



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## **MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

### **PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office  
5050 El Camino Real  
Los Altos, CA 94022

**Tuesday, November 4, 2025**

### **DRAFT MINUTES**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

#### **ROLL CALL**

Members present: Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle

Members absent: None

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Counsel Egan Hill, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Management Analyst II Sophie Christel, Senior Capital Project Manager Mark Brandi, Capital Project Manager I Ayden Sabharwal, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Foothills Area Superintendent Brad Pennington, and Land Stewardship and Trails Manager Michael Gorman

#### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

#### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Public comment opened at 1:01 p.m.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 1:01 p.m.

### **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

#### **1. Approve the October 21, 2025 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Public comment opened at 1:01 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 1:01 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded the motion to approve the October 21, 2025, Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

#### **2. Draft Goals and Outcomes for the Strategic Plan for Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change (R-25-138)**

Management Analyst II Sophie Christel provided the staff presentation. General Manager Ana Ruiz and Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington assisted with answering questions.

Director Kersteen-Tucker commented that Goal 1 includes an educational component that is unclear in the phrasing. She noted that Outcome 1 states “The District understands the meaning, implication, and benefits of resilience and effectively applies a resilience lens to day-to-day work.” She noted that the term “The District” is vague and suggested to change it to workforce.

Ms. Christel stated she can revise the text to read “The District staff and management understands the meaning...” to Outcome 1 for Goal 1.

Ms. Ruiz proposed also adding “Board” to Outcome 1 for Goal 1. The Committee agreed, and Ms. Christel stated she would revise the language to include staff, management, and Board.

Ms. Christel attained consensus from the Committee to apply the same revision to Outcome 2 of Goal 1.

Director Kishimoto suggested including a summary of the major areas of threat that will be addressed by the Strategic Plan for Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change (SPARCC).

Chair Riffle inquired whether Goal 1 would also apply to how the District selects its vendors.

Ms. Ruiz highlighted the recent changes to the grazing tenant selection process, which now incorporates sustainable practices as one of the criteria. She said that this goal can help codify this approach in all future RFP/RFPQ processes that staff solicit.

Chair Riffle suggested keeping the language in Goal 1 as written but emphasized that the implementation steps should reflect that effort extends beyond the District.

Director Kersteen-Tucker proposed revising Goal 2 Outcome 1 to say “The District works with an expanding array of partners in its land management efforts to holistically address resilience needs across jurisdictional borders.”

Ms. Christel stated that the language can be modified to reference either an expanding array or perhaps a greater diversity of partners.

Director Kishimoto suggested adding that the District seeks to be a regional leader in Outcome 1 of Goal 2.

Chair Riffle noted that Goal 2 presents an opportunity to share best management practices not only on what the District is doing, but also to learn from others and asked whether this is reflected in Outcome 1.

Ms. Christel stated that best management practices fit better under Outcome 1, while Outcome 2 focuses on data sharing, which could be expanded beyond hazard and vulnerability data to include ecological data or other types of data.

Chair Riffle asked if Outcome 2 of Goal 2 should be broadened for other types of data.

Ms. Christel stated that she could make the language more general as she believes that there are different types of data that would benefit from sharing across entities.

Chair Riffle commented that unless there is a strong reason for the language to be specific, he supports broadening the language on Outcome 2 of Goal 2 and making it more specific in the next level of implementation.

Chair Riffle suggested adding “or lead” to Goal 2, “Grow, strengthen, and/or lead strategic partnership to expand...”.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested a clearer distinction between Goals 3 and 4. She also suggested stating upfront in Goal 3, “Strategically prioritize and scope capital and operational projects to promote...”.

Director Kishimoto suggested moving the current Goal 4 to Goal 3.

Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington stated Goal 3 speaks to the infrastructure and the development of open space for recreation or other types of human use of the open space, while Goal 4 focuses on managing the ecosystem and the natural environment to make it more resilient to climate change impacts.

Chair Riffle suggested removing “land” from Goal 3.

Director Kersteen-Tucker agreed with removing “land” from Goal 3 to avoid confusion with Outcome 2 when discussing capital and operational projects.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested swapping the order of Outcomes for Goal 3.

Director Kishimoto recommended that Goal 4 should be moved to Goal 2.

Director Kersteen-Tucker agreed with the suggestion.

