



# Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Preserve Public Access Working Group



Photo Credit: Jared Hart

## Meeting #6 – Site Meeting and Design Discussion March 2024



**Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group**  
**Meeting #6 Table of Contents**  
*Hawthorns Area Plan*

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## Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group Site Meeting Instructions *Hawthorns Area Plan*

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### Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group Meeting #6 Site Meeting

**Sunday, March 24, 2024 at 9 a.m.** (We encourage members of the public to please arrive by 8:45 a.m. to allow time for parking and walking to the first meeting location, which is about 10 to 15 minutes from the parking area. If you're arriving by car, vehicles with higher clearance are required to traverse uneven, rugged dirt roads.)

Thank you for joining us at the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group site meeting at the Hawthorns Area at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve on Sunday, March 24. As parking is highly limited and this meeting is open to the public, we kindly request an [RSVP from all attendees by 5 p.m. March 21, 2024](#). Please take a moment to review the following important information:

#### Timing

Please plan to arrive by 8:45 am to allow time for parking and walking to the meeting starting point. Please note that we won't be able to accommodate those who arrive late. As the Hawthorns Area is currently closed to the public, the gate will be closed at 9:10 am and remain shut for the duration of the site meeting. The site meeting will last approximately 4 hours.

#### Directions

Please use the address 4411 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028 to navigate to the property entrance gate. The entrance is located across from Roberts Market. Kindly adhere to the signage and guidance provided by District staff to arrive at the designed parking area.

Vehicles with higher clearance are required to navigate the uneven and rugged dirt driveway. Please be mindful that the driveway may become muddy due to potential rain.

Upon parking, kindly proceed to the midway point of the driveway and follow the signage leading to the public check-in area, where you can sign in and have your boots sanitized. Follow staff's direction to continue uphill to reach the meeting starting point. Refer to Site Meeting Map below for more information.

#### To Ensure Your Experience is Enjoyable

- Be prepared to walk up to 4 miles in steep uneven terrain.
- Wear hiking boots or sturdy walking shoes appropriate for rugged terrain. There is no trail in most areas.
- Bring ample drinking water – water is not available on site.
- Bring your own snacks, and please keep in mind the District's Leave No Trace ethic.
- Dress in or bring layers (T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, sweater, and/or jacket). The weather can be unpredictable.

- Bring sun protection (hat, sunscreen) and consider insect repellent.
- Participants are encouraged to make personal decisions on comfort, safety, and willingness to drive or hike in threatening weather conditions.
- Restrooms are not available; please plan accordingly.
- Formal bike parking facilities are not available.
- Carpool if possible. Parking is limited.

### Water to bring:

Participants should come prepared for a day hike – dress in layers and wear sturdy shoes; bring water, sunscreen, hat, snacks/lunch, walking stick, etc.

### Questions

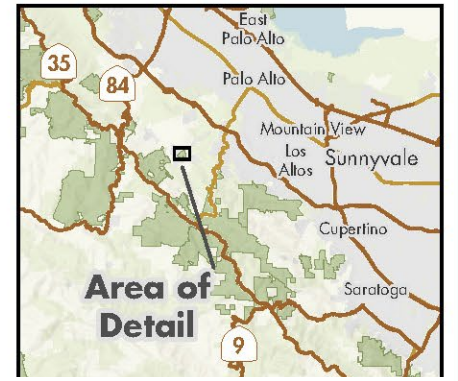
Contact Ashley Mac, Planner III ([amac@openspace.org](mailto:amac@openspace.org)) and Tina Hugg, Senior Planner ([thugg@openspace.org](mailto:thugg@openspace.org)) or 650-691-1200.



# Hawthorns PAWG Meeting #6 - Site Meeting Map

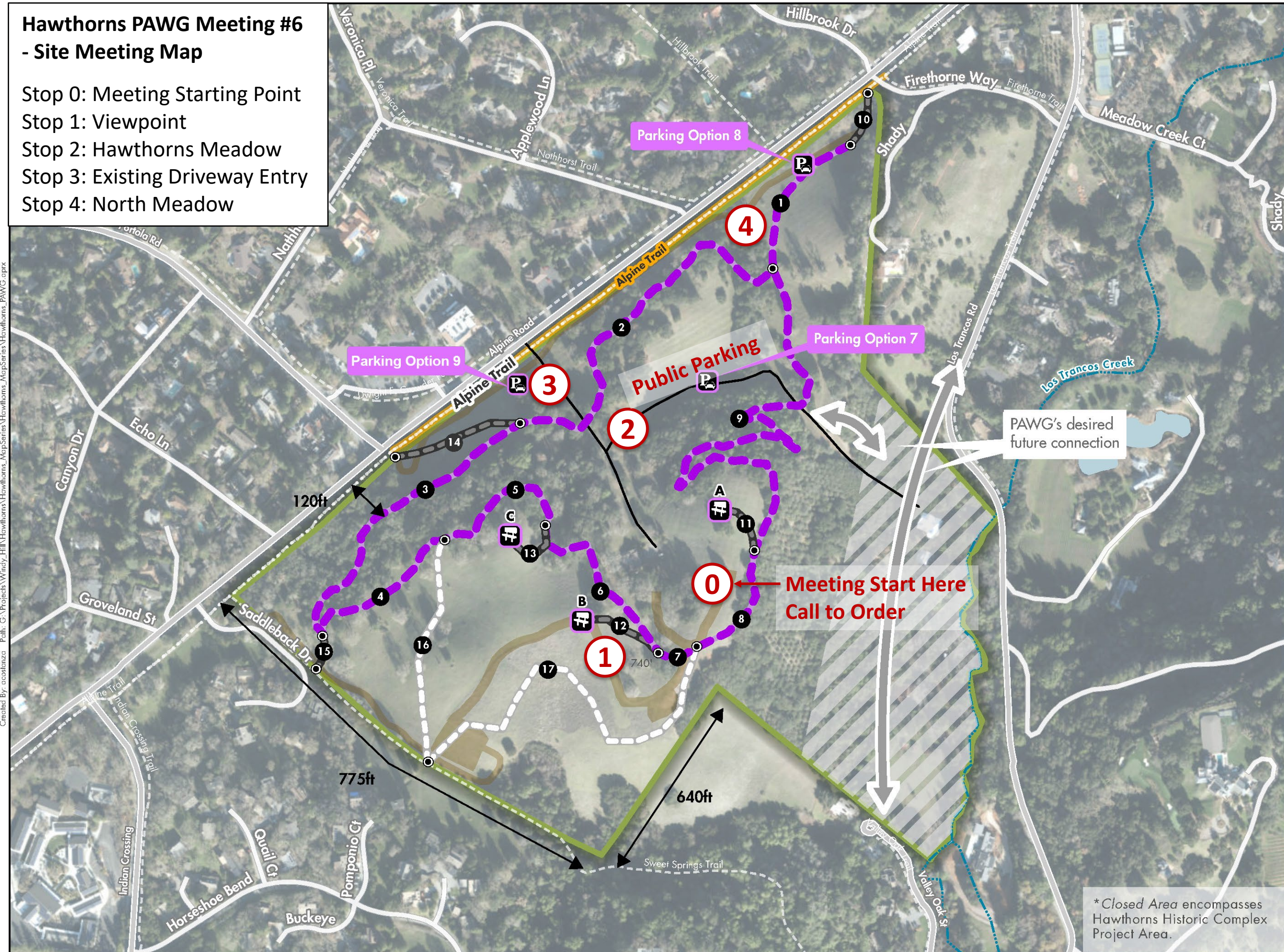
- Stop 0: Meeting Starting Point
- Stop 1: Viewpoint
- Stop 2: Hawthorns Meadow
- Stop 3: Existing Driveway Entry
- Stop 4: North Meadow

Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District  
(Midpen)  
2/2/2024



## Hawthorns PAWG Meeting #6 - Site Meeting Map

- Hawthorns area property line
- Closed area\*
- Town trail
- Fire road
- Conceptual Loop Trail
- Option 1
- Option 2
- Proposed bench
- Proposed parking lot
- Alpine Rd Trail Improvement Corridor
- Fuel break
- PAWG desired future connections
- Trail junction



\*Closed Area encompasses Hawthorns Historic Complex Project Area.

While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.

Created By: acostanza Path: G:\Projects\Windy\_Hill\Hawthorns\_MapSeries\Hawthorns\_MapSeries\Hawthorns\_PAWG.aprx





Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group Meeting

### MEETING SUMMARY

February 29, 2024  
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Administrative Office  
5050 El Camino Real  
Los Altos, CA 94022

### PAWG Members Present (✓) or Absent (x):

Board Director	✓ Margaret MacNiven, Ward 6
Town Liaison	✓ Judith Hasko representing the Town Council (as alternate for Sarah Wernikoff)
Interest Area Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bryna Chang</li> <li>✓ Tyler Feld</li> <li>✓ Charlie Krenz</li> <li>✓ Rachel Oslund</li> <li>✓ David Smernoff</li> <li>✓ Karen Vahtra</li> </ul>
Ward stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ward 1: Scott Mosher</li> <li>✓ Ward 2: Vivian Neou</li> <li>✓ Ward 3: Willie Wool</li> <li>✓ Ward 4: Sandy Sommer</li> <li>x Ward 5: Jeff Greenfield</li> <li>✓ Ward 6: Helen Quinn</li> <li>✓ Ward 7: Kerry De Benedetti</li> </ul>

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ✓ Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager     | ✓ Marie Lanka, Grants Management Analyst I    |
| ✓ Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager     | ✓ Sherilyn Reinhart, Administrative Assistant |
| ✓ Jane Mark, Planning Manager                 | ✓ Chris Barresi, Area Superintendent          |
| ✓ Tina Hugg, Senior Planner                   | ✓ Natalie Jolly, Public Affairs Specialist II |
| ✓ Ashely Mac, Planner III                     |   |
| ✓ Bryan Apple, Capital Projects Field Manager |   |
| ✓ Arianna Camponuri, Forest Ecologist I       |   |

**PGAdesign Facilitator:** Cathy Garrett

## **ROLL CALL**

Co-Chair Rachel Oslund officially called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Ashley Mac provided welcoming remarks and introductions before turning the meeting to Cathy Garrett, Facilitator.

## **WORKING GROUP BUSINESS**

### **1. PUBLIC COMMENT**

In addition to several written public comments received prior to the PAWG meeting, shared with the PAWG members, there were seven commentors in the first Public Comment period of this meeting. Topics are expanded upon below as all were discussed later in the meeting. Topics included:

- Strongly recommend placing a driveway entrance by Roberts Market, as opposed to locating it near Nathhorst Avenue.
- Desire to include 1 or 2 parking places for equestrian trailers within the parking area.
- Concerns from residents of Portola Valley Ranch regarding proposed trail segment Option 2, which falls within the viewshed of 15 homes. Concern for privacy and potential impact on property values.
- Concern over potential increased usage of Town of Portola Valley (Town) trails within Portola Valley Ranch by users of the Hawthorns property if connected to Town trails.
- Appreciation for the spur trail options via Sweet Springs Trail for equestrians to enter Hawthorns.
- Request that the Historic Complex be included in the overall trail and parking planning process.
- Request that the location of the existing staff house be assessed for potential parking.
- Appreciation for the inclusion of a Town Council study session incorporated in the Midpen planning process.
- Desire to focus on traffic safety along Alpine Road.
- Concern for possible parking impacts to Saddleback Drive and Pomponio Ct in Portola Valley Ranch.
- Concern about the placement of parking within the Alpine Road scenic corridor, as it may lead to visual impacts and may not align with the Town's General Plan.

