



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-21-120  
Meeting 21-28  
September 22, 2021

### AGENDA ITEM 3

#### AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract with RHAA Landscape Architects to Provide Technical Analysis, Site Planning, and Design Services for the La Honda Creek Parking Area and Trailhead Feasibility Study

#### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS *den*

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with RHAA Landscape Architects of Mill Valley, CA to complete the La Honda Creek Parking Area and Trailhead Feasibility Study Project for a base amount of \$340,649.
2. Authorize a 10% contingency of \$34,065 to cover unforeseen tasks beyond the current scope for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$374,714.

#### SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) is conducting a feasibility study to evaluate four potential sites for expanded parking and trailhead access to La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Preserve) based on the La Honda Public Access Working Group's (PAWG) recommendations supported by the District Board of Directors (Board) on October 21, 2020 (R-20-115). After issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) on June 21, 2021, the General Manager recommends awarding a contract to RHAA Landscape Architects (RHAA) for a base contract amount of \$340,649. In addition, the General Manager recommends authorizing a 10% contingency in the amount of \$34,065 to cover additional or more in-depth technical studies, agency consultation, or public outreach support beyond the current scope, if needed, for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$374,714. There are sufficient funds in the adopted Fiscal Year 2021-22 (FY22) project budget to complete the first year of work under this contract. If the project schedule accelerates such that additional funds are necessary, an adjustment would be requested as part of the quarterly budget amendment process. Funding for future year budgets will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

#### DISCUSSION

The La Honda Creek Parking Area and Trailhead Feasibility Study Project (Project) seeks to provide ecologically sensitive public access to the central portion of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Preserve) and offer opportunities to connect visitors to the upper and lower reaches of the Preserve. This Project is included in Phase I and Phase II of the Board-approved 2012 La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve Master Plan. The Project scope is based on PAWG recommendations, which were supported by the Board in October 2020. The recommendations

distribute visitor access, amenities, and uses across different sites and form the basis of this Project's scope of work.

The feasibility study will analyze various access elements, which differ per site, including trailheads, parking areas, restrooms, and bridge replacement, to ultimately facilitate a link between the northern and southern ends of the Preserve. The findings of the feasibility study will be used to prepare conceptual design options for each site in coordination with ongoing Phase II trail design work that is underway and led by District staff.

Progress on the feasibility study will be brought to the Planning and Natural Resource Committee (PNR) for review and guidance. Final results of the feasibility study, including elements of the projects that are recommended for future implementation, will be reviewed by PNR and then forwarded to the full Board for concurrence. Subsequent implementation steps would include environmental review, final design, final Board approval of project elements, permitting, and installation/construction. Timing for the implementation of each individual element will be dependent on available funding and staff capacity.

### ***Contract Scope of Work***

RHAA's proposed scope of work includes planning and technical studies, field investigations, design services, and public and stakeholder engagement to analyze opportunities at each site as described below.

#### **Sites B2 and B3 – Sears Ranch Road – West of Existing Parking Lot and east of Gate LH15**

- Equestrian trailer parking
- Overflow vehicular parking for the Sears Ranch Road entrance
- Trail connection between existing trail system and new potential parking improvements
- Potential Sears Ranch Road improvements

#### **Site D – Highway 84 – Gate LH07**

- Vehicular parking area with trailhead and potential vault restroom facility
- Safe vehicular access to and from Highway 84
- Potential Highway 84 improvements to enhance roadway safety
- Trail connection, including a replacement bridge over La Honda Creek, between the planned trail system and new potential parking improvements

#### **Site E3 – Highway 84 – Area behind line of trees near White Shed and across from Red Barn**

- Unpaved vehicular parking area – docent or permit access only
- Safe vehicular access to and from Highway 84
- Potential Highway 84 improvements to enhance roadway safety
- Trail connection between planned trail system and new potential parking improvements

To inform the feasibility study for each site listed above, the consultant will complete the following:

- Background Review of Project History and PAWG Process
- Traffic Studies
- Boundary and Topographical Surveys
- Geotechnical Study

- Archaeological / Cultural Resources Study
- Biological and Botanical Resource Evaluation
- Site Opportunities and Constraints Analysis
- Public and Stakeholder Engagement
- Feasibility Analysis
- Agency Coordination and Permitting Strategy
- Conceptual Site Design and Cost Estimates

The District will continue to hold public meetings to share progress and information with interested parties and to collect feedback to inform site opportunities and constraints and feasibility study findings. Public and stakeholder engagement will include adjacent property owners and Preserve visitors as well as tenants. The District will continue to post updates online and will also notify the PAWG of upcoming events, meetings, or other key project information.

