



R-26-59
Meeting 26-13
May 6, 2026

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA ITEM 1

AGENDA ITEM

Presentation of the Hawthorns Area Plan Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs for Consideration as the Basis for the Project Description to Conduct Environmental Review

GENERAL MANAGER’S RECOMMENDATION *se den*

Consider and accept the Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs, with any changes recommended by the Board of Directors, as the basis for the project description to conduct environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

COMMITTEE

- Action Plan & Budget
- Legislative, Funding & Public Affairs
- Planning & Natural Resources
- Real Property
- Ad-Hoc Committee

MEMBERS

- Ward 1 – Craig Gleason
- Ward 2 – Yoriko Kishimoto
- Ward 3 – Jed Cyr
- Ward 4 – Curt Riffle
- Ward 5 – Karen Holman
- Ward 6 – Margaret MacNiven
- Ward 7 – Zoe Kersteen-Tucker

COMMITTEE ACTION

Date: March 17, 2026

Action: Forward the (previously draft) Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs, with any changes recommended by the Committee, to the Board of Directors for consideration as the basis for the project description to conduct environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Item: Presentation of the Hawthorns Area Plan (previously draft) Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs for Consideration as the Basis for the Project Description to Conduct Environmental Review

COMMENTS

On March 17, 2026, staff presented the Hawthorns Area action table and schematic parking designs, two key elements of the Hawthorns Area Plan, to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) (see PNR report and minutes in Attachments 7 and 8). The Hawthorns Area Plan, when approved, will specify activities and actions related to new projects, ongoing operations, and programmatic activities on the property. The action table and accompanying maps identify land use, natural resources, and public access actions, and the schematic designs

depict parking and trailhead improvements at two locations on the property. The PNR reviewed and commented on the action table, maps, and schematic designs as summarized below.

Action Table

PNR collectively reviewed each section of the action table and identified missing data, needed clarifications, topographic errors, formatting problems, and numbering issues to address.

The committee requested clarification about the low priority rating for natural resources actions. Natural Resources staff explained that their evaluation considers natural resource priorities at the District-wide level. Based on the technical studies conducted for Hawthorns, staff ranked priorities for the property lower than those at other preserves with higher priority natural resource protection actions. The low priority label in the Hawthorns Area Plan does not indicate that natural resource management is of low priority, rather that the natural resources actions at the Hawthorns Property are of lower priority compared to other preserve sites given these resources are in generally good condition and in good ecological health. PNR expressed comfort in deferring prioritization and ranking to staff as long as this context is added to the action table.

PNR requested clarification on the priority rankings of the proposed trail connections to Alpine Road Trail (high) and the future, potential trail connection to Sweet Springs Trail (low). Staff explained that the Alpine Road Trail connections will allow trail users to navigate across the parking area driveways and connect to the internal trailhead. Therefore, these trail improvements are of higher priority than the aspirational and potential future connection to Sweet Springs Trail (which is located in the Portola Valley Ranch community). Moreover, this connection is speculative since it requires coordination and agreement with the adjacent community and the Town. Further exploration of this potential future connection would occur at a later date, well after the Hawthorns area is open. PNR requested that the accompanying public access map be revised to more clearly delineate the improvements to the Alpine Road Trail that are required to implement the parking area and trailhead.

The attached and revised action table and maps reflect PNR-requested edits and additions (Attachments 2 – 3).

Schematic Designs

Following the Public Access Working Group's recommendations approved by the Board on March 12, 2025, two parking design options as presented to the PNR have advanced into the schematic design phase. Option 9 uses the existing driveway off Alpine Road, across from Roberts Market, and option 10 requires a new driveway at the intersection of Portola and Alpine Roads, which would create a four-way stop condition. Parking in either option would be implemented in phases, starting with approximately 25 spaces in Phase I and potentially expanding to a maximum of 50 spaces at a future date, if demand consistently exceeds the initial parking capacity. The PNR asked clarifying questions about both options as described below. The attached and revised schematic designs reflect PNR-requested changes and additions (Attachment 4).

The committee asked that cross sections and photographs for both options be included with the Board report to better understand proposed site conditions and visibility for vehicles turning left out of the existing driveway. Cross sections and additional photographs of the parking area sites are included in Attachment 4.

For additional clarity about Phase I, staff developed two potential Phase I design plans for each option (Attachment 4). The Phase I designs provide for an initial parking allotment of 21-25 spaces while allowing for a future parking expansion to a buildout of 50 spaces, if additional parking is considered necessary based on parking demand. Before proceeding with the implementation of Phase II, the General Manager would first return to the Board for their review and consideration to determine whether to proceed with such an expansion. The Phase I parking design plans and the buildout to 50 spaces will both be evaluated in CEQA. The Phase I designs that have been prepared for each option are described below:

1. “Linear” Phase I design: includes a drive aisle, 21 parking spaces on one side only, a hammerhead turnaround, and site amenities. The linear approach minimizes the extent of cross-slope grading.
2. “Truncated” Phase I design: includes 25 parking spaces loaded on both sides of a short section of drive aisle, a hammerhead turnaround, and site amenities. Though wider than the linear design, the truncated approach reduces the extent of grading along the slope. The Phase I hammerhead is located at the beginning of the parking lot and if Phase II is implemented, the hammerhead would be relocated to the end of the drive aisle.

PNR also requested photographs and more information on trees proposed to be removed for each parking option. They also requested that the project team identify which trees may be considered significant trees by the Town of Portola Valley. These are shown in Attachment 5.

The committee requested that staff include a summary of specific sections from the District’s 2024 Parking/Staging Area and Trailhead Design Guidelines (Guidelines) that guided schematic design development. Below are high-level summaries of key sections and points that have guided the schematic design process to date and how the schematic designs implement this guidance. Page references are included to Chapter B. Approach in the Guidelines document:

Typologies, Open Sites (page 13)

Guidance: Use topography and grading to screen parking in grassland landscapes. In areas of cut or fill, increase the scope of grading to allow the blending of new grades into the native topography in a naturalistic manner. Explore use of low retaining walls to reduce grading.

Implementation: Options 9 and 10 use naturalistically graded berms to screen parked cars from adjacent roads and paths. Grades are contoured to quickly blend new slopes into the surrounding hillside. Carefully placed, two- to three-foot retaining walls help retain existing trees that also offer screening and habitat value.

Viewsheds (pages 17)

Guidance: Parking areas should be designed to establish a sense of place by framing views of natural and cultural landscape features while screening functional, unsightly elements from scenic corridors.

Implementation: Options 9 and 10 are screened from the Alpine Road scenic corridor through the use of graded berms and the retention of trees along the parking area’s northern boundary. Both options provide access to internal and external viewsheds within the property through the internal trail system and accompanying wayfinding tools.

Siting and Layout (page 18)

Guidance: Site parking areas on the outer edges of preserves and close to areas of existing development and roads. Implement efficient parking layouts. Consider phased implementation. Provide easy drive-through and exit layouts. Preserve native vegetation, especially mature native trees, to the greatest extent possible. Follow best practices for pedestrians, bicyclists, and driver safety.

Implementation: Options 9 and 10 are both positioned on the northern edge of the Hawthorns property, closest to areas of existing development (i.e., Robert's Market) and roadways (i.e., Alpine and Portola Roads). Both options are designed for efficiency with a standard ingress/egress and an emergency access layout with a hammerhead turnaround and bidirectional drive aisles. Both options consider a Phase I and II approach and follow best practices for pedestrian, bicycle, and driver safety, including pedestrian friendly car stacking at driveways. Both options are designed to preserve the majority of mature native trees on site by laying out the parking spaces within a grassy, open area and using two- to three- foot tall retaining walls, where necessary.

Grading (pages 21-22)

Guidance: Work with topography to the extent feasible. Minimize site impacts such as the grading footprint. Avoid large retaining walls. Seek to minimize the project footprint while minimizing visual and environmental impacts.

Implementation: Options 9 and 10 are designed to fit effectively within the site's hillside topography. Intentionally placed, small (two- to three- foot tall) retaining walls are used to minimize the grading footprint and protect mature native trees. Both options use a hammerhead turnaround to achieve emergency access requirements instead of a 96-foot roundabout design, thereby minimizing the project footprint. Cut and fill are balanced on site.

General Comments and Staff Responses

Several individuals provided public comments related to the Hawthorns Area Plan during the PNR meeting. One comment included a suggestion to open the Hawthorns property without a parking lot to lessen site impacts and allow more time to evaluate future parking needs. Staff responded that a "No Project" alternative will be evaluated as part of the CEQA environmental review process, which would discuss the existing conditions without the proposed parking and trail improvements. However, opening trails in a new area without providing parking would establish an obstacle for those who do not live within walking or biking distance to be able to access the trails and likely lead to offsite parking conflicts as visitors must resort to parking in the nearby commercial center and along neighborhood streets.

Another public comment suggested a parking lot configuration with two driveways that would allow one-way in and one-way out circulation. The Hawthorns Public Access Working Group discussed a two-driveway, one-way in and one-way out approach in 2024 as early parking concepts emerged and abandoned this option for a variety of reasons described below.

1. Parking circulation in a two-driveway option, when the lot is full, would add additional traffic onto Alpine Road as vehicles drive out of the lot to circulate via Alpine Road to drive back into the lot with the hopes of finding a vacating parking space.

2. A two driveway option creates two points of interactions between visitor vehicles and Alpine Road, doubling the points of interaction with: pedestrians traveling along the Alpine Trail roadway frontage, bicycles traveling eastbound on Alpine Road, and vehicles traveling both east and west bound along Alpine Road.
3. One ingress driveway and one egress driveway will introduce some confusion as visitors figure out how to maneuver the two-driveway layout, with the potential for motorists to enter the wrong way into the parking area.
4. A two driveway option requires additional earthwork, grading, retaining walls, and tree removal (20 trees total). In comparison, option 9 requires the removal of 5 trees, and option 10 requires the removal of 15 trees.

Another comment suggested a permeable material for the parking lot such as gravel. Although counterintuitive, compacted gravel (90% plus compaction is required to support vehicular circulation, including fire trucks) is considered impervious and therefore requires stormwater treatment measures, leading to a larger disturbed footprint to establish stormwater basins. Gravel can also be challenging to maintain in the long term. As a potential alternative, permeable concrete would be considered for its durability and stormwater treatment function. Permeable concrete can be installed to retain stormwater within its footprint while providing for the desired subsurface permeability.

Additional comments included concerns about Alpine Road Trail as a safe route to school and the desire for the District to engage with the Town of Portola Valley's Trails and Paths Committee. Coordination with the Town Committee on this subject will be conducted during the project implementation phase that will follow completion of the environmental review phase.

Prior suggestions have also been raised to instead provide parking and driveway access from Los Trancos Road, rather than Alpine Road. However, neither of the two existing driveways off Los Trancos Road provide adequate sight distance for either a right or left turn due to the curvature of Los Trancos Road in this section. In addition, private property is located between the Hawthorns property and Los Trancos Road. The District's access easement rights across the private property does not include general public access. For these reasons, access from the Los Trancos Road side of the property is infeasible for general public access.

Finally, the committee suggested that staff invite the Board to visit the site and walk along the Alpine Road Trail. Several Board members have visited the site on their own. In addition, the project team offered small group tours to Board members. Five Board members attended the site tours on April 7 and 13, 2026.

PNR voted unanimously to forward the Hawthorns Area Plan Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs, with the PNR's edits and comments addressed and incorporated, for the Board consideration as the basis for the CEQA Project Description for environmental review.

Next Steps

Pending Board approval, the project team will initiate environmental review. The District's role as the lead agency in the CEQA analysis of this project includes engaging with responsible agencies (CEQA Guidelines section 15096), including the Town of Portola Valley.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Hawthorns Property Aerial Map (*original, from 3/17/26 PNR*)
2. Hawthorns Area Plan Draft Action Table (*updated*)
3. Hawthorns Area Plan Draft Maps (*updated*)
4. Hawthorns Schematic Design Options 9 and 10 Plans, Cross Sections and Photographs (*updated*)
5. Hawthorns Trees Proposed for Removal
6. March 17, 2026 PNR Committee Report (R-26-35) – *note that Attachments 1 through 4 are included as listed above*
7. March 17, 2026 Final PNR Committee Minutes

Prepared by / Contact person:

Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, Planning Department
Cecelia Gerstenbacher, Planner II, Planning Department
Ashley Mac, Planner III, Planning Department

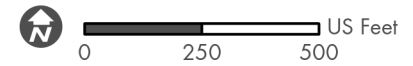
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Created By: flopez



Hawthorns Area - Aerial Map

- Hawthorns Area
- Approximate Limits of Hawthorns Historic Complex (closed area)
- Building

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
9/9/2022



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.

Action Table

The Hawthorns Area’s use and management actions are organized by topic area and shown in the table below. This table is intended to be an attachment within the Hawthorns Area Plan report which will include additional narrative. Each action includes high-level information related to phasing, priority, action type, cost, and potential partners. Phasing categorized as “ongoing” refers to actions which do not have a specific start or end date, such as maintenance and monitoring efforts. Phasing is also categorized as “short-term” for implementation within 1-3 years, “mid-term” for implementation within 4-9 years, and “long-term” for implementation within 10 or more years. Some actions may occur at multiple timescales, such as the development of trail connections, and in that instance have been categorized as “short/mid-term, or “mid/long-term.” Actions have also been assigned as high/medium/low priority based on Board and public interest as well as urgency of the restoration or management actions. Natural resource action priorities were considered and evaluated based on urgency and in context to other natural resource priorities at the District-wide level. Based on technical studies conducted at Hawthorns to evaluate site conditions, habitat health and level of natural resource sensitivity, Natural Resources staff ranked certain natural resource actions for the property as low priority. This “low” designation reflects the low urgency for time sensitive actions, limited natural resource sensitivity, and relative healthy habitat conditions as compared to other preserve areas that house higher levels of sensitive natural resources in need of timely management actions. Action types are categorized as CIP (capital improvement project), EVAL (Evaluation/Assessments), POL (policy/plan compliance), PRG (programming project), M (maintenance project), and NR (natural resources/restoration project) to better understand the implications of an action on staff time and responsibilities. No cost information is included in the table at this time and will be added closer to completion of the Area Plan.

Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Natural Resources Management						
NR 1. Vegetation	<p>NR 1.1: Purpose: Protect and enhance biodiversity, including sensitive natural communities.</p> <p>Actions: Continue existing District removal of invasive vegetation. Consider seeding of locally appropriate plant species.</p>	Ongoing	Medium	NR PRG		Nonprofit restoration organizations (e.g., Grassroots Ecology), <u>District</u> volunteers
NR 2. Wildlife	<p>NR 2.1: Purpose: Protect native wildlife by reducing barriers to movement and dispersal.</p>	a) Ongoing b) Mid-term	Medium	CIP EVAL		N/A

Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Natural Resources Management						
	<p>Actions: (a) Use wildlife-friendly fencing and infrastructure as appropriate. (b) Conduct habitat assessments to refine objectives and prioritize barrier removals. Reference best available data sources when planning project areas to select most appropriate tool to inform the identification and protection of wildlife corridors.</p>					
	<p>NR 2.2: Purpose: Promote native wildlife populations to protect and maintain ecosystem function.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Restore or enhance degraded habitats for native wildlife. (b) Continue efforts of the District’s wildlife programs for birds, bats, amphibians, invertebrates and mammals.</p>	<p>a) Short/ Mid-term b) Long-term</p>	Medium	<p>NR POL PRG</p>		<p>a) Volunteers b) N/A</p>
	<p>NR 2.3: Purpose: Monitor for, protect, and provide habitat for protected and special status species present.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Protect, monitor, and conduct adaptive management actions to sustain viable habitat for special status species, including Townsend’s big eared bat, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, Central California Coast steelhead, and mountain lion. (b) Site new public access facilities and amenities away from known sensitive species and habitats; repairs and</p>	Ongoing	High	<p>CIP NR POL PRG</p>		N/A

Action Types

CIP - Capital improvement project

EVAL –

Evaluation/Assessments

AGT – Partner/Legal Agreement

POL – Policy/Plan Compliance

PRG – Programming project

M – Maintenance project

NR – Natural resources/restoration project

Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)

Mid-term (4-9 years)

Long-term (10+ years)

Notes

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Natural Resources Management						
	reconfigurations to existing facilities shall attempt to reduce such impacts to the greatest extent possible.					
	<p>NR 2.4: Purpose: Preserve functional diversity of native ecological communities.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Maintain working relationships with neighbors and the Town of Portola Valley to coordinate efforts that protect ecological function across property boundaries, such as wildlife-friendly fencing and vegetation management.</p> <p>(b) When feasible, avoid construction during species avoidance windows and sensitive seasons; implement monitoring and constraining species protections during construction if activities must occur during species avoidance windows and sensitive seasons. In all cases, provide base-level biological monitoring of construction or disturbance activities in special-status species habitat areas, consistent with the District’s programmatic Best Management Practices.</p>	Ongoing	High	CIP		<p>a) Neighbors and Town of Portola Valley</p> <p><u>b) N/A</u></p>
NR 3. Watershed Resources	<p>NR 3.1: Purpose: Protect the riparian corridor and in-stream habitat quality of Los Trancos Creek.</p>	Ongoing	High	CIP NR PRG		N/A