### **2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 16, 2023 MEETING SUMMARY**

One clarification was requested, to correct the name of Hillbrook Avenue, rather than Willowbrook Drive. The voting members of the PAWG approved the December 16, 2024, Meeting #4 Summary, all in favor with Jeff Greenfield absent and David Smirnoff abstaining.

### **3. FOLLOW UP ITEMS**

Following the December 16, 2023 PAWG meeting, Midpen staff requested that Midpen leadership evaluate the PAWG idea of demolishing the staff house to provide possible parking spaces for the preserve. Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager, provided discussion and the results of this evaluation. In summary, the Executive Team gave direction to not proceed analyzing this site for parking because of the following:

- Impacts to the natural resources of the site
- Impacts financially to Midpen to provide staff housing
- Importance of the on-site Midpen presence for managing the property
- The house site would not be superior to other sites due to the steep topography that requires the house itself act as a retaining wall.

Regarding the overall planning process, Ashley Mac provided an update that the Town Council would be engaged after the Midpen project team presents the PAWG's recommendations to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee and Board study session in the fall of 2024. This

provides the Town Council an opportunity to provide feedback to the PAWG, project team, and Board before any final Midpen decision is made.

#### **4. REVIEW OF TRAILS**

Bryan Apple, Capital Projects Field Manager with Midpen, described components of the trail map that include a second short loop to the main loop trail, various connections to Alpine Trail, and a number to each segment to simplify discussion of the trails. He presented the Conceptual Trail System map overlaid on the Site Constraints map to indicated how and where potential impacts have been addressed or avoided.

Bryan Apple outlined key trail use goals and considerations:

- Provide ecologically sensitive public recreation
- Consider adjacent uses, potential user groups and user perspectives
- Consider allowing bicycle uses along the perimeter of the Hawthorns area at Alpine Road to connect to regional bicycle trails
- Consider evaluating the site for dog access
- Consider Easy Access trail opportunities where feasible and practical
- In the context of the site's topography, vegetation and other natural features, develop a trail system that aligns with the Board-approved Hawthorns Area vision and goals, is financially and operationally sustainable, considers the user experience, and strives to accommodate a range of hiking and equestrian abilities.
- Explore opportunities for local and regional trail connections as well as a loop trail system within the property.

He also covered key trail considerations:

- Benches for visitors to enjoy vista points
- Vault toilet at the parking lot
- Appropriate signage to guide visitors to the site
- Proposed infrastructure and amenities located to minimize effects on viewsheds in the local vicinity
- Key vistas and Hawthorns Area's natural beauty to highlight

To convey a general sense of the trail system, Bryan Apple presented photographs illustrating the siting of the proposed trails and also reviewed each proposed vista point locations and related trail concerns. The intent of the plan is to manage potential conflicts with impacts on natural resources.

Bryan reviewed a comparison table of nearby open parks and spaces with the Hawthorns property. He observed that when trail mileage is increased, there is usually also an increased need for parking. The PAWG will need to consider the capacity of the site and overall desired trail connections that may affect parking demand. Hawthorns is the smallest of the sites of those presented on the table. For instance, Arastradero is eight times the size of the Hawthorns property.

#### **5. REVIEW OF PARKING OPTIONS 7 AND 8**

Paul Stevenson, landscape architect with CSW, provided an overview on the parking concepts.

##### **Option 7 - Refinements to the Hawthorns Meadow parking area, its phasing and reduced size**

- Pros: Reuses the existing driveway entry opposite Roberts Market, provides for phasing with Phase 1 having 22 stalls aligned along the oak-studded edge of the meadow, Phase 2 adding 18 stalls across Phase 1's stall on the meadow side of the drive and Phase 3 having the potential to replace the circular turnaround with a hammerhead to fit 10 more stalls. Parking can be integrated with relatively little grading.
- Cons: Because Phase 3 removes the circular turnaround in lieu of a hammerhead, it would require additional vehicular maneuvers for cars to turnaround, the driveway into the



preserve is much longer and steeper than in Option 8, it requires more tree removal, paved area and utility improvements than Option 8.

**Option 8 - Parking near Alpine Road at the northeast area of the property, utilizing a drive location in the northeast corner of the site**

- Pros: The entry drive at the east end of the parking area provides for improved traffic management for vehicles entering/exiting the site or bicyclists using Alpine Road, keeps amenities such as the vault toilet outside the 75-foot scenic corridor, attenuates potential views of parking from Alpine Road with existing trees, and places boulders strategically to screen views from eye level of motorists or cyclists on Alpine Road given the elevation of the parking area and the angle of views. This option is less expensive than Option 7 and has less impact on the natural resources of the preserve. Grading is achieved by feathering the slope to meet existing grades on the south side of the parking area.
- Cons: Requires more grading than Option 7, there will be limited vegetative screening along the Alpine Trail frontage due to vegetation removal needed for wildland fire resiliency.

Andrew Lee, Senior Consultant with Parametrix, reviewed the new traffic study data collected at the request of the PAWG.

- With guidance from the Town, Parametrix performed new traffic counts at 4 locations:
  - Alpine Road at Portola Road
  - Alpine Road east of Nathhorst Avenue
  - Los Trancos Road near the Town limit
  - Alpine Road at Westridge Drive
- This data supplemented the 2019 Town of Portola Valley traffic data and allowed an assessment of the changes over time.
- Traffic counts have decreased in the last four years. The Alpine Road at Nathhorst Avenue location saw 5,000 fewer daily vehicles in 2023 versus in 2019. The current usage is approximately half the capacity of the roadway.
- The following proposed development along this part of Alpine Road was derived from the Town's Housing Element. At Westridge Drive, there are up to 120 units permitted under the Housing Element whereas at Nathhorst Avenue, it is up to 50 new units of development. In summary, there is less anticipated growth of traffic at Nathhorst Avenue than at Westridge Drive.
- To check the recent traffic data against annual and seasonal trends, weekend and weekday data was pulled from Replica, a big data source that has counts dating back to 2021. The data from Replica for the most part aligns with the recent traffic counts gathered, confirming veracity of recent counts.
- Seasonal data showed that summer bicycle traffic is busier than winter. Of the four locations where traffic data was collected in 2023, the Alpine Road at Nathhorst Avenue location has the highest level of pedestrian and bicycling use.
- Bicycling usage is much higher on weekends than on weekdays. In contrast, vehicular traffic data indicated a peak each weekday morning and evening. Vehicular traffic during the weekend is much less than weekdays. The busiest weekend vehicular activity on weekends is no busier than midday on a weekday. In summary, the comparison between the bicycle usage peaks on Alpine Road versus the vehicular traffic peaks reveals that the greatest weekend bicycle activities do not occur at the same time as the pronounced vehicle usage.
- Bicycling activities peaked in 2021 and 2022 during the height of the pandemic and have since reverted to pre-pandemic patterns. That said, there is considerable use of Alpine Road by bicyclists.
- For walking and bicycling counts, a comparison with Town data was not possible because they did not collect pedestrian and bicycling data.

