



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

R-23-35
March 21, 2023

AGENDA ITEM 3

AGENDA ITEM

Hawthorns Area Plan – Review of Technical Reports and Public Access Working Group Structure and Recruitment Process

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review and forward, with any final modifications as directed by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee, the following technical reports to the full Board of Directors for review and acceptance:
 - a. Hawthorns Area Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report
 - b. Hawthorns Area Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo
 - c. Hawthorns Area Public Access Framework
2. Review and forward, with any final modifications as directed by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee, the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group composition, recruitment, and formation strategy to the full Board of Directors for review and approval.

SUMMARY

Through the Hawthorns Area Plan project (project), the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) will develop a comprehensive use and management plan for the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Hawthorns Area). The first phase of the project, Vision and Goals, was completed at the March 23, 2022 Board of Directors (Board) meeting with Board approval of the project's vision and goals. At this March 21, 2023 Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee meeting, the project team will present a body of work culminating the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints phase of the project. This includes the *Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report* (Attachment 1), which summarizes the property's existing site characteristics; the *Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo* (Attachment 2), which describes the traffic conditions surrounding the Hawthorns Area, potential driveway access locations, and expected visitor use levels; and, the *Public Access Framework* (Attachment 3), which outlines resource and land management considerations related to public access opportunities at the Hawthorns Area.

Additionally, staff will provide a Public Access Working Group (PAWG, Working Group) composition and recruitment strategy to initiate the next project phase: Programming/Conceptual Planning. At the November 16, 2021 PNR meeting (R-21-156), the project team presented a draft strategy for a future Hawthorns Area PAWG and received early input from the Committee. At this PNR Committee meeting, staff will present a revised strategy reflective of the Committee's feedback. Pending Board approval, staff would form and work with the Working

Group to develop Conceptual Alternatives for public access at the Hawthorns Area that are consistent with the approved vision and goals and are fully informed and guided by the findings of the technical reports as well as the natural, cultural, and aesthetic resource and land management considerations identified for the property.

BACKGROUND

The 79-acre Hawthorns Area, which is located within the Town of Portola Valley (Town), was gifted to the District in 2011 and is currently closed to the public in accordance with the Board-adopted Preliminary Use and Management Plan (R-06-53). In 2021, the District initiated a multiyear planning process for the property in alignment with Board policy 4.01, *Open Space Use and Management Planning Process*. Engaging community members, District staff, and the Board, this multistep planning process will result in the Hawthorns Area Plan, a comprehensive use and management plan guiding resource and land management actions at the site. **Table 1** outlines the Hawthorns Area Plan planning process.

Table 1 – Hawthorns Area Plan Planning Process

#	Phase Title	Phase Overview	Public Engagement Opportunities	Projected Timeline
1	Vision and Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop vision and goals Refine planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual comment card Board/PNR meetings 	FY2021 – 22
2	Existing Conditions/ Opportunities and Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey existing conditions Prepare Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report Initiate transportation study Develop Public Access Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement Site tours Open house Virtual comment card Board/PNR meetings 	FY2022 – 23
3	Programming/ Conceptual Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify programmatic elements Launch Public Access Working Group Develop Conceptual Plan Alternative(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement Workshops Working Group Online surveys Pop-up events Virtual comment card Board/PNR meetings 	FY2023 – 24
4	Area Plan/ Environmental Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile Area Plan Approve CEQA findings and Area Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board/PNR meetings Public/agency comment on CEQA document 	FY2024 – 25 to FY2025 – 26
5	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design development, permitting, bidding, and construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD (Town permitting process) 	FY2026 – TBD

On March 23, 2022, the Board approved the vision and goals for the project (R-22-45), which include opening the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity, ecologically sensitive public access, providing a trail system, and providing multimodal access opportunities for the property. Since then, staff have implemented the second phase of the project: Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints. By conducting technical studies, surveys, and public engagement, staff have prepared an Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, initiated a transportation study to describe the traffic conditions surrounding the Hawthorns Area, and developed a Public Access Framework to outline resource and land management considerations related to public access opportunities at the site.

As part of Phase 3: Programming/Conceptual Planning, the District is planning to initiate a PAWG to assist the District in planning low intensity public access facilities at the Hawthorns Area consistent with the approved vision and goals and within the parameters established by the Public Access Framework. Through the Working Group process, the District would prepare draft Conceptual Alternatives for PNR and Board review. Ultimately, the Conceptual Alternatives would be refined into a Preferred Alternative subject to environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

PHASE II: EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS/OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Based on technical studies, available background material, and public engagement, the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report summarizes the environmental characteristics, site conditions, operations and maintenance activities, allowed and permitted uses stipulated by the conservation easement, and site restoration projects undertaken since the District officially acquired the Hawthorns Area in 2011. The report also describes the site's opportunities and constraints, particularly as they pertain to future resource management and public access.

The Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report appendices consist of the following technical studies conducted in support of the Hawthorns Area Plan project:

1. Preliminary Wetland Delineation (March 2022)
2. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (April 14, 2022)
3. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (July 13, 2022)
4. Habitat Assessment and Focused Surveys for Roosting Bats, and San Francisco Dusky-footed Woodrat Colony Mapping (August 12, 2022)
5. Hawthorns Historic Structures Assessment – Historic Resource Study (October 2013)
6. Hawthorns Historic Structures Assessment – Structure Conditions Assessment (December 2013)
7. Hawthorns Historic Structures Assessment – Geotechnical Summary (June 24, 2013)
8. Historical Consultations – Olive Groves and Hawthorn Trees; Secondary Ancillary Structures (December 10, 2021)
9. Boundary Survey (March 2022)

Due to the quantity and volume of these supporting studies, they are made available on the project web page rather than being included in Attachment 1. Studies related to archaeology are confidential and are not available to the public.

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

At the July 13, 2022 Board meeting, the District awarded a contract to Parisi Transportation Consulting to provide transportation planning services in support of the Hawthorns Area Plan (R-22-81). The consultant team was tasked with documenting existing traffic, transportation, and circulation conditions; assessing the feasibility of potential driveways and roadway improvements to facilitate public access; anticipating future parking demand; conducting a transportation impact analysis for CEQA; and providing support during public meetings and community engagement.

The consultant team has completed their first phase of work, encompassing background review and driveway feasibility and parking demand analyses. The resulting Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo (Attachment 2) documents existing traffic, transportation, and circulation conditions surrounding the Hawthorns Area, including the vehicular, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian transportation system; traffic data for nearby roadways and intersections; recent, current, and upcoming Town projects that may affect local circulation and parking; and the findings from the driveway feasibility analysis.

PUBLIC ACCESS FRAMEWORK

The Hawthorns Area Public Access Framework (Attachment 3) outlines proposed public access-related resource and land management considerations to inform, frame, and guide the third phase of the Hawthorns Area Plan project (Programming/Conceptual Planning), which includes engagement of the PAWG. While there will be broader considerations included in the future Hawthorns Area Plan, the Public Access Framework encompasses natural, cultural, and aesthetic resource management considerations and ongoing operations and maintenance needs directly related to and focused on public access. Overarching considerations for all topic areas and associated actions include diversity, equity, and inclusion; climate change; financial sustainability; the District's mission; and the Board-approved vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement efforts during the Existing Conditions phase included over ten stakeholder meetings, pop-up events, a neighborhood workshop, two open houses (virtual and in-person), six site tours, webpage updates, e-blasts and social media posts through District and Town channels, a visitor survey, and a virtual comment card on the Hawthorns Area webpage. The Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints report incorporates public feedback in overarching themes. As before, a virtual comment card will be created on the Hawthorns Area webpage to provide members of the public the opportunity to offer feedback on future project phases.

In preparation for the upcoming Programming/Conceptual Planning phase, engagement will occur via PAWG meetings that will be open to the public, as well as PNR and Board meetings, webpage updates, e-blasts, and social media posts. As the project moves through PNR and Board

meetings, updates will be also shared with a Town Ad Hoc Committee comprised of existing Town Committee members identified by Town staff and Committee Chairs.

PHASE III: PROGRAMMING/CONCEPTUAL PLANNING

PUBLIC ACCESS WORKING GROUP

Working Group Purpose

The purpose of the Working Group is to establish an interactive forum of local and regional perspectives to collaborate with the District on a plan for introducing public access at the Hawthorns Area in a manner consistent with the Board-adopted vision and goals. The Working Group would evaluate the following public access components:

- Parking area and driveway location(s)
- Trailhead location(s) and internal trail system
- Trail connections with surrounding Town trails and pathways
- Opportunities for regional trail connections
- Proposed trail uses within the Hawthorns Area

The Working Group's draft Conceptual Alternatives would be presented for PNR and Board review and refinement into a Preferred Alternative. With Board approval, the Preferred Alternative would be ultimately incorporated into the Hawthorns Area Plan and advanced into the environmental review phase.

Working Group Composition

Based on PNR feedback at the November 16, 2021 meeting (R-21-156), staff revised the Working Group composition and recruitment strategy to reflect the process previously developed for the successful 2019-2020 La Honda Creek Public Access Working Group (La Honda PAWG) (R-21-36). The proposed Hawthorns Area PAWG composition and process have been adjusted to reflect the specific characteristics, location, and jurisdictional environment of the Hawthorns Area and to incorporate best practices identified during the La Honda PAWG process. The Working Group would be comprised of voting and non-voting members, described below.

Voting Members

The Hawthorns Area PAWG would consist of nine Board-approved voting members representing a diverse array of user groups and stakeholders interested in the Hawthorns Area (see **Table 2**). Four members would be appointed directly by the Board, two representing the wards from the County of San Mateo and two representing the wards from the County of Santa Clara. These four ward stakeholders would represent regional perspectives across the District's jurisdiction. The remaining five voting members would be selected by the Board following an application process to comprise a diverse and cohesive group, representing a range of interest areas. These five Working Group members may represent one or more topic areas, provided that the ultimate composition of the Working Group is balanced in its representation of perspectives. Topic areas of representation may include local neighborhoods, safe routes to schools, local and regional trail connections, resource conservation, recreational use, and interpretation/education. In addition, Working Group members would not be currently serving as a member of the Town of Portola Valley Town Council, Architectural & Site Control Commission, Planning

Commission, or any other Town Committee that has advisory or regulatory oversight related to the project.

Non-Voting Members

In addition to the voting members described above, the Working Group would be supported by several non-voting roles: one Board member, one Town liaison, District staff, and a meeting facilitator.

Board Member

The Board president would appoint one Board member to join the Working Group as a liaison to represent the District's mission and interests, provide input based on District policy, answer questions about District policy, and function as a conduit between the Board and the Working Group. To follow the progress of the group, the Board liaison would attend all Working Group meetings, complete assignments, and actively participate in discussions but would not vote in Working Group decisions. The liaison would also provide updates to the full Board at their regularly scheduled meetings. One representative is the preferred approach to maintain a nimble Working Group and is commensurate with the small size of the Hawthorns Area. The appointed liaison would not be a current member of the PNR.

Town Liaison

The District would work with Town staff to invite one member from the Town Council or a Commission to join the Working Group as a liaison who would represent Town interests, provide input based on Town policy, answer questions regarding Town policy, and communicate any updates as needed to Town representatives. To follow the progress of the group, the Town liaison would attend all Working Group meetings, complete assignments, and actively participate in discussions but would not vote in Working Group decisions.

District Project Team and External Facilitator

District staff and consultants would assist the Working Group with meeting logistics, preparation, record-keeping, and facilitation to ensure that meetings are well-informed and productive.

Table 2 – Proposed Working Group Composition

Quantity	Member	Representation	Recruitment Pathway	Voting Member
4	Ward Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County of San Mateo County wards District mission County of Santa Clara County wards District mission 	Board appointment	Yes
5	Working Group Members	<p><i>May represent one or more of the following perspectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighborhoods Safe routes to schools Local and regional trail connections Resource conservation 	Application and Board selection	Yes

Quantity	Member	Representation	Recruitment Pathway	Voting Member
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational uses • Interpretation/education 		
1	Board Liaison	District mission and interests	Board appointment	No
1	Town Liaison	Town interests	Town appointment	No
1	Meeting Facilitator	Neutral party	Request for proposals	No

Proposed Recruitment Strategy and Process

There would be different recruitment strategies for ward stakeholders and working group members.

Ward Stakeholders

To recruit the two San Mateo County ward stakeholder members, the Board president would authorize the two Board Directors representing Wards 6 and 7 (San Mateo County) to each submit a candidate for a San Mateo County-based ward stakeholder to serve on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group.

To recruit the two Santa Clara County ward stakeholder members, the remaining Board Directors representing Wards 1 through 5 (Santa Clara County) would discuss which two Directors would each submit a candidate for a Santa Clara County-based ward stakeholder to serve on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group. The Board President would then authorize the two Directors to submit a candidate.

Working Group Members

To recruit the five Working Group members, District staff would develop an open application for interested parties, requesting the following information from prospective candidates:

- Reasons for wanting to serve on the PAWG;
- Open space interests and any prior experience participating in community groups or organizations;
- Experience, qualifications, expertise, or specialized knowledge that would enhance the PAWG;
- Familiarity with the District as an open space agency, District Preserves generally, and the Hawthorns Area;
- Testimony of capacity and commitment to devote to the PAWG, if selected;
- Two professional and/or character references; and
- Confirmation that applicant is not currently an elected or appointed official with discretionary authority in the Town of Portola Valley.

Pending Board approval of the PAWG composition and formation process, the application (Attachment 5) would be promoted and circulated for a one-month period and would be available online through the District website and in hardcopy at the District administrative office. District staff would hold a virtual community meeting during this time to share information and answer

technical questions from the public on the Board-approved application process. Staff would also coordinate with the Town to further notify the community of the open application period. Following the open application period, District staff would collate and forward all applications, as well as a list of proposed interview questions, to the Board for review. Applicants would be selected via the proposed process below to be part of brief interviews at a Special Meeting of the Board.

Candidate Selection for Interviews

Following the application review process, the Board would hold a virtual/in-person hybrid meeting to conduct interviews with candidates and appoint five to the PAWG. For each application, staff would prepare a cover sheet using the Application Review Criteria Form (Attachment 6). Depending on the number of applications, the General Manager recommends two options for selecting applicants to interview.

Scenario 1:

If the District receives *less than* or equal to *ten* applications, the full Board would review all applications and interview all applicants (approximately 15 minutes per interview).

Scenario 2:

If the District receives *ten or more* applications:

- a) Staff would review the applications and select the top ten applications. The ten applicants receiving the most votes would be invited for an interview with the full Board.

or

- b) Each Board Director would review the applications and select the top ten applicants. The ten applicants receiving the most votes would be invited for an interview with the full Board.

or

- c) The full Board would approve formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to review the applications and invite ten applicants to interview with the full Board. If this option were to be selected, the full Board would be authorizing the General Manager to determine the best timing and condition for the Committee's formation pursuant to Board Policy 1.04, *Board Committees*.

Prior to conducting the interviews, the Board would finalize the interview questions based on the suggested questions provided by staff. Each Board member would ask the applicant one question for a total of seven questions per interview, envisioned to encompass the following:

- Skills, connections, resources, and expertise distinguishing the candidate;
- Assessment of potential challenges the Working Group may face;
- Evaluation of the perspectives most important for the Working Group;
- Vision of what a successful Working Group may entail;
- Strategies for consensus building and effective collaboration; and
- Understanding of and alignment with the District's overarching mission and goals.

Based on the interviews and the candidates' suitability, the Board would then vote to identify and select the top five applicants to serve on the PAWG.

Final Appointment

Following the recruitment process for both ward stakeholders and working group members, the Directors would then vote at a subsequent Board meeting to form and appoint the members to the PAWG, with the goal that the final composition meets the following criteria:

- All members are eligible to serve on the PAWG per the conditions established in the application process, possess the skills and background necessary to contribute meaningfully to the PAWG, and would be able to commit to the meetings and activities for the duration of the PAWG's tenure.
- Members reflect a balanced array of District interests and perspectives, aligning with Board *Policy 6.08 on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*.
- Members demonstrate their ability and interest in collaborating with the District, its partners, and peer agencies to meet the public access goals for the Hawthorns Area identified in the project's Vision and Goals (R-22-45), as well as the District's Vision Plan (2012).

PAWG Operation

Formation and Term

The Board would authorize formation of the PAWG to operate until Board review of the Conceptual Alternatives and approval of a Preferred Alternative to incorporate into the Hawthorns Area Plan and advance into environmental review. Upon identification of a Preferred Alternative, the Board would determine whether the PAWG has fulfilled its charge and, if so deemed, direct the General Manager to dissolve the PAWG.

Tentative Meeting Format and Timeline

The District would host approximately five to seven PAWG meetings every six to eight weeks, all of which would be open to the public. PAWG meetings are expected to be in person and occur at the District's headquarters, on the Hawthorns property, or in the Town of Portola Valley and can be expected to last two to three hours each. **Table 3** outlines the tentative PAWG meeting timeline for key deliverables. The timeline and number of meetings may be modified to extend up to 18 months if the PAAWG finds they need more time to deliberate or discuss a topic, or if the PNR or Board requests that the PAWG address additional questions or revisions before returning to the PNR or Board.

Table 3 – Tentative PAWG Meeting Schedule and Key Deliverables

#	Objective
1	Establish PAWG roles, goals, workplan, schedule, and operating procedures
2	Conduct in-person property tour and review existing site conditions
3 – 4	Discuss parking and driveway options, as well as internal connections, trailheads, and local and regional connectivity opportunities
5 – 6	Review and provide input on draft trail and parking alternatives
7	Confirm revised trail and parking alternatives to forward to the District's PNR and subsequently to Board for consideration

Operation

The Hawthorns Area PAWG would operate following procedures similar to those developed during the 2019-20 La Honda PAWG process and adjusted for the Hawthorns Area Plan project (Attachment 4). The PAWG Procedural Guide outlines the group's purpose and charge, goals and outcomes, formation and term, decision-making process, meeting procedures, and other logistics.

FISCAL IMPACT

Updates on Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Phase and Future Programming/Conceptual Planning Phase on the Hawthorns Area Plan has no direct, immediate fiscal impact. Funding for further planning efforts and related costs this fiscal year are within the approved Fiscal Year 2022-23 (FY23) budget.

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio #6 Windy Hill: Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership allocation, costs-to-date, projected future project expenditures and projected ending balance at the portfolio level.

MAA06 Windy Hill—Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 03/03/23):	(\$207,170)
Encumbrances:	(\$48,821)
Remaining FY23 Project Budgets:	(\$101,267)
Future MAA06 project costs (projected through FY26):	(\$467,384)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$824,641)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$11,915,359

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio #06 Windy Hill: Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership allocation, costs-to-date, projected life-to-date project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA06 Windy Hill—Trail Improvements, Preservation and Hawthorns Area Historic Partnership Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	
06-002 Hawthorns Area Plan	(\$824,641)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$824,641)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$11,915,359

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

- **May 18, 2021:** PNR received an informational presentation on the proposed planning and public engagement process for the Area Plan and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-65, meeting minutes](#))
- **August 24, 2021:** PNR reviewed the proposed draft vision and goals and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-112, meeting minutes](#))
- **November 16, 2021:** PNR reviewed the revised vision and goals and draft Public Access Working Group strategy and provided further refinements. PNR unanimously recommended

forwarding the refined vision and goal statements to the full Board for consideration. ([R-21-156](#), [meeting minutes](#))

- **March 1, 2022:** PNR reviewed the proposed planning and public engagement process to develop the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-29](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 23, 2022:** Board reviewed and approved the vision and goals. ([R-22-45](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **July 13, 2022:** Board approved the award of contract with Parisi Transportation Consulting to provide transportation planning services for the Hawthorns Area Plan ([R-22-81](#), [meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

Reviewing existing conditions and developing the Hawthorns Area Plan Public Access Working Group strategy do not constitute a project subject to CEQA. Environmental review is anticipated to occur in a future fiscal year, pending the Board's selection of a Preferred Alternative as the CEQA Project Description.

NEXT STEPS

Pending the PNR's direction, staff would forward the Hawthorns Area Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and Public Access Working Group composition, recruitment, and formation strategy to the full Board for review and approval. The project would be subsequently presented to the Board as outlined in **Table 4**.

Table 4 – Tentative Schedule (pending PNR direction and Board approval)

Board Meeting Date	Purpose
April 26, 2023	Review and approve the Hawthorns Area Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition and formation strategy.
May 1 – June 11, 2023	Recruitment period.
June 21, 2023 (<i>Special Board Meeting</i>)	Conduct Working Group candidate interviews.
June 28, 2023	Appoint all members of the PAWG.

Responsible Department Head:
Jane Mark, AICP, Planning Department

Prepared by/ Contact Persons:
Arianna Nuri, Planner II, Planning Department/Ecologist I, Natural Resources Department
Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, Planning Department

ATTACHMENTS

1. Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report (see project website for appendices)
2. Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo
3. Public Access Framework
4. Working Group Procedural Guide
5. Working Group Application Questionnaire
6. Working Group Application Review Criteria Form

Existing Conditions / Opportunities and Constraints Report
Hawthorns Area Plan
March 2023



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 79-acre Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Hawthorns Area) is located near the intersection of Alpine Road and Portola Road and is one of the last remaining islands of open space in the Town of Portola Valley (Town). The property (APNs: 790-800-80, 790-800-50, and 790-800-90) is bounded by Alpine Road to the west, Los Trancos Road to the east, and private property to the north and south. The property is accessible from driveways on Alpine Road and Los Trancos Road.

