



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-25-23
Meeting 25-06
February 26, 2025

STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM 1

AGENDA ITEM

Overview of the Hawthorns Area Plan Public Access Working Group Recommendations and Public Feedback with an Additional Consideration Regarding Trail Segments #16 and 17

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Receive a presentation on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group's (PAWG) recommendations and a summary of public feedback received to date. The purpose of this meeting is to present extensive information to the Board of Directors (Board) to help the Board absorb the information prior to making any decisions. An action by the Board to consider accepting the PAWG recommendations, with any Board-directed modifications, and directing the General Manager to incorporate them into the public access component of the Hawthorns Area Plan is scheduled to occur at a subsequent public meeting.
2. Consider and provide feedback on an alternative trail alignment to Trail Segments #16 and 17.

SUMMARY

In 2023, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) Board of Directors (Board) formed the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (PAWG) to develop public access recommendations for the Hawthorns area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. District staff presented the PAWG's recommendations to the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee for consideration on September 17, 2024 (R-24-115). The recommendations include two conceptual parking area location options and a loop trail concept with future (time uncertain) trail connections to the Town of Portola Valley's (Town's) trails. The recommendations also include bicycle, equestrian, dog-on-leash, and hiking access designations for each trail segment. The PNR unanimously voted to forward the PAWG recommendations with no modifications, to the full Board and concurred in having staff first present these to the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee, Portola Valley Town Council, and the Portola Valley Ranch Homeowners Association to collect and forward their feedback to the full Board.

The intent of this Study Session is to present the information generated from the extensive PAWG process and the final PAWG recommendations, as well as input received from the most recent community engagement work. In addition, staff will be presenting one alternative for Trail Segments #16 and 17 that considers both the recent input received and the PAWG's intent. No action will be taken at this meeting. Instead, this is an opportunity for the Board to absorb the extensive information and ask clarifying questions. Board consideration of an action to accept the PAWG recommendations, with any Board-directed modifications, and direct the General

Manager to incorporate them into the public access component of the Hawthorns Area Plan is scheduled to occur at a subsequent public meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Hawthorns Area Plan project is a multiyear planning effort to open the 79-acre Hawthorns Area property to the public. The property is located in the Town of Portola Valley, a part of Windy Hill Preserve, and subject to a conservation easement, which allows low intensity, ecologically sensitive recreation and defines limits on potential future development of the property. With Phases 1 (Vision and Goals) and 2 (Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints) complete, the project is currently in Phase 3 (Programming/Conceptual Planning), which focuses on developing conceptual plan alternatives for ecologically sensitive public access. Pending future Board consideration and acceptance of the PAWG recommendations, the project would move into Phase 4 (Area Plan/Environmental Review). At the end of environmental review, the Board will consider approval of the Hawthorns Area Plan, with the project moving into design development, permitting, bidding and construction as part of Phase 5 (Implementation).

The Board approved formation of a Public Access Working Group as part of Phase 3 to assist the District with developing public access options. Over the course of a year, through seven meetings and site visits, and working within the Board-approved vision and goals of the project (as detailed below), the PAWG developed their recommendations for public access.

Board-approved Vision and Goals

On March 23, 2022, the Board reviewed and approved the following Vision and Goals for the Hawthorns Area Plan, which guided the formation of the PAWG public access recommendations ([R-22-45](#)):

Hawthorns Area Vision Statement

The Hawthorns Area offers picturesque views of rolling oak grasslands and the Santa Cruz Mountains, provides important wildlife refuge, and reflects the region's natural, agricultural, and social history. The District will protect and manage natural, scenic, cultural, and open space resources at the Hawthorns Area and provide ecologically sensitive public access consistent with the District's mission and the allowable uses outlined in the property's conservation easement.

Hawthorns Area Goals

- Protect and restore native habitat and manage for ecological resiliency of aquatic and terrestrial habitat, wildlife connectivity, and other natural resources.
- Open the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity public access, provide an internal trail system, and provide multi-modal access to the property.
- Connect to adjacent public trails and explore opportunities for trail connections to regional open space lands.
- Interpret the rich natural, cultural, and historic features and pursue partnerships to manage the property's natural and cultural history.
- Highlight scenic viewpoints and design recreational amenities while protecting scenic viewsheds.

- Manage the property for safe public access in a fiscally sustainable manner that promotes ongoing public support and appreciation with ongoing public engagement and consistent with the District's Good Neighbor Policy.

Board-approved Public Access Framework

The PAWG received a Public Access Framework (PAF) (Attachment 1) developed during the existing conditions phase of the project that outlined specific natural resource and land management considerations related to public access. The PAF guided and informed the PAWG's exploration and evaluation of parking and trail options on the topics of natural resources (vegetation, wildlife, aquatic, wildfire resiliency), cultural resources (Native American resources, historic complex), aesthetic resources (viewsheds, scenic corridor), public access (public use, trail, driveways, parking, site amenities, signage), and operations and maintenance (gates and fencing, staff residence, roads and trails, safety and security, utilities, environmental hazards, legal arrangements, partnerships).

PAWG and Conceptual Planning

Based on the PAF, natural resources protection has been a key focus throughout the PAWG process. At the December 16, 2023 meeting, PAWG members had a robust conversation on the various proposed driveway access points on Alpine Road and the extent of parking being introduced into the meadows. The District's Natural Resources staff provided a comprehensive analysis of parking options 4 through 6, which are based on the District's Basic Policy and Resource Management Policies. This analysis led the PAWG to develop more parking options and played an important role in shaping their final recommendations.

In total, the PAWG held seven (7) meetings throughout their process, including two (2) onsite meetings at the Hawthorns Property. Each PAWG meeting followed the Brown Act requirements, with public notifications and time for public comment. The PAWG held robust discussions regarding trail alignments, parking options, trail use considerations, consistency with the conservation easement, and other related topics. For an overview of the PAWG meeting schedule and topics covered, please refer to Attachment 2.

Summary of PAWG Recommendations

At the final June 13, 2024 PAWG meeting, the voting results showed a consensus among the 13 voting PAWG members for the various public access components:

- Internal trail system
- Trail connections with surrounding Town trails
- Opportunities for regional trail connections
- Proposed trail uses within the Hawthorns Area
- Concept parking designs

The following recommendations are a result of the PAWG process and voting results (Attachment 3, see Figure 4 for map).

1. Internal Trail System
 - Support for internal loop trail alignment and spur trails to viewpoints

- Support for benches at all viewpoints. Bench A facing northeast, bench B facing northwest, and bench C facing northwest.
2. Trail Connections with Surrounding Town Trails and Pathways
 - Support for connections to Alpine Trail
 - Opposition to connection to Sweet Springs Trail by Saddleback Drive
 - Suggestion to re-evaluate future connections (Trail Segments 16 and 17) to Sweet Springs Trail after monitoring trail usage following the preserve's opening (connection would require coordination between the Town and Portola Valley Ranch and possibly certain permissions and agreements between the parties).
 3. Opportunities for Regional Trail Connections Beyond Town Trails
 - Support for future regional trail connection to Los Trancos Trail
 - Support for future regional trail connection to Arastradero Preserve and Foothills Nature Preserve
 4. Proposed Trail Uses
 - Support for hiking, dogs-on-leash, equestrian use, and bicycle use on internal loop trail, spur trails and connections to Alpine Trail (bicycle use on Alpine Trail requires Town approval)
 - Support for hiking, dogs-on-leash, and equestrian uses only on connections to Sweet Springs Trail, if any of the connections are built
 5. Conceptual Parking Designs
 - Support for both conceptual parking options 9 and 10, with a greater level of support for option 10 (parking option 9 utilizes existing driveway to staff residence, and parking option 10 utilizes new driveway at intersection of Portola Road and Alpine Road). Both options will be studied under CEQA.
 - Support for a phased approach if feasible and up to maximum of 50 parking spaces.

Review of PAWG Recommendations by the Planning and Natural Resource Committee

The PAWG recommendations were reviewed by the PNR at their September 17, 2024 meeting (R-24-115) (Attachments 6 and 7). The PNR unanimously voted to forward the PAWG recommendations with no modifications, to the full Board and agreed to have staff first present the recommendations to the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee, Portola Valley Town Council, and the Portola Valley Ranch Homeowners Association to collect and forward their feedback to the full Board.

Summary of Key Feedback

District staff presented the PAWG recommendations to the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee on October 23, 2024, Portola Valley Town Council on October 30, 2024, and Portola Valley Ranch Homeowners Association on January 16, 2025. Below are key themes of the input received during these meetings (Attachment 4).

- Desire to reduce the proposed 50 parking spaces and support for a phased approach starting with fewer spaces and expanding as needed (see additional detail below)
- Concerns about potential overflow parking
- Concerns about traffic safety at driveway entrance locations

- Support and opposition to potential trail connection to Sweet Springs Trail (see additional detail below)
- Opposition to Trail Segment 17 on the hillside (see additional detail below)
- Concerns from Portola Valley Ranch homeowners regarding potential viewshed, privacy, trespass, and trail use issues on Sweet Springs Trail
- Concerns about potential effect of public access on natural resource values
- Desire for a regional trail connection from Los Trancos Trail through Hawthorns Historic Complex to connect to Alpine Road Trail
- Concern about cost to the Town related to infrastructure improvements along Alpine Road and at driveway and street intersections

Parking Lot Size and Shared Parking Opportunities

Throughout the PAWG process, during the September 17, 2024 PNR meeting, and in the engagement efforts after the PNR meeting, members of the public have raised recurring concerns about the number of parking spaces being proposed and the assumptions upon which this number is based. Though Hawthorns is a small preserve with a modest amount of trail mileage, the project's traffic demand analysis calculated a potential demand for between 25 and 70 spaces, based on an assumption that Hawthorns could become a hub for regional and local trail access given its prime location in the middle of the Town's extensive trail network and close proximity to nearby preserves. Since the actual future use at Hawthorns is unknown, the project team selected a number in the middle, to account for the Hawthorns' size while also considering the likelihood of greater use due to its close proximity to surrounding communities, easy access to major roadways and highways, and nearby trail connections to surrounding parks and open spaces.

The PAWG received frequent comments and concerns about the 50 spaces. Their solution was to phase the parking area, starting with fewer spaces and leaving flexibility to expand if the level of use is observed to be greater than the initial number of spaces. The conceptual parking area design demonstrates the feasibility of locating parking in the preserve, with additional design refinements to be developed in the future. Details on how to phase the parking were not discussed, as a topographic survey and more design work are needed, but conceptually, the first phase of parking could have about 20 to 25 spaces and would need to include a fire truck turnaround, due to fire code requirements. If a phased parking approach is approved, the details of a phased parking plan would be prepared during the design phase of the project.

As requested by the PNR committee, staff explored potential opportunities for shared parking within a mile radius of the Hawthorns' Alpine Road entrance, but none were found that could accommodate long-term overflow parking. For context, the District continues to experience overflow parking issues at the lower Windy Hill parking area during high peak times and days. Hawthorns runs the same risk of overflow parking if it becomes a popular local recreational resource and/or a regional hub for trail users.

Alternative to Trail Segments #16 and 17

Based on recent input received following the September PNR meeting and upon further analysis, staff has identified an alternative trail alignment (Attachment 5) to potentially address community concerns raised regarding the connection to Sweet Springs Trail and Trail Segment #17 while still meeting the trail experience intent of the PAWG.

The alternative trail alignment modifies Trail Segment #17 to stay below the canopy of trees along Sweet Springs Trail, thereby minimizing the trail’s visibility to nearby residents. In addition, this alignment can merge with Trail Segment #16 to form a continuous internal secondary trail loop that requires no connection to Sweet Springs Trail.

The alternative trail alignment is conceptual and requires further refinement during design development and construction that will entail balancing viewshed impacts, optimizing the buffer between the trail and homes, avoiding and minimizing impacts to the natural resources, and considering the trail’s constructability and sustainability. This trail alternative achieves the intent of the PAWG to increase overall trail mileage at the preserve and address feedback and concerns raised throughout the public engagement process. By being internal to Hawthorns, the trail alternative could be implemented in the first phase of public access improvements and retain the flexibility to evaluate and approach Portola Valley Ranch Homeowners Association and the Town at a future date about a possible trail connection to Sweet Springs Trail.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommended action has no immediate fiscal impact. Implementation schedules and cost estimates for planning, design and construction will be developed at later date once the Board reviews and approves the elements of the public access plan for the Hawthorns Area. This information will then be used to inform the development of future annual Budgets and Action Plans.

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio #06 *Windy Hill: Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership* allocation, costs-to-date, projected future project expenditures and projected ending balance at the portfolio level.

MAA06 Windy Hill—Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 2/3/25):	(\$451,150)
Encumbrances:	(\$31,963)
Remaining FY25 Project Budgets:	(\$163,519)
Future MAA06 project costs (projected through FY28):	(\$309,113)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$955,745)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$11,784,255

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio #06 *Windy Hill: Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership* allocation, costs-to-date, projected life-to-date project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA06 Windy Hill—Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	
06-002 Hawthorns Area Plan	(\$955,745)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$955,745)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$11,784,255

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

- **May 18, 2021:** Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) received an informational presentation on the proposed planning and public engagement process for the Hawthorns Area Plan and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-65](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **August 24, 2021:** PNR reviewed the proposed draft vision and goals and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-112](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **November 16, 2021:** PNR reviewed the revised vision and goals and draft public access working group strategy and provided further refinements. PNR unanimously recommended forwarding the refined vision and goal statements to the full Board for consideration. ([R-21-156](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 1, 2022:** PNR reviewed the proposed planning and public engagement process to develop the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-29](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 23, 2022:** Board reviewed and approved the Vision and Goals for the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-45](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **July 13, 2022:** Board approved the award of contract with Parisi Transportation Consulting to provide transportation planning services for the Hawthorns Area Plan ([R-22-81](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 21, 2023:** PNR reviewed the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition and formation strategy. ([R-23-35](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **April 26, 2023:** Board reviewed and approved the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition as well as recruitment and formation strategy. ([R-23-44](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **June 21, 2023:** Board interviewed ten candidates by the Hawthorns Area Ad Hoc Committee and select six individuals to fill the Interest Area Representative seats on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group. ([R-23-69](#), [no meeting minute taken for the interviews](#))
- **June 28, 2023:** Board Appointed members to serve on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group. ([R-23-75](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **August 9, 2023:** Board approved the award of contract with CSW|ST2 to provide preliminary site plan and conceptual design services for the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-23-78](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **February 14, 2024:** Board approved the amendment of contracts with Parametrix (transportation consultant, formerly Parisi Transportation Consulting) and PGAdesign (PAWG facilitator). ([R-24-17](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **September 17, 2024:** PNR reviewed the PAWG recommendations, made no modifications, and supported the next step of presenting the recommendations to the Town before returning to a Study Session of the Board. ([R-24-115](#), [meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Environmental review for the Hawthorns Area Plan is anticipated to occur in a future fiscal year, pending Board approval of the public access elements to include as part of the CEQA Project Description. Environmental review would begin once the project description is further defined and approved by the Board.

NEXT STEPS

See table below for a list of next steps:

Calendar Year	Hawthorns Area Plan Phase
March 2025	Completion of Phase 3: Return to the Board to consider accepting the PAWG recommendations, with any Board-directed modifications, and directing the General Manager to incorporate them into the public access component of the Hawthorns Area Plan.
2025-2027	Phase 4: Compile all elements of the Hawthorns Area Plan, including the public access components. Conduct CEQA environmental review and obtain Board approval of the project.
2027-TBD	Phase 5: Implementation (design development, permitting, bidding and construction)

Attachments

1. Public Access Framework
2. PAWG Meeting Schedule and Topics
3. PAWG Recommendations Report and Summary of Process
4. Town Ad Hoc/Town Council/Portola Valley Ranch/Public Feedback Summary
5. Alternative Trail Alignment for Trail Segments #16 and 17
6. Planning & Natural Resources Committee Report (R-24-115) without attachments due to size. See [Laserfiche](#) for complete agenda packet.
7. Approved Minutes of the Planning & Natural Resources Committee for meeting R-24-115.

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Hawthorns Area Public Access Framework

Purpose: *The Hawthorns Area Public Access Framework outlines proposed natural resource and land management considerations specifically related to public access at the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. Overarching themes informing the framework include diversity, equity, and inclusion; accessibility; climate change; financial sustainability; natural resource protections, the District’s mission; and the Board-approved vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area.*

Within the context of the Public Access Framework, the Public Access Working Group will consider:

- Preserve and trail uses
- Parking and driveway access locations
- Trail system pathways, including options for a closed trail network versus an open system connected to other nearby existing trails

Management Areas	Sub-Topics	Public Access Considerations
Natural Resources	Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site public access and facilities to minimize detrimental impacts to vegetation communities (e.g., minimize tree removals, prevent habitat fragmentation and shrub encroachment to historic grassland areas, prevent proliferation of invasive species, etc.). • Avoid siting facilities in a way that would impact special status plant species if found.
	Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site public access elements sensitively to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat and movement, reduce barriers for wildlife (e.g., using wildlife-friendly fencing), and protect wildlife habitat connectivity. • Ensure public access continues to allow for monitoring, protection, and on-site habitat for special status species present.
	Aquatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access in the closed area around Los Trancos Creek and ensure future public access is sited away from the Los Trancos Creek riparian corridor and wetlands.

	Wildfire Resiliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site public access in alignment with the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, ensuring sufficient defensible space and site access for emergency personnel. • Utilize hardened surfaces in parking area material design to reduce likelihood of wildland fire ignitions.
Cultural Resources	Native American Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access in the closed area with known cultural resources and ensure future public access avoids impacts to areas with cultural resource sensitivity. • Conduct tribal consultations as appropriate throughout public access development process.
	Historic Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access to the Historic Complex area until (1) the long-term disposition of the structures has been determined through the Hawthorns Historic Complex Partnership project, and (2) the Historic Complex area and associated uses have been incorporated into the Hawthorns Area Plan. • Ensure future use of the Historic Complex is compatible with public access and other land/resource management considerations.
Aesthetic Resources	Viewsheds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site proposed infrastructure and amenities to minimize effects on viewsheds in the vicinity of the Hawthorns Area. • Site proposed infrastructure and amenities to highlight key vistas visible from the Hawthorns Area, such as the San Francisco Bay and nearby open spaces. • Showcase the Hawthorns Area’s natural beauty and internal features for public enjoyment. • Where feasible, use materials complementary of the Hawthorns Area’s natural landscape and cultural features.
	Scenic Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site proposed infrastructure and amenities to minimize effects on the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor in alignment with the Town of Portola Valley’s Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan.

Public Access	Public Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider adjacent uses, potential user groups, and user perspectives in determining allowable uses within the Hawthorns Area to reduce management, conflict, and safety concerns. • Provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public recreation, including hiking and equestrian access. • Consider allowing bicycle uses along the perimeter of the Hawthorns Area at Alpine Road to connect to regional bicycle accessible trails. • Consider evaluating the site for dog access. • Seek Easy Access trail opportunities where feasible and practical.
	Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the site’s topography, vegetation, and other natural features, develop an internal trail system that aligns with the Board-approved Hawthorns Area vision and goals, is financially and operationally sustainable, considers the trail user experience, and strives to accommodate a range of hiking and equestrian abilities. • Explore opportunities for local and regional trail connections. Conversely, consider providing a closed loop trail system within the property boundaries. • Consider opportunities for Easy Access trails. • Seek opportunities to realign the Alpine Road Trail and offer safer passage within the Alpine Road corridor that align with the Board-approved Hawthorns Area vision and goals and minimize impacts to the site’s natural resources and public access opportunities.
	Driveways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop driveway(s) accessing future on-site parking with adequate lines of sight and consideration to local traffic and congestion patterns, including adjacent roadways and trails. Consider utilizing existing driveway to access potential parking if practical and feasible and if adequate separation from staff residence is achievable. • Consider relocation of the Alpine Road Trail in designing and/or developing driveways intersecting with Alpine Road.

	Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop on-site parking with surface material and location that aligns with the conservation easement, maintenance needs, and defensible space requirements. • Consider impacts to adjacent roadways and neighbors in locating and developing parking amenities. • Consider the appropriateness of multiple, smaller parking areas versus one large parking area based on existing resources, site conditions, and characteristics. • Consider required stormwater C3 treatments in the selection and development of on-site parking. • Consider accommodating transportation demand management strategies as appropriate (e.g., providing bicycle and/or equestrian amenities to encourage non-automobile access).
	Site Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide benches in select locations to enhance public enjoyment of vista points and other key property features. • Consider a vault toilet at the future on-site parking and consider an associated rain catchment system for resource management use.
	Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure public access amenities include relevant signage where appropriate to guide and inform members of the public (e.g., trail directional signs, a trailhead signboard, interpretative panels, and applicable regulation and resource management signs).
Operations and Maintenance	Gates and Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include perimeter and internal fencing and gates to ensure appropriate public access, site security, aesthetics, and historic resource management goals.
	Staff Residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard privacy for the staff residence to the extent feasible when siting parking and trail infrastructure.
	Roads and Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize use of existing driveways and internal roads required for public access and District operations before developing new driveways and roads.

	<p>Safety and Security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize gates, fencing, dark sky security lighting as needed, and signage on District property where appropriate to maintain site security and meet public safety objectives in alignment with the District’s Good Neighbor Policy. • Site parking area to facilitate law enforcement/ranger patrol and access for emergency response personnel. • Consider impacts to the adjacent Town roadways when siting parking and trail connections (e.g., line of sight, pedestrian safety, etc.).
	<p>Utilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider restrictions set by the conservation easement regarding improvements to on-site utilities (e.g., no electrical or sewer improvements).
	<p>Environmental Hazards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access in the closed area with known environmental hazards and ensure future public access avoids environmental hazards if found.
	<p>Legal Arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop public access in alignment with stipulations set forth by the conservation easement held by the Peninsula Open Space Trust. • Explore options for the re-alignment and widening of the Alpine Trail, considering the District and the Town’s shared long-term maintenance and operational needs.
	<p>Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider and identify local and regional partnership opportunities that encourage multimodal access to the Hawthorns Area and adjacent open spaces.

Hawthorns Area Plan PAWG Meeting Schedule and Topics

Date and Location	Topics
July 27, 2023 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 1: Kickoff Established Working Group roles, goals, workplan, schedule, and operating procedures. Received public feedback. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
August 26, 2023 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Hawthorns Site	Meeting 2: Site meeting Conducted in-person site meeting and reviewed existing site conditions. Received public feedback. RSVPs were requested for planning logistics. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
October 26, 2023 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 3: Preliminary design discussion PAWG discussed and provided input on draft parking and driveway design options 1 through 4, as well as internal connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Received public feedback. Selected two co-chairs. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
December 16, 2023 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 4: Continuation of preliminary design discussion PAWG continued discussion on initial conceptual design alternatives, including parking and driveway options 4 through 6, internal trail system and connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Received public feedback. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
February 29, 2024 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 5: Continuation of December 16, 2023 design discussion PAWG discussed updated conceptual design alternatives, including parking and driveway options 7 and 8, internal trail system and connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Conducted informal voting and assessed initial recommendations on all public access components. Received public feedback. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
March 24, 2024 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Hawthorns Site	Meeting 6: Site meeting and design discussion PAWG reviewed and discussed conceptual parking design options 7 through 9a on site. Received public feedback. RSVPs were requested for planning logistics. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
June 13, 2024 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 7: Discuss and confirm recommendation PAWG discussed design options 7 through 10 and finalized recommendations on conceptual trail alignment, trail uses, opportunities for regional trail connections, and conceptual parking alternatives to forward to the District's PNR Committee and subsequently to the Board for consideration. Received public feedback. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)



Hawthorns Area of the Windy
Hill Open Space Preserve

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group

**RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT
and SUMMARY OF PROCESS**

November 1, 2024



Photo Credit: Jane Mark

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Mission Statement

“Midpen’s mission is to acquire a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.”

1. Introduction

The 79-acre Hawthorns property was protected from development when it was gifted to Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) in 2011. The Hawthorns Area is part of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve, located within the Town of Portola Valley.

Since 2021, Midpen has been engaged in a multi-year phased planning effort with a focus on opening the preserve to the public. The intention is to open the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity, ecologically sensitive public access, providing a trail system and optimizing opportunities for multimodal access to the property. To establish the framework for a comprehensive use and management plan for the property, Midpen's Board of Directors approved its *Vision and Goals* for the Hawthorns Area on March 23, 2022. The existing conditions that support this intention, along with the PAWG structure and charge, were approved by the Board on April 26, 2023.

Midpen's Board directed staff to initiate a public process to engage a group of community members from throughout the Midpen district to investigate and evaluate options for providing public access to the Hawthorns Area. The goal of this group, named the Hawthorns Public Access Working Group (PAWG), was to identify access options, and why these options were preferred. Recommendations from the group will be forwarded, along with public feedback, to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) for consideration and subsequently to the Board for final policy decisions.

This report describes the PAWG's process, its organization and implementation over a 12-month period, and the resulting conclusions and recommendations that emerged from its deliberations. The public was invited to attend and comment at all PAWG meetings.

The Hawthorns Area is subject to a conservation easement granted to Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), under which Midpen now operates. The easement allows low-intensity and ecologically sensitive recreation and defines limits on potential future development of the property.

Following the body of the report are Appendices that provide detailed information about the PAWG process.

Vision Statement

“The Hawthorns Area offers picturesque views of rolling oak grasslands and the Santa Cruz Mountains, provides important wildlife refuge, and reflects the region’s natural, agricultural, and social history. Midpen will protect and manage natural, scenic, cultural and open space resources at the Hawthorns Area and provide ecologically sensitive public access consistent with Midpen’s mission and allowable uses outlined in the property’s conservation easement.”



2. Process

A. Purpose and Charge

The purpose of the PAWG was to establish an interactive forum of local and regional perspectives to collaborate with Midpen on a public access plan at the Hawthorns Area that is consistent with the Board-adopted *Vision and Goals*.

Phase 1: The Board approved the *Vision and Goals* for the Hawthorns Area in March 2022 to create low-intensity, ecologically sensitive public access, provide a trail system, and optimize opportunities for multimodal access to the property.

Through the Working Group process, the following public access components were evaluated:

- Trailhead location(s) and internal trail system
- Trail connections with surrounding Town trails and pathways
- Opportunities for regional trail connections
- Proposed trail uses within the Hawthorns Area
- Parking area and driveway location(s)

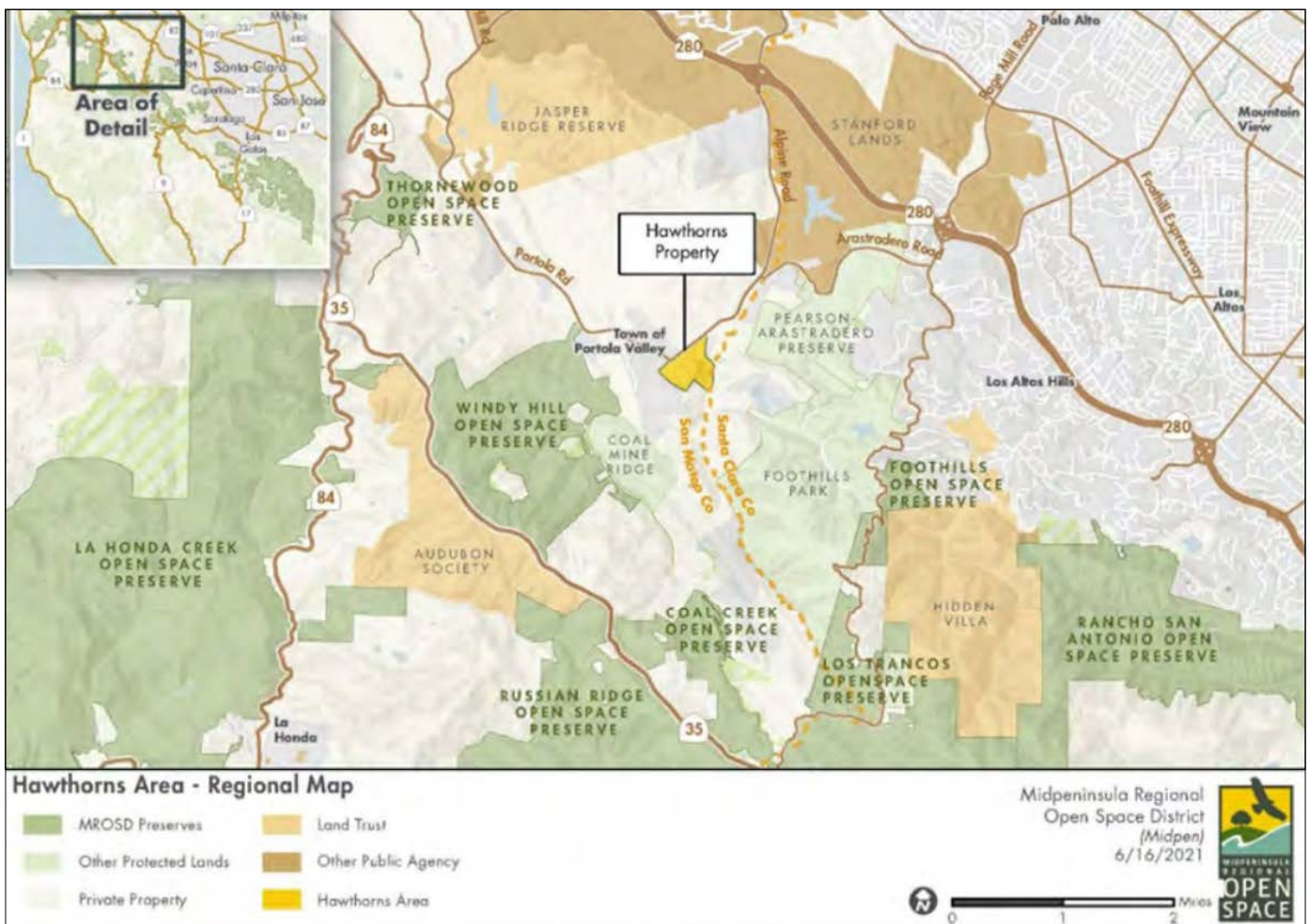


Figure 1: Hawthorns Area Regional and Location Map

HAWTHORNS AREA GOALS

1. **Natural Resources:** Protect and restore native habitat and manage for ecological resiliency of aquatic and terrestrial habitat, wildlife connectivity, and other natural resources.
2. **Public Access:** Open the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity public access, provide an internal trail system, and provide multimodal access to the property.
3. **Local and Regional Connectivity:** Connect to adjacent public trails and explore opportunities for trail connections to regional open space lands.
4. **Natural and Cultural History:** Interpret the rich natural, cultural and historic features and pursue partnerships to manage the property's natural and cultural history.
5. **Aesthetics:** Highlight scenic viewpoints and design recreational amenities while protecting scenic viewsheds.
6. **Operations and Maintenance:** Manage the property for safe public access in a fiscally sustainable manner that promotes ongoing public support and appreciation with ongoing public engagement and consistent with Midpen's Good Neighbor Policy.

The PAWG was charged with identifying the best solution given Midpen's mission, project vision and goals, site constraints and public input, while also thinking about the desired visitor experiences at the Hawthorns property. Natural resources protection was a key focus throughout the PAWG process. Ultimately, the PAWG evaluated a series of challenging planning issues, weighed possible tradeoffs, and developed their recommendations.

Through their discussions, the PAWG developed conceptual design alternatives and recommendations for the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to review and convey to the Board. With Board approval, the preferred alternative will ultimately be incorporated into the Hawthorns Area Plan (a Comprehensive Use and Management Plan for the Hawthorns Area) and advanced to the environmental review process.

B. Project Goals and Objectives

To achieve a comprehensive set of well-informed recommendations, the PAWG considered a wide range of public access issues informed by a range of technical studies, the conservation easement and related documents, as well as the *Vision and Goals*.

The supporting technical documents aimed to inform, frame, and guide the programming and conceptual planning phase of the project and the activities of the PAWG itself. Chief among these documents are the *Public Access Framework*, the *Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report*, and the *Hawthorns Area Transportation Study*, as well as the conservation easement.

The six project goals relate directly to the purpose of the PAWG as described in the side bar or opposite page.

The *Public Access Framework* encompasses natural, cultural, and aesthetic resource management actions; public access considerations; and ongoing operations and maintenance needs. It considers diversity, equity, and inclusion, and notes concerns regarding climate change.

The *Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report* describes the site's opportunities and constraints, particularly pertaining to future resource management and public access. Based on technical studies and public input obtained during an earlier project phase, it summarizes the environmental characteristics, operations and maintenance activities, allowed and permitted uses stipulated by the existing conservation easement on the property, and site restoration projects undertaken since Midpen officially acquired the Hawthorns Area.

The *Hawthorns Area Transportation Study* documents the existing transportation conditions, and estimates future use and the amount of parking needed at the Hawthorns Area. It evaluates site access, including potential driveway locations, and sight distances for driveway approaches for the future

parking area.

The Hawthorns Area is subject to a **conservation easement** granted in 2005 by the Woods Family Trust to Peninsula Open Space Trust. This easement allows low-intensity recreational uses and related development that align with improvements typically offered at other Midpen preserves, such as trails, split-rail fences, parking areas, vault restrooms, and directional signage. The conservation easement restricts future development of new buildings and infrastructure. Specifically, Section 6(i) of the conservation easement states the following:

“If the (Hawthorns Area) is ever conveyed to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, or any similar governmental or non-governmental entity intending to use the (Hawthorns Area) for public open space and passive recreational uses, construction of a limited staging (gravel parking lot, pit toilets, wood rail fencing, trail markers etc.) around the perimeter of the Improved Portion as necessary to facilitate public access to, and of use of, the (Hawthorns Area) for hiking and other uses permitted by this easement.”

As evident in the conservation easement plan, a group of historic buildings and features form the Hawthorns Historic Complex in the southeast corner of the property. This area is undergoing a separate planning process and is excluded from the public access considerations of the PAWG.

C. PAWG Formation Process and Members

The formation and operation of Hawthorns Area PAWG followed the 2019 – 2020 La Honda PAWG process, with adjustments tailored specifically to the project and community context. While La Honda PAWG focused on site selection for future feasibility study work, the Hawthorns Area PAWG focused on site selection and concept design work.

During the PAWG formation process, Midpen staff developed the composition, recruitment, and formation strategy of the PAWG, which was reviewed by the Midpen General Manager and the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee, and ultimately approved by the Board of Directors on April 26, 2023 (R-23-44). As part of the recruitment efforts, Midpen staff created informational flyers, attended tabling events, and facilitated a Q&A session during the open application process. The Board reviewed the 21 applications received, interviewed candidates, and selected six Interest Area Representatives. The project team also asked the Portola Valley Town Manager for a liaison from the Town Council and the Board President for a liaison from the Board.

The criteria to be a PAWG member include possessing the skills and background necessary to contribute meaningfully to the PAWG, and the ability to commit



PAWG members at MROSD Administrative Offices.

Photo Credit: Ashley Mac

to the meetings and activities during the PAWG’s tenure. PAWG members reflect a balanced array of Midpen interests and perspectives, aligning with Board Policy 6.08 on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Members demonstrate their ability and interest in collaborating with Midpen, its partners, and peer agencies, meeting the public access goals for the Hawthorns Area identified in the project’s *Vision and Goals*, as well as Midpen’s *Open Space Vision Plan* (2012).

On June 28, 2023 (R-23-75), the Board appointed 15 members to serve on the PAWG. The PAWG’s 15 members consisted of 13 voting members (seven Ward Stakeholders and six Interest Area Representatives) and two non-voting members (a Midpen Board Liaison and a Town Liaison). Table 1 outlines the PAWG composition (Appendix D).

To facilitate the meetings and guide the process, Midpen hired Cathy Garrett, president of PGAdesign, as the facilitator. Additionally, Midpen staff hired a design consultant, Paul Stevenson, a landscape architect with CSW|ST2, to develop conceptual site plan alternatives in collaboration with the PAWG, and a traffic consultant, Andrew Lee, a traffic engineer with

Table 1: Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group Composition					
No.	Member Type	Representation	Member Name	Recruitment Pathway	Voting Member
6	Interest Area Representative	May represent one or more of the following interest areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community interests Neighborhoods Safe routes to school Local and regional trail connections Resource conservation Recreational uses Interpretation/education 	Bryna Chang Tyler Feld Charlie Krenz Rachel Oslund David Smernoff Karen Vahtra	Application and Board selection	yes
7	Ward stake-holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent regional perspectives balanced with both ward and local interests Understanding of Midpen’s mission 	Ward 1: Scott Mosher Ward 2: Vivian Neou Ward 3: Willie Wool Ward 4: Sandy Sommer Ward 5: Jeff Greenfield Ward 6: Helen Quinn Ward 7: Kerry De Benedetti	Board appointment	yes
1	Board Liaison	Midpen mission and interests	Margaret MacNiven, Ward 6	Board appointment	no
1	Town Liaison*	Town interests	Sarah Wernikoff, Mayor	Town appointment	no

* Judith Hasko attended one of the PAWG meetings as alternate Town Liaison in Sarah Wernikoff’s absence.

D. PAWG Meeting Process

Midpen staff and the consultant team supported the PAWG through a series of seven working meetings over one year. The PAWG's meetings were governed by the Brown Act, and two public comment periods allowed the public to provide feedback at the beginning and end of each meeting. All agendas, meeting summaries, presentations, and materials provided to the PAWG were posted on the project website. Official agenda packets, meeting summaries, and public comments are available on Midpen's public portal: <https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/Browse.aspx?id=22252&repo=r-5197d798>.

In addition to the regularly scheduled meetings, PAWG members worked between meetings to review project materials and complete homework assignments that documented their impressions and preferences regarding trail alignments, uses, and parking and driveway options (Appendix A). PAWG members also visited the project site in November 2023 when staff facilitated two non-quorum site visits. PAWG members actively participated in shaping the meeting process, periodically requesting additional information from the Midpen project team, suggesting homework assignments for the entire group, and recommending potential additional parking locations for further study. In addition, the PAWG as a group reviewed and provided feedback on the meeting summaries, with the Co-Chairs reviewing meeting agendas, draft meeting summaries, and key discussion points.

Design Process

CSW developed and refined a total of ten conceptual parking area and driveway designs, incorporating feedback from the PAWG and the public throughout the PAWG process (Appendix A). Parametrix collected additional data at the PAWG's request and completed an analysis of the transportation opportunities and constraints for the Hawthorns Area. The Midpen trail crew identified a conceptual loop trail alignment with a gentle grade of 5 to 8%, which was verified in the field and considered a variety of site constraints identified in the *Public Access Framework*. The PAWG suggested additional trail options during the process, which were incorporated in a conceptual trail design map.



Photo Credit: Cathy Garrett

Community and Town Engagement

All seven PAWG meetings included two public comment periods for the public to speak, one at the beginning and a second at the end of each meeting. The PAWG meetings drew considerable public interest. Midpen staff received 153 written public comments on the project during the PAWG process, including follow-up feedback and thoughts submitted by PAWG members between meetings, as of 4:00 PM on June 13, 2024. The majority of the comments were submitted by local town residents and committees. The primary concerns raised were related to traffic safety, natural resources protection, viewshed and aesthetics, as well as trail connections.

Engagement with the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee (Town Ad Hoc) is one way in which the Town has been engaged as part of the planning process. This focus committee consists of representatives from seven Town committees, brought together by the Town to provide feedback on this project. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee have been attending PAWG meetings and providing both oral and written comments.

Following the presentation of preferred alternatives to PNR, the project team will seek input from the Town Ad Hoc, Town Council, and the Planning Commission for feedback. The compiled feedback will then be presented to the Board during subsequent meetings for further consideration. This process ensures that decision-making is informed by comprehensive input.

The summary Table 2 below shows the dates, locations, and topics covered in the series of meetings. A more detailed description of each meeting follows.

Table 2: Meeting Dates, Location and Topic		
Meeting	Meeting Date and Location	Topics
1	Thursday July 27, 2023 Midpen Office	Meeting 1: Kickoff Established Working Group roles, goals, workplan, schedule, and operating procedures. Received public feedback.
2	Saturday August 26, 2024 Site Tour	Meeting 2: Site meeting Conducted in-person site meeting and reviewed existing site conditions. Received public feedback. RSVPs requested for planning logistics.
3	Thursday October 26, 2023 Midpen Office	Meeting 3: Preliminary design discussion PAWG discussed and provided input on draft parking and driveway design options 1 - 4, as well as internal connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Received public feedback. Selected two co-chairs.
4	Thursday December 16, 2023 Midpen Office	Meeting 4: Continuation of preliminary design discussion PAWG continued discussion on initial conceptual design alternatives including parking and driveway options 4 - 6, internal trail system and connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Received public feedback.
5	Thursday February 29, 2024 Midpen Office	Meeting 5: Continuation of December 16, 2023 design discussion PAWG discussed updated conceptual design alternatives including parking and driveway options 7 - 8, internal trail system and connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Received public feedback.
6	Saturday March 24, 2024 Site Meeting	Meeting 6: Site meeting and design discussion PAWG reviewed and discussed conceptual parking design options 7 – 9 on site. Received public feedback. RSVPs requested for planning logistics.
7	Thursday June 13, 2024 Midpen Office	Meeting 7: Discuss and confirm recommendation PAWG discussed design option 10 and confirmed recommendations on concept trail alignment, trail uses, opportunities for regional trail connections, and concept parking alternatives to forward to Midpen’s PNR Committee and subsequently to the Board for consideration. Received public feedback.

PAWG Meeting 1: July 27, 2023

At its initial meeting, the PAWG reviewed the project goals and objectives, the group's purpose and charge, ground rules and operating procedures, and the anticipated work plan and schedule through 2024. The project team provided each PAWG member with background materials about the PAWG, Midpen, the open space preserves, and associated technical studies.

To ensure the PAWG's work would be aligned and consistent with Midpen's mission, planning and policy documents, and previous work prepared for the project, Midpen staff provided a presentation highlighting Midpen's mission, the *Vision Plan for Windy Hill Open Space Preserve*, and technical studies, including the *Existing Conditions Opportunities and Constraints* report, the *Transportation Study*, the *Public Access Framework*, and the *Constraints Map*.



Photo Credit: Ashley Mac

PAWG Meeting 2: August 26, 2023

Building upon the background materials shared in July, the PAWG's August site tour—attended by over 40 members of the public—allowed the PAWG to familiarize themselves with site conditions, observe the Alpine Road frontage, consider access opportunities both within the preserve and adjacent to Town of Portola Valley trails (Alpine and Sweet Springs Trails), and assess where to accommodate parking and access points from Alpine Road (figure 3).

The site tour consisted of seven stops including:

- The "Hawthorns meadow," a grassy area within the site
- The northeast area of the property near Alpine Road
- The Alpine Trail near the historic entry drive
- The Alpine Trail at the existing entry drive
- The summit of the site (for consideration of possible vista points)
- A second summit facing Windy Hill and the Town
- The boundary with the historic complex that lies outside the Hawthorns Area portion that will be initially opened to public access.

The Midpen-led team drew attention to key issues of the property for the PAWG to keep in mind during their work, including views to and from the property, trails (Alpine Trail, the proposed internal loop and spur trails, and connections to trails adjacent to the Hawthorns Area), possible preserve use types (hikers, equestrians, dogs on leash, bikers, children, and adults), driveway access, safety and security, and natural and cultural resources.



Photo Credit: Marie Lanka



Figure 2. Map showing stops made during PAWG Meeting 2

PAWG Meeting 3: October 26, 2023

Midpen staff provided supplementary information in response to questions and requests from the PAWG during previous meetings, including a map displaying the network of nearby regional trails; size, parking availability, and visitation information of nearby preserves; a Site Constraints Map compiling various site considerations; and videos and photographs of the proposed loop trail alignment.

Landscape Architect Paul Stevenson (CSW|ST2) and traffic engineer Andrew Lee (Parametrix) presented four options for parking and driveway access. These included Options 1, 2, and 3 located within existing meadows on the property, and Option 4 located along Alpine Road. The PAWG divided into two groups to review the options and discuss opportunities, constraints, and areas of concern before reporting back to the meeting at-large with comments, observations, and priorities.

Toward the end of the meeting, the PAWG selected two Co-Chairs, Helen Quinn, Ward 6 representative, and Rachel Oslund, an Interested Area Representative, to work with the Midpen project team on future meeting logistics, format, topics, and facilitation of ongoing PAWG meetings.

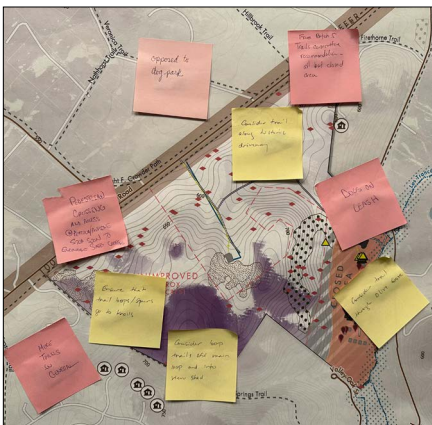


Photo Credit: Ashley Mac

PAWG Meeting 4: December 16, 2023

The PAWG continued their discussions regarding trail and parking concepts, and the conceptual internal loop trail, including review of additional trails suggested by PAWG members, such as spur trails to viewpoints, connections to Town trails, and Alpine Trail realignment. The design team presented two additional parking and driveway options, Options 5 and 6, still located within existing meadows on the property but reduced in scale from the previous Options 1, 2, and 3. Midpen's Natural Resources staff provided an overview of natural resource considerations related to proposed parking Options 4, 5, and 6, based on Midpen's Basic Policy and Resource Management Policies.

Topics of concern regarding the possible driveway access points on Alpine Road included the gradient on Alpine Road, the amount of tree cover and associated shade that may impact motorist and bicyclist visibility, the speed of traffic, the quantity of bicyclists, and traffic safety. Los Trancos Road was not considered as a point of access because of line-of-sight constraints that make it unsuitable for a general public access driveway. The PAWG's main concerns related to parking and driveway access were traffic safety, natural resource protection, and aesthetics.

PAWG Meeting 5: February 29, 2024

PAWG discussions continued about the topics and issues raised in December. The design team developed two additional parking and driveway options, Options 7 and 8, in response to the PAWG's traffic safety and natural resource concerns about the prior six parking options. Parametrix also presented additional traffic data collected at the request of the PAWG. The design refinements in Options 7 and 8 reduced the natural resource impacts, overall parking area footprint, driveway length, amount of grading needed, and improved vehicular, bicyclist, and pedestrian safety.

The PAWG reviewed Options 7 and 8 against the project's Board-approved *Vision and Goals*, and began assessing initial overall preferences of the group through informal polling on conceptual trail segments, possible trail uses, bench locations, and conceptual parking options. This revealed areas of consensus and debate on possible uses and an interest from a majority in recommending Options 7 and 8 be forwarded to the PNR.

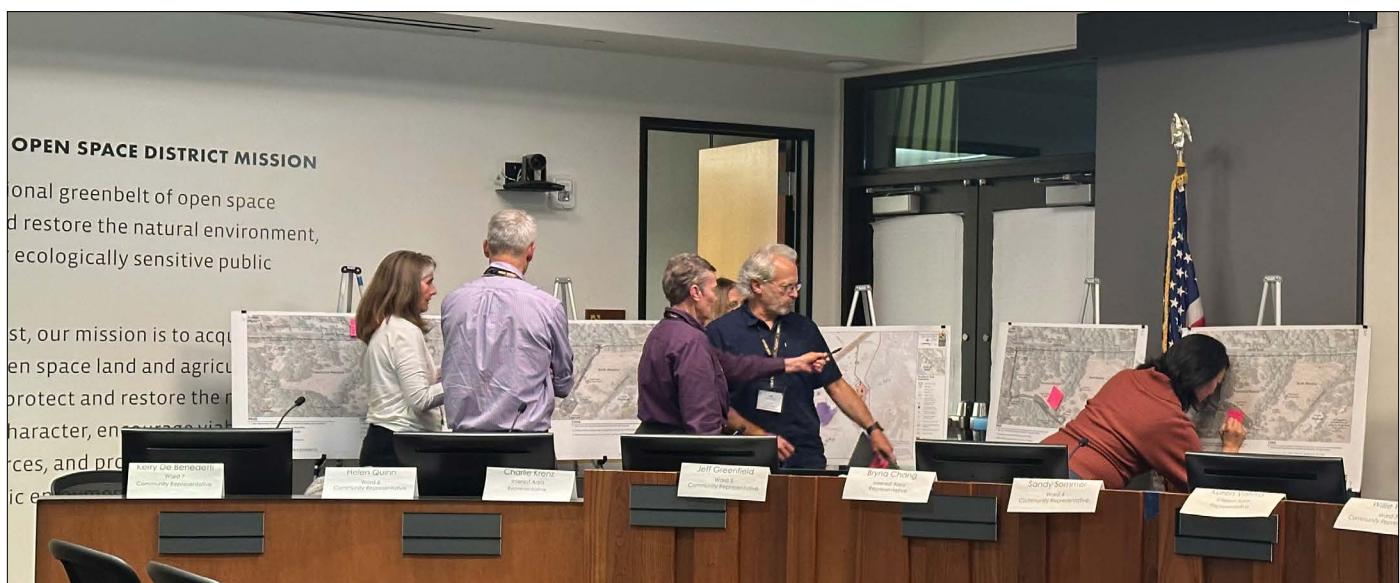


Photo Credit: Ashley Mac

PAWG Meeting 6: March 24, 2024

At the request of the PAWG, this meeting was held on site for the PAWG to obtain public feedback and to re-visit areas that had been key topics of discussion at earlier meetings . Specific topics included potential trail connections to Sweet Springs Trail, bench locations, and conceptual parking Options 7, 8, and 9 (the design team developed Option 9 in response to a suggestion from two PAWG members received after February’s meeting).

The site meeting consisted of four stops including:

- The proposed Bench “B” location
- The junction of the existing drive and the Hawthorns Meadow
- The junction of the existing driveway and Alpine Road
- The gate of the historic driveway.

The group also made an impromptu detour to a secondary lower knoll closer to Sweet Springs Trail, allowing PAWG members to stand at a lower elevation and observe the relationship between the proposed trails and houses located in Portola Valley Ranch.

The project team shared a variety of considerations related to Options 7, 8, and 9, including potential impacts on natural resources, relative quantities of grading needed, opportunities for connectivity from Hawthorns trails to Town of Portola Valley trails, and traffic concerns along Alpine Road.



Photo Credit: Galli Basson

PAWG Meeting 7: June 13, 2024

In preparation for discussion and voting, PAWG members individually assessed Options 7, 8, 9, and 10 prior to the meeting using the Board-approved project goals. This included assessing possible impacts to natural and cultural resources, safety at driveway access points, the visitor experience, local and regional trail connectivity, aesthetics, operations and maintenance, and other considerations. PAWG assessments and contributions were compiled into the “Midpen Assessment of Conceptual Parking Design Options” which compared, summarized, and identified points of support and concern for each option.

PAWG members reviewed Option 9, which was expanded to include 50 parking spaces, and Option 10, a new option conceived of at the site visit in June, which located the driveway entrance to the intersection of Portola Road and Alpine Road. The PAWG discussed specific trail segments and uses, accounting for the public comments received throughout the process. During the voting process, they deliberated, modified, and voted on the final recommendations to be forwarded to the PNR Committee for consideration.

The PAWG voted on the following categories:

- Internal trail system
- Trail connections
- Opportunities for regional trail connections
- Proposed trail uses
- Parking areas

The voting results demonstrated a strong accord among the 13 voting members of the PAWG on their final recommendations. See Chapter 5 Recommendations for specifics of the voting results, which illustrates both a broad-brush and fine-grained understanding of the PAWG’s recommendations.

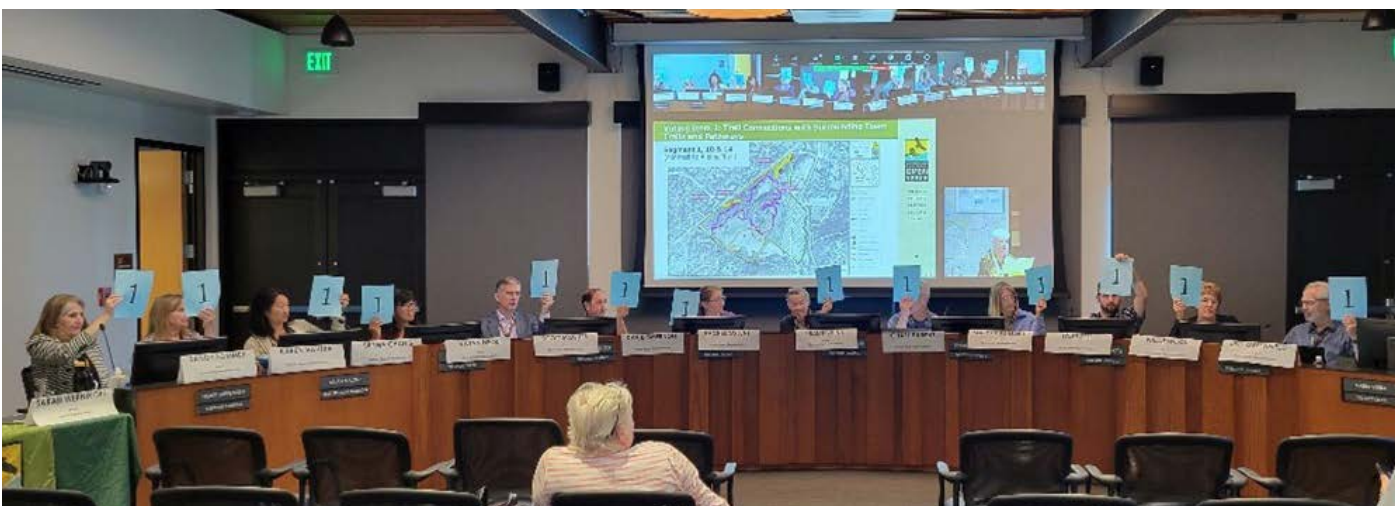


Photo Credit: Paul Stevenson

The Gradients of Agreement include:

1. I can say an unqualified “yes” to the recommendation
2. I find the proposal acceptable. It appears to be the best of the available options at this time.
3. I can live with the proposal, although I am not especially enthusiastic about it.
4. I do not fully agree with the proposal, but I am willing to stand aside, remain neutral, so the process can move forward.
5. I do not fully agree with the proposal. I have some suggestions and I would like the working group to do more work to see if we can reach a higher level of agreement.
6. I do not agree with the proposal, and I will work actively to oppose it.

E. Decision Making Process

The ground rules and operating procedures (Appendix C) for the PAWG established that the group would strive to make decisions and recommendations through a respectful and consensus-based process, consensus being defined as general agreement by all members present when a decision item was on the meeting agenda. The Co-Chairs presided over the meetings, which were facilitated by Midpen staff and facilitator Cathy Garrett. Guided by the facilitator, the PAWG signaled their level of support for topics using a scoring system based on the Gradients of Agreement described to the right. The Gradients of Agreement (see Sidebar) are a mechanism for testing the level of agreement on a proposal that expands on the traditional “yes” or “no” voting.

The Working Group also used informal voting to test the level of support prior to their final voting. By employing the Gradients of Agreement, the Working Group sought to determine if there were general support or not, and what, if anything, may be modified or proposed to gain a higher level of consensus prior to official voting.

Values from “1” to “4” on the Gradients of Agreement are considered supportive of a proposal. Full consensus is reached if all members are between a “1” and “4” on the Gradients of Agreement scale. Majority consensus is reached if a simple majority of all members are between “1” and “4” on the Gradients of Agreement scale.



3. Site Opportunities and Constraints

The PAWG’s exploration of public access opportunities at the Hawthorns property was informed and influenced by a wide range of site constraints and opportunities identified by technical studies mentioned in this report and in the appendices. The property has considerable constraints, including steep topography, limited options for parking/driveway access, aesthetic considerations, and potential impacts to natural and cultural resources.

Following is a compilation of data contained in the technical studies, input from Midpen subject matter experts, and public feedback from the community engagement process that informed the PAWG’s work and decision-making. Specifically, it includes the 6 goals from the *Vision and Goals*, items addressed in the *Public Access Framework* and additional topics raised during discussions.

A. General

Opportunities:

- Resource and land management guidelines for the Hawthorns Area may help Midpen protect and restore native habitat, reduce wildland fire risk, and support ecological resilience and wildlife connectivity.
- Midpen partnerships with other stakeholders such as the Town of Portola Valley, tribes, peer agencies, and non-profits, may enable them to fulfill the property’s vision and goals.
- Maintenance and operation guidelines for the Hawthorns Area may support the long-term stewardship of the property and meet public safety objectives in alignment with the Midpen’s Good Neighbor Policy.
- Opportunities for collaboration and support from communities include adjacent neighbors, the broader community of the Town of Portola Valley, recreational interest groups, schools, and local businesses. Concurrently, stakeholder engagement presents considerations for how best to incorporate public access.

Constraints:

- The Conservation Easement on the property limits the uses and management activities Midpen can consider for the Hawthorns Area (Figure 4).



Photo Credit: Marie Lanka

B. Natural Resources

Opportunities:

- Utilize sites within already developed or disturbed areas within the preserve for public access infrastructure.
- Position public access and facilities to minimize detrimental impact to vegetation communities. This includes minimizing tree removals, avoiding fragmentation of habitat areas, preventing proliferation of invasive species, and preventing shrub encroachment on grasslands.
- Design to avoid barriers to wildlife; use wildlife-friendly fencing.

Constraints:

- Potential impacts to vegetation (including special status species), wildlife (including loss of habitat or barriers to movement), aquatic life, and wildfire resiliency from the siting of new public access infrastructure.
- Locate public access in areas outside the Los Trancos Creek riparian corridor and wetlands.

C. Tribal Cultural Resources

Opportunities:

- Engage in tribal consultation and partnership as appropriate during the public access development process.
- Locate public access outside areas with known tribal cultural resources to ensure public access avoids impacts to culturally sensitive indigenous resources.

Constraints:

- Protect against potential impacts to Native American resources.
- Limit public access to or near the property's tribal cultural resources to help ensure their long-term preservation.

D. Cultural Resources

Opportunities:

- Locate public access outside areas with known cultural resources, such as the Historic Complex, to ensure public access avoids impacts to culturally sensitive resources.

Constraints:

- Protect against potential impacts to sensitive cultural resources by limiting public access to or near the property's cultural and historical resources, helping ensure their long-term preservation.
- Ensure future uses of the Historic Complex are compatible with public access within the Hawthorns Area.

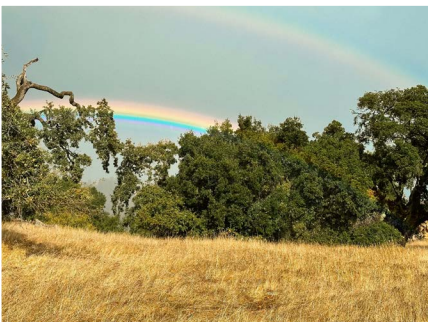


Photo Credit: Ashley Mac

E. Public Access

Opportunities:

- Highlight scenic viewpoints, such as views to San Francisco Bay and nearby open areas.
- Design low-intensity recreational amenities while sharing the property's rich natural, cultural, and historic resources with the public.
- Provide opportunities for low-intensity recreational uses, multimodal access, and local and regional trail connectivity through an internal trail system.
- Provide benches at locations to enhance public enjoyment of vista points.
- Consider accommodating transportation demand management strategies as appropriate (e.g. providing amenities to encourage non-automobile usage).
- Consider adjacent uses, potential user groups, and user perspectives in determining allowable uses within the Hawthorns Area to reduce management, conflict, and safety concerns.
- Incorporate materials that complement the Hawthorns Area's natural landscape where feasible.
- Utilize hardened surface materials in parking area to reduce likelihood of wildland fire ignitions.
- Provide a vault toilet near the on-site parking area outside of the 75-foot scenic corridor zone.
- Provide relevant signage where appropriate to guide and inform visitors (e.g. trail directional, trailhead signboard, interpretive, regulation, and resource management signs).

Constraints:

- Consider the site's topography, vegetation, and other natural features when determining an internal trail system. Ensure the internal trail system is financially and operationally sustainable and aligns with the Board's vision and goals.
- Develop parking, including location and materials, in alignment with the conservation easement, maintenance needs, and defensible space requirements.
- Site driveway(s) to the parking area with adequate lines of sight and consideration of local traffic and congestion patterns, including adjacent roadways and trails. Consider utilizing existing driveways to access potential parking as practical.
- Provide adequate separation between driveway access to parking from staff residence as achievable.
- Consider potential stormwater management (C3) requirements when locating on-site parking.



Photo Credit: Cathy Garrett

F. Low-intensity Recreational Uses

Opportunities:

- Provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public recreation including hiking and equestrian access.
- Evaluate dog-on-leash opportunities as feasible.
- Evaluate access by bicycles as appropriate.
- Seek Easy Access Trail opportunities as feasible.

Constraints:

- The Hawthorns property's limited size, steep topography, and sensitive ecological resources constrain the recreational amenities Midpen can offer.

G. Aesthetic Resources

Opportunities:

- Site public access amenities to protect viewsheds, including the Alpine Scenic Corridor.

Constraints:

- Minimize potential aesthetic impacts from new public access infrastructure and amenities at the Hawthorns Area.

H. Local and Regional Connectivity

Opportunities:

- Facilitate connections to local and regional trails for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians, particularly to the Town of Portola Valley's trails.
- Seek opportunities to realign the Alpine Road Trail to offer a safer passage within the Alpine Road corridor.

Constraints:

- Consider possible realignment of the Alpine Trail in relation to driveway access and public safety on the trail.
- Minimize potential impacts to the Alpine Scenic Road Corridor in accordance with the Town of Portola Valley's Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan. These impacts may include development of trails, driveways, parking, site amenities, and signage.



Photo Credit: Cathy Garrett

I. Operations and maintenance

Opportunities:

- Site wildlife-friendly perimeter and internal fencing and gates to ensure appropriate public access, site security, aesthetics, and historic resource management goals.
- Maintain site security and fulfill public safety objectives that meet Midpen's Good Neighbor Policy by utilizing gates, fencing, dark-sky security lighting as needed, and signage on Midpen property.

- Site public access as stipulated by the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, ensuring sufficient defensible space and safe access for emergency personnel.

Constraints:

- Safeguard privacy for the staff residence to the extent feasible when siting parking and trail infrastructure.
- Consider utilizing existing driveways and internal roads for public access and Midpen operations before developing new driveways.
- Site the parking area to facilitate access by law enforcement, ranger patrol, and emergency response personnel.
- Consider impacts to adjacent Town roadways when siting parking and trail connections (line of sight, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, etc.)
- Consider restrictions set by the conservation easement regarding improvement to onsite utilities (e.g. no electrical or sewer improvements).
- Restrict public access in areas with known environmental hazards, if any.

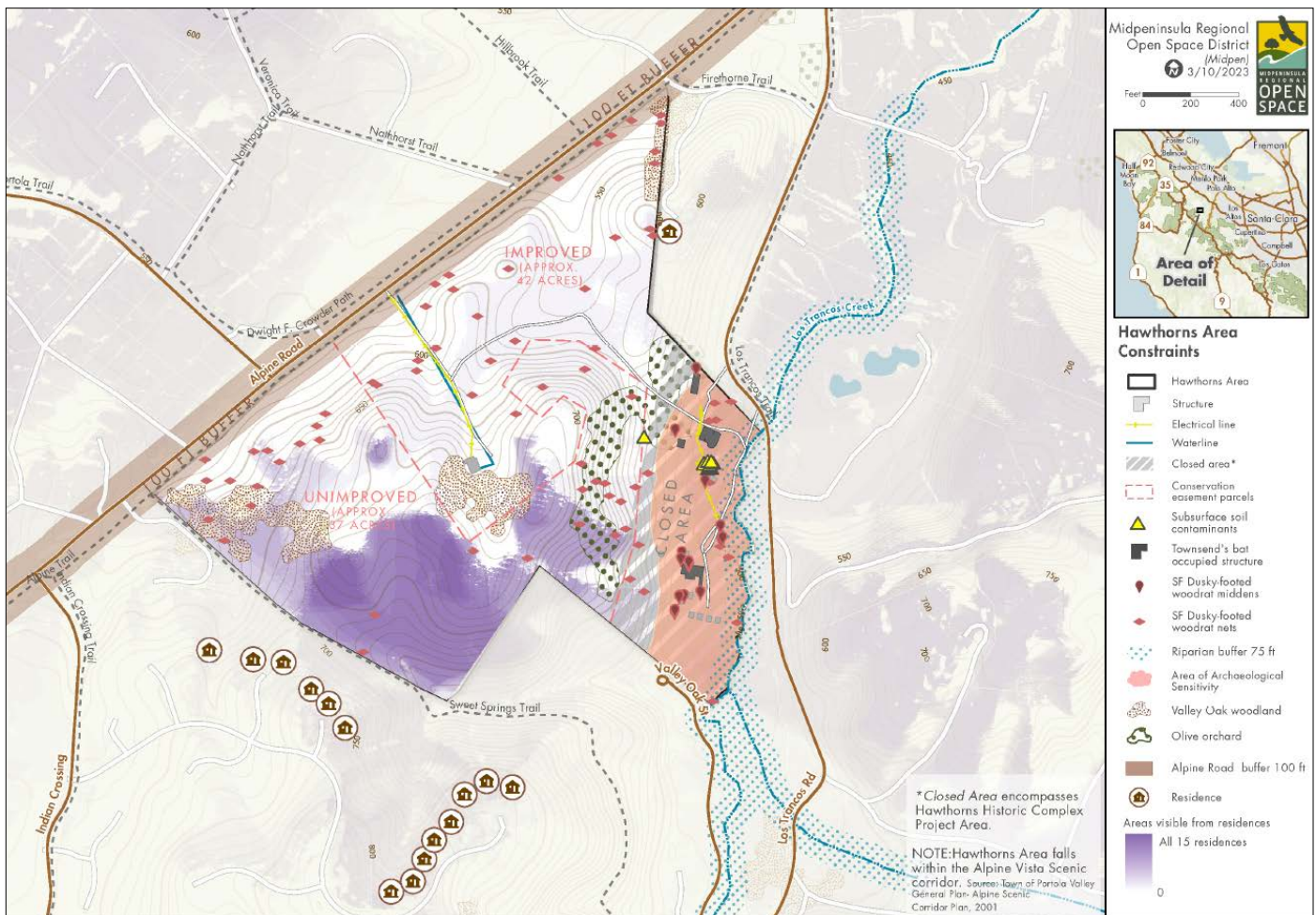


Figure 3. Hawthorns Public Access Constraints Map



4. Review of Public Access Options

Over the one-year PAWG process, multiple options for public access at the Hawthorns Area were evaluated, including:

- Trailhead location and internal trail system
- Trail connections with surrounding Town trails and pathways
- Opportunities for regional trail connections
- Proposed trail uses within the Hawthorns Area
- Parking area and driveway location(s)

A. Trailhead Location and Internal Trail System

The proposed primary internal trail loop is supplemented with additional trail segments suggested by the PAWG, including links to vista points and bench locations and connections to adjacent regional trails (Figure 5). A key trail goal is to provide access to ecologically sensitive public recreation, especially via easy-access trails. Within the context of the topography, vegetation, and natural features at the Hawthorns property, a conceptual trail system was developed that accords with the Board-approved Hawthorns Area *Vision and Goals*. This conceptual trail design is also operationally sustainable, considers the user experience, and strives to accommodate a range of users' abilities. The alignment of the internal trail considers adjacent uses, potential user groups, and user perspectives.

Key trailhead and trail considerations include providing signage to guide visitors to the site, integrating views of natural beauty at outlooks, and siting vault toilets and amenities associated with the trailhead to minimize effects on viewsheds in the local vicinity.

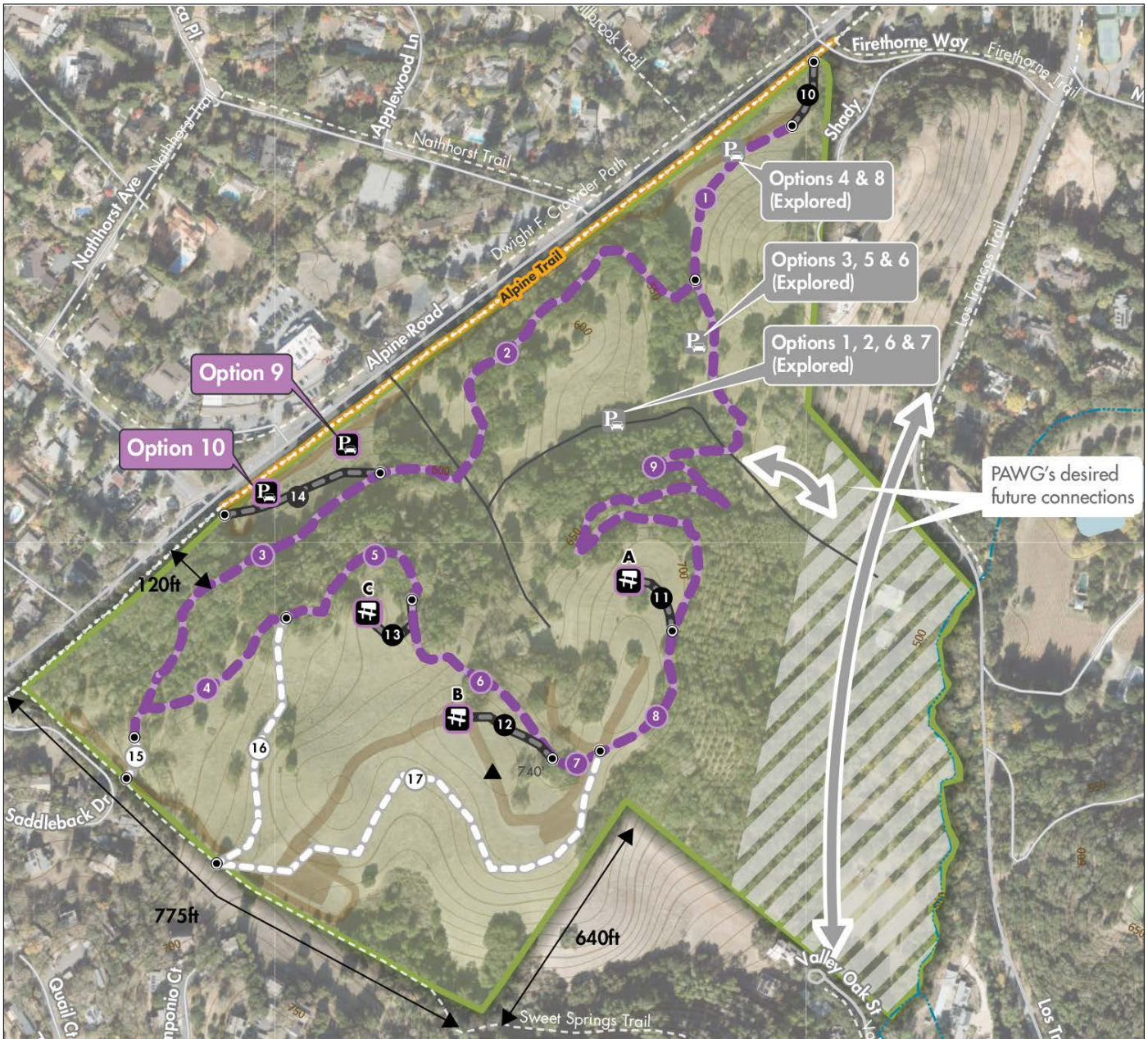


Figure 4. Hawthorns Area Conceptual Trail Design (Note: While Midpen strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features)

B. Trail Connections with Surrounding Town Trails and Pathways

Midpen’s approach is to explore opportunities for local and regional trail connections that potentially supplement the proposed internal loop trail (Figures 5 and 6). Additionally, the General Plan of the Town of Portola Valley contains a Trails and Pathways element that advocates for interconnectivity where trails meet, including trails that extend beyond the town’s borders, such as at Midpen lands or into other cities.

The Hawthorns Area lies immediately adjacent to the Alpine Trail along Alpine Road and the Sweet Springs Trail at the edge of the adjacent residential area called Portola Valley Ranch. Both are part of the network of trails within the Town of Portola Valley.

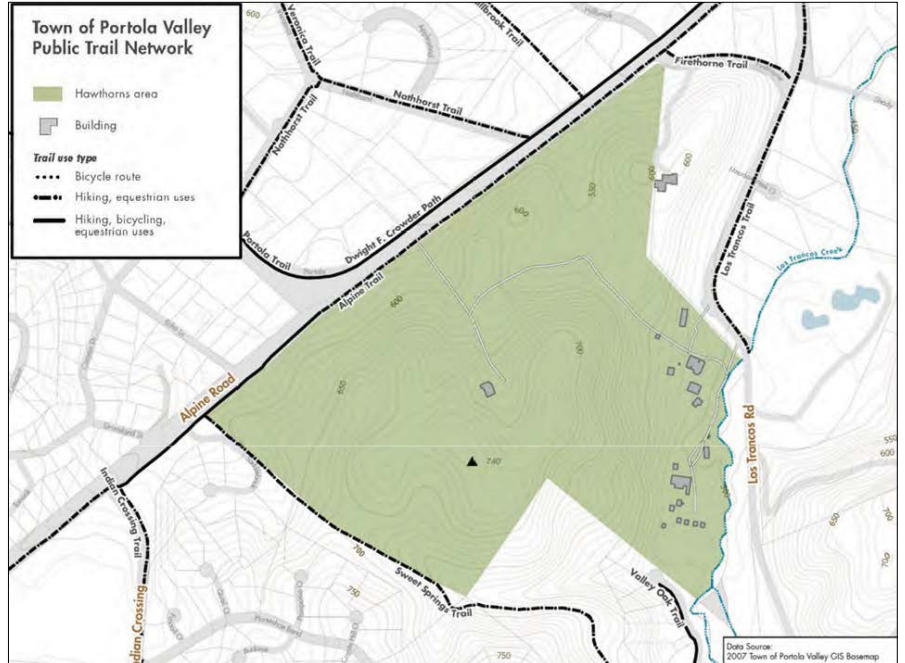


Figure 5. Town of Portola Valley Public Trail Network

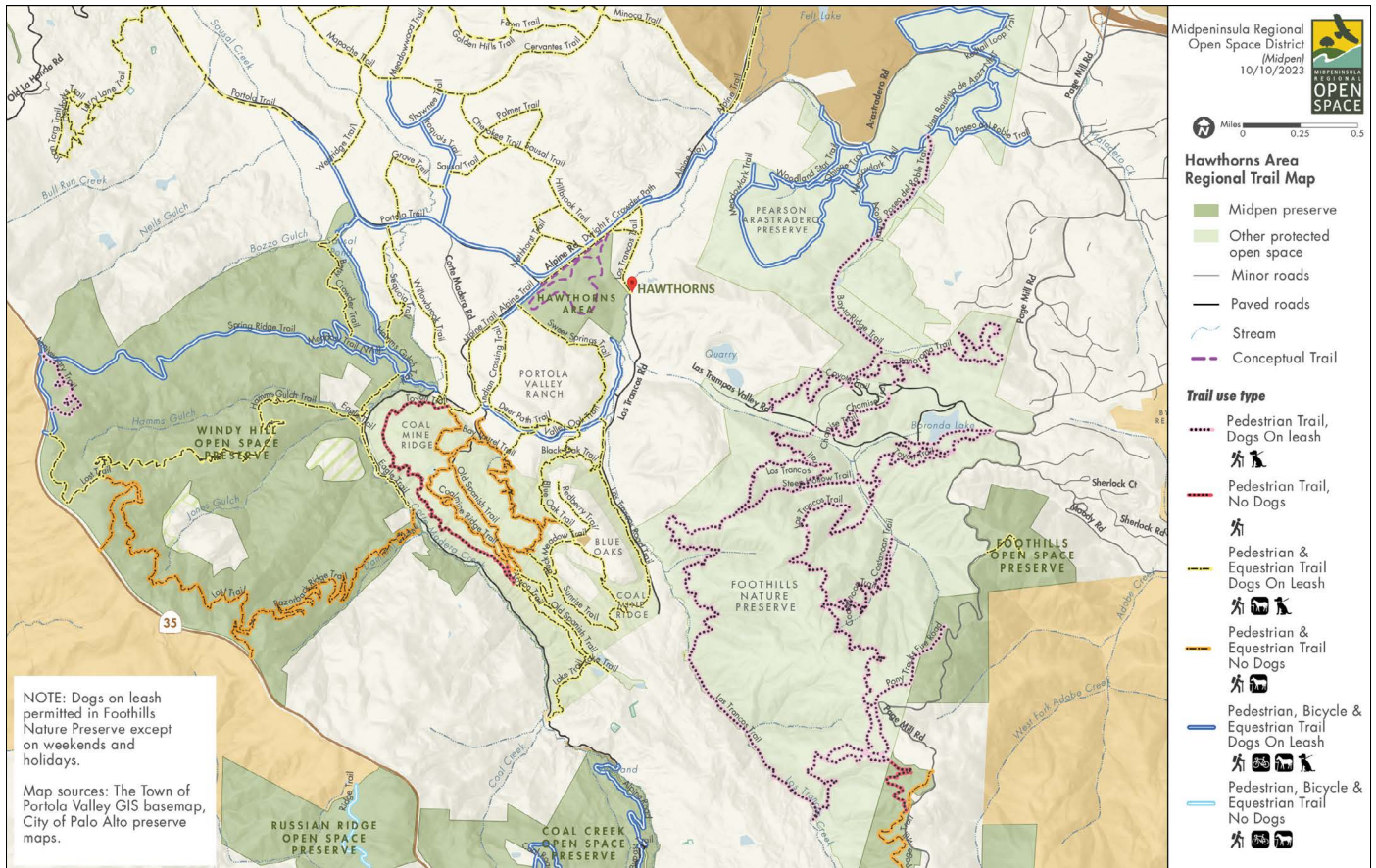


Figure 6. Hawthorns Area Regional Trail Map

C. Opportunities for Regional Trail Connections

To facilitate regional trail connectivity, Midpen fosters connections, or where feasible, contributes to possible future connections to trails serving the greater region. See Figure 6, Hawthorns Area Regional Trail Map.

D. Proposed Trail Uses within the Hawthorns Area

Under consideration by the PAWG were the type and character of different categories of users. Possible trail users at the Hawthorns property include hikers, dogs and dog walkers (both leashed and unleashed were considered), equestrians, and adults and children on bicycles. Each was considered given the preserve's size, the potential natural resource impacts, and whether they accord with the Board-approved *Vision and Goals*. For reference, the types of users at nearby and similarly sized preserves were compared.

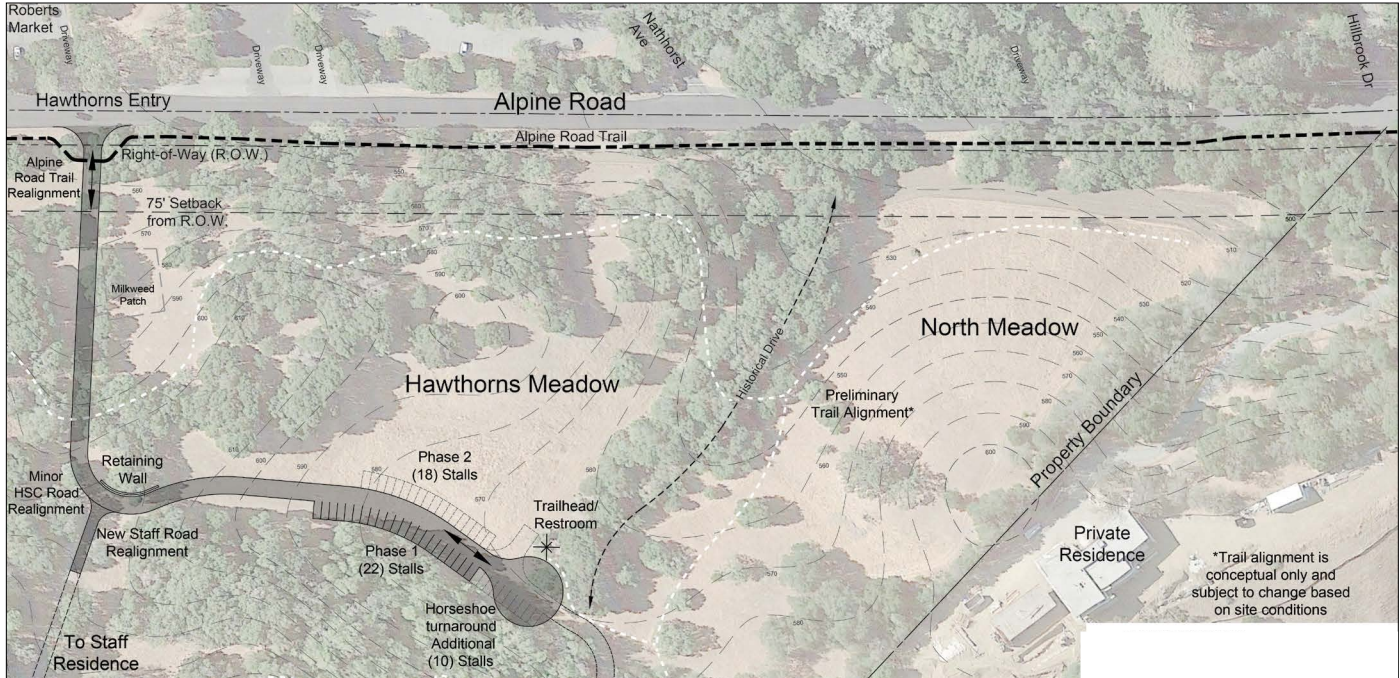


Figure 7. Parking Option #7

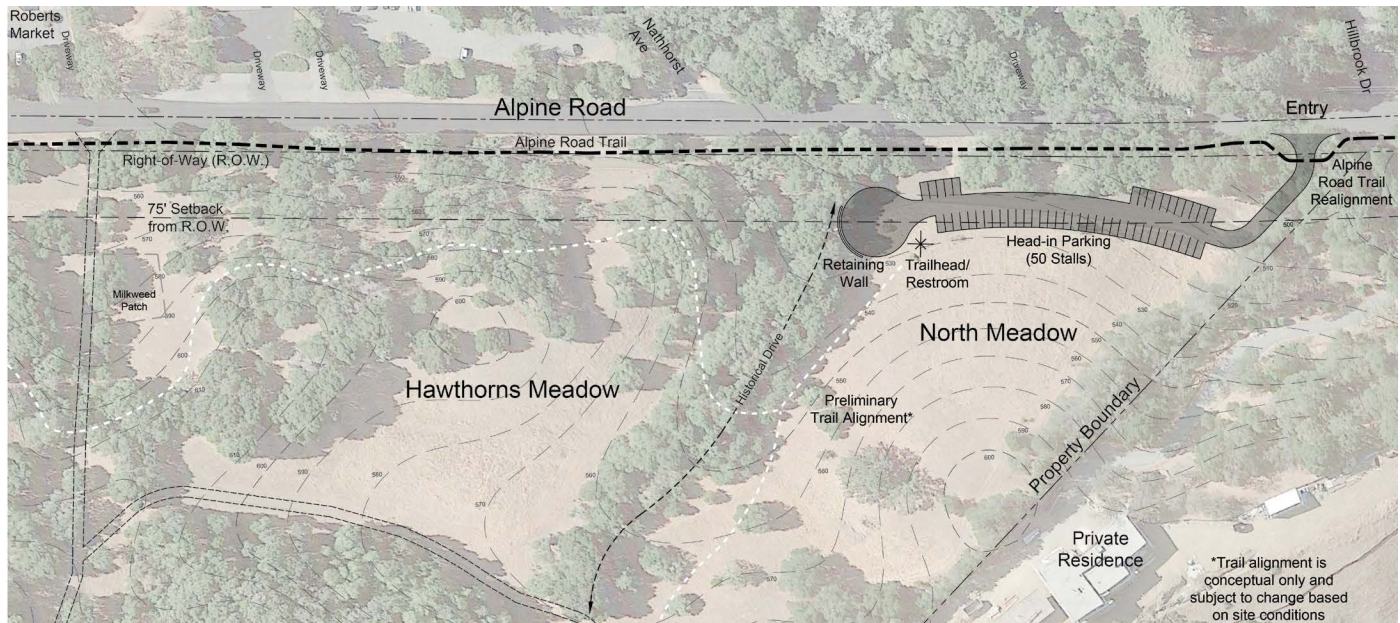


Figure 8. Parking Option #8

E. Parking Area and Driveway Location(s)

Parking will invite public access into the preserve and support Midpen’s mission to serve a diverse and distributed population. For details of parking design, refer to Appendix A.

The parking analysis prepared by traffic engineers Parametrix was based in part on the size of the preserve and recommended parking for 25 to 68 cars. For planning purposes, the target was 50 spaces. This number may be refined depending on the number and nature of users visiting the Hawthorns Area.

Ten parking options were considered with a range of driveway locations. Of the ten options, four were brought forward for the PAWG to vote on. These were Options 7, 8, 9, and 10 (Figures 7-10).

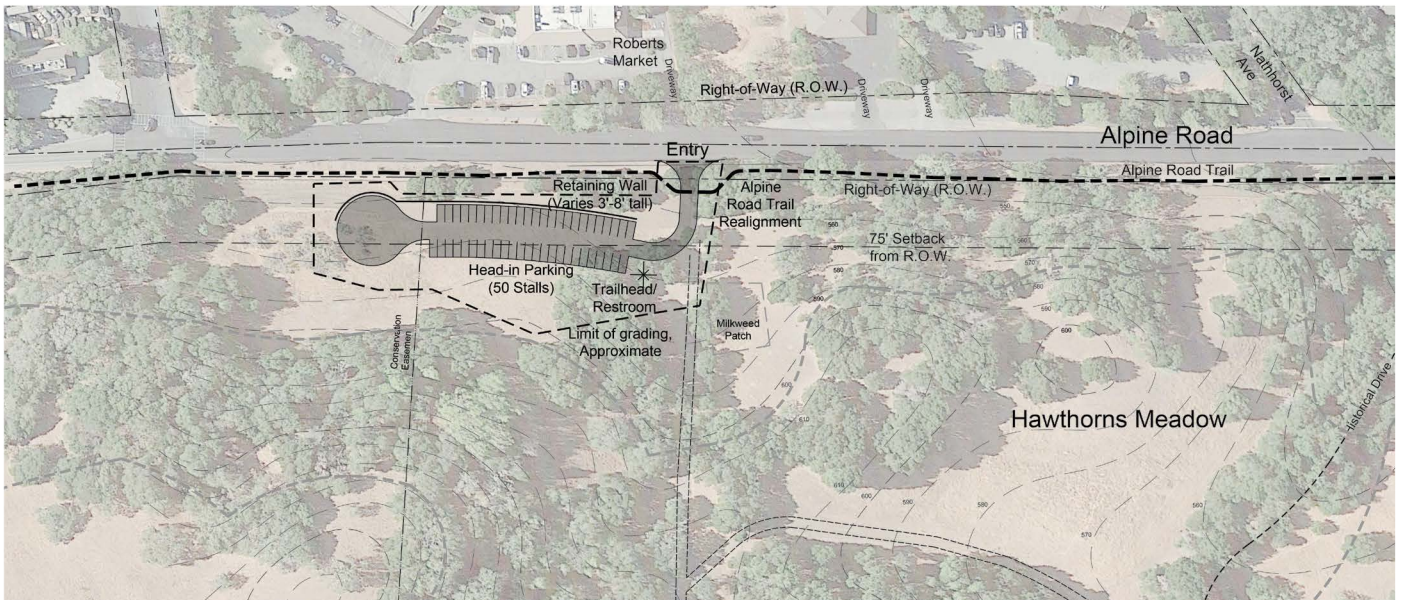


Figure 9. Parking Option #9

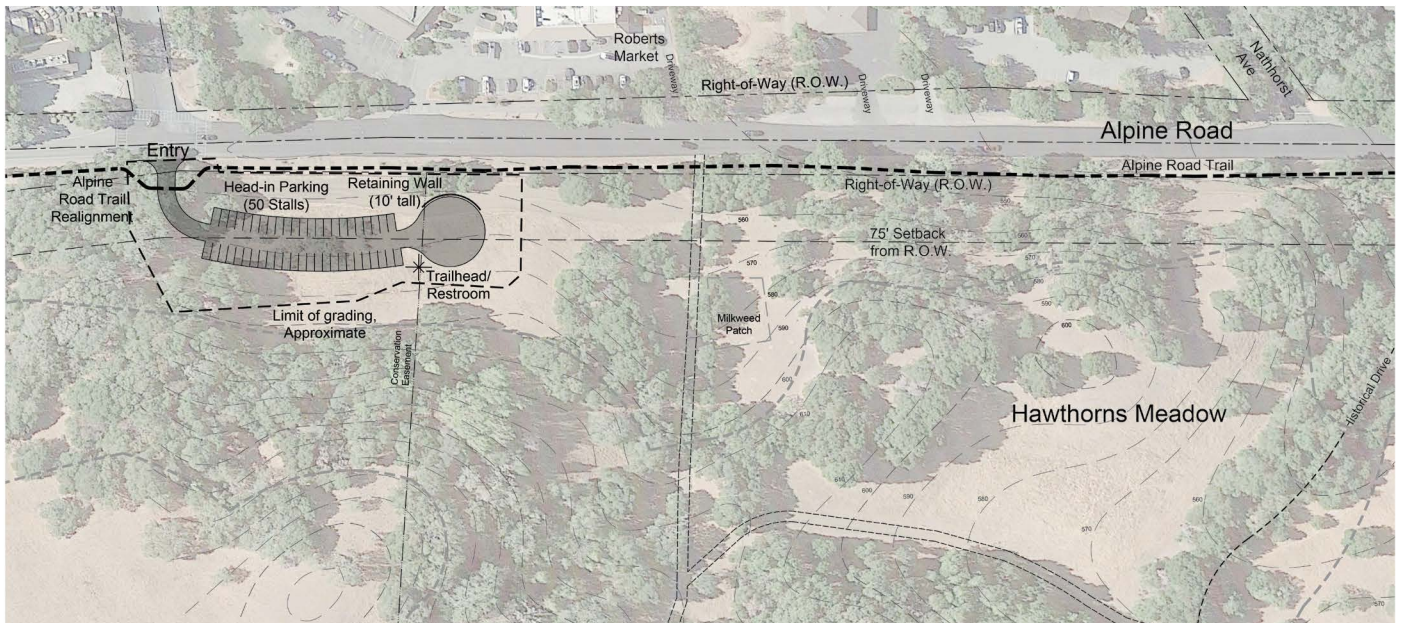


Figure 10. Parking Option #10



Photo Credit: Ashley Mac

5. Recommendations

A. The Voting Process

At their final meeting, the PAWG voted on a series of recommendations. To gather both a consensus overview from the PAWG and, crucially, a fine-grained understanding of the recommendations, the voting was divided into component parts. These included:

- 1) Internal Trail System
- 2) Trail Connections with Surrounding Town Trails and Pathways
- 3) Opportunities for Regional Trail Connections
- 4) Proposed Trail Uses
- 5) Concept Parking Designs

All the data previously reviewed during the process was synthesized into the voting. Throughout the twelve-month period, PAWG members had time to study the issues, raise potential concerns, learn from subject experts, discuss amongst themselves, and hear comments from the public. Along the way, Midpen provided additional analysis when requested by the PAWG and advanced ideas provided by PAWG members.

The primary concerns raised were related to traffic safety, natural resources protection, viewshed and aesthetics, and trail connections. Striking a balance between these trade-offs can be challenging. Throughout the voting process, both individually and as a group, PAWG members sought the best solution given the constraints and site considerations. On some topics they put forward multiple recommendations to the PNR (Appendices B & C).

Voting was guided by the previously reviewed Gradients of Agreement. This approach tests the level of agreement on a proposal that expands on the traditional “yes” or “no” voting. For the list of Gradients of Agreement, see Section 2(e) that discusses the Decision Making Process.

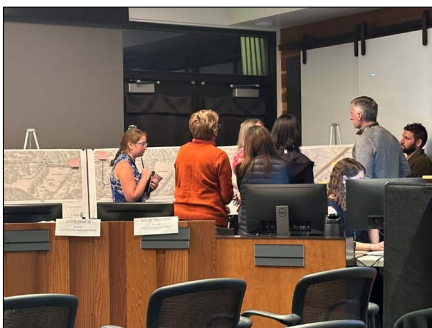


Photo Credit: Ashley Mac

B. Voting Results

Voting results were tabulated during the meeting (Appendix B). The process provided a concise result supporting specific recommendations as well as additional data related to the level of support (i.e., more “1” votes than “3” or “4” votes) and who supported each recommendation. Overall, the PAWG supported opening the Hawthorns Area to a broad range of public access uses. Notably, many topics received unanimous votes, demonstrating a strong accord among the PAWG members.

The following lists a summary of the vote by topic.

1) Internal Trail System

Voting by the PAWG first addressed each segment of the internal trail system.

Vote summary:

- Support for all internal loop trail segments and spurs to vista points (trail segments 2 through 9, plus 11 and 12).
- Support for bench locations A, B, and C.
- Suggestion to limit visibility of one trail segment from other trail segments as far as topographically feasible.

Considerations to be shared with the PNR:

- As far as grading will permit, Trail Segments #3 and #4 should be aligned to have enough separation from each other, from the edge of the property closest to Sweet Springs Trail, and from the homes nearby.
- Adjust the trail alignment as needed to accommodate the ultimately selected staging area.

2) Trail Connections with Surrounding Town Trails and Pathways

Vote summary:

- Support for connections to Alpine Trail (trail segments 1, 10 and 14)
- Opposition to connection to Sweet Springs Trail by Saddleback Drive (trail segment 15)
- Suggestion to re-evaluate and decide whether to build connector trail to Sweet Springs Trail after monitoring trail usage following the preserve's opening (trail segments 16 and 17)

Considerations to be shared with the PNR:

- When the conceptual trail alignments are further refined, the PAWG discussed that they be adjusted to minimize impacts on residents of Portola Valley Ranch. Specifically, they could increase the distance between trails and houses. The intent is to meet Midpen's Good Neighbor Policy as far as practicable while providing public access.
- There was a desire to move any connection to Sweet Springs Trail further northwest and away from Pomponio Court that currently connects to Sweet Springs Trail.



Photo Credit: Natalie Jolly

3) Opportunities For Regional Trail Connections

Vote summary:

- Support for a future connection between the Los Trancos Trail on Los Trancos Road through the Hawthorns property to Valley Oak Street.
- Support the concept of a future regional connection to Arastradero Preserve (over Los Trancos Creek) and to Foothills Nature Preserve.
- Suggestion to collaboratively seek possible future regional trail connections over land owned by others immediately adjacent to Hawthorns.

Considerations to be shared with the PNR:

- The PAWG specifically discussed creating and supporting the larger vision of these regional connections while being cognizant that they require access over land that Midpen does not own or control. They acknowledged that these possible future connections will require Town involvement and partnerships with other landowners, but nevertheless wanted to voice and convey their support for any such efforts to the PNR and the Board. The request included adding text to the plan graphics showing the desired regional connections.

4) Proposed Trail Uses**Vote summary:**

- Support for a multi-use access on the internal loop trail, spur trails, and connections to Alpine Trail (trail segments 1 through and including 14). The uses included: hikers, equestrians, dogs on leash, and bicyclists.
- Support for hiking, dogs-on-leash, and equestrian uses only on connections to Sweet Springs Trail, if any of the connections are built—opposition to bicycle use (segments 16 and 17). Although not recommended, if Segment 15 is pursued, the PAWG also opposes bicycle use on this segment.
- Consideration to be shared with PNR: Allowing bicycle use on the Alpine Trail segments that connect to the proposed connector trails (segments 10 and 14) would require approval from the Town of Portola Valley.

5) Concept Parking Design

Since the first PAWG meeting, a considerable amount of work went into iterating and devising the possible parking area options. The PAWG helped develop and review ten options with Options 7, 8, 9, and 10 being short-listed for voting. Options 7 and 8 were selected during the informal voting at PAWG Meeting #5. Option 9 grew directly out of comments received from PAWG members. Option 10 also built upon PAWG input and was developed between PAWG meetings #6 and #7. Both Options 9 and 10 keep the parking area around the perimeter of the preserve along Alpine Road.

In preparation for their last meeting, PAWG members had individually assessed Options 7 through 10 using criteria per the Board-approved visions and goals for the project (Appendix C). Their assessments were compiled and prior to formally voting, the PAWG reviewed a summary of their collective input (*Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group Midpen Assessment of Conceptual Parking Design Options*).

Vote summary:

- Support for both Parking Options 9 and 10, with Option 10 being preferred. Support for a maximum of 50 parking spaces.
- Support for consideration of a phased approach.
- Opposition to Parking Options 7 and 8.



Photo Credit: Midpen Staff

C. Additional Considerations for the PNR Committee

PAWG comments to supplement the vote and recommendations:

- Until the ultimate number of parking spaces is decided, some uncertainty about the level of use of the Hawthorns Area will likely remain. If it has capacity, the parking area may support regional connectivity, offer staging for road cycling, and host those visiting nearby preserves, as well as those visiting the Hawthorns Area. The parking analysis prepared by Parametrix recommended 25 to 68 parking spaces for a preserve of this size. The PAWG felt that 50 parking spaces was a reasonable upper limit and suggested that further information about the level of use may lead to reducing the total number of parking spaces. The PAWG understood that it is the purview of the PNR to decide the appropriate number of parking spaces at Hawthorns.
- The Town may have concerns about possible conflicts with the movement of school-aged children in relation to the driveway location in Option 10.
- There was a request to specifically provide bike parking within the parking area.



Photo Credit: Ashley Mac



Photo Credit: Jared Hart



Photo Credit: Galli Basson

6. Conclusion

The PAWG worked diligently and respectfully to fulfill its charge. There was a great deal of information provided, considered, and generated through the twelve-month process, and ultimately this group, representing both the community of Portola Valley and the broad constituency of Midpen, came to a strategic and thoughtful approach for providing public access to the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Preserve.

The PAWG's recommendations will be reviewed by Midpen's Planning and Natural Resources Committee. The Board will make the final policy decisions on which concept parking and trail alternatives to incorporate into the Hawthorns Area Plan and future environmental review phase.



Photo Credit: Tina Hugg



7. Appendices

A. Concept Parking Design Summary Report

B. PAWG Meeting #7 Voting Results

C. Site Assessment Summaries and Forms

1. Summary of PAWG Assessment of Conceptual Parking Design Options
2. PAWG Individual Assessments

D. General Information

1. PAWG Procedural Guide and Ground Rules
2. PAWG Member Biographies



APPENDIX A

Concept Parking Design Summary Report

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve Public Access Working Group Design Summary

OCTOBER 31, 2024

Prepared by:

CSW | ST2

121 Park Place, Richmond, CA 94801

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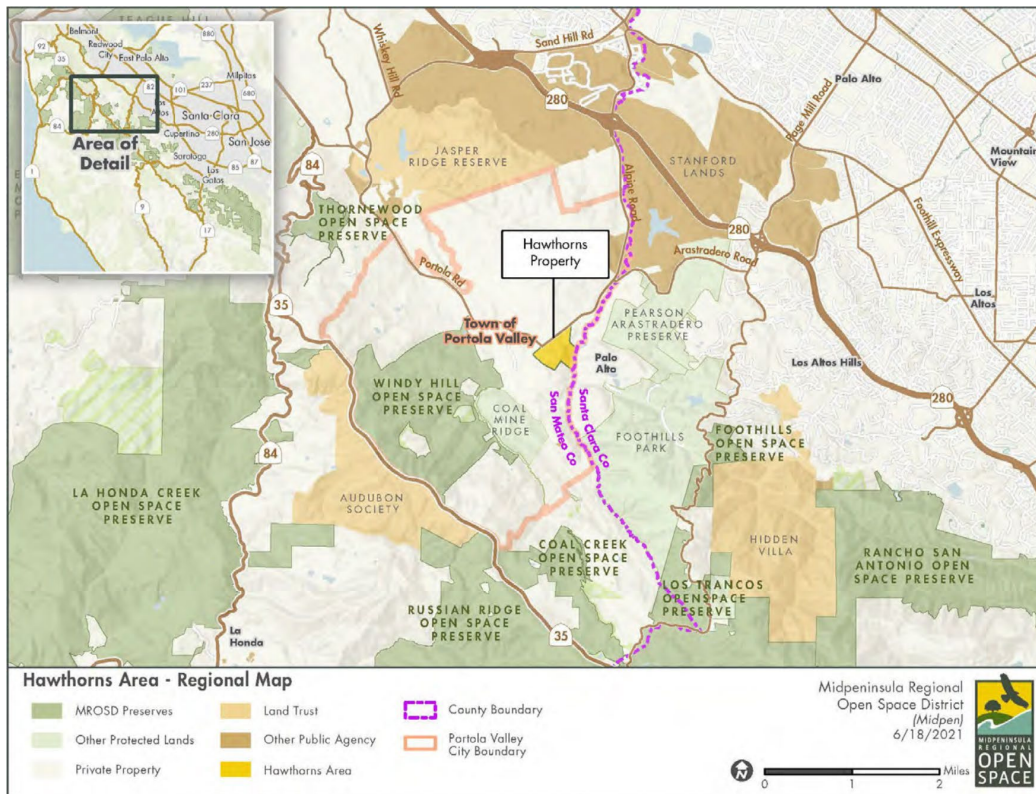
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INTRODUCTION

The 79-acre Hawthorns area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve was protected from development when it was gifted to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) in 2011. Since then, Midpen staff have worked to restore native grasslands, improve community wildland fire safety, and protect historic features on the property. A multiyear public process began in 2021 to explore the feasibility of introducing ecologically sensitive public access to the undeveloped portion of the property. On June 28, 2023, the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (PAWG) was officially formed by the Midpen Board of Directors to evaluate public access components.

The purpose of this parking design project has been to develop site planning options and analysis for parking area(s), driveway location(s), trailhead site amenities, and modifications to the Town of Portola Valley’s Alpine Road Trail to open the Hawthorns Area for public access. This Design Summary Report provides an overview of the parking design project background, opportunities and constraints, options developed and considered, and the preferred options developed in consultation with the PAWG, stakeholders, and the public. This is a supplement to the PAWG Recommendations Report developed by PGAdesign, which summarizes the overall PAWG process, site opportunities and constraints, as well as PAWG recommendations.

Figure 1. Hawthorns Area Property Location Map



BACKGROUND

The Hawthorns Area Plan Public Access project has been developed through the coordinated efforts of a team of Midpen staff, the Public Access Working Group (PAWG), and a team of consultants. This report studies the design options for the parking area, driveway and trailhead amenities. The team developed the following site inventory for the project area shown in Figure 2.

Other components related to the Hawthorns Area Plan which are not included in this report are the following; Trailhead location(s) and internal trail system; trail connections with surrounding Town trails and pathways; opportunities for regional trail connections; and proposed trail uses within the Hawthorns Area.

The project team developed the design options through a series of public meetings. All Public Access Working Group meetings were open to the public.

Meeting 1: Kickoff – Establish Working Group roles, goals, work plan, schedule and operating procedures. July 27, 2023.

Meeting 2: Site Visit – Conduct in-person site tour and review existing site conditions. August 26, 2023.

Meeting 3: Preliminary Design Discussion – Discuss and provide input on draft parking and driveway design options. October 26, 2023.

Meeting 4: Continuation of Preliminary Design Discussion – Continue to discuss initial conceptual design options on draft parking and driveway options. December 16, 2023.

Meeting 5: Continuation of December 16, 2023 Design Discussion – Discuss updated conceptual design options on draft parking and driveway options. February 29, 2024.

Meeting 6: Site Meeting and Design Discussion – Site visit to receive public feedback on Meeting 5's conceptual design options. March 24, 2024.

Meeting 7: Discuss and confirm recommendation – Discuss and confirm which parking options to recommend to Midpen's PNR Committee and subsequently to Midpen's Board for consideration. June 13, 2024.

PUBLIC ACCESS WORKING GROUP

The Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (PAWG) was officially formed on June 28 2023. Table 1, below, outlines the Working Group composition, which consisted of thirteen voting members (seven Ward Stakeholders and six Interest Area Representatives) as well as three non-voting members (a District Board Liaison, a Town Liaison, and a Meeting Facilitator). For additional details about the PAWG refer to the PAWG Summary and Recommendations Report.

TECHNICAL BASIS

Design decisions made during development of the options were guided by established plans and policies related to the project areas geographic and planning context, including the following:

- **Existing Conditions / Opportunities and Constraints Report.** *Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, March 2023.* This report analyzed existing conditions of the Hawthorns Area with regard to the following elements; natural resources, public access, local and regional connectivity, historic and cultural resources, aesthetics and operations and maintenance.
- **Hawthorns Historic Structures Assessment.** *a+h Knapp Architects, October 2013.* The study assessed the potential historic and cultural significance of the property by applying the National Register of Historic Places criteria of evaluation.
- **Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve Transportation Study.** *Parametrix, in collaboration with Mead & Hunt, June 2024.* Working concurrently with the (PAWG), the study evaluated the existing and future transportation conditions in the vicinity of the Hawthorns Area. It also provided an analysis and recommendation for the parking demand at the Hawthorns Area.
- **Woodside Fire Protection District Roadways and Access - Design/Installation Requirements.** *Woodside Fire Protection District, January 2020*
- **Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan.** *Town of Portola Valley, April 25, 2001.* The Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan is a schematic guide for the conservation and development of Alpine Road between Santa Cruz Avenue and Skyline Boulevard.
- **Staging/Parking Area and Trailhead Design Guidelines.** *Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, July 24, 2024.* This design guidelines established a framework for the design and evaluation of parking area options and will serve as a reference throughout the subsequent phases of design.

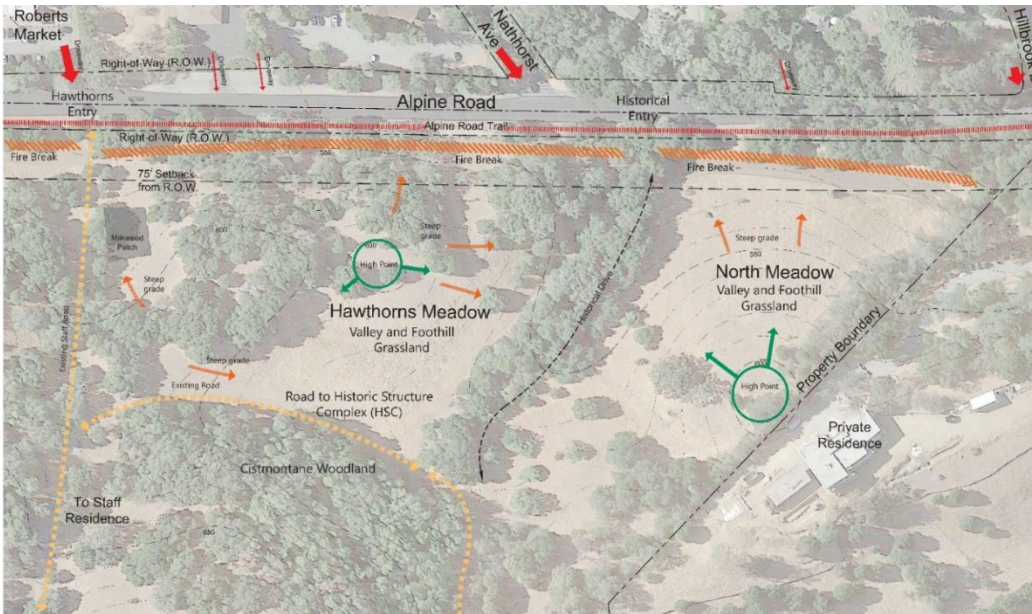
SITE INVENTORY AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

An inventory of site conditions and a set of design considerations were developed for use by the PAWG in evaluating options. Additional design considerations are found in the Staging / Parking and Trailhead Design Guidelines report, noted above. The site inventory is presented in Figure 2, while the design considerations are outlined as follows:

- All proposed parking is to be located on Midpen property.
- All proposed site improvements, including parking area, are to be located around the perimeter of the "Improved Portion" defined by the Conservation Easement, with priority consideration for locations along Alpine Road or in the interior of the site adjacent to an existing grassy meadow.
- The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards must be met for accessible parking and an accessible path of travel to nearby amenities, such as trailhead signage and restroom, must be provided at a minimum.

- Consider Midpen preference for some amount of easy access trail, with the understanding that a fully accessible trail is likely not feasible based on the site topography and environmental setting.
- Parking area must be designed for proper drainage, runoff and erosion control.

Provide for adequate screening of the parking in consideration of Alpine Road being a Town-designated 'scenic corridor'. Accommodate Town requirement for a 75-foot setback from the property line for structures along Alpine Road. Figure 2. Hawthorns Area Site Inventory



OPTIONS CONSIDERED

During the year-long PAWG process, a total of eleven conceptual parking design options were presented to, and evaluated by, the PAWG. The initial set of options presented in October 2023 were associated with an outline of opportunities and constraints for each option. Subsequent sets of options were presented in a different format, as requested by the working group. Two versions of Option 9 were reviewed by the PAWG: the initial design with 30 spaces, shared at March 2024 meeting, and a refined version with 50 spaces, presented at the June 2024 meeting. Under the project team's guidance, PAWG members individually assessed conceptual parking design options 7, 8, 9, and 10. In addition to their preferred options, these assessments serve as additional information forwarded to the PNR Committee for consideration.

Options - October 2023

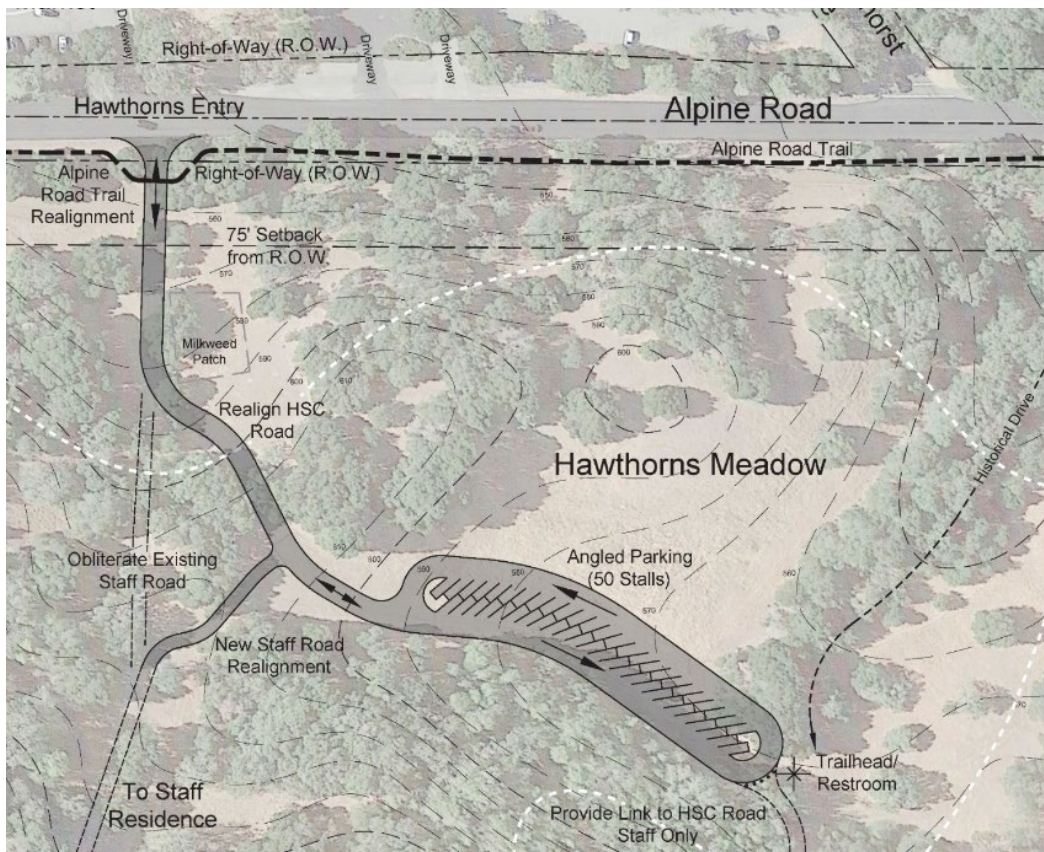
Four options were presented to the PAWG in October 2023, along with opportunities and constraints tables associated with each. Following PAWG review, Option 4 was identified for further consideration.

OPTION 1

Option 1 incorporates the existing driveway entrance off of Alpine Road as the parking area access point. The proposed driveway runs along the existing driveway alignment for about half of the existing driveway length before realigning to connect with the proposed 50-stall angled-parking parking area.

This option did not move forward for consideration mainly due to the impact to natural resources created by a large parking area pavement in the Hawthorns Meadow and significant grades approaching 20%.

Figure 3. Concept Option 1



Option 1 Pros and Cons

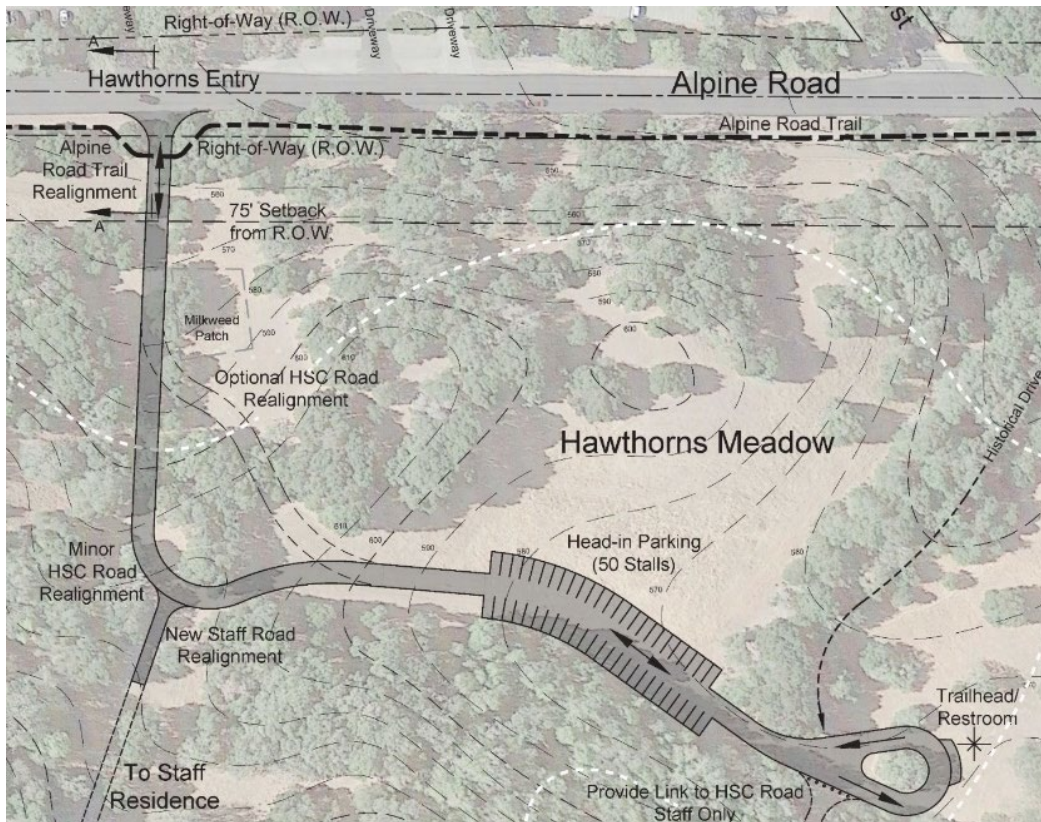
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses 4411 Alpine Road driveway entry while realigning staff road to heighten site and parking surveillance. • Parking is relatively level and oak trees provide shade for the parking off Historic Drive • No habitat disturbance to north meadow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siting parking deeper into the preserve where it is not visible from Alpine Road poses a greater challenge for law enforcement, ranger patrol, and emergency response • Large parking layout affects Hawthorns meadow and Historic Drive • Parking layout encroaches on steep topography • Grading extends into Hawthorns Meadow

OPTION 2

Option 2 incorporates the existing driveway entrance off of Alpine Road as the parking lot access point. The driveway runs along the existing alignment of the driveway. A double loaded parking lot is located in Hawthorns Meadow, with a loop turnaround placed in the area beyond the historical drive.

This option did not move forward for consideration mainly due to the impact to natural resources created by a large parking area pavement in the Hawthorns Meadow. There are also and significant slopes at the driveway, up to 20%.

