan to ensure that systematic fire station coverage is provided during periods of increased service demand. American Medical Response (AMR) and four local fire agencies provide emergency advanced life support transport.

projections to the Town, Los Trancos Woods and Ladera, it should be noted that Ladera is more likely to experience more modest growth due to lack of opportunity for subdivision and new construction. Projections may not reflect land use policies in the Town of Portola Valley or constraints on development such as sewer in Los Trancos Woods/Vista Verde.

Census 2000 & ABAG 2025	2000	2035
Town of Portola Valley	4,462	5,086
Ladera	1,492	1,700
Los Trancos Woods/Vista Verde	1,028	1,172
	6,982	7,958

**(3) Financing constraints and opportunities**

As a 'low property tax city', Portola Valley has recently benefited from resolution of Tax Equity Allocation<sup>6</sup> (TEA) distribution to four low property tax cities in San Mateo County. TEA in essence guarantees the Town 7% of the 1% property tax instead of the lower 4.5% property tax share that was a result of Proposition 13. The table below illustrates distribution of the 1% property tax in a sample tax rate area within the Town of Portola Valley.

1% Property Tax Distribution - Sample Tax Rate Area	
Agency	Share
County of San Mateo	23.67
Library	3.45
Town of Portola Valley	4.30
Portola Valley Elementary School Dist.	21.12
Sequoia High School District	15.60
San Mateo Community College District	6.77
Woodside Fire District	17.24
San Francisquito Creek Flood Zone 2	0.23
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District	1.83
Bay Area Air Quality Management District	0.21
Harbor District	0.35
Mosquito Abatement District	0.19
Sequoia Health Care District	1.46
County Education Tax (Office of Education)	3.52
	100.00 <sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> TEA Funding implemented through AB 709 and AB1197 is a mandated formula in which California's no or low property tax cities receive a minimum of 7% of the property tax revenue available within their boundaries. In San Mateo County it was determined in 2005 that Portola Valley, Woodside, Colma and Half Moon Bay had not been allocated TEA funding and the County corrected this. Agencies recently reached a settlement on amounts due the agencies for previous years that cities did not receive TEA funding.

<sup>7</sup> Shares vary from tax rate area to tax rate area. May not total 100.00 due to rounding of ten decimal shares.

The following table summarizes revenues and expenditures as reported in the adopted 2007-2008 budget and Basic Financial Statements for Year Ended June 30, 2006:<sup>8</sup>

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2005-06 Actual</b>	<b>2006-07 Actual</b>	<b>2007-08 Adopted</b>
Government Agency	109,193	69,566	70,137
Franchise Fees	181,048	203,297	211,781
Permits & Fees	568,492	445,159	489,300
Other Revenues	129,698	4,114,909	10,669,712
Parks & Recreation	132,470	136,658	122,825
Service Charges	111,220	68,198	72,190
Revenue from Taxes	2,575,365	2,622,904	2,085,000
Town Center Facilities	75,261	24,240	21,000
Use of Money	170,706	320,546	520,000
Utility Users' Taxes	628,666	573,756	487,970
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,682,119</b>	<b>8,579,233</b>	<b>14,749,915</b>

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>			
Admin & Operations	1,191,219	1,305,538	1,504,679
Committees & Commissions	184,828	146,620	168,670
Consultant Services	461,704	434,178	556,570
Miscellaneous	32,666	36,725	40,129
Parks Operations	53,376	55,047	68,814
Public Works	1,492	7,571	9,000
Service Agreements	434,965	507,122	537,129
Services & Supplies	265,736	246,458	294,981
Town Center Facilities	54,726	102,371	96,223
Capital Improvements	895,345	3,982,482	10,814,169
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,576,057</b>	<b>6,824,112</b>	<b>14,090,364</b>
<b>Revenues - (Operating &amp; CIP)</b>	<b>1,106,062</b>	<b>1,755,121</b>	<b>659,551</b>

Financing opportunities include resolution of Tax Equity Allocation funding<sup>9</sup> and the willingness of Town residents to participate in private funding of the Town Center Project in the range of \$16 million. In examining the current and previous two fiscal year budgets, trends in General Fund revenues for fiscal years 2005-06, 2006-07 and proposed 2007-08 do not reflect historic and anticipated revenue streams because the Town has experienced the one-time TEA settlement revenues, an ERAF refund and Town Center funding.