Action Types

CIP - Capital improvement project
 EVAL – Evaluation/Assessments
 AGT – Partner/Legal Agreement
 POL – Policy/Plan Compliance

PRG – Programming project
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Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)
 Mid-term (4-9 years)
 Long-term (10+ years)

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Natural Resources Management						
and Aquatic Habitat	<p>Actions: Maintain the Town-required 55-foot riparian buffer zone from the top of bank of Los Trancos Creek as necessary for buildings and other site improvements that require such setback.</p>					
	<p>NR 3.2: Purpose: Improve habitat conditions in Los Trancos Creek by expanding or enhancing the riparian corridor and increasing instream habitat complexity, where feasible, recognizing that opportunities for direct instream habitat improvements are limited.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Where feasible, improve conditions for aquatic and riparian wildlife by enhancing and/or expanding the width and extent of the vegetated riparian corridor along Los Trancos Creek within the Preserve and augmenting instream habitat complexity. (b) Opportunistically monitor Los Trancos Creek, including water flows, to assess habitat quality and suitability for anadromy and spawning; identify opportunities for restoration and enhancement, with a focus on riparian corridor improvements.</p>	Mid to Long-Term	Medium	NR PRG		N/A
	<p>NR 3.3: Purpose: Protect and monitor water quality to support long-term preservation, restoration, and enhancement of aquatic resources within Hawthorns.</p>	Ongoing	Low	NR PRG		N/A

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Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)
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Natural Resources Management						
	<p>Actions: Implement the Water Quality Monitoring Program priorities for the Preserve, including monitoring of creeks to guide adaptive management efforts and response actions.</p> <p>NR 3.4: Purpose: Minimize erosion impacts to riparian and aquatic habitats.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Monitor streambank stability of Los Trancos Creek within the Preserve and implement erosion prevention actions along the creek corridor within District lands, if necessary. Work with Preserve neighbors to address resource impacts from adjacent land uses. (b) Implement erosion control measures within 150 feet of Los Trancos Creek for roadwork, construction, demolition, or vegetation removal.</p>	a) Ongoing b) Ongoing	Medium	CIP PRG		N/A
NR 4. Wildfire Resiliency	<p>NR 4.1: Purpose: Enhance wildland fire resiliency throughout the Area.</p> <p>Actions: Implement the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program’s <i>Vegetation Management Plan</i>, which includes ecosystem resiliency/healthy forest initiatives, enhanced fire management (i.e., fuel breaks and legally required defensible spaces around critical infrastructure) and updating fire response resource maps. Conduct outreach to neighbors to promote the District’s defensible space permits and encourage ecologically sensitive</p>	Ongoing	High	M NR POL PRG		Woodside Fire Protection District

Action Types

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Natural Resources Management						
	vegetation management related to wildfire resiliency and natural resource enhancement consistent with the Wildland Fire Resiliency and Integrated Pest Management programs.					
	<p>NR 4.2: Purpose: Provide defensible space and home hardening of the staff residence, and vegetation management for key structures, and designated parking area(s). Action: Provide fire clearance around structures and parking areas as required by the Woodside Fire Prevention Code and consistent with the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program.</p>	Ongoing	High	CIP M POL PRG		Woodside Fire Protection District
	<p><u>NR 4.3. Purpose: Pursue restoration opportunities to maximize ecosystem resiliency on site.</u> <u>Action: Manage the property’s Olive Orchard for ecological resiliency through restoration while maintaining historic integrity.</u></p>	<u>Mid to Long Term</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>PRG</u> <u>NR</u>		<u>N/A</u>
NR 5. Habitat Integrity	<p>NR 5.1: Purpose: Preserve habitat integrity by carefully siting new parking areas to be protective of ecosystem resilience and health. Actions: Design and site new parking areas to avoid habitat fragmentation by locating them at the outer edges of the</p>	Mid-term	High	CIP POL		N/A

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Natural Resources Management						
	property and/or adjacent to areas of existing development as recommended in the <i>District’s Parking Area and Trailhead/Staging Area Design guidelines</i> .					
NR 6. Climate Resiliency	<p>NR 6.1: Purpose: Reduce and manage greenhouse gas emissions where possible.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Promote resilience of long-term vegetation carbon sequestration by implementing the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program actions. (b) Protect soil carbon storage by managing erosion. (c) Reduce visitor greenhouse gas emissions by promoting use of multimodal (e.g., equestrian and bike) and green travel (e.g., solar-based Electric Vehicle charging) alternatives and the associated support infrastructure, if feasible and permissible by the Town.</p>	Ongoing	a) High b) Medium c) Low	POL PRG		N/A
	<p>NR 6.2: Purpose: Promote habitat resilience to the effects of extreme weather conditions and climate change.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Implement priorities under the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program and Integrated Pest Management Program, including Early Detection and Rapid Response protocols for new invasive species and education initiatives to increase awareness of fire risks and fire safe practices. (b) Implement actions under</p>	a) Ongoing b) Mid to Long-term	High	CIP M NR PRG POL		N/A

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Natural Resources Management						
	the District’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Strategic Plan for Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change (SPARCC) to protect preserve infrastructure from the impacts of flooding, erosion/landslides, and other natural hazards utilizing best available models for future climate conditions.					

Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Historic, Cultural, and Tribal Cultural Resources Management						
CR 1. Tribal Cultural Resources	<p>CR 1.1: Purpose: Incorporate tribal knowledge and history into the visitor experience as appropriate and in collaboration with tribal groups. Actions: Collaborate with tribal groups to identify educational opportunities regarding archaeology, anthropology, and Native American cultural history and to review and implement interpretive materials.</p>	Mid/Long-term	Determined by Tribal interest and Capacity	PRG		Native American Tribes
	<p>CR 1.2: Purpose: Establish a formal pathway that supports tribal reconnections to ancestral lands and tribal practices that protect and preserve ecological health.</p>	Mid-term	Determined by Tribal interest and Capacity	AGT		Native American Tribes

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Historic, Cultural, and Tribal Cultural Resources Management						
	Actions: Formalize access for tribal members to practice traditional lifeways, such as ethnobotanical collection, resource management, and the application of Traditional Ecological Knowledge that support climate and fire resiliency native habitat and vegetation health, and biodiversity.					
CR 2. Historic Resources	CR. 2.1: Purpose: Conduct interim management actions to maintain site safety of the Hawthorns Historic Complex pending site specific planning. Actions: Conduct debris cleanup, defensible space and fuel management and critical maintenance repairs as needed. Restrict public access at the Historic Complex pending future decisions regarding its long-term disposition and use. Implement additional interim security measures as necessary.	Short-term	High	M		

Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Aesthetic Resources Management						
	AS 1.1:	Mid/Long-term	High	CIP POL		N/A

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Aesthetic Resources Management						
AS 1. Viewsheds	<p>Purpose: Minimize effects of new development on important viewsheds as seen into the Property from surrounding areas, and on the rural character of Portola Valley.</p> <p>Actions: (a) Site new public access facilities and amenities in accordance with the <i>District’s Parking and Staging Area Design Guidelines</i>. Where feasible, use materials complementary of the Property’s natural landscape and the rural character. Locate and design parking areas to reduce the amount of earthwork and the footprint of retaining walls. (b) Utilize topography and/or vegetation to screen new parking area(s) from neighboring properties as appropriate. (c) To the extent feasible, locate trails and benches in harmony with surrounding natural settings by having trails follow contour lines and installing bench(es) below ridgelines and other prominent high points.</p>					
	<p>AS 1.2: Purpose: Showcase the Hawthorns Area’s natural beauty and landscape features for public enjoyment.</p> <p>Actions: Site proposed amenities, including benches and overlooks in accordance with the <i>District’s Parking and Staging Area Design Guidelines</i> to highlight key vistas visible from the Hawthorns Area, such as the San Francisco Bay and nearby open spaces, while avoiding viewshed impacts to surrounding lands</p>	Mid/Long-term	Medium	CIP POL		N/A

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Aesthetic Resources Management						
	(refer to AS 1.1). Limit signage to reduce visual clutter in the interior of the preserve and cluster signage at key points, such as trailheads and parking area(s).					
AS 2. Scenic Corridor	<p>AS 2.1: Purpose: Minimize effects to the Alpine Scenic Corridor from new public access facilities through rural design, proper siting, and minimizing the footprint of vertical elements to protect the rural character.</p> <p>Actions: Site proposed infrastructure and amenities to minimize effects on the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor in alignment with the <i>Town of Portola Valley’s General Plan and Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan</i>. Cluster new parking area(s) and trailheads and locate adjacent to existing development and parking/roadways, including the commercial areas of Alpine Road. Utilize topography and/or vegetation to screen and minimize views into parking area(s). Coordinate with Town on improvements to the existing equestrian/hiking trail along Alpine Road.</p>	Long-term	Medium	AGT CIP POL		Town of Portola Valley

Action Types

CIP - Capital improvement project

EVAL – Evaluation/Assessments

AGT – Partner/Legal Agreement

POL – Policy/Plan Compliance

PRG – Programming project

M – Maintenance project

NR – Natural resources/restoration project

Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)

Mid-term (4-9 years)

Long-term (10+ years)

Notes

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Public Access, Recreation, and Interpretation						
PA 1. Public Use	<p>PA 1.1: Purpose: Designate trail uses (hiking, biking, dogs on leash, and/or equestrian uses) appropriately based on site suitability to remain protective of natural and cultural resources.</p> <p>Action: (a) Designate the internal loop trail, spur trails, and connections to Alpine Trail (segments 1 through 14) as open to multi-use (hiking, biking, dogs on leash, and equestrian). Designate trail segment 18 as hiking only. (b) Designate future connections to Sweet Springs Trail, if any are made later (requires Portola Valley Ranch community and Town coordination and approval) as open to hiking only. (c) Coordinate as needed with the Town regarding including bicycle use on Alpine Trail in the future.</p>	<p>a) Short/Mid-term b) Long-term <u>c) Long-term</u></p>	<p>a) High b) Low <u>c) Low</u></p>	<p>AGT CIP POL</p>		Town of Portola Valley

Action Types

CIP - Capital improvement project

EVAL –

Evaluation/Assessments

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NR – Natural resources/restoration project

Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)

Mid-term (4-9 years)

Long-term (10+ years)

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Public Access, Recreation, and Interpretation						
PA 2. Trails	<p>PA 2.1: Purpose: Align new trails to be protective of natural and cultural resources, promote public safety, and be durable and economically and operationally sustainable over the long term.</p> <p>Action: Account for the site’s natural and cultural resource sensitivities and landscape features, including slope and line of sight, when developing and constructing trail alignments. Utilize the District’s trail standards to layout and construct sustainable trail alignments that avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive resources.</p>	Short/Mid/Long-term	High	CIP POL		N/A
	<p>PA 2.2: Purpose: Explore and implement opportunities for local and regional trail connections.</p> <p>Action: Develop trail connections to the Town’s Alpine Road Trail in coordination with the Town. Explore the feasibility of a future trail connection to Sweet Springs Trail with the Town and Portola Valley Ranch community after the Hawthorns Area is open to the public.</p>	Mid/Long-term	Medium	AGT EVAL POL		Town of Portola Valley, City of Palo Alto
	<p>PA 2.3: Purpose: Provide Easy Access trail opportunities where feasible and practical.</p>	Mid/Long-term	Medium	CIP POL EVAL		N/A

Action Types

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Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)

Mid-term (4-9 years)

Long-term (10+ years)

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Public Access, Recreation, and Interpretation						
	Action: Evaluate and prioritize opportunities for accessible trails and paths to designate as Easy Access.					
	<p>PA 2.4: Purpose: Ensure new trails remain consistent with Board-approved policies.</p> <p>Action: Follow the applicable Board-approved <i>Trail Design Guidelines</i> and <i>Staging/Parking Area and Trailhead Design Guidelines</i> when designing and constructing new trail alignments and trailheads.</p>	Mid/Long-term	High	CIP POL		N/A
PA 3. Driveways	<p>PA 3.1: Purpose: Develop safe driveways connecting Preserve parking areas to public roadways.</p> <p>Actions: Evaluate new driveway(s) accessing future on-site parking in accordance with Board-approved <i>Parking/Staging Areas and Trailhead Design Guidelines</i>, including adequate lines of sight, stopping distances and consideration of local traffic and congestion patterns on adjacent roadways and trails. Consider utilizing existing driveway(s) if practical and feasible. Evaluate improvements to adjacent public roads as needed to support parking area and driveway development.</p>	Short/Mid-term	High	AGT CIP EVAL POL		Town of Portola Valley

Action Types

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Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)

Mid-term (4-9 years)

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Public Access, Recreation, and Interpretation						
PA 4. Parking and Trailheads	<p>PA 4.1: Purpose: Design and develop new parking area(s) that are functional, safe, meet regulatory requirements, and reflect a sense of place consistent with the surrounding rural character.</p> <p>Actions: Develop on-site parking in alignment with the Board-approved <i>Parking/Staging Areas and Trailhead Design Guidelines</i>, the underlying Conservation Easement, Town’s permitting and stormwater and other regulatory requirements. This includes proper siting/design and material selection for new parking area (s) that align with maintenance needs, aesthetic character, design requirements, traffic study findings, defensible space requirements, and implementation of required C3 stormwater treatments on site. Ensure coordination with and input from neighboring property owners and the Town of Portola Valley.</p>	Short/Mid-term	High	CIP POL		N/A
	<p>PA 4.2: Purpose: Prioritize accessibility in parking and trailhead areas.</p> <p>Actions: Comply with the Board-approved <i>Parking/Staging Areas and Trailhead Design Guidelines</i> as well as other relevant</p>	<u>Short/mid term</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>CIP</u> <u>POL</u>		<u>N/A</u>

Action Types

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Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)
 Mid-term (4-9 years)
 Long-term (10+ years)

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Public Access, Recreation, and Interpretation						
	ADA regulations to provide parking areas and visitor-serving amenities for individuals with disabilities.					
PA 5. Signage	<p>PA 5.1: Purpose: Install preserve signage, where appropriate, to guide and inform members of the public about visitor rules, special protections, and for interpretive education.</p> <p>Actions: Develop a signage plan in alignment with the <i>District’s Sign Manual</i> for trail directional signs, trailhead signboard(s), regulation signs, and resource management/interpretation signs. Keep signs and markers to a minimum in the interior of the preserve and cluster signage at trailheads and parking areas to ensure sign placement is in keeping with the rural and natural setting. Install a preserve sign at the parking area driveway entrance.</p>	Mid/Long-term	Medium	POL PRG		N/A
PA 6. Site Amenities	<p>PA 6.1: Purpose: Install standard District benches where appropriate.</p> <p>Actions: Provide benches at selected locations to enhance public enjoyment of vista points and other key landscape features, and at rest areas. Locate benches below high points/ridgelines to protect scenic views from surrounding lands.</p>	Mid-term	Medium	CIP EVAL		N/A
	<p>PA 6.2:</p>	Mid/Long-term	High	CIP POL		N/A

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Phasing

Short-term (1-3 years)
 Mid-term (4-9 years)
 Long-term (10+ years)

Notes

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Public Access, Recreation, and Interpretation						
	<p>Purpose: Provide standard visitor-serving amenities at new parking area(s).</p> <p>Actions: Incorporate visitor serving amenities in accordance with Board-approved <i>Parking/Staging Areas and Trailhead Design Guidelines</i>, including proper trailhead signage, a vault toilet, and hiking boot/bicycle wheel cleaning station.</p>					
PA 7. Multimodal Access	<p>PA 7.1: Purpose: Consider accommodating Incorporate transportation demand management strategies as appropriate and feasible to encourage non-vehicular modes of access to the preserve.</p> <p>Actions: a) Provide bicycle and/or equestrian amenities to facilitate non-vehicular modes of access to the preserve. b) Depending on future parking demands, collaborate with the Town regarding overall traffic management, including multimodal options like utilizing off-site parking and/or a shuttle system from Town parking facilities. c) Evaluate the possibility of providing real-time parking data to support visitor planning and reduce the potential for parking congestion.</p>	a) Mid/Long-term b) Long-term c) Mid/Long-term	High	AGT CIP EVAL PRG		Town of Portola Valley
PA 8. Interpretation and Education	<p>PA 8.1: Purpose: Enrich visitor experiences at the Hawthorns Area through educational and hands-on opportunities that highlight the importance of open space preservation and conservation work.</p>	Ongoing	Medium	PRG		N/A

Action Types

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Phasing

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 Mid-term (4-9 years)
 Long-term (10+ years)

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Public Access, Recreation, and Interpretation						
	<p>Actions: Continue docent naturalist guided activities for the public. Continue volunteer-led removal of invasive vegetation and explore opportunities to have additional Trails and Stewardship Volunteer Program activities on site. When effective and as capacity allows, generate social media content (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, etc.) and editorial content (e.g. Views, e-newsletter, etc.) to enhance storytelling.</p>					
	<p>PA 8.2 Purpose: Provide appropriate interpretive opportunities on site. Actions: Plan for and evaluate interpretive opportunities on site which highlight the property’s unique history, cultural, tribal and natural resources.</p>	Mid/Long-term	Low	EVAL PRG		<u>Town of Portola Valley</u>

Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Operations and Maintenance						
	<p>OM 1.1: Purpose: Establish a low-maintenance, safe, and enjoyable ranch road and trail system.</p>	Ongoing	Low	M POL		N/A