The traffic assessment of the two parking alternatives followed:

- Option 7: no material change as it utilizes the existing driveway.
- Option 8: the north entry point improves this alternative due to less tree cover and fewer shadows cast. It is closer to Hillbrook Avenue where the slope on Alpine Road flattens out. Additionally, the former location of the entry at the historic drive has an embankment that impedes sight lines that is not present at the more northerly entry point in Option 8, making this a safer location.

### **Review of Parking Options 7 and 8 against the Board-approved vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area.**

Ashley Mac reviewed the two parking options against the project vision and goals that guide this public access planning process, including:

- Natural resources considerations
- Public access considerations - visitor experience
- Public access considerations - traffic safety
- Local and regional connectivity considerations
- Natural and cultural history considerations
- Aesthetics considerations (from the trail users' perspective as well as Alpine Road)
- Operations and maintenance considerations

These goals carry through the entire planning process and the two parking options were compared side-by-side against each goal. Ashley illustrated for each a set of pros and cons and a moon dial graphic. The moon dial is illustrated by a circle that is open, filled in one quarter, one half, three quarters or fully. The more the circle is filled in, the better the parking option meets the goal. For each of the categories listed above, Option 8 scored higher than Option 7, with the exception of natural and cultural history considerations where their scores were equal and traffic safety where Option 7 scored one quarter better than Option 8.

In summary, Option 7 maximizes traffic safety and minimizes visibility from Alpine Road. Option 8 minimizes natural resource impacts, enhances trail user experience, and reduces operational requirements.

## **6. PAWG QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

PAWG questions fell into 4 categories. Where input was provided from Midpen and/or the consultants, responses are indicated.

Trail locations:

- Can the trails be implemented in a phased manner? Response: The PAWG can recommend this. It is achievable.
- Can the gray arrows indicating future regional trail access be extended through the Historic Complex to indicate a desire for a future link to Arastradero?
- Can trail segment 17 be sited out of the viewshed of the homes in Portola Valley Ranch? Response: Segment 17 of the secondary loop trail is sited to provide access up the slope while limiting impacts to the grasslands. Realignment of the trail out of the viewshed would likely push the slopes on the trail outside the target 8-10% range and introduce climbing turns and switchbacks, which are best avoided in grasslands. The trail could be over-steepened to avoid the viewshed, which would increase adverse impacts and maintenance of the trail. As shown, the alignment is a more sustainable design.
- The PAWG desires a connection to the Sweet Springs trail.

Uses:

- Bikes on the periphery is one approach. What would the constraints be to limit bicycle use? Response: The Public Access Framework (PAF) is the main guidance document. The PAF does not prohibit bicycle use within the interior and the PAWG can consider bicycle use on all trails or specific trails as they form recommendations regarding the uses of the preserve.
- During the public comment period there was discussion about the permitted users on the



Sweet Springs Trail. A member of the public stated that the trail was created in 1975 with an easement for equestrian use only. Response: It is at the discretion of the Town to make this determination since it's a Town trail. The Town's trail map shows Sweet Springs Trail as allowing pedestrians, equestrians and dogs on leash. See comments under Item 8.

- Even though some regional connections cannot be made until a future time, can this plan indicate the intention to make bicycle connections up to the Skyline area and through the Historic Complex?

#### Bench Locations:

- There is a desire that benches be sited to best utilize the views from each vantage point and to avoid facing neighboring Portola Valley Ranch homes or the staff house. Will Midpen incorporate this? Response: The PAWG can determine the placement and orientation of benches and include them in their recommendations.

#### Parking Options:

- Did Midpen consider parking for people with disabilities at the staff house to reach the center of the property? Response: When parking is provided, accessible parking is part of that overall supply.
- There is concern regarding the possibility of seeing the parking at Option 8 from Alpine Road. Response: The Alpine Road View photos illustrate the most visible location into the site. Because of the angle of the viewer, with Alpine Road at a lower elevation, the boulders proposed will screen most of potential views to the parking area.
- Regarding the possibility of overflow parking occurring on adjacent streets, what is Midpen's approach? Response: Midpen has found that a newly opened preserve garners more attendance in the first few months that it is open than after some time has passed. The Midpen response to parking varies on the conditions of each location and whether the area has been posted as no parking. Examples of how it is addressed may include a) the local jurisdiction's law enforcement and Midpen's Rangers enforcing no parking in areas posted as no parking zones or not legally safe, b) working with the local jurisdiction to post "resident only parking" signs on the weekends, c) working with the local jurisdiction to post "no parking" signs in areas where overflow parking is an issue. Midpen has used adaptive parking management to tailor their response when a problem arises, such as at the Sears Ranch Road parking area in La Honda Creek Preserve, which was very well attended for the first few months after it opened. Usage decreased after the first three months. It was noted that the chance of overflow parking occurring would depend on the type of uses permitted and associated number of users on the trails.
- Can a new parking option be considered, such as to the west of the existing driveway close to Alpine Road? Response: The Conservation Easement, owned by POST, that encompasses all of the Hawthorns property is comprised of two zones. The portion identified as being an "unimproved area" permits neither parking nor tree removal. The "unimproved area" lies close to the west side of the existing driveway limiting the amount of space available for parking. This area is also very steep.
- Is there a concern with an offset T-intersection where the driveway is shown in Option 8 in relation to Hillbrook? Response: There is enough distance between intersections to offset the risk of collision. There might be a concern if there were a left turn pocket accessed by cars going either direction at this location but there is no such feature. Another potential concern might be if there was significant traffic emanating from Hillbrook, but that is not the situation. As is presently the case, cars entering Alpine Road from Hillbrook need to gauge the speed of Alpine Road traffic, which is swift, in order to enter Alpine Road traffic lanes.
- What is a "downstream bike pullout area"? Response: It is location for large groups of cyclists to pull onto a widened shoulder clear of the vehicular lane. The Town can use these areas, along with advanced signage, to assuage potential bicycle-vehicle conflicts.

