



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## **PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

R-16-95

August 2, 2016

### **AGENDA ITEM 1**

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Highway 17 Wildlife Passage and Bay Area Ridge Trail Crossing Project Public Meeting

#### **GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Present and receive public feedback regarding the Highway 17 Wildlife Passage and Bay Area Ridge Trail Crossing Project.

#### **SUMMARY**

The project study area extends along Highway 17 between the Town of Los Gatos and the Bear Creek Road overcrossing adjacent to Lexington Reservoir. This two-part project will provide safe passage for wildlife and provide a dedicated Highway 17 crossing for both the Bay Area Ridge Trail and Juan Bautista de Anza Trail, a National Park Service administered trail that overlays the Ridge Trail and follows the route of the early Spanish Explorer. The full Board received an information presentation about the project at its July 27, 2016 meeting. This combined Planning and Natural Resources committee and public meeting is the first unveiling of the four preliminary crossing alternatives to the public. The committee will be able to meet representatives from the project team, key partners for this regionally important project and listen to and receive public feedback.

#### **MEASURE AA**

A 5-year Measure AA Project List was approved by the Board at their October 29, 2014 meeting and includes Project #MAA20 (South Bay Foothills: Wildlife Passage and Ridge Trail Improvements). The Highway 17 Wildlife Passage and Bay Area Ridge Trail Crossing project was identified as a high priority project during the Vision Plan and funding for the project was provided through passage of Measure AA.

#### **DISCUSSION**

In February of 2016 (R-16-18), the Board of Directors authorized staff to enter into a contract with a consultant team to identify preliminary alternatives and conceptual designs for both the wildlife and trail crossing options within the study area. The Preliminary Alternatives Report identified four project alternatives (two for the wildlife crossing and two for the Bay Area Ridge Trail). A map indicating the location of the four alternatives is provided as Attachment 1. The presentation at the August 2, 2016 public meeting will identify each of the proposed alternatives (location, style, functionality etc.), as well as rough order of magnitude costs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

MAA#20 allocated \$14 million for the project. The rough order of magnitude costs associated with this project currently range from \$13.8 to \$22.2 million to complete all of the components of the project through construction of both a dedicated wildlife crossing and a dedicated Ridge Trail crossing. These numbers are subject to revision as we continue to work with Caltrans to further evaluate the alternatives and select a preferred alternative. The allocated funding identified in MAA #20 is adequate to bring the project to full design as well as some to all of construction costs (based on the rough order of magnitude cost estimates and depending on the preferred alternative(s) selected). However, selection of certain alternates may require securing outside funding to bring the project to full implementation. Some potential funding sources have already been identified and include: Caltrans (Active Transportation and Environmental and Enhancement Grants), Valley Transportation Authority, National Fish and Wildlife Federation, private donors and/or a combination of the above and/or other yet to be identified sources.

**BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW**

This is the first Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting for this project. The committee is expected to receive public feedback and engage with regional partners and stakeholder agencies during this very early stage of the project.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Public Notice for the upcoming August 2, 2016 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting was sent on July 18, 2016 and is posted on the District's webpage.

**CEQA COMPLIANCE**

At this time (Feasibility Study Phase) the project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As the project progresses and the project is defined through selection of preferred alternative(s), environmental review of project alternatives will begin. This work effort is scheduled to begin in mid to late Fiscal Year 2016-17.

**NEXT STEPS**

Staff will return to the Board on August 24, 2016 to seek approval to enter into a cooperative agreement with Caltrans. After the completion of a required Caltrans Project Study Report, preferred alternatives for the two crossing structures will be selected and advanced to the next phases of the Caltrans project development process which entails preparation of more detailed design, engineering studies, and environmental review.