<sup>8</sup> Actual budget data is drawn from year-end revenue/expenditure reports and financial statements. Adopted budget data is from 2007-08 adopted budget document.

<sup>9</sup> In total, the Town has received \$2,561,832 in settlement payments for previous years and ongoing property tax revenues will be augmented by approximately 80%



In regard to revenue diversity, in the 2007-08 Fiscal Year, backing out one-time revenues related to Town Center construction, revenue from taxes comprises 48% of general revenues, with the next largest revenue sources being: Use of Money (12%); Utility Users Tax (11%); Other Revenues (11%) and Permits & Fees (11%).

The Town's estimated fund balance as of July 1, 2007 was \$9,731,495 including: \$2,432,566 unrestricted; \$2,062,589 Town Center Design; \$1,225,000 Town Hall Construction Reserve; \$1,480,251 open space; and \$1,075,612 road fee fund.

Liabilities including long term debt as reported for year ending June 30, 2006 (most recent basic financial statement available) was \$88,267 including accrued compensated absences and a lease on a modular trailer currently used as the Town's administration building during construction of Town Center and as of adoption of the 2007-2008 budget are now owned by the Town.

Net assets for fiscal years ending June 2004, 2005 and 2006 are \$11,453,650, \$12,737,834 and \$15,482,744 respectively.

**(4) Cost avoidance opportunities**

Existing cost avoidance practices include contracts for town attorney, town planner, engineering including a geologist and records and property management. The Town participates in joint power agreements for library services and emergency services. It also participates in the county contract for animal control and contracts for police services with the County Sheriff's Department. The Town receives insurance coverage through the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).

**(5) Opportunities for rate restructuring**

Initial comments by the Town cited no opportunities for rate restructuring.

**(6) Opportunities for shared facilities.**

Initial comments by the Town cited no opportunities for shared facilities.

**(7) Government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers.**

The Portola Valley sphere of influence includes areas outside Town boundaries in Ladera and Los Trancos Woods/Vista Verde. The Town incorporated in response to rapid post-WWII development to protect land use in existing boundaries. The recent success of the Portola Valley Community Fund to raise private funds for construction of the new Town Center indicates strong support by residents for Town services. Interest in expansion of Town boundaries has been limited to occasional inquiries to LAFCo from residents of the Ladera community.

**(8) Evaluation of management efficiencies.**

The Town's budget includes 13 full-time personnel equating to one employee per 355 of population. Departments include Public Works, Planning and Building and General Administrative Services. Police services are provided via a contract with the County Sheriff's Department, which includes six patrol positions or 1 position per 770 of population.<sup>10</sup> The budget also funds contract positions including Town Attorney, Geologist and Town Planner. Use of contract staffing provides flexibility in staffing levels.

Volunteerism: As noted on the Town's website, when Portola Valley was incorporated in 1964, one of the founding goals was to keep costs low by having a government run as much as possible by volunteers. A side benefit to this was seen to be the spirit of community and camaraderie that would develop among residents who worked together to build a town. This spirit of volunteerism continues today with many thousands of hours being donated to town service every year. All members of the Town Council, commissions and committees serve without pay or benefits of any kind. Three sets of five residents comprise the Town Council, Architectural and Site Control Commission and Planning Commission. Another 105 citizens are members of fourteen standing committees. Others serve on ad hoc committees set

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<sup>10</sup> Compared to Atherton (7,423) with 54.5 full-time positions equating to 1 full-time city position per 136 of population and 1 fulltime police position per 260 of population, or Town of Woodside (5,563) with 21 full-time personnel equating to one employee per 265 of population and one sheriff position per 795 of population

up for short periods for specific purposes. Finally, there are special assignments, such as town newsletter staff, police commissioner, and town historian.

