TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES
DATE: APRIL 22, 2002 CMR:215:02

SUBJECT: ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALO ALTO AMENDING SECTION 22.04.34 OF CHAPTER 22.04 OF THE PALO ALTO MUNICIPAL CODE TO PREVENT THE USE OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES OR MOPED "OFF ROAD" IN OPEN SPACE AREAS

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that Council approve the attached ordinance amending Chapter 22.04 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, making violations of the operation of motorized vehicles within open space areas infractions.

BACKGROUND
Arastradero Preserve has had a problem in the past with people riding motorized bikes and off-road vehicles through the open grassland fields of the Preserve. Dirt bikes and motorcycles have not only scarred the landscape, but also frightened horses riding on trails and bicyclists in the path of the fast-moving vehicles. To prevent motor vehicles from entering the Preserve, pedestrian stiles built out of large logs were placed at all of the entrances of the Preserve. These styles allow horses and hikers to walk over the logs to enter the Preserve, but make it very difficult for a heavy motor bike or vehicle to be carried across the stiles. This modification to the entry gates has proven effective in keeping motorized vehicles out of the Preserve.

In March 2001, Council approved a Trail Master Plan for the Arastradero Preserve that recommended removing the stiles from the entrance gates of the Preserve in order to make the Preserve trails more accessible to persons with disabilities. A secondary intent is to make the trail entrances safer for equestrians, bikes and hikers entering and exiting the gate at the same time. Staff is beginning to implement the Master Plan. Removing the stiles at the five entry gates to the Preserve will not only provide better access, but will also create a more visually inviting entrance to the Preserve trails.
Although the use of off-road vehicles and dirt bikes has been a particular problem at the Arastradero Preserve, there have also been occasional incidents at Foothills Park and the Baylands Preserve.

**DISCUSSION**
Palo Alto Municipal Code section 22.04.34, Motorized Vehicles, currently restricts the use of motorized vehicles to persons with valid driver’s license, prohibits the repairs of vehicles within open space areas, and prohibits the use of electric power generators within open space parks. The ordinance does not, however, prohibit the operation of vehicles, mopeds or scooters off designated parking lots or roads. The proposed amendment to the ordinance will correct this deficiency and will protect open space habitat from damage.

Amending Chapter 22.04 to restrict the off-road operation of vehicles will enable Park Rangers or Police Officers to issue citations to violators. Prominent notice of the restriction of vehicles will be posted at the entrance gate to the Preserve and at other places within Foothills Park and the Baylands Preserve.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**
Revenue from citations issued pursuant to this ordinance will be deposited to the City’s General Fund. The revenue anticipated from the adoption of this ordinance will not be significant.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**
The proposed amendment is consistent with existing City policy.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**
This is not a project subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.

**ATTACHMENTS**
Attachment A: Ordinance

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