Ms. Christel confirmed that the revised goal order is: Goal 1 Culture, Goal 2 Natural Resources, Goal 3 Infrastructure, Goal 4 Partnerships, and Goal 5 Access.

Director Kersteen-Tucker proposed revising Outcome 2 of the current Goal 4 to read: “Strategically protect wildlife connectivity and foster healthy natural systems across District lands.”

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested adding Goal 6 to address the public safety aspect of the goal, while Goal 5 would focus on public awareness and education around the importance of climate resilience that would then drive the public outreach programs such as the docent programs.

Director Kishimoto agreed with the addition of Goal 6 on public safety and noted that the public would appreciate having that goal.

Director Riffle reiterated that Goal 5 should focus on awareness, and Goal 6 should focus on public safety.

Mr. Lenington asked where the District’s responsibility falls in the public safety realm, specifically about development in the Wildland Urban Interface. He noted that staff frequently receives requests for fuel management to provide fuel break protections for adjacent private development. He stated that it is not necessarily the District’s responsibility to protect private development that borders the open space preserves. He further noted that the public safety element of the climate resiliency policy will need to be considered as the safety goal and outcomes are crafted.

Director Kishimoto concurred and noted that the District’s role would be more along the lines of supporting or working with the communities. She emphasized that the District does not want the public to assume it has a legal responsibility to protect their private safety.

Chair Riffle added what Mr. Lenington expressed should be captured to Goal 6, which is safety oriented.

Chair Riffle suggested moving the first outcome in Goal 5 to Goal 6, along with a portion of the second outcome “How to recreate safely during climate driven events.” He then inquired what the outcomes are for Goal 5.

Ms. Christel stated that Goal 5 would then focus on public education and awareness of the impacts of climate change in a more general sense, including ways the community can increase personal resilience and what the District is doing broadly towards resilience work.

Chair Riffle commented that the outcomes should be measurable and not be too vague.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested that staff give it further thought and bring back options for consideration. She agreed that the outcomes should not be vague but noted that the concept of climate resilience may not be well understood by much of the public. For that reason, she emphasized the importance of promoting awareness and education on climate resiliency.

Ms. Christel stated that it would also be acceptable for Goals 5 and 6 to be lighter, and that each goal may only have one outcome by splitting the existing two outcomes.

Public comment opened at 2:05 p.m.

Bruce Bailey spoke on Goal 5, noting that he had to read it several times to fully understand it, and agrees with splitting Goal 5 and adding Goal 6.

Public comment closed at 2:06 p.m.

Chair Riffle asked how the trade-offs should be addressed, noting that resilience work is necessary but can be costly. He questioned whether considerations for cost efficiency should be addressed within SPARCC or considered when making a decision.

Ms. Ruiz stated that she would consult with Ms. Christel about where to embed the language, possibly in a narrative form. She noted that resilience is starting to appear in recommendations for the full Board to consider and that SPARCC will formalize it, while acknowledging trade-offs such as cost and long-term maintenance.

Chair Riffle commented that while the District aims to meet resilience goals, the Board also has a fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers. He asked his colleagues whether the cost considerations should be addressed in SPARCC or left to an independent decision.

Director Kersteen-Tucker agreed with Chair Riffle that costs should be addressed.

Ms. Christel stated that research on the economic costs and benefits of resilience work shows that upfront investments often lead to long-term savings.

Ms. Ruiz noted that it would need to be based on a case-by-case decision and whether it is a programmatic or a non-programmatic decision. Building in resilience early can make sense, but for others projects some sustainability measures may be very costly.

Chair Riffle agreed and believed this will be reflected in how staff presents the trade-offs, which is where the cost element may be addressed.

No vote required. Staff will take the Committee's feedback provided on the draft Goals and Outcomes.

### **3. Prospect Road Parking Area Improvement Options for Fremont Older Open Space Preserve (R-25-139)**

General Manager Ana Ruiz provided opening remarks. Senior Capital Project Manager Mark Brandi and Capital Project Manager I Ayden Sabharwal provided the staff presentation. Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Foothills Area Superintendent Brad Pennington and Land Stewardship and Trails Manager Michael Gorman assisted in answering questions.

Director Kishimoto commented that the road to the parking lot is narrow and asked whether a sign indicating when the lot is full could be installed to prevent queuing.