(9) **Local accountability and governance**

This section examines the degree to which an agency keeps affected residents informed about district services, budget, programs, anticipated changes in service, effectiveness of the district in responding to requests for information and the degree to which the an agency encourages public participation in decision making.

The Portola Valley Town Council meets the second and fourth Wednesday of the each month at 8:00 p.m. The agenda is distributed to a list of subscribers that include residents, members of the press and interested parties. The agenda is also posted on the website. The Town produces a newsletter twice a year and the Town maintains a website. The summary budget is on the website. Council meetings are subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act governing public meetings.

**Recommended LAFCo Determinations Pursuant to Government Code Section 56430 to be prepared following comment from the public and interested agencies**

**Sphere of Influence Review and Update**

Government Code Section 56425 specifies that in determining the sphere of influence of each local agency, the Commission shall consider and prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

- 1. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands*
- 2. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.*
- 3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.*
- 4. The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.*

This sphere of influence update incorporates information and determinations in the municipal service review as well as changes that have taken place since the sphere of influence was originally adopted and provides for public input on the four areas of determination listed above. Comments to LAFCo by affected agencies, organizations individuals are requested in order to be included in the Executive Officer's report to the Commission.

Town Sphere and Service Area:

The sphere of influence designation for the Town of Portola Valley includes unincorporated Ladera and Los Trancos Woods/Vista Verde. There have been no annexations to the Town since the sphere was adopted in 1985.

Sphere of Influence Determinations:

Section 56425 requires the Commission to make determinations concerning land use, present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area, capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide and existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency. The following section discusses these areas of determination.

The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands

The Town incorporated to have local control over land use and retain the character of the community. Land use within the Town of Portola Valley includes residential, open space, commercial and institutions. The Town's General Plan favors low-density residential development and preservation and protection of open space and environmentally sensitive areas.

Surrounding areas in the Town's sphere of influence include consistent land uses.

The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area

The area within Town boundaries consists primarily of residential land use requiring basic municipal services and

there is a demonstrated need and support for continued delivery of services.

Surrounding areas in the Town's sphere of influence consist of primarily residential development with similar needs for municipal services.

The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide

Services provided by the Town are outlined above. The Town's public facilities, including parks and roads, and are adequate to serve Town population.

In regard to areas in the Town's sphere on influence, improvements to roads in the Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde communities would be necessary to meet Town of Portola Valley road standards.

The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency

The Town constitutes an established community, which incorporated in order to maintain its rural residential character. Support for Town services is demonstrated by significant private donations for reconstruction of Town Center.

Unincorporated areas in the Town's sphere of influence share common service delivery patterns and access and are appropriately included in the Town's sphere.

Adjacent area in Santa Clara County along Los Trancos Creek also share common road access and service delivery patterns but are not eligible for inclusion in the Town's sphere of influence because State law restricts city jurisdictional boundaries from crossing county boundaries.

### Sphere of Influence Determinations

- (1) **The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.**

Land use within the Town of Portola Valley includes residential, open space, commercial and institutions. The Town's General Plan favors low-density residential development and preservation and protection of open space and environmentally sensitive areas.

- (2) **The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area**

The area within Town boundaries consists primarily of residential land use requiring basic municipal services and there is a demonstrated need and support for continued delivery of services

- (3) **The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.**

The Town's public facilities, including parks and roads, and are adequate to serve Town population.

- (4) **The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.**

The Town constitutes an established community, which incorporated in order to maintain its rural residential character. Support for Town services is demonstrated by significant private donations for reconstruction of Town Center. Unincorporated areas in the Town's sphere of influence share common service delivery patterns and access and are appropriately included in the Town's sphere.

