



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

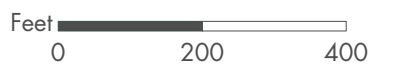
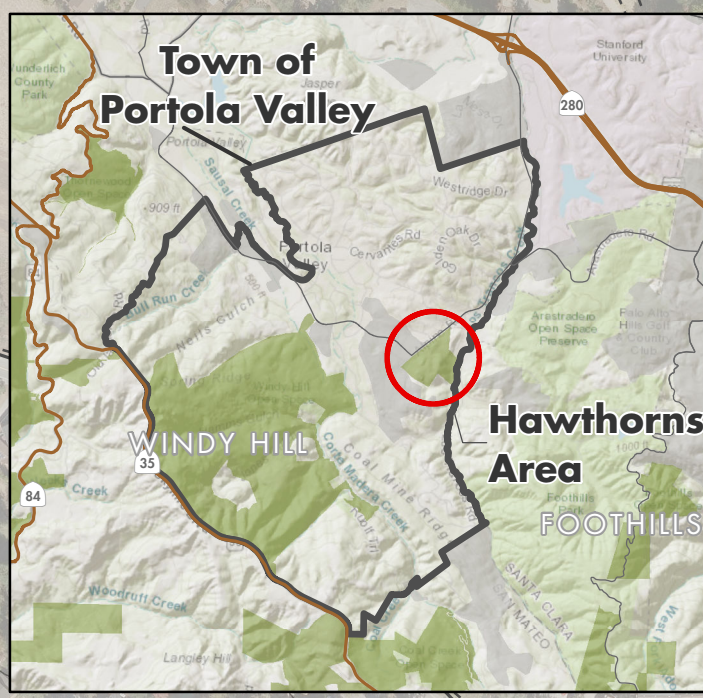
DATE: March 10, 2021
MEMO TO: Board of Directors
THROUGH: Ana Ruiz, General Manager *AR*
FROM: Alex Casbara, Planner III; Meredith Manning, Senior Planner *MM*
SUBJECT: Hawthorns Area Public Access Project -- Planning Process Update

This memorandum provides an update on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Project (Project) for the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Hawthorns Area) (Attachment 1). The nearly 79-acre Hawthorns Area is located between Alpine Road and Los Trancos Road in the Town of Portola Valley and was acquired by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) in 2011 as an addition to Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. The Hawthorns Area is currently closed to the public. Opening this area for public access was identified as a high priority as part of the District's Vision Plan process in 2014 and was voter-approved in Measure AA per the Expenditure Plan for Portfolio 6, Windy Hill.






The Project is on the Board-approved Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Improvement and Action Plan. With the recent filling of a long-standing vacancy in the Planning Department, the District now has the capacity to fully engage and initiate the planning process for the Project. District staff recently met with Town of Portola Valley (Town) staff to discuss the District's planning process, which will incorporate a broad spectrum of public and stakeholder input. The meeting was productive and Town staff provided helpful feedback on the District's planning process and insight on the Town's permitting requirements.

Key milestones for the Project planning process for public access to the Hawthorns Area include: (a) scheduling public meetings with the Planning and Natural Resources Committee and the full Board of Directors to establish the project vision and goals, (b) identifying, evaluating, and documenting the opportunities and constraints and presenting these to a Board Committee and the public for input, (c) soliciting Board and public input to inform the development of a conceptual plan, (d) conducting environmental review and permitting, and (e) obtaining final Project approval. Due to high community interest, the District anticipates robust public engagement throughout the Hawthorns Area planning process. Staff also anticipate working collaboratively with Town staff throughout this process.

The District will schedule a public presentation at the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee meeting, anticipated in spring/summer 2021, to initiate the visioning process and discuss ways for the community to engage and participate in project development. Recommendations from the PNR would then be forwarded to the full Board for review and approval, including approval of the project vision and goals. The overall Project planning process is anticipated to take three to four years based on current knowledge of public interest and anticipated level of engagement. The public will have the opportunity to provide input at the upcoming PNR Committee meeting and throughout the Project planning process.



Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve

-  Paved Road
-  Unpaved Seasonal Road
-  Trail
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Hawthorns Area

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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.