



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-20-15  
Meeting 20-03  
February 12, 2020

## AGENDA ITEM 7

### AGENDA ITEM

Administrative Office Project Update

### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *den*

Review and provide feedback on the current project design reflecting 50% complete construction documents to reconfigure and repurpose the 5050 El Camino Real building in Los Altos, California as the main administrative office for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

### SUMMARY

At the October 9, 2019 public meeting, the Board of Directors (Board) reviewed and approved the design development plans for the Administrative Office Project (AO or Project), allowing the Project to proceed into construction documents and permitting. At the February 12, 2020 public meeting, the Board will review and provide feedback on the latest project design and cost estimate, which reflects a 50% complete construction document set, focusing on the following elements:

- Exterior office sign
- Atrium and Boardroom
- Tenant space
- Source wood material

### BACKGROUND

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) has been evaluating options to address the lack of sufficient administrative office space to meet ongoing and long-term business needs since 2015, as the organization began to undergo significant internal restructuring to accelerate project delivery, expand public service delivery, and ensure sufficient resources to manage public land and access facilities. At the July 2017 public meeting, the Board adopted a resolution to enter into a purchase and sale agreement for the building located at 5050 El Camino Real, Los Altos, CA (R-17-90). Escrow closed on the purchase on February 1, 2019.

At the December 6, 2017 public meeting, the Board approved the Space Needs Assessment & Basic Program Report (R-17-128) for the Project. At the August 22, 2018 public meeting, the Board approved a contract with the design consultant, Noll & Tam, to assess and design the new AO based on the Board-approved project design goals, program elements, and space needs (R-18-97 and R-18-100). At the October 24, 2018 public meeting, District staff and the Board began the design process for the new AO by prioritizing project goals and space needs (R-18-123).

From January through May 2019, the Board held a public open house and several public meetings to solicit public input and provide feedback on the evolving schematic design options, cost estimates, and alternatives to reduce total project costs. At the May 22, 2019 public meeting, the Board approved the final schematic design and associated cost estimate (R-19-64). On the same date, the Board approved a contract amendment with Noll & Tam to continue with the remaining phases of the Project, including design development, construction documents, permitting assistance, construction administration, and as-built drawings.

At the October 9, 2019 Board meeting, the Board reviewed the design development plans and revised cost estimate to confirm that the Project as designed meets the Board-approved project goals, program elements, design direction, and project budget (R-19-130). As part of this review, the Board approved the design development plans allowing Noll & Tam to proceed into the next project phase - construction documents (detailed, constructible plans) and permitting with the following additional direction:

- Install a 40-foot tall flagpole with foundation
- Replace cladding at exterior side entries
- Replace cladding at columns, soffit, and fascia
- Use Privasee operable partition in lieu of Acoustifold
- Add exterior vertical aluminum panels with printed design at northerly and westerly building facades

On October 9, the Board also made the decision to install solar panels separately once the project is complete. To allow for a later installation of solar panels, the Project includes minor structural roof upgrades to accommodate the additional load.

## **DISCUSSION**

Incorporating Board feedback from the design development phase of the Project, District staff and Noll & Tam have proceeded to develop construction documents and coordinate with the City of Los Altos on permits. The current project design, which the Board will discuss at the February 12, 2020 public Board meeting, reflects a set of 50% complete construction documents.

### **Permitting Update**

To date, Noll & Tam has prepared draft constructible plans, specifications, calculations, and general conditions for the Project. The District utilized these draft materials to submit a Commercial Design Review application with the City of Los Altos in August 2019 and received initial city comments in October 2019. Noll & Tam has responded to and incorporated the comments into the current set of CDs. As the permitting agency, the City of Los Altos will be the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and anticipates the Project to be eligible for a categorical exemption. The District will submit all remaining City of Los Altos permit applications in April/May 2020, when the final set of construction documents (CDs) are anticipated.

The Project's final CDs will include the following main components:

- Architecture (interior and exterior)
- Civil engineering – grading, drainage, demolition, and utilities
- Landscape architecture – planting and hardscape

- Structural engineering – framing, seismic analysis, shear wall, beams, and columns
- Information technology (IT) – audiovisual, communication, servers, and security
- Mechanical and electrical engineering – plumbing, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning), lighting, power & signal, and fire alarm

All interior and exterior improvements are consistent with the Board-approved project goals, program elements, and design direction.

### **Bird Safe Window Glazing**

Noll & Tam has worked closely with the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society on the bird safety design measures. Several bird-safe design measures exist to protect birds from flying into or colliding with windows. Noll & Tam continues to coordinate with various manufacturers to be informed of emerging new designs and available products. At the February 12, 2020 Board meeting, Noll & Tam will provide an update on the current window glazing design and return to the Board in April 2020 to go over the final recommended glazing product(s) and associated cost(s).