### ***Consultant Selection***

The District issued a Request for Proposals on June 21, 2021. A mandatory pre-proposal site tour was held on July 13 and attended by nine firms. Six proposals were received on July 30, 2021. Evaluation criteria included prior experience with coastal and/or rural, agricultural communities; background working in San Mateo County; Caltrans or traffic safety experience; project experience in park or recreation settings; experience with robust public engagement; understanding of prior project history, including the PAWG's work; and creative project approaches to the scope of work.

<b>Firm</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Proposed Base Fee</b>
CSW ST2	Redwood City, CA	\$216,300
RHAA	Mill Valley, CA	\$333,036
Zander Design	Berkeley, CA	\$395,361
Sherwood Design Engineers	Santa Cruz, CA	\$430,436
SWCA	Half Moon Bay, CA	\$550,756
BFS Landscape Architects	Mountain View/Monterey, CA	\$577,614

Upon review of the proposals and consultant qualifications, the District invited four teams, RHAA, Zander Design, CSW|ST2, and SWCA for interviews. The interviews offered staff the opportunities to focus on each consultant team's understanding of project challenges, their project approaches, and experiences with local, rural or coastal communities.

Staff ranked RHAA, located in Mill Valley, as the most qualified and best suited for the project at a fair and reasonable price. Though from outside the local area, RHAA's team members have extensive knowledge of San Mateo County, experience working on projects with similar traffic safety considerations, and a long history of public project engagement. During the site tour and interview, RHAA was the only one to clearly synthesize and identify key project characteristics – the site access constraints presented by Highway 84 and possible solutions, the need to engage the public from both in the area and from within the District's boundary, the role of the Board in decision making, and finding solutions within budgetary constraints. Additionally, RHAA's responses during the interview set themselves apart from other firms by demonstrating that they clearly understood the project, the District's environmentally sensitive considerations and priorities, and the PAWG's suite of recommendations. RHAA thus avoided focusing on one site

over another, and instead considered each of the four separate sites as being of equal importance with their own set of very different opportunities and challenges. The project team includes BKF as the civil engineer; LSA for environmental services and traffic analysis; R. Borinstein Company for cost estimating; and Cal Engineering & Geology for geotechnical services. LSA is currently working on La Honda's Phase II Trails project, bringing comprehensive knowledge of the natural resources in the area, and are well equipped to facilitate future public access efforts.

RHAA's cost proposal is fair and reasonable. It reflects a clear understanding of the project scope, including the importance of Board and community involvement and input, significance of evaluating the potential visual impacts and roadway safety considerations, and ability to complete deliverables within the proposed timeframe. Overall, RHAA's cost proposal is the second lowest among the four firms invited for interview and significantly lower than the highest proposal within this group.

During contract negotiations, staff and RHAA discussed increasing time for additional work and consultations with Caltrans regarding design requirements and proposed highway or traffic calming solutions. RHAA also suggested cost savings by completing a reconnaissance level geology study and hazard assessment prior to implementing a more in-depth geotechnical analysis that includes borings in future phases of the project. The negotiated base contract amount with the additional hours is \$340,649.

To cover potential additional, unanticipated scope if needed, the General Manager recommends a 10% contingency of \$34,065, for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$374,714. Contingency funds may be necessary for additional or more in-depth technical studies, agency consultation, or additional public engagement to support the project goals.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The FY22 adopted budget includes \$274,750 for the La Honda Creek Parking and Trailhead Access project VP05-02. There are sufficient funds in the project budget to initiate the recommended action and expenditures. If the project schedule accelerates such that additional funds are necessary, an adjustment would be requested as part of the quarterly budget amendment process.

<b>La Honda Creek Parking and Trailhead Access - Feasibility Study VP05-002</b>	<b>Prior Year Actuals</b>	<b>FY22 Adopted</b>	<b>FY23 Projected</b>	<b>FY24 Projected</b>	<b>Estimated Future Years</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>\$45,142</b>	<b>\$274,750</b>	<b>\$142,750</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$462,642</b>
Spent-to-Date (as of 08/20/2021):	(\$45,142)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$45,142)
Encumbrances:	\$0	(\$9,535)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$9,535)
RHAA Landscape Architects Contract:	\$0	(\$195,000)	(\$127,000)	(\$18,649)	\$0	(\$340,649)
10% Contingency:	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$34,065)	\$0	(\$34,065)
<b>Budget Remaining (Proposed):</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$70,215</b>	<b>\$15,750</b>	<b>(\$52,714)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$33,251</b>

The recommended action is not funded by Measure AA.

## BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

- **July 28, 2020:** PNR forwarded the PAWG recommendations to the full Board.
  - [PNR Report](#)
  - [Minutes](#)
- **October 21, 2020:** The Board approved the PAWG recommendations.
  - [Board Report](#)
  - [Minutes](#)
- **March 10, 2021:** The Board received a presentation on best practices from the PAWG pilot process
  - [Board Report](#)
  - [Minutes](#)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Additional notice of this award of contract and the initiation of the feasibility study work was provided to members of the PAWG as well as residences along the Highway 84 area between Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) and Highway 1. Additional notice was provided to parties interested in La Honda Creek Preserve, regional trails, natural resource management, coast side topics, and grazing. Notifications were posted at the Preserve's three trailheads (Event Center, Sears Ranch, and Allen Road) as well as the La Honda Post Office and General Store. The notification advised recipients to sign up for the Preserve list to continue receiving meeting notifications.

## CEQA COMPLIANCE

The feasibility study and conceptual designs will identify and evaluate possible future actions, which the District has not yet approved, within the meaning of CEQA Section 15262. The feasibility study and conceptual designs will inform future actions that will be subject to CEQA, and subsequent environmental review will be conducted at that time. Retention of professional consultants will not result in a direct physical change to the environment [CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2)] and does not constitute Board approval of the proposed project or related proposed project elements.

## NEXT STEPS

Following Board approval, the General Manager will execute a contract with RHAA. The tentative schedule to complete feasibility studies for the four project sites is provided below:

<i>Key Milestones</i>	<i>Tentative Schedule</i>
Project kick off, background review, technical studies	2022-2023
Site opportunities and constraints analysis, conceptual designs, cost estimations	2023-2024
Feasibility studies	2024

