

Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve

Public Access Working Group Design Summary

DRAFT | SEPTEMBER 5, 2024

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Prepared by:

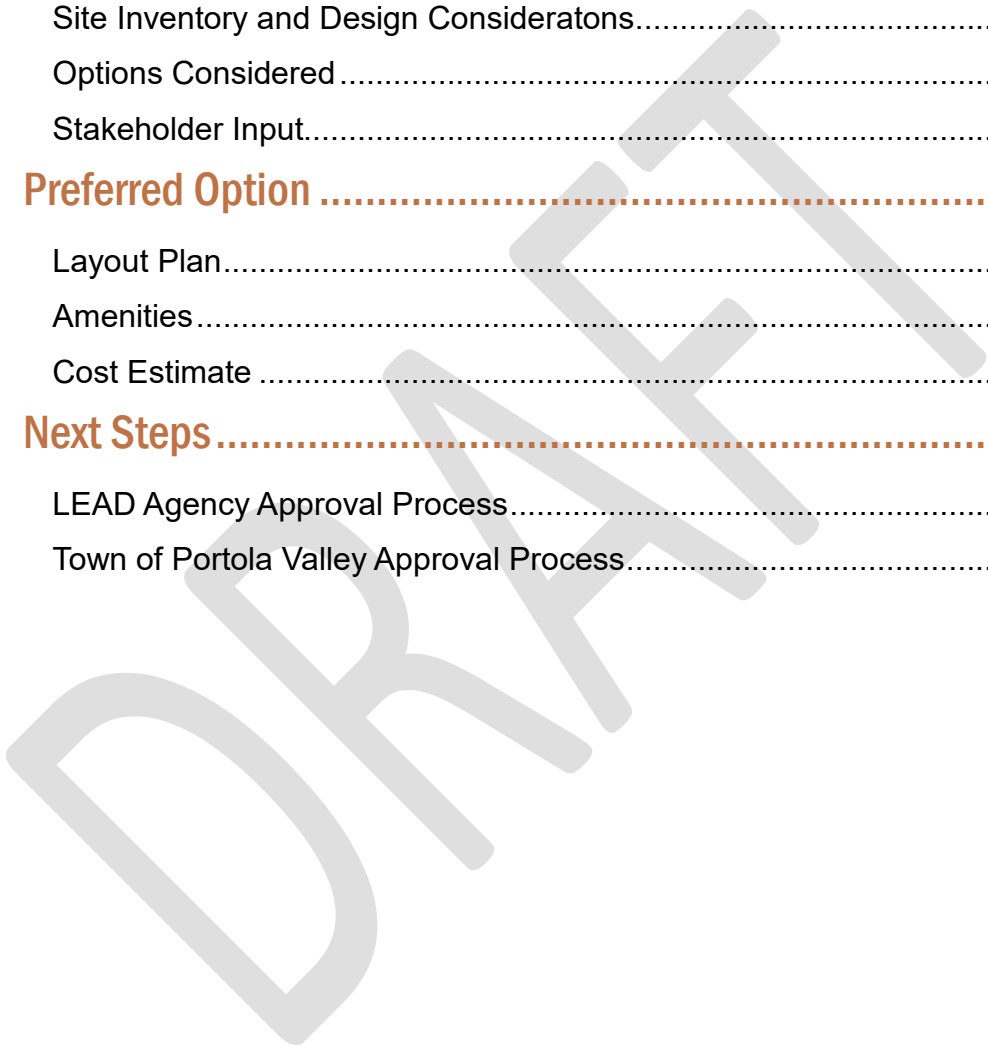
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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Background.....	3
Public Access Working Group.....	3
Technical Basis.....	4
Site Inventory and Design Consideratons.....	4
Options Considered.....	6
Stakeholder Input.....	29
Preferred Option.....	31
Layout Plan.....	31
Amenities.....	46
Cost Estimate.....	46
Next Steps.....	47
LEAD Agency Approval Process.....	47
Town of Portola Valley Approval Process.....	47

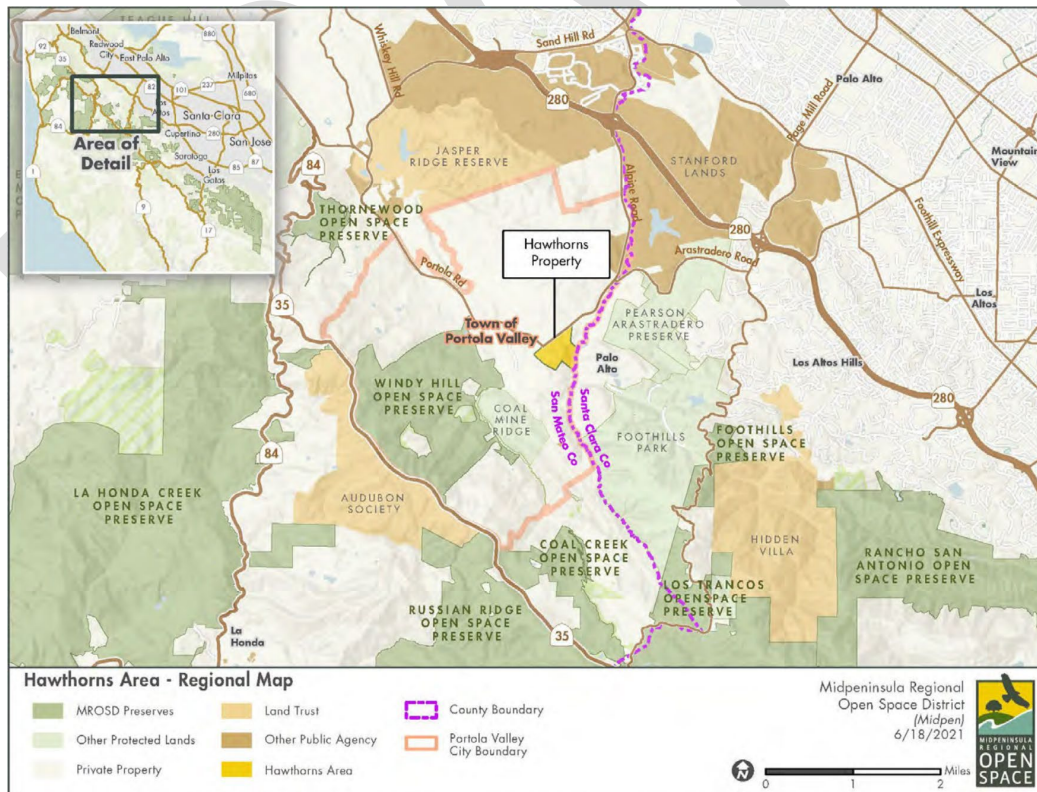


INTRODUCTION

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 CONSIDERATONS

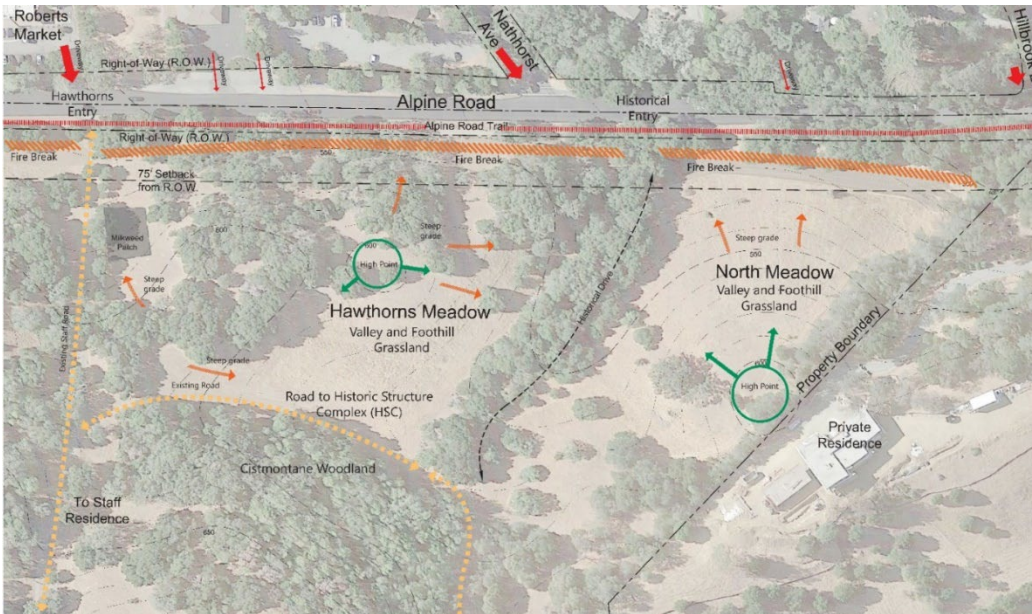
An inventory of site conditions and a set of design considerations were developed for use by the PAWG in evaluating options. Additional design considerations are found in the Staging / Parking and Trailhead Design Guidelines report, noted above. The site inventory is presented in Figure 2, while the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

Attachment 2

- 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.

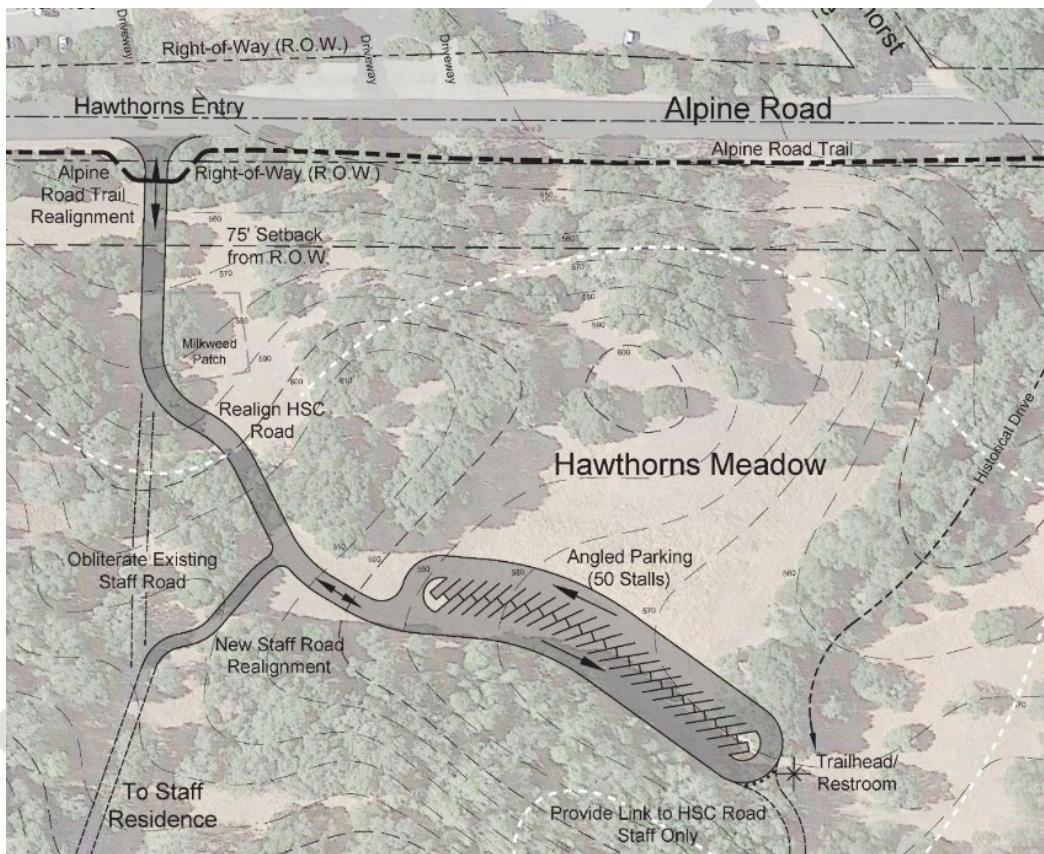
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OPTION 1

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

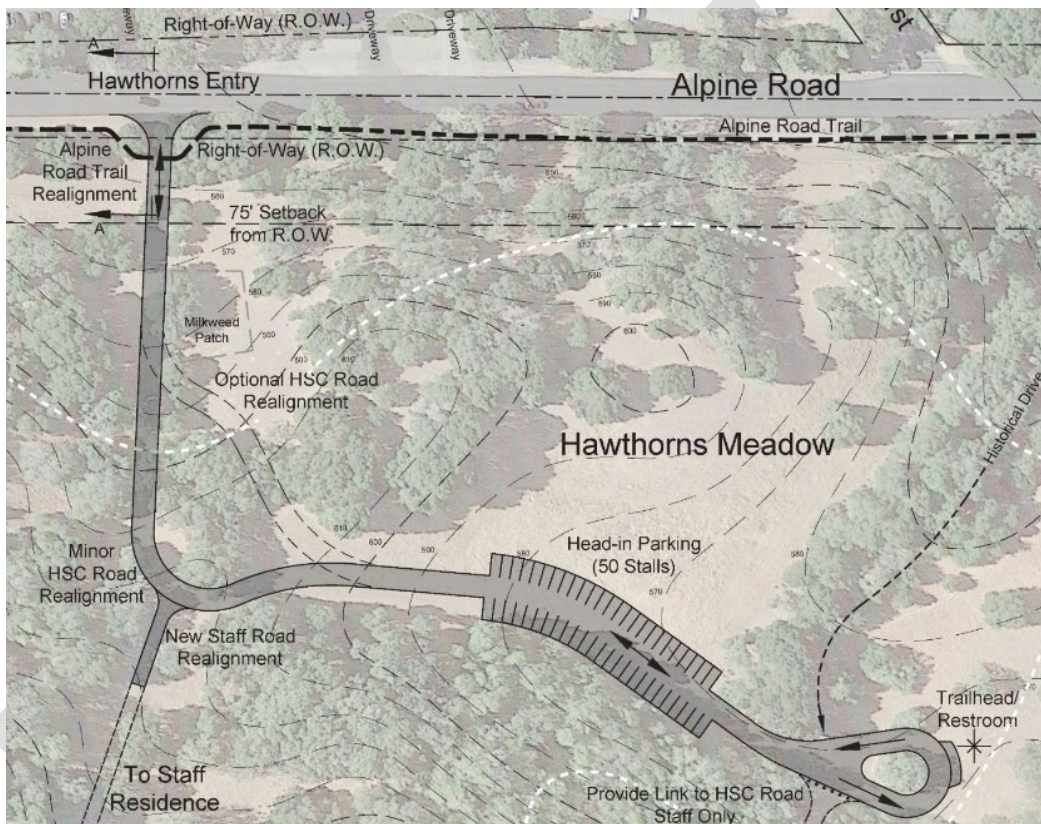
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses 4411 Alpine Road driveway entry while realigning staff road to heighten site and parking surveillance. • Parking is relatively level and oak trees provide shade for the parking off Historic Drive • No habitat disturbance to north meadow 	<ul style="list-style-type: 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

