



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

**La Honda Creek Parking Feasibility Study
Public Access Working Group Meeting**

**La Honda Elementary School
450 Sears Ranch Rd
La Honda, CA 94020**

**October 19, 2019
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

MEETING SUMMARY

ROLL CALL

Chair Barbara Hooper called the meeting of the La Honda Public Access Working Group to order at 9:00 a.m.

PAWG Members Present (✓) or Absent (*):

Board Directors (Non-Voting Members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Curt Riffle, Ward 4 ✓ Larry Hassett, Ward 6
Working Group Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lou Bordi, Ward 6 Representative ✓ Ari Delay, La Honda Community Representative ✓ Art Heinrich, Ward 2 Representative ✓ Barbara Hooper, Ward 6 Representative ✓ Karl Lusebrink, La Honda Community Representative ✓ Kathleen Moazed, La Honda Community Representative ✓ Melany Moore, Ward 1 Representative ✓ Denise Phillips, Ward 7 Representative ✓ Andie Reed, Ward 5 Representative * Sandy Sommer, Ward 4 Representative ✓ Willie Wool, Ward 3 Representative

District Staff Present:

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| ✓ Ana Ruiz, General Manager | ✓ Korrine Skinner, Public Affairs Manager |
| ✓ Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager | ✓ Michael Jurich, Land & Facilities Manager |
| ✓ Jane Mark, Planning Manager | ✓ Aaron Peth, Planner III |
| ✓ Tina Hugg, Senior Planner | ✓ Xucan Zhou, Planner II |
| ✓ Melissa Borgesi, Planner I | ✓ Chris Barresi, Area Superintendent |
| ✓ Luke Mulhall, Planning Administrative Assistant | ✓ Haven Lund, Ranger |

MIG Consultants: Lou Hexter, Ana Padilla

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

WORKING GROUP BUSINESS

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to approve the September 12, 2019 La Honda Public Access Working Group (PAWG or WG) meeting summary. The PAWG requested that contextual language be added to Ms. Moazed’s comments describing the community’s passion to preserve the Red Barn site. Ms. Wool moved to approve the summary with the suggested additional context; Ms. Moore seconded. The WG unanimously approved the motion.

<p>Approving the September 12, 2019, PAWG Meeting Summary, as amended</p>	<p>Ayes (11) - Lou Bordi, Ari Delay, Art Heinrich, Barbara Hooper, Karl Lusebrink, Kathleen Moazed, Melany Moore, Andie Reed, Denise Phillips, Willie Wool Noes (0) Abstentions (0) Absent (1) - Sandy Sommer Non -Voting (2) - Curt Riffle, Larry Hassett</p>
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Planner I Melissa Borgesi explained the purpose of the tour is for members to observe each of the three potential public access sites (Attachment 2). PAWG members were instructed to record their observations according to the project objectives and criteria on a provided worksheet.

Senior Planner Tina Hugg explained the tour logistics and route, which includes stops at the Sears Ranch Road trailhead area, the Red Barn area, and the Event Center (formerly Driscoll Ranch).

General Manager Ana Ruiz reviewed the project goals and objectives.

At the Sears Ranch Road trailhead area, the PAWG drove a loop within the existing parking lot and noted potential expansion opportunities there. The group proceeded about one mile into the preserve, stopping at the “former residence/dog kennel” area for observations about possible development of parking and trailhead infrastructure there.

At the Red Barn area, the PAWG viewed two locations: one just beyond the existing ranger residence north of the Red Barn and another in the area west and downslope of the Red Barn. At each location, District staff described site constraints and opportunities and highlighted the need for working with the grazing tenant to ensure continued grazing operations with minimal impacts, among other issues. One member reminded fellow PAWG members that the site tour is a time for members to observe and gather information rather than to share opinions or advocate for a particular site.

At the Event Center (formerly Driscoll Ranch) at the southernmost end of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Preserve), the group walked through the tunnel under Highway 84 and viewed the connection to the equestrian trail that leads to the Harrington Creek Trail in the lower Preserve.

While traveling to each site, District staff answered basic questions about the preserve and distinguished which land is owned by the District and which is privately-held. Staff shared the questions and responses at each site, and that list is included as Attachment 1 to this summary.

Following the tour, the group returned to La Honda Elementary School for a debrief. The PAWG members shared their initial impressions of the site visits. One PAWG member expressed that the site visit should be seen as an opportunity to objectively gather information and not to lobby for any given site. At the Sears Ranch Road area, some members felt the existing parking lot and “former residence/dog kennel” area are viable opportunities, noting the sense of quiet and remoteness with safe access. Being close to the calving operation provided an agricultural connection and opportunities for equestrian staging and uses were benefits.

At the Red Barn, PAWG members noted the intrusion of noise and the traffic along that stretch of Highway 84. Some suggested parking in the area adjacent to the ranger residence or allowing parking by permit access only as alternatives to building a parking lot visible from the highway. Though driveway access from Highway 84 would still be a concern, some PAWG members suggested a parking area behind the ranger residence would retain the corral intact near the Red Barn. PAWG members suggested there is an opportunity for an interpretive center at the location. The PAWG discussed the availability of space, opportunities to access and interpret the agricultural history of the Preserve, and the visual appeal and the regional draw of the barn and corral. PAWG members inquired about the possible impact of development of the site on the former pond and potential wetlands area. Providing docent-led hikes via special permit was also suggested as an alternative to developing the Red Barn site.

At the Event Center, a member proposed separating visitor uses, such as equestrian uses and hiking uses to prevent potential conflicts. Proposed uses would need coordination with the grazing tenant whose cattle use the site and tunnel. Another mentioned equestrian access was better at the Sears Ranch Road area, as the trails from the Event Center are steep. There was a desire to see hike-in access from the Event Center. It was mentioned by a PAWG member that long stretches of Highway 84, including at this location, can be used as passing zones, and can cause hazardous conditions for safe highway access. The PAWG discussed opportunities for developing an education center at the Event Center and for increasing revenue-generating events, such as rodeos. The PAWG members also shared overall general comments from the site tours, such as building smaller parking areas across multiple sites instead of building one large parking area.

NEXT MEETING HOMEWORK

To prepare for the November 16 site tour, District staff asked the PAWG to submit additional suggestions for possible site locations to tour by October 31. Once staff receives the information, staff will determine the feasibility of visiting the proposed locations. Staff reminded PAWG Members to submit the data they collected from their traffic observations at the Red Barn (homework from August 22, 2019 PAWG meeting) and their completed observations worksheet from the current site tour by October 23.

The Board liaisons recommended that the PAWG members visit other District parking lots. They also suggested visiting the Allen Road permit parking area and the upper La Honda trails for an understanding of the northern extent of the preserve. Members should request a permit from District staff to visit the

Allen Road permit parking. In addition, members can visit the El Corte de Madera parking lot at Gate CM00 before the November site tour to see a lot not visible from the highway.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A member of the public, who also went on the site tour, commented the Red Barn site is sacred to the community and thanked the District for including the public in the site visits and for a great experience.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hooper adjourned the meeting of the La Honda Public Access Working Group at 1:00 pm.



Tina Hugg, PLA, ASLA
Senior Planner