Existing improvements to the Hawthorns Area include residential buildings, farm structures, landscaping, and ranch roads. Some of these structures date back to the late 1800s, when a prominent San Francisco resident, Judge James Monroe Allen, acquired the property and constructed a residence, carriage house, and several ancillary buildings near Los Trancos Creek. Frances Newhall Woods purchased the estate in 1916 from Judge Allen's widow, Ida Davis Allen, and made additional improvements to the property. The cluster of buildings and structures near Los Trancos Creek is informally referred to as the Historic Complex.

In 2006, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) Board of Directors (Board) accepted the Hawthorns property and an endowment fund from the Woods Family Trust as the largest private land gift received by the District at that time. The Woods Family Trust generously donated their property to preserve it as public open space in perpetuity. The property officially transferred to the District in 2011 as the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. This transfer included an endowment to be used towards stewardship of the donated property and a conservation easement managed by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) to permanently protect the natural features of the property and restrict future development of new structures or infrastructure.

1.1 REPORT PURPOSE

To fulfill the goals set forth by the 2014 [Measure AA Open Space Bond](#) and Open Space [Vision Plan](#) priorities approved by the District Board of Directors, the District will prepare an Area Plan for the Hawthorns Area to guide resource and land management activities and outline the introduction of ecologically sensitive public access on the property.

Development of the Area Plan will require careful attention to the preliminary use and management plan and related plan amendments for the property, existing conditions, and the inherent opportunities and constraints of the site. Based on technical studies, available background material, and public engagement, this Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report summarizes the environmental characteristics, site conditions, operations and maintenance activities, allowed and permitted uses, and site restoration projects undertaken since the District officially acquired the property in 2011. This report will also help identify opportunities and constraints at the Hawthorns Area, particularly as they pertain to future resource management and public access.

This document is organized into the following sections:

- **Section 1.0, Introduction**
- **Section 2.0, Background** provides an overview of the Hawthorns Area Property and a description of the District's planning framework.
- **Section 3.0, Existing Conditions** establishes the current conditions at the Hawthorns Area, organized into the following topics:
 - Natural Resources
 - Public Access
 - Local and Regional Connectivity
 - Historic and Cultural Resources
 - Aesthetics
 - Operations and Maintenance
- **Section 4.0, Opportunities and Constraints** describes the key considerations for future resource management and public access at the property.
- **Section 5.0, Public and Stakeholder Engagement** includes an overview of the public engagement effort conducted during the Existing Conditions Phase of the Hawthorns Area Plan process.
- **Section 6.0, Supplemental Figures** encompasses maps and images that provide additional context on the Hawthorns Area.
- **Section 7.0, Appendix** comprises supplemental reference materials.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The District is a public agency formed by voter initiative in 1972. The District's purpose is to acquire and permanently protect a regional greenbelt of open space lands, preserve and restore wildlife habitat, watersheds, viewsheds, and fragile ecosystems, and provide opportunities for low-intensity recreation and environmental education. On the San Mateo County coast, the District has an expanded mission to acquire and preserve agricultural land of regional significance, preserve rural character and encourage viable agricultural uses of land resources. The District has protected more than 70,000 acres of land and currently manages 26 open space

preserves with more than 250 miles of low-intensity recreational trails, including segments of four regional trails. Representing a wide spectrum of habitat communities, including bayside tidal wetlands, grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian corridors, coyote brush scrubland, and evergreen forests, District lands extend from San Carlos in San Mateo County in the north to the unincorporated

Mission Statement: *“To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space in perpetuity; protect and restore the natural environment; and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.”*

Santa Clara County area located south of Los Gatos in the south. The District's mission statement outlines the critical functions of the agency and serves as the policy framework with which all District goals, objectives, and implementation actions must remain consistent.

2.2 VISION PLAN AND MEASURE AA

In 2014, the Board approved 54 priority actions in the Open Space Vision Plan that prioritized conservation, management, and public access efforts throughout the District's jurisdiction; the Hawthorns Area is included under Vision Plan Priority #6: Windy Hill, which states the following actions that are specific to the Hawthorns Area:

“Open Hawthorns Area, develop trails connecting to Portola Valley and Palo Alto trails. Explore partnerships to protect, restore, and interpret historic buildings. Improve habitat conditions in Los Trancos Creek.”

The public supported this Vision Plan priority in 2014 when they voted for the passage of Measure AA, a \$300M general obligation bond to fund the top 25 Vision Plan priority actions. The total expenditure plan for the Windy Hill Measure AA Portfolio is \$12,740,000. The Hawthorns Area Plan would fulfill relevant portions of Vision Plan Priority #6 approved by the Board and supported by the public.

2.3 HAWTHORNS AREA VISION AND GOALS

On March 23, 2022, the District Board of Directors adopted the Vision and Goals for the Hawthorns Area after a robust public input process. The *vision* describes how the Hawthorns Area should look and function into the future, while the *goals* define allowable uses and management strategies. Together, the vision and goals represent a comprehensive use and management roadmap for the Hawthorns Area.

2.3.1 Hawthorns Area Vision Statement

The Hawthorns Area offers picturesque views of rolling oak grasslands, the San Francisco Bay, and the Santa Cruz Mountains; provides important wildlife refuge; and reflects the region's natural, agricultural, and social history. The District will protect and manage natural, scenic, cultural, and open space resources at the Hawthorns Area and provide ecologically sensitive public access consistent with the District's mission and the allowable uses outlined in the property's conservation easement.

2.3.2 Hawthorns Area Goals

1. Protect and restore native habitat and manage for ecological resiliency of aquatic and terrestrial habitat, wildlife connectivity, and other natural resources.
2. Open the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity public access, provide an internal trail system, and provide multimodal access to the property.
3. Connect to adjacent public trails and explore opportunities for trail connections to regional open space lands.
4. Interpret the rich natural, cultural, and historic features and pursue partnerships to manage the property's natural and cultural history.
5. Highlight scenic viewpoints and design recreational amenities while protecting scenic viewsheds.
6. Manage the property for safe public access in a fiscally sustainable manner that promotes ongoing public support and appreciation with ongoing public engagement and consistent with the District's Good Neighbor Policy.

2.4 PRELIMINARY USE AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

As part of the acquisition process, the District prepares Preliminary Use and Management Plans (PUMPs) that establish status quo land management activities for properties. The PUMP guides on-site uses and activities until a more comprehensive plan for the property can be developed or an existing plan is amended to incorporate the property. The Board adopted a PUMP for the Hawthorns Area in 2006 and a PUMP amendment in 2012 (**Attachment 1**). Since 2012, District staff have implemented a number of actions prescribed by the PUMP, including the following:

- Secured existing buildings and structures against trespass and vandalism

- Established an on-site employee presence
- Implemented a plan for wildland fire management and defensible space safety
- Conducted grassland restoration and invasive species management
- Evaluated long-term management options for the Historic Complex
- Initiated studying the feasibility of providing public access and connecting to existing trail networks

2.5 CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The Hawthorns Area is subject to a conservation easement granted in 2005 by the Woods Family Trust to POST. The conservation easement allows low-intensity recreational uses and related development that align with improvements typically offered on other District preserves, such as unimproved trails, split rail fences, parking areas, vault restrooms and directional signage. Other forms of development are generally restricted by the conservation easement. Section 6(i) of the conservation easement states the following:

"If the [Hawthorns Area] is ever conveyed to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, or any similar governmental or non-governmental entity intending to use the [Hawthorns Area] for public open space and passive recreational uses, construction of a limited staging area (gravel parking lot, pit toilets, wood rail fencing, trail markers, etc.) around the perimeter of the Improved Portion as necessary to facilitate public access to, and use of, the [Hawthorns Area] for hiking and other uses permitted by this easement."

Per the conservation easement, the "Improved Portion" refers to the parcel depicted in purple below, while the "Unimproved Portion" of the property is represented by the tan area (see **Figure 1**).

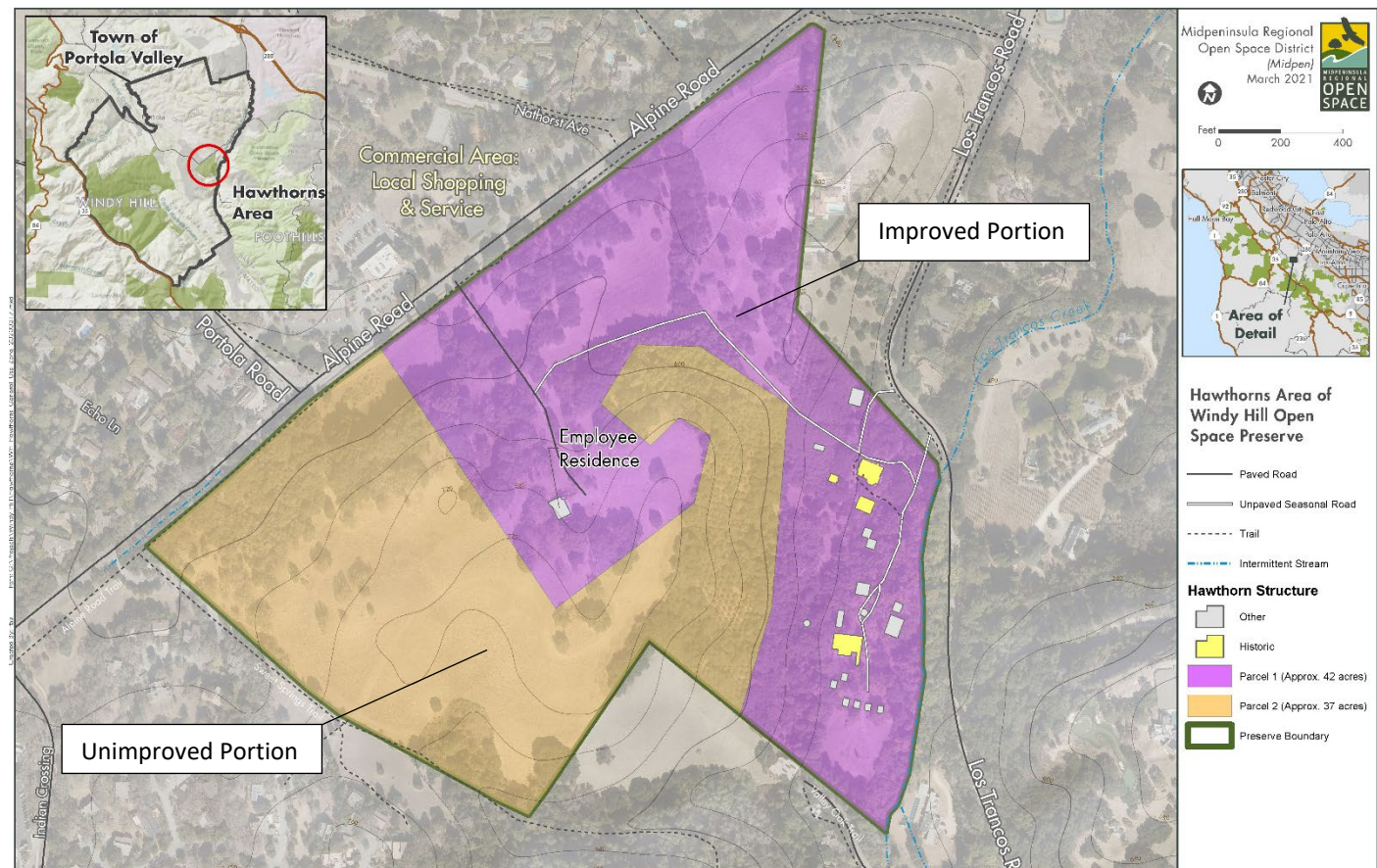


Figure 1: Hawthorns Area Improved and Unimproved Areas per the Conservation Easement (2005)

Other prohibited and permitted uses are described in Section 6 of the conservation easement (**Attachment 2**), as paraphrased in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Hawthorns Area Conservation Easement Prohibited and Permitted Uses

Conservation Easement Section	Description
<i>Prohibited Uses</i>	
3(a)	Subdivision, except for lot line adjustments and transference to a qualified agency for open space uses.
3(b)	Commercial or industrial development or activity, including agricultural use.
3(c)	Construction of additional buildings.
3(d)	Activities that cause significant soil degradation, erosion, or pollution of aquatic features.
3(e)	Tree removal, except as required for safety, fire protection, or resource management.
3(f)	On-site dumping or disposal of waste, refuse or debris.
3(g)	Installation of new utility systems or extension of existing utility system. (The repair, replacement, and relocation of existing utility systems may be allowed.)
3(h)	Exploration, development, or extraction of minerals.
3(i)	Commercial grazing.
3(j)	Use of off-road or all-terrain vehicles, unless used on existing roads, paths, and trails for purposes of site management, public safety, or travel between improvements located on the property.
3(k)	Commercial shooting or commercial shooting ranges are prohibited. Hunting or trapping of wildlife is prohibited, except to prevent damage to existing improvements or as necessary for resource management and public safety purposes.
3(l)	Activities producing sustained noise levels in excess of 65 decibels as measured on trails surrounding the property, except for agricultural and landscaping requirement necessary for the repair, reconstruction, or relocation of existing improvements.
3(m)	Storage or disassembly of inoperable vehicles.
3(n)	Alteration of landforms by grading or excavation.
3(o)	Activities that would degrade the property's scenic and natural character, such as clearing, stripping of native vegetation, grading, or storage of materials.
3(p)	Draining, filling, dredging, clearing, or diking of wetland and riparian areas.
3(q)	Alteration or manipulation of watercourses, or the creation of new water impoundments or watercourses, other than permitted agricultural and ecological enhancements.
3(r)	Placement of signs or billboards, except to display the property's name and use as an open space area, or to control unauthorized use.
3(s)	Golf courses, driving ranges, or sport courts.
3(t)	Excavation, removal, destruction, or sale of archeological artifacts or remains, except as part of an authorized archeological investigation.
<i>Allowable Uses</i>	
6(a)	Reasonable measures for fire safety, erosion control, and tree removal for safety, fire protection, or resource management purposes.
6(b)	Removal of non-native vegetation and restoration with native vegetation.
6(c)	Maintenance and use of existing paved and unpaved roadways, passages, and trails.
6(d)	Exceptions to the prohibited uses established in Section 3 of the Conservation Easement.
6(e)	Use, maintenance, and improvements to the existing spring and ground water system to service the property.

Conservation Easement Section	Description
6(f)	Passive recreational uses such as hiking, bicycling, and equestrian use.
6(g)	Construction of unpaved trails or paths for non-motorized uses.
6(h)	Use, occupancy, repair, reconstruction, or replacement of existing buildings and improvements directly related to the public open space operations of the property owner.
6(i)	Construction of a limited staging area (gravel parking lot, pit toilets, wood rail fencing, trail markers, etc.) to facilitate public access and recreational uses.

3.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1 NATURAL RESOURCES

3.1.1 Plant Communities

Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting conducted a [botanical resource survey](#) at the Hawthorns Area in 2019. **Table 2** identifies plant communities documented within the Hawthorns Area: Valley and Foothill Grassland, Cismontane Woodland, and Riparian Forest. Aside from these natural habitats, there are stands of woodland that are dominated by introduced species, primarily European olive (*Olea europaea*) and English hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). Aside from woodlands dominated by cultivars, shaded habitats generally feature a high cover of native plants, while more open, sunny habitats support a majority of introduced species.

Plant communities at the Hawthorns Area encompass habitat types that are known to support special-status plants in the region. Based on typical micro-habitat conditions, elevation ranges, and taxa distribution patterns, 11 special status plant species have the potential to occur on the site, of which none were observed during the 2019 protocol-level botanical surveys. The botanical survey identified areas within the Cismontane Woodland as Valley Oak Woodland, a rare and threatened plant community in the state. The botanical surveys also identified a sensitive natural community of woodlands with a cover of California bay trees within the Cismontane Woodland.

Table 2: Hawthorns Area Plant Communities

Name	Acreage	% of Hawthorns Area	Description ¹
Valley and Foothill Grassland	28.5 acres	37%	Introduced, annual Mediterranean grasses and native herbs. On most sites the native species, such as needle grass, have been largely or entirely supplanted by introductions. Stands rich in natives usually found on unusual substrates, such as serpentine or somewhat alkaline soils.
Cismontane Woodland	47 acres	60%	Trees deciduous, evergreen or both, with open canopies. Broadleaved trees dominate, although conifers may be present in or emergent through the canopy. Understories may be open and herbaceous or closed and shrubby. This type occurs on a variety of sites below the conifer forests in Mediterranean California. At the Hawthorns Area, this plant community includes 13.6 acres of olive groves.
Riparian Forest	2.4 acres	3%	Broadleaved, winter deciduous trees, forming closed canopies, associated with low- to mid-elevation perennial and intermittent streams. Most stands even-aged, reflecting the flood-mediated, episodic reproduction. These habitats can be found in every county and climate in California.

Valley and Foothill Grassland

Valley and foothill grasslands at the Hawthorns Area are dominated by a high cover of relatively tall and dense introduced annual grasses. Within central and southwestern portions of the Hawthorns Area, where soils are generally deeper and richer, the most

¹ https://cnps.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CNPS_Inventory_4th_ed_OCR.pdf

conspicuous grass was slender wild oat (*Avena barbata*), a highly palatable species that is favored by grazing animals, and so tends to occur in lower covers within grazed habitats. Associated herbaceous species included ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), rose clover (*Trifolium hirtum*), and filaree species (*Erodium spp.*). Grasses occurred as only localized stands along northern portions of the study area, and included the native blue wildrye (*Elymus glaucus*) and the non-native Harding grass (*Phalaris aquatica*), both of which are perennial species. In addition, there are scattered populations of narrow leaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*), a host plant for the Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), a candidate species for the Endangered Species List.

Native herbs were generally more common during the summer season, after the annual grasses died back, with species including turkey-mullein (*Croton setigerus*), woodrush tarweed (*Hemizonia congesta ssp. luzulifolia*), and summer lupine (*Lupinus formosus*). Portions of the site that were mowed as part of fire management featured higher covers of these native species, as a result of reduced competition from introduced grasses. Stands of native wildflowers were otherwise noticeably sparse throughout the study area, especially within the largest stands of grassland. However, a few showy stands of annual lupines (e.g., *L. nanus* and *L. bicolor*) were observed along the northern and northwestern portions of the site, where soils appear to be shallower. Localized clusters of the both narrowleaf and smooth mule ears (*Wyethia angustifolia* and *W. glabra*) were conspicuous along the edges of the grasslands, especially on more moist north-facing slopes. As a result of the lack of natural disturbances (e.g., livestock grazing, wildland fire), a stand of coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) was observed encroaching into the grasslands near the northwestern edge of the study area, but was not sufficiently large or homogenous to be mapped as a separate habitat type. Additional areas of such scrub habitats were present as narrow bands along the transitional zones between grassland and woodland habitats.

Cismontane Woodland

The habitat is most prevalent along north- and east-facing slopes as well as areas of concave topography, and consists of two distinct sub-habitat types. Areas within and along the edges of the large grassland in the southwestern portion of the study area are dominated by valley oak trees (*Quercus lobata*). This area amounts to 5.4 out of the total 33.4 acres — the habitat is mapped separately from the Cismontane Woodland because it is rare and threatened.² Valley oaks are the dominant tree, and consist of primarily very large and old trees, with very few signs of regeneration. Associated trees include blue oak as well as a few scattered California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) and Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*). As the trees form more of an open savanna than a woodland, the understory was found to be similar to Valley and Foothill Grassland, with many of the same grass and herb species noted for that habitat. Where trees form more of a closed canopy, additional herbs noted include Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*) and tall sock destroyer (*Torilis arvensis*).

Covering 28.0 acres, Cismontane Woodland along steeper slopes (excluding the valley oak sub-habitat) consists primarily of coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) trees. Both species occur as saplings and seedlings as well as mature individuals. Signs of sudden oak death were observed on coast live oaks within the study area. A small stand at the southwestern corner of the site also supports arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), as this location is the headwaters of a small seasonal stream. Some woodlands feature a cover of California bay that would qualify as California Bay Forest, which is a sensitive natural community.³ However, data are still being collected on this habitat type, and more recent data indicate that this is not a particularly rare or threatened type. In fact, as a result of sudden oak death disease, which has resulted in the mortality of millions of coast live oak trees and is spread by California bay (which is not killed by it), the latter is increasing at the expense of the former.

Associated tree species within this habitat include California buckeye, Pacific madrone, and a few scattered Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*). The understory was generally sparse, but included toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*). Some of the sunnier openings also supported stands of European olive that have spread beyond planted areas, along with the invasive French broom. The herbaceous understory was similarly sparse, especially in the more shaded zones, but did include at least a low cover of sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza berteroi*), Pacific black snakeroot (*Sanicula crassicaulis*), creeping snowberry (*Symphoricarpos mollis*), rough hedge nettle (*Stachys rigida*), and coastal woodfern (*Dryopteris arguta*).