## Attachments

1. Preserve map
2. Project orientation map of study sites

3. Project limits of work by site

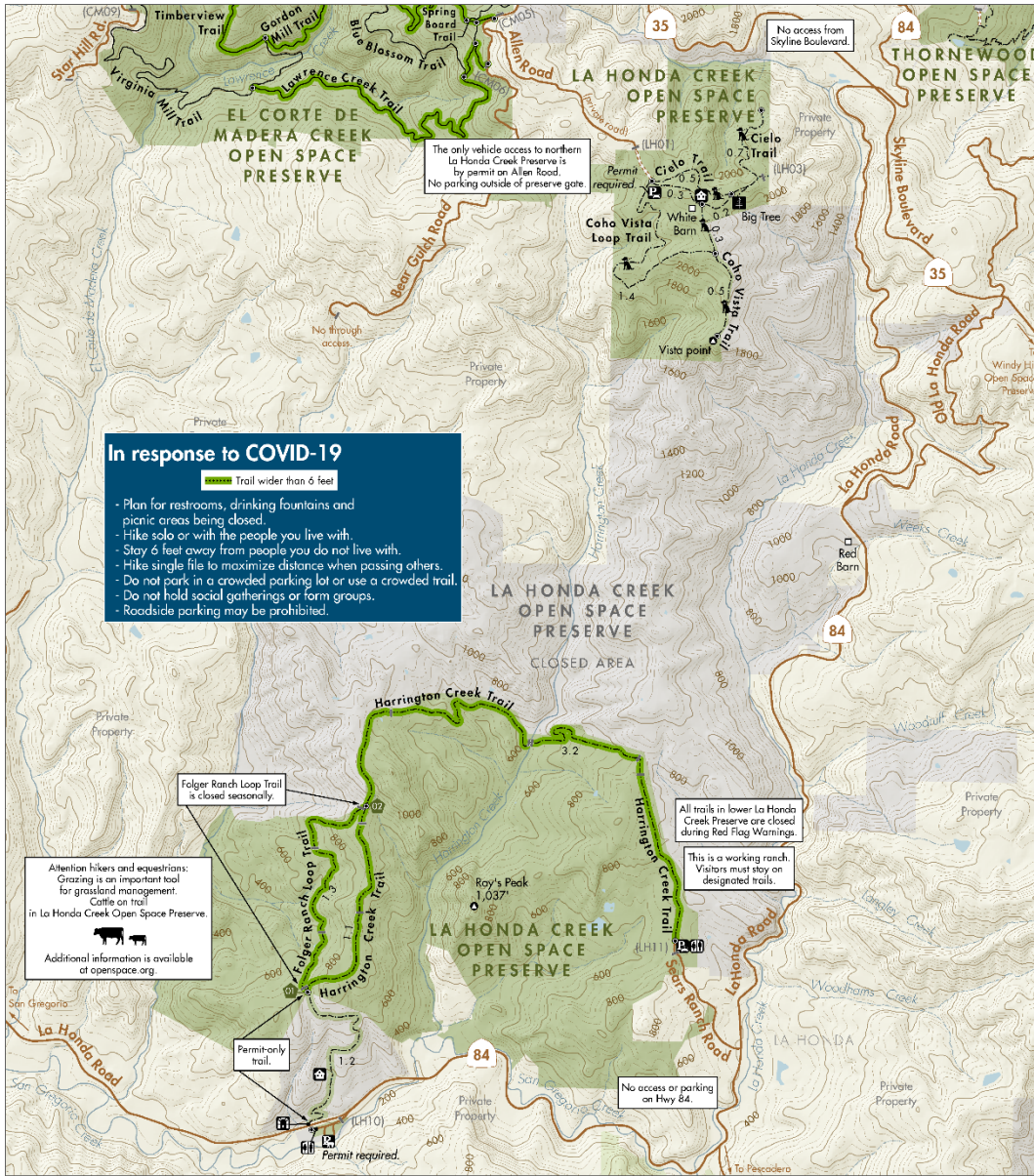
Responsible Department Head:

Jane Mark, Planning Manager, Planning Department

Prepared by:

Melissa Borgesi, Planner II, Planning Department

# ATTACHMENT 1 Preserve map



**In response to COVID-19**

**Trail wider than 6 feet**

- Plan for restrooms, drinking fountains and picnic areas being closed.
- Hike solo or with the people you live with.
- Stay 6 feet away from people you do not live with.
- Hike single file to maximize distance when passing others.
- Do not park in a crowded parking lot or use a crowded trail.
- Do not hold social gatherings or form groups.
- Roadside parking may be prohibited.

Attention hikers and equestrians:  
Grazing is an important tool for grassland management.  
Cattle on trail in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve.

Additional information is available at [openspace.org](https://openspace.org).

The only vehicle access to northern La Honda Creek Preserve is by permit on Allen Road. No parking outside of preserve gate.

No access from Skyline Boulevard.

All trails in lower La Honda Creek Preserve are closed during Red Flag Warnings.

This is a working ranch. Visitors must stay on designated trails.

No access or parking on Hwy 64.

**La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve**

For more information, visit [openspace.org](https://openspace.org) or call 650-691-1200.

- Map Legend**
- Midpen preserve
  - Closed area
  - Other protected land
  - Private property (no public access)
  - No public entry in Midpen water areas
  - Road
  - Vehicle driveway
  - Hiking, equestrian trail
  - Hiking, bicycling, equestrian trail
  - Trail distance (miles)
  - Numbered trail junctions
  - Gate (#)
  - Parking area
  - Equestrian parking area
  - Restroom
  - Point of interest
  - Notable flora
  - Tunnel
  - Other public or private building
  - Residence

- Dogs on leash permitted on designated trails.
- Bicycles not permitted in this preserve.

**In case of emergency, call 24-hour emergency dispatch at 650-968-4411 or 911.**

For your safety and the protection of the preserves:  
The preserve is open one-half hour before official sunrise until one-half hour after official sunset.

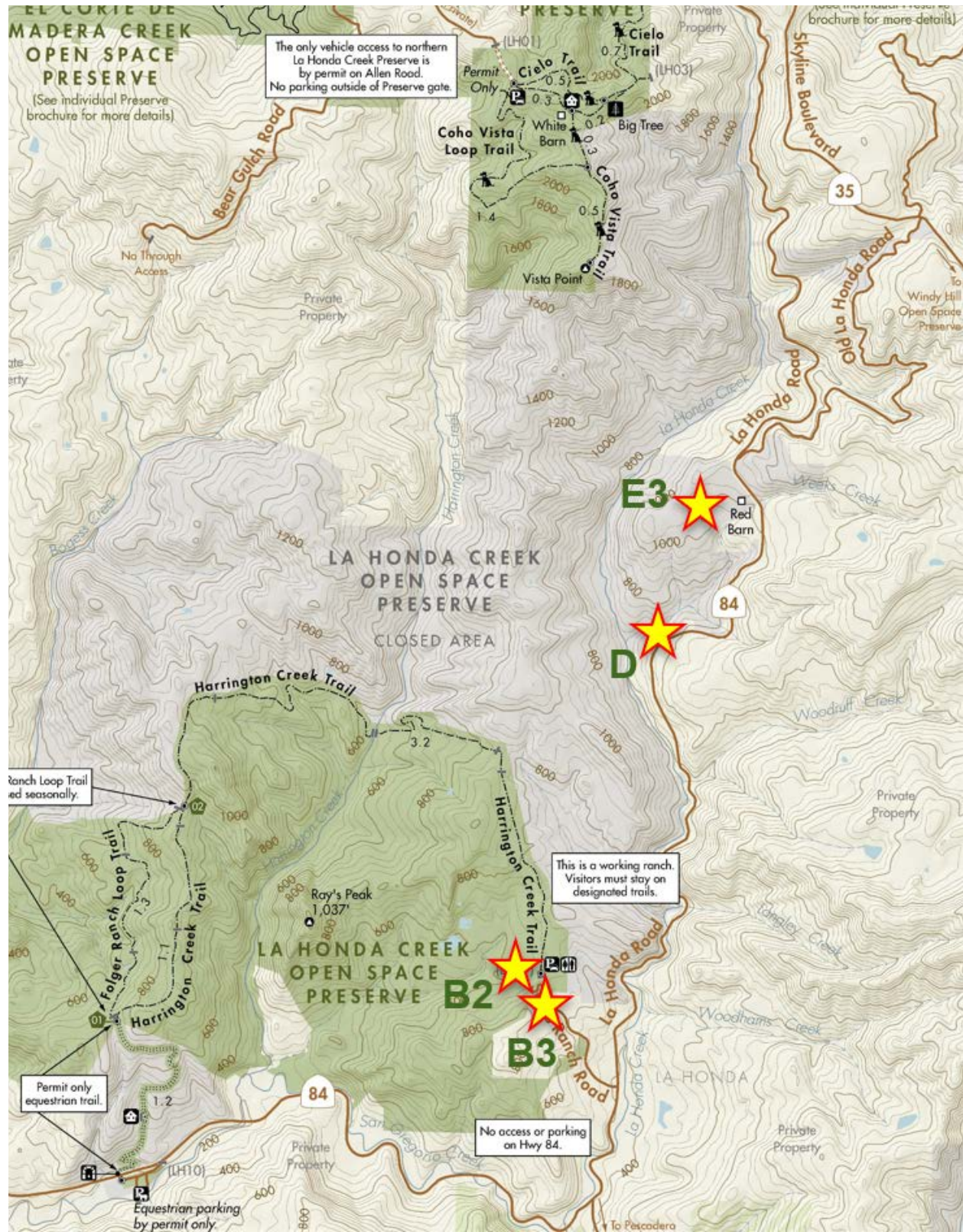
**Leave no trace:** do not disturb natural features, plants or animals.

Keep it **crumb clean**: do not leave food or litter behind.  
Take valuables with you and lock your vehicle.



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ATTACHMENT 2 Project orientation map





# ATTACHMENT 3 Project limits of work by site



# ATTACHMENT 3 Project limits of work by site