## 7. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

During the second public comment period, eight comments were received. Topics included:

- The possibility of including parking for two horse trailers at Hawthorns with enough space to turn a horse trailer.
- If mountain bicycles are permitted within Hawthorns, there was concern about how to ensure bicyclists do not ride onto Sweet Springs Trails from Hawthorns, as Sweet Springs Trail does not permit bicycling.
- Question about how to share photos shown at the PAWG meeting with the general public when these were not part of the packet.
- Support for a multi-use trail including dogs on leash.
- Support for phased parking and a total of 50 car spaces.
- Desire for a possible entry to Hawthorns to be considered off Los Trancos Road.
- Request for story poles to illustrate placement of possible parking areas.
- Concern about possible overflow parking onto nearby streets.
- A speaker expressed the desire to have residences in Portola Valley Ranch protected from possible views from trail users at Hawthorns, particularly in relation to trail segment 17.
- Another speaker was in support of trail segment 17.
- Concern about parking safety in relation to Option 8.
- Concern about visibility from Alpine Road to Option 8's parking area and that boulders may be insufficient screening.
- Desire to incorporate bicycle loop for use by children.
- Question about the timing of the replacement of perimeter fencing.
- Concern about safety on Alpine Road; bicyclists may not slow down for cars entering/exiting a new Hawthorns parking area.
- Concern about the permitted users, e.g. equestrian only, on Sweet Springs Trail and the language of the trail easement with the Town. Request for review of easement document. See comments under Item 8.

## **8. PAWG DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPMENT**

To gather initial overall preferences of the PAWG, Co-Chair Rachel Osland took informal polling on a series of topics. First, she asked the PAWG's attitude towards trail segments as numbered on the Conceptual Trail System Plan. For this informal voting, the Gradients of Agreement were utilized. Using this six-level voting system, values from 1 through 4 are considered supportive of an item, values 5 or 6 are considered not supportive. Consensus is reached if a simple majority of all members present are between 1 and 4. The results of this informal voting follow. During the discussion, PAWG members expressed opinions and, in some cases, concerns, which are summarized below the voting results. Refer to **Attachment 1** for photographs of the value distribution of the informal voting.

### Trail Uses:

- Hiking, equestrian use and for dogs on leash received majority support for all trail segments (i.e. 1 through 17).
- Mountain bicycle use received majority support for trail segments 1 through 14.
- Mountain bicycle use was not supported for trail segments 15 through 17.

### Bench Placement:

- Bench locations A, B and C received majority support.

### Parking Options 7 and 8:

- Sending both options to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) for their review received majority support.

### Potentially using the staff house site for parking:

- Using the staff house site for parking was not supported.

### Comments from the PAWG in relation to the above voting:

- Regarding trail uses: The use by bicycles in the preserve was debated and the PAWG had a wide spread of interests.



- Desire to clarify the usage of the Sweet Springs Trail regarding the Town's easement. Response from Co-chair and PVR resident Helen Quinn: the original easement may have identified this trail as equestrian only. However, since the mid-1970s it has been used by equestrians and pedestrians.
- Observation that the Town's Trails and Paths Committee supports enhanced connectivity to Town trails.
- Concern that proposed Hawthorns trails that are open to bicycles will connect to surrounding trails where bicycles are excluded. This may be difficult to enforce. One suggestion was that gates could be part of the solution.
- Desire to have a bicycle loop for use by children. Response: it is not possible to enforce children-only bicycles on trails; if bicycles are permitted on a given trail segment, it need to be open to all.
- Concern from several PAWG members about destruction to trails caused by mountain bicycles. Comment was made that good trail design might mitigate potential damage.
- Benches are to be oriented towards the distant view that is the signature of each bench location.
- Concern was expressed whether segment 9, which is steep, is suitable for mountain bicycles. Response: Midpen has similar trails where mountain bikes are permitted.
- Regarding the alignment of trails segments 16 and 17, there was no informal voting by the PAWG. The following identifies the range of PAWG opinions. There is benefit from the location of trail segments 16 and 17, as they provide improved connectivity for future links to back country preserves. Support was voiced for offering more trail connections as far as feasible. Some PAWG members suggested that trail segment 16 was possible while concern remained for trail segment 17, as it is in the viewshed of some Portola Valley Ranch residents. Midpen response to trail segment 17 realignment: The length of the trail could be extended which will result in greater impacts on grasslands; the goal is to avoid climbing turns and switchbacks in grasslands. Other PAWG members felt that realigning or extending trail segment 16 is a viable option to mitigate impacts on Portola Valley Ranch residents' views while still making trail connections.
- The PAWG had a desire to review bench location C while on site for the PAWG #6 meeting on March 24, 2024. One goal is to ensure that bench location stays outside the viewshed from Portola Valley Ranch.
- Regarding parking, one PAWG member voiced concern that there is no good option for parking within a preserve of this size due to the impacts on natural resources and the meadow in Option 7 and safety concerns for Option 8.
- One PAWG member commented that the Town's primary concern appears to be safety and that they would like to revisit the possibility of accessing the preserve via Los Trancos Road. Response: The sight lines on Los Trancos Road do not meet stopping requirements.
- Could a right-turn-only approach to preserve access be considered. For instance, enter at Los Trancos Road with a right turn, drive through the Historic Complex towards Alpine Road with a parking area would be situated along this route, and drive out of the preserve with right turn only. Response: This would be for Midpen to consider, the impacts of siting a road all the way through the preserve are considerable, right turn only approach is a very restrictive and relies on people acting lawfully. This approach has risks.
- Concern regarding the feasibility of horse trailer parking within the parking area. Response: horse trailer parking is possible, though it comes with trade-offs. For instance, two trailers at 50 feet each would displace parking for 10 cars, or potential more if pull-through trailer parking is preferred. It's worth noting that this is a very small site with steep terrain compared to nearby preserves.
- For parking Option 8 some of the mitigation strategies recommended rely on Midpen, while others rely on the Town. This will need coordination.
- Some PAWG members requested reconsideration of the Conservation Easement held by POST for the property. Response: During a recent conversation with POST, Midpen confirmed that POST is not open to renegotiating the easement.