### **Revised Project Cost Estimate**

The cost estimate based on the current CDs as of February 12 is approximately \$24.78 million and below the Board approved project budget of \$27.4 million. The cost estimate includes construction labor and material, design fees, permitting fees, testing and inspection, design and construction contingencies, escalation, and other miscellaneous project costs.

### **Board Feedback on Outstanding Project Design Elements**

On February 12, the Board will have an opportunity to provide direction on the following outstanding project design elements to guide the completion of the CDs.

#### ***Exterior Office Sign***

A standard District logo exterior office sign will be installed at the corner of El Camino Real and Distel Circle. At the September 11, 2019 study session, the Board provided feedback on two design alternatives and requested Noll & Tam to provide a third alternative that accentuates the aesthetic of the first two alternatives and blends well with the existing rock wall. At the October 9, 2019 meeting, Noll & Tam presented revised alternatives, with the Board selecting a vertical panel design that is inset into the existing rock wall and incorporates the standard District logo and “5050 El Camino Real” lettering. On February 12, the Board will have an opportunity to select an option that reflects this recent Board direction (refer to Attachment 1 for revised renderings).

#### ***Atrium and Boardroom Layout***

At the October 9, 2019 public Board meeting, Noll & Tam presented updates to several atrium area and Boardroom design elements and renderings. Some key design ideas included: use of authentic natural materials (such as wood, cork, and stone) wherever possible; bringing the outdoors in to create warm and light-filled spaces; using natural colors found in nature; and incorporating aesthetic elements from the open space preserves to reflect the conservation and natural resource values and mission of the District. In addition, the Board also commented on the need to provide flexibility in the use of the space to accommodate a wide range of public office space needs (e.g. small, medium, and large public gatherings and meetings; public workshops; open houses; and formal public hearings). The main public space (public lobby,

atrium, and Boardroom) will be located at the center of the building with direct connections to the parking area and public sidewalk through the entrance plaza/exterior walkway.

These public facing areas will incorporate a combination of rustic and functional design and will include salvaged and recycled wood as much as possible (sources listed below). The lobby flooring will be of concrete with a topographic pattern extending from the plaza into the lobby that subtly communicates the range of elevations found in the District's public open space lands. The main lobby walls will be covered in a wood veneer with a secondary dark gray accent wall featuring a quote that embodies the District's mission and values. The Boardroom is designed to face northerly toward the entrance with its back to the south face of the building, where an outdoor space and planter area will be located. Tall drought tolerant native plants will provide visual and solar shading to the Boardroom. The Board dais is proposed to be fixed while the remaining furniture will be mobile, allowing maximum flexibility for other uses such as trainings or staff meetings. On October 9, 2019, the Board provided the following input, which has been incorporated into the latest plans:

- Include District logo and source wood into Board dais design
- Expose raw edges of source wood to accentuate the natural aesthetic of wood
- Provide revised frosting design concepts for the Boardroom glass partition that are subtle and integrate well with the design of the adjoining public spaces.

Noll & Tam will present updated design elements and renderings that includes the items listed above at the February 12, 2020 Board meeting to receive any additional Board feedback and direction. See Attachment 2 for updated rendering of the public atrium and Boardroom.

### ***Tenant Space***

Approximately 7,200 square feet (SF) of the first-floor space is available for tenant leasing, including three suites (as currently configured with the wall partitions) and a shared public restroom. The income received from this tenant space will help offset the total project costs until and if the District determines that additional office space is needed to accommodate future District business needs and/or any additional staffing growth. The three proposed tenant suites range in size from approximately 1,700 square feet to 2,600 square feet and include an open office area, meeting room, closed office, and kitchenette/coffee area. The layout may be reconfigured to meet future tenant needs. Tenants will be able to enter and exit through either the District's main entrance or a separate side stairwell. See Attachment 3 for layout.

### ***Source Wood Material***

District staff and Noll & Tam are further evaluating the reuse and repurposing of felled trees, stockpiled wood, and/or non-native trees identified for removal. Some architectural usage of this material includes handrails, benches, interior finishes, desks, signage, and/or the Boardroom dais. Four sources of wood remain under evaluation. Additional evaluation is required to confirm the feasibility based on material conditions, cost (fall, transport, mill, and woodwork), and design opportunities. Redwood trees at El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve were recently deemed unsuitable. Below is a brief summary of each wood source, including site location, description, and suitability.

- *Redwood trees* removed by Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) at El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve were deemed unsuitable due to inadequate size and quality of the trees. PG&E

removed several redwood trees on Bear Gulch Road to address fire risk concerns along their power lines.

- *Blackwood acacia (Acacia melanoxylon)* at Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve. Natural Resources (NR) staff are evaluating the restoration of 17 acres of redwood/mixed conifer forest that is invaded by this non-native, invasive acacia species and located along the planned Purisima-to-the-Sea regional trail corridor.