Woodlands within the study area feature high covers of exotic tree and shrub species. Except for the easternmost area near Los Trancos Creek, the most common species were European olive and English hawthorn. The former were planted as groves along the eastern portion of the property, and the latter were sporadically planted and/or have since colonized other areas. The Historic Complex was planted with a variety of other horticultural species as well. Some of the species, such as horticultural roses (*Rosa sp.*)

² Sensitive plant communities include those designated as such by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as alliances classified in the Manual of California Vegetation (MCV) (Sawyer et al. 2009). Valley Oak Woodland ranked as S3, G3 in the MCV, indicating that the habitat is rare and threatened at both the state and global levels, and are therefore considered sensitive.

³ Sensitive plant communities include those designated as such by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as alliances classified in the Manual of California Vegetation (MCV) (Sawyer et al. 2009). California Bay Forest is a habitat designated as S3, G4 in the MCV, indicating that it is sensitive at the state level.

and camphor tree (*Cinnamomum camphora*), remain as aging individuals that are not reproducing, while others, such as white poplar (*Populus alba*), greater periwinkle (*Vinca major*), annual honesty (*Lunaria annua*), and English hawthorn, continue to spread beyond their original planted locations.

A species that may or may not have been planted by the residents, but which is fairly widespread in all of the “artificial woodland” areas is Franchet’s cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster franchetii*). This and French broom are common components throughout these habitats. The understory herbs observed are mostly weedy species, such as Italian thistle, bristly dogtail grass (*Cynosurus echinatus*), and nit grass (*Gastridium phleoides*). Native plants observed are relatively common and competitive species, such as creeping snowberry and rough hedgesettle. A few of the openings within olive groves that were planted along steeper hillslopes featured at least a few native plants, including significant stands of foothill needle grass (*Stipa lepida*).

Riparian Forest

Los Trancos Creek flows north along the eastern edge of the study area and supports 2.4 acres of riparian habitat. Los Trancos Creek supports a dense canopy of both true riparian and quasi-riparian tree species along with a similar diversity of shrubs, vines, and herbs that reflect the moist, shaded conditions as well as the influence of planted species. The highest overstory consists of the native white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*). There are also several large Northern California black walnut (*Juglans hindsii*), a species native to California but introduced to the study area. Growing among these species are white poplars, an introduced species that has likely spread well beyond its original planted location. There are also several arroyo willow, both in tree and shrub form.

The shrub and vine understory along the edge of Los Trancos Creek consists of red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), California blackberry, and the invasive greater periwinkle. Most other invasive species are more common beyond the tops of the stream banks, including French broom and English ivy, which are beginning to crowd out blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*), California hazel (*Corylus cornuta*), and other native species. The herbaceous understory along the stream consisted of rosilla (*Helenium puberulum*), giant horsetail (*Equisetum telmateia*), and clustered dock (*Rumex conglomeratus*). The less disturbed floodplain areas are occupied by cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*), sweet cicely, and mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*).

3.1.2 Protected Trees

The Town seeks to protect tree species listed in **Table 3**. Per Portola Valley Municipal Code Section 15.12.070.A, trees of these species that meet or exceed either the circumference or diameter listed are considered to be “significant,” and require site development permits for removal even if they appear to be dead.

Table 3: Significant Tree Species

Species	Circumference	Diameter
Coast Live Oak (<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>)	36"	11.5"
Black Oak (<i>Quercus kelloggii</i>)	36"	11.5"
Valley Oak (<i>Quercus lobata</i>)	36"	11.5"
Blue Oak (<i>Quercus douglasii</i>)	16"	5"
Coast Redwood (<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>)	54"	17.2"
Douglas-fir (<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>)	54"	17.2"
California Bay Laurel (<i>Umbellularia californica</i>)	36"	11.5"
Big Leaf Maple (<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>)	24"	7.6"
Madrone (<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>)	24"	7.6"

Note: Circumference and diameter are measured fifty-four (54) inches above natural grade.

3.1.3 Invasive Species

The District has an [Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\) Guidance Manual](#) to direct its management of harmful invasive plants and animals on preserves, with particular emphasis on invasive plants that threaten rare native species or sensitive natural communities. Applying adaptive management practices, District staff update work plans on an annual basis based on prior treatment results, new environmental conditions, and any new invasive species sightings. Nonchemical techniques for invasive species management, including prevention, pulling, cutting, digging, and mowing, are considered before chemical methods.

Ongoing grassland management at the Hawthorns Area includes timed mowing of invasive yellow star thistle. The District’s Natural Resources Department is working with contractors to perform grassland monitoring for informing the best timing to mow the

invasive, non-native weeds to promote native plant generation. Volunteers also actively remove highly flammable French broom, especially along roadways.

3.1.4 Wildlife

Most wildlife species found within the Hawthorns Area also occur within the surrounding semi-urban residential areas. Common bird species often seen foraging and hunting in the oak woodlands and grasslands include: Anna's hummingbird, American robin, California scrub jay, dark-eyed junco, cooper's hawk, and turkey vultures. California ground squirrels, bobcats, and dusky footed woodrats are present throughout the site, with the woodrats being found in abundance within the olive groves which are an introduced food source. Gopher snakes and rattlesnakes can be found investigating rodent burrows or basking in the sun for thermoregulation. Owls and bats are often found roosting in the onsite structures. Wide ranging animals such as Columbian black tailed deer and mountain lions also move across the landscape, and local residents have observed a coyote den at the property.

More complete lists of wildlife species can be found in **Table 4**, which identifies common vertebrate species expected to occur at the Hawthorns Area,^{4,5} and **Table 5**, which identifies *special status* wildlife species with potential to occur at the Hawthorns Area.⁶ *Special status* species included are those that are state or federally listed as threatened, rare, endangered, species of special concern, or candidate species.

Habitat Connectivity

Providing habitat connectivity across this human modified landscape is important for wildlife to find food, shelter, and mates. Much of the Hawthorns Area is surrounded by fencing. When fencing is present, habitat connectivity for wildlife can be provided by using wildlife friendly fence design to allow passage of animals under, through, or over the fence especially at key locations (corners, waterways, etc.). In some instances, fencing may be used to direct animals away from roadways or other high-risk areas. In order to maintain and enhance wildlife passage across and through the Hawthorns Area, wildlife friendly fence design principles will be incorporated during the site planning process.

Table 4: Hawthorns Area Wildlife

Common name	Scientific Name
<i>Birds</i>	
Acorn woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>
American crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>
Allen's hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus sasin</i>
American goldfinch	<i>Spinus tristis</i>
American kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
American robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>
Anna's hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>
Ash-throated flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>
Band-tailed pigeon	<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Barn swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Bell's vireo	<i>Vireo bellii</i>
Bewick's wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>
Black phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>

⁴ Natural Resources Database. 2022. Observations of fauna from nearby Windy Hill open space Preserves (with the exception of waterfowl that are unlikely to be found at Hawthorns). December 15, 2021 Update. <http://nrdb.org>. Accessed May 2022.

⁵ Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. 2021. Open Space Maintenance and Restoration Program Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

⁶ Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. 2021.

Common name	Scientific Name
Black-chinned sparrow	<i>Spizella atrogularis</i>
Black-headed grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>
Blackpoll warbler	<i>Setophaga striata</i>
Black-throated gray warbler	<i>Setophaga nigrescens</i>
Blue-gray gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila caerulea</i>
Brewer's blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>
Brown creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>
Brown-headed cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>
Bullock's oriole	<i>Icterus bullockii</i>
Bushtit	<i>Psaltiriparus minimus</i>
California quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>
California scrub-jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>
California thrasher	<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>
California towhee	<i>Melospiza crissalis</i>
Canada goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
Cassin's vireo	<i>Vireo cassinii</i>
Chestnut-backed chickadee	<i>Poecile rufescens</i>
Chipping sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>
Cliff swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>
Common raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Cooper's hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>
Dark-eyed junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>
Downy woodpecker	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>
European starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Ferruginous hawk	<i>Buteo regalis</i>
Fox sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>
Golden eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>
Golden-crowned kinglet	<i>Regulus satrapa</i>
Golden-crowned sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>
Great blue heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>
Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Great horned owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>
Hairy woodpecker	<i>Picoides villosus</i>
Hermit thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>
Hermit warbler	<i>Setophaga occidentalis</i>
House finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>

Common name	Scientific Name
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
House wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>
Indigo bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>
Lawrence's goldfinch	<i>Spinus lawrencei</i>
Lazuli bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>
Lesser goldfinch	<i>Spinus psaltria</i>
Lewis's woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes lewis</i>
Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>
Macgillivray's warbler	<i>Geothlypis tolmiei</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
Mourning dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>
Nashville warbler	<i>Oreothlypis ruficapilla</i>
Northern flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>
Northern mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>
Northern rough-winged swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>
Northern Saw-whet owl	<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>
Nuttall's woodpecker	<i>Picoides nuttallii</i>
Oak titmouse	<i>Baeolophus inornatus</i>
Orange-crowned warbler	<i>Oreothlypis celata</i>
Pacific wren	<i>Troglodytes pacificus</i>
Pacific slope flycatcher	<i>Empidonax difficilis</i>
Pine siskin	<i>Spinus pinus</i>
Prairie falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>
Purple finch	<i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>
Red crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
Red-breasted nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>
Red-breasted sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus ruber</i>
Red-shouldered hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>
Red-tailed hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
Red-winged blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>
Rock pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
Rough-legged hawk	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>
Ruby-crowned kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>
Rufous hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus rufus</i>
Rufous-crowned sparrow	<i>Aimophila ruficeps</i>

Common name	Scientific Name
Sage sparrow	<i>Amphispiza belli</i>
Say's phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>
Sharp-shinned hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>
Snowy egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>
Song sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>
Spotted towhee	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>
Steller's jay	<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>
Swainson's thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>
Tennessee warbler	<i>Oreothlypis peregrina</i>
Townsend's warbler	<i>Setophaga townsendi</i>
Tree swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>
Turkey vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
Varied thrush	<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>
Violet-green swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>
Warbling vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>
Western bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>
Western kingbird	<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>
Western meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>
Western screech-owl	<i>Megascops kennicottii</i>
Western tanager	<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>
Western wood-pewee	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>
White-breasted nuthatch	<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>
White-crowned sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>
White-throated sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>
Wild turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>
Wilson's warbler	<i>Cardellina pusilla</i>
Wrentit	<i>Chamaea fasciata</i>
Yellow-rumped warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>
Mammals	
Black-tailed jackrabbit	<i>Lepus californicus</i>
Bobcat	<i>Lynx rufus</i>
Botta's pocket gopher	<i>Thomomys bottae</i>
Broad-footed mole	<i>Scapanus latimanus</i>
Brush rabbit	<i>Sylvilagus bachmani</i>
California ground squirrel	<i>Otospermophilus beecheyi</i>
California myotis	<i>Myotis californicus</i>

Common name	Scientific Name
California pocket mouse	<i>Peromyscus californicus</i>
California vole	<i>Microtus californicus</i>
Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>
Deer mouse	<i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i>
Gray fox	<i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i>
House mouse	<i>Mus musculus</i>
Long-tailed weasel	<i>Mustela frenata</i>
Merriam's chipmunk	<i>Tamias merriami</i>
Mexican free-tailed bat	<i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i>
Mountain lion	<i>Puma concolor</i>
Columbian black-tailed deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus columbianus</i>
Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>
Striped skunk	<i>Mephitis sp.</i>
Virginia opossum	<i>Didelphis virginiana</i>
Western gray squirrel	<i>Sciurus griseus</i>
Reptiles	
California alligator lizard	<i>Elgaria multicarinata</i>
California kingsnake	<i>Lampropeltis getula californiae</i>
Coast gartersnake	<i>Thamnophis elegans terrestris</i>
Coast range fence lizard	<i>Sceloporus occidentalis bocourtii</i>
Northern pacific rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus oreganus</i>
Pacific gopher snake	<i>Pituophis catenifer</i>
Pacific ringneck snake	<i>Diadophis punctatus</i>
Red-eared slider*	<i>Trachemys scripta elegans</i>
Santa Cruz garter snake	<i>Thamnophis atratus</i>
Sharp-tailed snake	<i>Contia tenuis</i>
Skilton's skink	<i>Plestiodon skiltonianus</i>
Western pond turtle	<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>
Western yellow-bellied racer	<i>Coluber constrictor mormon</i>
Amphibians	
American bullfrog*	<i>Lithobates catesbeianus</i>
Arboreal salamander	<i>Aneides lugubris</i>
California giant salamander	<i>Dicamptodon ensatus</i>
California newt	<i>Taricha torosa</i>
California slender salamander	<i>Batrachoseps attenuatus</i>
California toad	<i>Anaxyrus boreas halophilus</i>

Common name	Scientific Name
Ensatina salamander	<i>Ensatina eschscholtzii</i>
Rough-skinned newt	<i>Taricha granulosa</i>
Sierran tree frog	<i>Pseudacris sierra</i>
Yellow-eyed ensatina	<i>Ensatina eschscholtzii xanthoptica</i>
<i>Fish</i>	
Threespine stickleback	<i>Gasterosteus aculeatus</i>
Prickly sculpin	<i>Cottus asper</i>
Speckled dace	<i>Rhinichthys osculus</i>
Hitch	<i>Lavinia exilicauda</i>
Sacramento Sucker	<i>Catostomus occidentalis</i>
California Roach	<i>Hesperoleucis symmetricus</i>
Rainbow trout	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>
Common carp*	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>
White crappie*	<i>Pomoxis annularis</i>
Brown bullhead*	<i>Ameiurus nebulosus</i>
Mosquitofish*	<i>Gambusia affinis</i>
Largemouth bass*	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>
Bluegill*	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i>

*Denotes non-native species

Table 5: Wildlife Special Status Species Potential to Occur

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Status ¹	Habitat	Potential to Occur
<i>Birds</i>			
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	SE / SP	Occurs mainly along seacoasts, rivers, and lakes; nests in tall trees or in cliffs, occasionally on electrical towers. Feeds mostly on fish but will also feed on large carcasses. Mature tall trees are used for roosting.	Low - absent as breeder. In the Program area, the bald eagle occurs primarily as a migrant and winter visitor and is rare during the summer months (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2021). Although there are no known nesting records from any District preserve, this species has nested east of Lexington Reservoir, just north of Bear Creek Redwoods OSP, in recent years, and it has also nested at Crystal Springs Reservoir, from 2013 through 2015. Potentially suitable nesting habitat is present at Guadalupe Reservoir, immediately adjacent to Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. This species is currently known to occur in District preserves only as a nonbreeding forager, but it could potentially nest in preserves, particularly those close to lakes, such as Bear Creek Redwoods, El Sereno, and Sierra Azul Preserves.

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Status ¹	Habitat	Potential to Occur
Bryant's savannah sparrow (<i>Passerculus sandwichensis alaudinus</i>)	CSSC	Nests in extensive grasslands in the Santa Cruz Mountains.	Moderate. Unconfirmed but potential to occur in the southwest grassland on the Hawthorns Area.
Grasshopper sparrow (<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>)	CSSC (nesting)	Breeds and forages in grasslands, meadows, fallow fields, and pastures.	Moderate. Unconfirmed but potential to occur in the southwest grassland on the Hawthorns Area.
Least Bell's vireo (<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>)	FE / SE	Breeds in shrubs and small trees in riparian and non-riparian habitat. Dependent on dense shrub layer in California.	Low. Though there was an individual occurrence in Menlo Park, species not likely to be present to breed. Local range does not extend north of Castle Rock State Park.
Northern harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	CSSC (breeding)	Breed in large, undisturbed tracts of wetlands and grasslands including dry uplands. Winter in range of habitats with low vegetation.	Moderate. Potential to occur during breeding and non-breeding seasons in the southern grasslands of Hawthorns Area.
Olive-sided flycatcher (<i>Contopus cooperi</i>)	CSSC	Breed in montane and northern coniferous forests. Occupy a range of elevations, usually in mid to high elevation forests.	Moderate. Unconfirmed but potential to occur in the woodland/forested sections of Hawthorns Area.
Peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>)	SP	Forages in many habitats; nests on cliffs and tall bridges and buildings.	Low. Has a low likelihood to breed at Hawthorns because there are no substantial rock outcroppings, but area may provide roosting/foraging habitat.
Willow flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii brewsteri</i>)	SE	Nests in dense willow thickets in riparian woodlands.	Moderate - absent as breeder. Although this species historically bred in the San Francisco Bay Area and central coast, it was extirpated decades ago. Small numbers of birds from more northerly populations occur on District lands during spring and fall migration.
White-tailed kite (<i>Elanus leucurus</i>)	SP	Nests in tall shrubs and trees, forages in grasslands, marshes, and ruderal habitats.	High. Grasslands within the Hawthorns Area provide suitable breeding and foraging habitat.
Yellow warbler (<i>Setophaga petechia</i>)	CSSC (breeding)	Breeds in thickets and disturbed or regrowing habitats, particularly along riparian areas and wetlands.	Moderate. Potential to occur during breeding season in deciduous thickets, around springs, or along Los Trancos Creek.
Mammals			
American badger (<i>Taxidea taxus</i>)	CSSC	Burrows in grasslands and occasionally in infrequently disked agricultural areas.	Low. No record of occurrence on site but low potential to occur due to suitable grassland habitat.
San Francisco dusky footed woodrat (<i>Neotoma fuscipesannectens</i>)	CSSC	Nests in a variety of habitats including riparian areas, oak woodlands, and scrub.	High. The Hawthorns Area provides suitable nesting and foraging habitat for this relatively common species. Stick nests may be placed in trees, shrubs, or on the ground. This species may also nest in and around old structures.
Townsend's big eared bat (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>)	SC / CSSC	Roosts in caves and mine tunnels, and occasionally in deep crevices in trees or in abandoned buildings, in a variety of habitats.	High. This species has been detected in buildings at the Hawthorns Area.
Amphibians			

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Status ¹	Habitat	Potential to Occur
California red-legged frog (<i>Rana draytonii</i>)	FT / CSSC	Uses streams, freshwater pools, and ponds with emergent or overhanging vegetation as breeding and nonbreeding aquatic habitat. It can disperse through a variety of habitats, such as grassland or woodland, particularly during the wet season.	Low. No record of occurrence on site, but the San Francisquito Creek watershed provides habitat for the California red-legged frog (CRLF) primarily in the upper reaches. CRLF has been observed within District preserves upstream and there was one observation about 1.5 miles downstream from Hawthorns, but CRLF has low potential to occur. However, while the short reach of Los Trancos Creek within Hawthorns is likely not significant for habitat continuity, it may provide CRLF habitat during wet years.
Foothill yellow-legged frog (<i>Rana boylei</i>)	SE / CSSC	Occurs in a variety of habitats in coast ranges, but all contain partially shaded shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate.	Low. Historic occurrence within the nearby El Corte de Madera Creek watershed. This species is considered extirpated in the local area.
<i>Fish</i>			
Central California Coast steelhead (<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>)	FT	Cool streams with suitable spawning habitat and conditions allowing migration between spawning and marine habitats.	Moderate. Los Trancos Creek is designated as critical habitat for California central coast Evolutionary Significant Unit (ESU) of steelhead. ⁷ Within the Hawthorns Area, Los Trancos Creek lacks channel complexity, such as scour pools and instream wood, and the low summer flows limit rearing habitat despite the prevalence of coarse bedload. While the short reach of Los Trancos Creek within the Hawthorns Area is likely not significant for habitat continuity, it may provide steelhead habitat during wet years.

¹Status Codes: FE = Federally Endangered; FT = Federally Threatened; FC = Candidate for Federal Listing; SE = State Endangered; ST = State Threatened; SC = Candidate for State Listing; CSSC = California Species of Special Concern; SP = State listed as Fully Protected

3.1.5 Aquatic Resources

In spring 2022, the District contracted Stillwater Sciences, Inc., to assess water and wetland resources at the Hawthorns Area, which include Los Trancos Creek and three small riverine intermittent streambed drainages. Classified as a riverine upper perennial waterbody with an unconsolidated bottom, Los Trancos Creek flows from Monte Bello Ridge in the Santa Cruz Mountains to its confluence with San Francisquito Creek at Stanford University. Los Trancos Creek meanders along the eastern edge of the Hawthorns Area and although it flows year-round, it is prone to low flows or complete drying during droughts. Channel erosion is minimal but several channel failures/cut banks along the opposite side of the creek from District land may eventually need stabilizing. Runoff from Los Trancos Road into the creek at the culverted road crossing (gate WH10) could impair downstream water quality, but the runoff occurs along the San Mateo County right of way and outside of District land. As stated in **Section 3.1.4**, Los Trancos Creek is designated as critical habitat for California central coast steelhead.