- One PAWG member suggested placing parking proximate to the existing drive near the Alpine Road frontage. This location was considered by the consultants but was not pursued because the existing Conservation Easement limits the size of the parking area, and the terrain is very steep, leading to significant amounts of cut, grading and a tall retaining wall.
- A suggestion was made to locate accessible parking near or at the staff house. Likewise, there was a request to consider creating accessible trails to reach viewpoints. Response: Even with ADA parking at the staff house, the impacts of providing an accessible path (ADA standard) is significantly challenging due to the steep terrain.

## **9. MEETING HOMEWORK**

- Familiarize yourselves on project materials (parking and trail concepts, Public Access Framework, key considerations, traffic information, and public feedback, etc.) in preparation for next the meeting.
- Prepare to share observations and reflections at Meeting 6.
- Prepare to receive public feedback on site at Meeting 6.
- Consider how conceptual design alternatives meet all project goals and objectives.
- Consider other potential issues.
- Begin thinking about how to develop PAWG recommendations.

## **10. CLOSING COMMENTS**

The next PAWG meeting is on site. This is not a site tour but rather a visit to specific locations observe existing conditions and clarify issues discussed to date.

PAWG Meeting #6 is scheduled for March 24, 2024 on site from 9 am to 1 pm. Please plan to arrive 15 minutes early as the starting location is a short walk from the Hawthorns meadow where we gathered previously.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Hawthorns Are Public Access Working Group was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.



ATTACHMENT 1:

USE	TRAIL #	VOTING
HIKING	1-9	(12) 1
EQ	"	(4) 2 (8) 1
DOGS	"	(3) 3 (1) 2 (8) 1
BIKES	1, 2, 10, 14	
HIKING	10, 14	(12) 1
EQ	"	(3) 2 (1) 4 (8) 1
EQ	10	(12) 1
EQ	14	(3) 2 (1) 4 (8) 1
DOGS	10, 14	(1) 3 (1) 1
HIKING	11, 12, 13	(12) 1
EQ	"	(2) 2 (10) 1
DOGS	"	(2) 2 (10) 2
HIKING	15	(12) 1
	16	(2) 2 (10) 1
	17	(3) 5 (3) 4 (1) 3
EQ	15	(1) 2 (11) 1 (2) 2 (3) 1
	16	(3) 2 (9) 1
	17	same as HIKING
DOG	15	(2) 2 (10) 1
	16	(4) 2 (8) 1
	17	same as HIKING

Photographs of PAWG informal voting results on trail uses – numbers in parentheses denote the number of members.

USE	TRAIL #	VOTING
BIKING	3-9	(1)5 (2)4s (2)3 (1)2 (6)1
	1, 2	(1)4 (3)2 (8)1
	10, 14	(1)4 (3)2 (8)1
	11, 12, 13	(1)5 (2)4 (2)3 (3)2 (5)1
more discussion needed	→ 15	(1)6 (7)5 (2)2 (1)4
	→ 16	(7)5 (2)4 (1)2 (2)1 (1)4
	→ 17	(1)6 (7)5 (1)4 (1)2 (2)1
Benches		
Y/N	A	(1)2 11(1)
	towards Bay	(1)2 11(1)
	B	(1)2 11(1)
	→ looking north	TBD
		(out of viewshed)
	C	(1)5 (1)2 (10)1
	→	need to check on site

Photographs of PAWG informal voting results on trail uses (continued) and benches – numbers in parentheses denote the number of members.

USE	VOTING
PARKING	
BOTH	(5)4 (2)3 (2)2 (2)1
7	(1)5 (6)4 (3)3 (1)1
8	(3)6 (5)4 (1)3 (2)2
HOUSE SITE	(4)6 (2)5 (1)4 (1)3 (3)2

Photographs of PAWG informal voting results on conceptual parking options – numbers in parentheses denote the number of members.