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Phasing

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Operations and Maintenance						
OM 1. Road and Trail Maintenance	Actions: Follow District maintenance guidelines of ranch roads and trails for patrol, emergency and public access. Brush all trail-width segments on a yearly basis and brush all road-width segments as needed to maintain safe passage.					
	OM 1.2: Purpose: Maintain and manage roads and trails to reduce erosion and sedimentation. Actions: Implement routine road maintenance and erosion and sediment control measures, as needed, in accordance with District standards and practices.	Ongoing	Low	M		N/A
OM 2. Safety and Security	OM 2.1: Purpose: Ensure the safety of Preserve visitors. Actions: Provide signage to support visitor safe practices and compliance of District regulations while visiting the preserve. Site parking area(s) to facilitate vigilance and oversight by law enforcement/ranger patrol. Design and maintain driveway and ranch road access for emergency response personnel. Conduct ongoing patrol and take enforcement actions, as needed, to address violations for the protection and safety of the resources and public.	Ongoing	High	POL PRG		N/A
	OM 2.2: Purpose: Ensure security of Preserve lands and structures.	Ongoing	High	POL PRG		N/A

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Operations and Maintenance						
	<p>Actions: (a) Install a gate at the future parking area(s) for site security during preserve closures. (b) Conduct ongoing patrol to monitor safe, appropriate, and permissible public uses. (c) Monitor closed areas for unauthorized access. (d) Utilize and install gates, wildlife-friendly fencing (including perimeter fencing), visual screening, and signage where appropriate in alignment with the <i>District's Good Neighbor Policy</i>. (e) Maintain interior security fencing around historic structures to prevent trespassing pending future decisions on their long-term use and disposition.</p>					
	<p>OM 2.3: Purpose: Prevent trespassing of private property.</p> <p>Actions: Implement special measures, as necessary, to prevent trespassing onto private property, including using of fencing, signage, vegetation buffer, etc., as well as proper siting of facilities.</p>	Ongoing	High	EVAL POL		Town of Portola Valley
	<p>OM 2.4: Purpose: Safeguard privacy for the staff residence to the extent feasible when siting parking and trail infrastructure.</p> <p>Actions: Locate parking areas, trailheads and trails out of view from staff residence; add vegetative screen where</p>	a) Mid/Long-term b) Ongoing	High	CIP M		N/A

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Operations and Maintenance						
	necessary. If needed, provide fencing and gate to separate shared driveway from staff residence.					
OM 3. Environmental Hazards	<p>OM 3.1: Purpose: Address environmental hazards.</p> <p>Actions: Remove barbed wires, nails, debris, and other materials that pose a hazard. Remove and remediate hazards in alignment with natural and historic resource management objectives and procedures. Implement existing maintenance and operation guidelines to support the long-term stewardship of the property and meet public safety objectives in alignment with the <i>District’s Good Neighbor Policy</i>.</p>	Ongoing	High	EVAL M NR POL		N/A
OM 4. Legal Arrangements/Conservation Easement	<p>OM 4.1: Purpose Ensure conditions of easements and other agreements are met.</p> <p>Actions: Provide public access and land and resource management actions that are in alignment with the Conservation Easement held by the Peninsula Open Space Trust. This includes ensuring all utilities and infrastructure remain in alignment with the Conservation Easement.</p>	Ongoing	High	AGT	NA	Peninsula Open Space Trust
OM 5. Partnerships	<p>OM 5.1:</p>	Ongoing	High	AGT POL	NA	Native American

Action Types

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Phasing

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Focus Areas	Purpose and Actions	Phasing	Priority	Action Type	Cost	Potential Partners
Operations and Maintenance						
	<p>Purpose: Seek and maintain partnerships to support management of the Preserve that aligns with the District’s mission and policies.</p> <p>Actions: Partner with tribes, non-profits, governmental entities, and/or other stakeholders in regional resource and land management efforts pertaining to the Hawthorns Area in accordance with the <i>District’s Good Neighbor Policy</i>.</p>					Tribes, non-profit organizations and governmental agencies
	<p>OM 5.2: Purpose: Seek funding partnerships to leverage and magnify District resources.</p> <p>Actions: Explore grant and external funding opportunities to support the long-term management of the Hawthorns Area.</p>	Long-term	Medium	AGT	NA	To be determined
	<p>OM 5.3: Purpose: Pursue partnership opportunities for mutually beneficial arrangements with the Town of Portola Valley.</p> <p>Actions: <u>Evaluate future trail connection options for (a) Alpine Trail, including any improvements necessary to connect Alpine Trail users to other trails on the property and (b) Sweet Springs Trail after the property is open to public access and use levels are well understood.</u></p>	Long-term	a) High b) Low	AGT	NA	Town of Portola Valley

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Key Area 1 – Historic Complex

Long term uses for the Historic Complex Area will be determined as part of a separate planning process given the complexity and challenges presented by the site conditions, necessity of working with a partner when implementing long term uses, zoning code and Conservation Easement. Since 2023, the Hawthorns Historic Complex Project has continued to encounter challenges that are complex and time-intensive to resolve. In addition to needing to comply with the Conservation Easement, resolving challenges related to the site’s zoning regulations is a time and staff intensive endeavor that does not align with the Hawthorns Area Plan process and timeline. Based on this rationale, on December 10, 2025, the Board of Directors deferred this project until after the Hawthorns Area Plan is adopted and implementation of Area Plan projects is underway.

In the meantime, all applicable purpose and action statements of the Hawthorns Area Plan Action Table will provide overarching guidance on the use and management of the Historic Complex. Assuming the Hawthorns Historic Complex project resumes in the future, the planning process would seek to incorporate this area seamlessly into the overall Hawthorns Area Plan and its vision and goals.

Action Types

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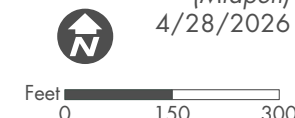
- PRG – Programming project
- M – Maintenance project
- NR – Natural resources/restoration project

Phasing

- Short-term (1-3 years)
- Mid-term (4-9 years)
- Long-term (10+ years)

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Hawthorns Area Conceptual Trail Design

- Hawthorns area property line
- Closed area*
- Building
- Town trail
- Fire road
- Primary loop trail
- Internal loop trail
- Spur trail
Multiple segments.
- Alpine Road Trail Improvements
Proposed at Parking Area Driveway Entrances & Trail Connections.
- PAWGS desired future connections
Pending collaboration with private property owners and municipalities.
- Trail junction
- Proposed bench



PAWGS's desired future connections
(location to be determined)
between Sweet Springs
Trail and Interloop trail

PAWGS's desired
future connections
pending collaboration with
private property owners
and municipalities

*Closed Area encompasses
Hawthorns Historic Complex.

Created By: acostanza Path: G:\Projects\Windy_Hill\Hawthorns_MapSeries\Hawthorns_MapSeries_PNR\Hawthorns_PNR.aprx

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.



Hawthorns Area Conceptual Trail Design

- Hawthorns area property line
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- Building
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- Alpine Road Trail Improvements
Proposed at Parking Area Driveway Entrances & Trail Connections.
- PAWGS desired future connections
Pending collaboration with private property owners and municipalities.
- Trail junction
- Proposed bench



Created By: acostanza Path: G:\Projects\Windy_Hill\Hawthorns_MapSeries\Hawthorns_MapSeries\Hawthorns_PNR.aprx



PAWGS's desired future connections
(location to be determined)
between Sweet Springs
Trail and Interloop trail

PAWGS's desired
future connections
pending collaboration with
private property owners
and municipalities







*Closed Area encompasses
Hawthorns Historic Complex.

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Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
4/22/2026


Hawthorns Area Operation & Maintenance Projects

-  Hawthorns area property line
-  Closed area*
-  General site cleanup
Debris & selective removal
-  Building
-  Work order
(completed, closed)
Since 2019
-  Work order
(in-progress, open)

*Closed Area encompasses Hawthorns Historic Complex.



Path: G:\Projects\Windy_Hill\Hawthorns_MapSeries\Hawthorns_MapSeries\Hawthorns_PNR.aprx
Created By: flopez

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Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
2/19/2026



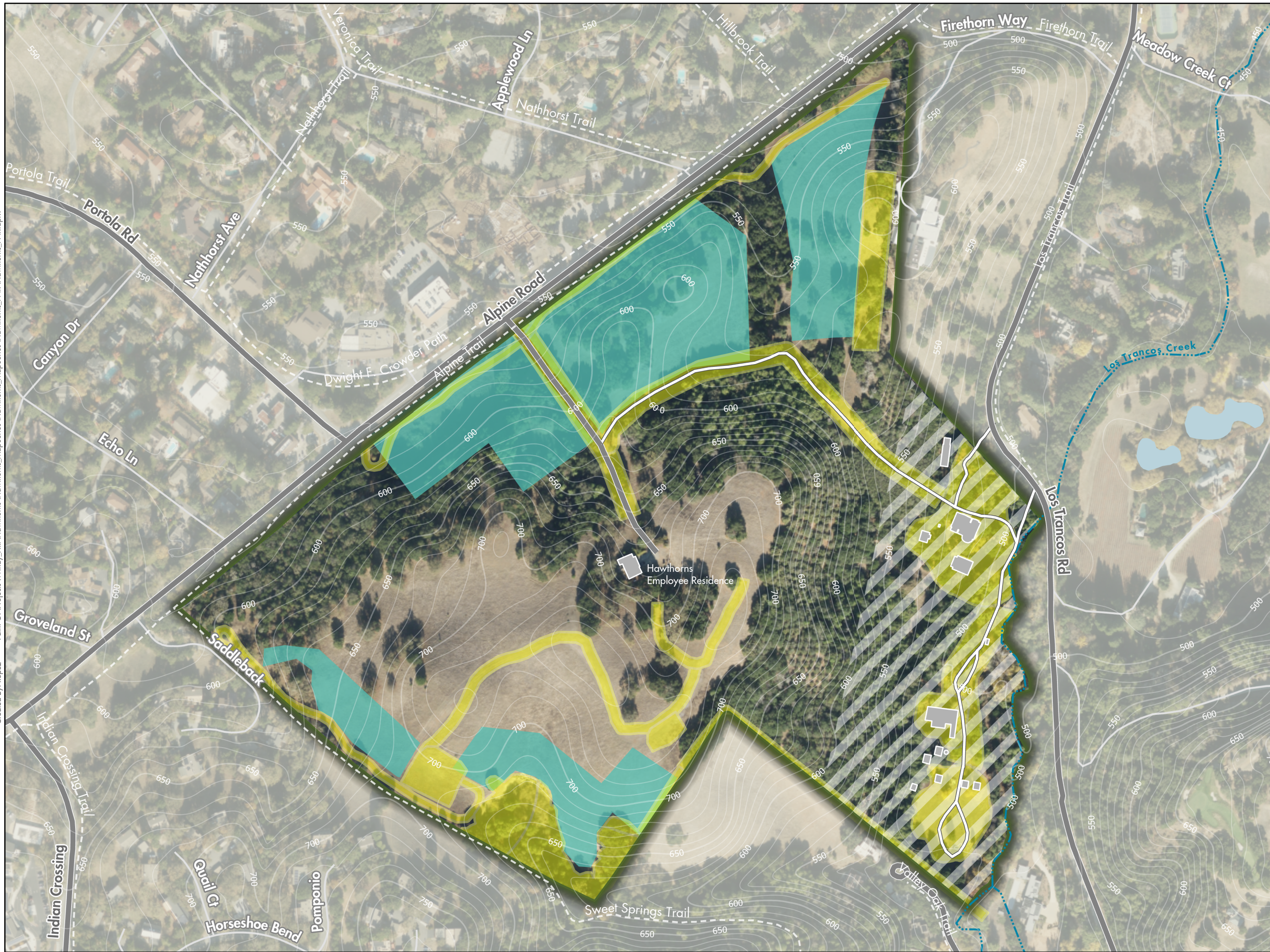
Feet
0 150 300



Hawthorns area vegetation & natural resource projects current work

-  Hawthorns area property line
-  Closed area*
-  Wildland Fire Resiliency Program work for enhanced fire management and community protection
-  Integrated Pest Management (IPM) areas

*Closed Area encompasses Hawthorns Historic Complex.



Path: C:\Projects\Windy Hill\Hawthorns\MapSeries\Hawthorns_MapSeries\Hawthorns_PNR.aprx
Created By: flopez

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Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
3/3/2026



Feet
0 150 300



Hawthorns area vegetation & natural resource projects Future work

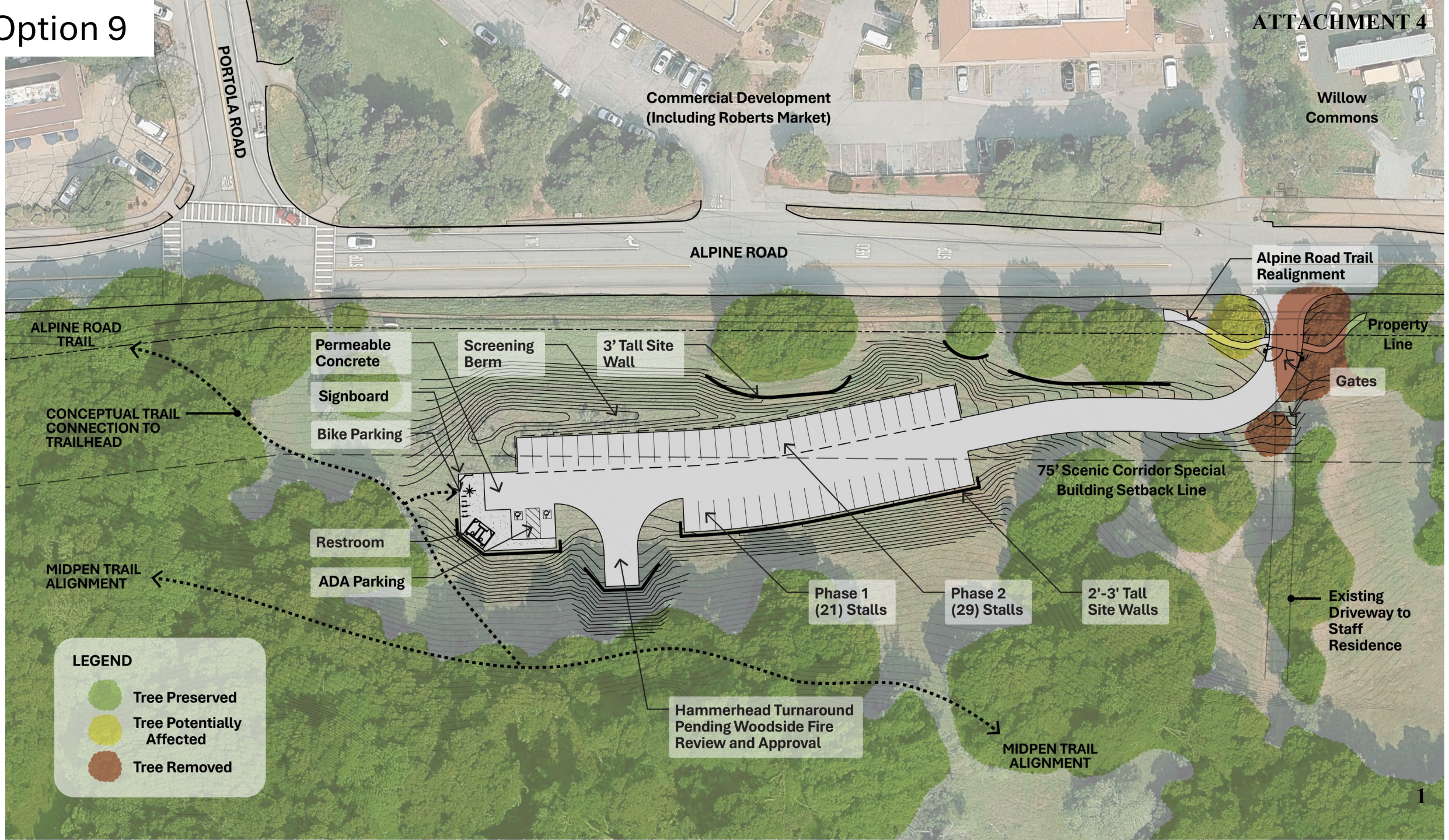
-  Hawthorns area property line
-  Closed area*
-  Wildland Fire Resiliency Program work for enhanced fire management and community protection
-  Future ecosystem resiliency work

*Closed Area encompasses Hawthorns Historic Complex.



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.

Path: C:\Projects\Windy Hill\Hawthorns\MapSeries\Hawthorns_MapSeries\Hawthorns_PNR.aprx
Created By: flopez



Commercial Development
(Including Roberts Market)

Willow
Commons

PORTOLA ROAD

ALPINE ROAD

Alpine Road Trail
Realignment

ALPINE ROAD
TRAIL

Permeable
Concrete

Screening
Berm

3' Tall Site
Wall

Property
Line

Signboard

Bike Parking

Gates

CONCEPTUAL TRAIL
CONNECTION TO
TRAILHEAD

75' Scenic Corridor Special
Building Setback Line

Restroom

ADA Parking

Phase 1
(21) Stalls

Phase 2
(29) Stalls

2'-3'
Tall Site
Walls

Existing
Driveway to
Staff
Residence

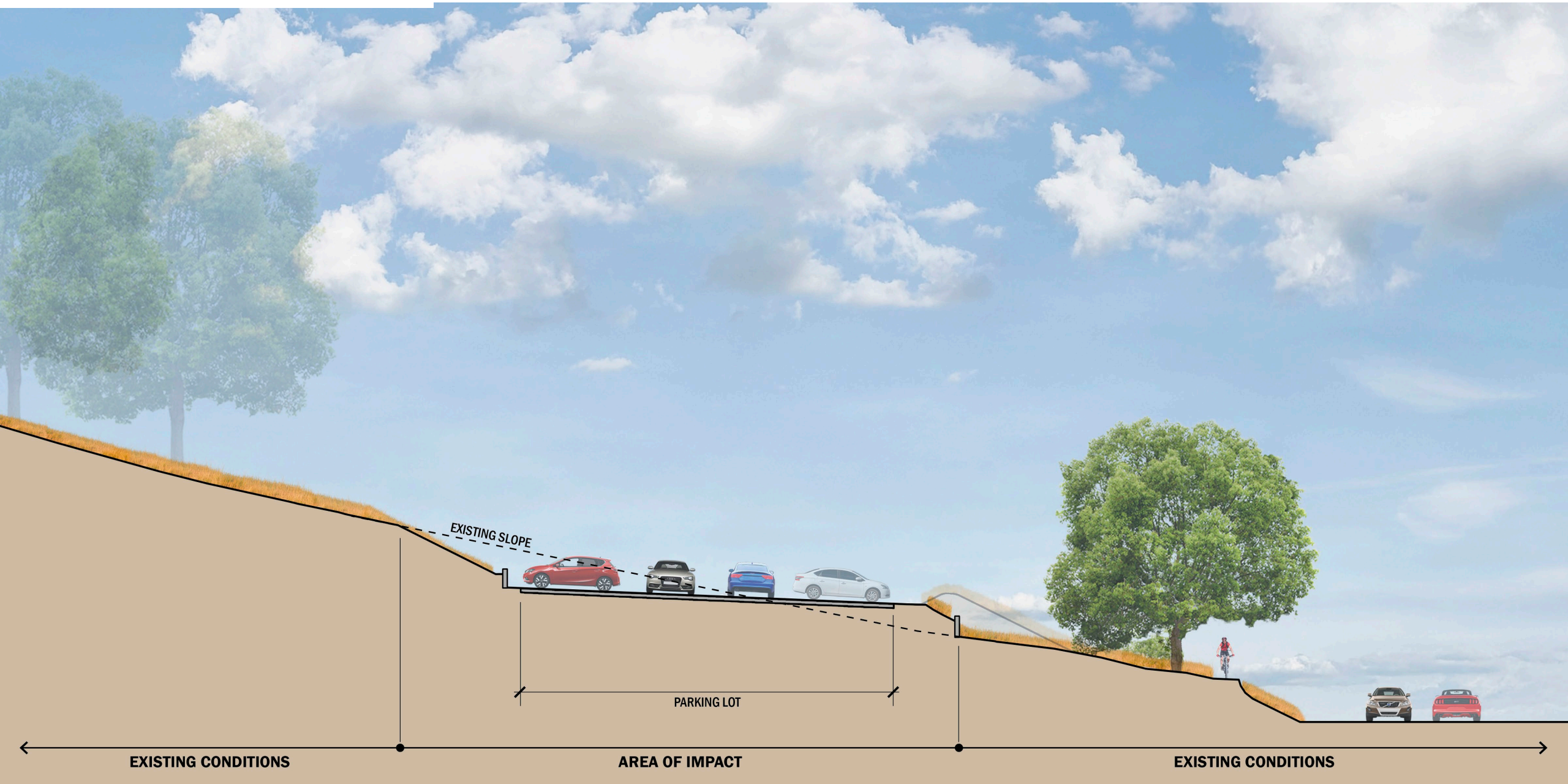
MIDPEN TRAIL
ALIGNMENT

Hammerhead Turnaround
Pending Woodside Fire
Review and Approval

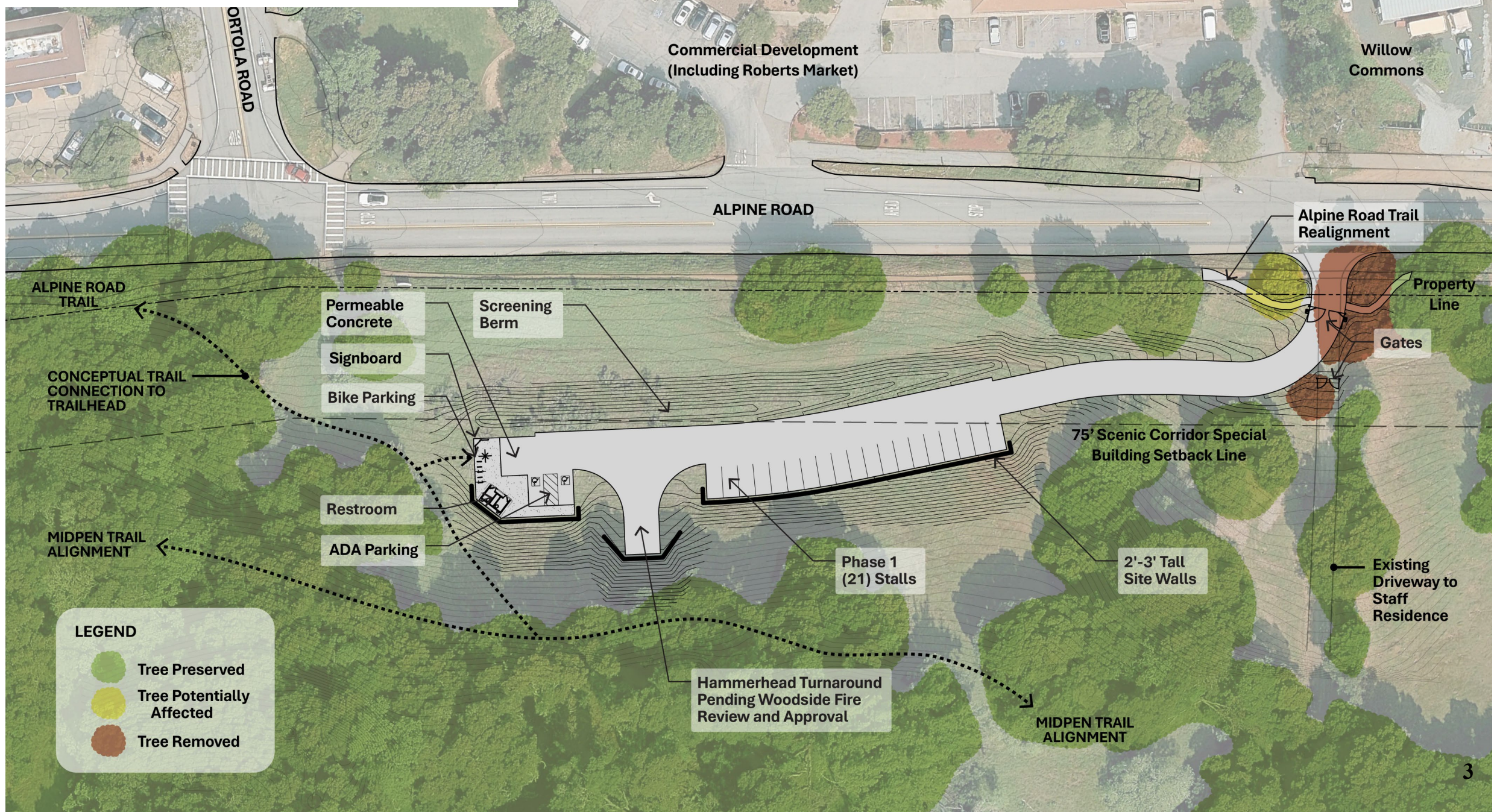
MIDPEN TRAIL
ALIGNMENT

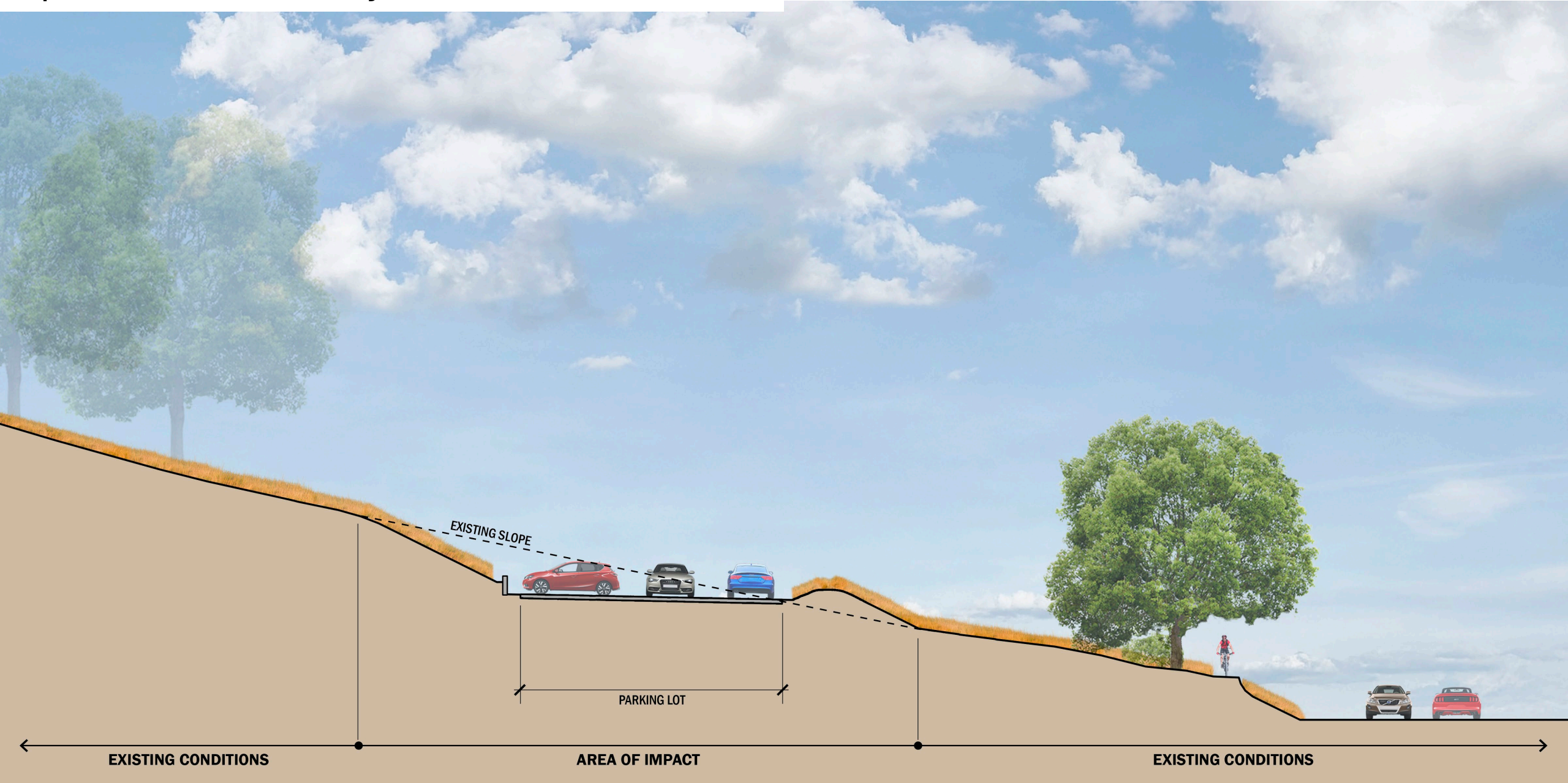
LEGEND

- Tree Preserved
- Tree Potentially Affected
- Tree Removed

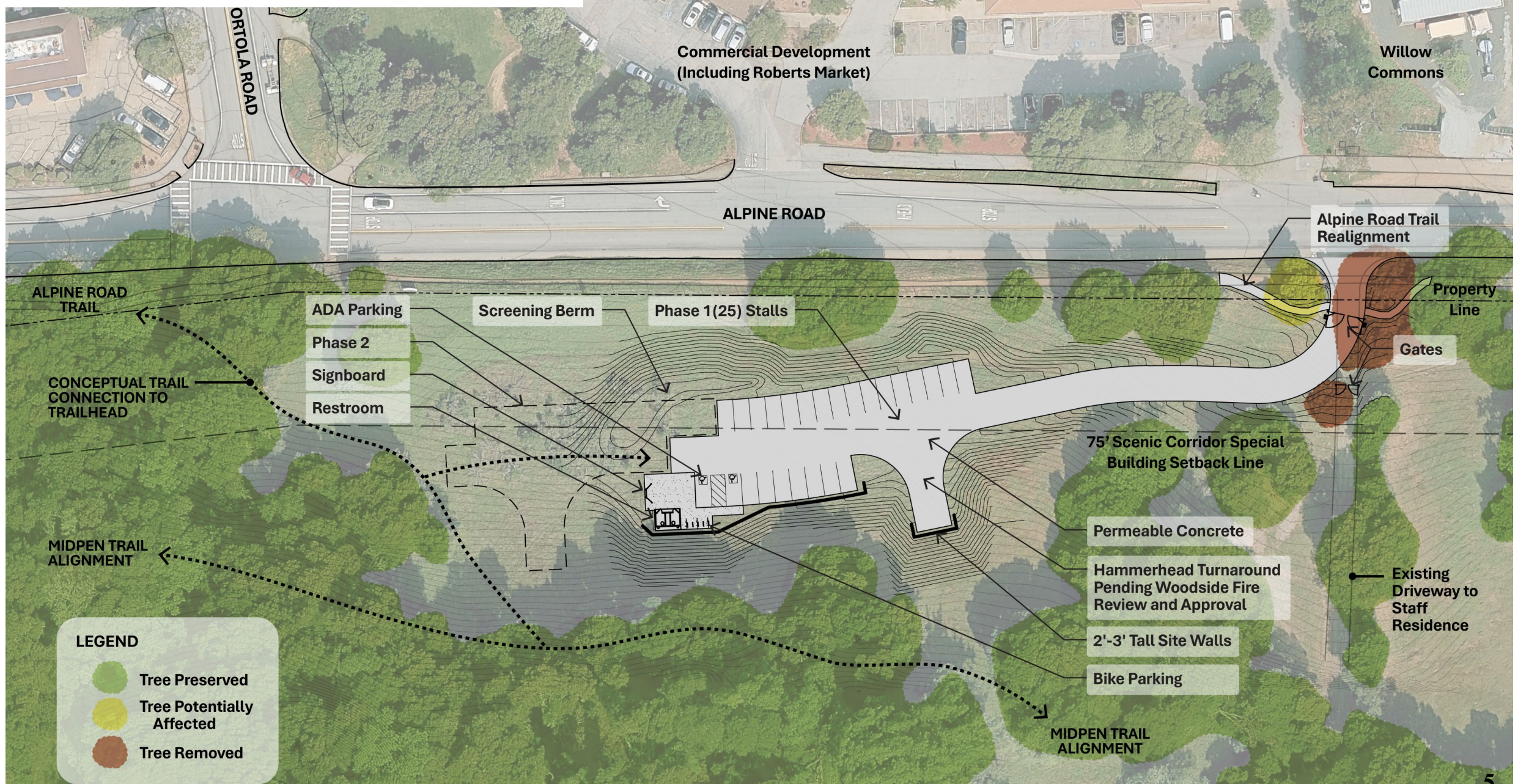


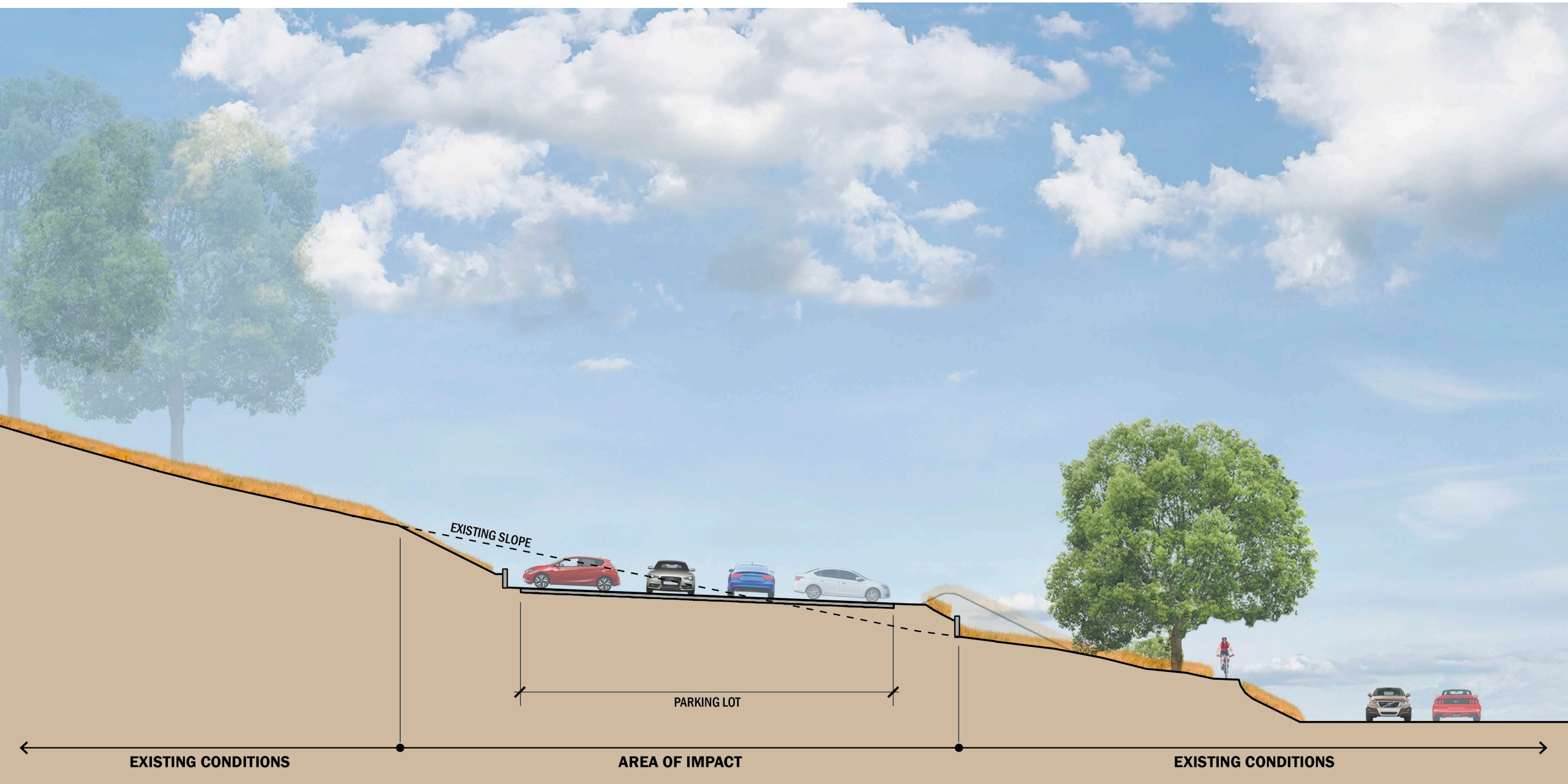
Option 9 Phase 1 Only - Linear





Option 9 Phase 1 Only - Truncated





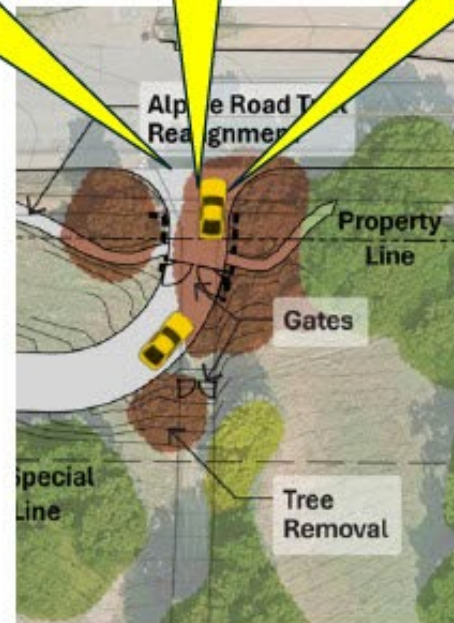
View from car facing forward at driveway exit



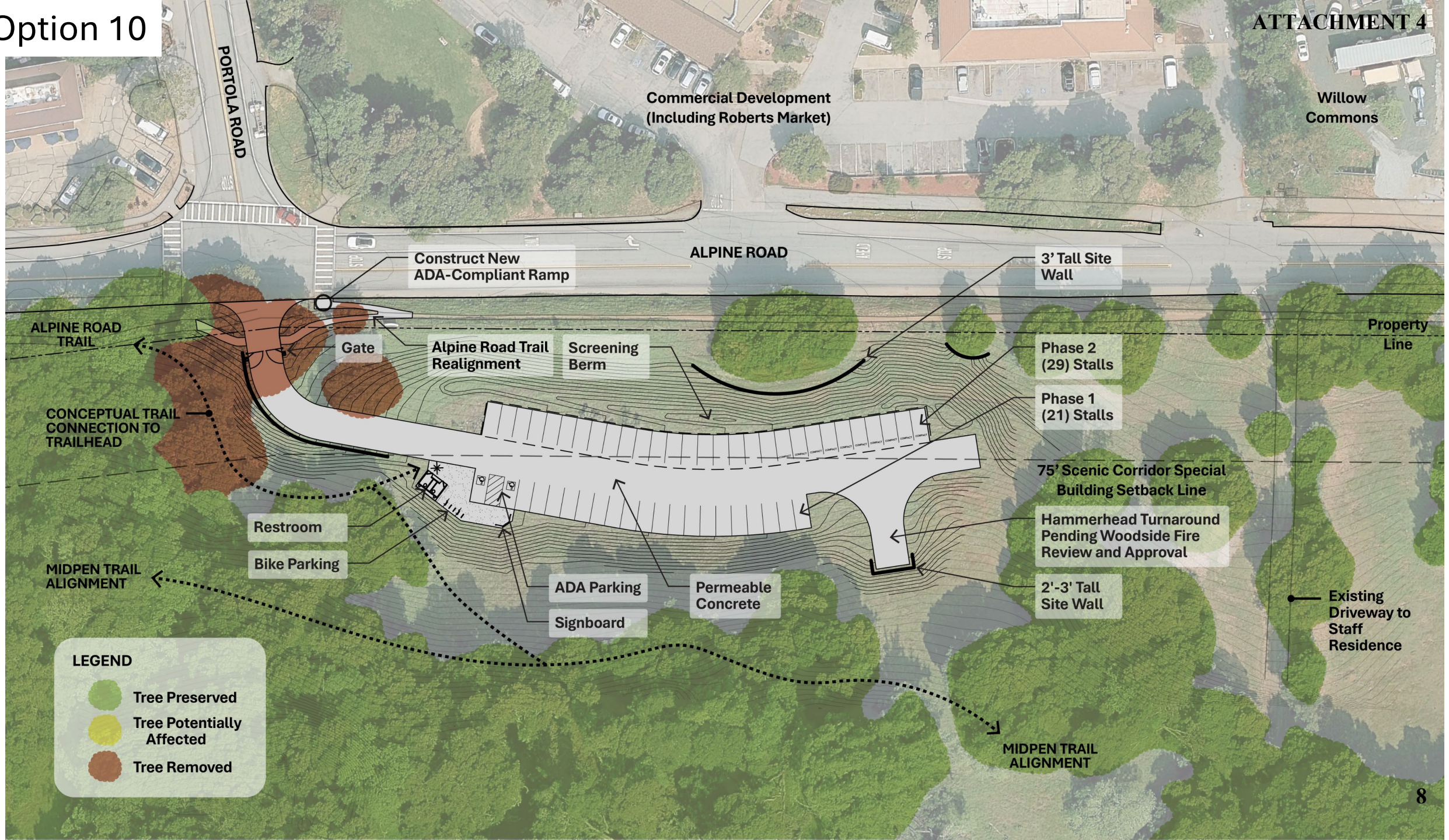
View from car turning right out of driveway



View from car turning left out of driveway



Option 9 Driveway Line of Sight



Commercial Development
(Including Roberts Market)