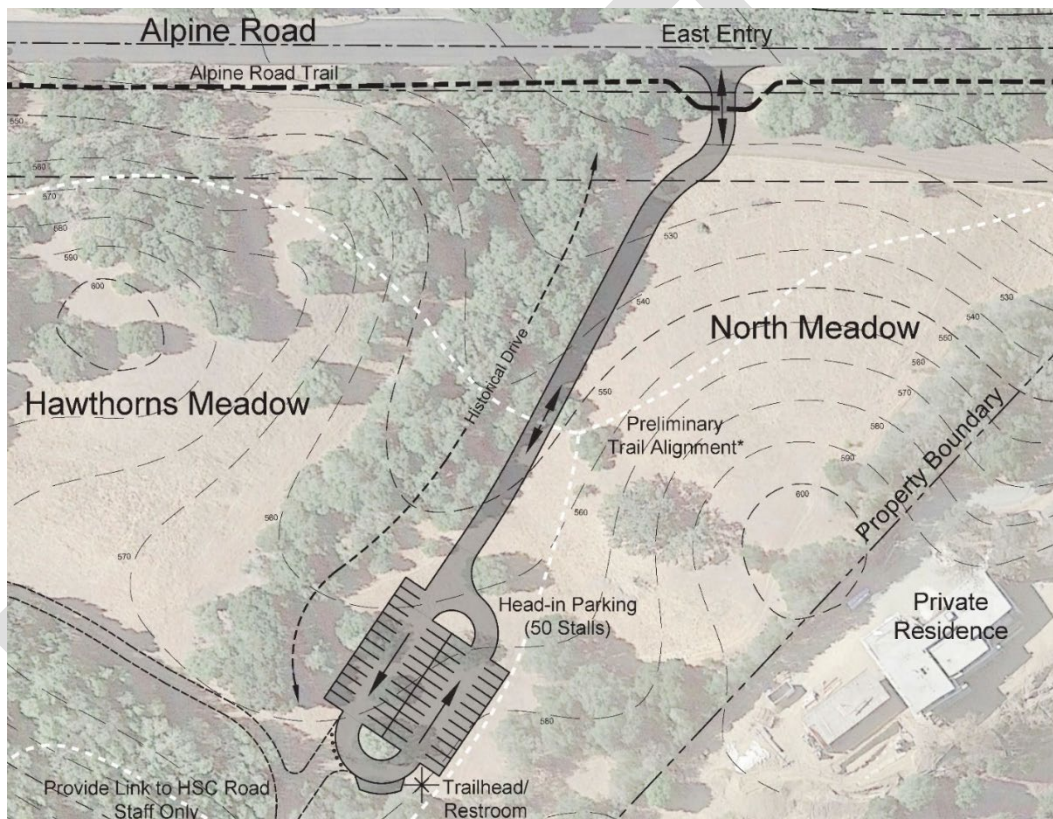
Pros	Cons
Uses 4411 Alpine Road driveway entry with an alternative to realign Historic Drive	Siting parking deeper into the preserve where it is not visible from Alpine Road poses a greater challenge for law enforcement, ranger patrol, and emergency response
Topography and oak trees shelter parking off 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

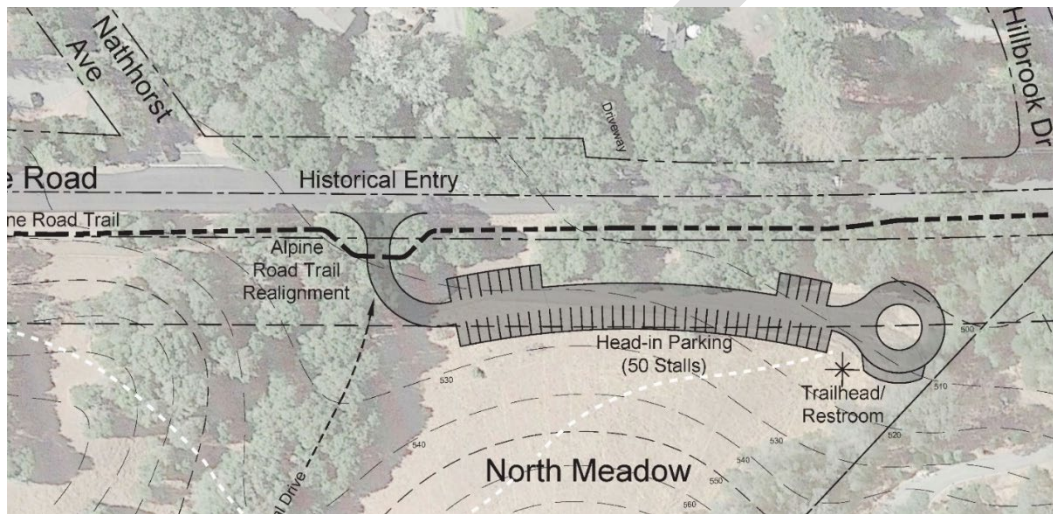
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing staff road creates separate staff access. • Head-in parking loop is compact and efficient • Limits new improvements to North Meadow • Driveway slopes are moderate, 10% maximum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East entry will require extensive 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

