



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-19-47

April 16, 2019

AGENDA ITEM 2

AGENDA ITEM

Rancho San Antonio Multimodal Access Study Update

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide feedback on the draft scope of work related to the Rancho San Antonio Multimodal Study: Phase 1 Parking and Transportation Demand Analysis.
2. Provide feedback on the recommended short-term measures that can be initiated within Fiscal Years 2019-20 and 2020-21.
3. Forward the recommended scope of work and short-term measures to the Board of Directors for consideration of approval.

SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) developed a scope of work to undertake a parking and transportation demand analysis of Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve (Preserve) and Rancho San Antonio County Park (Park). The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate existing parking and access to the Preserve and Park, clarify the underlying causes for the parking and access challenges that exist, and identify strategies for reducing parking issues. The analysis will expand upon a suite of recommendations for managing parking demand and improving multimodal access. The analysis will also provide a basis for future efforts to promote greener transportation options, improve visitor experience, reduce congestion, and reduce parking impacts to adjacent communities. While the study is underway, the General Manager recommends initiating short-term measures to improve the parking issues. Staff is seeking review and comment from the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (Committee) on the draft scope of work of the Multimodal Study: Phase 1 Parking and Transportation Demand Analysis (Attachment 1), and the proposed short-term measures to then forward to the full Board of Directors (Board) for consideration and approval.

DISCUSSION

Background

The Park is located approximately three-quarters of a mile northwest of the Interstate 280/Foothill Boulevard interchange in western Santa Clara County. The Park serves as a high demand access point to the District's Preserve, which abuts the Park along its northwest, west and southwest boundaries. The Park and Preserve come under two separate jurisdictions – Santa Clara County and the District, respectively. Since July 1, 2020, the District has been managing,

patrolling, and maintaining the Park under a multiyear Management Agreement. The current agreement expires on June 30, 2020 and has an option for a five-year extension, which the General Manager will be reviewing in the upcoming fiscal year.

In 1991, the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department (County Parks) completed the Rancho San Antonio Park Master Plan and Initial Study (IS). The IS considered future developments and population growth that would potentially increase Preserve and Park visitors. The IS discussed that on average peak weekday and weekend periods, with no increase in on-site parking supply, there would be a deficit in parking spaces.

The current proposed Multimodal Study evolved in response to ongoing parking challenges facing visitors accessing the Preserve by car. In 2017, approximately 700,000 people visited the Preserve and Park. Parking demand is so high during peak and weekend visiting hours that visitors often wait in their cars to secure a parking space. This detracts from the overall visitor experience and can lead to visitor frustration and at times conflicts.

Due to the high parking demand, nearby residents experience parking overflow in their neighborhoods. In 2016, in response to these concerns, the City of Cupertino eliminated public curbside parking on weekends and holidays along neighborhood streets closest to the Preserve and Park, and established preferential parking zones for residents only. In a separate action, the Los Altos Hills City Council closed Mora Drive to public parking, a popular neighborhood access point to the Preserve. While these actions have addressed resident concerns, the parking restrictions have decreased the available public parking, exacerbating the parking challenges to access the Preserve.

Convening of Stakeholders

With these growing challenges in mind, the District convened a stakeholder meeting in June 2017 attended by representatives of County Parks; Cities of Cupertino, Mountain View, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills; Santa Clara Valley Water District; and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. Each of these agencies is an important stakeholder with interests that converge at the Preserve pertaining to public, resident, and worker access via local streets, expressways, and trails. In addition, the cities jointly worked on the Four Cities Stevens Creek Feasibility Study, a coordinated trail planning effort that included an evaluation of potential routes to connect Stevens Creek Trail to the Preserve.

At this meeting, stakeholders discussed challenges at the Preserve, agency interests, and solutions that may already be underway. The group brainstormed ideas and solutions worth pursuing further. Everyone confirmed that the challenges at the Preserve needed further study. Board Directors Curt Riffle and Yoriko Kishimoto attended this stakeholder meeting.