Willow
Commons

PORTOLA ROAD

ALPINE ROAD

Construct New
ADA-Compliant Ramp

3' Tall Site
Wall

ALPINE ROAD
TRAIL

Gate

Alpine Road Trail
Realignment

Screening
Berm

Phase 2
(29) Stalls

Property
Line

CONCEPTUAL TRAIL
CONNECTION TO
TRAILHEAD

Phase 1
(21) Stalls

Restroom

Bike Parking

ADA Parking

Permeable
Concrete

75' Scenic Corridor Special
Building Setback Line

Hammerhead Turnaround
Pending Woodside Fire
Review and Approval

2'-3'
Tall Site Wall

Existing
Driveway to
Staff
Residence

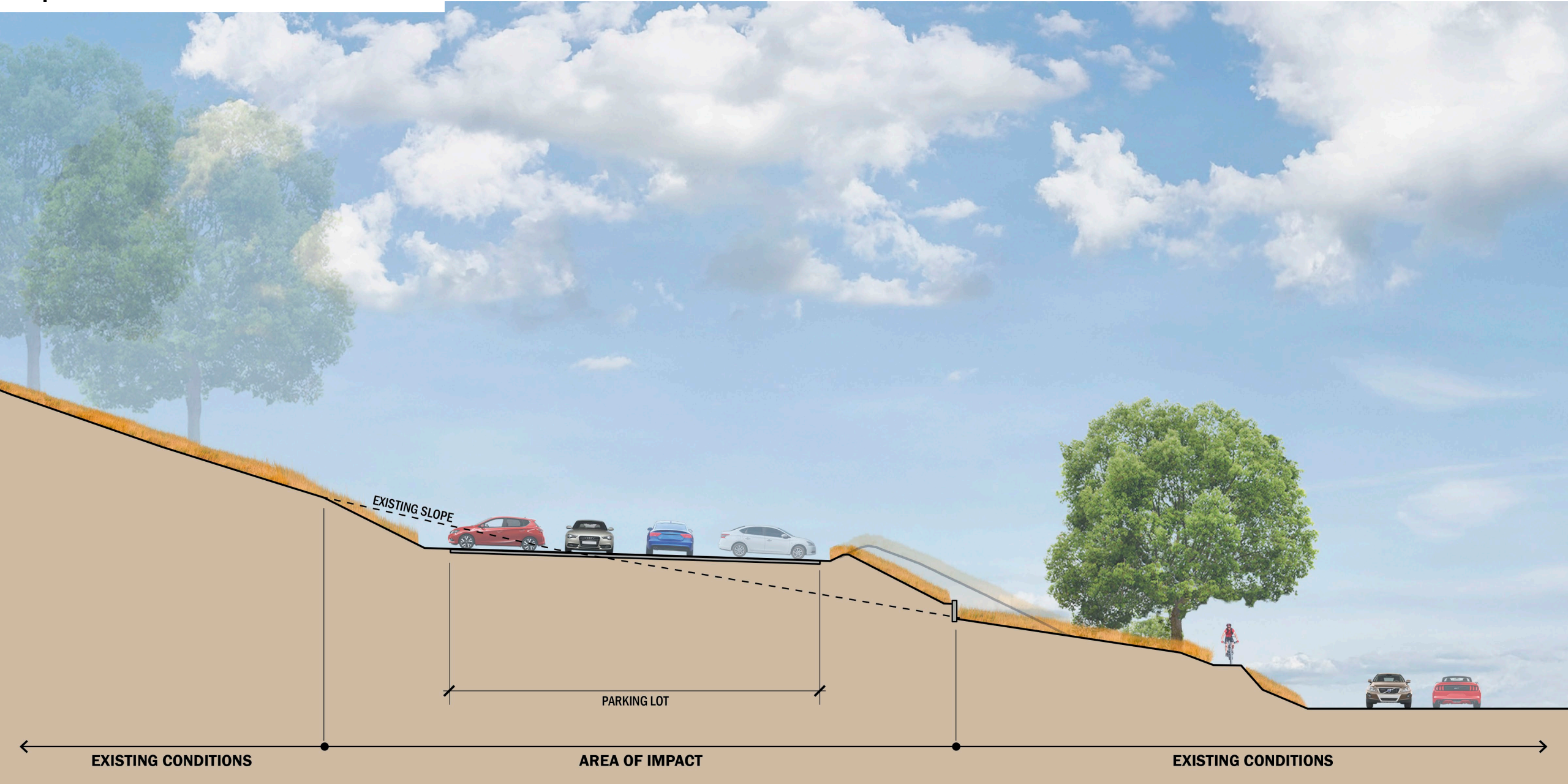
MIDPEN TRAIL
ALIGNMENT

Signboard

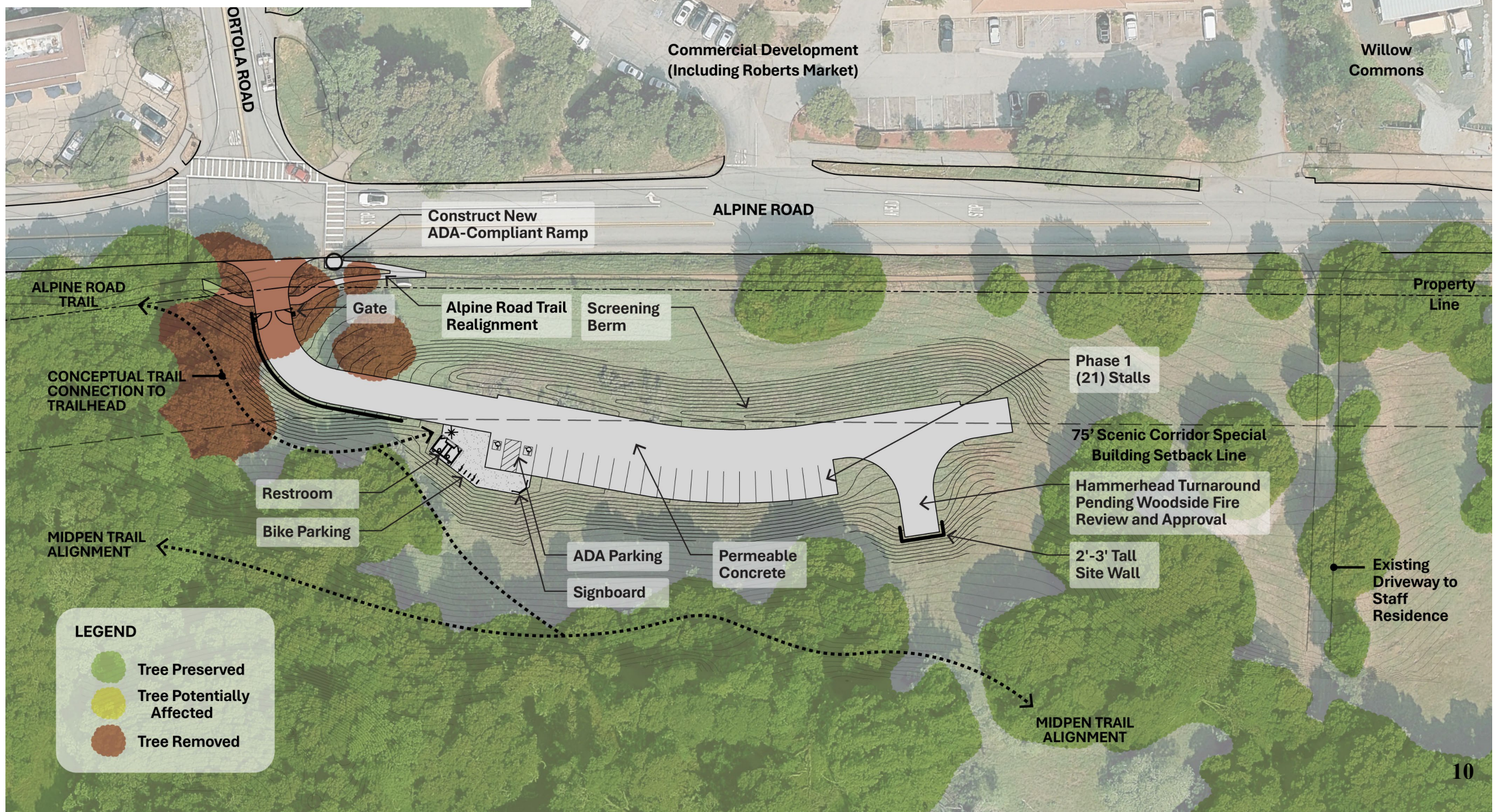
MIDPEN TRAIL
ALIGNMENT

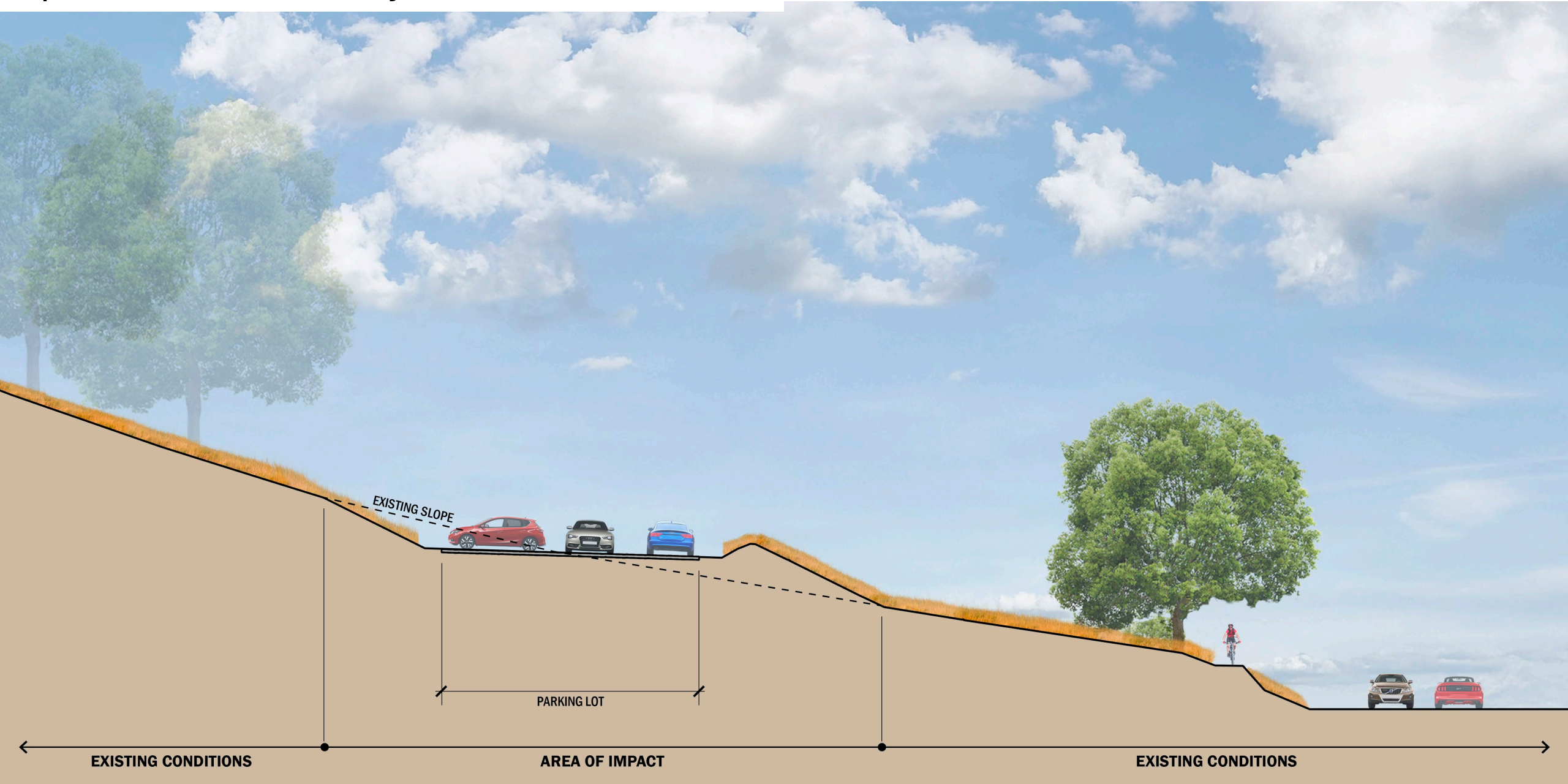
LEGEND

-  Tree Preserved
-  Tree Potentially Affected
-  Tree Removed

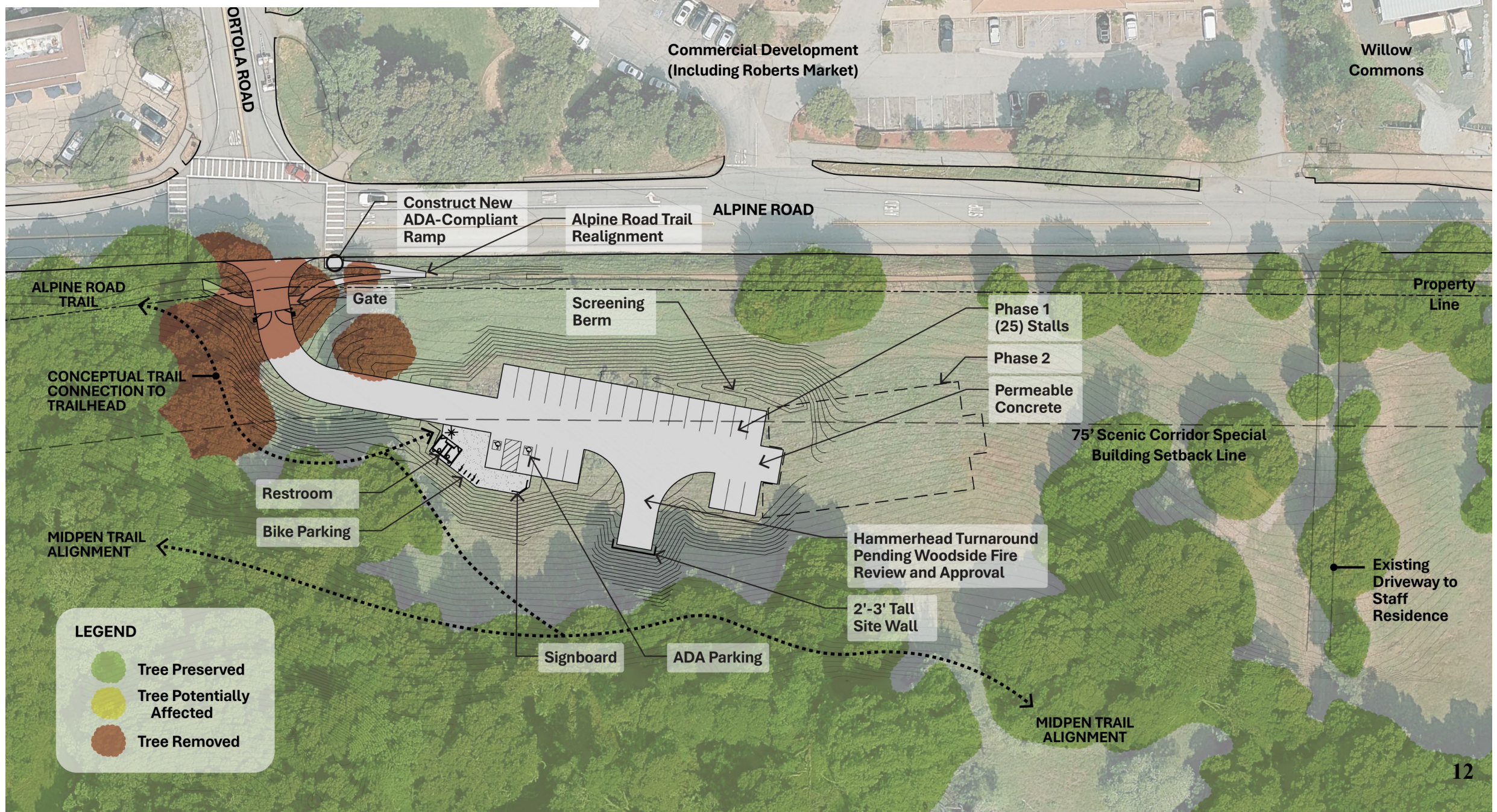


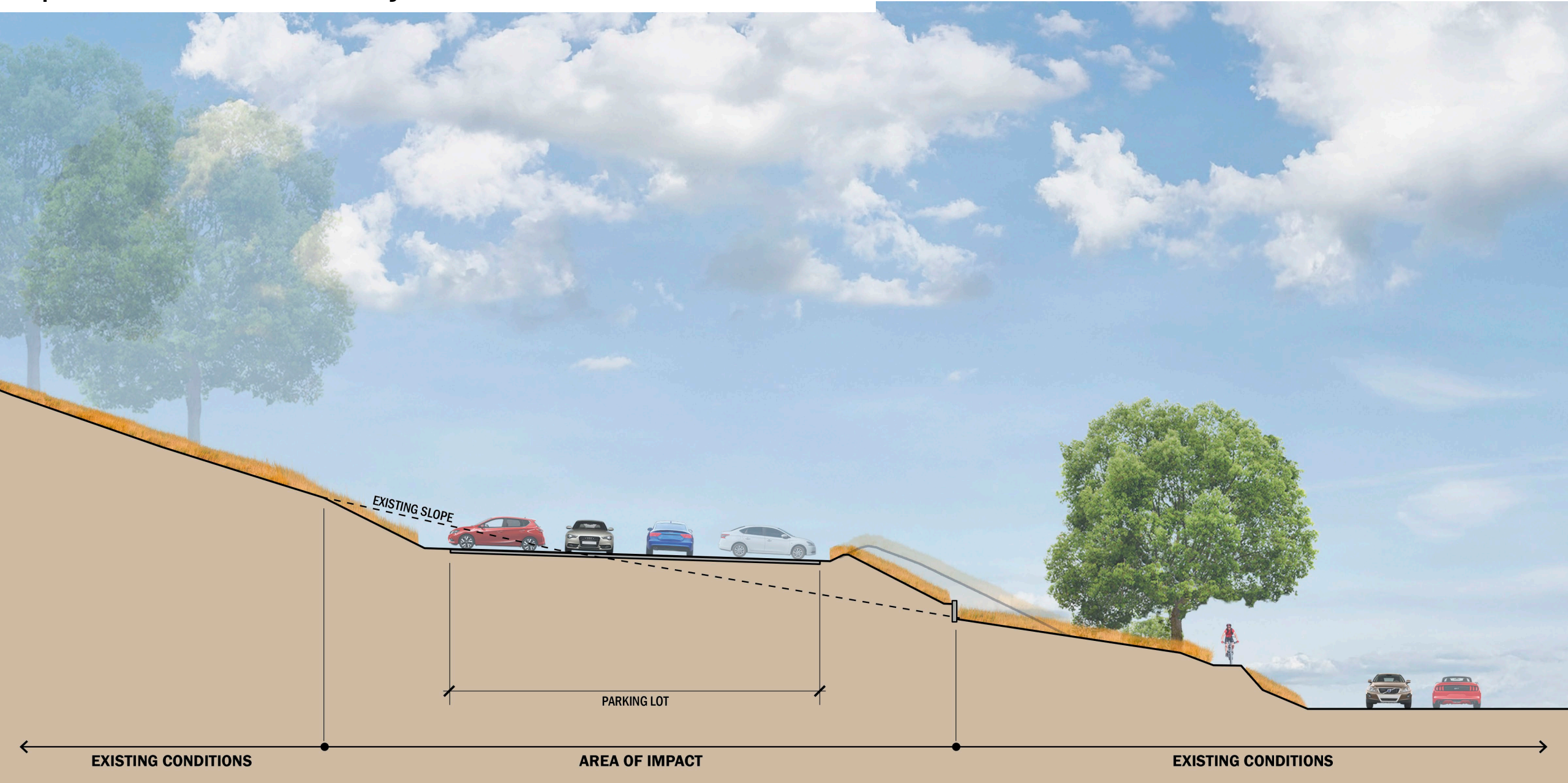
Option 10 Phase 1 Only - Linear





Option 10 Phase 1 Only - Truncated





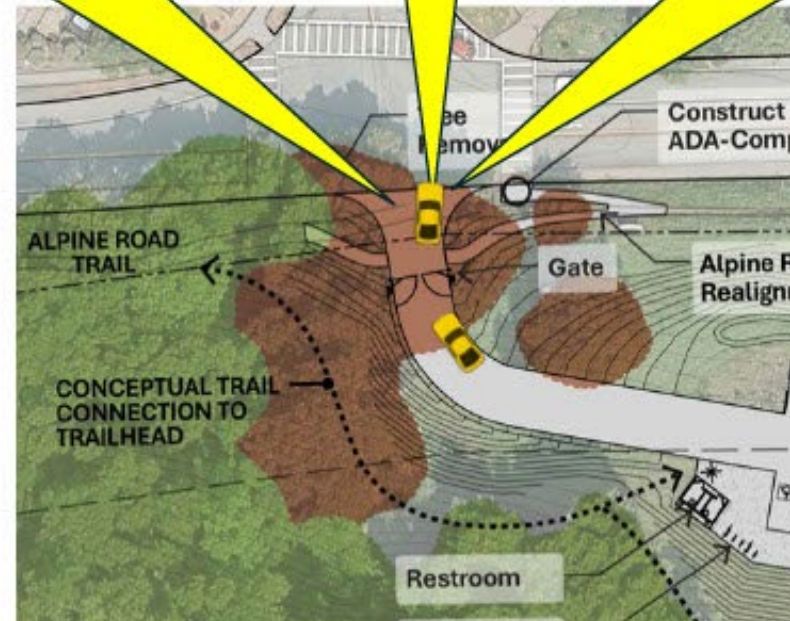
View from car facing forward at driveway exit



View from car turning left out of driveway



View from car turning right out of driveway



Option 10 Driveway Line of Sight

Trees Proposed for Removal

Key:

ID – arborist report identification number

H and V – health and vigor (0 – Dead, 1 – Poor, 2 – Moderate, 3 – Good)

DBH – diameter at breast height in inches

Option 9

Five total trees will need to be removed to implement Option 9. All five of these trees are Coast Live Oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and are located around Option 9's driveway entrance. Four of the Coast Live Oaks proposed for removal are considered significant trees according to the Town of Portola Valley' Municipal Code Section 15.12.070.A (see Town of Portola Valley Significant Trees table below). Seven trees are retained in Option 9 with the use of low (2-3 foot tall) retaining walls.

Trees removed by driveway

ID	Species	H and V	DBH	Notes
8	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	29*	NA
9	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	14*	NA
10	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	10	NA
21	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	16*	NA
93	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	16*	NA

* Significant tree

Trees retained with use of retaining walls

ID	Species	H and V	DBH	Notes
84	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	64	Multistem
85	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	15	NA
86	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	26	NA