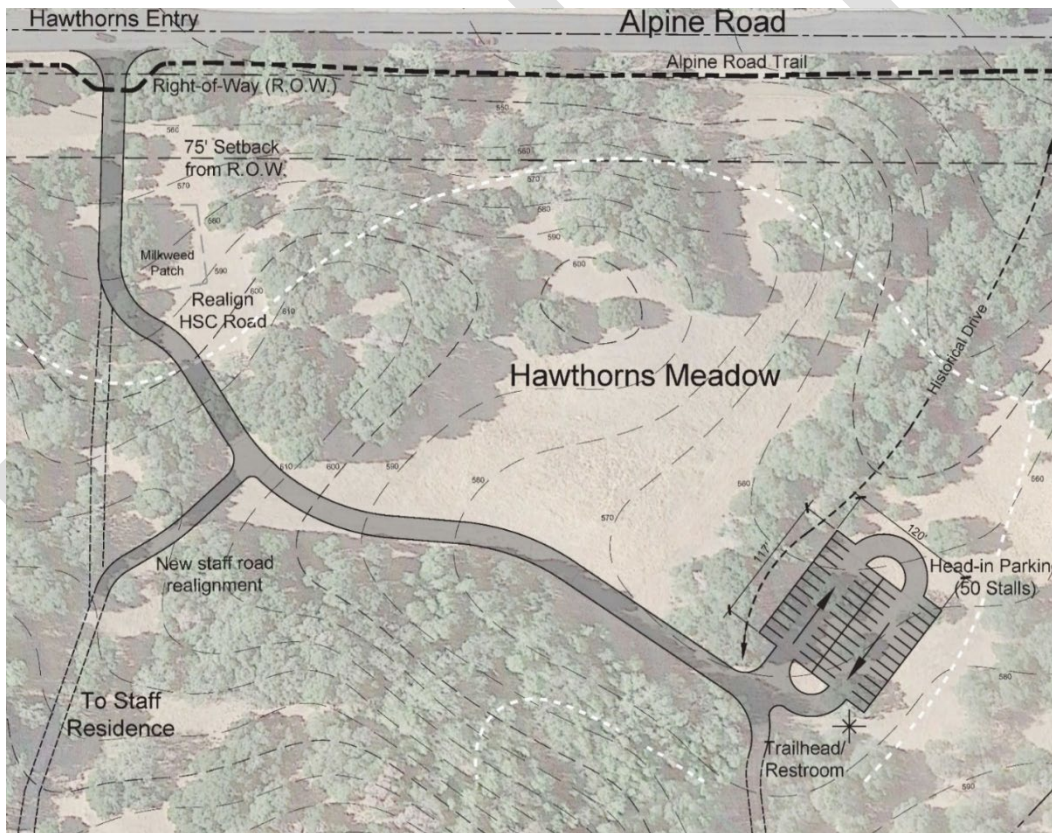
At the December 2023 PAWG meeting, three options were reviewed and considered. Option 4 from the previous round of options moved forward to be considered alongside the newly presented Option 5 and Option 6.

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

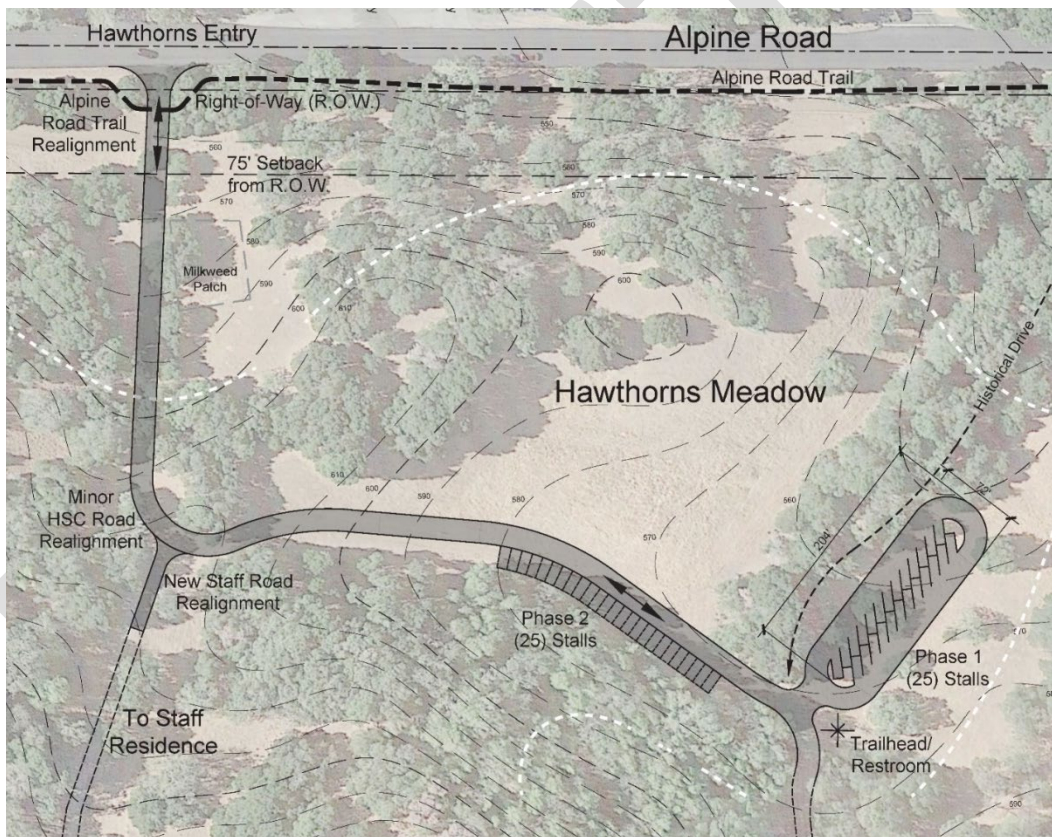
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OPTION 6