Mr. Brandi stated that staff has discussed the possibility of tracking parking availability with sensors, similar to Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve (OSP). He noted that the lot fills frequently, so real time availability may have limited value, but staff can consider the option moving forward.

Director Kishimoto asked if there was any opportunity to purchase land from the Saratoga Country Club.

Mr. Brandi stated that earlier planning efforts, dating back decades, explored options for additional parking locations, including discussion with the Saratoga County Club about a potential land swap. He added that the current project focuses on improving the existing parking area, but a larger discussion could still be had about other opportunities in the future.

Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke about the cost of Option 2, noting it is significantly higher than Option 1 while providing fewer parking spaces. She requested that regardless of the decision made, transportation demand management (TDM) strategies should be studied and evaluated.

Director Kersteen-Tucker echoed Director Kishimoto's comments that additional discussions aimed to increase parking capacity would be beneficial.

Chair Riffle asked if staff could review whether additional parking could be added in the central parking area in Option 2.

Mr. Brandi stated that staff can re-evaluate the area but noted that multiple configurations of the central parking area have already been reviewed. He added that staff can review the eastern end of the five-space parking row to see if additional parking can be accommodated.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested including a cost estimate for resilience elements in Option 2 when presenting this item to the Board.

Chair Riffle inquired whether there has been any consideration of reserving one or two parking stalls for carpool.

Mr. Brandi stated that carpool parking can be contemplated and explored in more detail, though it is uncertain whether it would effectively incentivize more people to use carpool and reduce the number of cars.

Chair Riffle suggested that the Board report address the possibility of one or two carpool designed spots, noting that it may encourage visitors to carpool.

Chair Riffle suggested exploring the feasibility and costs of providing internet connectivity to the site and considering a partnership or cost sharing with the Saratoga Country Club or neighbors. He also suggested installing sensors in the parking areas since the lot will have to be repaved and then can potentially be used in the future as a TDM strategy.

Mr. Brandi stated staff can consider installing underground sensors while re-surfacing the lot.

Director Kersteen-Tucker stated that if Option 2 is pursued, staff should engage with neighbors to explain the rationale and highlight TDM strategies, including potential carpool spaces and sensors, to help address any concerns.

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone noted concern about implementing real-time parking space indicators due to the lot's small and tight layout. He stated that users would have difficulty accurately relying on an application or signage counts and advised caution in pursuing this strategy.

Public comment opened at 3:06 p.m.

Bruce Bailey, a long-time user of the Fremont Older parking lot for over 34 years, commented that stripping the lot would likely reduce parking capacity and would not address ongoing complaints about limited parking. He noted that residents frequently raise concerns about cars queuing in the marked fire lane, which visitors often overlook, and suggested improved signage. He expressed support for the proposed circulation flow, stating it would reduce conflicts caused by vehicles traveling in opposite directions. He added that while overflow car parking exists on Prospect Road, it is too far for visitors with disabilities. He also stated he supports providing internet access in the area and believes a bike rack is not needed and would be a waste of space.

Public comment closed at 3:13 p.m.

Chair Riffle expressed his preference for Option 2, noting that it would provide more organization, safety, and ease of patrol, resulting in a more orderly parking experience. He stated that he hopes one or two additional parking spaces can be added to Option 2. He also encouraged applying relevant parking management lessons from Rancho San Antonio OSP to the Fremont Older parking lot, acknowledging there are limitations but emphasized the need to make the best use of the small parking lot.

Director Kersteen-Tucker echoed Chair Riffle's comments and expressed support for Option 2, emphasizing the safety considerations and resilience aspects of Option 2. She also supported the use of TDM strategies to help communicate with neighbors about why additional parking spaces are not being added and the improvements being made will improve safety and be more tolerable for the neighbors.

Director Kishimoto expressed that she is undecided and after further discussion she opted in favor of Option 2.

Director Kishimoto requested that when the item is presented to the full Board include the broader discussion held by the Committee.

**Motion:** Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Chair Riffle seconded the motion to select Option 2 to enhance the visitor experience at the existing parking area off Prospect Road at Fremont Older Open Space Preserve to subsequently forward on to the Board of Directors for their consideration:

- Option 2: formalize the parking configuration through asphalt and permeable pavement and striping, establish defined circulation routes, and enhance ADA parking and trailhead amenities. This option defines the parking layout and number of parking spaces, enhances accessibility, and provides new public amenities.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 3:23 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC  
District Clerk