87	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	24	NA
90	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	18	NA
91	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	15	Growing through fence
92	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	11	Growing through fence

Option 10

Fifteen (15) total trees will need to be removed to implement Option 10. Ten of these trees are Coast Live Oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), one is a Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*), two are Pacific Madrones (*Arbutus menziesii*), one is an Ornamental Plum, and the final tree is an unidentified species in the pine (*Pinus*) family. Eleven of these trees are considered significant trees according to the Town of Portola Valley' Municipal Code Section 15.12.070.A (see Town of Portola Valley Significant Trees table below). Four trees are retained in Option 10 with the use of low (2-3 foot tall) retaining walls.

Trees removed by driveway

ID	Species	H and V	DBH	Notes
66	<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	3	17*	Multistem
67	<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	2	10*	NA
68	<i>Pinus sp.</i>	1	50+	3 needles, knobconish, poison oak limited ability to collect DBH
69	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	73*	Woodrat nest, significant tree
75	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	17*	NA
76	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	7	NA
77	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	20*	Multistem
78	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	18*	NA
79	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	20*	Multistem
80	<i>Quercus lobata</i>	3	11	NA
81	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	34*	Multistem
82	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	33*	NA
83	Ornamental Plum	3	8	NA
88	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	49*	Multistem
89	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	12*	Growing through fence

* Significant tree

Trees retained due to retaining walls

ID	Species	H and V	DBH	Notes
84	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	64	Multistem
85	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	15	NA
90	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	18	NA
91	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	3	15	Growing Through Fence

Town of Portola Valley Significant Trees

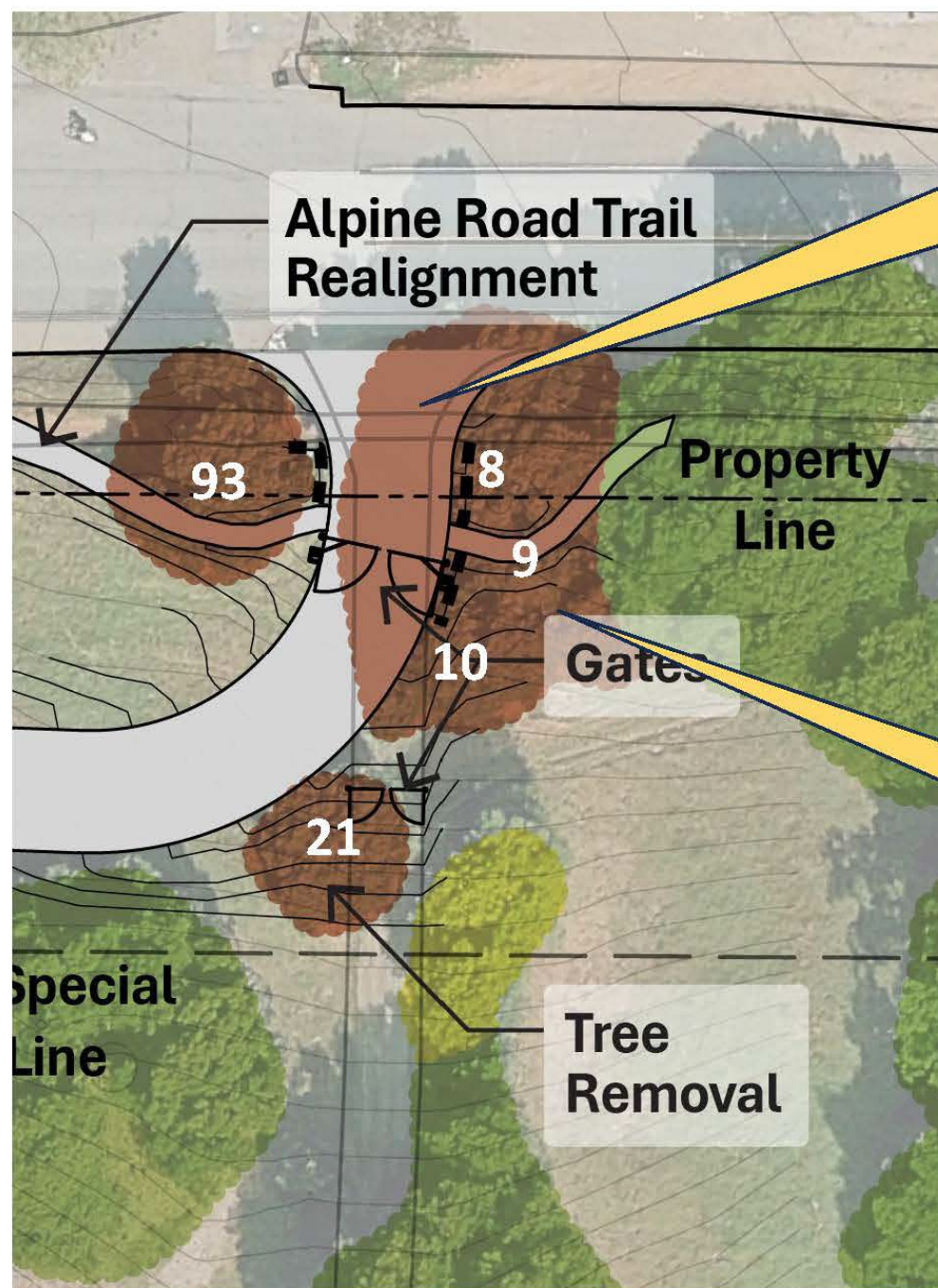
(Portola Valley Municipal Code Section 15.12.070.A)*