Attachment

1. Study Area Map indicating the four potential highway crossing locations.

Responsible Department Managers:  
Kirk Lenington, Natural Resources Department

Prepared by:

Julie Andersen, Resource Specialist III, Natural Resources Department

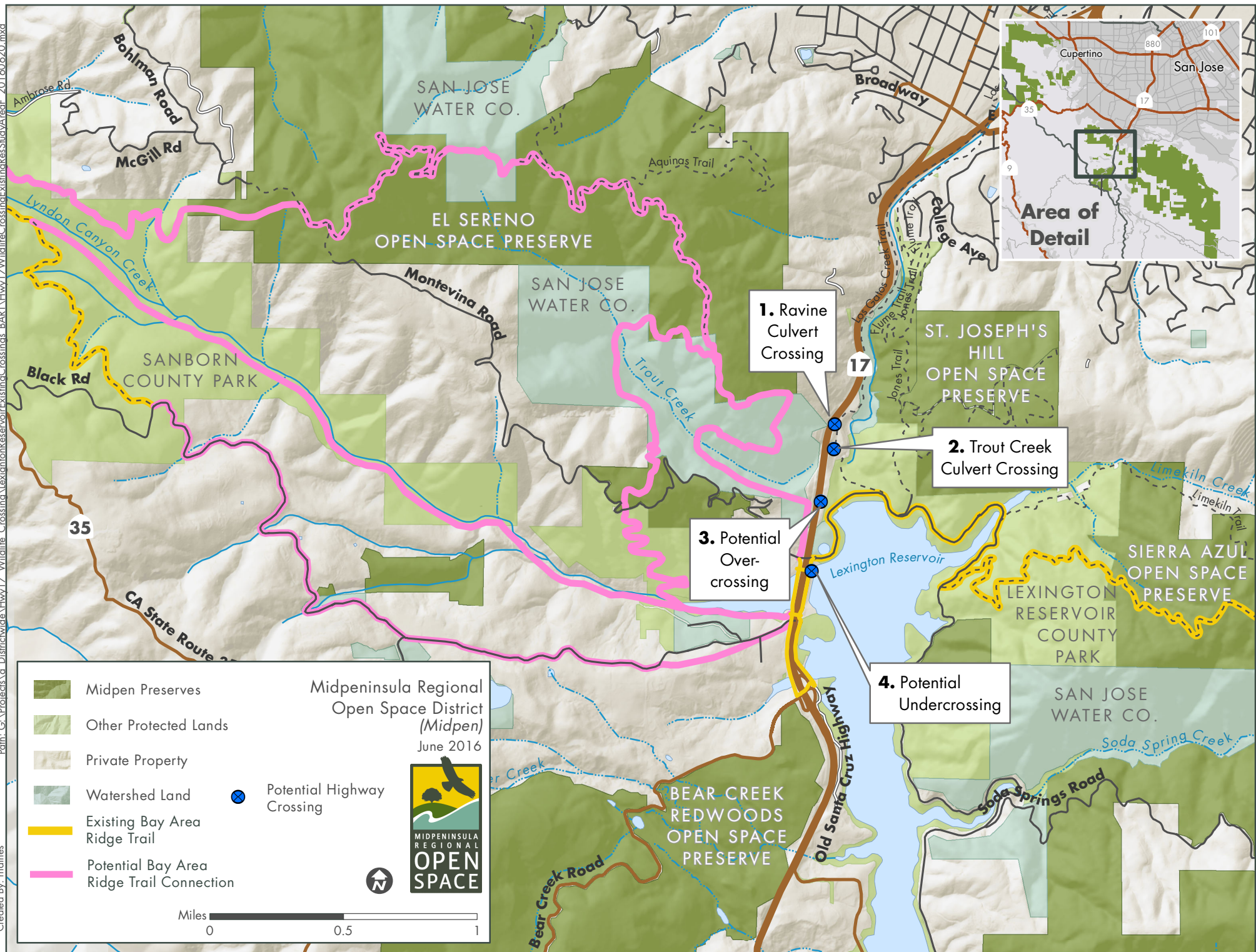
Contact person:

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Created By: rhaines



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