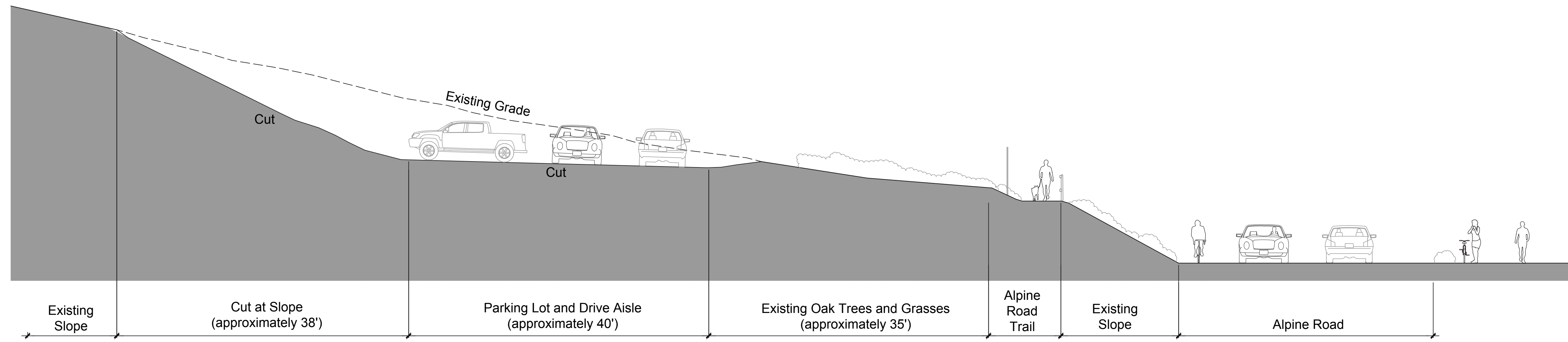
**Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group**  
**Parking Options 8 and 9 Concept Design Comparison**  
*Hawthorns Area Plan*

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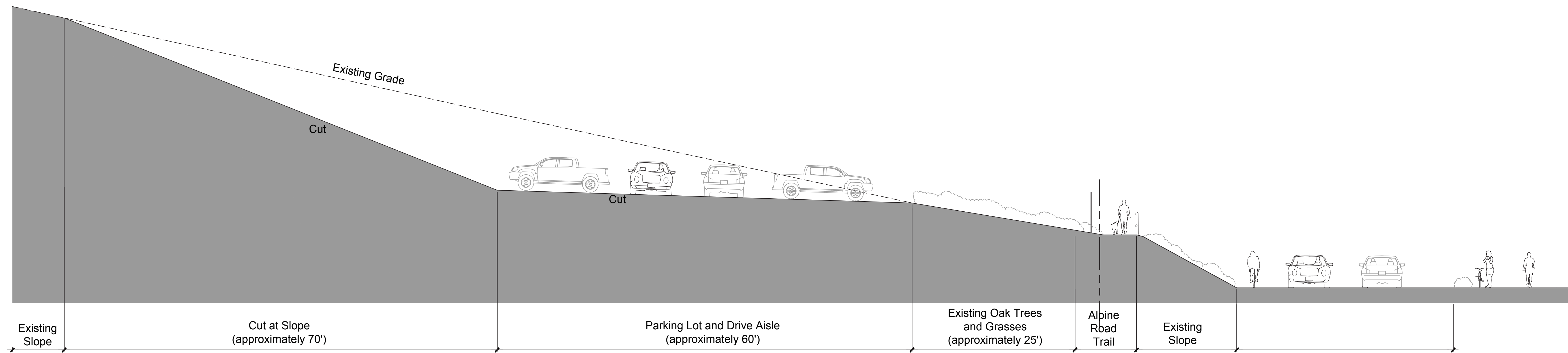
After the February 29, 2024 Public Access Working Group (PAWG) meeting, two PAWG members sent the Midpen project team a couple other parking lot options to explore. The project and consultant team looked into these ideas to assess the potential number of parking spaces the new location could accommodate and the impact on the existing site. The result is parking lot option 9, which locates a 30-space parking lot to the right of the existing driveway. During the upcoming site meeting on March 24, the project team will guide the PAWG to this location to gather their feedback on whether they would like to pursue this option further.

For the PAWG's consideration, attached is a side-by-side high level comparison of options 8 and 9. The excavation required for option 9, particularly into the hillside, will be considerably more extensive than for option 8. Both options assume a 2:1 slope for the uphill cut. While option 8's section appears similar, the cut/fill is closer to being balanced onsite due to fill at the entrance and turnaround areas. In option 9, however, all grading will involve cutting into the hillside, resulting in significant off-haul and a 12-foot-high retaining wall. The cut and fill could be balanced if two 6-foot-high walls are installed on the uphill and downhill side of the parking lot.

