



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 6, 2016

Contact: Amanda Kim, Media Communications Supervisor
akim@openspace.org, (650) 691-1200

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to Hold Special Meeting on Future of Mount Umunhum Radar Tower

Los Altos, CA—The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) Board of Directors (Board) will hold a special public meeting on Wednesday, June 8 at 5:00 pm to make a decision on the future of the radar tower atop Mount Umunhum at Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. Mount Umunhum is located in an unincorporated area near the Town of Los Gatos.

Originally, the Board was considering three options for the tower: restoration of the natural area by removing the tower, an open-air option using part of the structure as a shade pavilion, and a retain and seal option, which would keep the tower in place permitting public access to the exterior only.

In 2012, the Midpen Board had voted to postpone any decision on the tower until October 2017 to give Midpen staff time to open the summit to the public so that the public could experience the mountain with the tower in place to facilitate better informed public opinion on the three tower options. This additional time also permitted the community interested in retaining the radar tower an opportunity to raise funds for its preservation.

The Board is making a decision now because on May 10, 2016, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved listing the Mount Umunhum radar tower on the County Heritage Resource Inventory to ensure ongoing preservation of the structure. Given the implications of the recent County Board decision, Midpen's General Manager, Steve Abbors, in a report to the Board, is recommending the retain and seal option for the radar tower. Because this option is no longer predicated on establishing formal funding partnerships, the General Manager is also recommending that the Board authorize the receipt of funds for future repairs and maintenance of the structure as donations and withdraw the previous Board-approved Partnership Guidelines that were established to create formal funding agreements.

The Special Board Meeting is open to the public and will be held at the Shoup Park Garden House at 400 University Avenue, Los Altos, CA, 94022. There is limited parking on-site, additional parking is available at First Church of Christ, Scientist at 401 University Avenue (across the street). Written comments submitted ahead of the meeting are welcome via email to mt.um@openspace.org or by mail to 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA 94022.

###

Created by voter initiative in 1972, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District has successfully protected more than 62,000 acres of open space. The District is a California special district governed by an elected board of directors. The District's mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land and agricultural land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.