Figure 4. Concept Option 2



Option 2 Pros and Cons

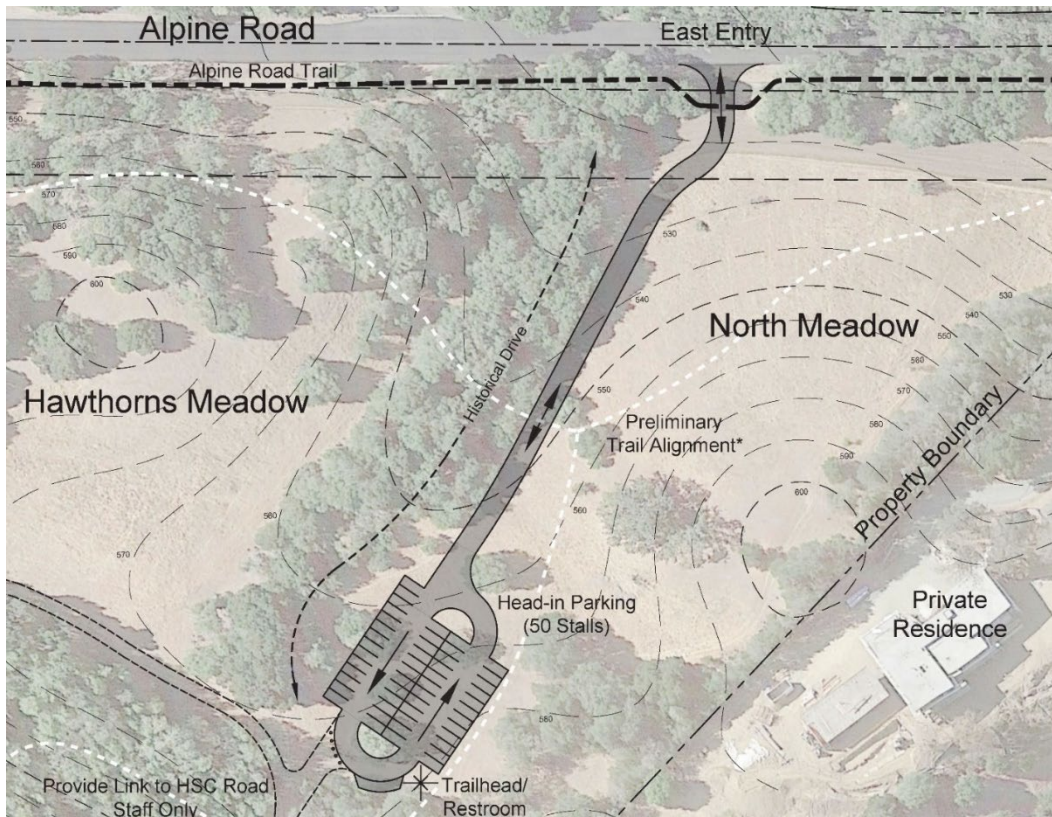
Pros	Cons
Uses 4411 Alpine Road driveway entry with an alternative to realign Historic Drive	Siting parking deeper into the preserve where it is not visible from Alpine Road poses a greater challenge for law enforcement, ranger patrol, and emergency response
Topography and oak trees shelter parking off Historic Drive.	Large parking layout affects Hawthorns meadow and Historic Drive.
Head-in parking reduces grading into Hawthorns Meadow.	Turn around increases parking footprint and does not provide ideal trail head drop off or parking queuing.
	Entry Road slopes approach 20%.

OPTION 3

Option 3 locates a new driveway access point adjacent to the historical driveway and a double-loaded 50-stall head-in parking area in the North Meadow area. This double-loaded, loop parking area would be placed in the area to the east of the historical drive.

This option did not move forward for consideration mainly due to natural resources impacts and safety concerns at the driveway entrance at Alpine Road. The natural resources would be impacted along the historical driveway alignment. The driveway occurs further away from intersections along Alpine Road, on steep grade and shaded by trees along Alpine Road. These elements create the potential for conflict between motorists and cyclists at the entrance.

Figure 5. Concept Option 3



Option 3 Pros and Cons

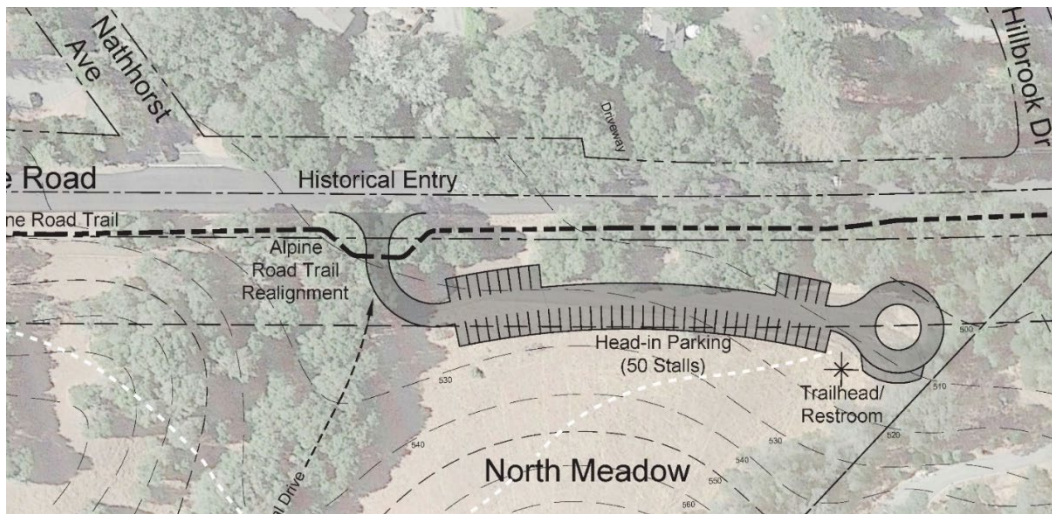
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing staff road creates separate staff access. • Head-in parking loop is compact and efficient • Limits new improvements to North Meadow • Driveway slopes are moderate, 10% maximum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East entry will require extensive grading and tree removal. • Creates second access way and grading extends into North Meadow. • Sheltered parking area not surveyable by police and fire from Alpine Road.

OPTION 4

Option 4 locates driveway access at the historical entry, connecting to a 50-stall head-in parking area running roughly parallel to Alpine Road.

This option moved forward from the October 2023 meeting of the PAWG and was reconsidered during the December 2023 meeting. Ultimately, this option did not move forward for consideration mainly due to the safety concerns at the driveway entrance at Alpine Road. The driveway entrance was in a shaded portion of Alpine Road and the grade along Alpine Road was steeper than other sections. These elements created potential conflict points for cars and cyclists.

Figure 6. Concept Option 4



Option 4 Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses Alpine Road (HSC) driveway entry and increase site circulation. • Parking off Alpine Road is surveyable by police and fire. • Existing staff road creates separate staff access. • Parking is sited on the fire break. • Limits new improvements to lower North Meadow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alpine Road historical driveway will require grading and tree removal. • Creates second access way and impacts North Meadow. • Turnaround at north end does not provide ideal trail head drop off or parking queuing. • Grading in lower North Meadow may require wall.

Options – December 2023

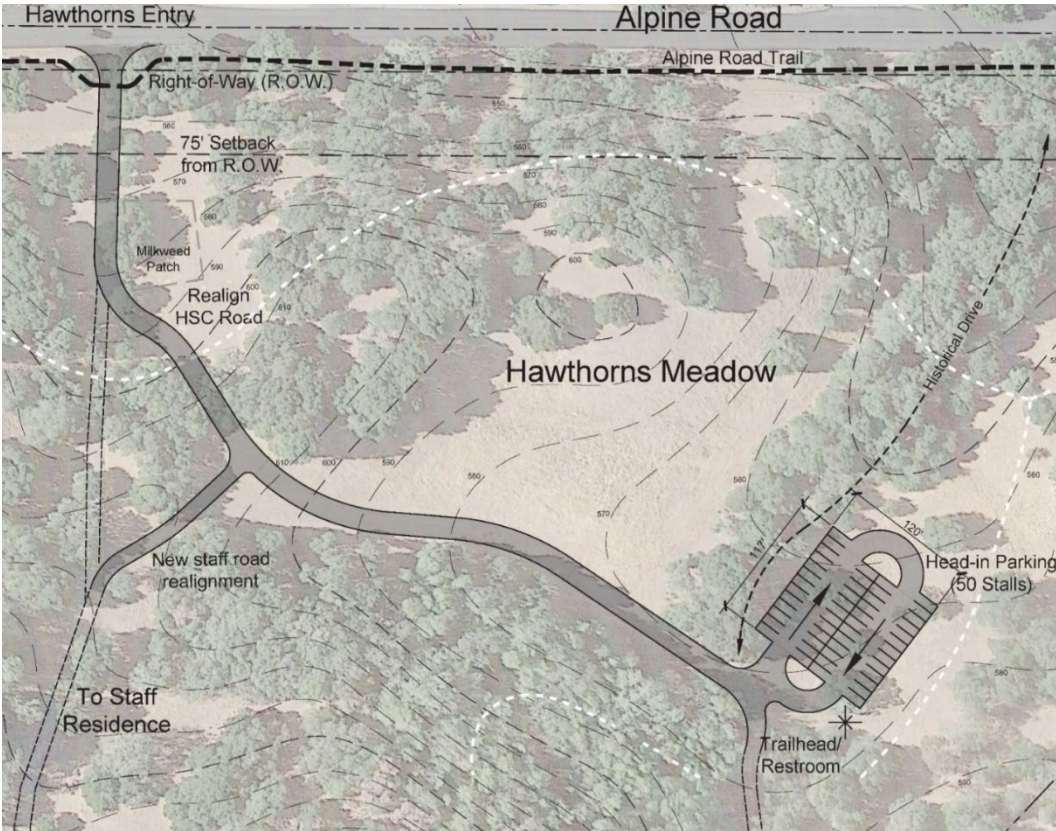
At the December 2023 PAWG meeting, three options were reviewed and considered. Option 4 from the previous round of options moved forward to be considered alongside the newly presented Option 5 and Option 6.

OPTION 5

Option 5 incorporates the existing driveway entrance off of Alpine Road as the access point into the parking lot. The proposed driveway runs along the alignment of the existing driveway, realigning halfway up the existing driveway and crossing Hawthorns Meadow to the alignment of the historical drive. A double-loaded, loop parking area is placed in the area beyond the historical drive.

This option did not move forward for consideration mainly due to high levels of natural resources impacts in the Hawthorns Meadow. There are also significant slopes at the driveway, up to 20%.

Figure 7. Concept Option 5



Option 5 Natural Resources Considerations

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sited away from riparian resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deviation from historical road alignment and proposed plans require significant grading and paving in a previously undisturbed area, resulting in the most intensive human impacts

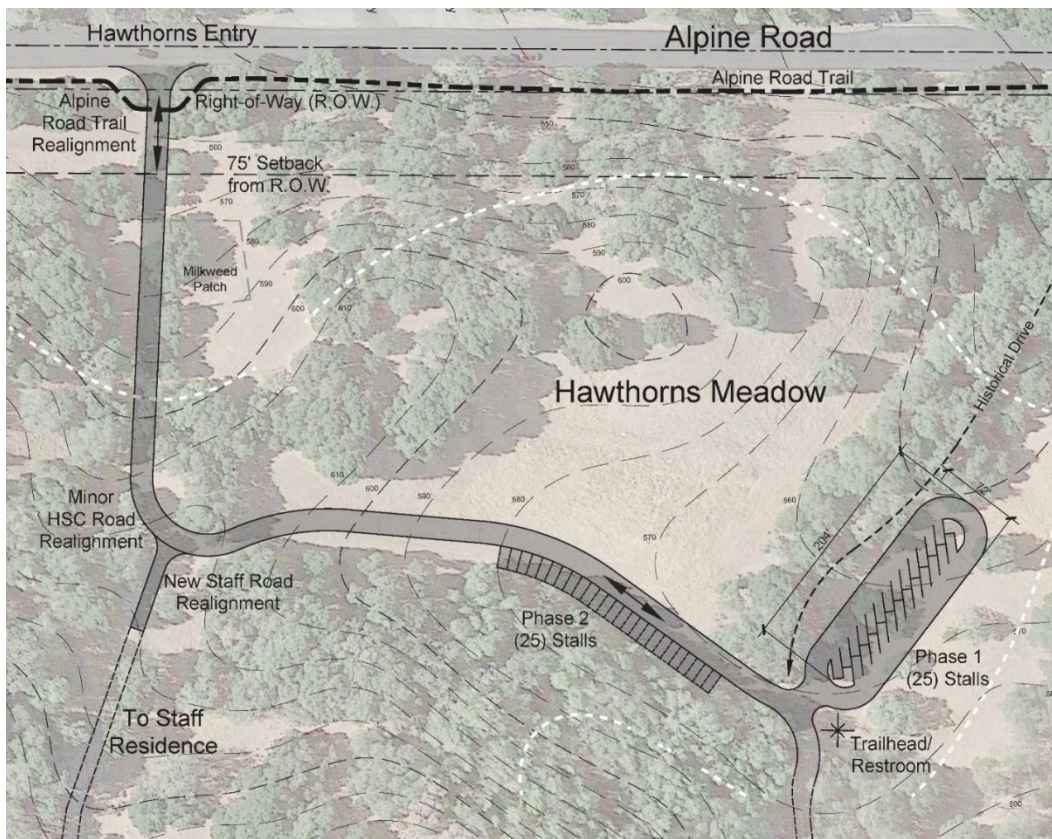
Pros	Cons
	<p>to the landscape as well as greatest potential adverse impacts to geologic and cultural resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Second greatest footprint of total paved area• Necessitates the greatest tree removal and additional vegetation removal/construction of a shaded fuel break for wildland fire management• Increases meadow fragmentation, reducing habitat quality, connectivity, and ecological resilience

OPTION 6

Option 6 incorporates the existing driveway entrance off of Alpine Road as the access point into the parking lot. The proposed driveway runs along the existing alignment of the current driveway connecting to the lower Hawthorns Meadow. A single row of parking provides 25 head-in stalls along the access road in Hawthorns Meadow with the remaining 25 stalls along a loop road extending beyond the historical drive. This option can be built in two phases with the loop road and associated (25) parking stalls being built. The second phase would install an additional (25) parking stall along the driveway built in phase 1. There would be a total of (50) stalls built in both phases.

This option did not move forward for consideration mainly due to natural resources impacts from the Historic Drive and Hawthorns Meadow.

Figure 8. Concept Option 6



Option 6 Natural Resources Considerations

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sited away from riparian resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deviation from historical road alignment and proposed plans require significant grading and paving in multiple previously undisturbed areas, resulting in the most extensive human impacts to the landscape, as well as increased potential adverse impacts to geologic and cultural resources

Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greatest footprint of total paved area• Necessitates second greatest tree removal and additional vegetation removal/construction of a shaded fuel break for wildland fire management, as well as reduction of native oak woodland• Increases meadow fragmentation, reducing habitat quality, connectivity, and ecological resilience

Options – February 2024

Based on previous feedback received, two new options, Option 7 and Option 8 were reviewed by the PAWG in February 2024. An informal vote during the PAWG meeting indicated that a majority were interested in forwarding parking options 7 and 8 to the PNR, along with the eight options reviewed to date.

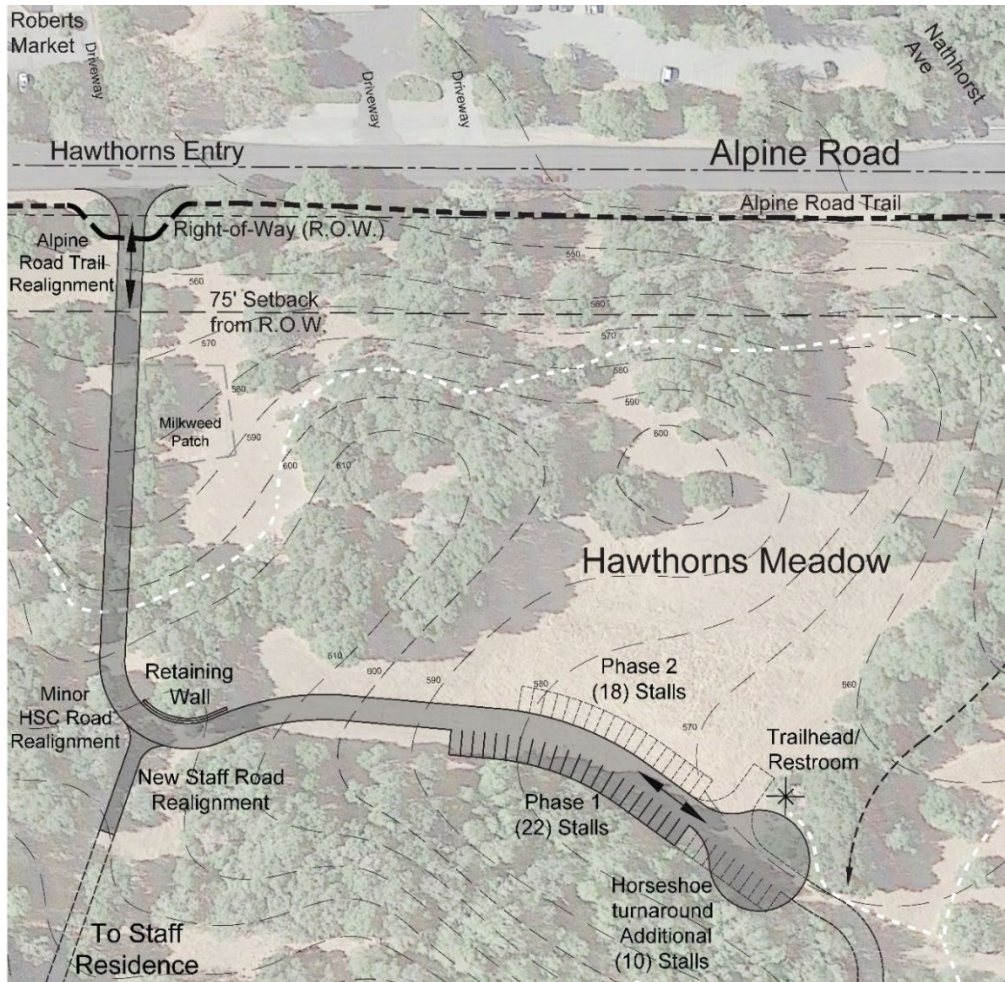
The project team assessed parking design options 7 and 8 using six criteria based on the Board-approved goals for the Hawthorns Area project. These include natural resources protection, public access (including driveway access, traffic safety, and the overall visitor experience in the preserve), local and regional connectivity, natural and cultural history, aesthetics, operations and maintenance, along with other considerations. Refer to the pros and cons assessment for Option 7 and 8 below for more details. Additionally, PAWG members also individually assessed these parking options. For a summary of PAWG's evaluations, refer to Appendix C1 of the *PAWG Recommendations Report*.

OPTION 7

Option 7 incorporates the existing driveway entrance off of Alpine Road as the access point. The proposed driveway runs along the alignment of the existing driveway and into the lower Hawthorns Meadow. This option can be built in two phases. The first phase would install 22 parking spaces and include a circular turnaround. The second phase would install an additional 28 parking stalls but would require a horseshoe turnaround. The horseshoe turnaround is less ideal for circulation, but is needed to increase the quantity of parking. There would be a total of 50 stalls built in both phases.

This option did not move forward during final voting process mainly due to natural resources impacts at Hawthorns Meadow. There are also significant slopes at the driveway, approaching 20%.

Figure 9. Concept Option 7



Option 7 Pros and Cons – Midpen Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sited away from riparian resources • Partially confined to existing developed and/or disturbed areas within the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires additional development relative to option 8, resulting in more intensive and extensive detrimental ecological impacts throughout the preserve • Longer driveway length and central location of parking area within the preserve increase the footprint of total paved area, exacerbates habitat fragmentation, and compromises ecological integrity and resilience of meadow and native oak woodland vegetation communities • Necessitates the greatest tree removal of all the conceptual parking options to meet the construction specifications and to comply with Woodside Fire's wildland fire resiliency requirements
Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximizes traffic safety conditions, as existing driveway entrance has clear sight lines due to its gentle downslope on Alpine Road and minimal tree cover • Proximity to the Portola Road intersection and Town Center Driveways enhances driver awareness of cross-traffic and turning vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driveway does not have four-way stop sign, would require additional signs and crossing markings at the driveway entrance
Visitor Experience in the Preserve (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing parking to the preserve's interior increases internal congestion and noise, compromising the tranquility of the preserve and the visitor experience • Internal trail would need to cross the existing driveway where vehicular access is sited, introducing potential conflict and safety concerns for visitors
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed 40-50 parking spaces provides ample opportunities for visitors wishing to park their vehicles at the Hawthorns Area while recreating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

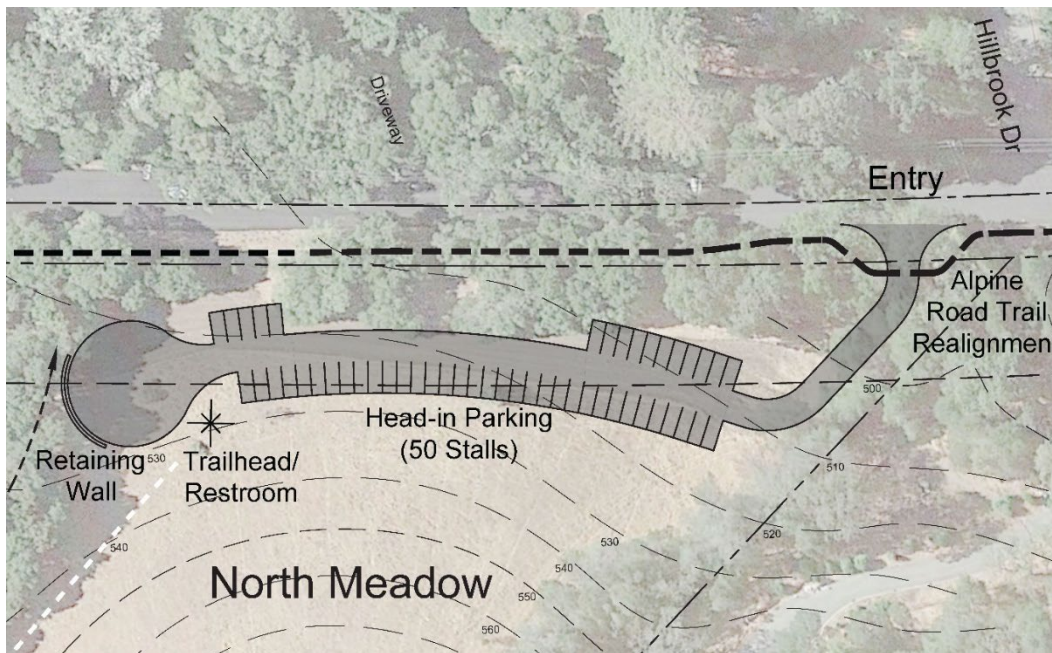
Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	on adjacent trails and open space lands	
Natural and Cultural History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites parking area away from closed area with known cultural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siting the parking and restroom deeper into the preserve maintains aesthetic values externally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driveway, parking, and restroom are more visible from trails within the preserve, reducing aesthetic values internally to the preserve
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizes use of partial existing driveways and internal roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siting parking deeper into the preserve where it is not visible from Alpine Road poses a greater challenge for law enforcement, ranger patrol, and emergency response • Larger area with developed infrastructure increases operational and maintenance needs
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction cost is relatively more than options 8, 9 and 10 • Hammerhead design requires additional vehicular maneuvering for cars at turnaround

OPTION 8

Option 8 located the parking area along the most level area of the property which is adjacent to Alpine Road. There would be less grading in this option due to the proximity to Alpine Road and the level nature of the grades in this area. The driveway is located near the eastern property line where the grades between the road and property are level. The driveway occurs further away from intersections, on steep grade and shaded by trees along the road. These elements create the potential for conflict between motorists and cyclists at the driveway entrance onto Alpine Road. There are residential neighbors across the street from this location, so the parking lot would have more visual impact to the neighbors and motorists than other options.

This option did not move forward during final voting process mainly due to traffic safety at the driveway entrance and visual impact concerns along Alpine Road.

Figure 10. Concept Option 8



Option 8 Pros and Cons - Midpen Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits extent of built environment to property edge in already disturbed area near existing roadway, minimizing human impacts to the preserve • Smaller footprint of total paved area, retaining wall and shorter driveway length than options 7 & 9 • Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<p>the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat connectivity and ecological resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires less vegetation removal than options 7, 9 and 10 to achieve design specifications and comply with Woodside Fire's wildland fire resiliency requirements 	
Driveway Access Point and Traffic safety (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driveway access has adequate lines of sight A gently sloped and short driveway encourages non-automobile access, potentially reducing vehicular congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New driveway would add another entrance onto the preserve from Alpine Road, which would require coordination with to Town to establish an intermodal safety corridor Driveway does not have four-way stop sign, driveway entrance would require additional signs and crossing markings
Visitor Experience in the Preserve (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors Siting parking along the property boundary preserves the tranquility of the remaining preserve, enhancing the visitor experience Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed 50 parking spaces provides ample opportunity for visitors wishing to park their vehicles at the Hawthorns Area while recreating on adjacent trails and open space lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Natural and Cultural History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites parking area away from closed area with known cultural resources Consolidates new development near existing developed infrastructure and already disturbed areas along Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siting parking and the restroom along the preserve's perimeter maintains visual resources internally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited vegetative screening along the Alpine Trail frontage due to required vegetation removal may result in parking being visible from

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps structures, such as the restroom, out of the 75' setback of the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor 	<p>Alpine Road. Would require additional screening (e.g., grading, boulders, vegetation) to minimize visibility from Alpine Road.</p>
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping parking to the preserve's perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel Less amount of developed infrastructure to operate and maintain than option 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction cost is relatively less than options 7 and 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None

Options – March 2024

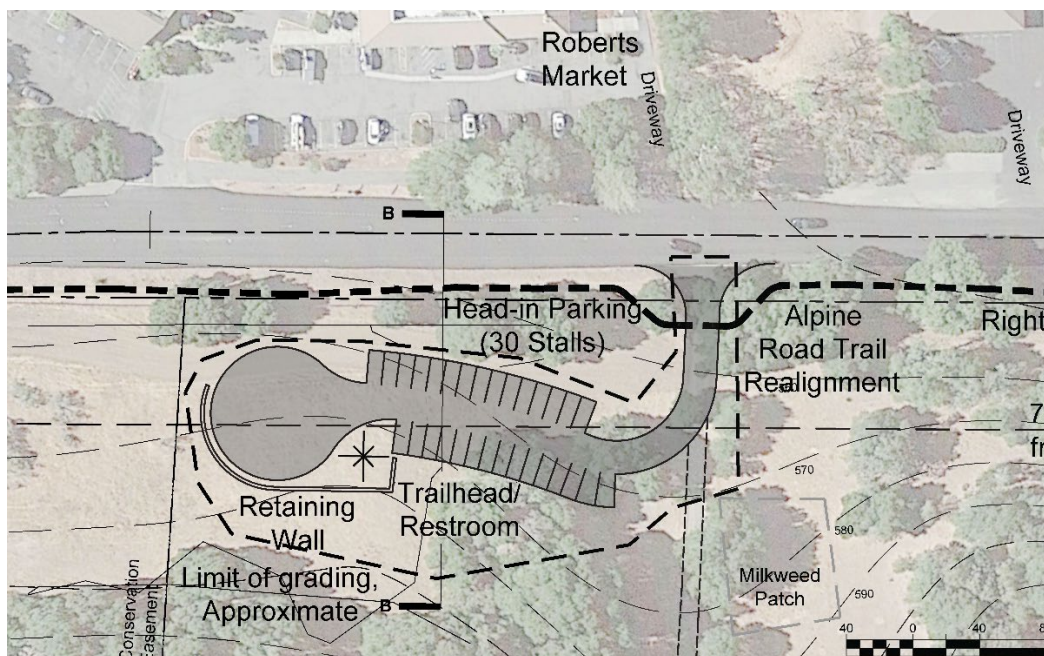
At PAWG meeting #6, Design Discussion, in March of 2024, there were two parking options presented, Options 8 and 9a. Option 9a was suggested by members of the PAWG as a response to concern about the feasibility of the previous options. There was concern that the driveway at Option 8 was not feasible due to safety concerns for cyclists and all other options encroached into the site and had a significant impact on the natural resources of the site.

OPTION 9A

Option 9a incorporates the existing driveway entrance off of Alpine Road as the access point into the parking lot. Trees and vegetation would need to be removed at the entrance in order to widen the driveway to accommodate the flow of traffic into the parking lot. The parking lot would accommodate (30) parking stalls. This is limited because it does not expand beyond the Conservation Easement. The parking lot would occupy the level area near the existing driveway. A wall, up to 12' tall, would be added prior to the edge of the Conservation Easement, so grading wouldn't encroach into the 'unimproved' area. On the upper side of the parking lot there would need to be an additional wall, or a large amount of grading and tree removal since the grades are steep for the majority of the parking area. The parking area would be visible from Alpine Road, so there would be less natural resources impact on the site, but more visual impact from Alpine Road.

This option was preferred by the PAWG and developed further into option 9, which was presented at the PAWG meeting #7 in June, 2024.

Figure 11. Concept Option 9a



Options – June 2024

At PAWG meeting # 7, in June of 2024, there were two parking options presented, Options 9 and 10. Option 9 was modified from Option 9a, which was presented at the previous meeting. Between the meetings, POST approved the placement of the parking area within the 'unimproved portion' within the conservation easement. Prior to that, Options 1 – 9 placed parking area within the 'improved portion' defined in the conservation easement.

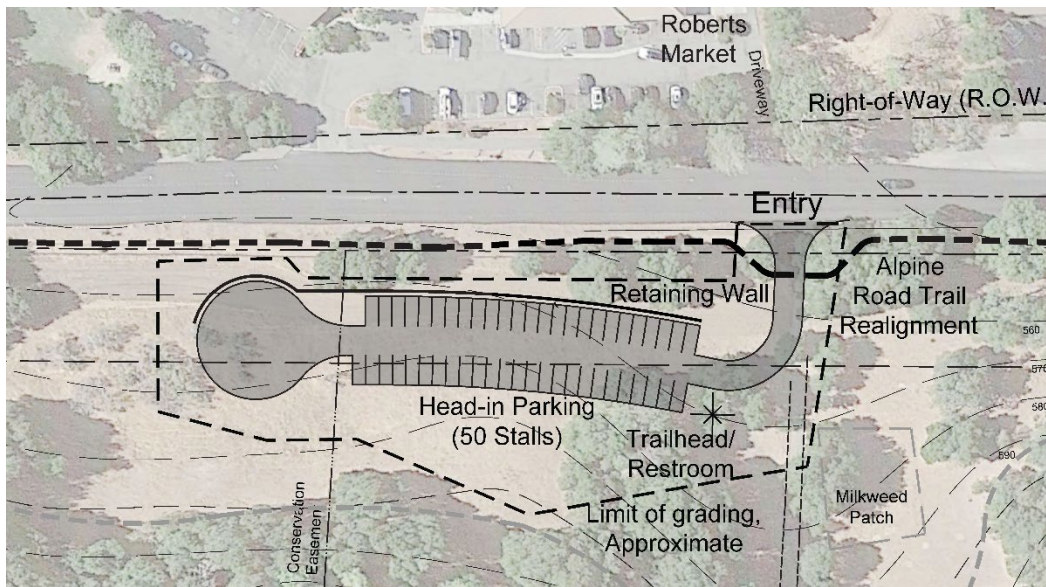
Similar to Option 7 and 8, the project team also assessed Options 9 and 10 using six criteria based on the Board approved goals for the Hawthorns Area project. These include natural resources protection, public access (including driveway access, traffic safety, and the overall visitor experience in the preserve), local and regional connectivity, natural and cultural history, aesthetics, operations and maintenance, along with other considerations. Refer to the pros and cons assessment for Option 9 and 10 below for more details. Additionally, PAWG members also individually assessed these parking options. For a summary of PAWG's evaluations, refer to Appendix C1 of the PAWG Recommendations Report.

OPTION 9

Option 9 incorporates the existing driveway entrance off of Alpine Road as the access point into the parking lot. Trees and vegetation would need to be removed at the entrance in order to widen the driveway to accommodate the flow of traffic into the parking lot. The parking lot would occupy the level area near the existing driveway, but a wall would be added on the Alpine Road side of the parking lot to account for the grades. On the upper side of the parking lot there would need to be an additional wall, or a large amount of grading and tree removal, since the grades are steep for the majority of the parking area. The parking area would be visible from Alpine Road, so there would be less natural resources impact on the site but more visual impact from Alpine Road.

This option was selected as one the two preferred options with greater level of support because it had less impact on the natural resources of the site and the driveway was in the safer location along Alpine Road. This option had slightly more impact on the natural resources than option 10 due to the steeper grades in the parking area and retaining walls that would be required.

Figure 12. Concept Option 9



Option 9 Pros and Cons - Midpen Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limits extent of built environment to the property edge in already disturbed area near existing roadway, minimizing impacts to the preserve Smaller footprint of total paved area and shorter driveway than options 7 and 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires more retaining walls than options 7, 8 and 10

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat connectivity and ecological resilience 	
Driveway Access Point and Traffic safety (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximizes traffic safety conditions, as existing driveway entrance has clear sight lines due to its gentle downslope on Alpine Road and minimal tree cover Proximity to the Portola Road intersection and Town Center Driveways enhances driver awareness of cross-traffic and turning vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driveway does not have four-way stop sign, driveway entrance would require additional signs and crossing markings
Visitor Experience in the Preserve (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siting parking along the property boundary preserves the tranquility of the remaining preserve, enhancing the visitor experience Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed 50 parking spaces provides ample opportunity for visitors wishing recreate along adjacent trails and open space lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Natural and Cultural History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites parking area away from closed area with known cultural resources Consolidates new development near existing developed infrastructure and already disturbed areas, along Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites parking and restroom to the preserve's perimeter, minimizing its visibility from trails within the preserve and therefore preserving aesthetic values internally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited vegetative screening along the Alpine Trail frontage due to required vegetation removal may result in parking being visible from Alpine Road. Retaining wall built

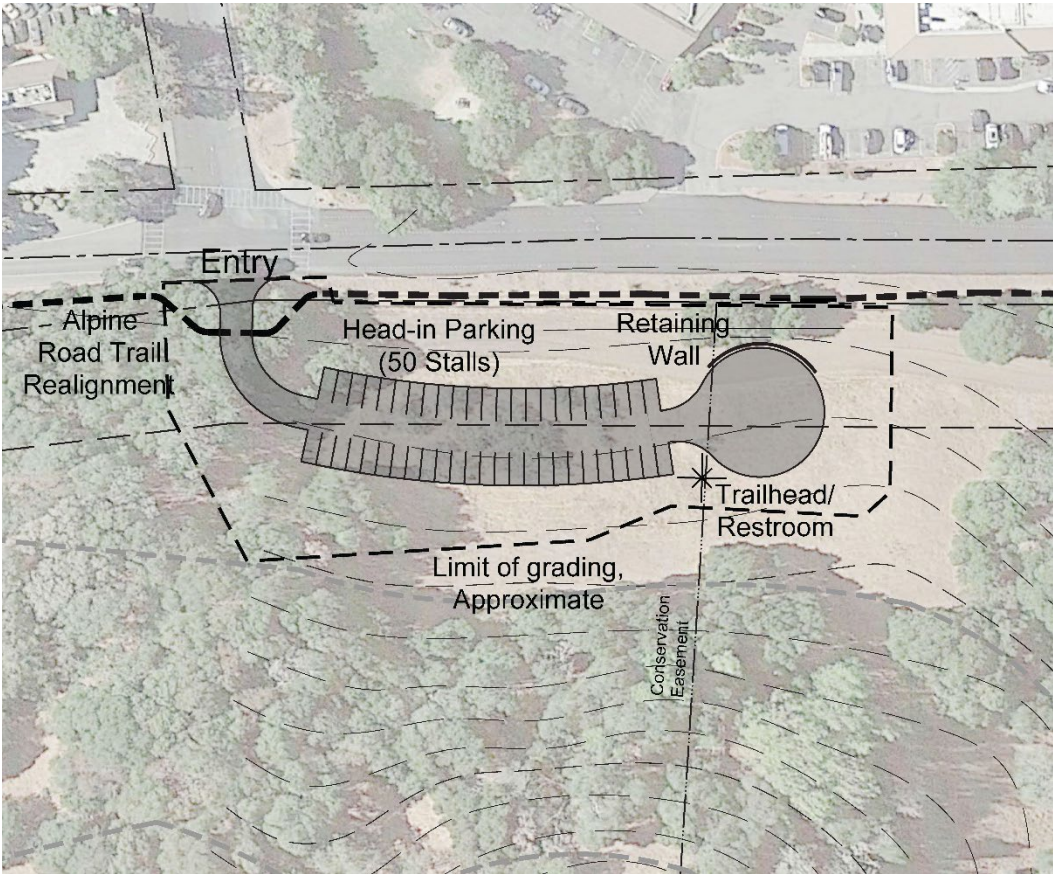
Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps structures, such as the restroom, out of the 75' setback of the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor • 	<p>along Alpine Road will be visible for the length of the parking lot.</p>
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping parking to the preserve's perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction cost is relatively less than option 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extends the parking area into the Unimproved Portion defined in the Conservation Easement. POST could request steps taken to mitigate the scenic impacts due to the proximity to Alpine Road. These could include using natural coloring of the parking area and/or installing natural features along the perimeter to shield the view.

OPTION 10

Option 10 locates driveway at the intersection of Alpine Road and Portola Road. Trees and vegetation would need to be removed at the entrance. The driveway entrance would be the safest location for cyclist since it is at a four way stop intersection. The parking lot would occupy the level area near the existing driveway. A wall would have to be added at the turnaround to accommodate the existing grades. The parking area would be visible from Alpine Road, but that may be visually screened with a berm between the parking and Alpine Road.

This option was selected as one the two preferred options with greater level of support because it had less amount of impact on the natural resources of the site and the driveway was in the safest location along Alpine Road. This driveway entrance was safer than option 9 since it was located at a four way stop intersection.

Figure 13. Concept Option 10



Option 10 Pros and Cons - Midpen Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limits extent of built environment to the property edge in already disturbed area near existing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<p>roadway, minimizing impacts to the preserve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smallest footprint of total paved area, retaining wall and shorter driveway length • Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities in those meadows • Requires less vegetation removal than options 7 and 9 	
Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driveway located at intersection with Portola Road and Alpine Road would create a four-way stop that provides safest entry of all options • Driveway access has adequate lines of sight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Visitor Experience in the Preserve (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siting parking along the property boundary preserves the tranquility of the remaining preserve, enhancing the visitor experience • Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors • Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed 50 parking spaces provides ample opportunity for visitors wishing to connect to adjacent trails and open space lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Natural and Cultural History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites parking area away from closed area with known cultural resources • Consolidates new development near existing developed infrastructure and already disturbed areas along Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locates parking across from existing commercial area and associated parking lots, e.g. Roberts Market • Sites parking and restroom to the preserve's perimeter, minimizing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking may be visible from Alpine Road • Retaining wall along Alpine Road will be visible for the less than a quarter of

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<p>its visibility from trails within the preserve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps structures, such as the restroom, out of the 75' setback of the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor A potential screening berm could be built between Alpine Road and the parking area, preserving aesthetic resources 	<p>the length of the parking lot and will be screened by existing trees</p>
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping parking to the preserve's perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction cost is relatively less than options 7 and 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extends the parking area into the Unimproved Portion defined in the Conservation Easement. POST could request steps taken to mitigate the scenic impacts due to the proximity to Alpine Road. These could include using natural coloring of the parking area and/or installing natural features along the perimeter to shield the view.

Figure 14. Comparing Options 7, 8, 9 & 10

	Option 7	Option 8	Option 9	Option 10
Relative construction cost	\$\$\$	\$	\$\$	\$
Relative Tree Removal	2x	1x	1x	1x
Total Paved Area (square footage)	32,600 SF	25,400 SF	23,000 SF	21,000 SF
Parking Lot Area (square footage)	12,400 SF	21,200 SF	19,500 SF	18,700 SF
Driveway Area (square footage)	16,500 SF	4,200 SF	3,500 SF	2,300 SF
Phase 2 (square footage)	3,700	-	-	-
Driveway slope over 10% (linear feet, 20' wide)	12,800 SF	0 SF	0 SF	0 SF
Relative Retaining Wall (length x height)	1x	1x	4x	2x
Relative Utility Improvements (swales, piping)	2x	1x	1x	1x

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Midpen staff received 153 written public comments regarding the Hawthorns Area Plan during the PAWG process from July 2023 to June 2024. This input informed the PAWG's final recommendations made during the June 13, 2024 meeting. The primary concerns raised were related to traffic safety, natural resources protection, viewshed and aesthetics, as well as trail connections. Refer to September 17, 2024 Board Report Attachment 6 – Public Comment Summary for more details.