Multimodal Study - Phase I: Parking and Transportation Demand Analysis

To better understand the underlying causes for the parking and access challenges, and develop effective multimodal strategies to address them, the General Manager recommends conducting a parking and transportation demand analysis to evaluate existing parking and access conditions, understand more about how visitors access the Preserve, and identify strategies to encourage other modes of travel and reduce parking demand.

As visitor numbers increase and parking demand for the site grows, this analysis can inform the District of parking and access issues, and evaluate and recommend strategies to implement over the short-, mid- and long- term that aim to reduce visitor reliance on single occupancy vehicle travel to alleviate parking demands. Staff has developed a draft scope of work for the analysis (Attachment 1) and a table of potential strategies, based on prior stakeholder input and research on parking management solutions that other agencies are using in the Bay Area (i.e. Muir Woods reservation system) (Attachment 2). The scope of work for the parking and transportation demand analysis incorporates input received from County Parks. The General Manager plans to solicit expert consultant assistance to review the range of potential strategies identified to date and identify any new additional strategies that may be viable for the Preserve.

Short-term, immediate, low-cost measures

Staff has identified a variety of short-, medium-, and long-term measures (Attachment 2). The General Manager recommends implementing short-term, immediate, low-cost measures concurrently with the study to begin addressing the parking issues. As part of the implementation, staff would track the outcomes and results to determine whether additional medium- or long-term solutions are warranted. The parking and transportation demand analysis will further evaluate and add to the medium- and long-term solutions as options for the Board to consider and potentially add to future annual Capital Improvement and Action Plans.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommended action has no immediate fiscal impact. There are minimal costs associated with initiating short-term strategies. Costs would cover installation of signs and bicycle racks, and map and brochure updates, which could range from \$2,000 to \$3,000. A budget of \$56,000 for consultant services is included in this FY2018-19 and also budgeted for FY2019-20.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

This Planning and Natural Resources Committee is reviewing this item for the first time.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Additional notice was provided to County Parks, other project stakeholders (Cities of Cupertino, Mountain View, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills) Santa Clara Valley Water District, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, neighbors living adjacent to the Preserve, and Preserve interested parties.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The Multimodal Study: Phase I Parking and Transportation Demand Analysis is equivalent to a feasibility or planning study for possible future actions, which the District has not yet approved, within the meaning of CEQA Section 15262. The Multimodal Study will inform future actions that will be subject to CEQA, and subsequent environmental review will be conducted at that time.

The short-term actions recommended by staff are not subject to CEQA review because they would not have a significant impact on the environment within the meaning of Section

15061(b)(3), or they fall within the Existing Facilities exemption under Section 15301 for operation, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing structures, facilities, and equipment.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Committee feedback, the General Manager will forward to the full Board the recommended scope of work for the parking and transportation demand study, and short-term measures, for consideration of approval.

Attachments

1. Draft Scope of Work
2. Table of Potential Measures

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RANCHO SAN ANTONIO MULTIMODAL ACCESS STUDY

Parking and Transportation Demand Management Analysis

The District seeks professional services to undertake a Parking¹ and Transportation Demand Management (TDM)² analysis of Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve and County Park (Rancho San Antonio). The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate existing parking and access to the Park/Preserve, clarify the parking and access challenges that exist, and identify strategies that will reduce parking demands and better manage visitation levels. Taking into consideration an approved Santa Clara County Park Master Plan for Rancho San Antonio (1992), the analysis will provide recommendations for managing parking demand, achieving parking lot efficiency, and improving multimodal access. The study will provide a basis for future studies, if needed, and help manage peak visitation, improve visitor experience, reduce congestion, and reduce parking impacts to the local community.