Regulatory Context

Clean Water Act

Under [Section 404 of the Clean Water Act](#) (CWA) and [Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act](#), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has jurisdiction over all Waters of the U.S., including wetlands and waters currently, previously, or potentially used in interstate or foreign commerce. The Hawthorns Area contains 0.30 acres of potential Waters of the U.S. subject to the USACE's

⁷ National Marine Fisheries Service. 2005. Endangered and Threatened Species: Designation of Critical Habitat for Seven Evolutionarily Significant Units of Pacific Salmon and Steelhead in California; Final Rule. FR Doc. 05-16389. Part II. 50 CFR. Part 226. Vol. 70. No. 170: pp. 52488-52627. September 2, 2005.

jurisdiction (see **Table 6**). For additional details and maps pertaining to Waters of the United States at and around the Hawthorns Area, see the **Supplemental Figures** section at the end of the report.

Table 6: Potential Waters of the U.S. Within the Hawthorns Area

Feature	Classification	Acres
Los Trancos Creek	Riverine, Upper Perennial, unconsolidated bottom (cobble-gravel)	0.24
Drainage	Riverine, Intermittent Streambed	0.06
Total		0.30

Furthermore, Section 303(d) of the CWA authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assist states, territories, and authorized tribes in listing impaired waters and developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for impaired waterbodies. A TMDL establishes the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed in a waterbody and serves as the starting point or planning tool for restoring water quality. In general, once a waterbody has been added to a state's list of impaired waters it stays there until the state develops a TMDL and the EPA approves it.⁸

Los Trancos Creek is a tributary to San Francisquito Creek, which is designated as a 303(d) impaired waterbody due to trash and sedimentation.⁹ Historic and current land uses throughout the San Francisquito Creek watershed have altered the forms and functions of San Francisquito Creek's channels, exacerbating sedimentation and resulting in erosion, runoff, water quality degradation, and compromised riparian habitat for native fish species.¹⁰

California Riparian Habitat Conservation Act

Chapter 4.1 of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Fish and Game Code establishes the California Riparian Habitat Conservation Act, which aims to protect California's rivers and riparian resources. The Fish and Game Code acknowledges the necessity of keeping certain lands such as riparian and wetland areas in their natural condition in order to preserve their environmental value. Preservation and enhancement of riparian habitat is a primary concern of the CDFW and the Wildlife Conservation Board, and any activities proposed in the vicinity of riparian habitats should be coordinated with the CDFW.

Town Creek Setback Ordinance

The Town regulates land use within a specified distance of creeks to protect the waterway. For Building Permits and Site Development Permits, the Town's Creek Setback Ordinance¹¹ stipulates that setbacks may be measured from either the top of the creek bank (TOB) or the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) at the discretion of the property owner. For parcels of 2.5 acres or more, a 55-foot buffer from TOB or a 60-foot buffer from the OHWM is required.

3.1.6 Wildland Fire Management

The District's ongoing land stewardship includes proactive, year-round wildland fire prevention, preparation, and response. The District adopted a [Wildland Fire Resiliency Program](#) in 2021 to increase ecologically sensitive vegetation management District-wide. Under this program, wildland fire severity and risk are reduced through vegetation management with a focus on ecological health and wildland fire resilience, in alignment with the District's mission and policies. Moreover, as part of the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, the District is developing a Prescribed Fire Plan to reintroduce prescribed fire to District lands in partnership with twelve fire agencies, including the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE).

The District implements required wildland fire prevention activities at the Hawthorns Area, as well as discretionary measures, including mowing along roadways, ridgetops and a staging area for wildland fire crews, thinning specific vegetative fuels, and maintaining 100' of defensible space around all structures. Under direction from the District, Grassroots Ecology, a local non-profit organization focused on restoring local ecosystems, works with volunteers to pull highly flammable French broom, especially from ignition points along roadways.

⁸ <https://www.epa.gov/tmdl/overview-listing-impaired-waters-under-cwa-section-303d?msclkid=63484a0ea60911eca1da89a12b6c7dc9>

⁹ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/rwqcb2/water_issues/programs/TMDLs/2016_303d/00684.shtml#35585

¹⁰ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/TMDLs/sanfranciscitosediment/sanfranciscitosedimentbudget.pdf

¹¹ No. 2007-369, Chapter 18.59 of Title 18 of the Portola Valley Municipal Code

In accordance with the [Woodside Fire Protection District Ordinance](#) Perimeter Property Line Clearance, the District is required to remove vegetative fuel materials or litter at least 50 feet from the Hawthorns Area property line and 100 feet from any neighboring structure. This includes materials such as dead weeds and dry annual grasses that are capable of being easily ignited.

3.2 PUBLIC ACCESS

The Hawthorns Area is currently closed to the public and does not contain designated public access facilities. However, as the 2014 Measure AA Open Space Bond and Vision Plan established a goal of opening the Hawthorns Area to the public, public access considerations in alignment with the conservation easement are inherent to the Hawthorns Area Plan planning process.

Existing infrastructure at the Hawthorns Area includes driveways, internal ranch roads, and informal pathways that may provide future public access opportunities and connections with the surrounding Town road and trail network. The District has retained a transportation consultant to characterize existing traffic conditions and evaluate lines of sight at the existing driveways to determine if these access points could provide safe ingress and egress to the Hawthorns Area. Refer to Section 4.2 for a discussion of public access opportunities and constraints.

3.3 LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

The 2003 [Town of Portola Valley General Plan](#) (General Plan) includes a [Trails and Paths Element](#), which envisions a comprehensive trail and path system throughout the Town. **Table 7** describes local trails and pathways near the Hawthorns Area, and **Figure 2: Town Trails** depicts these trails and pathways.

- **Coal Mine Ridge Nature Preserve:** Coal Mine Ridge Nature Preserve is a privately owned, 235-acre open space preserve that is a part of Portola Valley Ranch. Public trail access for equestrian use and hiking is provided under an easement granted to the Town, but the easement applies only to the public trails and does not permit public access to the rest of the open space. Dogs and bikes are prohibited on the trails in Coal Mine Ridge Nature Preserve.
- **Pearson-Arastradero Preserve:** Pearson-Arastradero Preserve is located east of the Hawthorns Area and managed by the City of Palo Alto. Bounded by Los Altos Hills, Stanford University, and Portola Valley, the 622-acre preserve contains over ten miles of recreation trails open to pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists, and dogs on-leash. This preserve could facilitate future trail alignments for the envisioned Bay to Ridge Trail, including the planned Palo Alto to the Sea Trail.¹²
- **Foothills Nature Preserve:** Bounded by Portola Valley, Los Altos Hills, Pearson-Arastradero Preserve and Los Trancos Open Space Preserve, Foothills Nature Preserve is managed by the City of Palo Alto and encompasses 1,400 acres of chaparral, oak woodlands, and grassland ecosystems. The preserve includes fifteen miles of hiking trails open only to pedestrians. While horses are not permitted anywhere in the preserve, bicyclists are permitted on paved roads. The preserve is open to dogs on leash on weekdays; however, no dogs are permitted on weekends or holidays. Foothills Nature Preserve is also open to fishing and canoeing at Boronda Lake, as well as seasonal camping at Towle Campground. In the future, Foothills Nature Preserve could facilitate future trail alignments for the envisioned Bay to Ridge Trail, which would ultimately include the planned Palo Alto to the Sea Trail.
- **Stanford Dish Area:** The Stanford Dish Area is located in the foothills west of Stanford University, is owned and operated by Stanford University, and is open to the general public. Named for a radio antenna constructed in 1961 and still actively used today, the Stanford Dish Area supports rare species, cultural resources, and academic study and offers nearly four miles of paved recreational pedestrian trails. No dogs, horses, or bicycles are allowed anywhere in the Stanford Dish Area.
- **Stanford Perimeter Trail:** Connecting recreational areas in the foothills to those in the Palo Alto Baylands, the Stanford Perimeter Trail is 3.4-mile, multi-use trail built along Junipero Serra Boulevard, Stanford Avenue, and El Camino Real. The trail was constructed in partnership between Stanford University and the City of Palo Alto and is included in the City of Palo Alto's Master Plan for Parks, Trails, Open Space & Recreation. The trail is open to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve:** Located south of Sand Hill Road and west of Interstate 280, Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve is owned and operated by Stanford University primarily for conservation and scientific research. The 1,193-acre Preserve is open to the public in a limited capacity through scheduled, docent-led tours from October through May. Other recreational uses are not permitted.
- **Windy Hill Open Space Preserve:** Situated approximately one mile west of the Hawthorns Area in the Town, the 1,414-acre Windy Hill Open Space Preserve is owned and managed by the District. The Preserve includes over 13 miles of hiking trails, including a segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail. Bicyclists, equestrians, and dogs on-leash are permitted on designated trails in the Preserve.

¹² The ultimate vision of the Bay to Ridge Trail as defined by the City of Palo Alto is to connect parks and open spaces from the San Francisco Bay to the peninsula ridgeline across the broader Palo Alto region, encompassing Foothills Park and Arastradero Preserve in the southwest as well as the Baylands Preserve and other shoreline parks and natural open spaces to the northeast. For more information, see City of Palo Alto's *Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan*.

In addition to the open spaces within the immediate vicinity of the Hawthorns Area, there are numerous parks and preserves located throughout the broader San Francisco Peninsula.

- **Skyline Region** – The Skyline Region of the Santa Cruz Mountains includes parks and open space preserves generally located along Highway 35, including Huddart County Park, Wunderlich County Park, Pescadero Creek County Park, Purisima Creek Redwoods, El Corte de Madera Creek, La Honda Creek, Russian Ridge, Coal Creek, Skyline Ridge, Long Ridge, Monte Bello, and Saratoga Gap. The Bay Area Ridge Trail, a regional trail system circumnavigating the San Francisco Bay Area, connects many preserves and San Mateo County parks in the Skyline Region.
- **Foothills Region** – The Foothills Region of the Santa Cruz Mountains encompasses lower-elevation recreational areas between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the urbanized Peninsula. Santa Clara County parks and open space preserves in the Foothills Region include Stevens Creek County Park, Upper Stevens Creek County Park, Rancho San Antonio County Park and Preserve, Teague Hill, Thornewood, Los Trancos, Picchetti Ranch, and Fremont Older.

Table 7: Local and Regional Trails

Map No.	Name	Description	Allowable Uses			
			Pedestrian	Equestrian	Bicycle	Dogs On-leash
1	Alpine Trail	The Alpine Trail parallels Alpine Road on the south side of the road from the Ladera community near I-280 to Portola Road, eventually connecting with the Alpine Trail as it extends into the Santa Cruz Mountains. Between Los Trancos Road and Saddleback Drive, Alpine Trail is an unpaved path separated from Alpine Road by a vegetated berm elevated several feet above the roadway. Bicycles and dogs on-leash are only allowed on Alpine Trail north of the Alpine Road / Portola Road intersection.	X	X	X	X
2	Alpine Road	Alpine Road is a major arterial roadway through the Town. The following portions of Alpine Road adjacent to the Hawthorns Area are officially designated as part of the Town’s trail and path network: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Bicycle Route: Alpine Road from Los Trancos Road to Saddleback Drive.▪ Bicycle Path: On the north side of Alpine Road from Los Trancos Road to Portola Road.	X	X	X	X
3	Dwight F. Crowder Path	The Dwight F. Crowder Path is a multi-use thoroughway north of Alpine Road from the Portola Trail east towards Central Portola Valley and intersects with the Nathhorst and Hillbrook Trails.	X	X	X	X
4	Sweet Springs Trail	The Sweet Springs Trail extends from Alpine Trail near the western corner of the Hawthorns Area and extends south into the Portola Valley Ranch neighborhood. This is a private trail owned by Portola Valley Ranch that is accessible to the public. Hiking and equestrian uses are allowed on this trail; bicycles are prohibited.	X	X		X
5	Los Trancos Trail	The Los Trancos Trail is located on the east side of Los Trancos Road along the eastern boundary of the Hawthorns Area. The unpaved trail begins at Los Trancos Creek and extends to the north parallel to Los Trancos Road until it terminates at the Alpine Trail.	X	X	-	X
6	Firethorne Trail	The Firethorne Trail spans from the Los Trancos Trail to the Alpine Trail at the northeastern corner of the Hawthorns Area.	X	X	-	X
7	Hillbrook Trail	The Hillbrook Trail connects to the Dwight F. Crowder Path a few hundred feet southwest of the northeastern corner of the Hawthorns Area and extends north parallel to Hillbrook Road.	X	X	-	X
8	Nathhorst Trail	Situated north of the Hawthorns Area and southwest of the Hillbrook Trail, the unpaved Nathhorst Trail runs adjacent to Nathhorst Road and connects to the Dwight F. Crowder Path to the east, to the Veronica Trail to the northwest, and to the Portola Trail to the southwest.	X	X	-	X
9	Veronica Trail	The Veronica Trail originates at the Nathhorst Trail and extends along Veronica Road north of the Hawthorns Property.	X	X	-	X
10	Portola Trail	Located north of the Hawthorns Area, the Portola Trail is the extension of the Dwight F. Crowder Path to the west following Portola Road.	X	X	X	X
11	Indian Crossing Trail	The Indian Crossing Trail originates at Alpine Road west of the Hawthorns Area and continues south toward the Portola Valley Ranch neighborhood.	X	X	-	X
12	Valley Oak Trail	The Valley Oak Trail is a multiuse trail Town trail that spans the Portola Valley Ranch neighborhood and comes to a terminus near the southwestern corner of the Hawthorns Area.	X	X	X	X



Town of Portola Valley Public Trail Network

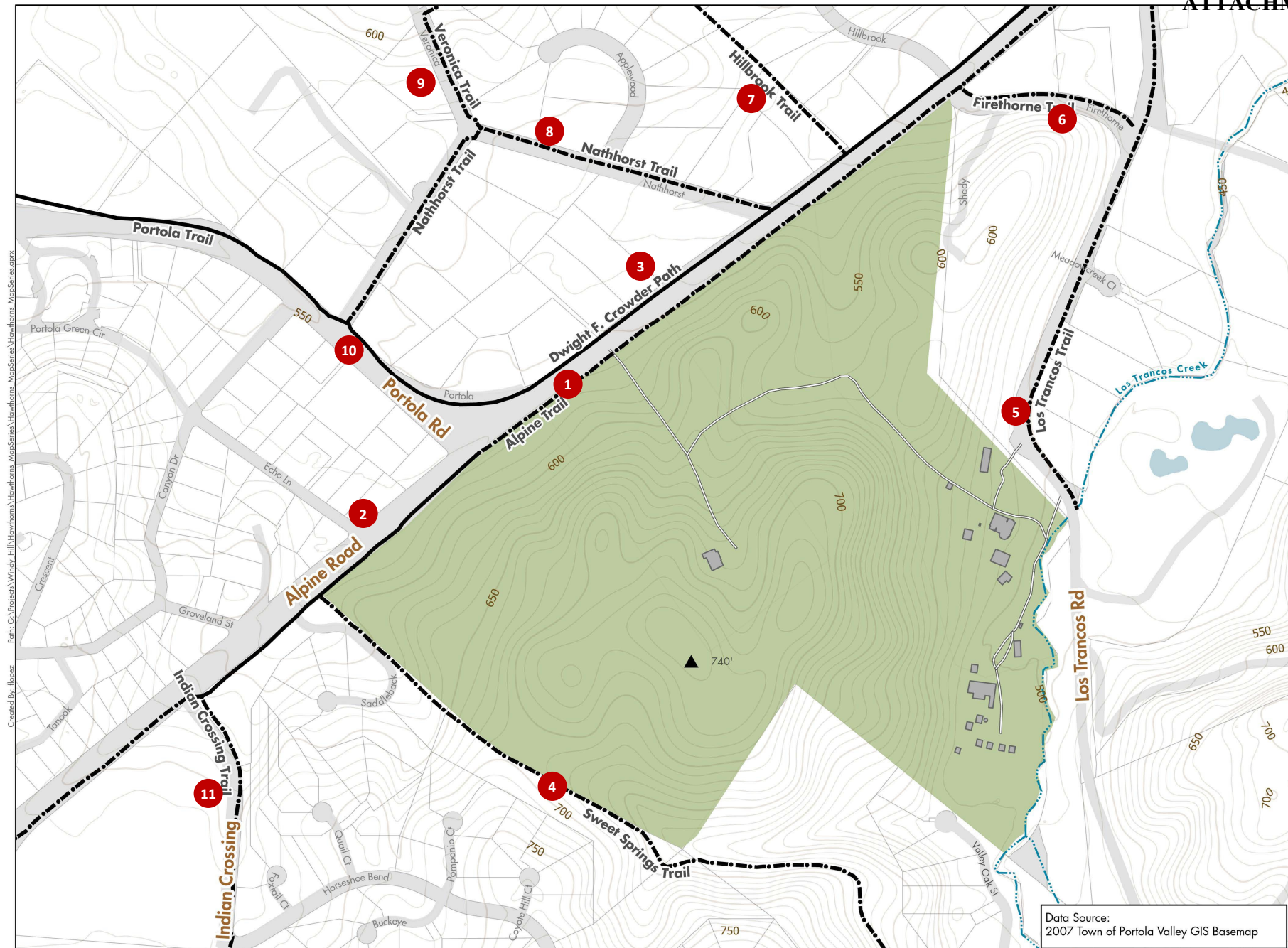
Hawthorns Area

Building

Trail use type

Equestrian &
Pedestrian Trail,
Dogs On Leash

Bicycle, Equestrian,
& Pedestrian Trail,
Dogs On Leash



Data Source:
2007 Town of Portola Valley GIS Basemap



Figure 2: Town Trails

3.4 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

3.4.1 Hawthorns Historic District

In 2013, the District retained Knapp Architects to prepare a [Historic Resource Study](#) (HRS) for the Hawthorns Area, which concluded that the property is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district because it retains landscape features and structures that reflect the social, agricultural, and architectural history of San Francisco Peninsula estate property in the late 19th century. Resources determined eligible for the National Register are automatically eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources. Furthermore, the [Historic Element](#) of the Town's General Plan identifies two historic resources at the property: (1) the 'Allen-Woods House and grounds,' and (2) 'Vegetation at Allen-Woods House.' As an eligible historic district, the Hawthorns Area meets the definition of an historic resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Character-Defining Features

Table 8 and **Figure 3** identify character-defining features at the Hawthorns Area, which represent the prominent or distinctive aspects, qualities, or characteristics that contribute significantly to its physical character and convey its historical significance. Character-defining features for the Hawthorns Historic District are those that convey its relationship to the history of country estates in Portola Valley during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These attributes include built structures and natural features, including the natural topography, open grasslands, and expansive vistas.

The HRS categorized character-defining structures at the Hawthorns Area as *primary* and *secondary historic district contributors*. In this context, primary contributors are those that are important in defining the historic character of the property and that should be retained or only minimally altered. Secondary features are less critical in contributing to the property's historic character and may undergo greater change without substantially impacting the property's overall historic character.¹³

The HRS categorized character-defining landscape elements as *contributing features* and *non-contributing features*. In this context, *contributing features* define the historic character of the property and that should be retained or only minimally altered, whereas *non-contributing features* do not communicate the property's overall historic character.¹⁴

Integrity

When a property is historically significant, the property's integrity is assessed to verify that it retains the physical characteristics which convey its historic significance. Several ancillary structures are in various states of disrepair from dilapidated finishes to total collapse. In their current state, the remaining portions are a scattered array of construction materials with no sense of their original architectural configuration or use. As such, these particular ancillary buildings no longer retain integrity to contribute to the property's historic significance.

Historic Complex Structural Assessment

In 2022, the District enlisted Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. to conduct a structural assessment of the buildings present on the Hawthorns Area and provide an overview of the necessary actions needed for stabilization, restoration, rehabilitation and reuse, and demolition as a separate project from the Hawthorns Area Plan process. Based on the information provided, the Board will determine the next steps for the management of the Historic Complex, at which time public access considerations for this area will be ascertained.

¹³ <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/interiors-primary-secondary.htm>

¹⁴ <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/interiors-primary-secondary.htm>

Table 8: Features at the Hawthorns Area (see Figure 3)

Feature Name	Description	Contribution to Historic District
<i>Buildings and Structures</i>		
Hawthorns House	Approximately 9,000 square foot, wood-framed, shingle-style two-story residence with unfinished basement and finished attic. Constructed in 1887.	Primary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Garage	Approximately 2,200 square foot, wood-framed one-story structure with a first-floor garage and small attic. Constructed in 1916.	Primary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Cottage	Approximately 1,300 square foot, wood-framed structure with partially finished attic and split-level interior. Constructed around 1885.	Primary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Lower Barn	Approximately 4,400 square foot, wood-framed one-story structure with a large central side-sliding barn door flanked by secondary swinging doors. Constructed in 1887.	Primary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Upper Barn	Rectangular plan with inset porch, stalls and shed; corrugated steel roof; wood frame on grade; dirt floors. Construction date unknown.	Secondary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Raccoon Sheds	Appear to have been shelter enclosures. Rectangular plan; corrugated steel roof; wood frame on grade; dirt floor. Construction date unknown.	Secondary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Horse Sheds	Appear to have been a series of shelters. Square plan, open three sides; corrugated steel roof; wood framing; rough concrete floor; central wooden trough. Construction date unknown.	Secondary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Silo	Cylindrical storage container clad in vertical concrete panels with metal rods wrapped horizontally at intervals along the height; ladder enclosed by a cylindrical metal attachment on the exterior; roof is sheet metal with a conical raised cap for ventilation. Construction date unknown.	Secondary character-defining feature, retains integrity
Shetland Pony Shed	Appears to have been shade device and may relate to Upper Barn. Rectangular plan, open on three sides; corrugated steel roof; wood frame on grade. Construction date unknown. Structure has collapsed and no longer retains integrity.	Originally a secondary character-defining feature, but no longer retains integrity and does not contribute to historic district.
Dog Sheds	Appear to have been shelter enclosures. Rectangular plan; corrugated steel roof; horizontal board finish; wood frame on grade; dirt floor. Construction date unknown. Structures have collapsed and no longer retain integrity.	Originally a secondary character-defining feature, but no longer retains integrity and does not contribute to historic district.
Carriage Shed	Appears to have been an open shelter at the south end and an enclosed space at the north end with stalls. Rectangular plan; corrugated steel roofs; wood frame on grade; dirt floor. Construction date unknown. Structure has partially collapsed and no longer retains integrity.	Originally a secondary character-defining feature, but no longer retains integrity and does not contribute to historic district.
Pump House	Rectangular plan; corrugated steel roof; wood frame on grade; concrete pad floor. Construction date unknown. Structure has collapsed and no longer retains integrity.	Originally a secondary character-defining feature, but no longer retains integrity and does not contribute to historic district.

Feature Name	Description	Contribution to Historic District
Coachman's Quarters	Appears to have been small living quarters at the north end, a central covered space, and grooming/tack room structure at the south end. Rectangular plan; corrugated steel roof; wood frame on grade. Construction date unknown. Structure has collapsed and no longer retains integrity.	Originally a secondary character-defining feature, but no longer retains integrity and does not contribute to historic district.
District Residence	A modern residence constructed in 1952 at 4411 Alpine Road is currently used as a District residence. The 4411 Alpine Road residence and associated driveway and landscaping do not contribute to the historic district.	Does not contribute to historic district.
<i>Landscape Features</i>		
Los Trancos Road Olive Grove	The Los Trancos Road olive grove encompasses approximately nine acres north of the Historic Complex and may have originally included up to 1,000 olive trees. These trees have not been pruned or tended for many years with sucker branches growing from the base of the trees, moss on trunks and limbs, and the encroachment of trees and brush within the edges of the grove.	Character-defining feature that contributes to the historic district.
Alpine Road Olive Grove	The Alpine Road olive grove encompasses approximately 2.5 acres in the southwestern corner of the property that was planted at an early date. This area is overgrown with oaks and brush to the extent that the rows of olive trees are no longer apparent within the expanse of wooded area along the western edge of the property. The condition and integrity of the Alpine Road Olive Grove has deteriorated so that it no longer contributes to the significance of the property and is no longer a character-defining feature.	Originally a character-defining feature but no longer contributes to historic district.
Hawthorn Trees and Shrubs	The Hawthorns Area was named for the small ornamental trees planted along Alpine Road and at the original Historic Entrance Driveway. The planting was originally maintained as a tall, pruned hedge about 12-15' high, but was removed when Alpine Road was widened in 1952. There are individual examples of hawthorns that have naturalized or self-seeded along Alpine Road at the southwestern edge of the property and scattered in the adjacent field and along the Historic Entrance Driveway. The original hawthorns hedge along Alpine Road is no longer extant, and the fugitive and volunteer hawthorns plants do not contribute to the property's historical significance.	Originally a character-defining feature but no longer exists and does not contribute to historic district.
Historic Entrance Driveway	The original entrance road to the Hawthorns property entered from Alpine Road about 500 yards northeast of the current driveway to the District Residence at 4411 Alpine Road. Trees were once planted evenly along each side of the Historic Entrance Driveway from Alpine Road to the ridgeline. The portion of this original driveway between Alpine Road and the olive grove is overgrown with vegetation and its roadbed is no longer extant; however, an entrance gate to this road is still in place in the fence line along Alpine Road. Oak trees recall the original driveway alignment and contribute to the overall historical character of the property.	The fence, gate, and oak trees delineating the original driveway all contribute to the historic district.

Feature Name	Description	Contribution to Historic District
Open Grasslands and Vistas	The open grasslands and expansive vistas to the surrounding ridges and distant mountains from the upper slopes of the open hillsides are associated with the pre-1952 development era.	Character-defining features that contribute to historic district.
Fences	Fences and remnants of fences (e.g., wooden posts, metal stakes, barbed wire) of varying types enclose the property and delineate internal uses and define the landscape's historical conditions.	Fences that define historic uses and layouts at the Hawthorns Area contribute to the historic district.
Terraced Area and Brick Oven	The terraced area, brick oven, and two retaining walls composed of stacked field stone at the north end of the Hawthorns House contribute to the historic district.	The terraced area and brick oven contribute to the historic district.
Internal Paths and Field Stone	<p>The property's internal road system consists of a series of single-lane dirt roads, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two entrances at Los Trancos Road • The road from the upper Los Trancos Road entrance that leads to the northwest corner of the Hawthorns House • The segment that runs along the front of the Hawthorn House • Road that is accessed from the lower Los Trancos Road entrance and leads out to the Lower Barn and field area • The driveway to the Garage • Segment that leads westward up through the olive grove (northwest of the Hawthorns House), over the ridge <p>The field stone edging and low retaining walls that line portions of the internal road system further contribute to the landscape's historic properties.</p>	With the exception of the asphalt driveway leading to the modern residence at 4411 Alpine Road, all paths on the Hawthorns property contribute to its historic designation.
Spatial Organization	<p>Two forms of spatial organization support the Hawthorns Area's historic classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the large olive grove that stretches between the northern and southern boundaries on this eastern side of the ridgeline • the cluster of the three main residential buildings (the Hawthorn House, the Cottage, and the Garage) at the northern end of the historic district, as well as the agricultural area with the Barn and open field at its southern end. 	Spatial organization at the Hawthorns Area contributes to the historic district.
Natural Topography	The natural topography of the Hawthorns Area slopes steeply down from the ridge and runs through the central portion of the historic district toward Los Trancos Road and then gradually levels out as it approaches the eastern boundary of the property at Los Trancos Creek. This formation, as well as the manner in which the built features have been added to the site with minimal topographic modifications, contributes to the historic nature of the property.	Natural topography at the Hawthorns Area contributes to the historic district.

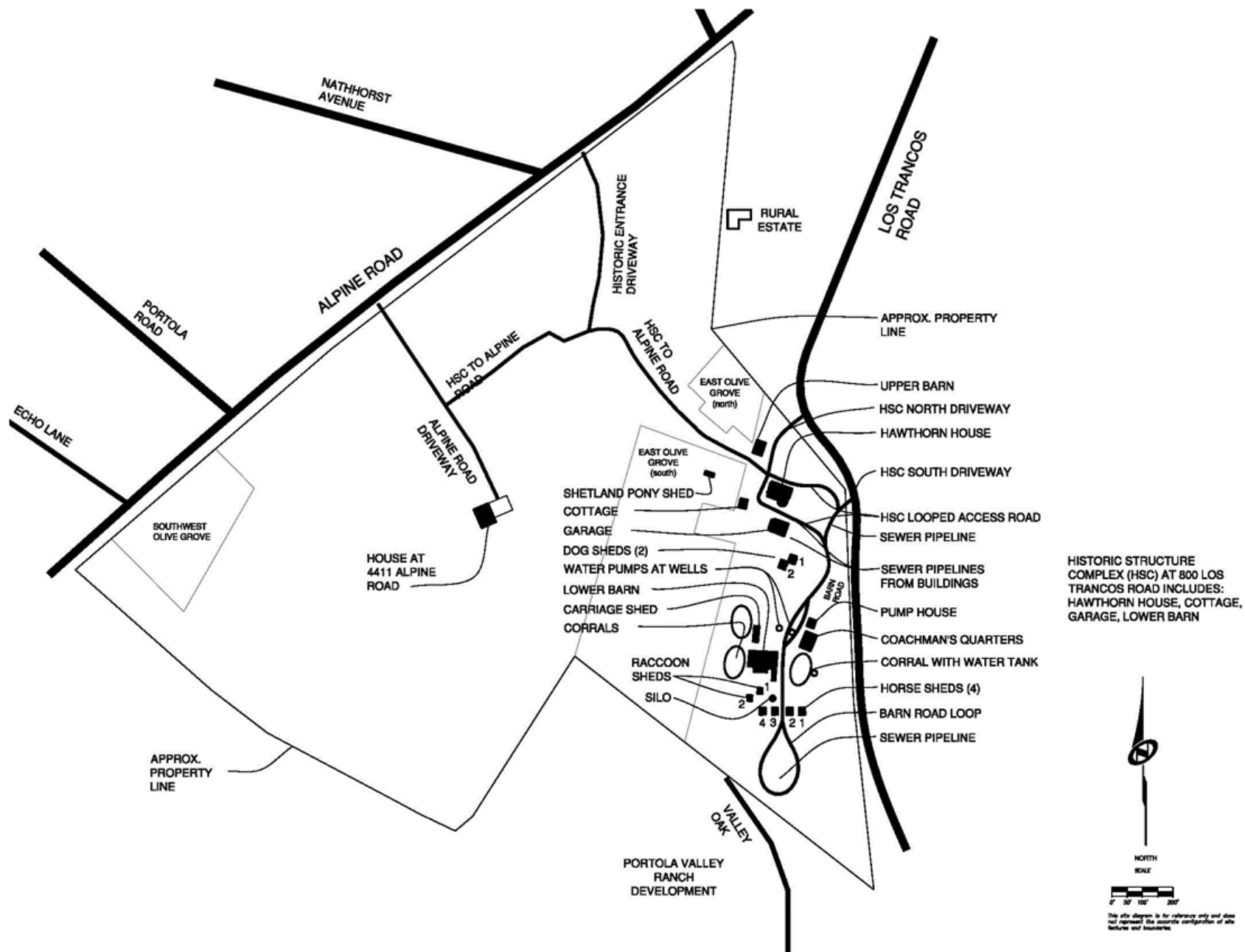


Figure 3: Hawthorns Historic District Features

3.4.2 Historic and Cultural Resources

Archaeological surveys conducted in 2018 and 2022 determined that the Hawthorns Area contains sensitive Native American resources. In general, portions of the Hawthorns Area within 200 feet of Los Trancos Creek may contain archaeological resources; the remainder of the Hawthorns Area has low archaeological sensitivity. Public access to the Los Trancos Creek areas of the Hawthorns Area could increase risk of degradation or damage to these resources. Coordination with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area will ensure privacy and respect to the sensitive and confidential nature of these resources.

3.5 AESTHETICS

The Hawthorns Area landscape includes low-elevation grassland hills and scenic ridgetops that afford panoramic views of the San Francisco Bay and Peninsula, the East Bay hills, and the Santa Cruz Mountains. Highpoints within the western half of the Hawthorns Area typically provide the most unobstructed sweeping vistas, although other grassland knolls throughout the property also provide open views of the region. Several portions of the Hawthorns Area (listed below) are visible from public rights-of-way, nearby trails, and adjacent Town neighborhoods.

- The Alpine Road frontage is visible from public areas and private parcels along the length of Alpine Road. This viewshed typically extends along the length of Alpine Road towards the Hawthorns Area until intervening vegetation and topography obstruct views.
- Grassland hills within the southwestern portion of the Hawthorns Area are visible from residences within Portola Valley Ranch, including Saddleback Drive, Horseshoe Bend, Quail Court, Pomponio Court, Coyote Hill Court, and Franciscan Ridge.
- A flat grassland along Los Trancos Creek within the southeastern portion of the Hawthorns Area is visible from residences along Valley Oak Street. Some structures that comprise the Historic Complex are also visible from these properties.
- Sections of the northeastern portion of the Hawthorns Area are visible from a single property located on Firethorn Way.
- The eastern portion of the Hawthorns Area is generally blocked by vegetation; however, portions of the Historic Complex are visible from Los Trancos Road and Los Trancos Trail.

3.5.1 Alpine Road Scenic Corridor

The approximately 10-mile Alpine Scenic Corridor links urbanized areas of the San Francisco Peninsula east of Highway 280 to rural Portola Valley. The [Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan](#), adopted as a part of the Town's 2003 General Plan, guides the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty of this corridor.

Areas of Special Concern

The Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan establishes several areas of special concern that contribute to the natural quality of the scenic corridor. Of these areas of special concern, the Hawthorns Area is located within the immediate roadside, primary vista corridor, and secondary vista corridor, summarized below:

- **Immediate Roadside:** This is a band on either side of the roadway, generally 50 to 100 feet wide, which extends to trees, fences, banks, or other features that define the roadside area. This strip is of great importance to the scenic values of the corridor, where buildings, grading, clearing, planting, and access roads should be carefully regulated.
- **Primary Vista Corridor:** The lands in view beyond the roadside determine the character of the scenic corridor and are thus designated as the "Primary Vista Corridor." This corridor includes nearby ridges viewed from the road and the foreground, up to 1,000 feet, where long vistas extend up valleys beyond the corridor. The Scenic Corridor Plan does not prohibit building within this corridor, but construction and planting should be designed to be compatible with and retain the natural and rural appearance of the area.
- **Secondary Vista Corridor:** This includes hills in the middle distance and the land in views down open valleys, where all major projects should be carefully reviewed and stringently regulated to prevent any significant alterations of the natural scene.

The Scenic Corridor Plan includes a list of items of concern within the areas described above, with the added guidance that the degree of concern should be tempered based on the visual impact when viewed from areas along the road. Those items that appear relevant to the Area Plan are excerpted below.

- Points of access to Alpine Road should be limited to the maximum extent possible.
- Building setbacks along Alpine Road should be increased as necessary to reduce the feeling of encroachment on the road.
- Buildings and structures should be subservient to the natural landscape in design, materials, and color.
- Planting should be in keeping with the natural landscape, leaving native trees and open space grasslands where possible and using native plant materials or other drought resistant plants in keeping with the natural scene.
- Removal of trees or other native vegetation cover should be stringently controlled.

Special Setback Lines

Section 18.58.020(D) of the Town's Code of Ordinances (excerpted below) establishes 75-foot setbacks from the Alpine Road right-of-way from the town boundary at Ladera to Portola Road. Furthermore, all new residences and major additions are subject to review by the Town's Architectural and Site Control Commission. Such reviews require analysis with respect to the Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan. In any new developments with frontage on Alpine Road, care should be taken to preserve natural landforms and vegetation in close proximity to the road to protect the corridor.

Section 18.58.020 - Special setback lines—S (scenic). Special setback lines are established along streets to assure the provision of space for light, air, safety, circulation, and visual amenity, and to permit or require adjustment in the location of structures to observe unusual physical conditions.

Section 18.58.020D. Alpine Road—No structure shall be located closer than seventy-five feet to the right-of-way of Alpine Road in that section of Alpine Road lying between the northerly town limits and Portola Road.

3.6 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Operations and maintenance activities at the Hawthorns Area are contingent on several parameters, including the restrictions set by the conservation easement, the underlying geology, the potential presence of hazardous materials, the Town's land use and zoning policies, and the existing infrastructure.

3.6.1 Ground Movement

The Hawthorns Area is situated on relatively stable ground and the likelihood of ground movement is low. According to The Town's [Geologic](#) and [Ground Movement Potential Maps](#), the property is primarily characterized by level to moderately steep slopes underlain by greenstone and Whisky Hill Formation bedrock. Despite its stability, the property's thin soil mantle may undergo shallow land sliding, settlement, and soil creep. These minor ground movements are most likely to occur along the eastern and western boundaries of the property, where the geologic conditions are comparatively less stable. Near Los Trancos Creek, soils are comprised of unconsolidated granular material atop level ground and gentle slopes, which may be subject to liquefaction during strong earthquakes. Moreover, the western portion of the property is designated as an area with significant potential for downslope movement due to the unstable, unconsolidated, and thin constituent material atop gentle to moderately steep slopes. However, as no fault lines transect the Hawthorns Area, even these regions of comparatively less stable composite materials are unlikely to experience significant ground movement.

3.6.2 Hazardous Materials

The District conducted Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) to identify hazardous substances at the Hawthorns Area. The Phase I ESA compiled information from site research and field visits to identify conditions at the Hawthorns Area that may involve hazardous substances. The Phase II ESA entailed soil sampling and laboratory analysis to determine if hazardous contaminants at the Hawthorns Area occur at concentrations exceeding Environmental Screening Levels (ESLs), which are thresholds established by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board to protect human and environmental health.

The Phase I ESA identified two potentially hazardous property conditions:

1. Former agricultural use of the property, which is typically associated with the use of agricultural chemicals.
2. The presence of drums, solid waste, and other hazardous material containers observed within the Hawthorns Historic Complex.

Subsequent soil analysis conducted for the Phase II ESA determined that soils on the property do not contain hazardous agricultural residue, and that most of the Historic Complex does not contain hazardous debris. However, soils at two locations (the garage and the location of a former structure) contain elevated lead concentrations, which may pose a health risk to recreational users and construction workers if directly exposed to these soils.

In addition, the soil analysis also showed that locations within the garage and other areas used previously for car storage contain cobalt, lead, and nickel concentrations that exceed Construction Worker ESLs. Earthwork within these locations may pose a health risk to construction workers (Figures 3a-3b of the Phase II ESA).

The Phase II ESA recommended that either remediation or mitigation actions for the lead-impacted soils at the garage and former structure location occur prior to opening the Hawthorns Area to the public. Mitigation measures may include engineering controls to limit exposure to the impacted soil, such as encapsulating the soil or installing a barrier to prevent access to the impacted area. Remediation would likely include excavation and offsite disposal of the impacted soil in addition to confirmation sampling. The Phase II ESA also recommended that a Soil Management Plan be prepared should earthwork activities be conducted in areas impacted by elevated concentrations of cobalt, lead, and nickel.

3.6.3 Land Use and Zoning

Town General Plan Land Use Element

The [Land Use Element](#) of the Town's 2003 General Plan outlines specific guidelines for land occupancy and describes the location and distribution aspects of land uses, spatially delineated in the [Comprehensive Plan Map](#). There are four land use intensity categories for residential areas: low-medium, low, conservation residential and open residential. Portions of these residential areas are further classified as "residential open space preserves." The Hawthorns Area is classified as a *Residential Open Space Preserve* due to its visual properties and environmental constraints. Residential Open Space Preserves primarily serve as conduits for natural resource preservation but may also support recreational uses through public trails and pathways where appropriate. As such, land use at the Hawthorns Area must align with the following sections set forth by and excerpted verbatim from the Land Use Element:

- *2106a:* Portions of some of these residential areas are classified as "residential open space preserves." These preserves possess one or more of the following characteristics: slopes, canyons and ravines generally in excess of 30% in slope, unstable lands, lands of significant scenic value to the town, historic resources, riparian environments, and lands inaccessible without traversing potentially unstable lands. To the maximum extent possible, these preserves should be kept free of structures and left in a natural condition with respect to terrain and vegetation. New residential subdivisions should provide for the clustering of residences outside of residential open space preserves so that these areas are left undisturbed for visual enjoyment and limited local use. However, on lands also shown as open residential, residences might be appropriate, if clustering is not possible, if acceptable development standards for access, utilities and geologic stability can be met, and if scenic qualities and historic features are preserved. Low intensity recreation uses would be appropriate in residential open space preserves, and drainage and erosion control measures should be undertaken where necessary.
- *2106b:* The slope-intensity standards for the conservation residential and open residential categories recognize in part the overall problems of the development in areas with potential geologic instabilities. However, the intensity of development in individual developments should be further reduced as necessary to reflect specific geologic conditions encountered, to minimize significant visual impacts, to preserve scenic qualities and historic features, and to avoid high fire hazards and inadequate emergency access.
- *2109:* Superimposed upon the residential land use indicated on the comprehensive plan diagram is a tree symbol representing residential open space preserve. The residential open space preserve should be primarily a permanent open space but should in addition accommodate a variety of recreational uses well suited to the natural terrain and which preserve the continuity of native vegetation. Such uses include riding and hiking trails, informal play areas, scenic walks, picnic areas, and residences subject to suitable conditions (see foregoing standards). These areas can be either privately controlled by the local property owners or held by a public agency.
- *2138.4:* Individual sites should be landscaped attractively with native plants so as to integrate the entire development visually with its neighbors and the overall natural qualities of the planning area. Protecting residential areas from noise, unsightliness, odor and other nuisances should be accomplished through adequate landscape buffers that also enhance pedestrian access and through other appropriate design features.