Species	Circumference**	Diameter**
Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)	36"	11.5"
Black Oak (<i>Quercus kelloggii</i>)	36"	11.5"
Valley Oak (<i>Quercus lobata</i>)	36"	11.5"
Blue Oak (<i>Quercus douglasii</i>)	16"	5.0"
Coast Redwood (<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>)	54"	17.2"
Douglas Fir (<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>)	54"	17.2"
California Bay Laurel (<i>Umbrellularia californica</i>) (if multiple trunk, measurements pertain to largest trunk)	36"	11.5"
Big Leaf Maple (<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>)	24"	7.6"
Madrone (<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>)	24"	7.6"

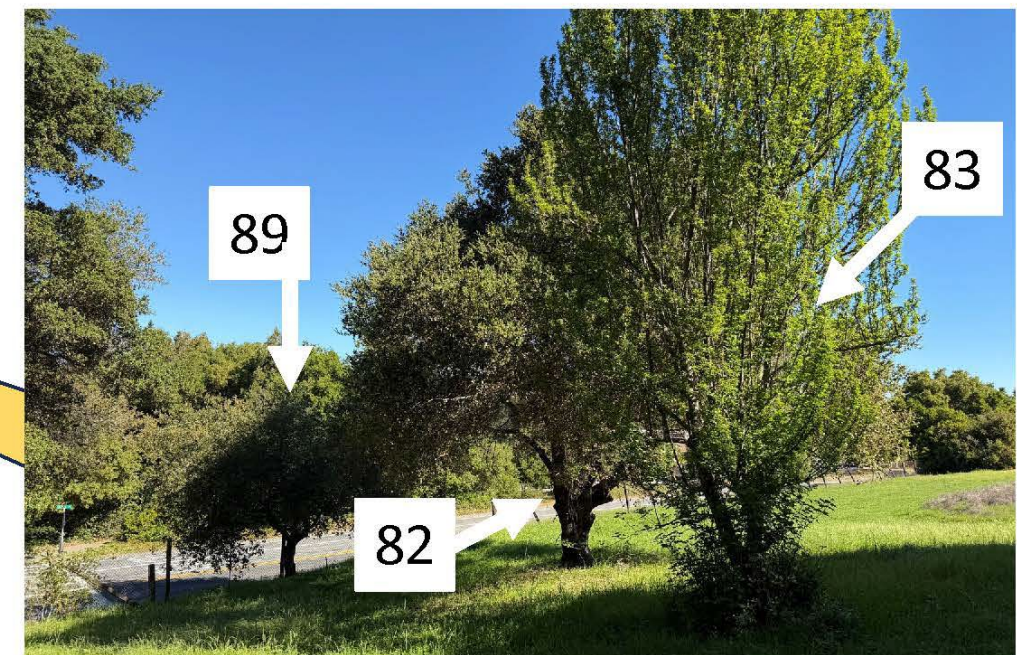
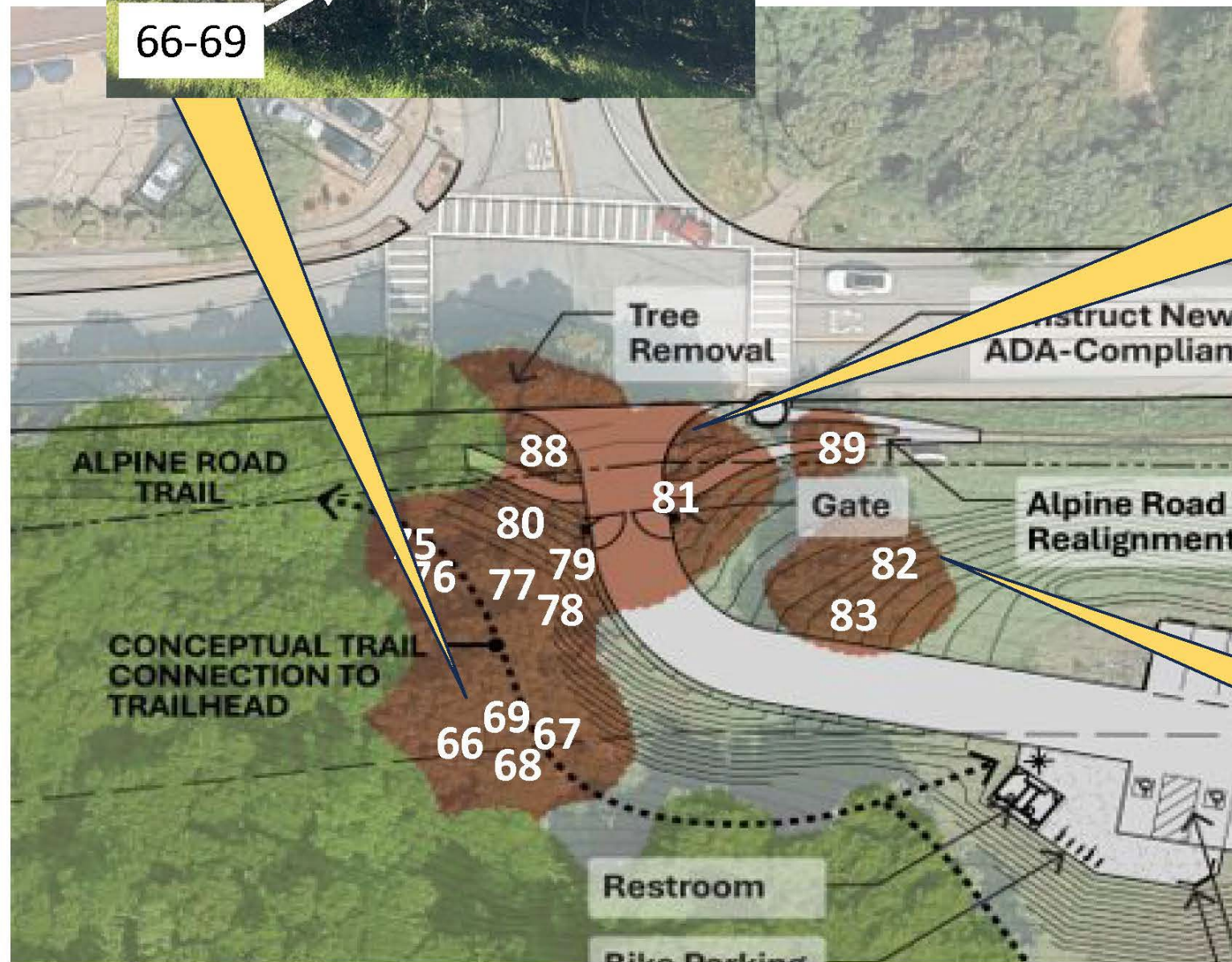
* [Town of Portola Valley tree removal web page](#)

** Measured 54 inches above natural grade

Option 9 Tree Removal for Driveway Entrance



Option 10 Tree Removal for Driveway Entrance





Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-26-35

March 17, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 3

AGENDA ITEM

Presentation of the Hawthorns Area Plan Draft Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs for Consideration as the Basis for the Project Description to Conduct Environmental Review

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

se den

1. Receive a presentation and provide feedback on the Hawthorns Area Plan draft Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs.
2. Forward the draft Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs, with any changes recommended by the Committee, to the Board of Directors for consideration as the basis for the project description to conduct environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

SUMMARY

The Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Preserve) in an incontiguous property located near the larger Preserve, received by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) as a generous land gift in 2011. The Area Plan that is under preparation for the Hawthorns Area will form part of the Comprehensive Use and Management Plan for the Preserve and detail all aspects of use and management for the Hawthorns property. The Area Plan will guide long-term land management, operations and public access actions and activities while ensuring natural resource protection. More specifically, the Area Plan will include management prescriptions for the land's natural, historic, cultural, and tribal resources; aesthetic resources; public use and access; and operations and maintenance activities as documented in the (draft) action table and illustrated in schematic designs.

At the March 17, 2026 Planning and Natural Resource (PNR) Committee meeting, staff will present and obtain PNR feedback on the Area Plan's action table and parking schematic designs for two parking options (Options 9 and 10). These options reflect the recommendations of the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group as presented and approved by the Board on March 25, 2025. Following this meeting, and if forwarded by the PNR, the action table and parking schematic designs will be refined based on Committee feedback and presented to the full Board for their consideration as the basis for the Hawthorns Area Plan project description to conduct environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The environmental review process is expected to span approximately 12 months. The Board will be presented the final CEQA findings prior to considering CEQA certification and Area Plan approval, which is expected in the summer of 2027. Following Area Plan approval, the District will be poised to proceed with on-the-ground implementation, which includes final design,

permitting, bidding, and construction of new public access facilities. For a broad schedule of next steps, please refer to the end of this report.

DISCUSSION

Background

The 79-acre Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Hawthorns Area, Attachment 1) is located near the intersection of Alpine Road and Portola Road and is one of the last remaining islands of open space in the Town of Portola Valley (Town). The property is bounded by Alpine Road to the west, Los Trancos Road to the east, and private property to the north and south. The property is accessible from driveways on Alpine Road and Los Trancos Road.

The Board accepted the Hawthorns Area property and an endowment fund in 2011 from the Woods Family Trust as the largest private land gift received by the District. A Preliminary Use and Management Plan (PUMP) was adopted by the Board as a component of the property acquisition process. The property was officially named the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. It is subject to a conservation easement managed by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) to permanently protect the natural features and restrict future development of new structures or infrastructure.

The Hawthorns Area has remained closed to the public since its transfer to the District in 2011. The Hawthorns Area Plan project is a multi-year, multi-phased planning effort to prepare the property for public use, with the phases of work defined as follows: Phase 1 - Vision and Goals, Phase 2 - Existing Conditions, Opportunities, and Constraints, Phase 3 - Programming/Conceptual Planning and Phase 4 - Area Plan/Environmental Review/Approval. The District is currently implementing Phase 4, which includes preparing the written Hawthorns Area Plan report, progressing the conceptual public access designs into schematic (more detailed) designs, and conducting environmental review. The Hawthorns Area Plan (draft) action table and schematic designs presented in this report reflect the Vision Statement and Goals for the property as approved by the Board on March 23, 2022 and presented below.

Hawthorns Area Vision Statement

The Hawthorns Area offers picturesque views of rolling oak grasslands, the San Francisco Bay, and the Santa Cruz Mountains; provides important wildlife refuge; and reflects the region's natural, agricultural, and social history. The District will protect and manage natural, scenic, cultural, and open space resources at the Hawthorns Area and provide ecologically sensitive public access consistent with the District's mission and the allowable uses outlined in the property's conservation easement.

Hawthorns Area Goals

1. Protect and restore native habitat and manage for ecological resiliency of aquatic and terrestrial habitat, wildlife connectivity, and other natural resources
2. Open the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity public access, provide an internal trail system, and provide multimodal access to the property.
3. Connect to adjacent public trails and explore opportunities for trail connections to regional open space lands.
4. Interpret the rich natural, cultural, and historic features and pursue partnerships to manage the property's natural and cultural history.

5. Highlight scenic viewpoints and design recreational amenities while protecting scenic viewsheds.
6. Manage the property for safe public access in a fiscally sustainable manner that promotes ongoing public support and appreciation with ongoing public engagement and consistent with the District's Good Neighbor Policy.

Overview of Hawthorns Area Plan

The Hawthorns Area Plan that is under preparation will specify activities and actions through schematic designs and an action table with accompanying maps that pertain to:

- New projects, including new natural resource restoration and public access projects;
- Ongoing operations, such as recurring patrol and maintenance work; and
- Programmatic activities related to land management and natural resource stewardship, including actions consistent with the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, Integrated Pest Management Program, and Water Quality Monitoring Plan.

Please refer to the action table in Attachment 2, maps in Attachment 3, and schematic designs in Attachment 4.

Below is a summary of the Hawthorns Area Plan components, which form the basis for the proposed project description under CEQA for PNR review and feedback:

1. Natural Resources Management

Focus areas: Vegetation, wildlife, watershed resources and aquatic habitat, wildfire resiliency, habitat integrity, and climate resiliency

Actions:

- Continue removal of invasive vegetation such as French Broom and Yellow Star Thistle.
- Sustain, restore, and/or enhance viable habitats on site.
- Protect, monitor and, if feasible, improve Los Trancos Creek riparian corridor and in-stream habitat.
- Enhance wildfire resiliency on site by implementing the District's *Wildland Fire Resiliency Program*, including maintaining defensible space around structures and parking.
- Preserve habitat integrity through careful siting of new infrastructure and implementation of wildlife friendly measures.

2. Historic, Cultural, and Tribal Cultural Resources Management

Focus areas: Tribal/cultural resources, historic resources

Actions:

- As tribal capacity and interest allow, collaborate with tribal groups to identify opportunities for education, interpretation, and practice of traditional lifeways on site.
- Conduct interim management of the Hawthorns Historic Complex pending future decisions regarding long term disposition and use.

3. Aesthetic Resources

Focus areas: Viewshed and scenic corridor

Actions:

- Minimize effects of new development on important viewsheds by siting facilities and amenities in accordance with the *District's Parking/Staging Area and Trailhead Design Guidelines*.
- Showcase the Hawthorn Property's landscape features by carefully siting benches and overlooks to highlight key vistas and prevent visual clustering in the interior of the preserve.
- Site proposed amenities to minimize visual impacts on the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor in alignment with the *Town of Portola Valley's General Plan and Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan*.

4. Public Access

Focus areas: Public use, trails, driveways, parking and trailheads, signage, site amenities, multimodal access, and interpretation and education

Actions:

- Add a new parking and trailhead area with standard visitor serving amenities. Initially, the parking area would provide approximately 25 standard parking spaces and may expand to at most 50 parking spaces if future demand exceeds capacity.
- Open approximately 66 acres of the property to public access via on-trail use.
- Add approximately 1.5 miles of new trail system, including an internal loop trail and spur trails to viewpoints with benches and appropriate signage.
- Add local trail connections to the Town of Portola Valley's Alpine Trail and acknowledge the desire for additional local and regional trail connections.
- Provide interpretation and educational opportunities, including continuing docent naturalist guided activities and volunteer-led removal of invasive vegetation.
- Provide bicycle and/or equestrian facilities and explore transportation demand management strategies as needed.

5. Operations and Maintenance

Focus areas: Gates and fencing, road and trail maintenance, safety and security, utilities and infrastructure, environmental hazards, legal agreements/conservation easement, and partnerships

Actions:

- Maintain roads and trails for patrol, emergency, and public access.
- Ensure the safety of visitors by providing adequate signage, emergency personnel, and ongoing patrol.
- Ensure the security of preserve lands and structures by utilizing gates, fencing, and patrol.
- Provide public access and conduct land and resource management actions in alignment with the Conservation Easement held by Peninsula Open Space Trust.
- Seek and maintain partnerships and funding opportunities for resource and land management, as well as future regional and local trail connections.

Note: The Hawthorns Area includes an approximately 13-acre site, located in the southeast corner of the property known as the Historic Complex. The Hawthorns Area Plan calls for the Historic Complex to remain closed to the public until a separate planning process is completed. The complexities of the Historic Complex, including its many structures that date back to the late 1800s and physical layout, require a separate site specific plan for this area of the property. The

Board may consider moving forward the planning process for the Historic Complex once the Hawthorns Area Plan is completed and approved, with implementation actions underway.

Parking Schematic Designs

As directed by the Board on March 12, 2025, staff advanced both conceptual parking options 9 and 10 (Attachment 4) to the schematic design phase. Additional technical studies, which included a topographic survey and geotechnical investigation, were conducted to evaluate grading options and judicious use of retaining walls; accommodate emergency and public access; respond to site constraints; and reduce the extent of site impact. The consultant team developed schematic designs that (1) reduce impacts of new development per the District's *Parking/Staging Area and Trailhead Design Guidelines*, (2) showcase the Hawthorns Property's landscape features and vistas, and (3) minimize effects on the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor in alignment with the *Town of Portola Valley's General Plan and Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan*.

Shared Parking Characteristics of Options 9 and 10

Both schematic design options 9 and 10 consist of standard vehicular parking spaces (no equestrian parking), ADA parking, trailhead amenities and signage, and a vault toilet restroom. The parking area includes a two-way traffic main drive aisle that terminates with a hammerhead turnaround alternative suggested by Woodside Fire Protection District (WFPD) in lieu of a typical 96-foot diameter turnaround circle. This alternative reduces the footprint of the turnaround for emergency vehicles and standard personal vehicles. Due to potential design implications to the proposed parking and driveway, the District and consultant team met with WFPD to obtain their initial input on emergency access. During a follow up meeting, WFPD expressed support of the hammerhead alternative shown on the plans.