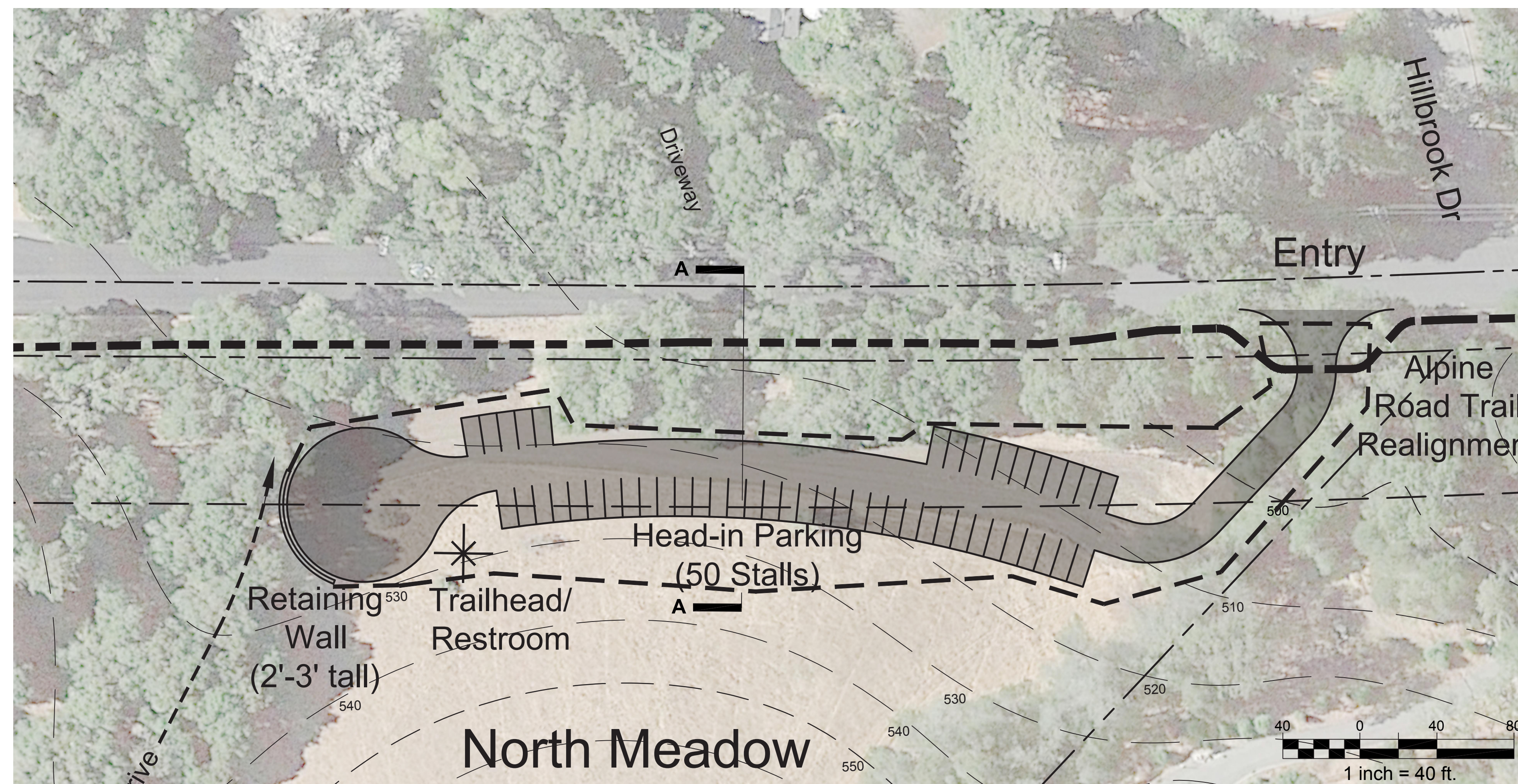




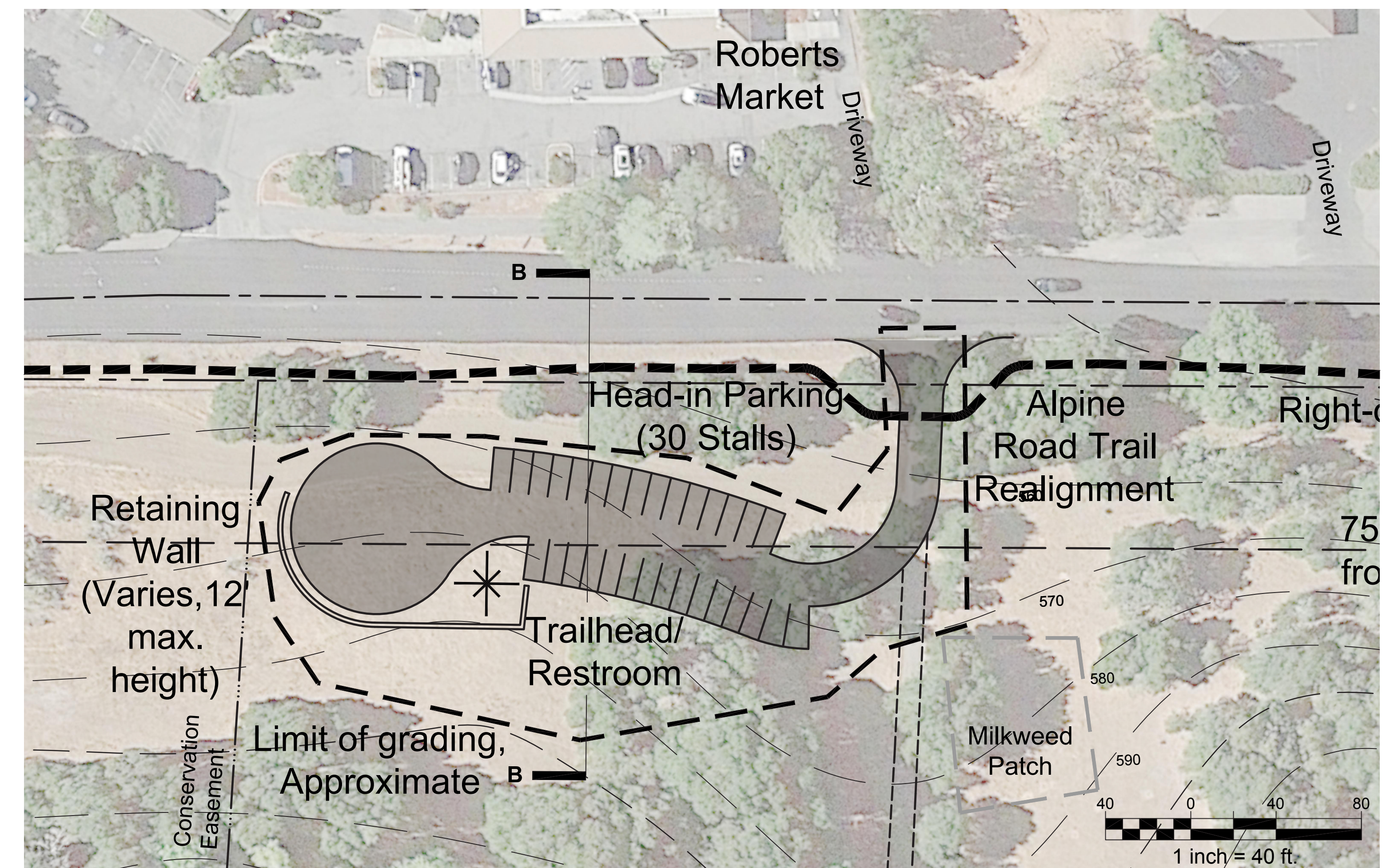
OPTION 8 - SECTION A-A



OPTION 9 - SECTION B-B



OPTION 8 - PLAN



OPTION 9 - PLAN

# HAWTHORNS AREA - OPTION 8 & 9 COMPARISON