

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

DATE: July 10, 2019

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Planning Staff

SUBJECT: Consideration of a request by the County's Real Property Services Division to determine if the proposed acquisition of two parcels, APNs 083-133-320 and 083-120-030, located at 331 and 340 Scenic Drive, La Honda, for purposes of hazard mitigation, conforms to the County General Plan.

County File Number: PLN 2019-00241

PROPOSAL

Consideration of a request by the County's Real Property Services Division to determine if the proposed acquisition of two parcels, APNs 083-133-320 and 083-120-030, located at 331 and 340 Scenic Drive, La Honda, for purposes of hazard mitigation, conforms to the County General Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission find that the proposed acquisition by the County's Real Property Services Division of two parcels, APNs 083-133-320 and 083-120-030, located at 331 and 340 Scenic Drive, La Honda, for purposes of hazard mitigation, conforms to the County General Plan.

BACKGROUND

Report Prepared By: William Gibson

Applicant: San Mateo County Real Property Services Division

Owners: David and Carolyn Worthington (331 Scenic Drive);
Martha Bollman Trust (340 Scenic Drive)

Location: Unincorporated La Honda

APN(s): 083-133-320; 083-120-030

Size: 24,200 sq. ft. (APN 083-133-320); 5,733 sq. ft. (APN 083-120-030)

Existing Zoning: R-1/S-10

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential

Existing Land Use: Both parcels are developed with single-family homes

Flood Zone: X (Area of Minimal Flooding)

Environmental Evaluation: A determination that the proposed acquisition of property conforms to the County General Plan is exempt from environmental review under the “common sense exemption” that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).) Any future action on the subject property would be subject to applicable CEQA requirements.

Setting: Both parcels are in rural La Honda, in an area primarily developed with lower-density single-family housing, surrounded by primarily forested hillside.

DISCUSSION

A. KEY ISSUES

1. Project Description

The County Real Property Services Division proposes to acquire two properties, at 331 and 340 Scenic Drive, La Honda. Subsequent to acquisition, the County intends to demolish all improvements on the properties, and record deed restrictions against them, restricting their use in perpetuity to open space.

The La Honda area, like much of the County, suffered record rainfall from 2016 through 2017. On January 11 and 12, 2017, the heavy rainfall caused a mudslide in the area, and the conditions made public safety responses extremely risky for property owners and first responders at these properties. Improvements on the subject properties sustained substantial damages and the properties were determined to be uninhabitable by the County.

Acquisition of the properties has two major mitigation benefits: (1) by acquiring the properties and demolishing the structures for conversion to open space, the public safety threat to human life is eliminated; and (2) acquisition and demolition of the structures will remove the weight of the improvements from the land, reducing the threat to an existing County road, as well as the water, electrical and cable utilities in the right of way.

Per California Government Code Section 65402, prior to County acquisition of any property, an analysis of the proposed acquisition's conformity with the County General Plan must be made.

2. Analysis

General Plan Goal 15.1, "*Minimizing Risks from Natural Hazards*," states the goal of:

Minimiz[ing] the potential risks resulting from natural hazards, including but not limited to, loss of life, injury, damage to property, litigation, high service and maintenance costs, and other social and economic dislocations.

General Plan Policy 15.3, "*Abatement of Natural Hazards*," directs the County to:

Inventory and, where feasible, abate, repair, or rehabilitate natural hazard conditions which most directly threaten public health, safety, and property, giving priority to those hazards which directly threaten critical facilities, life and property.

General Plan Policy 15.14, "*Disclosure of Natural Hazards*," directs the County to:

Make efforts to inform the public, including potential buyers of property, that a parcel is located in an area of possible natural hazards. Methods to be used include but are not limited to provision of access to County data, pre-application conferences, environmental review, *deed restrictions*, [...] or other appropriate mechanisms.

General Plan Policy 15.25, "*Support Efforts to Identify and Abate Hazardous Structures*," also directs the County to "Support efforts to inventory and abate structures that are particularly vulnerable to damage or failure during geotechnical disasters."

The proposed acquisition of the subject properties, removal of the uninhabitable structures, and recordation of deed restrictions ensuring their use as open space in perpetuity are in keeping with the General Plan's Natural Hazards policies. In addition, while both Policy 15.3 and 15.25 direct the County, where possible, to adaptively reuse existing structures rather than demolishing them, because in this case the weight of the structures themselves is contributory to the potential impact of natural hazards, reuse is neither desirable nor feasible, and the proposed acquisition does not conflict with these policies.

