



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

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

Administrative Office
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022

**Tuesday, September 17, 2019
1:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kishimoto called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at to order at 1:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Karen Holman and Yoriko Kishimoto

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, and District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Senior Resource Management Specialist Julie Andersen, Planner III Aaron Peth

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No speakers present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

VOTE: 3-0-0

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the August 13, 2019 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Minutes

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Chair Holman seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the August 13, 2019 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting.

VOTE: 3-0-0

2. Highway 17 Crossings Alternatives, Caltrans Project Study Report, Environmental Review, Public Outreach and Funding (R-19-124)

Senior Resource Management Specialist Julie Andersen provided an overview of the project, including purpose and goals, public meetings held throughout the project, and the Caltrans process being followed.

Randy Anderson, project manager with District consultant Trail People described the reasons behind the recommendation for two separate structures for wildlife and trail crossings and the rankings of the various crossing alternatives.

Ms. Andersen described the two wildlife crossings recommended for further study, related limitations for each alternative, and estimated costs.

Planner III Aaron Peth described the two trail crossings recommended for further study, related limitations for each alternative, and estimated costs. Mr. Peth described the benefits of each recommended alternative, including connections to existing trails, such as the Ridge and Los Gatos Creek Trails, and public and partner support.

Ms. Andersen described wildlife fencing needed for either wildlife crossing to direct wildlife to the crossing and will require monitoring and adaptive management.

Ms. Andersen describing the conclusion for Phase I (project initiation) of the project and the next phase (environmental review) of the project and the proposed future outreach and funding approaches for the project.

Director Holman inquired regarding funding support from Caltrans.

Ms. Andersen reported Caltrans cannot allocate any funding until after Phase II is complete. Potential funding opportunities have been identified and may be further explored following environmental review. Also the District plans to request Caltrans own the structures.

Director Holman inquired who would be monitoring and funding wildlife fencing.

Ms. Andersen reported that unfortunately the responsibility has not yet been identified and cannot be finalized until after the project has been fully defined. Staff has already begun to identify options and potential agencies or partners that may monitor and maintain the fencing.

Chair Kishimoto suggested including the January 2019 feasibility report when the item is presented to the Board of Directors.

Chair Kishimoto inquired regarding the lighting on the trail crossing.

Ms. Andersen reported Caltrans requires lighting, but the lighting will be selected to reduce the environmental impact.

Public comment opened at 1:48 p.m.

Tiffany Yap with the Center for Biological Diversity spoke favor of the wildlife crossing to promote wildlife connectivity, support genetic diversity, and increase safety for wildlife and humans.

Ross Heitkamp spoke in favor of the potential southern crossing and its ability to provide additional trail connection options.

Public comment closed at 1:52 p.m.

Director Holman inquired regarding a potential completion date and suggested seeking support from the state legislature to expedite the project.

Ms. Andersen reported that the anticipated completion date is 2024, barring unanticipated delays. The District is working through the process with its partners as quickly as possible.

Director Holman suggesting including additional maps with the report when it is presented to the Board and using more varied colors to help readers differentiate among the potential trail routes.

Motion: Director Holman moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to:

1. Forward the following recommended actions to the full Board of Directors for their consideration:
 - a. Delegate General Manager authorization to approve the final Caltrans Project Study Report - Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) document.
 - b. Approve the proposed approach for project environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate highway crossing alternatives (for wildlife and trail use).
 - c. Adopt a Resolution authorizing the General Manager to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans to begin the Caltrans Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED) for the proposed project.
2. Review and provide feedback on the proposed public outreach and regional partners funding plan.

VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kishimoto adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 1:59 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk