




Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: February 8, 2023

MEMO TO: Board of Directors

THROUGH: Ana Ruiz, General Manager 

FROM: Mike Williams, Real Property Manager
Aaron Peth, Real Property Planner III

SUBJECT: Update on MAA Portfolio #12 Middle Stevens Creek Trail

DISCUSSION

The Stevens Creek Trail is an approximately 27-mile regional trail that is intended to follow Stevens Creek, connecting the San Francisco Bay Trail to the Bay Area Ridge Trail. The trail starts at its connection with the San Francisco Bay Trail at Shoreline Park in Mountain View and will ultimately connect to Stevens Creek County Park and Monte Bello Open Space Preserve, ending at the Bay Area Ridge Trail on Highway 35.

The middle portion of the Stevens Creek Trail is identified as a regional trail priority in the 2014 Board-approved Vision Plan under Priority Action/Portfolio #12, *Peninsula/South Bay Cities: Partner to Complete Middle Stevens Creek Trail*, which calls for the District to:

- Support work by cities to develop the middle section of the Stevens Creek Trail and enhance neighborhood connections;
- Support work by partners to complete stream corridor restoration and steelhead habitat enhancement below dam; and
- Develop and install interpretive signage.

Portfolio #12 Work to Date

In 2018 the District supported the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail (FoSCT), Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water), and other partners, on the now completed Deep Cliff fish passage barrier removal project. The District provided some initial funding of the study to identify fish barriers (\$4,785), provided a portion of local matching funds (\$9,900) for a Valley Water grant, and provided technical review of consultant deliverables. The District also provided an additional \$20,078 when construction costs for barrier removal came in above the budgeted amount of \$90,000. The District provided a total of \$34,763 in direct funding for the project.

Proposed Trail Segment of the Middle Stevens Creek Trail

One of the remaining gaps in the middle section of the Stevens Creek Trail exists from the City of Cupertino's Linda Vista Park to Stevens Creek County Park (see Attachment 1). This gap has several complexities, including topography, proximity to the creek, private land ownership, and existing and past land uses. The area comprising this gap is a narrow creek canyon surrounded

by existing residences and a golf course. In the past, this area was part of a quarry, which further constrained future trail alignments. District staff are currently evaluating two routes to complete this gap, one identified in previous feasibility studies through a former quarry and a new alternative that runs alongside Stevens Creek.

Route 1 through the Former Quarry

The gap from Linda Vista Park to Stevens Creek County Park has been the subject of two City of Cupertino trail feasibility studies in 2002 and 2014 ([2002 Feasibility Study](#), [2014 Feasibility Study](#)). Both studies were associated with the proposed development of private properties in the trail gap area. Both studies identified a similar a preferred trail alignment that avoid some of the challenges of a trail adjacent to Stevens Creek by running across the former quarry bottom and ascending the unconsolidated quarry face through a series of quarry roads to connect with Linda Vista Park (see Attachment 1). This route would connect to an informal extension of the Coyote Ridge Trail that is currently on private property between Stevens Creek County Park and Fremont Older Open Space Preserve. Initial constraints of the trail alignment include its location on private lands and potential instability and environmental concerns related to the former quarry that will require further investigation.

Route 2 along Stevens Creek through Golf Course

At the end of 2022, the District was approached to provide technical assistance on an alternative trail route and associated easement along Stevens Creek to close this gap in the Stevens Creek Trail. The proposed Route 2 would connect from the Chestnut Area of Stevens Creek County Park and follow Stevens Creek until it reaches the golf course (see Attachment 1). At the golf course, the proposed trail alignment generally follows the property boundary through a wooded hillside before returning to follow the creek and crossing into Linda Vista Park.

Route 2 contains similar constraints to Route 1 in relation to its location on private lands. However, a private individual associated with the FoSCT has conducted initial outreach and consultation with the associated private landowners in the gap area and received their approval to conduct further investigations of a trail easement along Route 2. Additional constraints with Route 2 include multiple crossings of Stevens Creek, topography, and potential trail user conflicts with the existing golf course.

Potential Gift of Private Land

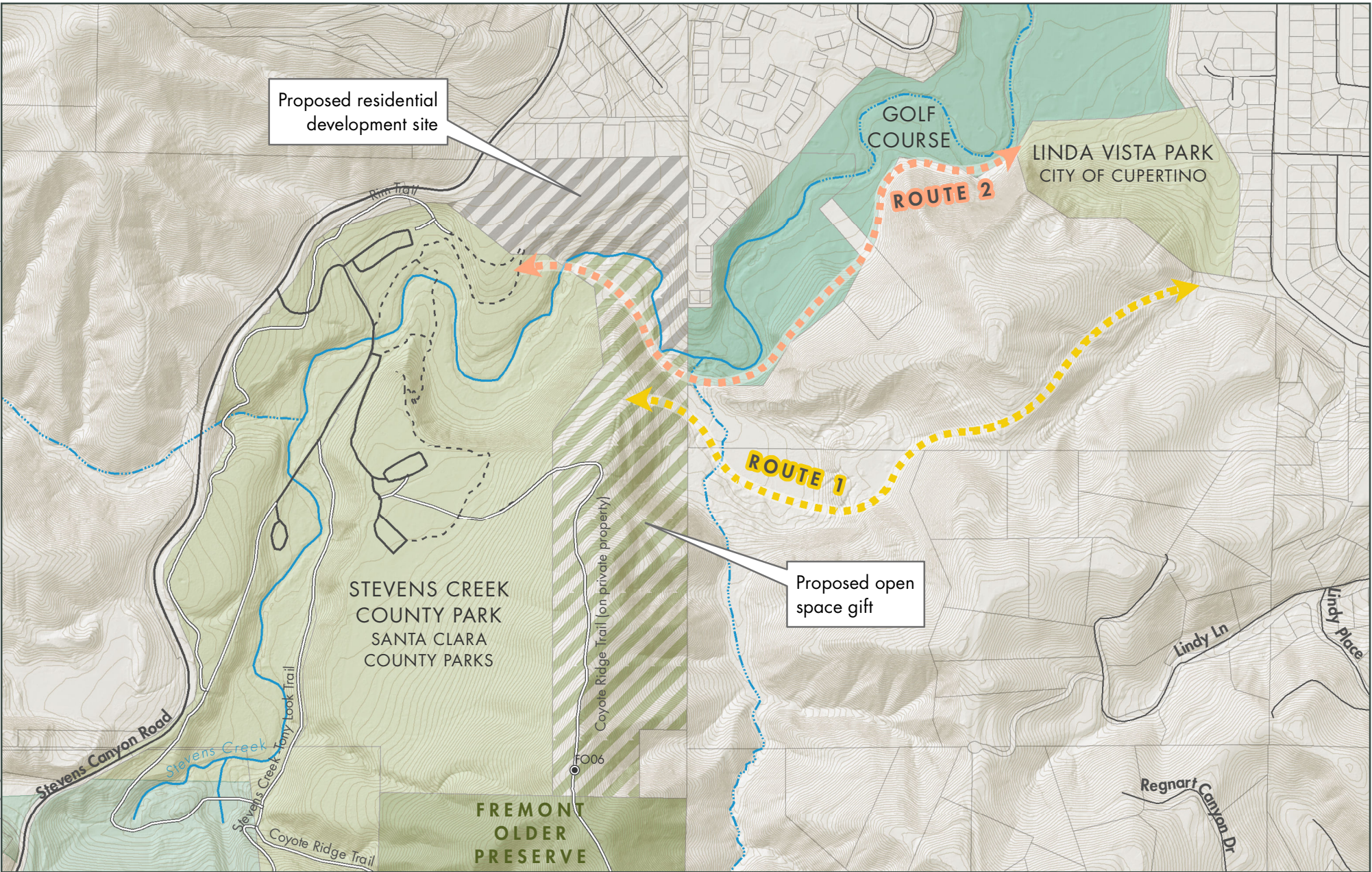
In addition to a trail easement in this area, there is also the potential for a gift of private land associated with assessor's parcel number 351-10-043. A residential development is proposed on the portion of the property north of Stevens Creek and the current property owner expressed an interest in gifting the southern portion of the property to a public agency to be retained as open space (Attachment 1). The southern portion of the property contains an informal extension of the Coyote Ridge Trail connecting Fremont Older Preserve to Stevens Creek County Park. The southern portion of the property also contains part of the former quarry, which would require further analysis as it could pose potential environmental and public safety issues.

NEXT STEPS

District staff will continue to provide technical assistance to evaluate the feasibility of both route alternatives and support partners with development of the trail segment between Linda Vista Park and Stevens Creek County Park. District staff will provide an update on this project to the Board when there are new relevant developments.

Attachment

1. Map of Middle Stevens Creek Trail Gap



Middle Stevens Creek Trail Gap

- Fremont Older Preserve
- Stevens Creek County Park & Linda Vista Park
- Golf course

- Proposed residential development site
- Proposed open space gift
- Parcel

- Route 1
- Route 2

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
1/25/2023



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.