B. ALTERNATIVES

The alternative to a finding of conformity with the General Plan is for the Planning Commission to find that the proposed acquisition does not conform to the policies of the County General Plan.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A determination that the proposed acquisition of property conforms to the County General Plan is exempt from environmental review under the “common sense exemption” that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).) Any future action on the subject property would be subject to applicable CEQA requirements.

D. REVIEWING AGENCIES

Real Property Services Division
County Counsel

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Recommended Findings
- B. Location and Site Maps

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Attachment A

County of San Mateo
Planning and Building Department

RECOMMENDED FINDINGS

Permit or Project File Number: PLN 2019-00241

Hearing Date: July 10, 2019

Prepared By: William Gibson

For Adoption By: Planning Commission

RECOMMENDED FINDINGS

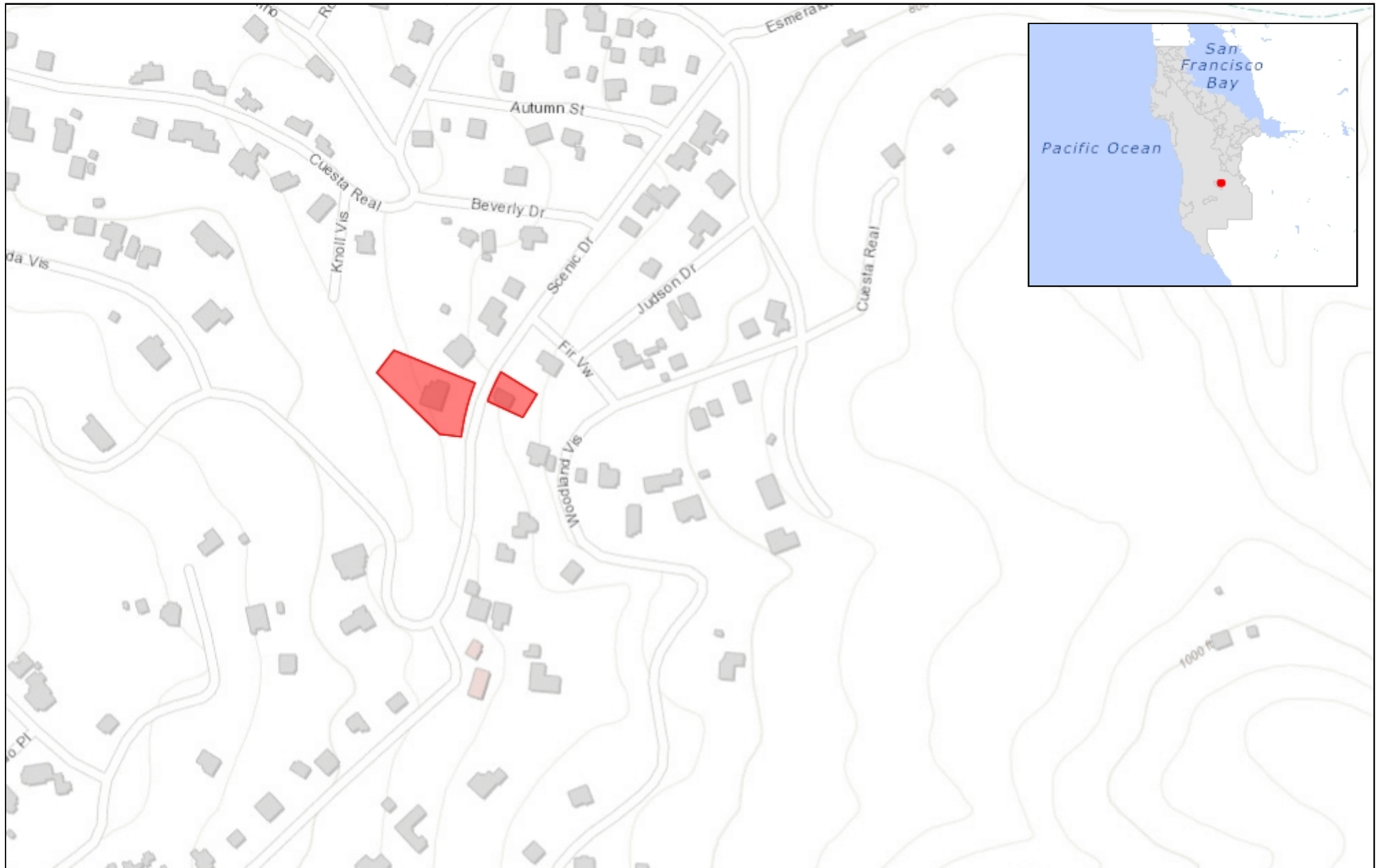
That the Planning Commission find that the proposed acquisition by the County's Real Property Service Division of two parcels, APNs 083-133-320 and 083-120-030, located at 331 and 340 Scenic Drive, La Honda, for purposes of hazard mitigation, conforms to the County General Plan.