**Profile:**

Town of Portola Valley  
765 Portola Road  
Portola Valley, CA 94028

Contact Person:

Angela Howard  
650/851-1700  
650/851-4677 (Fax)

**website: [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net)**

**Date of Incorporation:** July 14, 1964

**Governing Board:** Five-member city council elected to four-year terms

a. Membership and Term Expiration Date: Ted Driscoll, Mayor (11/2009); Maryann Moise Derwin, Vice Mayor (11/2009); Ed Davis (11/2007), Steve Toben (11/2007; Richard Merk (11/2009)

b. Compensation: None

c. Public Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays, 8:00 pm,  
765 Portola Road, Portola Valley

**Services Provided:** Building inspection, parks, recreation, planning, police, public works

**Area Served:** 10 sq. miles Estimated Population: 4,618 (as of 2007)

**Contractual Arrangements:** City Attorney & Planning Services, Animal Control, Refuse & Recycling, Library Joint Powers Authority, police services with San Mateo County Sheriff

**Number of Personnel:** 12 Full-time Equivalent

**Sphere of Influence:** Boundaries of 1984 plus Ladera and Los Trancos Woods/Vista Verde.

**Town Budget History  
(next page)**

Town of Portola Valley  
 Budget History

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2005-06 Actual</b>	<b>2006-07 Actual</b>	<b>2007-08 Adopted</b>
Government Agency	109,193	69,566	70,137
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<b>Operating Expenditures</b>			
Admin & Operations	1,191,219	1,305,538	1,504,679
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<b>Revenues - (Operating &amp; CIP)</b>	<b>1,106,062</b>	<b>1,755,121</b>	<b>659,551</b>

Note: Actual numbers are drawn from year end revenue/expenditure reports and financial statements. Adopted numbers are from 2007-08 adopted budget document.



**Exhibit A**  
**Recommended Determinations**

Municipal Service Review  
Town of Portola Valley

Determinations pursuant to Government Code Section 56430:

1. **Regarding infrastructure needs and deficiencies, the Commission determines:**
  - a) Town of Portola infrastructure includes Town Center facilities, the Historic Schoolhouse, sports fields, 35.5 road miles, 34 trail miles, and approximately 26 parcels at various locations totaling approximately 75 acres. Condition ranges from good to excellent condition. In the case of Town center facilities reconstruction due to proximity to San Andreas Fault is in progress funded with significant private contributions.
2. **Regarding growth and population projections for the affected area, the Commission determines:**
  - a) Census 2000 Population for Town of Portola Valley and areas in the sphere of influence was 6,456. Association of Bay Area Governments Projections 2007 projects 15% growth of by 2035 indicating that the Town and areas within the sphere will grow to 7,400 by 2035.
3. **Regarding financing constraints and opportunities and opportunities for rate restructuring, the Commission determines:**
  - a) While the Town is a "low property tax city", property tax and the associated Tax Equity Allocation are the main source of revenue for the Town.
4. **Regarding cost avoidance opportunities and shared facilities, the Commission determines:**
  - a) The Town's existing practices for cost avoidance and shared resources include a variety of joint powers agreements including library, animal control and emergency services, a contract with the Sheriff's department and other contract positions.
5. **Regarding opportunities for rate restructuring, (see #3 above)**
6. **Regarding opportunities for shared facilities (See #4 above)**
7. **In regard to government structure options, including the advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers, the Commission determines:**

a) The Town incorporated in 1964 to retain the character of the community and is a well-established and fiscally viable city.

**8. Regarding evaluation of management efficiencies, the Commission determines:**

a) The Town provides municipal services including administration, land use, public safety, park and recreation, road maintenance and refuse with a combination of paid personnel and contract services which allows the Town to adjust service levels based on resources available and service needs.

**9. Regarding local accountability and governance, the Commission determines:**

a) The Town is governed by a five-member locally elected council that meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at 8:00 p.m. at the Town Council Chambers at Town Center.

b) The Town distributes and posts the agenda.

c) The Town's budget information can be accessed on the website which is [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net)

d) Council meetings are subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act governing public meetings.

October 10, 2007

Town of Portola Valley MSR Determinations