Town Zoning Ordinance

Zoning within the Town is codified under [Title 18](#) of the Municipal Code and is visually synthesized in the Town's [Zoning Map](#). The Hawthorns Area is classified as Zoning District R-E/3.5A/SD-2/D-R under the Land Use Category "Community Park," described below:

- *R-E:* The "Residential Estate District" zone is intended to promote the establishment of a rural environment suitable for family living with parcels adequate to accommodate single family dwellings and accessory equestrian facilities. Parcel usage in the R-E district is subject to restrictions intended to preserve the Town's rural character, including limits placed on accessory uses; parcel area, open area, and bulk requirements; off-street parking requirements; provisions regulating nonconforming uses; required conditions; and special building setback lines. Furthermore, R-E districts are subject to net area reductions by the Town Planning Commission to reduce natural terrain and vegetation disturbances and ensure alignment with the General Plan.
- *3.5A:* This classification refers to the Hawthorns Area's categorization as a "Residential Density Combining District" associated with 3.5 acres. Limitations to areas with this classification include a maximum height of 34 feet, an 8,065 square feet maximum floor area, and a 15,566 square feet maximum for impervious surfaces.
- *SD-2:* This classification refers to the property's categorization as a "Slope Density Combining District" and determines acreage limitations for gross area per dwelling unit and required minimum parcel area.
- *D-R:* This distinction defines the Hawthorns Area as subject to "Design Review" regulations, which seek to preserve the existing natural quality of the area and provide for the adaptation of development to the natural scenery and specific site conditions; protect and enhance the visual character along designated major circulation corridors; and protect public and private property from excessive storm water runoff, soil erosion, earth movement, and fire hazard.

3.6.4 Infrastructure

In addition to the buildings associated with the Hawthorns Historic District, the Hawthorns Area contains infrastructure associated with previous and current land uses, including gates and fencing, a staff residence, utilities, and site security measures.

Gates and Fencing

The perimeter of the Hawthorns Area is fenced, with three primary gates for access— two along Los Trancos Road and one off Alpine Road. Additional interior fences and fence remnants (e.g., wood posts with barbed wire, board rails/slats, or metal stakes) are present throughout the property, primarily as vestiges of historic uses near the Historic Complex. These fences and fencing remnants vary in their condition, historical significance, impacts to wildlife, and implications for public safety. In 2022, the District enlisted Knapp Architects to conduct a site assessment of the fences, within the context of the site’s eligibility for listing as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places and prepare a memo describing general fence maintenance and site management principles for the District to follow in its ongoing management of the property.

Staff Residence

The District maintains a staff residence in the center of the Hawthorns Area, which is a building accessed via a paved driveway from Alpine Road. Built in 1952, this U-shaped California ranch residence sits on a small flat area at the end of the driveway and features a built-in garage, a front-facing balcony, and a low-pitched roof characteristic of western, pre-War California architecture. It is not historic in nature, nor is it associated with the Historic Complex.

Utilities

The staff residence located within the Hawthorns Area is served by electrical and water service, both of which are underground and parallel the driveway originating from Alpine Road. A septic system extends northeast of the residence, across the driveway.

The Hawthorns Historic Complex does not currently have permanent electric service, domestic water, storm drainage, sanitary sewer, or natural gas service. Water, gas, and electric meters and underground lines had been developed for a portion of the Historic Complex over the years, but as the site has been vacant for many years, these utilities have become outdated and are in disrepair. A historic, inactive water well is located near the Coachman’s quarters and pump house, although it is unclear when it was last used or where it connects. The Historic Complex has a septic system connected to the main house, garage, and cottage. There are sanitary waste lines that run south from the garage toward Los Trancos Creek and a septic tank located south of the garage. Other septic tanks may be present; however, none have been identified to date. Similarly, leach field locations have not been confirmed, but care will need to be taken to ensure leach fields are protected and avoided with further development. In addition, a sewer main runs through the site, south of the main house and garage, which may allow for sewer connections to buildings within the Historic Complex. There are several manhole covers present on the existing dirt roads and elsewhere in the Hawthorns Area, with a sewer line running parallel to Los Trancos Creek several feet out from its west bank. This sewer line is operated by the West Bay Sanitary District, which stipulates that all manholes must be kept clear at all times for emergency access.

Site Security

The buildings comprising the Historic Complex are locked, fenced, and boarded to prevent trespassing and vandalism. Standard signage denoting closed and hazardous areas, as well the year-round, on-site presence of a District Ranger at the staff residence, further augment site security.

4.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

This section identifies opportunities and constraints for the Hawthorns Area, which represent resource and land management priorities and key considerations that may have policy implications for the future use and management of the property. The topics described herein are a compilation of information gained through technical studies, coordination with District subject matter experts, and community engagement. The following opportunities and constraints have been organized by topic. Some features are addressed under multiple headings. For example, opportunities and constraints related to Los Trancos Creek are identified under natural resources, public access, and aesthetics. Each subsection begins with a brief overview of the opportunities and constraints for that topic area, followed by a summary table and a list of relevant public feedback received from the District’s public engagement programming. Some comments are verbatim, while others represent an amalgam of frequently expressed sentiments. The District will incorporate feedback as appropriate within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project.

Table 9: Executive Summary of Opportunities and Constraints

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
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O	By establishing resource and land management guidelines for the Hawthorns Area, the District has the opportunity to further its goals in protecting and restoring native habitat, supporting ecological resilience, wildlife connectivity, and wildland fire risk reduction.
O	An internal trail system at the Hawthorns Area will provide opportunities for low-intensity recreational uses, multimodal access, and potential local or regional trail connections.
O	Public access at the Hawthorns Area will allow the District to highlight scenic viewpoints and design low-intensity recreational amenities, while sharing the property's rich natural, cultural, and historic resources with the public through interpretative and educational features.
O	The Hawthorns Area Plan presents an opportunity for the District to partner with tribes, peer agencies, local municipalities, non-profits, and other entities to fulfill the property's vision and goals.
O	By developing maintenance and operation guidelines, the Hawthorns Area Plan can support the long-term stewardship of the property and meet public safety objectives in alignment with the District's Good Neighbor Policy.
O/C	The Hawthorns Area Plan presents opportunities for collaboration and support from stakeholders, including adjacent neighbors, local businesses, recreational interest groups, schools, and the broader Town of Portola Valley community. Concurrently, stakeholder concerns present considerations in how best to incorporate public access.
C	The conservation easement on the property limits the range of uses and management activities the District can consider for the Hawthorns Area.
C	The Hawthorns Area's limited size, steep topography, and sensitive ecological resources constrain the recreational amenities the District can develop.
C	The property's cultural and historical resources require careful management to ensure their long-term preservation, including limitations to public access.
C	Public access at the Hawthorns Area must take into consideration viewsheds in the region, including the Alpine Scenic Corridor.

4.1 NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal: Protect and restore native habitat and manage for ecological resiliency of aquatic and terrestrial habitat, wildlife connectivity, and other natural resources.

4.1.1 Plants

As discussed in Section 3.1.1, the Hawthorns Area contains three primary habitat types: Valley and Foothill Grassland, Cismontane Woodland, and Riparian Forest, which are known to support special-status plants in the region. Although no special-status plants have been observed at the Hawthorns Area, the Cismontane Woodland within the property contains one sensitive natural community, a cover of California bay trees, and a rare and threatened plant community, Valley Oak Woodland. Future management activities and public access infrastructure at the Hawthorns Area should consider the location and distribution of these sensitive and threatened natural communities.

Grasslands at the Hawthorns Area are typically comprised of introduced species of grasses and there is opportunity to manage the area to promote more native species composition. Sections of the property that were mowed as part of the District's fire management activities resulted in higher coverage of native species due to reduced competition from non-native species, suggesting that continued active management would benefit the native species. However, opening the Hawthorns Area to public access would increase the risk of introduction of invasive species by way of visitors unknowingly bringing in non-native seeds on shoes, vehicles, or clothing.

Woodlands at the Hawthorns Area have a concentration of state listed sensitive trees as well as those that have been affected by diseases such as sudden oak death. Management to prevent the spread of this pathogen will be necessary to reduce loss of native oak woodland habitat. The olive grove and hawthorn trees that were historically introduced to the area are non-native and have colonized parts of the landscape in which they were not originally planted. The olive grove is part of the Historic Complex and provides a food source for species such as the dusky footed woodrat, but the trees are considered a non-native species.

Table 10: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Plants

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Active grassland restoration and management would provide a suite of ecological benefits, including promotion of native species, wildland fire risk reduction, wildlife habitat, and carbon sequestration.
O	The plant communities at the Hawthorns Area provide a range of habitat for a variety of native wildlife, including special status species.
C	Invasive species, such as French broom and yellow star-thistle, threaten native plant communities and increase fire risks.
C	Introduced species, such as the olive trees on the property, encroach on native tree species.
C	Opening the Hawthorns Area to public access increases the risk of introducing invasive species and plant pathogens by way of people unknowingly bringing in non-native seeds on shoes, vehicles, or clothing.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Plants

- Restore, protect, and actively manage native grasslands, including promotion of native species and protection from erosion.
- Grassland and woodland landscapes could provide opportunities for carbon sequestration.
- Grassland and woodland landscapes provide opportunities for wildlife habitat.
- The prevalence of invasive species, such as French broom and yellow star-thistle, presents a fire hazard.
- Introduced species, such as the olive trees on the property, encroach on native tree species. If the orchard is brought back into production, the fruit will need to be harvested to stop seeds from spreading via birds.
- The olive orchard is a noteworthy property feature and a draw for visitors.
- The olive orchard requires maintenance and management to reduce fallen branches and potential fire hazards.
- Planting oak trees can block views.
- Prevent intrusion of coyote brush.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.1.2 Wildlife

As discussed in Section 3.1.3, the Hawthorns Area supports a variety of native and special-status wildlife, including the Townsend's big eared bat, dusky-footed woodrat, and steelhead trout. Townsend's big eared bat, a California Species of Special Concern, has been detected in the upper barn, Hawthorns House, cottage, garage, and lower barn. It is presumed that these individuals were solitary males, as no maternity colonies were identified in any of the buildings. However, given the sparsely developed conditions in the surrounding area, it is possible that a Townsend's big-eared bat maternity colony is present nearby, although none have been documented. Moreover, due to the presence of moderately dense woodland, understory cover and structure and the presence of a variety of food plants across the site, the Hawthorns Area supports a large woodrat population, with middens found in nearly every wooded area. Although most of the Hawthorns Area comprises highly suitable habitat for the San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, wooded areas along the northwestern and eastern portions of the site support lower quality habitat primarily due to the sparse understory vegetation and structure. Additionally, Los Trancos Creek is designated critical habitat for steelhead trout. As increased human presence may negatively impact wildlife, care must be taken to minimize harm and ensure wildlife habitat is protected.

Existing fencing at the Hawthorns Area may restrict wildlife movement, but the District plans to include wildlife friendly fencing design principles into the planning process to allow for wildlife passage and improved habitat connectivity. In addition, site design at the Hawthorns Area is an opportunity to minimize habitat fragmentation by keeping habitat areas continuous and siting infrastructure such as trails and parking in such a way that habitat is not interrupted.

Table 11: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Wildlife

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	The Hawthorns Area supports a variety of native and special-status wildlife, including the Townsend's big eared bat, dusky-footed woodrat, and steelhead trout.
O	The Hawthorns Area provides habitat connectivity and supports wildlife passage throughout the region, particularly through wildlife friendly fence designs.

C	Increased human presence from public access may negatively impact wildlife.
C	Historic fences may constraint wildlife movement.
C	San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests may constrain possible locations for public access trails, particularly in the Alpine Road Trail corridor.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Wildlife

- Maintain some portions of the property for wildlife use only; restrict recreational access in these areas.
- There is an opportunity for the Hawthorns Area to serve as a wildlife corridor.
- Less fencing would facilitate wildlife movement for mountain lion, deer, coyotes, and badgers.
- Replacing existing barbed wire fencing with something more wildlife friendly (e.g., split-rail, incontinuous fencing with gaps, etc.) would ensure wildlife passage and public safety/security, while maintaining alignment with the Town aesthetic standards for the scenic corridor.
- Look at current wildlife corridors and determine if fencing is blocking them and what can be done to facilitate access for wildlife.
- Consider providing wildlife crossings.
- Fencing may impede wildlife movement and connectivity.
- Potential for wildlife to become roadkill when crossing Alpine and Los Trancos Roads. Deer already get hit frequently near Echo Lane.
- Recently completed studies for the nearby Stanford Wedge project mentions San Francisco Garter Snake, which could be a public access constraint if present at the Hawthorns Area.
- The wild turkey population is already high and may outcompete native species.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.1.3 Aquatic Resources

Los Trancos Creek provides an important ecological function as a riparian corridor and critical habitat for steelhead trout. District staff have determined that the creek within the Hawthorns Area is in good condition without apparent immediate need for restoration, and the District does not have planned restoration projects for this segment. Portions of Los Trancos Creek within the Hawthorns Area could be enhanced in the future to improve its habitat potential, visual character, and educational and interpretive value while still performing its required hydrologic function. Future riparian habitat improvements could include debris cleanup in upland areas, fence removal and invasive plant species management, and the riparian zone could be expanded in some areas along the west bank.

Recreational use near Los Trancos Creek could introduce disturbances such as trash, erosion, and sedimentation. Furthermore, Los Trancos Creek is a tributary to San Francisquito Creek, which is a designated 303(d) impaired waterbody due to trash and sedimentation. Even if trails or parking do not lead directly to Los Trancos Creek, the creek channel would be an attractive feature if visible from public trails or parking areas. Inviting public access – either authorized or unauthorized – near Los Trancos Creek could interfere with recovery goals for San Francisquito Creek. Creating public parking area near Los Trancos Creek could require new stormwater and drainage control infrastructure to minimize impacts to riparian resources. This infrastructure may be cost-prohibitive and inconsistent with the District's mission to provide ecologically sensitive public access with minimal site disturbance.

Table 12: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Aquatic Resources

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Los Trancos Creek provides an important ecological function as a riparian corridor and critical habitat for steelhead trout.
O	Portions of Los Trancos Creek within the Hawthorns Area could be enhanced to improve its habitat potential, visual character, and educational and interpretive value while still performing its required hydrologic function.
O	The Hawthorns Area provides sufficient space for adequate setbacks and buffers to protect waterways and riparian resources.

C	Recreational use near Los Trancos Creek could introduce disturbances such as trash, erosion, and sedimentation.
C	Public access near Los Trancos Creek could interfere with recovery goals for San Francisquito Creek.
C	Siting public parking near Los Trancos Creek is to be avoided to maintain consistency with the District's mission of providing ecologically sensitive public access with minimal impacts to natural resources.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Aquatic Resources

- There is an opportunity to confirm that Los Trancos creek supports fish populations.
- Creek setbacks should be large to protect riparian areas.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.2 PUBLIC ACCESS

Goal: Open the Hawthorns Area to low-intensity public access, provide an internal trail system, and provide multimodal access to the property.

4.2.1 Parking Area and Driveway Access

The District will consider designated parking within the Hawthorns Area to facilitate public access and provide other amenities, including signboards, restrooms, and other low-intensity facilities to accommodate recreational uses and multimodal access. The District must consider many factors when evaluating the size and location for future parking, including sensitive ecologic and historic resources, anticipated visitor demand, potential for overflow parking on adjacent roads, multimodal accessibility, roadway circulation, traffic safety, the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor, the guidelines of the conservation easement, and surrounding land uses. Hilly terrain within the Hawthorns Area will also limit the suitability of parking locations because developing a flat parking surface within an open space context should not entail major landform alterations that disturb existing hydrology or topography and potentially result in aesthetic/visual impacts.

A future parking area at the Hawthorns Area will require a driveway connecting to adjacent roadways. The existing access points identified in **Figure 4** and described below could be evaluated as potential driveways to a future parking area within the Hawthorns Area. A new driveway may also be considered depending on the location of parking and the lines of sight available on adjacent roads.

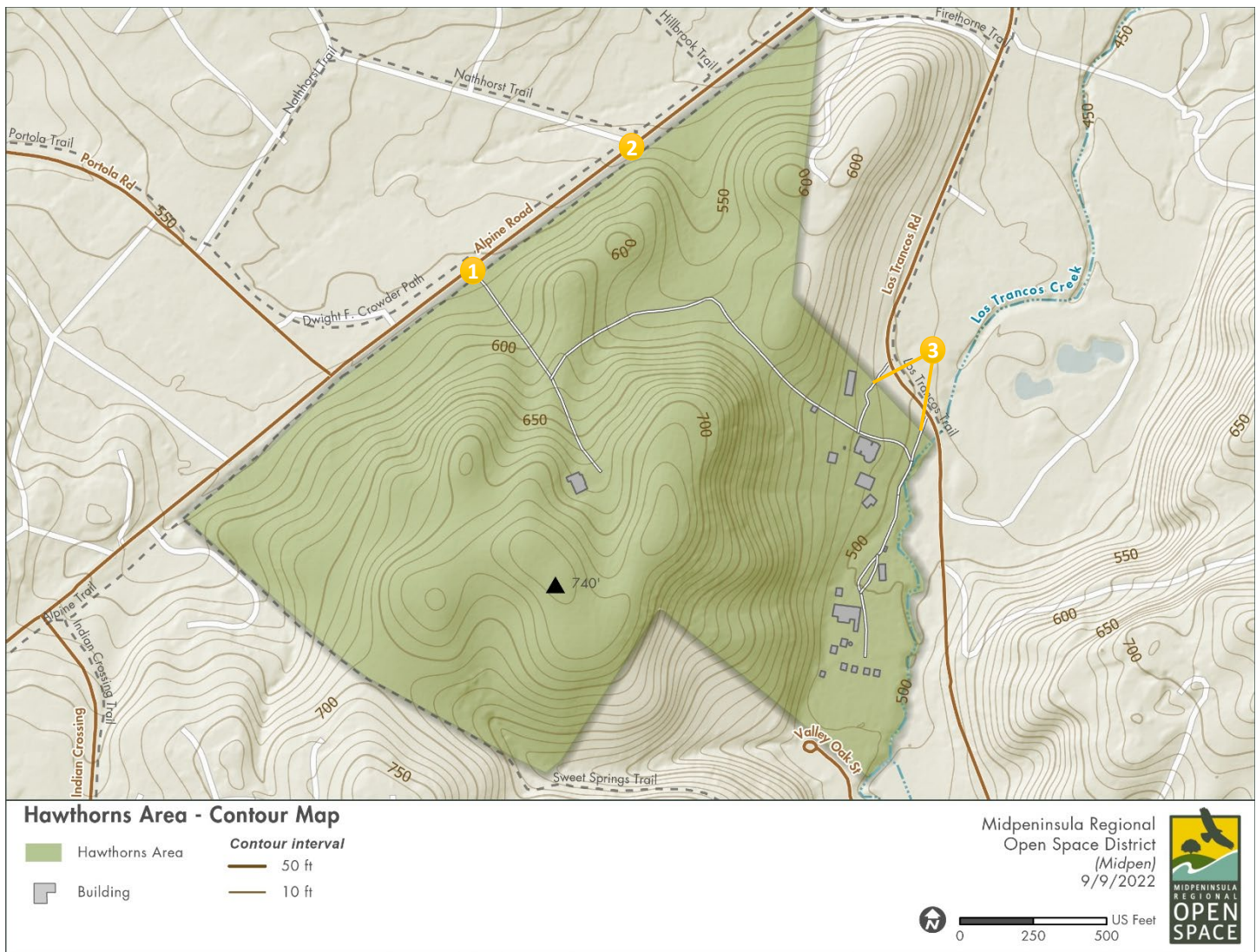


Figure 4: Map of Existing Access Points

1. 4411 Alpine Road Driveway

The paved driveway at 4411 Alpine Road currently provides access to the District residence located in the center of the property and could provide driveway access to future parking. This existing driveway intersects perpendicularly with a straight segment of Alpine Road and crosses Alpine Trail, which could result in potential conflicts between trail users and visitors accessing the driveway. This potential conflict could be reduced by realigning Alpine Trail further into the Preserve. The line of sight and impacts to the Town's traffic corridor are being evaluated as part of the District's transportation study.

2. Alpine Road Historic Driveway Entrance

The original entrance road to the Hawthorns property entered from Alpine Road about 500 yards east of the current driveway to the residence at 4411 Alpine Road. Although this original driveway is overgrown with vegetation and its roadbed is no longer extant, it represents an existing access point into a relatively flat portion of the Hawthorns Area. This entrance would be subject to the same constraints described above for the 4411 Alpine Road driveway.

3. Los Trancos Driveways

Two existing driveways extend into the Hawthorns Area from Los Trancos Road, a two-lane 35 mph roadway located along the eastern boundary of the property. This segment of Los Trancos Road is located at the center of an 'S' curve in the roadway. Accordingly, both driveways appear to have limited lines of sight, which may represent a safety concern for access to the Hawthorns Area and are undergoing further evaluation.

Moreover, parking infrastructure near Los Trancos Creek could result in environmental degradation, such as increased stormwater runoff and pollutants, and could require new infrastructure to minimize impacts to riparian resources. However, extensive

stormwater and drainage control infrastructure would be inconsistent with the District's mission to provide ecologically sensitive public access with minimal site disturbance. Furthermore, large improvements (grading, retention walls, extended driveway, etc.) would also be inconsistent with the conservation easement maintained by POST, which directs preservation of the Hawthorns Area's natural, scenic, historic, and open space conservation values.