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

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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.

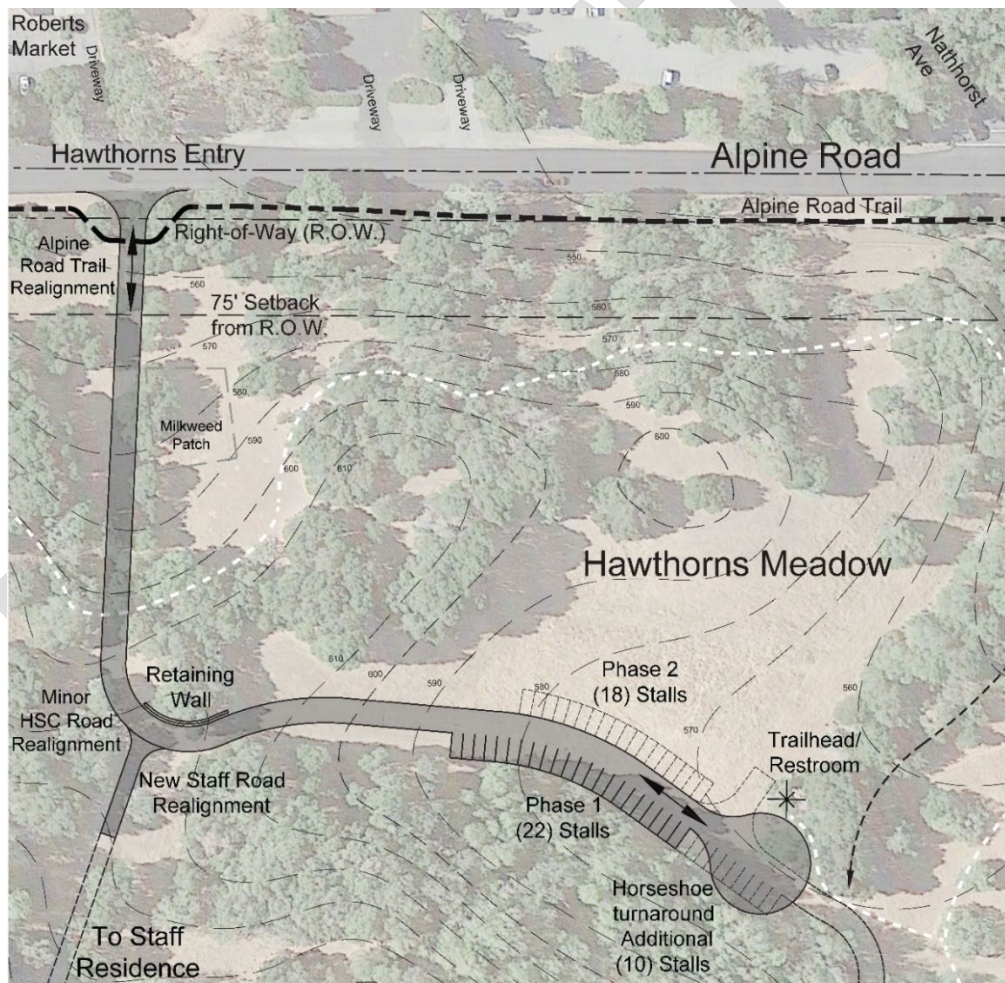
The project team assessed parking design options 7 and 8 using six criteria based on the Board-approved goals for the Hawthorns Area project. These include natural resources protection, public access (including driveway access, traffic safety, and the overall visitor experience in the preserve), local 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