Background

Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve and County Park (Rancho San Antonio) are popular regional and local destinations for large segments of the public and these sites receive significant use. The 3,988-acre Open Space Preserve, combined with the adjoining 165-acre County Park, offer visitors a unique experience with a sampling of diverse environments, interesting natural and cultural history and a variety of activities. The Open Space Preserve, owned by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen), features the popular Deer Hollow Farm demonstration farm and garden, and a popular trail network that extends into the Preserve from the County Park. The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved a Master Plan for Rancho San Antonio County Park in May 1992, which identified improvements to accommodate various user needs while maintaining the natural character of the park. Under a management agreement, Midpen operates and manages both the Preserve and Park.

Over one million people reside within 10 miles of Rancho San Antonio, and nearly 700,000 people visited the Preserve and Park last year. As visitor numbers increase, parking demand for the site grows. Parking congestion and spillover have been ongoing issues at Rancho San Antonio for several years. These conditions may result in a degraded visitor arrival and departure experience during peak hours, and may detract from the inspiring and contemplative experience of the Preserve. In addition, adjacent neighborhoods have been impacted by spillover parking. Cupertino and Los Altos Hills recently created preferential or permit parking zones in response to this issue, which has eliminated public parking spaces and reduced the number of available nearby parking spaces for Preserve and Park visitation.

Midpen, neighboring cities, and the general public realize that the status quo is undesirable. In June 2017, Midpen and County Parks co-convened a meeting to discuss the issues with agency stakeholders, including the cities of Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and Mountain View; the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA); and the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD). This group confirmed the need to identify and evaluate parking and access issues at Rancho San Antonio, and strategies to address these issues over the short, mid- and long- term.

¹ Refers to various policies and programs that result in more efficient use of parking resources.

² Transportation Demand Management (also called Mobility Management) is a general term for strategies that result in more efficient use of transportation resources (Victoria Transport Policy Institute).

Project Scope

- a. Consultant shall analyze existing Plans, Programs, and Policies
 - i. Organize and evaluate background information, including a review of the Rancho San Antonio County Park Master Plan, 1990 Rancho San Antonio Program Phase Document, Negative Declaration and Initial Study for Master Plan, agency guidelines, legal mandates and management objectives for the Park and Preserve, as well as the spectrum of recreation opportunities possible within resource capabilities.

- b. Consultant will collect and analyze information to better define causes and peak periods of parking problems at Rancho San Antonio, and prepare summary report of the findings. This work includes collecting visitor use patterns and determining problem types (i.e., parking congestion, spillover, illegal parking, idling for parking spaces). Information to gather and review includes:
 - i. Midpen's Preserve Use Survey data;
 - ii. Midpen's Land & Facilities counts for cars;
 - iii. Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department data (surveys, traffic and/or trail counts, etc.)
 - iv. Visitor intercept and online surveys:
 1. Demographics
 2. Peak use (time & day(s))
 3. Mode of travel and from which city
 4. Time spent at preserve
 - v. Any additional traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle counts as needed.

- c. Consultant will collect and analyze data regarding existing and/or planned opportunities for access, and prepare a summary report of the findings:
 - i. Existing General Plans, regional plans, or programs that dovetail with access to Rancho San Antonio;
 - ii. Parking facilities, availability, and use;
 - iii. Trails and pathway connections;
 - iv. Bicycle facilities and bicycle connections;
 - v. ADA accessibility (parking, access); and
 - vi. Transit/Shuttle services and shared transportation options.

- d. Consultant will evaluate existing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and prepare a summary report of the findings. Items to evaluate include but not limited to:
 - i. Strategies of other county, city, and regional parks that have addressed TDM (e.g. Access Plans and Traffic Studies);
 - ii. Signage, social media, and other information/communication updates (e.g. websites) promoting alternate modes of accessing the Preserve and Park;
 - iii. New, planned, or enhanced bike and pedestrian facilities to improve access;
 - iv. Bikesharing and ridesharing opportunities;