Parking is planned to be implemented using a phased approach, starting with approximately 25 spaces in Phase I and potentially expanding to a maximum of 50 spaces at a future date if demand consistently exceeds the initial parking capacity. Note: To evaluate the possibility of a future parking expansion, the General Manager would first return to the Board with a proposal for their review and consideration to determine whether to proceed with such an expansion.

Specific Design and Layout Characteristics of Option 9

Parking design option 9 utilizes the already existing driveway off Alpine Road, thus maintaining current traffic patterns in the area. A gate is proposed to separate the on-site staff residence driveway from the public parking area circulation. The parking area driveway is sited to minimize impacts to existing trees. In option 9, the Alpine Road Trail continues to cross the existing driveway at one location, near Alpine Road but set back a bit further in the preserve (approximately 20 feet).

Several two- to three-foot-high retaining walls are proposed along the periphery of the parking area to reduce the overall amount of grading, recontouring, and total area of soil disturbance. Along the Alpine Road side, option 9 balances the use of grading with discreet sections of retaining wall to screen the parking area from the road and to protect and retain clusters of existing trees along the Alpine Road Trail. The retaining wall serves to reduce the amount of fill over existing tree roots to help the survivability of approximately seven healthy, mature coast live and valley oak trees located along the Alpine Road Trail. These existing trees provide habitat for wildlife, help screen the parking area from the public roadway and roadside trail, and are deemed Significant Trees, the removal of which requires Town of Portola Valley review.

Specific Design and Layout Characteristics of Option 10

Parking design option 10 necessitates the creation of a new 20-foot wide driveway and entry point that would form a new, four-way intersection with Alpine and Portola Roads. The addition of this driveway changes the existing three-way intersection to a four-way, stop-controlled exchange. Coordination with the Town of Portola Valley is required to determine the need for and extent of modifications to the intersection, which may increase project costs. In option 10, Alpine Road Trail crosses two driveways, the new parking area driveway for option 10 and the existing staff residence driveway.

Several two- to three-foot-high retaining walls are proposed along the periphery of the site and along the entry drive from the intersection of Portola and Alpine Roads. Along the Alpine Road side, option 10 balances the use of grading with discreet sections of retaining wall to screen the parking area from the road and to protect and retain clusters of existing trees along the Alpine Road Trail. Retaining walls, particularly on the Alpine Road side of the property, reduce the overall amount of grading, recontouring, and total area of soil disturbance. Moreover, by reducing the amount of fill over tree roots, the retaining walls will allow for the retention of approximately four healthy, mature coast live and valley oak trees along the Alpine Road Trail. These existing trees provide habitat for wildlife, help screen the parking area from the public roadway and roadside trail, and are deemed Significant Trees, the removal of which requires Town of Portola Valley review.

Traffic and Circulation Considerations

Traffic considerations for option 9 and option 10 remain similar given both driveways' proximity to the existing three-way, stop-controlled intersection of Alpine and Portola Roads, which requires traffic to slow and stop near either parking area site. Any time delay that may be generated from option 10 at a new four-way stop intersection is expected to be marginal given the level of service at this intersection, which is currently a B (between 10.3 and 12.9 seconds of delay) during peak weekday AM and PM hours and an A (8.6 seconds of delay) during peak weekend usage, along with the sporadic use of the parking area driveway. Additionally, the undetermined extent of modifications (if any) that the Town of Portola Valley may require at the Alpine and Portola Road intersection could increase project costs. In contrast to option 10, option 9 utilizes an existing driveway, which leverages existing traffic patterns familiar to people traveling on Alpine Road, while option 10 introduces a new traffic pattern. In addition, option 9 results in one driveway crossing for the Alpine Road Trail, whereas option 10 requires two driveway crossings.

Both Options 9 and 10 are recommended to move forward into the next phase of work – CEQA review – to further evaluate the potential environmental impacts of each to help inform the Board on a final parking area option selection. Feedback from PNR on these two design options will be incorporated in a revised design before the information is forwarded to the Board for consideration as the basis for the CEQA project description.

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

- **May 18, 2021:** PNR received an informational presentation on the proposed planning and public engagement process for the Area Plan and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-65, meeting minutes](#))

- **August 24, 2021:** PNR reviewed the proposed draft vision and goals and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-112](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **November 16, 2021:** PNR reviewed the revised vision and goals and draft Public Access Working Group strategy and provided further refinements. PNR unanimously recommended forwarding the refined vision and goal statements to the full Board for consideration. ([R-21-156](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 1, 2022:** PNR reviewed the proposed planning and public engagement process to develop the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-29](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 23, 2022:** Board reviewed and approved the vision and goals. ([R-22-45](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **July 13, 2022:** Board approved the award of contract with Parisi Transportation Consulting to provide transportation planning services for the Hawthorns Area Plan ([R-22-81](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 21, 2023:** PNR reviewed the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition and formation strategy. ([R-23-35](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **April 26, 2023:** Board approved the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition and formation strategy. ([R-23-44](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **June 21, 2023:** Board interviewed and selected candidates as Interest Area Representatives on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group ([R-23-69](#))
- **June 28, 2023:** Board appointed members to serve on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group ([R-23-75](#), [meeting minutes](#)).
- **August 9, 2023:** Board approved the award of contract with CSW|ST2 to provide preliminary site plan and conceptual design services for the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-23-78](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **February 14, 2024:** Board approved the amendment of contracts with Parametrix (transportation consultant, formerly Parisi Transportation Consulting) and PGAdesign (PAWG facilitator). ([R-24-17](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **September 17, 2024:** PNR reviewed the PAWG recommendations, made no modifications, and supported the next step of presenting the recommendations to the Town before returning to a Study Session of the Board. ([R-24-115](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **February 26, 2025:** At this Study Session, Board reviewed the PAWG recommendations and public feedback and directed staff to return to a regular meeting of the Board for consideration and approval of the recommendations with any modifications requested by the Board. ([R-25-23](#), [meeting minutes](#)).
- **March 12, 2025:** Board reviewed and approved public access recommendations. ([R-25-33](#), [meeting minutes](#)).
- **July 23, 2025:** Board approved the award of contract with CSW|ST2 to provide schematic design services for the Hawthorns Area Plan ([R-25-100](#), [meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act and to the interested parties list.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This meeting is for the PNR to provide feedback on the recommended actions of the Hawthorns Area Plan action table and schematic designs, which will serve as basis for the project description to initiate environmental review pursuant to CEQA.

NEXT STEPS

The project team will refine the deliverables based on Committee input and bring the Hawthorns Area Plan components to the full Board at a future Board meeting for acceptance as the recommended CEQA project description to initiate environmental review. The tables below provide a tentative overall project schedule and anticipated upcoming meetings.

Calendar Year	Hawthorns Area Plan Phase
2021-2022	Phase 1: Develop vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area
2022-2023	Phase 2: Develop existing conditions/opportunities and constraints
2023-2025	Phase 3: Develop programming and conceptual planning, public access working group and Board approval
2025-2027	Phase 4: Compile all elements of the Hawthorns Area Plan, including the public access components. Conduct CEQA environmental review and obtain Board approval of the project
2027-TBD	Future: Individual Project Implementation (design development, permitting, bidding, and construction of project action items from the Hawthorns Area Plan)

Additionally, the table below provides a tentative project schedule for the current phase of work.

Tentative Dates	Task
Spring/Summer 2026	Board Meeting(s) – Consider acceptance of Draft Hawthorns Area Plan Action Table and Schematic Designs as the basis for the CEQA project description
Summer 2026 – Summer 2027	Conduct CEQA review, including public notification of draft Area Plan and CEQA document once ready for public review and receipt of comments/preparation of responses
Summer/Fall 2027 (anticipated)	Board consideration of CEQA certification and Hawthorns Area Plan approval

Attachments

1. Hawthorns Property Aerial Map
2. Hawthorns Area Plan Draft Action Table
3. Hawthorns Area Plan Draft Maps
4. Hawthorns Schematic Design Options 9 and 10

Responsible Department Head:
Jane Mark, AICP, Planning Manager

Prepared by:
Cecelia Gerstenbacher, Planner II, Planning Department
Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, Planning Department

Contact person:
Cecelia Gerstenbacher, Planner II, Planning Department
Ashley Mac, Planner III, Planning Department



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, March 17, 2026

APPROVED MINUTES*

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Members present: Jed Cyr, 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, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Senior Planner Tina Hugg, Planner III Ashley Mac, Planner II Cecelia Gerstenbacher, and Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Kishimoto 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.

**Planning and Natural Resources Committee
March 17, 2026**

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Select Committee Chair for 2026 Calendar Year

Director Cyr nominated Director Riffle to serve as the Committee Chair for calendar year 2026.

Director Riffle accepted the nomination.

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 Cyr moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded the motion to select Director Riffle as Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2026.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

2. Approve the December 10, 2025 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.

Public comment opened at 1:02 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 1:02 p.m.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Chair Riffle seconded the motion to approve the December 10, 2025, Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-1-0 (Director Cyr abstained)

3. Presentation of the Hawthorns Area Plan Draft Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs for Consideration as the Basis for the Project Description to Conduct Environmental Review (R-26-35)

Senior Planner Tina Hugg, Planner II Cecelia Gerstenbacher, CSW|ST2 Project Manager Jessie Maran, and Parametrix Senior Consultant Andrew Lee presented the item. General Manager Ana Ruiz, Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, and CSW|ST2 Landscape Architect Paul Stevenson assisted in answering questions.

Chair Riffle noted that in the Action Table page 1 of 21 is not listed. He suggested adding the page number at the bottom of the page for clarity and ease of reference.

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Chair Riffle noted that in the Action Table page 1, under Focus Area of NR2. Wildlife, the action type “eval” is not referenced in the paragraph above. He suggested including an explanation of “eval” for completeness and to avoid confusion.

Director Kishimoto noted that on page 4 under the Focus Area NR3.3 the Purpose is to “*Protect and monitor water quality to support long term preservation, restoration, and enhancement of aquatic resources within Hawthorns,*” and suggested raising the priority level from low to medium.

Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter explained that, in reviewing the Action Table from a natural resource’s perspective, staff considered the 79-acre parcel within the context of the rest of the District’s priorities and potential issues and compared to other bodies of water within the District.

Director Kishimoto suggested adding the context provided by Mr. Sifuentes-Winter to the Action Table, otherwise it is difficult to interpret.

General Manager Ana Ruiz inquired whether the priority level could remain the same if the context was added to the Action Table.

Director Kishimoto requested that the priority level be increased to medium priority.

Mr. Sifuentes-Winter stated he could consult with the District’s Water Resource Specialist and further discuss prioritization.

Director Riffle also expressed concern, noting that when he reviewed the Natural Resources Management items, he felt they should be considered high priority, and suggested that having additional context for how those distinctions were made would be helpful.

Ms. Ruiz explained that the evaluation considers priorities both at the District level and within Hawthorns, including what are the natural resources priorities such as the condition of Los Trancos Creek relative to other resource elements. She noted that some resources elements require more attention as compared to the creek.

Mr. Sifuentes-Winter explained numerous technical, botanical, and wildlife surveys have been conducted in the area to identify resources requiring protection. He noted that while some special species are present, none rise to the point of needing District action to protect a species. He further stated that given the preserve’s location, and in comparison to other areas with higher priority, this area has been ranked accordingly.

Director Kishimoto commented that she would be comfortable deferring to staff regarding the assigned priority level, however, she requested that additional context or a prominent footnote be added to the Action Table.

Director Cyr agreed that an explanation to the Action Table would be helpful.

Chair Riffle commented on NR 1.1 of the Action Table, under Potential Partners, the term “volunteers” should be clarified to refer to District volunteers. Additionally, regarding NR 2.4,

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he noted that multiple actions are listed but only the neighbors and the Town of Portola Valley (Town) are identified as Potential Partners. He asked whether the Potential Partners apply to all actions or solely to Action A.

Ms. Gerstenbacher responded that it would be indicative of Action A and noted that this will be clarified in the Potential Partners section.

Chair Riffle requested clarification regarding the ranking in Operations and Maintenance 5.3 of the Action Table, noting that actions include evaluating future trail connection for (a) Sweet Springs Trail ranked low and for (b) Alpine Trail improvements ranked high.

Ms. Gerstenbacher responded that Alpine Trail improvements will be included in the primary opening phase of the property and ranked higher on the priority list because they are part of opening the property to the public. She explained that improvements to the Sweet Springs Trail, or the potential for such improvements, are anticipated to occur later and are accordingly ranked lower in priority.

Ms. Hugg further clarified that the Alpine Road Trail improvements referenced are limited to connections from the trail to the trailhead, as well as improvements around the driveway. She emphasized that the District's scope applies only within its property boundary. She further explained that coordination with the Town would occur at a future date following completion of the District's planning process for the Hawthorns property. At that time, during the implementation phase, the District will engage with the Town.

Director Kishimoto suggested delineating more clearly the Public Access Map as shown on slide 27 of the staff's presentation and include clarification in the staff report to the Board.

Chair Riffle agreed with Director Kishimoto's suggestions.

Chair Riffle recommended removing the word "alternative" from the third bullet on slide 37 of the staff's presentation, noting that hammerhead is the recommended option.

Director Kishimoto suggested adding context to the staff report to the Board for Option 9, including the information as described on slide 42, noting that it is difficult to understand without visual reference. She also recommended including photos showing the visibility of vehicles turning left to head out to Portola Road.

Director Kishimoto requested to include photos of the proposed trees to be removed along with the total number, and indicate whether any of the trees are classified as a special tree.

Chair Riffle addressed the public comments received about children's safety at the crosswalks and asked about the overall safety of using the crosswalks.

Ms. Maran suggested including a photo would be helpful. She explained that the Alpine Trail dips down to Alpine Road where it intersects with Portola Road and where pedestrians can use a crosswalk to get to the other side of the road. This formalized, safe, and predictable crossing ensures good sightlines for all users, and allows users to see each other when necessary.

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Director Kishimoto suggested that, when the item is presented to the full Board, the staff report include a summary of the specific sections referenced in the District's Parking Guidelines.

Chair Riffle noted that, in the Action Table on page 11, under section PA1.1, there are two action items labeled as "c" and asked whether this was correct.

Ms. Gerstenbacher acknowledged this was an error and stated that the first "c" will be corrected to "b".

Chair Riffle requested that the Priority section of PA1.1 also be updated to reflect this correction.

Chair Riffle noted that PA 4.2 in the Action Table on page 13 does not include information regarding phasing, priority, action type, cost, or potential partners.

Ms. Gerstenbacher noted that this was a formatting error and stated that it would be corrected.

Chair Riffle noted that on page 15 of the Action Plan under PA 7.1 under Purpose it states "*Consider accommodating transportation demand management strategies...*" and requested to change it to "*Incorporate ~~Consider accommodating~~ transportation demand management strategies...*".

Chair Riffle inquired whether the Town should be listed as a potential partner in the Action Table on page 16, PA 8.2, to consult on the cultural or historical aspects of the property.

Ms. Gerstenbacher noted that it would be appropriate to list the Town as a potential partner that the District could consider collaborating with.

Public comment opened at 2:51 p.m.

Betsy Morgenthaler, Portola Valley Open Space Committee, spoke in favor of opening Hawthorns without a parking lot. She commented that an incremental approach would allow earlier public access, reduce immediate impacts, and provide time to evaluate future parking needs and whether a parking lot is necessary.

Mary Hufty, Portola Valley Town Vice Mayor, speaking in her personal capacity, spoke in favor of considering a one-way circulation through the parking lot, noting that it could reduce conflicts and simplify circulation by requiring drivers to look in only one direction. She also commented that the Town is developing a village in Portola Valley with increased housing and is seeking housing sites which is why the historic site is of interest to the Town.

Public comment closed at 2:59 p.m.

Ms. Mark responded to Ms. Morgenthaler's comments noting that there may be a no project alternative as part of the CEQA process, however, this would result in no trails and no development at the site.

Mr. Lee responded to Ms. Hufty's comment regarding the one-way passage through the Hawthorn site, explaining that the design was to limit access to a single point to minimize the

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degree of interaction with Alpine Road. He noted that having two driveways could create user confusion trying to figure out which way to enter and exit. He added that a one-way parking layout would not significantly reduce site work, and its benefits compared to its costs were very modest.

Director Kishimoto asked whether the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would clearly distinguish the impacts of Phase 1 versus Phase 2.

Ms. Mark responded that staff would work with the CEQA consultants to clearly identify what those impacts are per phasing.

Public comment reopened at 3:04 p.m.

Kristi Corley commented that if there is a potential parking lot it should be permeable with rock. She also expressed concern about Alpine Trail, which is a key route for schoolchildren, and it should be discussed thoroughly with the Town's Trails Committee to come up with a good solution for either Option 9 or 10.

Public comment closed at 3:06 p.m.

Director Riffle suggested that before this item is presented to the full Board, to advise the Directors take the opportunity to walk the Alpine Road trail so that it provides a better perspective of the site. It will also provide them with an opportunity to see key elements such as the Robert's Market parking, the stop sign, and traffic conditions.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Cyr seconded forwarding the draft Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs, with any changes recommended by the Committee, to the Board of Directors for consideration as the basis for the project description to conduct environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 3:11 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC, District Clerk