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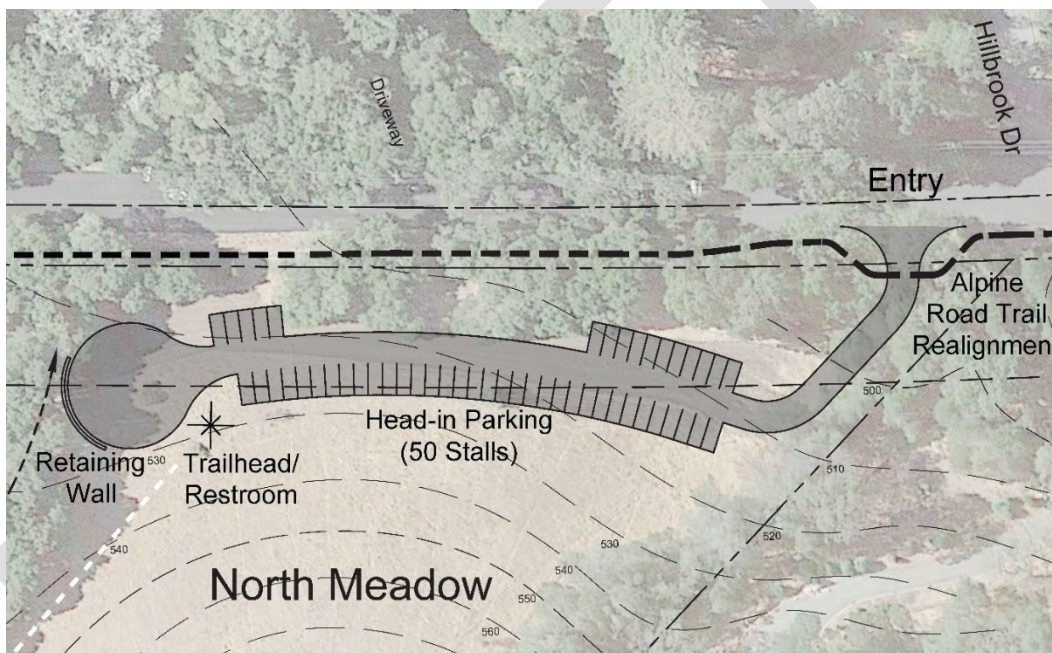
Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	on adjacent trails and open space lands	
Natural and Cultural History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites parking area away from closed area with known cultural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: 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

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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

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Options – March 2024

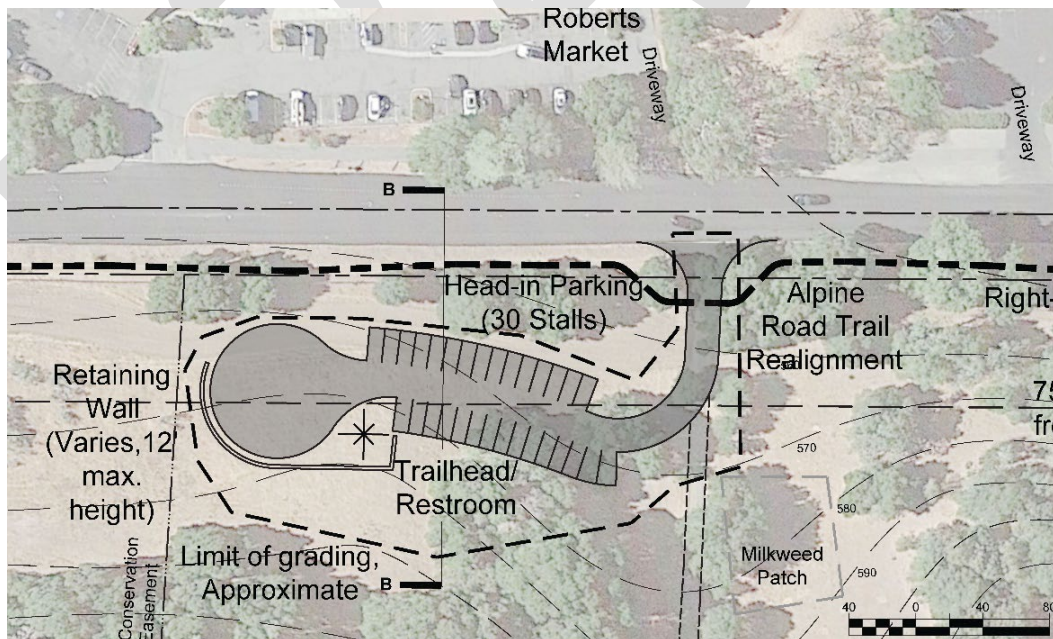
At PAWG meeting #6, Design Discussion, in March of 2024, there were two parking options presented, Options 8 and 9a. Option 9a was suggested by members of the PAWG as a response to concern about the feasibility of the previous options. There was concern that the driveway at Option 8 was not feasible 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.