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County of San Mateo - Planning and Building Department

ATTACHMENT B



0.14 0 0.07 0.14 Miles

WGS_1984_Web_Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere
© Latitude Geographics Group Ltd.

1:4,513 

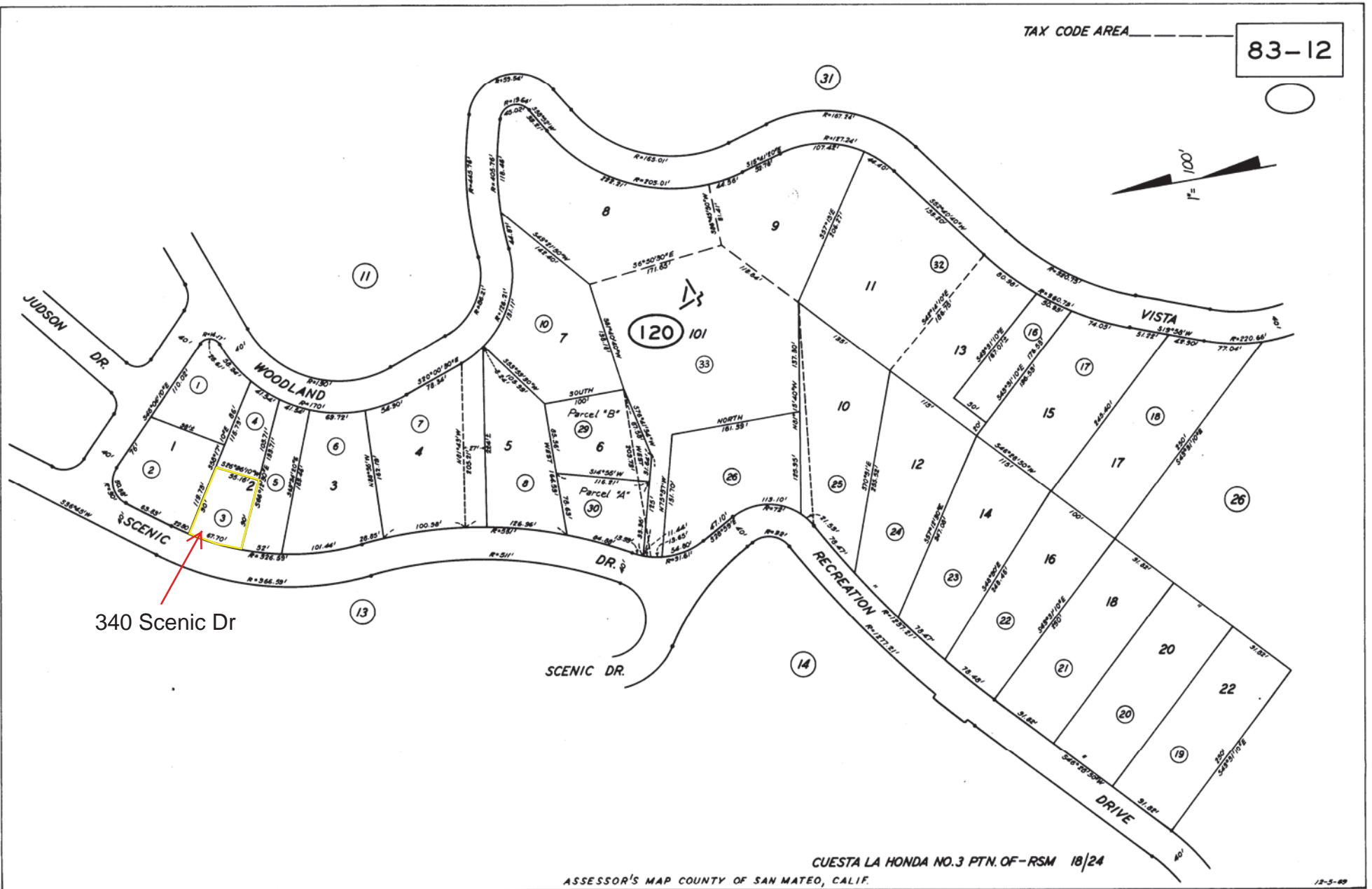
This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable.

