



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

Monday, April 27, 2026

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riffle called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 2:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Zoe Kersteen-Tucker (voting alternate), Curt Riffle

Members absent: Jed Cyr and Yoriko Kishimoto

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, 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, Senior Resource Management Specialist Karine Tokatljan, Planner II Mattea Ottoboni, Senior Capital Project Manager Mark Brandi, Capital Project Manager I Ayden Sabharwal, Area Superintendent Brad Pennington, Senior Resource Management Specialist David Liefert

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the March 31, 2026 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.

Public comment opened.

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

Public comment closed.

Chair Riffle requested a correction of the draft minutes on the second page, fourth paragraph of agenda item two, which states, “Chair Riffle inquired whether the District could consider ways to inform the public that there is additional parking a few miles down the road at the Windy Hill Portola Road lot.” He explained the additional parking is not on Portola Road but rather on Sears Ranch Road.

Motion: Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Chair Riffle seconded the motion to approve the March 31, 2026 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Cyr absent)

2. Sensitive Species Protection Planning for Bayfront Preserves (R-26-57)

Senior Resource Management Specialist Karine Tokatlian and Planner II Mattea Ottoboni presented. Assistant General Manager Brian Malone and General Manager Ana Ruiz assisted with answering questions.

Director Cyr joined the meeting at 2:16 p.m.

Director Kersteen-Tucker expressed regret that on-the-ground work would not begin until 2028, and suggested staff perform interim work while waiting to be CEQA certified.

Ms. Tokatlian stated staff can explore options for habitat or preserve management that benefits species protection and reduces predator activity, but that staff would need to be confident about the necessary level of CEQA or environmental coverage.

Chair Riffle suggested incorporating volunteers to assist in the interim and possibly long-term implementation actions.

Ms. Ottoboni confirmed that staff can explore promoting volunteer habitat enhancement support to get people involved.

Ms. Tokatlian explained there may be an opportunity to have a volunteer presence with educational materials to inform visitors using the trails, increase outreach efforts, and convey to the community how best to protect these species.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested there may be an opportunity to collaborate with District partners on a regional basis.

Public comment period opened.

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

Public comment period closed.

Chair Riffle requested that staff include the presentation slides in the FYI that will be presented to the Board of Directors (Board).

Motion: Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to provide feedback on the development of a Sensitive Species Protection Program for Bayfront Preserves, and provide concurrence that the Sensitive Species Protection Program as described is sufficient for staff to release a Request for Proposals to select a consultant for this work. An award of contract would subsequently be brought to the full Board of Directors for review and consideration.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

3. Design Alternatives for the Kennedy Trailhead Parking Area Improvement Project in Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (R-26-58)

Senior Capital Project Manager Mark Brandi and Capital Project Manager I Ayden Sabharwal presented. Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, General Manager Ana Ruiz, Area Superintendent Brad Pennington, and Senior Resource Management Specialist David Leifert assisted with answering questions.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired about the feasibility of creating an exit separate from the entrance with option 1.

Mr. Brandi stated the possibility could be considered further but staff's preliminary finding was that it may be infeasible due to environmental impacts, particularly to oak trees susceptible to impact within their root zone, and because of the significant grading that would be required for a separate exit.

Ms. Ruiz further explained that there is a wetland setback that needs to be maintained.

Mr. Brandi added that the eastern side of the site is complex in terms of the number of constraints, including the wetland, which may have a 30-foot setback required by the resource agencies with jurisdiction over the wetland.

Chair Riffle requested that the committee provide their feedback on option 1 versus option 2 so that the full Board has the Committee's feedback, and to also consider whether to forward both options, one of the options, or neither option to the Board.

Director Kersteen-Tucker, supported by Chair Riffle, suggested identifying the location for a bike rack on the site plan as part of the transportation demand management strategies. She further suggested identifying the capacity of the bike rack.

Mr. Brandi stated staff will review the demand for bicycle parking and potentially revisit the traffic study associated with the project to gain a better sense of demand.

Director Kersteen-Tucker encouraged more bike parking.

Chair Riffle commented that, unlike the Fremont Older parking lot, he is leaning towards maximizing the number of parking spaces and not having full circulation of traffic flow. He requested additional information on the trade-off.

Mr. Brandi explained staff is constantly evaluating full circulation in and out of sites, and every site is unique. He stated that although Kennedy and Fremont Older are both highly constrained in terms of the ability to have full circulation of vehicles, the community feedback for this project suggests there is a priority for alleviating roadside parking and overflow issues, and therefore to maximize the number of parking stalls provided. He noted that this project would not solve the overflow parking issue in the neighborhood, however, it would be a step towards alleviating the pressure on the neighborhood.

Public comment period opened.

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

Public comment period closed.

Director Cyr recommended forwarding both options to the full Board for their consideration. He noted his preference is for Option 2 and identified increased circulation as a higher priority.

Director Kersteen-Tucker also recommended forwarding both options to the full Board and expressed a preference for Option 1. She noted that although she likes the improved circulation of Option 2, Option 1 has five extra parking spaces, in addition to the bike parking. She also expressed appreciation that fewer trees would need to be removed with Option 1.

Chair Riffle expressed a preference for Option 1 to maximize parking capacity. He recommended forwarding both options to the Board for consideration. He commented that he believes the District needs to maximize access to relieve the roadside parking pressure on the top of the hill and on Kennedy Road. He expressed a preference for extending the duration of the online survey to allow for additional public feedback and said he would defer to staff. He also noted that he had heard comments questioning why the District would provide ADA access if the trail is too difficult and stated it is the District's responsibility to provide ADA access. He highlighted that eventually the District will have an entrance in the Rancho de Guadalupe area and suggested letting people know that this other entrance is part of the District's long-term plan.

Mr. Brandi stated staff will be sure to highlight that in the presentation to the Board.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested that the staff report to the Board include future entry points into the preserve, a key to the two options so the Board understands exactly what everything is, and to add where staff believes bike parking could be located. She further requested staff to add their initial ideas for the bike parking capacity, more information regarding fire emergency access, and a description of the wetland and how it might dictate the type of surfacing chosen for the area.

Motion: Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to forward both design alternatives to the full Board of Directors for review and approval along with the Committee's recommendation for Option 1.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

Chair Riffle asked for staff to recommend to the Board to visit the site prior to the item being presented. He noted that staff would not need to be present.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 4:07 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC
District Clerk