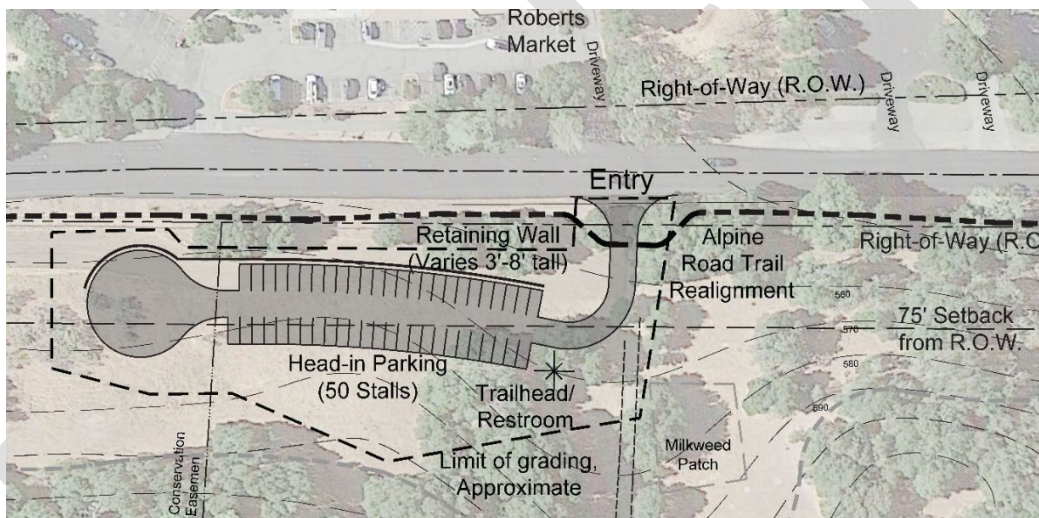
Similar to Option 7 and 8, the project team also assessed Options 9 and 10 using six criteria based on the Board approved goals for the Hawthorns Area project. These include natural resources protection, public access (including driveway access, traffic safety, and the overall visitor experience in the 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 Maintains integrity of meadows and sensitive vegetation communities to the greatest extent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires more retaining walls than options 7, 8 and 10

Attachment 2

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	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 • Keeps structures, such as the restroom, out of the 75' setback of the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor 	<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 along Alpine Road will be visible for the length of the parking lot.

Attachment 2

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
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.

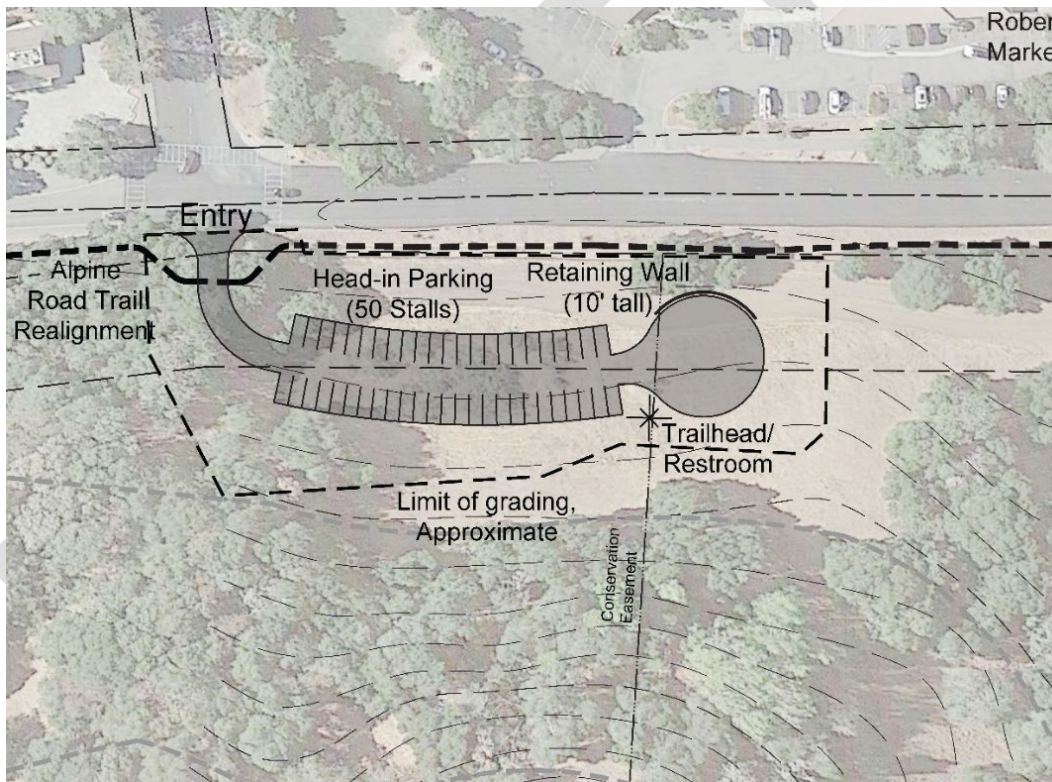
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OPTION 10

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 roadway, minimizing impacts to the preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None

Attachment 2

Project Design Assessment Criterion	Pros	Cons
	<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 its visibility from trails within the preserve 	<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 the length of the parking lot and will be screened by existing trees

Attachment 2

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 A potential screening berm could be built between Alpine Road and the parking area, preserving aesthetic resources 	
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

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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 	<p>disturbance could provide new habitat for invaders and limit water retention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 (Public Access)</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 • 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
<p>Visitor Experience in</p>	<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

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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)

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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

Attachment 2

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."

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