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TAX CODE AREA

83-12

1" = 100'



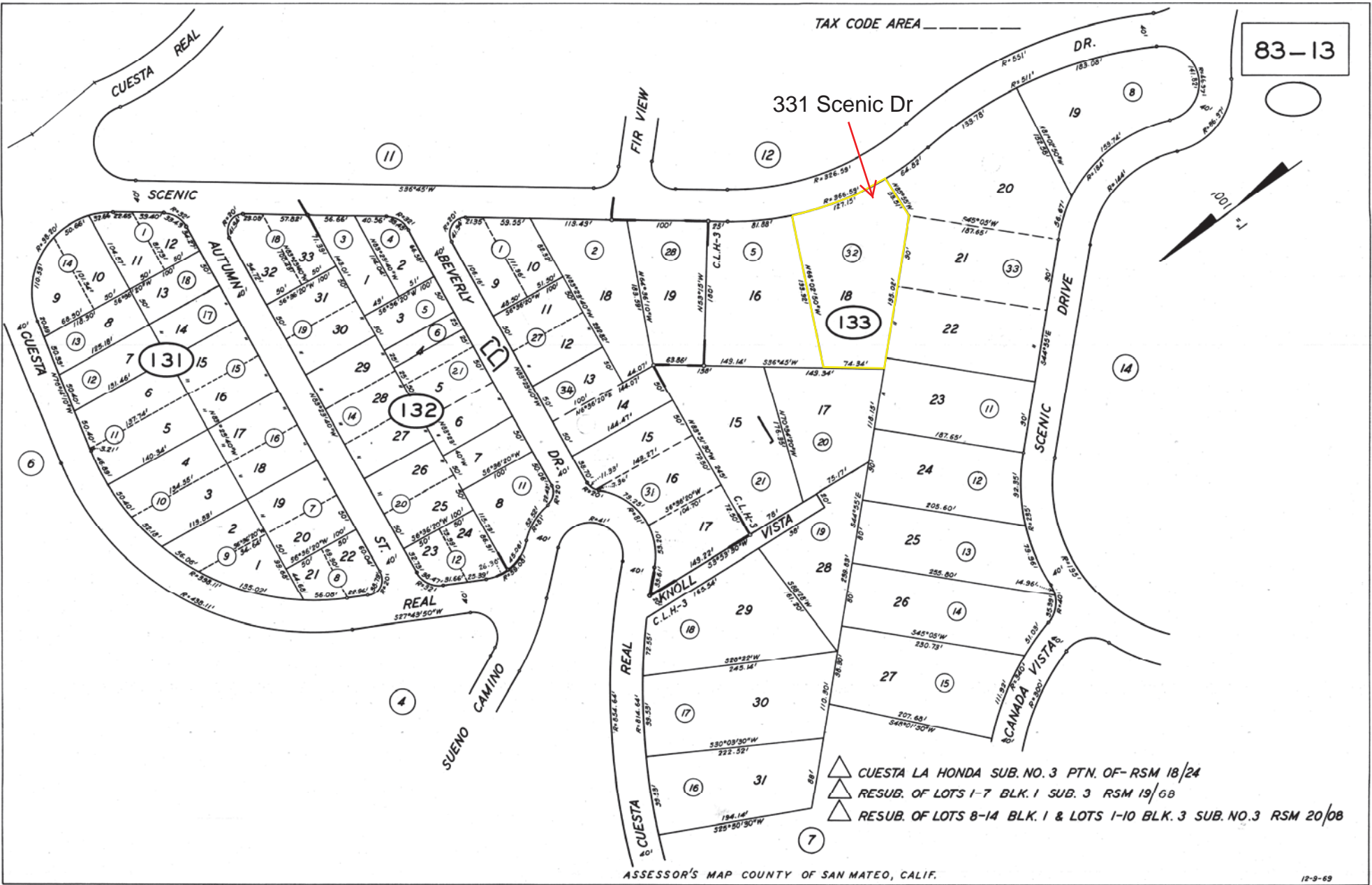
340 Scenic Dr

CUESTA LA HONDA NO.3 PTN. OF - RSM 18/24

ASSESSOR'S MAP COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, CALIF.

TAX CODE AREA

331 Scenic Dr



- ▲ CUESTA LA HONDA SUB. NO. 3 PTN. OF-RSM 18/24
- ▲ RESUB. OF LOTS 1-7 BLK. 1 SUB. 3 RSM 19/68
- ▲ RESUB. OF LOTS 8-14 BLK. 1 & LOTS 1-10 BLK. 3 SUB. NO.3 RSM 20/68