Additionally, both driveways provide direct access to the Historic Complex, which introduces a number of complexities. At this time, the future of the Historic Complex has yet to be determined. In their current state, the structures comprising the Historic Complex are in poor condition, presenting potential safety and aesthetic concerns. Public access to this portion of the property would require increased scope, schedule, budget, permitting, stakeholder and public engagement, as well as peer agency coordination to perform the necessary site improvements and avoid potential impacts to historic and pre-historic resources.

The District may seek to identify potential partners to use and maintain the Historic Complex. A shared driveway to a public parking area and private use at the Historic Complex would require greater oversight and coordination in the management of public access and create shared maintenance and repair responsibilities.

Table 13: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Parking Areas and Driveways

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	The District has the opportunity to provide on-site parking in certain locations, which warrant further study to assess feasibility for public access.
O	Pending further study, a driveway originating at Alpine Road may provide access to the Hawthorns Area.
O/C	The property's existing driveways present an opportunity to achieve the project's public access goals efficiently and cost-effectively without increasing the footprint of disturbed areas. However, line of sight constraints may render some access points infeasible.
C	Topography limits the potential locations and size of future on-site parking.
C	Sensitive resources constrain the possible locations for future on-site parking.
C	Line of sight constraints for Los Trancos Road inhibit public access.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Parking Areas and Driveway Access

The District received a high volume of public comments on the topic of parking. Many commenters proposed a large parking area to accommodate all visitors on-site and prevent overflow into neighborhoods, while some commenters requested limited parking to encourage visitation to Hawthorns Area via regional trails.

- Provide ample parking onsite to prevent overflow into neighborhoods.
- Develop multiple parking sites to increase availability.
- Limit parking on-site to keep overall usage low.
- Build parking area at existing flat area near eastern side of the Preserve at Los Trancos Road.
- Site parking closer to top of the hill or within interior of Preserve where it would be less visible from roadways.
- Provide separate entrances and exits to control the flow of traffic and fire safety/emergency access.
- Use lessons learned from Windy Hill and Arastradero parking areas.
- Limit overcrowding with a permit parking system, a reservation system, and/or an ADA only parking area.
- Driveway access from Alpine Road would be central to Town.
- Ensure safety of parking lots for kids – lines of sight, turn lanes, etc.
- Consider a natural surface driveway and parking lot instead of asphalt.
- Parking locations are limited by steep slopes.
- There is concern over the potential unavailability of parking with increased population in the area, especially on the weekends.
- There is concern over overflow of parking into neighborhoods, roadways, and businesses, specifically:
 - Portola Valley Ranch
 - Valley Oak Street
 - Alpine Road
 - Portola Road
 - Oak Forest Court

- Willowbrook Drive
- Robert's Market and the surrounding commercial complex
- Corte Madera School
- Parking on roads would cause safety issues for cyclists due to encroachment into bike lanes.
- There is concern that opening the Hawthorns Area will result in overflow parking for Windy Hill.
- Consider providing overflow lots for the Hawthorns Area. Coordinate with Corte Madera School and other entities for potential overflow parking areas, particularly at weekends.
- There is concern about people parking at the end of the road and trail junctions to use trails.
- Parking lots would invite in more people – trails should be more of a throughway.
- Creating an internal loop trail with no connection to the Town's trail system would potentially lower demand for this preserve.
- Road cyclists may use the lot to park and ride for a whole day.
- Streets in Portola Valley Ranch are narrow, and neighbors are concerned that their driveways will be blocked.
- There is concern about car density and safety within any on-site parking area.
- Using Alpine Road driveway could cause safety issues for kids using Alpine Trail.
- Los Trancos Road is windy with blind curves and people typically exceed the speed limit, posing safety concerns for recreational users.
- Parking on Los Trancos Road (near the Historic Complex) could negatively affect homes in the surrounding area, specifically due to increases in noise and visual impacts.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.2.2 Recreational Uses

The District's mission emphasizes low-intensity recreational uses to avoid concentration of use, significant alteration of the land, and natural resource impacts. The level of access for low-intensity public recreational use of District land is evaluated against the following basic criteria:

- Protection of natural resources;
- Preservation of the opportunity for tranquil nature study and observation;
- Avoidance of significant visitor and trail user conflicts;
- Availability of Board and staff time, funding, and/or other means, to plan for and manage the use.

Access for hiking is typically unrestricted on District trails and lands. Public comments also suggested other opportunities for enjoyment at the Hawthorns Area, including nature photography, picnicking, meditation, and educational components. The District will consider other recreational uses of the Hawthorns Area including equestrians, dogs on-leash, and bicycles, as described below. Factors to consider include use conflicts, consistency with adjacent local trail and property uses, and maintenance feasibility.

Equestrians

There is high public interest in equestrian accessibility in the Hawthorns Area and most local trails are currently accessible to equestrians. The provision of equestrian amenities such as hitching posts and water troughs would make trails more accessible and enjoyable for equestrians. Due to size limitations that the District is likely to encounter for parking, providing equestrian parking may be very difficult to accommodate at the Hawthorns Area. Providing equestrian friendly parking requires much more planning than typical car parking lots based on the amount of space needed for the trailers (equaling the width of five or six regular car spaces) and turnaround considerations. By including equestrian trail uses, considerations will be needed for overhead clearance, trail width, trail grade, trail surfacing, and line of sight.

Table 14: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Equestrian Use

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Equestrian access to the Hawthorns Area may enhance the regional equestrian trail network.
O	Equestrian amenities, such as hitching posts and water troughs, would make trails more accessible and enjoyable for equestrians.

C	Equestrian parking may be very difficult to accommodate at the Hawthorns Area due to size and site constraints and would require additional planning, potentially impacting project schedule, scope, and budget.
C	By including equestrian trail uses, considerations will be needed for overhead clearance, trail width, trail grade, trail surfacing, and line of sight.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Equestrian Use

Equestrian stakeholder representatives discussed their priority desires for the Hawthorns Area in the following order of interest:

- Equestrian access and amenities, such as hitching posts, at the Hawthorns Area would be ideal for regional equestrian trail users.
- Providing supportive amenities like hitching posts.
- Equestrian parking would be welcome.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

Additional public input pertaining to equestrian use included the following:

- Consider the height of overstory on trails to improve access.
- Consider sight lines – do not want hedges, fence lines, or other things blocking vision and prefer gradual bends to the trail, so people and horses can see well into the distance and avoid potential user conflicts, especially with cyclists.
- Provide loop trails through the property.
- Provide safe fencing (no barbed wire) placed three or more feet from the trail.
- Keep speeds low for all users so that everyone can enjoy the property.
- Utilize horses for grazing in organized community grazing days.
- Expose hikers and other non-horse people to large animals.
- Barbed wire on some existing trails (Sweet Springs Trail) presents a hazard to horses.
- Safety conflicts between equestrians and cyclists could be problematic.
- Impacts of equine presence and waste on the natural environment must be considered.
- Consider not allowing equestrians at the Hawthorns Area, as it is small and there are other local and regional locations for equestrian use.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

Dogs

Dogs are allowed on specific trails within District lands and are subject to the District's dog policies.¹⁵ These policies include requiring leashes, limits on number of dogs per person, and restriction of dogs in prohibited areas. If dogs are allowed into the Hawthorns Area, all rules listed in the regulations and ordinances would apply. Many trails adjacent to the Hawthorns Area, including Alpine Trail and Los Trancos Trail, as well as designated trails in Windy Hill Open Space Preserve allow dogs on-leash, but trails within the Portola Valley Ranch community do not allow dogs on-leash.

Table 15: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Dog Use

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Dog access at the Hawthorns Area would align with permissible uses near and adjacent to the Hawthorns Area, providing local and regional recreational opportunities for dog owners.
C	Dog access requires additional patrol/enforcement to ensure compliance with regulations, including on-leash mandates and proper dog waste disposal.
C	Dog access necessitates additional trail signage and infrastructure, potentially impacting visual resources.

¹⁵ The District Dog Policy is outlined in section 701.1 of District Regulations and Ordinances.

C	Dog access may conflict with other trail uses, such as equestrian access.
C	Dog access may have a negative impact on wildlife.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Dog Use

- There is high public interest for on-leash dog walking.
- Provide clear on-trail signage for designated trails that allow dogs.
- Dogs are not allowed on some neighborhood trails or nearby preserves. Allowing dogs at the Hawthorns Area could result in improper use elsewhere.
- Impacts of dog presence and waste on the natural environment could be detrimental. Provide dog waste containers.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

Bicycles

Bicycling is a very popular activity in the vicinity of the Hawthorns Area, particularly along Alpine and Portola Roads. Bicycles are allowed in several regional parks and open spaces, including Windy Hill Preserve. However, some local trails that could serve as regional and local connections, such as Sweet Springs and Los Trancos Trails, do not allow bikes. Although the District does not typically allow bicycles on small preserves, there is public interest in opening all or portions of the Hawthorns Area to bicycles.

Table 16: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Bicycle Use

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Bicycle use at the Hawthorns Area presents an opportunity to enhance the network of local and regional bicycle trails, augmenting recreational opportunities in the area.
O	Bicycle infrastructure, including racks, can encourage multimodal access throughout the region.
C	Bicycle access at the Hawthorns Area may result in conflicts between trail users.
C	Bicycle access at the Hawthorns Area may result in improper bicycle usage on adjacent trails where bicycles are not permitted, potentially increasing trail conflicts regionally and/or necessitating additional patrol and enforcement.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Bicycle Use

- Provide opportunities for regional trail routes for bicyclists.
- Provide mountain bicycle access within the Hawthorns Area.
- Cycling to and through the Preserve is a good form of multimodal access.
- Expand Alpine Trail for additional bicycle use and safety.
- Consider safe, kid-friendly bicycle routes, such as allowing bicycle use for kids on Alpine Trail during school hours even if trails in the whole Preserve are not open to bicycles.
- Some trails in the Portola Valley Ranch are closed to bicycles and trail designations in the Hawthorns area would need to be consistent with these uses.
- Conflicts between equestrians and bicyclists may arise. Equestrians cite safety concerns and cyclists cite historical disputes with equestrians not wanting bikes on trails.
- Consider providing a flow trail, jump trail, and/or a pump track for bicyclists.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.2.3 Internal Trail System

The District intends to provide an internal trail system within the Hawthorns Area to facilitate low-intensity, ecologically-sensitive recreational uses. This may include a loop trail system contained within the Preserve, one or more designated entrance location(s), a

driveway for automobile access, on-site parking, sited trailheads, and possible interconnections with adjacent trails (refer to Section 4.3).

The design and location of trails within the Hawthorns Area will depend on a number of factors. The Hawthorns Area is characterized by steep and hilly terrain, which makes it topographically complex. The presence of sensitive resources, such as riparian areas and ecosystems that support special-status species, will determine constraints into the siting of trails. Because the Hawthorns Area is centrally located within the Town, the District must consider visibility of and from nearby residences and roadways in the design and location of the trails to preserve privacy and limit impacts to viewsheds. Moreover, visitation at the Hawthorns Area may vary based on the trails provided, as an internal loop system may not attract as many users as a trail network integrated with local and regional trails. The District will evaluate each of the described factors in the design and siting process.

Easy Access Trails

New public access projects provide opportunities to accommodate users at different ability or accessibility levels, including people who use wheelchairs, strollers, walkers, and anyone desiring a less strenuous open space experience. The District may consider designating a future trail within the Hawthorns Area as an Easy Access Trail, which provides specific design standards regarding trail width, grade, cross-slopes and surface.

Table 17: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Internal Trails

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Public access at the Hawthorns Area presents an opportunity to provide a network of recreational trails for visitors, supporting the District's mission and fulfilling the vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area.
O	If feasible given the topography and other site constraints, new trails at the Hawthorns Area may provide opportunities to accommodate users of all abilities and accessibility levels through Easy Access Trails.
O/C	The relocation of the Alpine Trail presents an opportunity to provide safer passage throughout the Town, particularly for school children. At the same time, the relocation of the Alpine Trail may be constrained by the physical characteristics of the site.
C	The network of internal trails will be limited in scope, length, grade, and placement due to the site's size and topographic constraints.
C	The network of internal trails may be limited in scope, length, grade, and placement so as not to interfere with the District's ecological, historic, and cultural resource management goals.
C	Trail siting may be constrained by additional factors, including feasible access points to the site, possible on-site parking, adjacent trail connections, and traffic/congestion considerations.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Internal Trails

- Hiking opportunities are highly desired at the Hawthorns Area.
- Utilize switchbacks to gradually overcome hilly terrain.
- Provide Preserve amenities, including restrooms, picnic tables, and benches.
- Provide benches for people to stop and relax.
- Ensure relatively flat and stable trail surfaces where possible.
- Develop a trail experience that could accommodate users with limited mobility.
- Site trails on the periphery of the Preserve to avoid impacts to grasslands.
- Mountain bikes can create user conflicts, particularly between equestrians, hikers, bird watchers, and dog walkers.
- Picnic tables could encourage more time spent at the property, which could exacerbate parking challenges.
- The small size of the Preserve limits trail length.
- Connect to the Town's trail system.
- Do not connect to the Town's trail system.
- Provide multi-use trails, especially along and near Alpine Road.
- Provide bicycle only trails.
- Trail building destroys wildlife habitat and contributes to erosion. Please create sustainable trails.
- Do not build any new trails.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.2.4 Multimodal Access

The District aims to reduce dependence on private vehicles to expand accessibility, limit parking congestion, and introduce greener modes of transit. Because of the central location of the Hawthorns Area and adjacency of existing trail systems, it is an ideal location for many residents to visit on foot, on bike, or on horseback. Other potential modes of transit could include shuttles or ride sharing/ride hailing services. The Town is currently serviced by recently reduced public transit service on weekdays only (school oriented [SamTrans Route 87](#)), so any kind of shuttle program would need to be external and likely involve coordination with the Town. An additional possible constraint of encouraging multimodal access could be unauthorized uses on local trails, such as bicycles on non-bike designated trails in an attempt to reach the Preserve.

Table 18: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Multimodal Access

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Public access at the Hawthorns Area may support local and regional multimodal access efforts.
C	Current multimodal access is limited and would require additional infrastructure and amenities, as well as a concerted coordination effort between the District and the Town.
C	Multimodal access would require ongoing enforcement and education to ensure compliance with trail use rules, especially in areas where bikes are not allowed.
C	Due to its limited size, the Hawthorns Area alone may not encourage a large modal shift in regional transportation. However, the Hawthorns Area may be included in a broader multimodal access effort for the region.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Multimodal Access

- Allow walking access to the Hawthorns Area. Many walking paths are connected in the Town, which would allow residents to visit without driving.
- Providing a shuttle service would allow for access without taxing town infrastructure.
- Provide bike racks/parking at trailheads and parking areas.
- Limited transit service is availability in the Town, which may complicate multimodal access opportunities.
- There are concerns about increased recreational traffic near the Hawthorns Area.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.2.5 Interpretation, Environmental Education, and Public Engagement

Goal: Interpret the rich natural, cultural, and historic features and pursue partnerships to manage the property's natural and cultural history.

The Hawthorns Area presents an opportunity to provide interpretive elements, including docent-led tours, interpretive panels, and signage, pertaining to the history and natural features of the site. The public and stakeholders have voiced support for interpretive elements and education at the Hawthorns Area.

Table 19: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Interpretation, Environmental Education, and Public Engagement

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Interpretation, environmental education, docent programming, and public engagement provide opportunities to inform and connect the public to the property's historic and cultural significance.
O	Interpretative elements present opportunities for partnerships between the District, the Town, tribes, and others.
C	Interpretive elements may increase visitation and traffic at the site.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Interpretation, Environmental Education, and Public Engagement

- Provide youth programming, such as nature, science, history education, demonstrative agriculture, 4-H, and land-based skill building activities.
- Consider partnerships to provide interpretation and environmental education, such as with the University of California Cooperative Extension program or the County of San Mateo.
- Create an interpretive nature center.
- The Hawthorns Area may enhance the Town's cultural offerings.
- Engage with Town committees including Nature and Science Committee, Conservation Committee, and Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Traffic Safety Committee.
- Allow docent-led hikes and tours of the property before the official opening to allow more public access.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to help manage the olive grove.
- Increased crowding and traffic may occur if educational and/or docent programming becomes too extensive.
- There are concerns about the site becoming a similar level of attraction to other regional educational destinations.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.3 LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Goal: Connect to adjacent public trails and explore opportunities for trail connections to regional open space lands.

The Hawthorns Area may provide an important connection with the local trail network. New trails within the Hawthorns Area could bring visitors to and through the property, and a District/Town partnership to realign and widen Alpine Trail would increase the safety along this existing trail corridor. Through partnerships and acquisition opportunities, the Hawthorns Area may also support regional connections between nearby public lands including Pearson-Arastradero Preserve, Foothills Park, and Windy Hill Open Space Preserve.

Allowable uses for future trails in the Hawthorns Area should consider current uses on existing local trails (see **Table 20**) to minimize the potential for unauthorized use or the need for increased enforcement. In particular, additional usage of the Sweet Springs Trail could raise privacy, safety, trail maintenance, rule enforcement, and security concerns for Portola Valley Ranch residents.

Table 20: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Local and Regional Connectivity

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	The Hawthorns Area may connect to adjacent trails, enhancing the local trail network.
O	The potential widening and realignment of the Alpine Trail may reduce trail user conflicts and address safety concerns, particularly for school children.
C	The network of private land surrounding the Hawthorns Area inhibits regional trail connectivity, as access rights would need to be acquired to close existing gaps.
C	Additional trails at the Hawthorns Area could raise privacy, safety, trail maintenance, rule enforcement, and security concerns for adjacent neighbors.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Local and Regional Connectivity

- There is support for trails located on the periphery of the Hawthorns Area to connect with other Town trails and integrate with the Portola Valley Trail Plan.
- There is concern that regional connectivity could also drive up visitation whereas a closed loop system within the Preserve might not.
- Realign portions of Alpine Trail adjacent to the Hawthorns Area to improve safety and trail experience.
- Walk-in access from Alpine Road would benefit the community.
- Emphasize local connections over regional destinations.
- Evaluate connections with adjacent trails, including Sweet Springs Trail, Los Trancos Trail, Alpine Trail, and Valley Oak Trail.
- Provide safe walking and running trail on eastern side of the property for safety of walkers and runners that currently must use Los Trancos Road.
- Support regional trail connections to Windy Hill, Pearson-Arastradero Preserve, Foothills Park, and Coal Mine Ridge.

- Connect to local origins and destinations like Woodside Priory, Corte Madera School, the Sequoias Retirement Community.
- Obtain easements on private roads and land to provide new regional trail connections.
- Provide clear signage to describe uses allowable on connected trails (i.e., no dogs, no bikes, etc.)
- Connections between the Hawthorns Area and existing trails could encourage unauthorized parking on nearby roads.
- Incompatible uses on adjacent trails may create enforcement issues.
- There are concerns about increased recreational traffic on existing adjacent trails, which could create maintenance issues and user conflicts.
- Alpine Road is currently used for school access for kids and there are concerns about impeding access.
- The Hawthorns Area is small and may have limited recreational carrying capacity.
- Increased automobile or recreational traffic on Los Trancos Road or Los Trancos Trail could increase safety hazards.
- Some members in the Portola Valley Ranch community are opposed to additional use of Sweet Springs Trail and Deer Path, as they are narrow and wind among private homes and pose safety and privacy concerns.
- Sweet Springs Trail is known to be very steep as it follows the fence line bordering the Hawthorns Area.
- The Hawthorns Area presents opportunities to extend trails from the Portola Valley Ranch neighborhood, creating regional trails that would allow public access across the Hawthorns Area into the Town.
- The Historic Complex could inhibit connection through Los Trancos Creek Trail.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.4 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Goal: Interpret the rich natural, cultural, and historic features and pursue partnerships to manage the property's natural and cultural history.

4.4.1 Hawthorns Historic District

The entire 79-acre Hawthorns Area is eligible for listing as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and is listed in the Town's General Plan Historic Element. Many features within the Hawthorns Area contribute to the property's historic significance, including the buildings centralized in the Historic Complex, the olive grove, and other built and landscape elements identified in **Table 8: Features at the Hawthorns Area**. Physical changes to the Hawthorns Area would be subject to local, state, and federal policies that regulate activities within designated historic areas.

The Hawthorns Area has a rich history and could facilitate interpretive experiences that provide the public with opportunities to enjoy the Hawthorns Area's natural beauty and discover stories about successive eras of California history. Opportunities for interpretation, environmental education, and public engagement at the Hawthorns Area include the following:

- Trailhead Orientation & Self-Guided Interpretation: trailhead signage and self-guided interpretation could inform visitors of the property's natural and cultural history.
- Collaboration with local schools: The Hawthorns Area is located within proximity to several schools and could provide an opportunity for hands-on learning.
- Collaboration with the Town: The Hawthorns Area is an important resource to Town residents. Partnership with Town officials and community groups could yield environmental education and public engagement opportunities at the Hawthorns Area.