The public was concerned about cross-traffic safety at the driveway entrance. Given the slope of the road, cyclists would be traveling at high speeds. The shade from the existing trees would also affect the ability of motorists to see cyclists as they entered and exited the driveway. Students from neighboring schools would also have to cross the driveway as they walked along the Alpine Road Trail. Los Trancos Road was suggested as an alternate driveway location, but due to unfeasible safety problems along Los Trancos Road a driveway would not meet safety standards.

Alpine Road is a rural corridor and some of the existing trees will need to be removed in all the options. Neighbors expressed concern about the aesthetic impacts occurring from the tree removal as well as the visual impact of the parking lot from Alpine Road. There was also concern about overflow parking outside Hawthorns Area if the parking lot was full.

PREFERRED OPTION

LAYOUT PLAN

At the Public Access Working Group meeting #7, the members voted on the parking options 7, 8, 9 and 10 to determine the preferred option to bring forward to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee. The PAWG voted to support both concept parking options 9 and 10, with a stronger preference for Option 10. There was support for an upper limit of 50 parking stalls in the parking lot. If the design of the parking lot could reasonably be built in phases there was also support for that approach.

The safety at the driveway entrance was the main factor in selecting Option 10 as the preferred option. There was concern about cyclist safety with cars entering and exiting the driveway. Other factors that made Option 10 the preferred option were; the parking lot was also not visible from residential areas; the parking area had the potential to be screened by a berm between it and Alpine Road; and Option 10 would have less earthwork than Option 9.

The following is a summary of the PAWG assessment for Options 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Option 7 Pros and Cons – PAWG Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverages pre-existing impacts on landscape by using paved driveway and pre-existing fire road • Limited grading required • The area has been used for parking in the past • Phased parking design may require fewer parking spaces overall and allows analysis of usage before increasing total number of parking spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destroys the ecological integrity of the large Hawthorns Meadow and creates a new and ongoing high disturbance area • Greatest amount of paved area. The driveway into the preserve is much longer and steeper. Too much roadway, construction and usage. • Putting parking in the middle of the preserve • Largest negative impact to the natural resources • Disrupts wildlife movement with noise, pollutants • This is an unacceptable option to consider • Greatest amount of tree and vegetation removal • Disturbs sensitive grasslands habitat and plant community at the site • May impact milkweed patch for monarch butterflies by compacting the soil or introducing pollutants • Disturbs tranquility of the location

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greatest amount of utility improvements • Larger vector for introductions of invasive species and pathogens
Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK, safer access point for vehicles and cyclists than option 8 • Close to Portola Road three-way stop intersection, bicycle and cars are still moving slowly • Driveway near the town's commercial centers signal drivers to slow down and alert cyclists to exercise caution • Higher visibility for ingress and egress, since the area has limited shade along Alpine Road • There is no conflict with Hillbrook Drive as there is with option 8 • Closer to an existing pedestrian crosswalk to cross Alpine Road than option 8, reducing the likelihood of pedestrians crossing Alpine Road without a crosswalk • Uses existing driveway • Good lines of sight • Reduces construction requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple entry points to Alpine Road on opposite side near this point, adds traffic complexity • Steep slopes on the driveway could result in poor visibility for small cars. This could become a safety hazard depending on the specific location of the trail crossing • Hikers may walk along roadside to reach Alpine Road or certain trails
Visitor Experience in the Preserve (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experience at the parking lot might be more peaceful than the option right along the sometimes quite busy Alpine Road • Easy trail access and provides sense of place upon entry • Easy to locate a restroom as it is off the Alpine scenic corridor • Shortest route from car to scenic viewpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negatively impacts trail user experience on the loop trail • Parking area in the middle of the preserve wrecks the natural beauty of the meadow. It subdivides the preserve into smaller areas and creates a less unified natural experience for visitors. Car traffic and noise in the middle of the preserve disrupts the natural experience of arrival. • Motorists would circle the parking lot, making it harder to focus on experiences in nature • Trail users on the loop trail would have to cross the driveway • Parking entry road becomes a dominant feature in the preserve interior

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides 50 parking spaces • Provides reasonable, safe access to / from Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like the large number of parking spaces, but Hawthorns could become a just a connector and not a destination • Existing road could eventually be part of a future regional trail connection, parking would impact that opportunity • Staging location is less conducive to a loop trail system • Pedestrians would need to walk on the driveway to enter the trail network or use restrooms
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not visible from Alpine Road • Least impact to the Alpine Scenic Corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worst aesthetic once inside the preserve. Destroys peace, beauty, and tranquility in the meadow in the center of the preserve. Destroys it with a parking lot and associated car and visitor noise. • Driveways are not attractive and should be minimized. This option challenges aesthetics and impacts vista of Alpine Road • Hawthorns Meadow. • Hawthorns Meadow view is changed forever • Even if the parking spaces are all EVs, the meadow is better than a parking lot • “Pave paradise and put up a parking lot” – Joan Baez • A handful of homes might have their view disturbed by cars in the meadow • More visible from internal trails
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily surveilled surveyed from the staff residence on the property, and regularly supervised • Uses existing road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parking lot away from Alpine Road would not be visible and would be a bit harder for the Sheriff, emergency services, or a ranger to patrol • Maintenance equipment has to be transported a long distance from the access point into the middle of the preserve • Longer entry road may require more maintenance than other options

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A parking lot situated closer to the viewpoints allows better ADA access by shortening the walk and climb to the scenic locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction is more expensive. Large paved area and long driveway increase construction and maintenance costs. Higher level of utility improvements needed (swales, piping). (II) The Hawthorns Meadow is probably the only quiet, minimally impacted place in Hawthorns area. A shame if it were to become a parking lot. Don't need more square feet of driveway Driving into the existing driveway, driving part way up a steep hill, and then down another steep hill to the lot makes for a clumsy, inelegant design Any road cyclists who wish to ride to Hawthorns to hike the loop would have a steep driveway to climb up and park their bicycle. Mountain bikers and gravel cyclists who arrive at the preserve will simply ride on the trails and will not be affected. Overall, the cons strongly out way the pros, so do not support this location. However, if the PNR determines that the parking lot must not be visible from Alpine Road, then this is the best of the internal options considered. In that case, would recommend building Phase 1 and monitoring use over the first 1 – 2 years before proceeding with Phase 2.

Option 8 Pros and Cons - PAWG Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the perimeter of the preserve, most of this parking lot is already disturbed Infrastructure is contained to an area already exposed to disturbance and human impact, limiting potential for Introduction of invasive species, Phytophthora, litter, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larger footprint impacts more natural resources than option 9 This option requires a fair amount of grading To make the driveway safer for visibility, a fair amount of trees may need to be removed or trimmed back Larger parking lot area and would need to cut into slope. Soil

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking location allows North Meadow to remain generally intact • Stays away from the milkweed patch, wood rat dens and Hawthorns Meadow • A good location that is relatively flat • Short driveway would minimize paving and environmental degradation • Less intrusive into the preserve • Less impact than option 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disturbance could provide new habitat for invaders and limit water retention. • Located in sensitive grasslands habitat; however, this is mitigated because the location of the grassland is on the edge of the preserve by Alpine Road
Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimizes vehicle impact within the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern of potential bike/car accidents as bikes accelerate at high speeds downhill, since the access point is at the bottom of a hill along Alpine Road • The least safe option because of traffic speeds and the offset cross street • The driveway T-intersection is offset from another T-intersection at Hillbrook Dr • Offset intersection with Hillbrook Dr may increase risk of vehicular collisions • Neighbors have a major concern about overflow parking clogging their street and obstructing emergency access • Low visibility of traffic • The potential for a major safety concern, involving bicycles and cars, makes this an unacceptable option to consider • There are few things that can be done to improve safety at this driveway other than signage • Depends upon Town of Portola Valley to make necessary roadway / signing improvements • Peak traffic times for both road cyclists and hikers are the same time on weekend mornings during good weather
Visitor Experience in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a good location for parking because it is located at the edge of the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
the Preserve (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better user experience of the full loop trail, allowing for a more immersive experience in the preserve Less vehicle interactions for pedestrians and cyclists within the preserve compared to option 7 Perimeter location has less impact than 7 	
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibly the best connectivity because it offers the most parking Parking lots, trailheads, and interpretive signage more accessible by being easily connected to Alpine Trail and other Town Trails More accessible to cyclists who may want to lock bikes at trailheads to explore preserve Preserves the option to use existing road into Historic Complex as a regional connection Easily accessed from Alpine Trail and nearby homes (including new developments) Staging location is conducive to a loop trail system, being in a corner of the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging for neighbors on Hillbrook Dr making left turns onto Alpine Road
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimizes visibility from Alpine Road with additional screening (e.g., grading, boulders) This would be an attractive site Better to place parking at the edge of an open space than disturbing the scenic views of a relatively untouched Hawthorns Meadow. Parking lots will always be ugly, but some screening will make parking near Alpine Road the least unpalatable option. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visible from Alpine Road, and adds visual impact on Alpine Scenic Corridor Requires screening to minimize visibility on Alpine Road Portola Valley residents are still concerned about how a parking lot next to Alpine Road will disrupt the Alpine Scenic Corridor. However, this can be mitigated by grading and screening. There is already a much more visible parking lot located across the street for Robert's Market, and the nearby intersection of Alpine and Portola Roads is a "Town Center" area that is already a break in the Scenic Corridor. Additionally, new developments specified in Portola Valley's Housing Element are slated

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
		<p>to be almost directly across the street from this parking lot, so the Scenic Corridor will already be disrupted by that development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading needed to create level parking lot. Cut slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation to appear natural. Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median. • Potential to be visible for neighbors in housing development
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More easily patrolled and accessed by ranger, local police and emergency services • Easier to maintain, as equipment won't need to be transported deep into the preserve • More accessible to cyclists who may want to lock bikes at trailheads to explore preserve • Visible from Alpine Road, can be monitored from outside preserve after hours, but screening may limit this capability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The farthest from the staff housing • Additional access point and gate increase routine operation to monitor and secure gate. Additional ongoing maintenance. • Because of the heavy shading disrupting visibility, the overhanging oak trees will likely need more ongoing maintenance to protect road cyclists
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that the parking area can be seen from Alpine Road might encourage bicyclists to use the Hawthorns parking lot as a staging area for bike rides, which would use up precious parking and possibly create the need for overflow parking • Requires adding a new access point into the preserve • Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts

Option 9 Pros and Cons – PAWG Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least overall impact on the natural resources of the preserve • Limits extent of built environment to property edge in already disturbed area along the disc line near existing roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires the most grading and largest retaining wall • Requires significant cut into hillside

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat connectivity and ecological resilience • Requires less vegetation removal • Smaller footprint option of total paved area and shortest driveway length • Protects milkweed patch • Disturbance of resources close to other developed areas (buildings and parking across the street) rather than creating a new one further down Alpine Road 	
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety (Public Access)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slower vehicle and bike speeds in this area increases safety • Driveway near the town's commercial centers signal drivers to slow down and alert cyclists to exercise caution • The safest access point off Alpine Road • Much safer access point than option 8 • Driveway access has adequate lines of sight • The area also has limited shade along Alpine Road enabling better visibility • Close to Portola Road three-way stop intersection, means bicycle and cars are still moving slowly • Uses existing driveway/road • Closer to an existing pedestrian crosswalk to cross Alpine Road than option 8 • There is no conflict with Hillbrook Dr, as there is with option 8 • Not located in a residential neighborhood • This location might make monitoring the parking lot and enforcing traffic easier for Midpen staff and the Town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential overflow parking may extend to neighbors or commercial area • It would be nice if Midpen could come to an agreement with Roberts Market across the street for overflow. Good signage needs to be posted on Alpine Road to ensure that overflow parking does not take place on Alpine Road (parking on Alpine would create a very dangerous situation for bicyclists and fire/emergency evacuation for the Town, which relies on Alpine Road as an evacuation route)

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimizes amount of paved area and reduces construction requirements 	
Visitor Experience in the Preserve (Public Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a good location for parking because it is located at the edge of the preserve Better user experience of the full loop trail, allowing for a more immersive experience in the preserve Less vehicle interactions for pedestrians and cyclists within the preserve compared to option 7 Perimeter location has less impact than option 7 Maintains vistas from Hawthorns meadow, North Meadow, and hilltops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The large retaining wall that may be required could negatively impact the visitor
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides 50 parking spaces, allows visitors to connect to adjacent trails and open space lands Parking, restroom, trailhead and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Trail and other Town Trails Easily accessed to/from Alpine trail Preserves alternative to use existing road into Historic Complex as a regional connection Staging location is conducive to a loop trail system, being located on the side of the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer parking spaces than 50 may or may not be viewed as a negative factor. Perhaps additional parking could be potentially added as a Phase 2? While this may be difficult to envision at this time, considerations may change if this option is selected, based on the assessed demand for additional parking.
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize visibility from Alpine Road with additional screening (e.g., grading, boulders) Aesthetically almost as good as option 8 Parked vehicles would be clustered in the already developed commercial core, across from Roberts Market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking may be visible from Alpine Road, may add visual impact on Alpine Scenic Corridor (III) Requires mitigation with screening to minimize visibility on Alpine Road Concern with the 12'+ retaining walls above an 80-96' diameter turn around area. Suggest designers work with Woodside Fire Protection District and

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps amenities such as the restroom outside the 75-foot Alpine Scenic Corridor • Parking and restroom on the preserve's perimeter minimizes visibility from trails within the preserve • Meadow views are preserved • Preserves roadside tree screening • While this option still is visible from Alpine Road, it is across from Roberts Market which also has a large parking lot in front of it. Therefore, it does not disrupt the scenic corridor as much as option 8. • Farther from residential neighborhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find a more elegant solution for turnaround
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping parking to the preserve's perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel • Easier to maintain, as equipment won't need to be transported deep into the preserve • Visible from Alpine Road • Easily surveilled from the existing house on the property, and regularly supervised • Can be monitored from outside preserve after hours, but screening may limit this capability • Reuses the existing driveway entry across from Roberts Market • Single access point reduces ongoing operation and maintenance. • Less expensive than option 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the best option by far • Options 7 & 8 include inherently unacceptable disqualifying designs – either extensive environmental impacts or potential major safety issues – both of which are “show-stoppers” that cannot be endorsed • This location encourages support of local businesses by being situated across the street from a grocery store with a deli and a hardware store • POST granted permission to extend parking into the “Unimproved portion” defined in the Conservation Easement, indicating that a parking lot in this location is in line with their values • Unclear why a 12-foot retaining wall is needed. Site is mostly flat and parking could extend further to the west along disc line and stay on flat portion • Water fountains in Triangle Park are more accessible from the trail network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that the parking area can be seen from the road might encourage bicyclists to use the Hawthorns parking lot as a staging area for bike rides, which would use up precious parking and possibly create the need for overflow parking • 50 parking spaces seem excessive for this 75-acre parcel • Are there other parking alternatives along Alpine Road? • The possibility of overflow parking occurring on adjacent streets • Some of the mitigation strategies recommended rely on Midpen, while others rely on the Town. This option will need more coordination with the Town. • Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts

Option 10 Pros and Cons - PAWG Assessment

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits extent of built environment to property edge in already disturbed area near existing roadway, minimizing human impacts to the preserve • Least overall impact on the natural resources of the preserve • Smallest footprint option of total paved area and shortest driveway length • Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost entirely within conservation easement, may need mitigation • Requires more grading into hillside • Removes trees and grassland, however located on the edge of the preserve in area that is already disturbed by existing fuel break

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<p>connectivity and ecological resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires far less vegetation removal than option 7, and incrementally less than option 9 • Most of this parking lot is already disturbed by the disc line • Limiting potential for introductions on invasive species, Phytophthora, litter, etc. • Farther from Milkweed patch • Reasonable sized retaining wall • Like parking near the existing commercial center near the developed area 	
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety (Public Access)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best and safest access for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians at the 3-way stop • Driveway access has adequate lines of sight • Really like how access to lot is at Portola Rd, a simple “elegant” solution, removes impact on road biker safety as a concern • Uses existing crosswalks at Alpine and Portola Roads. • Located at existing 3-way stop, so traffic and bicycle speeds are already reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires construction of a new driveway entrance • Two driveways close together. Can ranger access be through the new lot and close the existing driveway? • May get more non-preserve users, e.g. school drop off, road cyclists stopping to use bathroom • Overflow parking would go into parking lots of local businesses at Triangle Park • Additional cross traffic for pedestrians when entering the preserve on foot
<p>Visitor Experience in the Preserve (Public Access)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing visitor experience by keeping parking to the preserve’s perimeter, ensuring the tranquility of the remaining preserve for low intensity activities on loop trail • Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors • Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road • Provides good access and conducive to loop trail system • Straightforward entrance from an existing stop sign Maintains vistas from Hawthorns meadow, North Meadow, and hilltops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
Local and Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides 50 parking spaces and allows visitors to connect with adjacent trails and open space lands • Location at major intersection enhances regional wayfinding • Parking lots, trailheads, and interpretive signage more accessible by being easily connected to Alpine Trail and other PV Town Trails • Supports realignment of Alpine Trail • The parking may be limited to fewer spaces, if desired • Preserves alternative to use existing road into Historic Complex as a regional connection • Supports safe routes to school via Alpine Road trail connecting at a monitored intersection • Closer to the rest of Windy Hill preserve, may help alleviate overflow problems at Portola Rd lot • Road (not mountain or gravel) cyclists would not have to ride up a steep slope to lock up their bike • Provides reasonable, safe access to / from Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So well connected that parking may serve as regional staging area (beyond Hawthorns Area of WHOSP)
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locates parking across from existing commercial area and associated parking lots e.g. Roberts Market. • Lowest effect in terms of scenic corridor, with addition of a tree-vegetated berm as shown in the cross section. Restroom and trailhead located outside 75-foot scenic corridor. • Possibility to screen (e.g. screening berm) from Alpine Road reduces visual impact. • While this option still is visible from Alpine Road, it is across from Roberts Market which also has a large parking lot in front of it. Therefore, it does not disrupt the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking may be visible from Alpine Road • View from Alpine Road will need some mitigation such as the berm shown in drawings • Although short in distance, the retaining wall is 10' tall • Requires berm and screening tree planting. Initial appearance after construction would likely appear harsh, until screening trees fill in • Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median • Substantial grading to create level parking lot. Retaining wall would need aesthetic treatment and vegetative screening to appear more natural. Cut

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<p>scenic corridor as much as option 9.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking and restroom on the preserve's perimeter minimizes visibility from trails within the preserve (II) • Smallest paved footprint for both parking and driveway • Retaining wall along Alpine Road will be visible for the less than a quarter of the length of the parking lot and will be screened by existing trees • The entrance driveway at the 4-way stop intersection is the most intuitive and the least obtrusive option • Existing 3-way stop will require less new signage and crossing markings than other entrances. Turning this into a 4-way stop sign will eliminate using this area for the frequent public signs that are currently placed on the fence. • Limited screening required to hide the parking lot • Most aesthetically impacted area would be busy intersection, Triangle Park, and parking lots of businesses. Much of the view from these locations is previously obstructed by hedges at Triangle Park. • Unclear how the turnaround will work without lots grading and retaining walls • Driveway and parking consistent with appearance of commercial center 	<p>slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation.</p>
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel (V) • Easier to maintain and operate given the short driveway, proximity to Alpine Road and the fact that visitors will not need to drive up and down a relatively steep road (as is the case for option 7) (II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to monitor and open/close from existing Driveway • Readily oversight of access • Least amount of paved area among all the options 	
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall the best option, if allowed by POST • Construction costs are relatively low • Consolidates all parking in an already visually impacted section of Alpine Road • This builds upon the benefits of option 9, while reducing grading and retaining walls, and significantly increasing safety with the entrance at a 4-way stop • An informal but popular after school pickup is just across the street at Triangle Park. Some families could move their pickup spot to this parking lot and perhaps enjoy a short hike • Located next to a grocery store and a restaurant provides convenient post hiking or biking opportunities to the public • Water fountains in Triangle Park are more accessible from the trail network • Located away from residential areas. Encourages support of local businesses. Consistent with land use in commercial core 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has POST granted access in the conservation easement area? • Can it be built within the conservation easement? • An unlikely but potential conflict could occur if this location becomes a very popular spot for picking up children after school. Fortunately weekday school pickup in mid-afternoon is not a very popular time for hikers. • Extends the parking area into the Unimproved Portion defined in the Conservation Easement. POST could request steps taken to mitigate the scenic impacts due to the proximity to Alpine Road. These could include using natural coloring of the parking area and/or installing natural features along the perimeter to shield the view. • Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts

AMENITIES

The amenities on site will be located near or at the location identified as the Trailhead / Restroom and along Alpine Road. The amenities will include the following items:

- Restroom
- Bike Parking
- Trailhead Signage
- Gates and Fencing
- Electric Vehicle Charging Station

All of the amenities will meet the Midpen Staging/Parking Area and Trailhead Design Guidelines. The restroom will be a prefabricated vault toilet with (2) stalls. The vault toilet will be located near the trailhead and shall be ADA accessible from the parking lot to the trailhead.

Bike Parking shall be located near the trailhead and shall have a bike brush and bike repair station installed nearby.

Gates will be installed at the driveway entrance to the site. The gate shall be located to allow cars to pull off of Alpine Road, but not too far into the site for multiple cars to park on the driveway. The gates will have self-closing system, be solar powered and swing in to open.

Along the Alpine Road Trail there will be a split rail fence running the length of the property at the road side of the trail. On the uphill side of the trail a 4' tall fence will run the length of the property.

Electric Vehicle (EV) charging will need to be incorporated into the site based on current California Building Code, section 5.106.5.3. (2) EV stalls would be required for the proposed 50-space parking area.

COST ESTIMATE

Costs will be determined at a later phase of the design after the Board finalizes policy decisions for the Hawthorns Area Plan. At this stage of the design there are too many variables to provide an accurate cost estimate. Additional geotechnical, structural and other engineering need to be included in the design process to provide accurate cost estimation. Refer to Figure 14 for relative construction cost for parking options 7 – 10. Relative comparisons between each option can be made based on the relative quantities of demolition, pavement, earthwork and retaining walls required for each option.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps will include presenting the PAWG's recommendations to the Midpen Planning and Natural Resources Committee, Midpen Board, Town of Portola Valley, and other stakeholders for input.

LEAD AGENCY APPROVAL PROCESS

Planning and Natural Resources Committee

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) shall review the PAWG's recommendations including the preferred options along with the pros and cons presented in the report. From this information the committee will forward its recommendations to Midpen Board of Directors.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Board of Directors

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Board of Directors shall review the PAWG's recommendations including the preferred options along with the pros and cons presented in the report. The Board will make final policy decisions informed by input from the PAWG, PNR, Town of Portola Valley, and the public to determine which options to incorporate into the final Hawthorns Area Plan and advance to the environmental review phase per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY APPROVAL PROCESS

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space staff and the design team shall participate in stakeholders engagement activities with a wide range of stakeholders within the Town of Portola Valley. These meeting may include, but are not limited to the following groups.

Town of Portola Valley Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is responsible for addressing policy matters related to general land use and development in Town. Sitting as the Board of Adjustment, the Commission reviews applications for variances, and appeals from decisions made by town officials administering zoning and subdivision ordinances. Its decisions may be appealed to the Town Council.

Town of Portola Valley Architectural and Site Control Commission

The Town of Portola Valley Architectural and Site Control Commission is responsible for reviewing plans. As stated in Section 18-64.010, "The purpose of architectural and site plan review and approval is to promote the preservation of the visual character of Portola Valley, the stability of land values and investments, the public safety, and the general welfare by preventing the erection of structures or additions or alterations thereto of unsightly or obnoxious appearance or which

are not properly related to their sites, adjacent uses, and circulation in the vicinity, and by preventing the indiscriminate clearing of property, excessive grading and the destruction of trees and shrubbery."



APPENDIX B

B. PAWG Meeting #7 Voting Results

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group PAWG Final Voting Results

Hawthorns Area Plan

At PAWG Meeting #7 on June 13, 2024, Public Access Working Group (PAWG) members deliberated, modified, and voted on the final recommendations on the public access components to be forwarded to the PNR Committee for consideration. The final recommendations from the PAWG include two staging area options, an internal loop system, trail connections to the Town's trails and pathways, and trail uses.

The tables on the following pages compile the voting results for individual items during the voting process. Voting was guided using the Gradients of Agreement. This approach gauges the level of consensus on a proposal beyond the traditional "yes" or "no" voting.

Gradients of Agreement for Official Voting:

- The Gradients of Agreement is a mechanism for testing the level of agreement on a proposal that expands on the traditional "yes" or "no" voting.
- Values from 1 to 4 on the Gradients of Agreement are considered supportive of a proposal.
- Full consensus is reached if all members are between a 1 and 4 on the Gradients of Agreement scale.
- Majority consensus is reached if a simple majority of all members are between 1 and 4 on the Gradients of Agreement scale.
- Maximum three rounds of informal voting before official voting

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1 | I can say an unqualified "yes" to the recommendation. |
| 2 | I find the proposal acceptable. It appears to be the best of the available options at this time. |
| 3 | I can live with the proposal, although I am not especially enthusiastic about it. |
| 4 | I do not fully agree with the proposal, but I am willing to stand aside, remain neutral, so the process can move forward. |
| 5 | I do not fully agree with the proposal. I have some suggestions and I would like the working group to do more work to see if we can reach a higher level of agreement. |
| 6 | I do not agree with the proposal, and I will work actively to oppose it. |



PAWG Member Name	1. Internal Trail System						
	Segment 2 – 9	Segment 11 No bench	Segment 11 w/ Bench A (face northeast)	Segment 12 No bench	Segment 12 w/ Bench B (face northwest)	Segment 13 No bench	Segment 13 w/ Bench C (face northwest)
Sandy Sommer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Karen Vahtra	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bryna Chang	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Vivian Neou	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Scott Mosher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
David Smernoff	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rachel Oslund	1	1	5	1	3	1	5
Helen Quinn	1	1	2	1	3	3	4
Charlie Krenz	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kerry De Benedetti	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tyler Feld	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Willie Wool	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Jeff Greenfield	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
No. of Scores betw 1-4	13	13	12	13	13	13	12
No. of Scores betw 5-6	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Blank, N/A or 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green - supportive							
Red - not supportive							

PAWG Member Name	2. Trail connections with surrounding Town trails and pathways						3. Regional trail connections	
	Segment 1, 10 and 14 (connections to Alpine Trail)	Segment 15 (connection to Sweet Springs)	Segment 16 (include now) (connection to Sweet Springs)	Segment 16 (future phase after use monitored, may or may not be built) (connection to Sweet Springs)	Segment 17 (include now) (connection to Sweet Springs)	Segment 17 (future phase after use monitored, may or may not be built) (connection to Sweet Springs)	Support for the Town Trails & Pathways Committee's request for a future connection for Los Trancos Trail (Los Trancos Rd to Valley Oak)	Support for a future regional connection to Arastradero Preserve (over Los Trancos Creek) and Foothills Nature Preserve
Sandy Sommer	1	5	4	1	5	2	1	1
Karen Vahtra	1	6	5	2	6	4	1	1
Bryna Chang	1	6	5	2	5	2	1	1
Vivian Neou	1	6	5	3	5	3	1	1
Scott Mosher	1	4	4	1	4	2	1	1
David Smernoff	1	5	4	1	4	1	1	1
Rachel Oslund	1	6	3	2	4	2	1	1
Helen Quinn	1	6	2	1	6	5	1	1
Charlie Krenz	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	1
Kerry De Benedetti	1	5	3	1	4	1	1	1
Tyler Feld	1	5	2	2	3	1	1	1
Willie Wool	1	6	6	4	6	3	1	1
Jeff Greenfield	1	6	4	2	6	2	1	1
No. of Scores betw 1-4	13	2	9	13	6	12	13	13
No. of Scores betw 5-6	0	11	4	0	7	1	0	0
Blank, N/A or 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Green - supportive
 Red - not supportive
 Items added during meeting

PAWG Member Name	4. Trail Uses											
	Hiking on all trail segments	Segment 1 - 14		Segment 15		Segment 16		Segment 17		Segment 10, 1, 2, 14	Segment 2 - 9, 11, 12, 13	Segment 15, 16, 17
		Dog on leash	Equestrian	Dog on leash	Equestrian	Dog on leash	Equestrian	Dog on leash	Equestrian	Bike	Bike	Bike
Sandy Sommer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	6
Karen Vahtra	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	6
Bryna Chang	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	6
Vivian Neou	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	4	6
Scott Mosher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
David Smernoff	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rachel Oslund	1	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	2	4	6
Helen Quinn	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	6
Charlie Krenz	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kerry De Benedetti	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tyler Feld	1	1	4	3	3	3	3	1	2	3	4	6
Willie Wool	1	3	4	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	4	4
Jeff Greenfield	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	4	6
No. of Scores betw 1-4	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	5
No. of Scores betw 5-6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Blank, N/A or 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green - supportive												
Red - not supportive												

PAWG Member Name	5. Concept Parking Design					
	Option 7 (in Hawthorns Meadow)	Option 8 (by Eastern Boundary)	Option 9 (by existing driveway)	Option 10 (by Alpine & Portola Rd)	Cap spaces at 50 max	Phasing
Sandy Sommer	6	6	4	2	1	3
Karen Vahtra	3	6	3	1	1	3
Bryna Chang	6	5	3	1	1	1
Vivian Neou	5	6	3	1	1	3
Scott Mosher	5	6	2	1	1	2
David Smernoff	6	5	2	1	1	3
Rachel Oslund	6	6	3	2	1	4
Helen Quinn	6	5	3	1	1	4
Charlie Krenz	6	5	2	1	1	2
Kerry De Benedetti	6	4	3	1	1	3
Tyler Feld	6	4	3	1	1	3
Willie Wool	6	4	3	1	1	4
Jeff Greenfield	6	6	3	1	2	1
No. of Scores betw 1-4	1	3	13	13	13	13
No. of Scores betw 5-6	12	10	0	0	0	0
Blank, N/A or 0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green - supportive						
Red - not supportive						
Items added during meeting						



APPENDIX C

C. Site Assessment Summaries and Forms

1. Summary of PAWG Assessment of Conceptual Parking Design Options
2. PAWG Individual Assessments

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group
PAWG Assessment of Concept Parking Design Options – Finalized 6/13/24
Hawthorns Area Plan

Following their March meeting and at the request of the project team in coordination with the PAWG co-chairs, PAWG members were asked to assess the Hawthorns Area conceptual parking design options 7 through 9 using the six criteria per the Board approved goals for the Hawthorns Area project. The goals can be found on the project website at openspace.org/hawthorns. The PAWG members will assess option 10 separately after the June 13th meeting packet is published, and the summary of their input will be shared during the meeting.

Below are tables that compile and summarize the input received on parking design options 7, 8, 9 and 10. Comments on options 7 – 9 were received in May 2024 from 12 of the 13 voting PAWG members, prior to the posting of 6/13 PAWG meeting agenda packet. Comments on option 10 were received in June 2024 from 9 of the 13 voting PAWG members, after the posting of 6/13 PAWG meeting agenda packet.

Note: Roman numerals in parentheses after certain comments indicate the number of similar mentions from other PAWG members.

Parking Option 7 (in Hawthorns Meadow):

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverages pre-existing impacts on landscape by using paved driveway and pre-existing fire road (III) • Limited grading required (II) • The area has been used for parking in the past • Phased parking design may require fewer parking spaces overall and allows analysis of usage before increasing total number of parking spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destroys the ecological integrity of the large Hawthorns Meadow and creates a new and ongoing high disturbance area (VI) • Greatest amount of paved area. The driveway into the preserve is much longer and steeper. Too much roadway, construction and usage. (VI) • Putting parking in the middle of the preserve (V) • Largest negative impact to the natural resources (IV) • Disrupts wildlife movement with noise, pollutants (IV) • This is an unacceptable option to consider (III) • Greatest amount of tree and vegetation removal (III) • Disturbs sensitive grasslands habitat and plant community at the site (II) • May impact milkweed patch for monarch butterflies by compacting the soil or introducing pollutants (II)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbs tranquility of the location (II) • Greatest amount of utility improvements • Larger vector for introductions of invasive species and pathogens
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK, safer access point for vehicles and cyclists than option 8 (VI) • Close to Portola Road three-way stop intersection, bicycle and cars are still moving slowly (III) • Driveway near the town’s commercial centers signal drivers to slow down and alert cyclists to exercise caution (III) • Higher visibility for ingress and egress, since the area has limited shade along Alpine Road (II) • There is no conflict with Hillbrook Drive as there is with option 8 • Closer to an existing pedestrian crosswalk to cross Alpine Road than option 8, reducing the likelihood of pedestrians crossing Alpine Road without a crosswalk • Uses existing driveway • Good lines of sight • Reduces construction requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple entry points to Alpine Road on opposite side near this point, adds traffic complexity • Steep slopes on the driveway could result in poor visibility for small cars. This could become a safety hazard depending on the specific location of the trail crossing • Hikers may walk along roadside to reach Alpine Road or certain trails
<p>Visitor Experience in the Preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experience at the parking lot might be more peaceful than the option right along the sometimes quite busy Alpine Road • Easy trail access and provides sense of place upon entry • Easy to locate a restroom as it is off the Alpine scenic corridor • Shortest route from car to scenic viewpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negatively impacts trail user experience on the loop trail (V) • Parking area in the middle of the preserve wrecks the natural beauty of the meadow. It subdivides the preserve into smaller areas and creates a less unified natural experience for visitors. Car traffic and noise in the middle of the preserve disrupts the natural experience of arrival. (IV) • Trail users would circle the parking lot, making it harder to focus on experiences in nature (III) • Trail users on the loop trail would have to cross the driveway (III)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking entry road becomes a dominant feature in the preserve interior
Local And Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides 50 parking spaces (II) • Provides reasonable, safe access to / from Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like the large number of parking spaces, but Hawthorns could become a just a connector and not a destination • Existing road could eventually be part of a future regional trail connection, parking would impact that opportunity • Staging location is less conducive to a loop trail system • Pedestrians would need to walk on the driveway to enter the trail network or use restrooms
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not visible from Alpine Road (IX) • Least impact to the Alpine Scenic Corridor (IV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worst aesthetic once inside the preserve. Destroys peace, beauty, and tranquility in the meadow in the center of the preserve. Destroys it with a parking lot and associated car and visitor noise. (VI) • Driveways are not attractive and should be minimized. This option challenges aesthetics and impacts vista of Hawthorns Meadow. (II) • Hawthorns Meadow view is changed forever • Even if the parking spaces are all EVs, the meadow is better than a parking lot • “Pave paradise and put up a parking lot” – Joan Baez • A handful of homes might have their view disturbed by cars in the meadow • More visible from internal trails
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily surveilled from the staff residence on the property, and regularly supervised (III) • Uses existing road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parking lot away from Alpine Road would not be visible and would be a bit harder for the Sheriff, emergency services, or a ranger to patrol (IV) • Maintenance equipment has to be transported a long distance from the access point into the middle of the preserve • Longer entry road may require more maintenance than other options

<p>Other Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parking lot situated closer to the viewpoints allows better ADA access by shortening the walk and climb to the scenic locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction is more expensive. Large paved area and long driveway increase construction and maintenance costs. Higher level of utility improvements needed (swales, piping). (II) • The Hawthorns Meadow is probably the only quiet, minimally impacted place in Hawthorns area. A shame if it were to become a parking lot. • Don't need more square feet of driveway • Driving into the existing driveway, driving part way up a steep hill, and then down another steep hill to the lot makes for a clumsy, inelegant design • Any road cyclists who wish to ride to Hawthorns to hike the loop would have a steep driveway to climb up and park their bicycle. Mountain bikers and gravel cyclists who arrive at the preserve will simply ride on the trails and will not be affected. • Overall, the cons strongly out way the pros, so do not support this location. However, if the PNR determines that the parking lot must not be visible from Alpine Road, then this is the best of the internal options considered. In that case, would recommend building Phase 1 and monitoring use over the first 1 – 2 years before proceeding with Phase 2.
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Parking Option 8 (By Eastern Boundary):

Project design assessment criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)
Natural resources protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the perimeter of the preserve, most of this parking lot is already disturbed (VI) • Infrastructure is contained to an area already exposed to disturbance and human impact, limiting potential for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger footprint impacts more natural resources than option 9 • This option requires a fair amount of grading

	<p>introduction of invasive species, <i>Phytophthora</i>, litter, etc. (II)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking location allows North Meadow to remain generally intact (II) • Stays away from the milkweed patch, wood rat dens and Hawthorns Meadow (II) • A good location that is relatively flat • Short driveway would minimize paving and environmental degradation • Less intrusive into the preserve • Less impact than option 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make the driveway safer for visibility, a fair amount of trees may need to be removed or trimmed back • Larger parking lot area and would need to cut into slope. Soil disturbance could provide new habitat for invaders and limit water retention. • Located in sensitive grasslands habitat; however, this is mitigated because the location of the grassland is on the edge of the preserve by Alpine Road
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimizes vehicle impact within the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern of potential bike/car accidents as bikes accelerate at high speeds downhill, since the access point is at the bottom of a hill along Alpine Road (VIII) • The least safe option because of traffic speeds and the offset cross street (VI) • The driveway T-intersection is offset from another T-intersection at Hillbrook Dr (VI) • Offset intersection with Hillbrook Dr may increase risk of vehicular collisions (VI) • Neighbors have a major concern about overflow parking clogging their street and obstructing emergency access (VI) • Low visibility of traffic (III) • The potential for a major safety concern, involving bicycles and cars, makes this an unacceptable option to consider (III) • There are few things that can be done to improve safety at this driveway other than signage • Depends upon Town of Portola Valley to make necessary roadway / signing improvements • Peak traffic times for both road cyclists and hikers are the same time on weekend mornings during good weather

<p>Visitor experience in the preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a good location for parking because it is located at the edge of the preserve (VI) • Better user experience of the full loop trail, allowing for a more immersive experience in the preserve (V) • Less vehicle interactions for pedestrians and cyclists within the preserve compared to option 7 • Perimeter location has less impact than 7 	<p>None received</p>
<p>Local and regional connectivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly the best connectivity because it offers the most parking (II) • Parking lots, trailheads, and interpretive signage more accessible by being easily connected to Alpine Trail and other Town Trails • More accessible to cyclists who may want to lock bikes at trailheads to explore preserve • Preserves the option to use existing road into Historic Complex as a regional connection • Easily accessed from Alpine Trail and nearby homes (including new developments) • Staging location is conducive to a loop trail system, being in a corner of the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging for neighbors on Hillbrook Dr making left turns onto Alpine Road
<p>Aesthetics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimizes visibility from Alpine Road with additional screening (e.g., grading, boulders) (IV) • This would be an attractive site • Better to place parking at the edge of an open space than disturbing the scenic views of a relatively untouched Hawthorns Meadow. Parking lots will always be ugly, but some screening will make parking near Alpine Road the least unpalatable alternative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible from Alpine Road, and adds visual impact on Alpine Scenic Corridor (III) • Requires screening to minimize visibility on Alpine Road (III) • Portola Valley residents are still concerned about how a parking lot next to Alpine Road will disrupt the Alpine Scenic Corridor. However, this can be mitigated by grading and screening. • There is already a much more visible parking lot located across the street for Robert’s Market, and the nearby intersection of Alpine and Portola Roads is a “Town Center” area that is already a break in the Scenic Corridor. Additionally, new developments specified in Portola Valley’s Housing Element are slated to be almost directly