In October 2019, two trees were felled and delivered to a local mill and lumber yard to determine the quality and feasibility of the wood. In December 2019, the wood was determined to be adequate for project design elements such as benches, interior finishes, desks, signage, and Boardroom dais. The wood is currently stored at the Foothill Field Office for drying. Staff will again review the wood in one year to assess the amount of warping and determine whether it is feasible for stairs and handrails (elements that require plum, level materials). The full cost will be presented to the Board once additional information is gathered. The District will solicit consultants to develop a Restoration Plan for site of these invasive, nonnative trees. See table below for a tentative schedule.

Milestones	Tentative Timeline
Transport two felled trees to lumber yard and determined that acacia trees are feasible for project design	October – December 2019
Identify trees to be used at the AO and evaluate tree permits that may be required	January 2020 – September 2020
Hire consultant to develop the Restoration Plan	July 2020
Fall trees and transport select specimens to the lumber yard for milling	September 2020 – March 2021
Storage and air-dry lumber to cure	March 2021 – September 2021
Fabricate lumber to meet project specifications	September 2021 - November 2021
Installation	November 2021 – February 2022
Move-In	March 2022

- *Stockpiled redwood trees* at Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve. Several 12 to 36-inch diameter at breast height (dbh) segments of redwood trees have been stockpiled at the preserve. These trees either fell naturally or were brought down to improve traffic and line-of-sight safety as part of the construction of the newly opened public access parking lot. Mitigation measures for tree removal are being implemented separately. These redwood trees were cut into large sections that may be salvaged and reused. The quality and quantity of the wood are not feasible for furniture, stair treads, or handrail. However, the wood may be feasible for signage

and lobby wall cladding. The District is coordinating with Noll & Tam to incorporate the wood into the project design.

- *Redwood logs stockpiled* at Skyline Field Office. Several 12 to 36-inch dbh segments of naturally felled redwood trees have been stockpiled at the Preserve. These redwood trees were cut into large sections that may be salvaged and reused. The District is coordinating with Noll & Tam to incorporate the wood into the project design.
- *Barn wood stockpile* from La Honda Creek Preserve. Old barn wood from prior demolition projects of dilapidated buildings that were removed for public safety to open lower La Honda Preserve to public access were saved and stockpiled. This material was inspected and determined as non-hazardous. Although a majority of the wood is damaged, cracked, and/or has dents from nails, some of the wood planks may be feasible for reuse on various interior walls, the boardroom dais, and the entry desk. Noll & Tam will confirm the possible use of the barn wood stockpile after an inspection and if feasible for reuse, will incorporate the wood into the project design where possible.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

At each major milestone, the District presents a revised cost estimate to ensure that the Project design remains within the May 2019 Board-approved project budget of \$27.4 million (R-19-64). At this current time, the updated cost estimate is approximately \$24.78 million and below the Board approved project budget of \$27.4 million. The design team will continue to update the project cost estimate as the details of the project design progresses through the construction document phase.

Since 2015, the District has studied alternatives for meeting the District's long-term office space needs. These alternatives include purchasing and renovating a new building; renovating and completing end-of-life repairs (e.g. HVAC) to the current 330 Distel Circle building while also continuing to rent adjacent office spaces; and rebuilding a larger three-story building at 330 Distel Circle. Following the 2019 purchase of 5050 El Camino Real, the cost analysis indicates that renovating the 5050 El Camino Real building at approximately a \$24.78 million is the most cost-effective solution to meet the District's long-term needs, compared to \$32 million to \$33 million net cost for the other office space options.

Funding sources for the Project include using *Committed for Infrastructure* reserve funds, any future additions to the reserve, rent income, parity bond proceeds, and interest earned from the parity bonds. Partial reimbursement is also expected from the future sale of the current 330 Distel Circle office. To begin the surplus property sale process of the existing building, the District issued a notice of surplus sale on November 22, 2019.

The Project is not funded by Measure AA.

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

## **CEQA COMPLIANCE**

As the permitting agency, the City of Los Altos will be the Lead Agency under the California

Environmental Quality Act and considers the Project eligible for a categorical exemption.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The General Manager will direct Noll & Tam to incorporate any additional comments received from the Board at the February 12 meeting into the construction documents. The table below is an operational timeline showing current and future project milestones.

### **PROJECT SCHEDULE WITH KEY MILESTONES**

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Tentative Timeline</b>
Construction Documents and Permits	October 2019 – March 2021
Bidding and Construction	March 2021 - March 2022
Move-In	March 2022

Attachments:

1. Exterior Office Sign
2. Lobby, Atrium, and Boardroom Layout
3. Tenant Space

Responsible Department Head:  
Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager

Prepared by:  
Jason Lin, P.E., Engineering and Construction Department Manager

ATT 1 - EXTERIOR OFFICE SIGN



MIDPENINSULA  
REGIONAL  
OPEN  
SPACE

5050  
EL CAMINO REAL



MIDPENINSULA  
REGIONAL  
**OPEN  
SPACE**

5050  
EL CAMINO REAL