- v. Transit and/or shuttle opportunities;
 - vi. Fee- and reservation-based programs;
 - vii. Land use available for future parking options within a ½ mile radius of Rancho San Antonio;
 - viii. Conceptual parking layout modifications for additional parking spaces;
 - ix. Time-limited parking (i.e. 4 or 6 hours) programs;
- e. Consultant will prepare a report with recommendations on short-, mid-, long-term strategies with order of magnitude cost information for managing/reducing parking demand, and improving multimodal access. Recommendations will remain consistent with the mission and goals of both Midpen and Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department, and:
- i. Balance public access/visitor experience with resource management/open space protection;
 - ii. Remain consistent with or identify the need for amendments to the 1992 Rancho San Antonio County Park Master Plan.
 - iii. Identify key partners and their roles for implementation.
 - iv. Identify the major action items/milestones to implement each strategy.
 - v. Group each strategy by major category.
 - vi. Identify available grant funding resources to implement the strategies.
 - vii. Include recommendations for a strategic community outreach process to support the ongoing implementation of this project.

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Attachment 2

Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve – Multimodal Access Study

Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Actions

Category	Short Term Actions	Medium Term Actions	Long Term Actions
Education Campaign	Host weekend events with Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition to promote biking to the Preserve		
	Provide website information and related links of existing bicycle maps, routes, plans, and other bicycle affiliate websites (i.e. SVBC) to promote alternatives ways to get to the Preserve		
	Provide onsite information about other preserve locations and alternative modes of transportation		
Ridesharing	Designate a rideshare drop-off/pick-up area (e.g. Uber, Lyft)	Collaborate with ride-share companies to offer a Credit Pilot Program for preserve visitors	
	Establish a pinpoint with rideshare companies for the drop-off/pick-up area		
Community Shuttle Service	Partner with the City of Cupertino on their community shuttle service pilot project to add a stop at the Preserve	Pilot a shuttle service from nearby location(s) or a weekend service shuttle	Establish service shuttles with other cities (modeling City of Cupertino’s community shuttle)
Information & Marketing	Improve access information in maps, brochures and website to highlight non-motorized access		

Attachment 2

Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve – Multimodal Access Study

Category	Short Term Actions	Medium Term Actions	Long Term Actions
Bicycle Enhancements	Install additional secure bike parking/racks	Partner with cities to establish new bike-friendly routes to the Preserve	
Trail Enhancements			Work with surrounding cities to build connecting trails to nearby open space
Wayfinding	Initiate discussions with City of Los Altos to install/update city signs that promote pedestrian and bicycle access routes to the Preserve.	Install signage at St. Joseph Avenue entrance, under I-280	
	Update interior Preserve signs to promote bicycle and pedestrian entrances.		
Improvements to Existing Parking Lots	Conduct a desktop assessment of the current parking lot and identify opportunities for re-striping with the intent to yield additional parking within the current layout.	If restriping the parking lots yield additional parking spaces, coordinate with County Parks to add the restriping to their Paving Management Program	
		Reconfigure parking lots if additional parking spaces are possible.	
Parking Management		Implement a reservation system	Consider additional onsite or offsite parking lot(s)
			Consider metered parking program
			Consider parking fee pilot program

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Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve – Multimodal Access Study

Category	Short Term Actions	Medium Term Actions	Long Term Actions
Improved Transportation Option	Pending resumption of construction activities on SCVWD Permanente Creek Flood Protection Project, monitor construction of pedestrian connection from Preserve entrance to the Steve Abbors Trail		Collaborate with Cupertino on a trail staging area, spur trail, and pedestrian/bike bridge over the UPRR tracks, Stevens Creek Trail Feasibility Study)
			Monitor Los Altos Hill’s construction of a pathway along Mora Drive from Olive Tree Lane (per update of Master Path Map)
			Monitor and participate in Caltrans District 4’s Pedestrian Plan to promote safe crossings under I-280 to the Preserve.
			Collaborate with and offer input to Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and Cupertino on Cities' Pedestrian & Bicycle Plans