		<p>across the street from this parking lot, so the Scenic Corridor will already be disrupted by that development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading needed to create level parking lot. Cut slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation to appear natural. Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median. • Potential to be visible for neighbors in housing development
Operations and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More easily patrolled and accessed by ranger, local police and emergency services (III) • Easier to maintain, as equipment won't need to be transported deep into the preserve • More accessible to cyclists who may want to lock bikes at trailheads to explore preserve • Visible from Alpine Road, can be monitored from outside preserve after hours, but screening may limit this capability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The farthest from the staff housing • Additional access point and gate increase routine operation to monitor and secure gate. Additional ongoing maintenance. • Because of the heavy shading disrupting visibility, the overhanging oak trees will likely need more ongoing maintenance to protect road cyclists
Other considerations	None received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that the parking area can be seen from Alpine Road might encourage bicyclists to use the Hawthorns parking lot as a staging area for bike rides, which would use up precious parking and possibly create the need for overflow parking • Requires adding a new access point into the preserve • Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts

Parking Option 9 (by existing driveway):

Project design assessment criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)
Natural resources protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least overall impact on the natural resources of the preserve (VI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires the most grading and largest retaining wall (IV)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits extent of built environment to property edge in already disturbed area along the disc line near existing roadway (VI) • Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat connectivity and ecological resilience (VI) • Requires less vegetation removal (IV) • Smaller footprint option of total paved area and shortest driveway length (III) • Protects milkweed patch (II) • Disturbance of resources close to other developed areas (buildings and parking across the street) rather than creating a new one further down Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires significant cut into hillside (II)
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slower vehicle and bike speeds in this area increases safety (V) • Driveway near the town's commercial centers signal drivers to slow down and alert cyclists to exercise caution (V) • The safest access point off Alpine Road (IV) • Much safer access point than option 8 (III) • Driveway access has adequate lines of sight (III) • The area also has limited shade along Alpine Road enabling better visibility (III) • Close to Portola Road three-way stop intersection, means bicycle and cars are still moving slowly (III) • Uses existing driveway/road (II) • Closer to an existing pedestrian crosswalk to cross Alpine Road than option 8 • There is no conflict with Hillbrook Dr, as there is with option 8 • Not located in a residential neighborhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential overflow parking may extend to neighbors or commercial area (III) • It would be nice if Midpen could come to an agreement with Roberts Market across the street for overflow. Good signage needs to be posted on Alpine Road to ensure that overflow parking does not take place on Alpine Road (parking on Alpine would create a very dangerous situation for bicyclists and fire/emergency evacuation for the Town, which relies on Alpine Road as an evacuation route)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This location might make monitoring the parking lot and enforcing traffic easier for Midpen staff and the Town. • Minimizes amount of paved area and reduces construction requirements 	
Visitor experience in the preserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a good location for parking because it is located at the edge of the preserve (VIII) • Better user experience of the full loop trail, allowing for a more immersive experience in the preserve (VIII) • Less vehicle interactions for pedestrians and cyclists within the preserve compared to option 7 (II) • Perimeter location has less impact than option 7 • Maintains vistas from Hawthorns meadow, North Meadow, and hilltops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The large retaining wall that may be required could negatively impact the visitor
Local and regional connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides 50 parking spaces, allows visitors to connect to adjacent trails and open space lands (II) • Parking, restroom, trailhead and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Trail and other Town Trails (II) • Easily accessed to/from Alpine trail (II) • Preserves option to use existing road into Historic Complex as a regional connection • Staging location is conducive to a loop trail system, being located on the side of the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer parking spaces than 50 may or may not be viewed as a negative factor. Perhaps additional parking could be potentially added as a Phase 2? While this may be difficult to envision at this time, considerations may change if this option is selected, based on the assessed demand for additional parking.
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize visibility from Alpine Road with additional screening (e.g., grading, boulders) (III) • Aesthetically almost as good as option 8 (II) • Parked vehicles would be clustered in the already developed commercial core, across from Roberts Market (II) • Keeps amenities such as the restroom outside the 75-foot Alpine Scenic Corridor (II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking may be visible from Alpine Road, may add visual impact on Alpine Scenic Corridor (III) • Requires mitigation with screening to minimize visibility on Alpine Road • Concern with the 12'+ retaining walls above an 80-96' diameter turn around area. Suggest designers work with Woodside Fire Protection District and find a more elegant solution for turnaround

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking and restroom on the preserve’s perimeter minimizes visibility from trails within the preserve • Meadow views are preserved • Preserves roadside tree screening • While this option still is visible from Alpine Road, it is across from Roberts Market which also has a large parking lot in front of it. Therefore, it does not disrupt the scenic corridor as much as option 8. • Farther from residential neighborhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some local residents have voiced concerns about this option • Because of grading and visible parking, the scenic view of the Hawthorns grassy hillside from Robert’s parking lot would be ruined forever. Pushing into the Conservation Easement area for extra parking extends the negative visual impact. • Significant grading to create level parking lot. Retaining wall would need aesthetic treatment and vegetative screening to appear more natural. Cut slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation. • Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median
Operations and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping parking to the preserve’s perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel (V) • Easier to maintain, as equipment won't need to be transported deep into the preserve (IV) • Visible from Alpine Road (II) • Easily surveilled from the existing house on the property, and regularly supervised • Can be monitored from outside preserve after hours, but screening may limit this capability • Reuses the existing driveway entry across from Roberts Market • Single access point reduces ongoing operation and maintenance. • Less expensive than option 7 	None received
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the best option by far (III) • Options 7 & 8 include inherently unacceptable disqualifying designs – either extensive environmental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that the parking area can be seen from the road might encourage bicyclists to use the Hawthorns parking lot as a staging area for bike rides, which would use up

	<p>impacts or potential major safety issues – both of which are “show-stoppers” that cannot be endorsed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This location encourages support of local businesses by being situated across the street from a grocery store with a deli and a hardware store • POST granted permission to extend parking into the “Unimproved portion” defined in the Conservation Easement, indicating that a parking lot in this location is in line with their values • Unclear why a 12-foot retaining wall is needed. Site is mostly flat and parking could extend further to the west along disc line and stay on flat portion • Water fountains in Triangle Park are more accessible from the trail network 	<p>precious parking and possibly create the need for overflow parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 parking spaces seem excessive for this 75-acre parcel • Are there other parking options along Alpine Road? • The possibility of overflow parking occurring on adjacent streets • Some of the mitigation strategies recommended rely on Midpen, while others rely on the Town. This option will need more coordination with the Town. • Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts
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Parking Option 10 (by Alpine and Portola Road):

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits extent of built environment to property edge in already disturbed area near existing roadway, minimizing human impacts to the preserve (VI) • Least overall impact on the natural resources of the preserve (V) • Smallest footprint option of total paved area and shortest driveway length (IV) • Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat connectivity and ecological resilience (III) • Requires far less vegetation removal than option 7, and incrementally less than option 9 (III) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost entirely within conservation easement, may need mitigation • Requires more grading into hillside • Removes trees and grassland, however located on the edge of the preserve in area that is already disturbed by existing fuel break

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of this parking lot is already disturbed by the disc line (II) • Limiting potential for introductions on invasive species, <i>Phytophthora</i>, litter, etc. (II) • Farther from Milkweed patch • Reasonable sized retaining wall • Like parking near the existing commercial center near the developed area 	
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best and safest access for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians at the 3-way stop (VIII) • Driveway access has adequate lines of sight (IV) • Really like how access to lot is at Portola Rd, a simple “elegant” solution, removes impact on road biker safety as a concern • Uses existing crosswalks at Alpine and Portola Roads. • Located at existing 3-way stop, so traffic and bicycle speeds are already reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires construction of a new driveway entrance • Two driveways close together. Can ranger access be through the new lot and close the existing driveway? • May get more non-preserve users, e.g. school drop off, road cyclists stopping to use bathroom • Overflow parking would go into parking lots of local businesses at Triangle Park • Additional cross traffic for pedestrians when entering the preserve on foot
<p>Visitor Experience in the Preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing visitor experience by keeping parking to the preserve’s perimeter, ensuring the tranquility of the remaining preserve for low intensity activities on loop trail (VI) • Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors (IV) • Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road (III) • Provides good access and conducive to loop trail system (III) • Straightforward entrance from an existing stop sign 	<p>None received</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains vistas from Hawthorns meadow, North Meadow, and hilltops 	
Local And Regional Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides 50 parking spaces and allows visitors to connect with adjacent trails and open space lands (III) • Location at major intersection enhances regional wayfinding • Parking lots, trailheads, and interpretive signage more accessible by being easily connected to Alpine Trail and other PV Town Trails • Supports realignment of Alpine Trail • The parking may be limited to fewer spaces, if desired • Preserves option to use existing road into Historic Complex as a regional connection • Supports safe routes to school via Alpine Road trail connecting at a monitored intersection • Closer to the rest of Windy Hill preserve, may help alleviate overflow problems at Portola Rd lot • Road (not mountain or gravel) cyclists would not have to ride up a steep slope to lock up their bike • Provides reasonable, safe access to / from Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So well connected that parking may serve as regional staging area (beyond Hawthorns Area of WHOSP)
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locates parking across from existing commercial area and associated parking lots e.g. Roberts Market. (IV) • Lowest effect in terms of scenic corridor, with addition of a tree-vegetated berm as shown in the cross section. Restroom and trailhead located outside 75-foot scenic corridor. (IV) • Possibility to screen (e.g. screening berm) from Alpine Road reduces visual impact. (III) • While this option still is visible from Alpine Road, it is across from Roberts Market which also has a large parking lot in front of it. Therefore, it does not disrupt the scenic corridor as much as option 9. (II) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking may be visible from Alpine Road (III) • View from Alpine Road will need some mitigation such as the berm shown in drawings • Although short in distance, the retaining wall is 10' tall • Requires berm and screening tree planting. Initial appearance after construction would likely appear harsh, until screening trees fill in • Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median • Substantial grading to create level parking lot. Retaining wall would need aesthetic treatment and vegetative

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking and restroom on the preserve’s perimeter minimizes visibility from trails within the preserve (II) • Smallest paved footprint for both parking and driveway (II) • Retaining wall along Alpine Road will be visible for the less than a quarter of the length of the parking lot and will be screened by existing trees (II) • The entrance driveway at the 4-way stop intersection is the most intuitive and the least obtrusive alternative • Existing 3-way stop will require less new signage and crossing markings than other entrances. Turning this into a 4-way stop sign will eliminate using this area for the frequent public signs that are currently placed on the fence. • Limited screening required to hide the parking lot • Most aesthetically impacted area would be busy intersection, Triangle Park, and parking lots of businesses. Much of the view from these locations is previously obstructed by hedges at Triangle Park. • Unclear how the turnaround will work without lots grading and retaining walls • Driveway and parking consistent with appearance of commercial center 	<p>screening to appear more natural. Cut slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation.</p>
<p>Operations and Maintenance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel (V) • Easier to maintain and operate given the short driveway, proximity to Alpine Road and the fact that visitors will not need to drive up and down a relatively steep road (as is the case for option 7) (II) • Easy to monitor and open/close from existing driveway 	<p>None received</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readily oversight of access • Lowest amount of paved area among all the alternatives 	
<p>Other Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall the best option, if allowed by POST (IV) • Construction costs are relatively low (IV) • Consolidates all parking in an already visually impacted section of Alpine Road • This builds upon the benefits of option 9, while reducing grading and retaining walls, and significantly increasing safety with the entrance at a 4-way stop • An informal but popular after school pickup is just across the street at Triangle Park. Some families could move their pickup spot to this parking lot and perhaps enjoy a short hike • Located next to a grocery store and a restaurant provides convenient post hiking or biking opportunities to the public • Water fountains in Triangle Park are more accessible from the trail network • Located away from residential areas. Encourages support of local businesses. Consistent with land use in commercial core 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has POST granted access in the conservation easement area? • Can it be built within the conservation easement? • An unlikely but potential conflict could occur if this location becomes a very popular spot for picking up children after school. Fortunately weekday school pickup in mid afternoon is not a very popular time for hikers. • Extends the parking area into the Unimproved Portion defined in the Conservation Easement. POST could request steps taken to mitigate the scenic impacts due to the proximity to Alpine Road. These could include using natural coloring of the parking area and/or installing natural features along the perimeter to shield the view. • Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group
PAWG Individual Assessment of Concept Parking Design Options
Hawthorns Area Plan

Below are individual assessments from PAWG members on parking design options 7, 8, 9, and 10. This was the homework for June 13, 2024 PAWG meeting #7 and was the only written assignment during the PAWG process. Staff has compiled all of the individual assessments into a single document, with each comment beginning with the respective PAWG member's initials.

Parking Option 7 (in Hawthorns Meadow):

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)
Natural Resources Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS - Uses existing road. Reduces some construction impacts/cost? • KV - Most of this area is already disturbed as it is along the existing fire road and has been used for parking in the past. • KV - This option requires limited grading. • RO - Phased design of parking design may require fewer parking spaces overall and allows analysis of usage before increasing total number of parking spaces • RO - Limited grading required • TF - Leverages pre-existing impacts on landscape by using paved driveway and pre-existing fire road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - I think we should eliminate this option because it is the most disruptive. It brutally cuts the park in two. • BC - This is the worst option with respect to natural resources protection; I would go so far as to say it is unacceptable. • BC - Hawthorns is already a small area, and putting parking in the middle of the preserve defeats the purpose of having a preserve, both for the wildlife and for the humans who want to enjoy nature due to the noise pollution and view pollution of having cars and a parking lot in the middle of the preserve. • BC - Violates Midpen’s Parking Area Design Guideline to “Establish a Transition Zone” because contrary to the recommendation to site “parking areas on the areas on the outer edges of preserves and close to areas of existing circulation and/or development such as access roads, highways, property lines to non-open space lands,” this option places parking in the middle of the preserve.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - Location in the middle of the preserve requires the most amount of grading, paving due to the long access road to parking. • BC - Located in sensitive grasslands habitat, which Midpen’s Parking Area Design guideline states are “particularly vulnerable and have decreased in area compared to other habitat types in the Peninsula Watershed. • DS - Disturbs tranquility of the location • DS - Disrupts wildlife with noise, pollutants • DS - Disturbs plant community at the site • KD - Creates a new and ongoing high disturbance area. • KD - Too much roadway- construction and usage. • RO - Creates too large of a footprint of paved surfaces in the park • RO - May risk milkweed patch for monarch butterflies with creation of new road • RO - Greatest amount of tree and vegetation removal • JG - Extensive environmental impacts make this an unacceptable option to consider • JG - Concentrating vehicles and visitors in proposed parking area WILL impact the Hawthorns Meadow, resulting in sensitive habitat fragmentation and reduced ecological resilience • JG - The driveway into the preserve is much longer and steeper • JG - Requires significantly more vegetation removal than Options 8 or 9 • JG - Requires significantly more paved area and utility improvements than Options 8 or 9 • SS - Parking disrupts the ecological integrity of the Hawthorns Meadow
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM - This option has the largest negative impact to the natural resources given the length of the road and the fact that it is in the middle of the preserve. • SM – This option will wreck the natural beauty and habitat of the meadow. • TF - Larger vector for introductions of invasive species and pathogens. • TF - More tree removal needed and higher paved area than other options. • TF - Regular vehicle traffic could impact root systems of the milkweed patch by compacting the soil or introducing pollutants. • HQ - Central location interferes with wildlife movement • HQ - Destroys large and currently unimpacted meadow
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - OK • BC - Much safer access point than Option 8 • BC - Traffic will already be slow at the Hawthorns driveway because they will have either just left the three-way stop intersection or will be slowing down because of it. • BC - The fact that the driveway is near one of the town’s commercial centers, with lots of businesses and parking lots, will indicated to drivers that they should slow down and to cyclists that they should be cautious. • BC - The entrance is closer to a pedestrian crosswalk to cross Alpine Road than Option 8, which makes it less likely that pedestrians will attempt to cross Alpine Road where there is no crosswalk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TF - Steep slopes on the driveway could result in poor visibility for small cars. This could become a safety hazard depending on the specific location of the trail crossing. • TF - Hikers may walk along roadside to reach Alpine Road or certain trails. • HQ - Multiple entry points to Alpine rd on opposite side near this point, adds traffic complexity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - There is no conflict with Hillbrook Dr, as there is with Option 8. • CK - Driveway's comparatively safe location is this design's sole positive attribute. • DS - Uses existing driveway • DS - Good lines of site • DS - Reduces construction reqs. • KV - The Hawthorns Entry is a far safer egress point for vehicles and for cyclists traveling northeast downhill from the Alpine and Portola intersection. Cyclists will not have picked up much speed yet after the stop sign. • KV - The area also has limited shade along Alpine enabling better visibility. • KV - The Alpine and Portola intersection along with the commercial buildings' egresses have a fair amount of congestion that will naturally help drivers, cyclists and pedestrians stay alert. • RO - Safest access point of the options • RO - Location across from Robert's Market means drivers are more aware of vehicles entering traffic • SS - Location across from Roberts Market is advantageous because cyclists heading northeast on Alpine Road will be moving more slowly, due to the flatter road. • SM - Location provides the best and safest access to the property. • TF - Slower speeds in cars and cyclists coming from Portola x Alpine intersection would reduce collision probability. • TF - Higher visibility for entrance and egress. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HQ - Close to Portola Rd, means bicycle traffic is still moving slowly 	
<p>Visitor Experience in the Preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KV - The experience at the parking lot itself might be a bit more peaceful than one right along sometimes quite busy Alpine Road. • KV - Easy to locate a restroom as it is off the Alpine scenic corridor. • RO - Shortest route from car to scenic viewpoints • TF - Easy trail access and provides sense of place upon entry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - It would also negatively impact the visitor experience—as a visual “eye sore” and a trail disruptor. • BC - Not ideal to have parking in the middle of the preserve; car traffic and noise in the middle of the preserve disrupts the natural experience • CK - The “Hawthorn’s meadow” is probably the only quiet, minimally impacted place in Hawthorns area. I think it’d be a shame if it were to become a parking lot. • DS - Inserts visitors into the center of the preserve. Potential impacts on loop trail experience. • KV - The parking being situated in towards the interior of the site would somewhat limit the experience of arriving at a destination and then looping through the park. • RO - Hikes would circle the parking lot, making it harder to focus on experiences in nature • RO - Hikers on the loop trail would have to cross the driveway • SS – Parking entry road becomes a dominant feature in the preserve interior, and two trail crossings are required. • SM - This location in the middle of the preserve wrecks the natural beauty of the meadow. It effectively subdivides the preserve into smaller areas and creates a less unified natural experience for visitors. • TF - Trail crossing driveway could lead to collision and injury. • HQ - Negatively impacts experience of trail users
<p>Local And Regional Connectivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - I do like the large number of parking spaces, but it could become a just a connector and not a destination. • BC - Provides 50 parking spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS - Existing road could eventually be part of a regional trail connection, parking would impact that opportunity. • SS - Staging location is less conducive to a loop trail system. • TF - Pedestrians would need to walk on the driveway to enter the trail network or use restrooms.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM - Provides reasonable, safe access to / from Alpine road. 	
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - The only positive in comparison with the other options is that it's not visible from Alpine Road. • BC - Parking would be hidden from Alpine Road, which is supposed to be a scenic corridor • DS - Not visible from Alpine Road. • KV - The Alpine scenic corridor has the least impact with the parking away from Alpine Road. • SS – Parking not visible from Alpine Road Scenic Corridor • SM - Improves the aesthetics from Alpine road as the parking lot is not visible. • TF - Parking lot would not be visible from Alpine Road maintaining the scenic corridor. • HQ - Less visible from Alpine Rd than other options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - Driveways are not attractive and should be minimized. • BC - Takes a peaceful, beautiful and environmentally sensitive meadow in the center of the preserve and destroys it with a parking lot and associated car and visitor noise. • CK - Grassy meadow vs 30-50 cars?... even if they were all EVs, the meadow is better. • DS - Beautiful quiet meadow becomes a parking lot. "Pave paradise and put up a parking lot" Joan Baez • KV - A handful of homes might have a their view disturbed by cars in the meadow. • KD - Hawthorns Meadow view is changed forever. • RO - Destroys peace and tranquility in the meadow • SM – Worst aesthetic once you are inside the preserve. • TF - Long paved driveway challenges aesthetics and impacts vista of Hawthorns Meadow. • HQ - More visible from internal trails
Operations and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS - Uses existing road. Reduces some op/maintenance? • RO - Easily surveilled from the existing house on the property, and regularly supervised • TF - Parking lot visible from ranger housing. This accessibility may help prevent theft, and keep a regular watch on needed maintenance. • HQ - Not easily monitored overnight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would not be visible to local police and harder for emergency services. • BC - Any maintenance equipment will have to be transported a long way away from the access point into the middle of the preserve. • KV - A parking lot away from Alpine Road is a bit harder for the Sheriff or a ranger to patrol. • SS – Parking set so far back from the street would have lowered vehicle visibility from a crime prevention and ranger patrol perspective. • TF - Parking not visible from the road

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HQ - Longer entry road may require more maintenance than other options
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KV - A parking lot situated closer to the viewpoints allows better ADA access by shortening the walk and climb to the scenic locations. RO - Not visible from Alpine Scenic Corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't think we need more square feet of driveway. CK - I think driving in the existing "Roberts gate", driving part way up a steep hill, and then down another steep hill to the lot makes for a clumsy, inelegant design. KV - Any road cyclists who wish to ride to Hawthorns but hike the loop would have a steep driveway to climb up and park their bicycle. Note: Mountain bikers and gravel cyclists who arrive at the Hawthorns will simply ride on the trails and will not be affected. SS - Large paved area and long driveway increase construction and maintenance costs. Higher level of utility improvements needed (swales, piping). 640 ft (1/8 mile) of steep driveway (over 10%) SM – Overall, the cons strongly out way the pros. Therefore, I do not support this location. However, if the PNR determines that the parking lot must not be visible from Alpine Road, then this is the best of the internal options considered. However, in the case I would recommend building Phase 1 and monitoring use over the first 1 – 2 years before proceeding with Phase 2. TF - Construction is more expensive.

Parking Option 8 (By Eastern Boundary):

Project design assessment criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)
Natural resources protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WW - I like that it parallels Alpine already a fragmenter of habitat. BC - One of the two best options (along with Option 9) for natural resources protection because the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC - Located in sensitive grasslands habitat, which Midpen's Parking Area Design guideline states are "particularly vulnerable and have decreased in area compared to other habitat types in the Peninsula Watershed. However this is mitigated because the location of the grassland is on the

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - A good location that is relatively flat and is at the edge of the preserve • BC - Short driveway would minimize paving and environmental degradation from building an access road. • DS - Preserves Meadow • KV - Most of this parking lot is already disturbed as it is along the disc line. • KD - Less intrusive into the parcel. • RO - Limits foot traffic near milkweed patch and wood rat dens • SS – Parking location allows North Meadow to remain generally intact. • TF - Infrastructure is contained to an area already exposed to disturbance and human impact, limiting potential for introductions on invasive species, <i>Phytophthora</i>, litter, etc. • TF - Stays away from the milkweed patch and Hawthorns Meadow. • HQ - On perimeter so less impact than option 7 	<p>edge of the preserve and already disrupted by the fact that Alpine Road, Portola Valley’s main thoroughfare, is adjacent to it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - There is a milkweed patch adjacent to this parking area and MidPen would need to ensure the patch is not destroyed during construction. • DS - Larger footprint impacts more natural resources than option 9 • KV - This option requires a fair amount of grading. • KV - To make the driveway safer for visibility a fair amount of trees may need to be removed or trimmed back. • TF - Larger parking lot area and would need to cut at slope. Soil disturbance could provide new habitat for invaders and limit water retention. • HQ - Impinges on wetland
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TF - Minimizes vehicle impact within the preserve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - The access point is less safe than the driveway across from Roberts Market. • BC - This is the worst option from a safety standpoint because the access point is at the bottom of a hill, in shade, where the many bicyclists who ride on Alpine road will be moving at full speed will be difficult for drivers to see as they enter and exit the driveway. • BC - There are few things that can be done to improve safety at this driveway other than signage. • BC - This driveway is almost directly across from Hillbrook Drive, where neighbors are very concerned that overflow parking will clog their street and prevent emergency egress. There is also potential vehicular conflict between cars

		<p>trying to enter/exit Hillbrook Drive and cars trying to enter/exit Hawthorns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CK - We're told this location will generate a significant hazard to road cyclists. I believe this to be true, and can't support this option. Additionally, the nearby residents strongly object to possible "overflow parking" on their streets. I think they have a point as well. Though we'll never keep everyone happy, over flow would best be handled near a commercial area, at the corner of Portola Rd and Alpine • DS - Significant traffic safety concern along higher speed section of Alpine Road. • DS - Potential bike/car accidents as bikes accelerate downhill. • DS - Proximity to Hillbrook Drive concerning. • JG - The potential for a major safety hazard, particularly involving bicycles and cars, makes this an unacceptable option to consider • JG - The grade of Alpine Road at this location is significantly steeper than at the existing driveway entry opposite Roberts Market • JG - The driveway T-intersection is offset from another T-intersection at Hillbrook Drive • JG - Local residents and city groups have warned of significant safety hazards presented at this location • KV - The historic entrance is dangerous entry point for road cyclists going Northeast along Alpine Road with speeds around 20-30 mph. The road is covered in dappled shade due to the many overhanging trees decreasing visibility for cars entering and exiting Hawthorns. Note: Peak traffic times for both road cyclists and hikers is the same time on weekend mornings during good weather.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KD - Considered the least safe option because of traffic speeds and the offset cross street. • KD - Residential neighborhood. • RO - Low visibility of traffic • RO - Bicycles traveling at higher speeds making it dangerous for them to pass that point with cars coming out • RO - Parking overflow (if needed) may extend into neighborhoods • RO - Offset intersection with Hillbrook Dr may increase risk of vehicular collisions • SS – Higher potential for traffic conflicts because cyclists heading northeast on Alpine Road will be moving more quickly, due to the steeper road. Potential turning movement complexity together with Hillbrook Drive. • SS – Depends upon Town of Portola Valley to make necessary roadway / signing improvements • SM – The location of the driveway creates serious safety concerns for both cars entering / exiting the preserve and for cyclists / pedestrians. For me, these safety concerns trump all other pros associated with this location. I would not support location under any condition and therefore did not complete the remaining pros / cons. • TF - Driveway entrance in a location where vehicles and cyclists are moving fast, which could lead to collisions. • TF - Could be challenging for visibility when exiting preserve. • HQ - Bicycle traffic from left at this point is moving fast • HQ - Not quite across from Hillbrook Dr makes a complicated 4 way intersection
<p>Visitor experience in the preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - 8 & 9 would both provide better visitor experience than 7. Good place to start and end a visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - This is a good location for parking because it is located at the edge of the preserve. • BC - Once visitors park and begin hiking the loop trail, they won't see the parking lot and can immerse themselves in the natural environment. • CK - Parking on the edge of a destination size open space makes more sense than parking in its middle: leaves an "un-impacted middle" to explore on foot or bike • DS - Inserts visitors at the loop trail, full experience. • KV - A parking lot along Alpine Road allows the visitor to park near the edge and walk the full loop trail in a straightforward way. • RO - Parking at the perimeter decreases impact on nature and wildlife, allowing for a more immersive experience in the park • SS – Parking area at edge of the preserve minimizes intrusion of parking, reserving a greater area for quiet enjoyment. • TF - Less vehicle interactions for pedestrians and cyclists within the preserve compared to option 7. • HQ - Perimeter location has less impact than 7 	
Local and regional connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - Possibly the best connectivity because it offers the most parking. • BC - Better than Option 9 because it allows a greater number of parking spaces to be built than Option 9 (50 instead of 30) • DS - Preserves option to use existing road into historic complex as a regional connection. • RO - Easily accessed from Alpine trail • RO - Easily accessed from nearby homes (including new developments) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TF - Challenging for neighbors on Hillbrook Dr making left turns onto Alpine Rd.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS - Staging location is conducive to a loop trail system, being located in a corner of the preserve. • TF - Parking lots, trailheads, and interpretive signage more accessible by being easily connected to Alpine Trail and other PV Town Trails. • TF - More accessible to cyclists who may want to lock bikes at trailheads to explore preserve. 	
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - This would be an attractive site. • BC - The consultants showed renderings that indicate that cars will not be very visible from Alpine Road due to the lot being at higher elevation than the road and numerous trees growing between the road and the parking lot. What can be seen from the road can be mostly hidden behind large boulders. • CK - I think it better to have parking on the edge of an open space than disturbing the scenic views of a relatively untouched meadow. Parking lots will always be ugly, but some screening will make parking near Alpine the least unpalatable alternative • SS – Parking elevated and set back to be out of sight from view along Alpine Road. Roadside tree screening preserved. • TF - Maintains vistas within Hawthorns meadow by screening parking area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - Possibly some visibility from Alpine • BC - Portola Valley residents are still concerned about how a parking lot next to Alpine Road will disrupt the scenic corridor that is supposed to be along the road. However, this is mitigated by the fact that the parking lot would not be easily visible and what is visible can be partially screened by large boulders. Further, there is already a much more visible parking lot located almost exactly across the street for Robert’s Market, and the nearby intersection of Alpine and Portola Roads is a “town center” area that is already a break in the scenic corridor. Finally, new developments specified in Portola Valley’s Housing Element are slated to be almost directly across the street from this parking lot, so the scenic corridor will already be disrupted by that development. • DS - Some screening from Alpine but adds visual impact at currently all-natural site. • KV - A parking lot (even if screened) along Alpine road, which is an official scenic corridor, does disrupt the vistas. • KD - Visible from Alpine Road. • RO - Vista requirements of the Alpine Scenic Corridor • SS – Grading needed to create level parking lot. Cut slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation to appear natural. Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TF - Potential to be visible for neighbors in housing development. • HQ - Requires screening to reduce impact on Alpine Rd scenic corridor, can be achieved
Operations and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - More easily patrolled and accessed by ranger, local police and emergency services. • BC - Easier from a maintenance/security standpoint because lot is near Alpine Road, so issues can be seen from Alpine road, and any equipment needed for maintenance won't have to be moved as far into the preserve. • RO - Easily visible from the road • TF - Easy access from Alpine Road better for monitoring and enforcement. • TF - More accessible to cyclists who may want to lock bikes at trailheads to explore preserve. • HQ - Can be monitored from outside preserve after hours, but screening may limit this capability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - It is, however, the farthest from the staff housing. • DS - Additional access point and gate increases routine operation to monitor and secure gate. Additional ongoing maintenance. • KV - Because of the heavy shading disrupting visibility, the overhanging oak trees will likely need more ongoing maintenance to protect road cyclists.
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - The fact that the parking area can be seen from the road might encourage bicyclists to use the Hawthorns parking lot as a staging area for bike rides, which would use up precious parking and possibly create the need for overflow parking. • DS - Requires adding a new access point into the Preserve. • TF - Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts.

Parking Option 9 (by existing driveway):

Project design assessment criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)

<p>Natural resources protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - This site is the least disruptive of the natural resources. • BC - Same as Option 8 • DS - Preserves meadow. • DS - Impacts are all in existing disc line. Minimal impact to natural resources. • JG - Least overall impact on the natural resources of the preserve • JG - Limits extent of built environment to property edge in already disturbed area near existing roadway, minimizing human impacts to the preserve • JG - Smallest footprint option of total paved area and shortest driveway length • JG - Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat connectivity and ecological resilience • JG - Requires far less vegetation removal than Option 7, and incrementally less than Option 8 • KV - Most of this parking lot is already disturbed as it is along the disc line. • KD - Less intrusion into the parcel. • KD - Disturbance of resources is close to other developed areas (buildings and parking across the street) rather than creating a new one further down Alpine. • RO - Protects meadow • RO - Protects milkweed patch • RO - Maintains integrity of greatest number of resources in the park • SS – Avoids extending roads and vehicles into core of preserve; all meadows remain intact. Avoids milkweed patch. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - Requires more grading than Option 8. • JG - Requires the most grading and largest retaining wall. • KV - This option requires the most grading of the three options. • TF - Requires more grading into hillside. • HQ - Probably requires significant cut and fill to achieve spaces and turnaround
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM – Minimizes the impact to natural resources given its close proximity to Alpine Road and the short driveway. • TF - Infrastructure is contained to an area already exposed to disturbance and human impact, limiting potential for introductions on invasive species, <i>Phytophthora</i>, litter, etc. • TF - Protects Hawthorns Meadow and North Meadow vehicle impact. • HQ - On perimeter so less impact than option 7 	
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - Along with option 7 –the safest entry off Alpine Rd. • BC - Same as Option 7. • HQ - Same as option 7 • CK - The best of the bunch: Alpine rd traffic will be slower, reducing the possibility of car vs road bike accidents. • DS - Uses existing driveway • DS - Good lines of site • DS - Reduces construction reqs. • JG - Driveway access has adequate lines of sight • JG - Maximizes traffic safety conditions, as existing driveway entrance has clear sight lines due to its gentle downslope on Alpine Road and minimal tree cover • JG - Proximity to the Portola Road intersection and Town Center Driveways enhances driver awareness of cross-traffic and turning vehicles • KV - The Hawthorns Entry is a far safer egress point for vehicles and for cyclists traveling northeast downhill from the Alpine and Portola intersection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - The fewer parking spaces may result in the need for overflow parking. It would be nice if MidPen could come to an agreement with Roberts Market across the street for overflow. Good signage needs to be posted on Alpine Road to ensure that overflow parking does not take place on Alpine Road (parking on Alpine would create a very dangerous situation for bicyclists and fire/emergency evacuation for the Town of Portola Valley, which relies on Alpine Road as an evacuation route). • RO - Parking overflow (if needed) may extend into neighborhoods or take advantage of business parking lots, such as Roberts Market. • TF - Potential overflow to neighbors on or Triangle Park parking lot.

	<p>Cyclists will not have picked up much speed yet after the stop sign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KV - The area also has limited shade along Alpine enabling better visibility. • KV - The Alpine and Portola intersection along with the commercial buildings' egresses have a fair amount of congestion that will naturally help drivers, cyclists and pedestrians stay alert. • KD - Slower traffic in this area increases safety. • KD - Good visibility for ingress/egress. • KD - Not located in a residential neighborhood. • KD - This location might make monitoring the parking lot and enforcing traffic regulations easier for MROSD staff and the Town. • RO - Safest access point of the options • RO - Uses existing roads • RO - Minimizes amount of hardscape required • RO - Location across from Robert's Market means drivers are more aware of vehicles entering traffic • SS - Location across from Roberts Market is advantageous for several reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cyclists heading northeast on Alpine Road will be moving more slowly due to the flatter road. • Parked vehicles would be clustered in the already developed commercial core. • SM - Location provides the best and safest access to the property • TF - Slower vehicles close to Alpine x Portola intersection would be safer for pedestrians. 	
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<p>Visitor experience in the preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - A good location to start and end a visit. • BC - Same as Option 8 • CK - As in the previous alternative: Parking on the edge of a destination size open space makes more sense than parking in its middle: leaves an “un-impacted middle” to explore on foot or bike • DS - Inserts visitors at the loop trail, full experience. • JG - Better visitor experience by keeping parking to the preserve’s perimeter, ensuring the tranquility of the remaining preserve for low intensity activities on trails • JG - Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors • KV - A parking lot along Alpine Road allows the visitor to park near the edge and walk the full loop trail in a straightforward way. • RO - Parking at the perimeter decreases impact on nature and wildlife, allowing for a more immersive experience in the park • SS – Minimizes intrusion of parking into the preserve, reserving a greater area for quiet enjoyment • SM – Provides the best experience in the preserve • TF - Maintains vistas from Hawthorns meadow, North Meadow, and hilltops. • TF - Limits vehicle/visitor interactions • HQ - Perimeter location has less impact than 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - The large retaining wall that may be required could negatively impact the visitor.
<p>Local and regional connectivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - Same as option 8 if it can accommodate 50 parking spaces. • DS - Preserves option to use existing road into historic complex as a regional connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - Fewer parking spaces provided than other two options (only 30 instead of 50) • JG - This option includes fewer parking spaces than Option 8, and potentially Option 7. • JG - This may or may not be viewed as a negative factor.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - The proposed 30 parking spaces allows visitors to connect to adjacent trails and open space lands • JG - Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road • RO - Easily accessed from Alpine trail • SS - Staging location is conducive to a loop trail system, being located on the side of the preserve. • SM - Provides reasonable, safe access to / from Alpine road. • TF - Parking lots, trailheads, and interpretive signage more accessible by being easily connected to Alpine Trail and other PV Town Trails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - Perhaps additional parking could be potentially added as a Phase 2? While this may be difficult to envision at this time, considerations may change if this option is selected, based on the assessed demand for additional parking.
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - Aesthetically almost as good as Option 8. • BC - Same as Option 8 • DS - Consolidates all parking at the already fully impacted corner of Alpine/Portola Road. • JG- Parking and restroom on the preserve’s perimeter minimizes visibility from trails within the preserve • JG - Keeps amenities such as the vault toilet outside the 75-foot scenic corridor • KD - Meadow views are left as they are • SS - Parked vehicles would be clustered in the already developed commercial core, across from Roberts Market and the office complexes. Parking elevated and set back to be out of sight from view along Alpine Road. Roadside tree screening preserved. • SM – While this option still is visible from Alpine Road, it is across from Roberts Market which also has a large parking lot in front of it. Therefore, it does not disrupt the scenic corridor as much as Option 9. • TF - Slope limits visibility from Alpine Road. • TF - Farther from housing development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - May be visible from Alpine Road. • CK - I worry about unsightly, ~12’+ retaining walls above an 80-96’ diameter turn around area. Suggest designers work with WFPD and find a more elegant solution for turn around • A parking lot (even if screened) along Alpine road, which is an official scenic corridor, does disrupt the vistas. • JG - Parking may be visible from Alpine Road • JG - Some local residents have voiced concerns about this • JG - This likely may be significantly mitigated with screening from trees & shrubs, landscaping, and grading • KD - Because of grading and visible parking, the scenic view of the Hawthorns grassy hillside from Robert’s parking lot would be ruined forever. • KD - Pushing into the conservation easement area for extra parking extends the negative visual impact. • RO - Vista requirements of the Alpine Scenic Corridor • SS – Significant grading to create level parking lot. Retaining wall would need aesthetic treatment and vegetative

		<p>screening to appear more natural. Cut slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS – Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median. • TF - May be visible from Alpine Road Scenic Corridor. • HQ - Because of land gradients likely more visible from Alpine rd
<p>Operations and maintenance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW - The best option for operations and maintenance by staff and local law enforcement. • BC - Same as Option 8 • CK - Better to be near Alpine for ease of Patrol? • DS - Single access point reduces ongoing ops and maintenance. • JG - Reuses the existing driveway entry opposite Roberts Market • JG - Keeping parking to the preserve’s perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement/ranger patrol and emergency response personnel • JG - Less expensive than Option 7; roughly equivalent to Option 8? • JG - Less developed infrastructure to operate and maintain than Option 7, and slightly less than Option 8 • RO - Easily visible from the road • RO - Easily surveilled from the existing house on the property, and regularly supervised • SM – This option should be easier to maintain and operate given the short driveway, proximity to Alpine Road and the fact that visitors will not need to drive up and down a relatively steep road (as is the case for Option 7). • TF - Easily accessible from Alpine Road for emergency vehicles and maintenance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HQ - Can be monitored from outside preserve at night 	
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - This is the best option by far. The only downside is that it provides fewer parking spaces (only 30) than the other two options (which provide 50). • DS - Unclear why a 12 foot retaining wall is needed. Site is mostly flat and parking could extend further to the west along disc line and stay on flat portion. • JG - This is the only identified option which is viable for consideration. Options 7 & 8 include inherently unacceptable disqualifying designs – either extensive environmental impacts or potential major safety issues – both of which are “show-stoppers” that cannot be endorsed. • KV - This location encourages support of local businesses by being situated across the street from a grocery store with a deli and a hardware store. • RO - POST granted permission to extend parking into the “Unimproved portion” defined in the Conservation Easement, indicating that a parking lot in this location is in line with their values • SM – I strongly recommend this as the best option, especially given the recent permission from POST to extend parking into the “Unimproved portion” defined in the Conservation Easement. • TF - Water fountains in Triangle Park are more accessible from the trail network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC - Same as Option 8. • KD - 50 parking spaces seem excessive for this 75 acre parcel. Would the donor have wanted or expected so much of their property to be used for that much parking? • KD - Re/ POST’s ability to amend the conservation easement- are there other parking options along Alpine Road? • JG - The possibility of overflow parking occurring on adjacent streets • JG - Some of the mitigation strategies recommended rely on Midpen, while others rely on the Town. This option will need more coordination with the Town. • TF - Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts. • HQ - Fewer parking spaces than other options

Parking Option 10 (by Alpine and Portola Road):

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Supports (pros)	Concerns (cons)

<p>Natural Resources Protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - Least overall impact on the natural resources of the preserve • JG - Limits extent of built environment to property edge in already disturbed area near existing roadway, minimizing human impacts to the preserve • JG - Smallest footprint option of total paved area and shortest driveway length • JG - Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent possible, supporting habitat connectivity and ecological resilience • JG - Requires far less vegetation removal than Option 7, and incrementally less than Option 9 • DS - Preserves meadow. • DS - Impacts are all in existing disc line. • DS - Minimal impact to natural resources. • DS - Farther from Milkweed patch • HQ - Location at property boundary minimizes impact on property as a whole • KV - On the perimeter of the preserve, most of this parking lot is already disturbed by the disc line. • KV - Infrastructure is contained to an area already exposed to disturbance and human impact, limiting potential for introduction of invasive species. • KV - Short driveway would minimize paving resulting in smallest total paved area. • KV - Limited tree removal • KV - Reasonable sized retaining wall. • SM – Minimizes the impact to natural resources given its close proximity to Alpine Road and the short driveway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HQ - Almost entirely within conservation easement, seems to violate easement requirements, may need mitigation for this reason • TF - Requires more grading into hillside • SS - Removes trees and grassland, however located on the edge of the preserve in area that is already disturbed by existing fuel break.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SM – Least amount of paved area of the options under consideration. • TF - Infrastructure is contained to an area already exposed to disturbance and human impact, limiting potential for introductions on invasive species, <i>Phytophthora</i>, litter, etc. • CK - I like how 10 positions parking near the commercial area. makes sense to collocate parking near this developed area. • RO - Limits extent of built environment to the property edge in already disturbed area near existing roadway, minimizing impacts to the preserve • RO - Smallest footprint of total paved area, retaining wall and shorter driveway length • RO - Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities in those meadows • RO - Requires less vegetation removal than options 7 and 9 • SS - Locates parking on periphery of preserve, which is better for ecological integrity. 	
<p>Driveway Access Point and Traffic Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - By far, the best driveway location, since a 4-way stop at the intersection with Portola Road and Alpine Road will result in safest ingress/egress. • JG - Driveway access has adequate lines of sight • DS - New driveway at 4 way stop is safest option. • DS - Good lines of sight • DS - Safest for road cyclists and walkers as all traffic stops • HQ - Absolutely the best choice from a safety point of view, 4 way stop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - Requires construction of a new driveway entrance. • DS - Two driveways close together. Can ranger access be through the new lot and close the existing driveway? • HQ - May get more non-preserve users, eg school drop off, road cyclists stopping to use bathroom • TF - Overflow parking would go into parking lots of local businesses at Triangle Park. • TF - Additional cross traffic for pedestrians when entering the preserve on foot.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KV - Hands down the safest choice for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. • SM - Location provides the best and safest access to the property as it is part of a 4-way stop. • TF - Entry at the 3 way stop sign would be safest for cyclists and pedestrians. • CK - really like how access to lot is at Portola Rd. a simple “elegant” solution... removes impact on road biker safety as a concern. • RO - Driveway located at intersection with Portola Road and Alpine Road would create a four-way stop that provides safest entry of all options • RO - Driveway access has adequate lines of sight • SS - Uses existing crosswalks at Alpine and Portola Roads. • SS - Located at existing 3-way stop, so traffic and bicycle speeds are already reduced. • SS - Good line of sight. • SS - Safest Alpine Road location 	
<p>Visitor Experience in the Preserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - Best visitor experience by keeping parking to the preserve’s perimeter, ensuring the tranquility of the remaining preserve for low intensity activities on trails • JG - Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors • JG - Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road • DS - Inserts visitors at the loop trail, full experience. • HQ - Provides good access to loop trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KV - Straightforward entrance from a existing stop sign. • KV - Parking at the edge allows a fully immersive experience while in the preserve. • KV - Parking and restroom are more accessible to the public. • SM – Provides the best experience in the preserve as it is not located very far in the preserve. • TF - Maintains vistas from Hawthorns meadow, North Meadow, and hilltops. • TF - Limits vehicle/visitor interactions • RO - Siting parking along the property boundary preserves the tranquility of the remaining preserve, enhancing the visitor experience • RO - Internal trail is separated from vehicular traffic, minimizing potential conflicts and bolstering safety for visitors • RO - Parking, restroom, and other amenities are more accessible by being close to Alpine Road • SS - Conducive to loop trail system (with inclusion of trail segment 14). 	
<p>Local And Regional Connectivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - The proposed 50 parking spaces provides ample opportunity for visitors wishing to connect to adjacent trails and open space lands • JG - The parking are may be limited to fewer spaces, if desired. • DS - Preserves option to use existing road into historic complex as a regional connection. • DS - Supports Safe routes to school via alpine road trail connecting at a monitored intersection. • DS - Preserves option to use existing road into historic complex as a regional connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS - So well connected that parking may serve as regional staging area (beyond Hawthorns Area of WHOSP)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS - Supports Safe routes to school via alpine road trail connecting at a monitored intersection. • HQ - Feels closer to the rest of Windy Hill preserve, may help alleviate overflow problems at Portola Rd lot • KV - Road (not mountain or gravel) cyclists would not have to ride up a steep slope to lock up their bike. • SM - Provides reasonable, safe access to / from Alpine Road. • TF - Parking lots, trailheads, and interpretive signage more accessible by being easily connected to Alpine Trail and other PV Town Trails. • RO - The proposed 50 parking spaces provides ample opportunity for visitors wishing to connect to adjacent trails and open space lands • SS - Location at major intersection enhances regional wayfinding. • SS - Supports realignment of Alpine Trail. • SS - Provides 50 parking spaces and allows visitors to connect with adjacent trails and open space lands 	
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - The entrance driveway at the 4-way stop intersection is the most intuitive and the least obtrusive alternative • JG - Locates parking across from existing commercial area and associated parking lots • JG - Parking and restroom on the preserve's perimeter minimizes visibility from trails within the preserve • JG - Keeps amenities such as the vault toilet outside the 75-foot scenic corridor • DS - Possibility to screen from Alpine Road limits visual impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - Parking may be visible from Alpine Road • HQ - View from Alpine Rd will need some mitigation such as the berm shown in drawings • KV - Although short in distance, the retaining wall is 10' tall. • TF - Visible from Alpine Road. • RO - Parking may be visible from Alpine Road • SS - Requires berm and screening tree planting. Initial appearance after construction would likely appear harsh, until screening trees fill in. • SS - Appearance of large paved turnaround would be improved with addition of central planted median. • SS - Substantial grading to create level parking lot. Retaining wall would need aesthetic treatment and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS - Smallest paved footprint for both parking and driveway • KV - Parked cars would not be visible from the street for either pedestrians or motorists helping maintain the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor. • KV - Existing four-way stop will require less new signage and crossing markings than other entrances. • KV - Retaining Wall required for the turnaround is in a limited area. • KV - Limited screening required to hide the parking lot. • KV - Turning this into a four way stop sign will eliminate using this area for the frequent public signs that are currently placed on the fence. • SM – While this option still is visible from Alpine Road, it is across from Roberts Market which also has a large parking lot in front of it. Therefore, it does not disrupt the scenic corridor as much as Option 9. • SM – Agree that a screening berm would be a good addition to reduce visibility from Alpine Road. • TF - Most aesthetically impacted area would be busy intersection, Triangle Park, and parking lots of businesses. Much of the view from these locations is previously obstructed by hedges at Triangle Park. • CK - I don't get how the turn around will work without lots grading and retaining walls, but defer to your judgement here • RO - Locates parking across from existing commercial area and associated parking lots, e.g. Roberts Market • RO - Sites parking and restroom to the preserve's perimeter, minimizing its visibility from trails within the preserve 	<p>vegetative screening to appear more natural. Cut slope at rear would need careful contouring and revegetation.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RO - Keeps structures, such as the restroom, out of the 75' setback of the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor • RO - A potential screening berm could be built between Alpine Road and the parking area, preserving aesthetic resources • RO - Retaining wall along Alpine Road will be visible for the less than a quarter of the length of the parking lot and will be screened by existing trees • SS - Driveway and parking consistent with appearance of commercial center. • SS - Lowest amount of paved area than other options. • SS - Lowest effect in terms of scenic corridor, with addition of a tree-vegetated berm as shown in the cross section. Restroom and trailhead located outside scenic corridor. 	
<p>Operations and Maintenance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - Keeping parking to the preserve's perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel • DS - Easy to monitor and open/close from existing driveway. • HQ - Readily oversight of access • KV - More easily patrolled and accessed by ranger, sheriff and emergency services. • SM – This option should be easier to maintain and operate given the short driveway, proximity to Alpine Road and the fact that visitors will not need to drive up and down a relatively steep road (as is the case for Option 7). • TF - Easily accessible from Alpine Road for emergency vehicles and maintenance. • RO - Keeping parking to the preserve's perimeter facilitates better access for law enforcement, ranger patrol and emergency response personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS - Good visibility for law enforcement. • SS - Lowest amount of paved area among all the alternatives 	
<p>Other Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG - With POST now permitting this option, this becomes the clear preferred option. • JG - This builds upon the benefits of Option 9, while reducing grading and retaining walls, and significantly increasing safety with the entrance at a 4-way stop • JG - Construction costs are relatively low • DS - Least expensive option • DS - Consolidates all parking in an already visually impacted section of Alpine Road. • HQ - Overall the best option, if allowed • KV - Lower construction cost than option 9 • KV - An informal but popular after school pickup is just across the street at Triangle Park. Some families could move their pickup spot to this parking lot and perhaps enjoy a short hike. • KV - Located next to a grocery store and a restaurant provides convenient post hiking or biking opportunities to the public. • SM – I strongly recommend this as the best option, even better than Option 9, especially given the recent permission from POST to extend parking into the “Unimproved portion” defined in the Conservation Easement. • SM – More cost effective than Option 7 and 9. • TF - Water fountains in Triangle Park are more accessible from the trail network. • RO - Construction cost is relatively less than options 7 and 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS - Has POST granted access in the conservation easement area? • HQ - Can it be built within the conservation easement? • KV - An unlikely but potential conflict could occur if this location becomes a very popular spot for picking up children after school. Fortunately weekday school pickup in mid afternoon is not a very popular time for hikers. • TF - Visibility from the road could increase the probability of thefts. • RO - Extends the parking area into the Unimproved Portion defined in the Conservation Easement. POST could request steps taken to mitigate the scenic impacts due to the proximity to Alpine Road. These could include using natural coloring of the parking area and/or installing natural features along the perimeter to shield the view.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SS - Located away from residential areas. Encourages support of local businesses. Consistent with land use in commercial core.• SS - Best option of all other parking alternatives. Pros outweigh the cons.	
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APPENDIX D

D. General Information

1. PAWG Procedural Guide and Ground Rules
2. PAWG Member Biographies

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group

Procedural Guide and Ground Rules

Hawthorns Area Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND CHARGE

The purpose of the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (Working Group) is to provide an interactive forum for the District's regional constituency, local neighbors, and different user groups to collaborate with the District and develop a plan to introduce public access at the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Hawthorns Area) in a manner consistent with the vision and goals adopted by the District's Board of Directors (Board) on March 23, 2022 and the land and natural resource management parameters established by the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report and the Public Access Framework. Feedback on public access options from the Working Group will be considered by the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee, and the PNR Committee will forward their recommendation to the full Board for review and consideration. The Board will make final policy decisions informed by input from both the Working Group and PNR to determine which options to incorporate into the final Hawthorns Area Plan and advance to the environmental review phase per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

1.2 GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The working group will work directly with the District project team to evaluate the following public access components:

- Parking area and driveway location(s)
- Trailhead location(s) and internal trail system
- Trail connections with the Town of Portola Valley's (Town's) surrounding trails and pathways
- Opportunities for regional trail connections
- Proposed trail uses within the Hawthorns Area

The working group process will establish the Hawthorns Area Public Access Conceptual Plan Alternatives that will be shared with the PNR Committee prior to distribution to the full Board for consideration. The Public Access Conceptual Plan Alternatives would undergo further refinement to facilitate selection of a Public Access Preferred Alternative by the Board, which would be compiled into the Hawthorns Area Plan and carried forward through environmental review, District project approval, final design, Town permitting, and implementation.

1.3 FORMATION AND TERM

Formation of the working group would be established by the Board and would extend until Board approval of a Public Access Preferred Alternative. This process is expected to begin in summer of 2023 and last approximately 12 months but may be extended for another 6 months as needed. Upon approval of a Public Access Preferred Alternative, the Board would determine whether the working group has fulfilled its charge and, if so deemed, direct the General Manager to dissolve the working group.

2.0 COMPOSITION

Table 1 outlines the proposed Working Group composition, which would consist of thirteen voting members (seven Ward Stakeholders and six Interest Area Representatives) as well as three non-voting members (a District Board Liaison, a Town Liaison, and a Meeting Facilitator). The Interest Area Representatives may represent a single topic area or multiple topic areas, provided that the ultimate composition of the Working Group is balanced in its representation of perspectives. In addition, Interest Area Representatives would not be currently serving as a member of the Town of

Portola Valley Town Council, Architectural & Site Control Commission, Planning Commission, or any other Town Committee that has advisory or regulatory oversight related to the project.

Table 1 – Proposed Working Group Composition

Quantity	Member	Representation	Recruitment Pathway	Voting Member
7	District Ward Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent regional perspectives balanced with both ward and local interests • Understanding of District mission 	Board appointment	Yes
6	Interest Area Representatives	<p><i>May represent one or more of the following interest areas:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community interests • Neighborhoods • Safe routes to schools • Local and regional trail connections • Resource conservation • Recreational uses • Interpretation/education 	Application and Board selection	Yes
1	District Board Liaison	District mission and interests	Board appointment	No
1	Town Liaison	Town interests	Town appointment	No
1	Meeting Facilitator	Neutral party	Request for Proposals	No

2.1 MEMBER VACANCIES

In the event of a vacancy, the vacancy will be filled using the following process:

1. If the vacancy is a Ward Stakeholder, the Board member for that ward would select a new representative to serve on the Working Group.
2. If the vacancy is an Interest Area Representative, the Board will appoint a new member to the Working Group from the interviewee list established previously by the Board.
3. If the vacancy is the District Board Liaison, the Board will appoint a new Board Member to the Working Group.
4. If the vacancy is the Town Liaison, the Town will appoint a new member to the Working Group.

3.0 NON-VOTING MEMBER ROLES

3.1 DISTRICT BOARD LIAISON

Because the Hawthorns Area is located within Ward 6, the Board member representing Ward 6 will join the Working Group as the Board liaison to represent the District’s mission and interests, provide input and answer questions based on District policy, and function as a conduit between the Board and the Working Group. To follow the progress of the group, the Board liaison would attend all Working Group meetings, complete assignments, and actively participate in

discussions but would not vote in Working Group decisions. The liaison would also provide updates to the full Board at their regularly scheduled meetings.

3.2 TOWN LIAISON

The District would work with Town staff to invite one member from the Town Council to join the Working Group as a Town liaison who would represent Town interests, provide input and answer questions based on Town policy, and communicate any updates as needed to the Town Council and other Town representatives. To follow the progress of the group, the Town liaison would attend all Working Group meetings, complete assignments, and actively participate in discussions but would not vote in Working Group decisions.

3.3 DISTRICT PROJECT TEAM AND TOWN STAFF

District staff and consultants will coordinate, host, and facilitate the Working Group's activities in a non-voting capacity. Town staff will be welcome to attend to observe and clarify questions pertaining to Town policies and resources.

4.0 GROUND RULES

Working group members shall strive for a collaborative, constructive process with active participation of all members in discussing issues and shall honor the following ground rules to ensure open and productive discussions:

1. **Attend scheduled meetings.** Working group members shall attend scheduled meetings in person to promote effective collaboration and relationship building. Striving for consistent attendance at each meeting is encouraged. Working group members who cannot attend a meeting shall call or email the Working Group Co-Chairs and District staff liaison or District Clerk at least two working days prior to the meeting. Two consecutive absences and up to three total indicate an inability to serve and may result in removal and/or replacement from the Working Group by the Board of Directors. Working group members who are unable to attend a particular meeting but would like to share their views on agenda topics have two options:

- a. They can submit written comments to District staff 24 to 48 hours before the meeting to be shared with working group members at the meeting, or
- b. They can ask another working group member to make comments on their behalf.

2. **Attend scheduled site visits.** Site visits are key to understanding the Preserve's suite of opportunities and constraints with regard to providing parking and trailhead access. Working group members shall strive to attend each site visit. No more than one site visit can be missed.

3. **Participate in meeting discussions.** Working group members will read each packet of meeting documents before the scheduled meeting and come prepared to engage in discussions.

4. **Keep an open mind and be respectful.** Working group members will keep an open mind and remain respectful of the opinions expressed by fellow working group members, the public, and information presented by the District project team.

5. **Represent stakeholder perspectives.** Working group members represent and will actively and constructively voice the interests and concerns of their respective community and/or stakeholder groups.

6. **Work together towards solutions.** Working group members will hold each other accountable to work together towards solutions for the project that meet the Board-approved project goals and objectives.

7. **Avoid sidebar conversations.** Working group members will avoid side conversations, which may detract from the meeting.

ATTACHMENT 3

8. **Avoid repetition.** Working group members will express their points and avoid continuing to reiterate the same points. If working group members share viewpoints previously raised by another working group member, they shall note the shared opinion and avoid otherwise repeating the points to help move the process forward.
9. **Take space, make space.** Working group members will speak up to make their points and avoid dominating the conversation.
10. **Be a liaison to the public.** Working group members will be available to hear from and discuss interests and concerns about the project with members of the public. Working group members will remain alert to issues, problems, and needs expressed by the public, neighbors, and special interest groups and will raise these to the Working Group. Working group members will also strive to keep their communities informed of the work and progress of the Working Group.
11. **Provide feedback to the District's Planning and Natural Resources Committee through the Working Group Co-Chairs.** The Co-Chairs of the Working Group will present feedback from the Working Group to the PNR Committee. Although the Working Group will strive for consensus, if consensus is not reached, the Co-Chairs will present differing views, e.g., majority and minority views.
12. **Provide opportunities during meetings for members of the public in attendance to address the Working Group.** Working Group meetings and site tours will be open to the public. Working group members will remain open to hear from the public about the project.
13. **Have fun.** Enjoy the process and learn from each other.

5.0 MEETING OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Working Group shall conduct its meetings as described below.

1. **Adoption of Ground Rules and Operating Procedures.** At the first meeting, the Working Group shall review, make minor modifications as necessary, and adopt the Procedural Guide and Ground Rules.
2. **Co-Chairs.** The Working Group shall select two Co-Chairs who will be responsible for presenting feedback from the Working Group to the PNR about the project. One Co-Chair will be a resident of the Town, while the other Co-Chair would represent regional perspectives. Neither Board Liaison nor Town Liaison on the Working Group would serve as Co-Chairs. See additional responsibilities under the Co-Chair Responsibilities and Decision-Making Process sections below.
3. **Frequency.** The Working Group is expected to meet a total of five to seven times, typically gathering once every six to eight weeks. The Working Group is expected to last approximately 12 months but may be extended for another 6 months as needed. Meeting dates and times may need to change or be added due to unforeseen situations such as inclement weather conditions.
4. **Quorum.** More than half of the voting members (a quorum) of the Working Group must be present to transact business. Seven members of the thirteen voting members must be present in each meeting.
5. **Agendas and materials.** Agendas will be developed by District staff and reviewed by the Working Group Co-Chairs. Agendas and materials will be posted on the District website at least 72 hours before each meeting. One notification of the meeting schedule will be distributed to interested parties and the Portola Valley area via email. Thereafter, notifications will be sent only in the event of a schedule change.
6. **Public participation.** Members of the public may speak during public comment periods provided at each meeting, one at the beginning of the meeting and another to be held at the discretion of the Working Group Co-Chairs. A handout with rules for public participation will be available at all meetings.

7. Motions for a vote. If a vote is needed, motions for a vote may be made by any voting member of the Working Group. All motions must be seconded by a different member of the Working Group.

8. Facilitation. A facilitator and District staff will work together to facilitate the meetings. The Co-Chairs will assist with running the meeting and ensuring order, flow, and adherence to the Working Group Purpose and Charge as well as Procedural Guide and Ground Rules. Meetings will be run by the Co-Chairs, or in the absence of the Co-Chairs by District staff, consistent with the Procedural Guide and Ground Rules and general rules of professional courtesy.

9. Meeting summaries. The facilitator and District staff will prepare meeting summaries, which will include recommendations made by the Working Group. With the exception of the last summary prepared after the last Working Group meeting, meeting summaries from Working Group meetings are approved at the following meeting of the Working Group, transmitted to the Board, and made available on the District website. The last summary that follows the dissolution of the Working Group would be provided to the Working Group, Board liaison and Town liaison by email to review and would be then approved by the PNR or Board.

6.0 CO-CHAIR SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

The Co-Chairs will alternate facilitating Working Group meeting operating procedures, such as stepping through the agenda, calling for votes, calling for public comment, and calling for respect towards their fellow working group members as appropriate. When one Co-Chair is leading the meeting, the other will serve as a secondary facilitator and support as needed. Both Co-Chairs should be present at all Working Group meetings; however, in the event one is unable to attend, another working group member will be selected by the group to serve as secondary Co-Chair. In addition to the regular Working Group meetings, Co-Chairs will attend meetings with District staff to prepare for and debrief each meeting. The Co-Chairs will assist with the preparation of the meeting summary(ies) that document the Working Group’s final discussion and recommendations.

7.0 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The Working Group shall strive for making decisions and recommendations through a consensus-based process, as described below. Throughout the process, when the Working Group is ready to make a formal vote, the Co-Chairs have the responsibility to ensure that the interaction remains orderly.

7.1 PROCEDURE FOR SEEKING CONSENSUS PRIOR TO OFFICIAL VOTING

The Working Group shall strive for full member participation in discussing issues in order to make decisions through a consensus-based process. Consensus is defined as general agreement by all members of the Working Group present at the meeting when a decision item is on the meeting agenda.

Prior to conducting an official or formal vote on items, the Working Group will first hold informal voting to test the level of support for a proposal by employing a tool called the Gradients of Agreement. The intent is to determine what, if anything, may be modified or proposed to gain a higher level of consensus prior to official voting. The Gradients of Agreement are a mechanism for testing the level of agreement on a proposal that expands on the traditional “yes” or “no” voting. The Gradients of Agreement are typically described as follows:

1	I can say an unqualified “yes” to the recommendation.
2	I find the proposal acceptable. It appears to be the best of the available options at this time.
3	I can live with the proposal, although I am not especially enthusiastic about it.
4	I do not fully agree with the proposal, but I am willing to stand aside, remain neutral, so the process can move forward.

5	I do not fully agree with the proposal. I have some suggestions and I would like the working group to do more work to see if we can reach a higher level of agreement.
6	I do not agree with the proposal, and I will work actively to oppose it.

Values from 1 to 4 on the Gradients of Agreement are considered supportive of a proposal. Full consensus is reached if all members are between a 1 and 4 on the Gradients of Agreement scale. Majority consensus is reached if a simple majority of all members are between 1 and 4 on the Gradients of Agreement scale.

During the informal voting process, the Working Group may discuss and deliberate each proposal and offer potential modifications or alternatives to gain a higher level of consensus. During this process, the Working Group may also determine if any proposals, alternatives, or modifications require additional study by staff, at which point informal voting will pause and resume at a subsequent meeting once staff complete the additional work. The informal voting process ends when a Co-Chair calls for a formal vote (see Section 7.2); this typically occurs after the first or second round of informal voting, when there is a clear majority and no requests for alternatives or modifications have been raised. If there are no signs of members changing their level of support despite alternatives or modifications, a Co-Chair will call for a formal vote after three rounds of informal voting, regardless of the level of consensus reached.

7.2 OFFICIAL VOTING

Official voting will employ the Gradients of Agreement described above. After attempting to seek consensus through the aforementioned informal voting process, a Co-Chair may call for a formal vote. A simple majority of the quorum present is needed for a proposal to pass and be recommended to the PNR Committee. A consensus is desired, but not necessary, for the official vote.

Final voting results will then be forwarded to the PNR Committee.

7.3 WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Group will provide recommendations to the PNR Committee. The meeting summaries shall include the results of each of the proposals voted on by the Working Group. The total results for each of the proposals receiving votes from the members of the Working Group shall be presented to the PNR Committee. The PNR Committee will then make recommendations to the full Board, who will make final policy decisions.

**Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group
Public Access Working Group Members**




Hawthorns Area Plan

Bryna Chang
Interest Area
Representative








Bryna grew up in Los Altos Hills and attended Palo Alto schools. She has lived within about 6 miles of the Hawthorns Area for the last 44 years and now lives in Palo Alto. Her son has just started attending Woodside Priory School, so she travels past the Hawthorns Area almost every day and hikes in Windy Hill on a weekly basis.

Bryna is passionate about environmental conservation, and relish the opportunity to apply her skills and experience to an effort that has a more prominent conservation mission than the volunteer work she has done to date. Bryna is currently the Vice-Chair of the Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission. She also spent most of her time as a dedicated school and community volunteer, serving on elementary, middle, and high school site councils and PTAs, and leading her children’s school green team for many years. She holds a B.S. in Biological Sciences and an MBA with a certificate in Public Management, both from Stanford. Professionally, she most recently lectured at the Stanford Graduate School of Business and ran the MBA Program Office at Stanford where she managed strategy and operations. She also spent time directing the Stanford Public Management program and have experience in internet product management and management consulting. She has conducted professional and/or pro-bono projects with several government and nonprofit organizations, including the Tanzania National Parks, Conservation Strategy Fund, Sustainable Conservation, Urban Ecology, Golden Gate National Recreational Area, and Monterey Bay Aquarium.

<p><u>Tyler Feld</u> Interest Area Representative</p> 	<p>Tyler grew up in Southern California with outdoor experiences walking to school through neighborhood open spaces. This prompted a degree from UC Santa Cruz in Environmental Studies. Following his degree, he spent five years as an environmental and outdoor educator, where he connected youth with ecologies throughout Northern California. Following the pandemic, he utilized his passion for ecology and connecting communities to nature to begin working in natural resources. He currently works with Grassroots Ecology engaging local communities in habitat restoration at various parks and open spaces around Silicon Valley.</p>
<p><u>Charlie Krenz</u> Interest Area Representative</p> 	<p>Charlie is 24-year resident of unincorporated Portola Valley and unabashed nature lover. As a young man, he spent his summers hiking in the Sierras. Locally, he’s a birder, native plant enthusiast and passionate mountain biker. As a volunteer he’s produced more than a few videos on topics related to local open space areas: <u>Stories of Mt Umunhum</u>, <u>The Alpine Road Story</u>, <u>Horse + Bike</u></p> <p>Charlie has also lobbied on behalf of Alpine Road, a popular connector route to Midpen open space areas, campaigned to open Foothills park to non-residents and served on the Midpen Vision Plan Advisory Committee. An engineer/business person, he served on the board of his local water district for 10 years.</p>
<p><u>Rachel Oslund</u> Interest Area Representative</p> 	<p>Rachel grew up in San Carlos as an avid hiker, camper, and outdoors person. She returned to the Bay Area after college to attend graduate school at San Jose State University and earned a master’s degree in education. She is now a Montessori educator focusing on elementary and secondary students. Her experiences taking students into nature have created a passion for making sure outdoor spaces are not only accessible to all, but also that people understand what makes these spaces so special. She is looking forward to working with the local communities to create something that will both be treasured by the people while still being a place for flora and fauna to grow and thrive.</p>

<p><u>David Smernoff</u> Interest Area Representative</p> 	<p>David has lived in Los Trancos Woods for 25 years and frequents the local trail systems on foot with his family, friends and multiple generations of dogs, and via mountain bike. He often stops and pulls non-native plants during hikes and loves taking pictures of our beautiful native plants. He co-founded the Arastradero Preserve Stewardship Project in 1996 which grew into the Acterra Stewardship program and in 2017 was the founding board president of Grassroots Ecology as it spun out of Acterra. He served on the MROSD Board from 1995-1998, as executive director and board member for Acterra, and continue to serve on the Grassroots Board. His day job was at NASA-Ames Research Center studying advanced life support systems, and currently is in a small startup working to commercialize unique compounds derived from photosynthetic bacteria. He received a Doctorate in Biology from Stanford University.</p>
<p><u>Karen Vantra</u> Interest Area Representative</p> 	<p>Karen has lived in the Bay Area her entire life and 20 years in the town of Portola Valley. A lifelong explorer, she has hiked at almost every preserve in the district. For the last 10 years she has volunteered in a tax program run through the IRS and the United Way for low-income people as a Tax Preparer and a Site Coordinator. For 3 years she served on the Portola Valley Ad-Hoc Wildfire Committee, which passed home hardening ordinances, initiated the 10-year cleanup of our evacuation routes, and launched a multitude of other efforts to keep Portola Valley safer from the growing threat of wildfire. Karen is an Electrical Engineer by trade and a founder of a technology company that went public in November 2001. She also enjoys cycling, mountain biking, and paddle boarding.</p>
<p><u>Scott Mosher</u> Ward 1 (Gleason) stakeholder</p> 	<p>Scott Mosher consults with Veregy Consulting to help electric utilities evaluate, pilot and deploy smart grid technologies. Previously, he was Vice President of Anililx, Inc., a telecommunications expense management company he co-founded in 1999. Earlier in his career he worked throughout California in finance, high tech consulting and telecommunications at Sybase, Andersen Consulting and FSG (Financial Strategies Group).</p> <p>Scott also has a deep background in community service. Since December 2010, Scott has served on the board of the S. H. Cowell Foundation. The Foundation focuses on improving the lives of children and families living in poverty in Central and Northern California. Scott serves on the Investment and Audit</p>

	<p>Committees. Scott also was actively involved in the Los Gatos public schools for many years, where he has volunteered in a number of financial leadership positions. In 2008, the Los Gatos Union School District Superintendent and School Board named him “Volunteer of the Year.”</p> <p>Scott graduated with a BS in Industrial Engineering from Stanford University before obtaining his MBA from INSEAD, an international business program at its campus in Fontainebleau, France. He recently completed his tenure as President of the INSEAD Alumni Association in the San Francisco Bay Area.</p>
<p><u>Vivian Neou</u> Ward 2 (Kishimoto) stakeholder</p> 	<p>Vivian Neou is currently a Vice President of California Native Plant Society Board of Directors. Professionally, she is a retired software executive. She became interested in native plants after she retired and started hiking. That led her to volunteer at the CNPS SCV Nursery, where she became the nursery manager. She's a past president of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and is active in many other roles in the chapter. Vivian enjoys leading hikes for Midpeninsula Open Space District, Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve and Edgewood Park & Natural Preserve.</p>
<p><u>Wilma (Willie) Wool</u> Ward 3 (Cyr) stakeholder</p> 	<p>Willie has lived on the SF Peninsula for over 50 years. She went to college here, raised a family, and taught high school. For the last 25 years, she has hiked the over 100 parks that are within one hour from here once and often twice a week logging 5 to 15 miles per week first as a teacher for Santa Clara Unified Adult Education then for Fremont Union High Adult and Community Education. 40-50 students register for her Hike for Health class year-round. Willie is also a docent for the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority.</p>

<p><u>Sandy Sommer</u> Ward 4 (Riffle) stakeholder</p> 	<p>Sandy is a landscape planner with broad vision as well as an in-depth understanding of public access planning, stewardship, and conservation real estate in the public and private sectors. Between 1999 and 2014, Sandy worked at the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. She has served on the boards of directors of several non-profit organizations, as an appointed public official, and in community service groups, including the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council and Squaw Valley National Ski Patrol. Her interests include hiking, mountain biking, environmental protection, regional trails, as well as equitable access to the outdoors. She has visited almost all the preserves and has an affinity for Russian Ridge.</p>
<p><u>Jeff Greenfield</u> Ward 5 (Holman) stakeholder</p> 	<p>Jeff is currently serving on the City of Palo Alto's Parks and Recreation Commission as Chair. He has served as Chair twice and is about to begin his 7th year on the Commission. He has also served on the Canopy Advisory Board since 2017. There is interest due to the Hawthorns Area's proximity and potential connection to Foothills Nature Preserve and Pearson - Arastradero Preserve.</p>
<p><u>Helen Quinn</u> Ward 6 (MacNiven) stakeholder</p> 	<p>Helen Quinn has been a resident of Portola Valley for over 45 years. She and her husband have been active supporters of the work of POST, Green Foothills, and Sempervirens for many years. She is well aware of the value of the regional network of open space preserves. She served for ten years in the 70's and 80's on the Portola Valley Town Trails committee and walks the trails in the area frequently to this day. She is a docent and leads hikes for the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve at Stanford and for Green Foothills outings to Santa Clara Valley Open Space preserves.</p> <p>Her professional career as a physicist at SLAC National Accelerator Center won her worldwide recognition and leadership roles. Since retirement her principal activity has been in support of improved K-12 science education across the US, work based on a study that she led for the National Academy of Sciences.</p>

<p><u>Kerry De Benedetti</u> Ward 7 (Kersteen-Tucker) stakeholder</p> 	<p>Kerry has been a resident of Woodside area for over 50 years and have enjoyed the local trails on horseback and on foot.</p> <p>Living close to Thornewood, she paid attention to the planning of the trail project there. In conjunction with serving a short term on the Town of Woodside’s Open Space Committee, she attended a Land Trust Alliance Workshop on Conservation Easements. After finishing the UC Master Gardener program, she volunteered at the Cascade Ranch on the native plant propagation project with the Amuh Mutsun Land Trust.</p> <p>In the past, Kerry was an art program facilitator for elementary school children and for people residing in Alzheimer’s facilities. Currently, she volunteers at Mission Farm in Woodside, where produce is grown for local food banks and kitchens.</p>
<p><u>Margaret MacNiven</u> Board Director, Ward 6 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District</p> 	<p>Margaret has been on the Midpen Board of Directors since January 1st, 2023. She represents Ward 6 which includes Portola Valley. She has lived on Long Ridge off Skyline Boulevard for 45 years and is familiar with the District’s thoughtful and thorough outreach program when considering public access on their lands.</p>

<p><u>Sarah Wernikoff</u> Vice Mayor, Councilmember, Town of Portola Valley</p> 	<p>Sarah was elected to the Portola Valley Town Council in November 2020 and has served as Vice Mayor since December 2021. Sarah has over ten years’ experience as a non-profit board trustee, including in leadership positions as Chair of the Board of the Lumind IDSC Foundation, Co-Chair of the Portola Valley School Foundation Endowment, Portola Valley School District PTO President, and most recently as Chair of the Board of Pals Programs and Branch Services, organizations that support individuals with disabilities. Sarah’s political work includes serving as COO of Close the Gap California, and as campaign manager for a state sente candidate. Prior to her work in politics, Sarah worked in management consulting and ecommerce general management. In most roles, Sarah’s responsibility has included P&L oversight, organizational development and optimizing operations for growth and efficiency.</p>
<p><u>Cathy Garrett</u> Facilitator, PGAdesign, Inc.</p> 	<p>Cathy is an award-winning landscape architect and president of PGAdesign with 39 years of experience in design and project management. Driven by a deep curiosity, she relishes understanding a place’s context—including its history, form, natural qualities, and human presence—to imbue her designs. She values creating spaces that draw people in and become places that build community resilience and hold importance in people’s lives. Open space projects comprise a robust array of Cathy’s myriad projects. She has prepared master plans, trailhead and trail plans, and cultural resource assessments for many preserves and parks.</p> <p>Cathy excels at facilitating conversations through community engagement. She helps build common ground between stakeholders, establishing meaningful sites within constraints that respect the site, integrate sustainability, and serve the entire community. Her focus is on active listening to find a shared understanding that advances an approach the community can set their positive energy behind.</p> <p>Natural places nourish Cathy at many scales, from the vastness of an ecosystem to that of mycology. She spends time in wild places, becoming acquainted with the patterns of natural systems which focus her attention on the constantly evolving natural forces that contribute to a place.</p>

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group
Town Ad Hoc/Town Council/PVR/Public Feedback Summary (Oct 2024 – Jan 2025)
Hawthorns Area Plan

Per PNR Committee guidance, Midpen staff presented the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (PAWG) recommendations to the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee and the Portola Valley Town Council for feedback. The meetings were held at the Portola Valley Town Center on October 23, 2024, and October 30, 2024 respectively, and were open to the public. Additionally, on January 16, 2025, Midpen staff presented the PAWG's recommendations and addressed questions and concerns at the Portola Valley Ranch (PVR) Homeowners Association's Fireside Chat.

The feedback summary below provides an overview of the input received during these meetings. Comments are grouped into four categories: feedback from the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee, the Portola Valley Town Council, the Portola Valley Ranch, and members of the public. Midpen staff organized the feedback within each group to align with the Board-approved project vision and goals. Individual public comments received during the period covered by this feedback summary are also included at the end of the document.

Key feedback themes included:

- 1) Desire to reduce the proposed 50 parking spaces and support for a phased approach starting with fewer spaces and expanding as needed
- 2) Concerns about potential overflow parking and traffic safety at driveway entrance locations
- 3) Support and opposition to potential trail connection to Sweet Springs Trail
- 4) Concerns from Portola Valley Ranch homeowners regarding potential viewshed, privacy, trespass, and trail use issues on Sweet Springs Trail
- 5) Concerns about potential effect of public access on natural resource values
- 6) Desire for a regional trail connection from Los Trancos Trail through Hawthorns Historic Complex
- 7) Concern about cost to the Town related to infrastructure improvements along Alpine Road and at driveway and street intersections

Town Hawthorns Ad Hoc Committee Feedback (by theme)

Natural Resources Protection

- Interest in minimizing tree removal
- Interest in soil cut and fill calculations

Driveway Access Point, Traffic Safety and Parking (Public Access)

- Support the idea of a phased approach to the 50 spaces parking area, starting with fewer spaces and then expanding as needed
- Support for parking option 10

Visitor Experience in The Preserve (Public Access)

- Potential to improve intersection safety at Portola Road and Alpine Road with option 10

Local and Regional Connectivity

- Support for phased approach to Sweet Springs trail connectivity, but 1) encourage to establish clear parameters about how and when the decision will be made for connectivity, and 2) support the overall direction as outlined in Portola Valley's General Plan regarding Trail connectivity
- Support and excitement for Alpine Road Trail improvements and trail's importance to community

Aesthetics

N/A

Operations and Maintenance

N/A

Other Considerations

- Support for alignment with the Conservation Easement
- Support for alignment with Portola Valley’s Municipal Code and General Plan
- Concern about the costs the Town may be responsible for regarding any improvements associated with the proposed parking
- Suggestion to slow down/delay the Area Plan until the intended usage of structures at the Historic Complex has been determined and can be incorporated
- Suggestion not to slow down project due to importance of Alpine Road Trail improvements to community
- Interest in bringing project to Architectural & Site Control Commission (ASCC) and Planning Commission

Town Council Feedback (by theme)

Natural Resources Protection

- Concern about the potential disruption to the wildlife corridor caused by the proposed parking options

Driveway Access Point, Traffic Safety and Parking (Public Access)

- Desire to reduce the proposed 50 parking spaces
- Concern about planning the number of parking spaces based on regional connections

Visitor Experience in The Preserve (Public Access)

- Concern about multi-use trail and trail user conflicts

Local and Regional Connectivity

- Desire for trail connection to Los Trancos Trail through Hawthorns Historic Complex project

Aesthetics

- Concern about proposed parking being visible and support for berm and screening

Operations and Maintenance

N/A

Other Considerations

- Importance of cost consciousness to the Town
- Suggestion to consider the impact of project with proposed housing units in the Town

Public Comments (by theme)

Natural Resources Protection

- Concern about soil types and geology
- Concern about tree removal

Driveway Access Point, Traffic Safety and Parking (Public Access)

- Concern about overflow parking to Alpine Road, nearby businesses and homes
- Request to update traffic data

Visitor Experience in The Preserve (Public Access)

- Concern about too many people on the trail and effect on visitor experience
- Concern about lack of parking for equestrians

Local and Regional Connectivity

- Opposition to any connection to Sweet Springs Trail

Aesthetics

- Opposition to trail segment #17 which is in the viewshed of neighboring homes
- Concern about parking in Alpine Road scenic corridor

Operations and Maintenance

N/A

Other Considerations

- Complement on the PAWG's work and the comprehensive and collaborative process
- Concern about conservation easement and whether proposed public access is in alignment
- Concern about overdevelopment (50 cars being too much)
- Concern about overflow of parking onto neighboring streets
- Concern about parking area being used by parents to pick up their children or bicyclists to ride up to Skyline Boulevard
- Concern about Sweet Springs Trail whose use is officially equestrian only and impact of a 50-car parking area
- Concern about the foot traffic's impact to Portola Valley Ranch privacy, opposition to a connection to Sweet Springs Trail, which originally was contemplated if the property had been developed to support 10 to 20 houses
- Concern about trash and patrol on Sweet Springs Trail and Town's ability to administer
- Concern about problems at other open space preserves
- Concern about cost to the Town
- Desire for Midpen to meet with and present project to Portola Valley Ranch community
- Concern about impact to Town's evacuation plan
- Concern about separating Hawthorns Area Plan project from Hawthorns Historic Complex project

Portola Valley Ranch Residents Feedback (by theme)

Natural Resources Protection

- Concern about the spread of invasive olive trees from Hawthorns onto neighboring properties
- Concern about trail segment #17 disrupting the existing grassland and wildlife

Driveway Access Point, Traffic Safety and Parking (Public Access)

- Concern about the number of proposed parking spaces, the size and "urban looking" design of the parking area
- Concern about planning the number of parking spaces and projected level of use when compared to other regional open space preserves (e.g. Arastradero Preserve, Windy Hill)
- Concern about the proposed entry at the Alpine Road and Portola Road intersection and potential safety concerns

Visitor Experience in The Preserve (Public Access)

- Concern about proposed bike use on Hawthorns trails
- Support for bike use within the Hawthorns Area

Local and Regional Connectivity

- Opposition to the potential trail connections to Sweet Springs Trail

Aesthetics

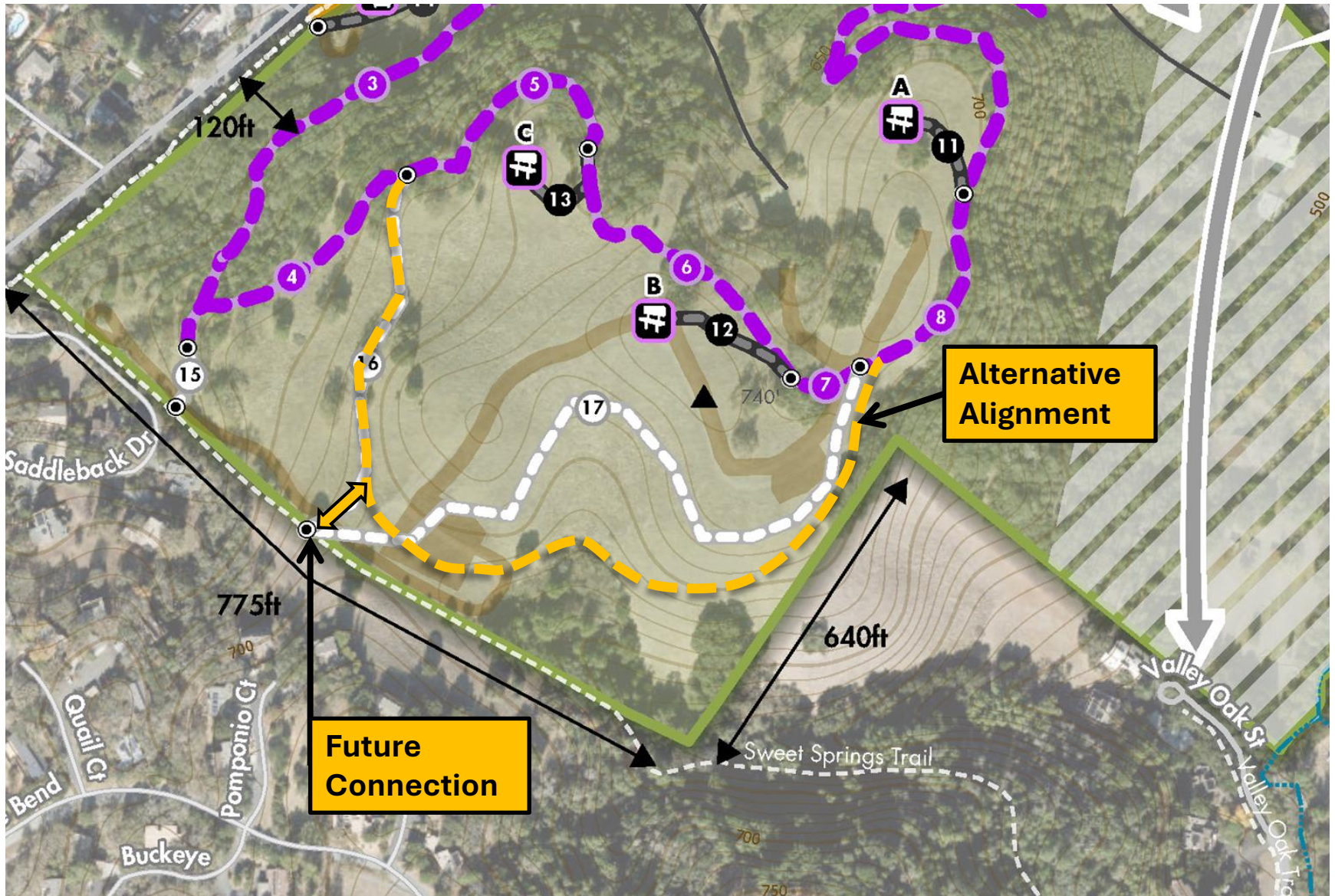
- Concern about proposed trail segments #16 and #17 in neighbors' viewsheds
- Concern about the potential connection to Sweet Springs Trail too close to private homes
- Concern about a signalized intersection appearing to be too "urban" for the town which intends to keep its rural character and only has two signalized intersections in the entire town

Operations and Maintenance

- Concern about trespassers from Hawthorns trails to Sweet Springs Trail
- Concern about off-trail use
- Desire to post signage to restrict public use of Sweet Springs Trail
- Concern about wildland fire resiliency

Other Considerations

- Encouragement for Midpen to plan for the long-term vision for trails
- Support for the proposed trails
- Suggestion to evaluate feasibility of a trail connection to Sweet Springs Trail further up the trail away from homes, at the corner of the Hawthorns property



PLANNING & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

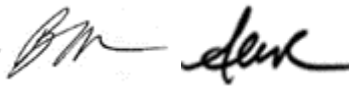
R-24-115
September 17, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 1

AGENDA ITEM

Hawthorns Area Plan – Public Access Working Group Recommendations

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS



1. Review and provide feedback on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group's (PAWG) recommendations.
2. Support the next step of presenting the recommendations with any modifications requested by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee, Portola Valley Town Council, and Portola Valley Planning Commission for feedback before bringing the PAWG recommendations and Town and public input to a Study Session of the Board of Directors. If supported, this next step will be communicated to the Board of Directors in an FYI Memorandum.

SUMMARY

In 2023, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) Board of Directors (Board) formed the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (PAWG), comprised of volunteer Ward Stakeholders and Interest Area Representatives as voting members and a Board Liaison and Town Liaison as non-voting members, to develop public access recommendations for the Hawthorns area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. The PAWG has concluded its work and is forwarding its public access recommendations to the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee for consideration. The recommendations include two parking area location options and a loop trail with trail connections to the Town of Portola Valley's (Town's) trails. The recommendations include bicycle, equestrian, dog-on-leash, and hiking access designations for each trail segment. Additionally, the recommendations are aligned with an existing conservation easement that overlays the property. The General Manager recommends that the PNR provide feedback on the PAWG's recommendations and support presenting the recommendations next to the Town (Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee, Planning Commission, and Town Council) for additional feedback, prior to bringing the item to the full Board at a subsequent Study Session for review and input.

DISCUSSION

In 2021, the District initiated the Hawthorns Area Plan project, a multiyear phased planning process for the 79-acre Hawthorns Area property, located within the Town. The Hawthorns Area

is governed by a conservation easement granted to the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), under which the District operates. This easement allows low intensity, ecologically sensitive recreation and defines limits on potential future development of the property. Guided by the easement's requirements, the PAWG's recommended parking options are located around the perimeter of the site's improved area and are also across from an already developed section of the Alpine Road corridor. On June 28, 2023 (R-23-75), the Board formed the PAWG to collaborate with the District on exploring ways to introduce public access to Hawthorns. The District held seven meetings, including two onsite from July 2023 to June 2024, to help the PAWG develop their recommendations.

During the Hawthorns Area Plan Phase 3: Programming/ Conceptual Planning, District staff worked with the PAWG to develop conceptual plan alternatives for ecologically sensitive public access and enjoyment that are informed by the existing conditions and aligned with the following key Board-approved parameters.

Board-approved Vision and Goals (Phase 1)

Hawthorns Area Vision Statement

The Hawthorns Area offers picturesque views of rolling oak grasslands and the Santa Cruz Mountains, provides important wildlife refuge, and reflects the region's natural, agricultural, and social history. The District will protect and manage natural, scenic, cultural, and open space resources at the Hawthorns Area and provide ecologically sensitive public access consistent with the District's mission and the allowable uses outlined in the property's conservation easement.

Hawthorns Area Goals

- Protect and restore native habitat and manage for ecological resiliency of aquatic and terrestrial habitat, wildlife connectivity, and other natural resources.
- Open the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity public access, provide an internal trail system, and provide multi-modal access to the property.
- Connect to adjacent public trails and explore opportunities for trail connections to regional open space lands.
- Interpret the rich natural, cultural, and historic features and pursue partnerships to manage the property's natural and cultural history.
- Highlight scenic viewpoints and design recreational amenities while protecting scenic viewsheds.
- Manage the property for safe public access in a fiscally sustainable manner that promotes ongoing public support and appreciation with ongoing public engagement and consistent with the District's Good Neighbor Policy.

Board-approved Public Access Framework (Phase 2)

The PAWG received a Public Access Framework (PAF) (**Attachment 10**) developed during the existing conditions phase of the project that outlined specific natural resource and land management considerations related to public access. The PAF guided and informed the PAWG's exploration and evaluation of parking and trail options on the topics of natural resources (vegetation, wildlife, aquatic, wildfire resiliency), cultural resources (Native American resources, historic complex), aesthetic resources (viewsheds, scenic corridor), public access (public use, trail, driveways, parking, site amenities, signage), and operations and maintenance (gates and

fencing, staff residence, roads and trails, safety and security, utilities, environmental hazards, legal arrangements, partnerships).

PAWG and Conceptual Planning (Phase 3)

Based on the PAF, natural resources protection has been a key focus throughout the PAWG process. At the December 16, 2023 meeting, PAWG members had a robust conversation on the various proposed driveway access points on Alpine Road and the extent of parking being introduced into the meadows. The District's Natural Resources staff provided a comprehensive analysis of proposed parking options 4 through 6, which are based on the District's Basic Policy and Resource Management Policies. This analysis played an important role in shaping the PAWG's final recommendations.

Table 1 below provides a general overview of the PAWG meeting schedule, topics and agenda packet materials. For more details of the PAWG process, meetings, public comments, and recommendations, refer to **Attachments 1 through 9**.

Table 1 – Hawthorns Area PAWG Meeting Schedule and Topics

Date and Location	Topics
July 27, 2023 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 1: Kickoff Established Working Group roles, goals, workplan, schedule, and operating procedures. Received public feedback. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
August 26, 2023 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Hawthorns Site	Meeting 2: Site meeting Conducted in-person site meeting and reviewed existing site conditions. Received public feedback. RSVPs were requested for planning logistics. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
October 26, 2023 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 3: Preliminary design discussion PAWG discussed and provided input on draft parking and driveway design options 1 through 4, as well as internal connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Received public feedback. Selected two co-chairs. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
December 16, 2023 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 4: Continuation of preliminary design discussion PAWG continued discussion on initial conceptual design alternatives, including parking and driveway options 4 through 6, internal trail system and connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Received public feedback. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)
February 29, 2024 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. District Office	Meeting 5: Continuation of December 16, 2023 design discussion PAWG discussed updated conceptual design alternatives, including parking and driveway options 7 and 8, internal trail system and connections, trailheads, trail uses, and local and regional connectivity opportunities. Conducted informal voting and assessed initial recommendations on all public access components. Received public feedback. (agenda packet , meeting minutes)

<p>March 24, 2024 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Hawthorns Site</p>	<p>Meeting 6: Site meeting and design discussion PAWG reviewed and discussed conceptual parking design options 7 through 9a on site. Received public feedback. RSVPs were requested for planning logistics. (agenda packet, meeting minutes)</p>
<p>June 13, 2024 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. District Office</p>	<p>Meeting 7: Discuss and confirm recommendation PAWG discussed design options 7 through 10 and finalized recommendations on conceptual trail alignment, trail uses, opportunities for regional trail connections, and conceptual parking alternatives to forward to the District’s PNR Committee and subsequently to the Board for consideration. Received public feedback. (agenda packet, draft meeting minutes – refer to Attachment 5)</p>

PAWG Recommendations

At the June 13, 2024 PAWG meeting, the voting results showed a consensus among the 13 voting members of the PAWG. The PAWG members raised topics for discussion as each voting item was brought up and indicated when clarifications or considerations related to their votes should be shared with the PNR. The final voting included the following public access components:

- Internal trail system
- Trail connections with surrounding Town trails
- Opportunities for regional trail connections
- Proposed trail uses within the Hawthorns Area
- Concept parking designs

The PAWG’s voting resulted in the following recommendations that are now before the PNR Committee for consideration. The PAWG’s recommendations below include information regarding their support and opposition to various public access elements within each category, as well as additional considerations the PAWG wanted shared with the PNR. For the detailed breakdown of voting results, see **Attachment 5A**. Refer to **Attachment 4** for numbering of trail segments and conceptual parking options.

1. Internal Trail System

- Support for internal loop trail alignment and spur trails (segments 2 – 9, 11, 12 and 13)
- Support for benches at all viewpoints. Bench A facing northeast, bench B facing northwest, and bench C facing northwest.

2. Trail Connections with Surrounding Town Trails and Pathways

- Support for connections to Alpine Trail (segments 1, 10 and 14)
- Opposition to connection to Sweet Springs Trail by Saddleback Drive (segment 15)
- Suggestion to re-evaluate and decide whether to build connector trail to Sweet Springs Trail after monitoring trail usage following the preserve's opening (segments 16 and 17)*
- Additional considerations to share with PNR:

- Adjust the western end of loop trail segment 3 to be positioned further away from Portola Valley Ranch, if feasible
 - If there is any connection to Sweet Springs Trail, desire to move it farther northwest and away from Pomponio Court Trail that currently connects to Sweet Springs Trail
3. Opportunities for Regional Trail Connections Beyond Town Trails
- Support for future regional trail connection to Los Trancos Trail
 - Support for future regional trail connection to Arastradero Preserve and Foothills Nature Preserve
4. Proposed Trail Uses
- Support for hiking, dogs-on-leash, equestrian use, and bicycle use on internal loop trail, spur trails and connections to Alpine Trail (segments 1 – 14)
 - Support for hiking, dogs-on-leash, and equestrian uses only on connections to Sweet Springs Trail, if any of the connections are built – opposition to bicycle use (segments 16 and 17). Although not recommended, if Segment 15 is pursued, the PAWG also opposes bicycle use on this segment.
 - Additional considerations to share with PNR:
 - Allowing bicycle use on the Alpine Trail segments that currently don't allow bicycles, that connect to the proposed connector trails (segments 10 and 14), requires Town approval
5. Conceptual Parking Designs (for details of conceptual parking design process, see **Attachment 2**)
- Support for both conceptual parking options 9 and 10, with a greater level of support for option 10
 - Support for an upper limit of 50 parking spaces
 - Support for a phased approach, if feasible
 - Additional considerations to share with PNR:
 - Attaching PAWG assessment of conceptual parking design options with the preferred conceptual parking options 9 and 10 (**Attachment 5C**).

*Note: further evaluation of the allowable trail uses of the connecting Sweet Springs Trail and the feasibility of implementing Segments 16 and 17 is needed. Therefore, through a majority vote, the PAWG recommends a ***phased approach*** for Segments 16 and 17 whereby these segments would be reevaluated as part of a future phase, after Hawthorns is opened to the public and the interior trail usage and connecting Sweet Springs Trail uses can be further evaluated.

The PAWG worked diligently and respectfully to fulfill its charge over the year-long process. They gathered, considered and generated a substantial amount of information, including new parking area options for the overall PAWG evaluation. Ultimately, this group, representing both local and regional constituencies of the entire District, developed a strategic approach for providing low intensity and ecologically sensitive public access to the Hawthorns property.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommended action has no immediate fiscal impact. Implementation schedules and cost estimates for planning, design and construction will be developed at later date once the Board reviews and approves the elements of the public access plan for the Hawthorns Area. This information will then be used to inform the development of future annual Budgets and Action Plans.

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio #06 *Windy Hill: Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership* allocation, costs-to-date, projected future project expenditures and projected ending balance at the portfolio level.

MAA06 Windy Hill—Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 08/12//24):	(\$417,971)
Encumbrances:	(\$152,706)
Remaining FY25 Project Budgets:	(\$75,955)
Future MAA06 project costs (projected through FY28):	(\$309,113)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$955,745)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$11,784,255

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio #06 *Windy Hill: Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership* allocation, costs-to-date, projected life-to-date project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA06 Windy Hill—Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	
06-002 Hawthorns Area Plan	(\$955,745)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$955,745)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$11,784,255

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

- **May 18, 2021:** Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) received an informational presentation on the proposed planning and public engagement process for the Hawthorns Area Plan and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-65](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **August 24, 2021:** PNR reviewed the proposed draft vision and goals and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-112](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **November 16, 2021:** PNR reviewed the revised vision and goals and draft public access working group strategy and provided further refinements. PNR unanimously recommended forwarding the refined vision and goal statements to the full Board for consideration. ([R-21-156](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 1, 2022:** PNR reviewed the proposed planning and public engagement process to develop the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-29](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 23, 2022:** Board reviewed and approved the Vision and Goals for the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-45](#), [meeting minutes](#))

- **July 13, 2022:** Board approved the award of contract with Parisi Transportation Consulting to provide transportation planning services for the Hawthorns Area Plan ([R-22-81](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 21, 2023:** PNR reviewed the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition and formation strategy. ([R-23-35](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **April 26, 2023:** Board reviewed and approved the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition as well as recruitment and formation strategy. ([R-23-44](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **June 21, 2023:** Board interviewed ten candidates by the Hawthorns Area Ad Hoc Committee and select six individuals to fill the Interest Area Representative seats on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group. ([R-23-69](#), [no meeting minute taken for the interviews](#))
- **June 28, 2023:** Board Appointed members to serve on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group. ([R-23-75](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **August 9, 2023:** Board approved the award of contract with CSW|ST2 to provide preliminary site plan and conceptual design services for the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-23-78](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **February 14, 2024:** Board approved the amendment of contracts with Parametrix (transportation consultant, formerly Parisi Transportation Consulting) and PGAdesign (PAWG facilitator). ([R-24-17](#), [meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Environmental review for the Hawthorns Area Plan is anticipated to occur in a future fiscal year, pending Board approval of the public access elements to include as part of the CEQA Project Description. Environmental review would begin once the project description is further defined and approved by the Board.

NEXT STEPS

If supported by the PNR, the General Manager will direct the District project team to present PAWG's recommendations to the Town Ad Hoc Committee, Town Council, and the Planning Commission for feedback. This would be followed by a presentation to the full Board of Directors of both the PAWG recommendations and Town feedback at a future Study Session. At a public meeting following the Study Session, the Board will make final policy decisions informed by input from the PAWG, PNR, Town, key stakeholders and the public to determine which options to incorporate into the final Hawthorns Area Plan and advance to the environmental review phase per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Tentative Project Timelines

Calendar Year	Hawthorns Area Plan Phase
2023-2025	Develop Programming and Conceptual Planning, Public Access Working Group and Board approval
2025-2026	Prepare Hawthorns Area Plan
2026-2027	Conduct CEQA environmental review
2027-TBD	Implementation (design development, permitting, bidding and construction)

Attachments

1. Hawthorns Area PAWG - Draft Recommendations Report and Summary of Process
2. Hawthorns Area Concept Parking Design - Draft Summary Report
3. Hawthorns Area Transportation Study
4. Hawthorns Area Concept Trail Design
5. June 13, 2024 Draft PAWG Meeting #7 Summary
 - A. PAWG Meeting #7 Voting Results
 - B. PAWG meeting #7 Photographs of Voting
 - C. Summary of PAWG Assessment of Conceptual Parking Design Options
6. Public Comments and PAWG Communications Summary
 - A. Written Public Comments
7. PAWG Workflow and Public Engagement Opportunities
8. Planning Projects within Hawthorns Property
9. PAWG Individual Assessment of Concept Parking Design Options
10. Hawthorns Area Public Access Framework

Responsible Department Head:
Jane Mark, Planning Department

Prepared by:
Ashley Mac, Planner III, Planning Department
Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, Planning Department

Contact person:
Ashley Mac, Planner III, Planning Department
Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, Planning Department



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

**MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office
5050 El Camino Real
Los Altos, CA 94022

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

APPROVED MINUTES*

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kersteen-Tucker called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 1:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker

Members absent: None

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Stephanie Gross, Senior Planner Tina Hugg, Planner III Ashley Mac,

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Holman moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

* Approved by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee on January 8, 2025.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS**1. Hawthorns Area Plan – Public Access Working Group Recommendations (R-24-115)**

Senior Planner Tina Hugg introduced Planner III Ashley Mac, who is also co-managing the project, along with the team's consultants, Traffic Engineer Andrew Lee from Parametrix and Landscape Architect Paul Stevenson from CSW|ST2. Also in attendance were the two co-chairs Helen Quinn and Rachel Oslund. She reported that the Public Access Working Group (PAWG) held their last meeting on June 13, 2024 and staff is requesting for the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (Committee) to approve their last meeting summary, which both PAWG co-chairs reviewed.

Motion: Director Gleason moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to approve the June 13, 2024, PAWG meeting summary.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

Ms. Hugg continued the presentation and provided a project overview. The project is located at the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve in the Town of Portola Valley (Town). The property consists of 79 acres and is surrounded by commercial and residential properties. The Hawthorns Area has been closed to the public since the District received the property in 2011 and is subject to a conservation easement held by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) that seeks to protect the property's natural and conservation values by establishing development parameters, which guide how to provide public access. She stated that the purpose of the Hawthorns Area Plan is to provide a comprehensive use and management plan that prescribes long-term uses for the land and resource management activities and establishes a pathway towards opening the property to public access. Ms. Hugg then reviewed the project's five phases, the vision, the six Board-approved goals, and the PAWG's formation and process, including their purpose and charge. She stated that staff is looking to attain the Committee's direction and guidance for the next steps, which would be for staff to present to the Town of Portola Valley, including the Town's Ad Hoc Committee and a joint meeting of the Town Planning Commission and Town Council. Staff would then return at a study session of the Board to present the PAWG's recommendations along with the Committee's and Town's feedback. The Board would then make the final policy decision on the conceptual designs at a future meeting.

Ms. Mac continued the presentation and provided an overview of the year-long process of the seven PAWG meetings. She shared the PAWG's recommendations include two parking area location options and a loop trail with trail connections to the Town trails. The recommendations include bicycle, equestrian, dog-on-leash, and hiking access designations for each trail segment. Additionally, the recommendations are aligned with an existing conservation easement that overlays the property. She pointed out that the section of the Alpine Trail segment along the Hawthorns property does not allow bikes, and that Town approval would be required to change the use on the trail and close the gap on this Safe Route to School. Ms. Mac further explained that the PAWG recommended a phased approach to re-evaluate trail segments 16 and 17 in the future, after the Hawthorns is open to the public and the level of usage levels is assessed. If either of segments 16 or 17 connections to Sweet Springs Trail are built, the PAWG recommends all uses excepts bikes. Permission to connect to the Sweet Springs Trail would need concurrence with the Portola Valley Ranch community and involvement of the Town. In addition, the PAWG

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recommends two parking alternatives - options 9 and 10, and supports up to 50 parking spaces and a phased approach if it is feasible. Ms. Mac reported that the PAWG evaluated parking options 1-4 and 5-8. Staff heard that traffic safety, natural resources considerations, and aesthetics were the main priorities of the PAWG, which led to options 9 and 10.

Director Gleason asked to clarify what can or cannot be done with the conservation easement in regard to parking option 10 and tree removal.

Ms. Mac explained that POST confirmed that the PAWG's recommendations align with the intent of the conservation easement. With this confirmation, Option 10 was discussed and ultimately selected. She noted that in the next phase of design, consultants will study tree removal in more detail.

Director Gleason asked whether the inclusion of bikes on Alpine Trail is something that the Town would independently want to do.

Ms. Hugg stated that the Town has indicated a desire for the trail to become a safe route for school children.

Director Holman inquired whether the parking options 9 or 10 could be shifted to the west to avoid some tree removal.

Mr. Stevenson responded that grading will still be needed for the driveway if the parking shifts over. Further study is needed to determine if it is possible to reduce the number of trees removed.

Director Holman requested more information on how the number of 50 parking stalls was determined.

Mr. Lee explained that parking counts were conducted at seven other nearby preserves and trailheads. Based on the amount of occupancy during the weekdays and weekends, the relative size of the preserves and types of uses that are allowed, it was estimated a range between 25 to 68 parking spaces would be needed. Since parking demand largely depend on time of day, day of the week, and season, 50 parking spaces was selected as an approximate midpoint number. In addition, due to its connectivity to regional trails, there will be opportunities to hike beyond Hawthorns.

Director Holman voiced her preference not to have any retaining walls.

Chair Kersteen-Tucker asked about visibility from Alpine Road and also if Parking Option 10 could be moved to remove less trees.

Mr. Stevenson noted that Option 10 would be less visible, and landforms would partially hide the parking area. There may be tradeoffs if the parking is moved, as it will shift into the knoll area, where there is steeper grading and a potential for walls. Further study is needed.

Director Gleason asked if the Board at the upcoming spring meeting would decide on staged implementation of parking. For example, to build 35 parking spaces with the capacity to increase to 50.

Ms. Hugg confirmed but cautioned that for CEQA purposes the full amount would be studied. In addition, it would be shared with the Town to show the phased approach.

General Manager Ana Ruiz added that the Town may have requirements for the number of parking spaces needed due to their concerns regarding parking and possible overflow parking impacts to Alpine Road and the commercial area across the street.

Director Holman asked if there was any discussion about forgoing parking and allowing walk-in, bike-in, or ride-in access only and suggested that the money saved from not building the parking lot could be allocated towards monitoring Alpine Road and monitoring parking for the businesses so that they are not impacted.

Ms. Hugg confirmed there was a discussion, and comments were received both in favor of and against parking.

Ms. Ruiz added that there are concerns from residents, including those from the Portola Valley Ranch community, about people parking within their area and streets, and noted that if there is no parking for people who drive in, it will likely impact the local residents.

Director Holman asked if there was discussion about sharing parking facilities with Alpine Hills Tennis and Swimming Club.

Planning Manager Jane Mark reported that staff reached out to Alpine Hills Tennis and Swimming Club to inquire if the District could stage parking for a tour of the Hawthorn Area and the request was denied. However, the question has not been asked to use it for long-term parking.

Ms. Quinn stated the problem with Alpine Hills Tennis and Swimming Club is that it has the same peak use times as the preserve. It is often not at capacity, but it is at capacity on Saturday and Sunday mornings when people visit the preserve. She explained that the PAWG suggested 50 parking spaces due to pressure from the Town with the concern about overflow and noted that the preserve is not just for the people who live in Portola Valley, but it is a preserve for the region and therefore it needs parking for those out of the region. This was discussed at the PAWG, and the idea of no parking was rejected for that reason.

Director Holman commented she was pleased that the PAWG selected options 9 and 10 since the other recommendations were not as attractive.

Public comment opened at 2:07 p.m.

Dave Polkinhorne voiced his concern that POST accepted to modify the easement for the parking. He requested clarification on the legal process of any modifications to the easement, including if there is a public review period, and who approves such changes. He also noted that his preliminary review of the easement suggests that grading and tree removal are prohibited and emphasized the importance of fully adhering to the easement terms. He expressed concern over adapting the site and making it available for everyone, and that design decisions should respect the site's limitations and that the primary goal should not be to bend it to adjust it for some, even if that means limited or no parking options.

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Chair Kersteen-Tucker asked staff for clarification on the notion of bending or flexing the conservation easement.

Ms. Hugg stated that POST is not amending the conservation easement. They are reviewing the PAWG recommendations in alignment with the conservation easement's intent. The conservation easement allows for public access and recreation.

John Keller, speaking as the President of the Portola Valley Ranch Association (Ranch) that borders the west edge of Hawthorns and abuts a large part of the property along Sweet Springs Trail, commented that he convened a special meeting of his Board to elicit comments from the residents and his Board on the two parking proposals. Resident concerns largely focus on safety, given the area's heavy traffic, especially at the nearby busy intersection. In his opinion, the entry point at what is the current three-way intersection is particularly unsafe for a variety of reasons and emphasized that safety should be prioritized in any decision-making.

Duf Sundheim, Vice-President of the Ranch, commented that the Ranch spoke about their concerns that legal rights need to be addressed and noted that there is considerable resident opposition. The Ranch seeks to understand the rules and laws pertaining to the project. He pointed out that there is a fence between the Hawthorns and the Ranch and that there is no access from the Hawthorns to the Ranch without the Ranch's consent. Additionally, the trail is designated for only equestrian use, and if the Town wishes to modify the terms of the easement, that land is owned by the Ranch and an easement was granted to the Town. He spoke about his concerns about the easement's maintenance requirements, which have not been kept by the Town. There are also insurance requirements, and the Ranch has not been provided with any proof that the insurance is intact. He stated that the Ranch would like to be cooperative and be engaged. Lastly, he stressed that Roberts Market has not been contacted and this project will directly affect them.

Chair Kersteen-Tucker asked when and how additional stakeholder engagement will happen.

Ms. Hugg stated that the PAWG and project team received public comments during the PAWG's meetings to help develop the current options presented to the Committee. However, the PAWG's recommendations are only ideas at the moment and the project team needs input and guidance from the Committee on these recommendations before continuing engagement efforts with the community and Town.

Charles Maroney, a Portola Valley Ranch resident, reported that he organized a petition signed by 95 Ranch residents opposing connections to Sweet Springs Trail. He noted that trail segment 17 passes through a viewshed visible to a dozen private homes, with clear sightlines between the homes and the trail. He suggested the Committee walk this segment to observe the visibility issues. He also expressed concern about the high volume of users on Sweet Springs Trail.

Due to technical issues, the Committee recessed at 2:26 p.m. and reconvened at 2:35 p.m.

Kristi Corley spoke about her concerns that residents have a single road in Portola Valley on Alpine Road for evacuations either for wildfire or an earthquake. She emphasized that Alpine Road has a 75-foot scenic setback requirement and noted that the proposed parking is placed only 60 feet back, requesting further explanation on the setback and if it has been approved by the Town. She commented the community's preference for natural views over visible parking

spaces and stressed the importance of effective screening. She also expressed concern over the increase from 35 to 50 parking spaces, noting that added traffic could increase their existing evacuation issue. She also referenced Windy Hill's parking lot and suggested having a permeable surface because the pavement runoff could impact Los Trancos Creek.

Karen Askey, a Portola Valley resident as well as PAWG member, asked for clarification if the upcoming Study Session would take place with the three bodies (Portola Valley Town Council, Planning Commission and the Town Hawthorns Ad Hoc Committee) meeting together or separately and whether the dates have been set for these meetings. She also requested to incorporate a design on the Alpine Trail widening, illustrating how that would work when presenting to the Town. She expressed her concerns about the parking constraints in Portola Valley due to the success of the Alpine Inn and Windy Hill, which has caused overflow of parking which the residents are extremely sensitive about. There have been a number of safety issues that have already occurred. She also noted that the Alpine Hill Tennis and Swimming Club has increased membership and number of events. Their parking lot is full in the summer, and they do use the lot for overflow parking.

Chair Kersteen-Tucker asked if staff would like to address the questions asked.

Ms. Hugg explained the meetings will be held separately and staff is working with the Town to schedule the meetings. Regarding Alpine Road Trail, it needs to be discussed with the Town. It is in early planning stages, and while initial ideas have been explored with the PAWG, no formal alignment has been drawn. She stated that the Town liaison Sarah Wernikoff confirmed that Town's 75-foot scenic setback only applies to structures, like restrooms, and that the setback does not apply to pavement portions of parking areas.

Dave Polkinhorne asked who makes the deciding vote if the District and the Town reaches an impasse and asked for the process to be explained.

General Counsel Hilary Stevenson highlighted that the District has a longstanding history of successfully working with local jurisdictions across two counties and 17 cities to complete permitting for various projects, including parking lots, facilities and other amenities. She noted that while the District is an independent special district with authority to manage its lands, it collaborates closely with the relevant cities and counties to meet their permitting requirements. She expressed confidence that, based on past experience, the District and the Town would be able to reach an agreement without needing arbitration.

Chair Kersteen-Tucker acknowledged the concern raised and commented that the Board aims to avoid any situations that would require escalation. She noted that one reason for convening a PAWG is to foster collaboration and ensure the District remains a good neighbor. The District values community input and is committed to developing plans, designs, and projects that accommodate the needs of as many people as possible.

Lana Norris spoke about her concerns that what is being considered does not comply with the terms of the easement. She iterated from a previous commenter that tree and grading are prohibited by the terms of the easement and noted that both options 9 and 10 would require grading. She inquired how this came about since POST does not have the authority to waive any specific elements of the easement and requested clarification on how the District attained

POST's approval. She spoke about the PAWG voting process and noted that a PAWG member voted neutral for segment 4 and that the process was allowed to go forward, therefore there was no majority support for segments 16 and 17 and asked to take this into consideration when looking at the numbers.

Chair Kersteen-Tucker asked staff if they would like to address the public's comments about the easement, tree removal and trail segments 16 and 17.

Ms. Stevenson stated that the conservation easement was granted with a clear intention to allow public access, including provisions for a parking lot, as outlined in the easement document. This reflects the original intentions of the easement. The District and POST have conferred and cooperated throughout the process, and he is confident that the plans being presented align with the intent of the conservation easement.

Ms. Ruiz stated that if the Board includes trail segments 16 and 17 now as part of a future phase, the required CEQA environmental review can cover them. This approach would not guarantee implementation but would leave the option open, contingent on further checkpoints and agreements.

Chair Kersteen-Tucker asked her colleagues if they are comfortable with the recommendation of the PAWG or if there are any other checks that they may want to put on any future approvals of the two trail segments if they are brought into existence, noting that she was comfortable with the recommendation.

Director Gleason commented that it may be difficult to make a decision on the proposed connections at this time. Without clear data on how many people might use the trail, especially the connection to the Sweet Springs trail. He agreed with the Ms. Ruiz's suggestion to include these segments in the environmental review as a potential future phase. This approach would not commit the District to any immediate action but would provide valuable information for future decision-making. He supported the recommendation, emphasizing the need for more data before making a final decision.

Director Holman stated that she is also comfortable with the recommendation and requested for staff to conduct additional research for when this item is presented to the Board to see if there is any place in Portola Valley that is within a reasonable distance for shared parking opportunities. Additionally, she would like to have noted that the retaining walls are a placeholder and not assumed, and that they will be addressed in the future.

Ms. Nelson informed Chair Kersteen-Tucker that there was an additional online comment and asked if she would allow it. Chair Kersteen-Tucker and the other Directors allowed the comment.

Ms. Corley commented that she forwarded Ms. Hugg a C/CAG traffic report that was conducted for Portola Valley and Alpine Road. She inquired if the reason why the trees removal is necessary is for fire truck turnaround. Additionally, she noted that equestrians have been requesting for horses to be allowed on the trails, but have yet to see any access for horses, and noted that the community is also asking for an off-leash dog area. She pointed out that Option 10 would go through the school routes and school children will be walking past that driveway and

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believes it is important to continue talking with the Town. Lastly, she suggested that the District should hold another entire town meeting to provide an update.

Public comment closed at 3:10 p.m.

Chair Kersteen-Tucker asked for staff to provide Ms. Corley responses to her questions offline.

Director Gleason recommended that staff present all of the safety information to the Board at the study session, including the recent public comments and questions. He noted that each option likely has aspects which raise safety concerns and it would be easier for the Board to consider as a whole to understand the full context and how each safety concern relates to the other options. He also asked in the future to consider the methodology of voting and how the neutral votes are counted or not counted.

Motion: Director Gleason moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to approve the next step of presenting the recommendations with any modifications requested by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to the Portola Valley Ad Hoc Hawthorns Committee, Portola Valley Town Council, and Portola Valley Planning Commission for feedback before bringing the PAWG recommendations and Town and public input to a Study Session of the Board of Directors. If supported, this next step will be communicated to the Board of Directors in an FYI Memorandum.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kersteen-Tucker adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 3:16 p.m.

Stephanie Gross, Deputy District Clerk
Maria Soria, District Clerk