4.4.2 Hawthorns Historic Complex

Structures within the Hawthorns Historic Complex are in various states of disrepair that currently prevents safe public access. The District is conducting a separate Hawthorns Historic Complex Structural Assessment Project to identify a range of feasible options for stabilization, repair, reuse and/or removal of structures within the Hawthorns Historic Complex as well as cost estimates that would be presented to the District's Board of Directors for review.

Long-Term Uses and Disposition of the Hawthorns Historic Complex Structures

Any future plans regarding the availability or restriction of public access within the Historic Complex will be evaluated as part of a future public access planning process, and public access to the Hawthorns Historic Complex will be dependent on the evaluation and disposition of the structures and long-term plans for the Historic Complex.

4.4.3 Historic and Cultural Resources

The Hawthorns Area contains sensitive Native American resources, generally located along the Los Trancos Creek corridor. Public access to the Hawthorns Area could increase risk of degradation or damage to these resources. Interpretive elements pertaining to Native American use of the site and the region provide an opportunity to both protect these resources and educate the public about the original inhabitants of the site. The District will seek partnerships and consultation with tribal representatives when pursuing these opportunities.

Table 21: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Historic and Cultural Resources

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Interpretive and educational elements pertaining to historic and cultural use of the site and the region provide an opportunity to protect these resources and educate the public about the original inhabitants of the area.
O	The District has the opportunity to seek partnerships and consultation with tribal representatives.
C	Public access to the Hawthorns Area could increase risk of degradation, damage, and/or removal of sensitive cultural resources.
C	Structures within the Hawthorns Historic Complex are in various states of disrepair and currently prevent safe public access.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Historic and Cultural Resources

- Allow public access to the Historic Complex.
- Utilize the Hawthorns House in some capacity, as it has high architectural and historic value. Suggestions include a residence, worker housing, museum, educational facility, interpretive center, event venue, meeting center, hostel, or community equestrian center.
- Include interpretive elements, such as murals, docent-led tours, youth programming, and historical exhibits.
- Leverage community fundraising and involvement for preservation and restoration of structures.
- Preserve the rural nature of the Town.
- Conduct demonstrative agriculture in the olive orchard.
- Involve Native American community members in planning for use of the Hawthorns Area.
- The Historic Complex is in poor condition and the buildings detract from the desired aesthetic.
- Restoration and reuse of the Historic Complex will incur expenses that should be allocated to protect more open space.
- Olive trees are not native to California and may be a fire hazard. Focus instead on native species.
- Buildings could attract unauthorized use and vandalism.
- The Historic Complex poses a fire hazard, and the buildings should be removed for public safety.
- Consider soliciting investor interests to restore the Hawthorns House.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.5 AESTHETICS

Goal: Highlight scenic viewpoints and design recreational amenities while protecting scenic viewsheds.

The Hawthorns Area offers panoramic views, scenic landscapes, and historic features that could be featured destinations for recreationalists and visitors. In particular, grassland hilltops, the olive grove, the Historic Complex, and the Los Trancos Creek channel contribute to the Preserve's unique scenic character and convey the property's rich history.

There are a number of visual characteristics in the property vicinity that detract from scenic quality and character. The proximity of existing development and roadways surrounding the Hawthorns Area interrupts otherwise expansive views of the Santa Cruz mountains and foothills. Viewpoints from the Hawthorns Area may have visibility of homes and yards of private properties adjacent to the property, which could create the potential for privacy concerns for existing homeowners. Conversely, recreational infrastructure within the Hawthorns Area, such as trails on grasslands and parking areas, could potentially be visible from nearby neighborhoods and could bring recreationalists and visitors into private viewsheds.

The Hawthorns Area is located within Alpine Road Scenic Corridor and is subject to guidelines that protect the natural beauty of this corridor. In addition, Section 18.58.020(D) of the Town's Code of Ordinances establishes a 75-foot setback from the Alpine Road right-of-way. Together, these policies may limit locations for public access infrastructure around the Hawthorns Area site perimeter.

Table 22: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Aesthetics

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	Panoramic views, scenic landscapes, grassland hilltops, the olive grove, and the Historic Complex are unique scenic characteristics of the Preserve that could be attractive elements for visitors.
C	Visibility of private property adjacent to the Hawthorns Area could create the potential for privacy concerns for existing landowners and impact private viewsheds.
C	As the Hawthorns Area is located within the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor, it is subject to guidelines that may limit locations for public access infrastructure around the Hawthorns Area site perimeter.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Aesthetics

- Provide views of surrounding areas from hiking trails and amenities like benches and picnic tables.
- The open space, views, and scenic beauty of the Hawthorns Area are a huge asset to the community.
- Protect the pristine viewshed from Alpine Road and adjacent properties.
- The visibility of a parking lot from Alpine Road would detract from the property's scenic value.
- Grassland trails have high visibility from surrounding vantage points.
- The visibility of trails and infrastructure on top of the hills would diminish property values for landowners with current views of the hilltop.
- The Historic Complex buildings are an eyesore and detract from the desired aesthetic.
- Remove the chain-link fence on Alpine Road and the barbed wire fence along the Sweet Springs Trail. Both are unsightly and the barbed wire is dangerous.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

4.6 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Goal: Manage the property for safe public access in a fiscally sustainable manner that promotes ongoing public support and appreciation with ongoing public engagement and consistent with the District's Good Neighbor Policy.

The Hawthorns Area presents several management considerations in moving forward with planning. Due to its location in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) and the presence of non-native flammable plants, such as French broom, and native, but overrepresented coyote brush, the Hawthorns Area requires management to maintain wildland fire resiliency. The use of conservation grazing and timed mowing can provide the opportunity to control invasive plants and control fire danger. Opening the Hawthorns Area to the public will require increased staffing to provide patrol, enforce rules, and maintain safe trails. The Town has planned several other projects within the Alpine Road corridor including housing projects. The cumulative impact of increased traffic during construction and opening activities at the Hawthorns Area is a potential concern.

Table 23: Opportunities and Constraints Pertaining to Operations and Maintenance

Opportunities/Constraints	Topic Area
O	The use of conservation grazing and timed mowing can provide the opportunity to control invasive plants and control fire danger.
C	The location of the Hawthorns Area in the WUI and the presence of flammable invasive species necessitate management to maintain wildland fire resiliency.
C	Opening the Hawthorns Area to the public will require increased staffing to provide patrol, enforce rules, and maintain safe trails.
C	The cumulative impact of increased traffic during construction, opening activities, and ongoing recreation at the Hawthorns Area is a potential concern.

Recurring Public and Stakeholder Input Pertaining to Operations and Maintenance

- Involve the community in maintenance efforts to increase feelings of involvement and engagement.
- The Hawthorns Area presents a fire risk to the surrounding neighborhoods, including the Portola Valley Ranch. Control fire danger in community with community involvement and use of grazing.
- Reduce ladder fuels in the olive orchard, along the creek, and around the Historic Complex.
- Reduce risk of fire and evacuation issues by closing the Hawthorns Area during times of high fire danger.
- Consider providing water storage or fire hydrants to facilitate wildland fire response.
- There is concern of vandalism at the Hawthorns Area, particularly in the Historic Complex area.
- It may be difficult to enforce rules, such as no bikes or no dogs off leash.
- Increased use and potential trash accumulation on trails would require more maintenance.
- Emergency access could be a challenge.
- Poison oak poses a hazard to the public.

Note: The District will incorporate input as appropriate and/or feasible within the scope of the Hawthorns Area Plan project, the Board-approved Vision and Goals, and the District's resource management policies.

5.0 PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The District conducted a series of public, neighborhood, and stakeholder meetings in addition to hosting site tours and administering public surveys to solicit feedback on the project. The recurring themes described above stem from this engagement effort and reflect actual comments made. Overall, public input exhibited excitement and support for public access and open space preservation, which was noted to be consistent with the Town's values and General Plan. There were many different viewpoints and priorities gathered from the public, so a balanced approach will be necessary to accommodate multiple user groups and perspectives. A holistic view of all regional activities and needs is desirable, considering other development within the Town and region. Based on the volume and frequency of comments received across all existing conditions categories, the following opportunities and constraints were of the most importance to the community:

Opportunities

- Regional trail connections
- Many options for multimodal access due to proximity to Town
- Educational and interpretive elements
- Many recreational opportunities

Constraints

- Availability of parking and overflow into neighborhoods
- User conflict on trails
- Small size of the Preserve
- Increased traffic impacts

5.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

Throughout the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Phase of the Hawthorns Area Plan planning process, the District engaged various stakeholders, including the Town of Portola Valley, advocacy organizations, neighborhood groups, local businesses, and members of the public, in a series of discussions to receive input on the opportunities and constraints the public envisions at the Hawthorns Area. These stakeholder groups included:

- Equestrian Trail Riders Action Committee,
- Green Foothills,
- Sequoia Audubon Society, San Mateo County Chapter,
- Bay Area Older Adults,
- Alpine Tennis and Swimming Club,
- Roberts Market,
- Portola Valley Ranch Homeowners' Association,
- Community of Ladera,
- Portola Valley School District,
- Town of Portola Valley,
- City of Palo Alto Parks and Recreation Commission,
- City of Palo Alto Parks and Recreation Department,
- Representatives from the Anthropology Departments of Foothill College and Stanford University,
- Representatives from the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe,
- Neighbors from adjacent properties, and
- Members of the public who expressed interest in the project.

5.2 NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

On June 28, 2022, the District hosted a neighborhood meeting at the Town of Portola Valley Community Hall to solicit feedback from members of the Portola Valley community on existing conditions at the Hawthorns Area. Notifications for this meeting were disseminated throughout the town both virtually and on physical flyers posted at key locations, including Roberts Market, the Alpine Tennis and Swimming Club, and the Alpine Inn. Following a brief staff presentation, attendees joined breakout groups for facilitated discussions and provided their input for the District's consideration. In general, attendees agreed that the Hawthorns Area is a beautiful open space area that provides expansive views, diverse habitat, wildlife connectivity, and opportunities for recreational access, historic reuse and interpretation, and connections to existing Town trails. Attendees also noted that parking availability, spillover parking into nearby neighborhoods, user conflict on trails, and increased traffic congestion were key constraints.

5.3 SITE TOURS

Site tours were held at the Hawthorns Area throughout the summer and fall of 2022 to provide opportunities for members of the public to visit the Hawthorns Area and gain familiarity with the site and landscape. District staff and volunteer docents walked the property, describing the natural features and the development process of the Area Plan. Additional docent-led tours were established to continue tours on a quarterly basis while the Area Plan is in development.

5.4 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES

The District held an in-person public open house on September 29, 2022 at the District's Administrative Office, as well as a virtual public open house on October 20, 2022, to engage broader audiences on the Hawthorns Area Plan. District staff were present at both events to discuss the planning process, answer questions, and receive feedback.

5.5 PUBLIC SURVEYS AND COMMENT CARDS

In addition to the stakeholder and public meetings, the District provided opportunities for public feedback through print and online forums, including a public survey and comment cards, which were open to the public during the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Phase through the end of November.

5.6 BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

To date, the Hawthorns Area Plan has been brought before the District's Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) at the following meetings:

- **May 18, 2021:** PNR received an informational presentation on the proposed planning and public engagement process for the Area Plan and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-65](#), [meeting minutes](#))

- **August 24, 2021:** PNR reviewed the proposed draft vision and goals and provided input and guidance. ([R-21-112](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **November 16, 2021:** PNR reviewed the revised vision and goals and draft public access working group strategy and provided further refinements. PNR unanimously recommended forwarding the refined vision and goal statements to the full Board for consideration. ([R-21-156](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 1, 2022:** PNR reviewed the proposed planning and public engagement process to develop the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-29](#), [meeting minutes](#))

The Hawthorns Area Plan has also been brought before the full District Board at the following meetings:

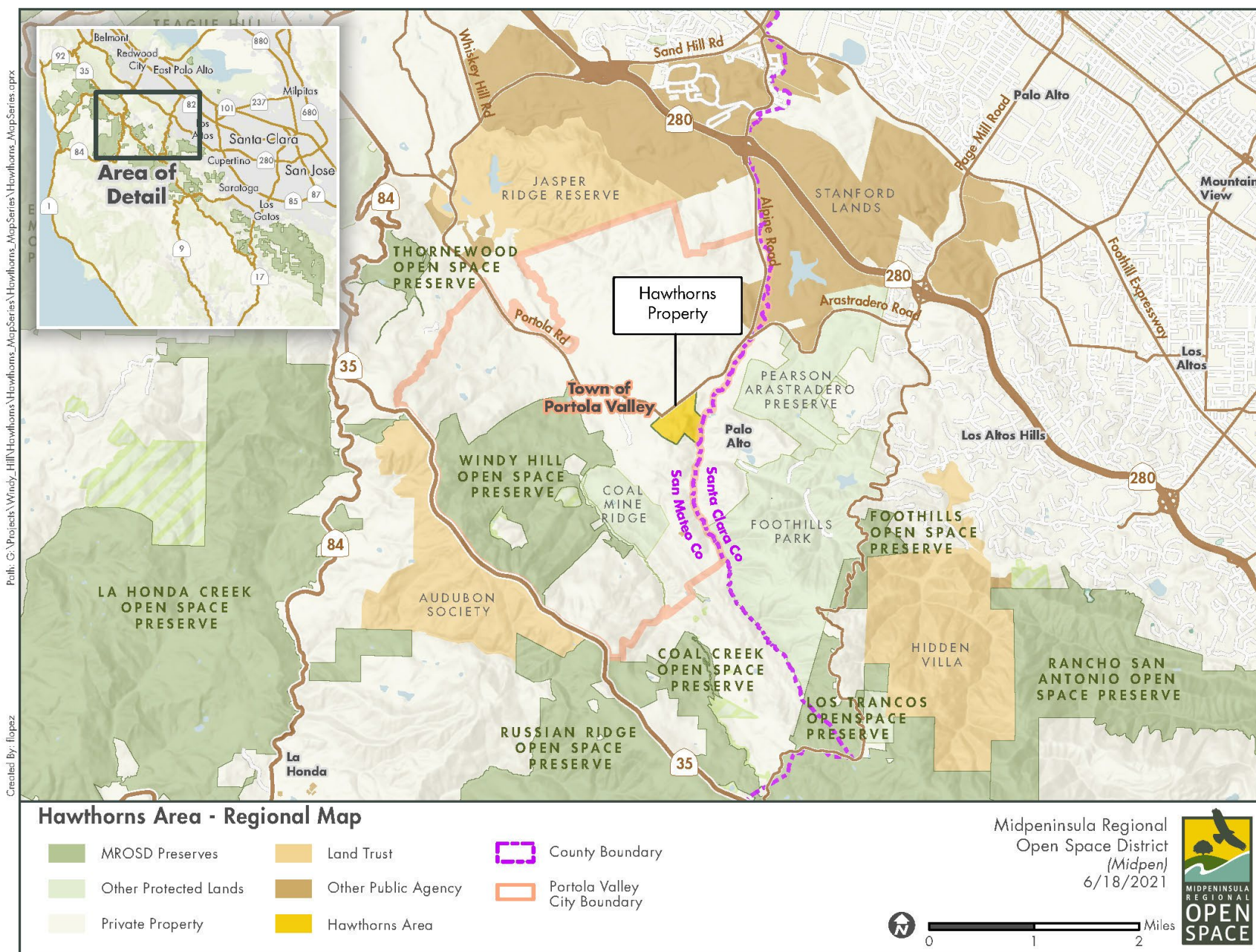
- **March 10, 2021:** Board received an [FYI memo](#) on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Project.
- **March 23, 2022:** Board reviewed and approved the Vision and Goals for the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-22-45](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **July 13, 2022:** Board reviewed the contract for the Hawthorns Area transportation study ([R-22-81](#), [meeting minutes](#))

6.0 SUPPLEMENTAL FIGURES

1. Regional Map
2. Aerial Map
3. Topography and Vegetation Communities Map
4. Hawthorns Area Waters of the United States (1/4)
5. Hawthorns Area Waters of the United States (2/4)
6. Hawthorns Area Waters of the United States (3/4)
7. Hawthorns Area Waters of the United States (4/4)
8. Public Access Constraints Map— Natural and Cultural Resources
9. Public Access Constraints Map— Aesthetics
10. Public Access Constraints Map— All Constraints

7.0 APPENDICES

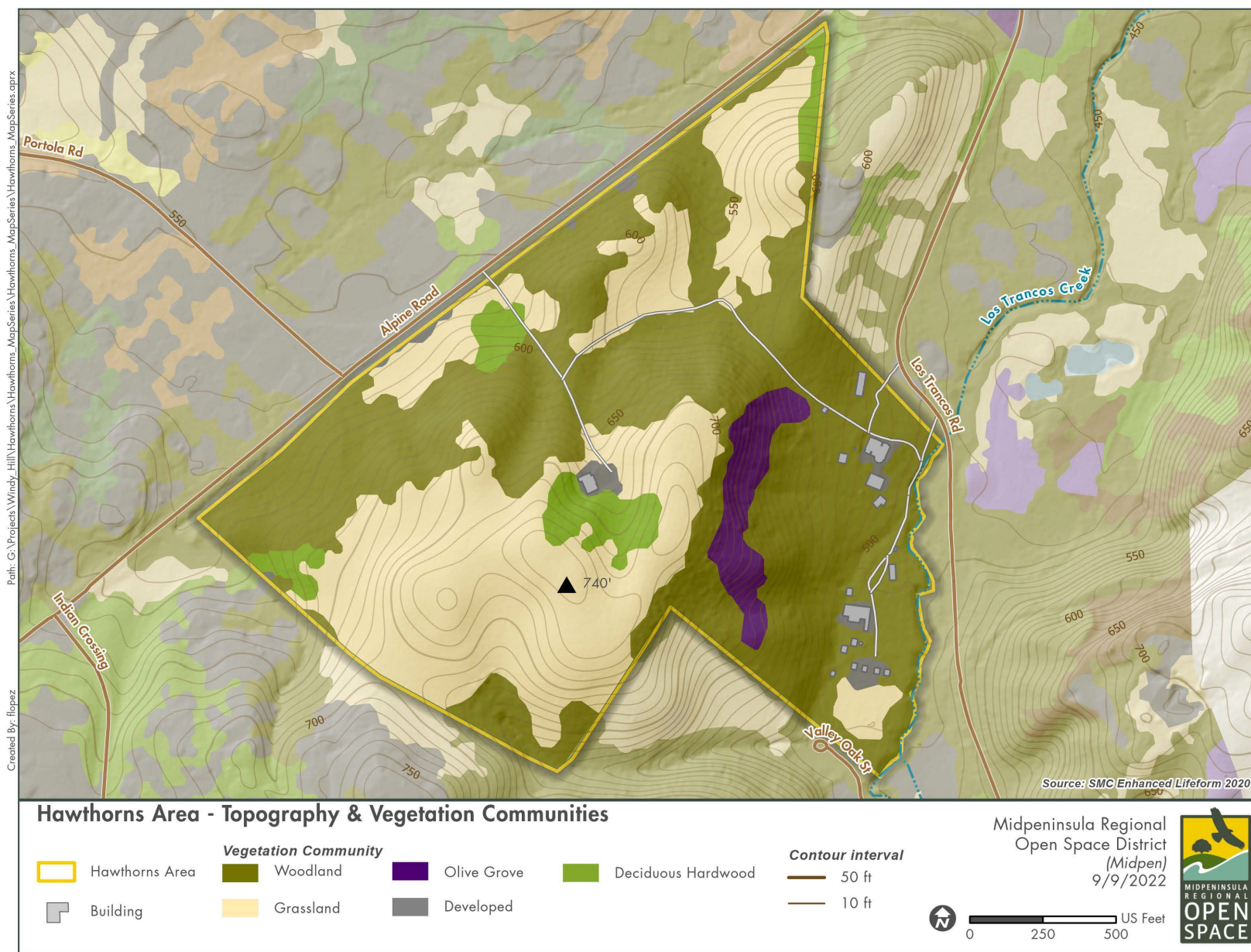
1. Preliminary Use and Management Plan (R-06-53) and Amendment (R-12-46)
2. Conservation Easement
3. Boundary Survey (BFK 2019)
4. Archeological Study: Phase I (Cogstone 2018)
5. Archeological Study: Phase II (Cogstone 2018)
6. Geotechnical Report (Treadwell & Rollo 2013)
7. Historic Resource Study (Knapp 2013)
8. Structure Conditions Assessment (Knapp 2013)
9. Structural Conditions Report (WJE 2022)
10. Bat and Woodrat Survey Report (MIG 2022)
11. Wetland Delineation Report (Stillwater Sciences 2022)
12. Environmental Site Assessment: Phase I (Rincon 2022)
13. Environmental Site Assessment: Phase II (Rincon 2022)



Supplemental Figure 2: Regional Map



Supplemental Figure 2: Aerial Map



Supplemental Figure 3: Topography and Vegetation Communities Map



Supplemental Figure 3: Hawthorns Area Waters of the United States (1/4)

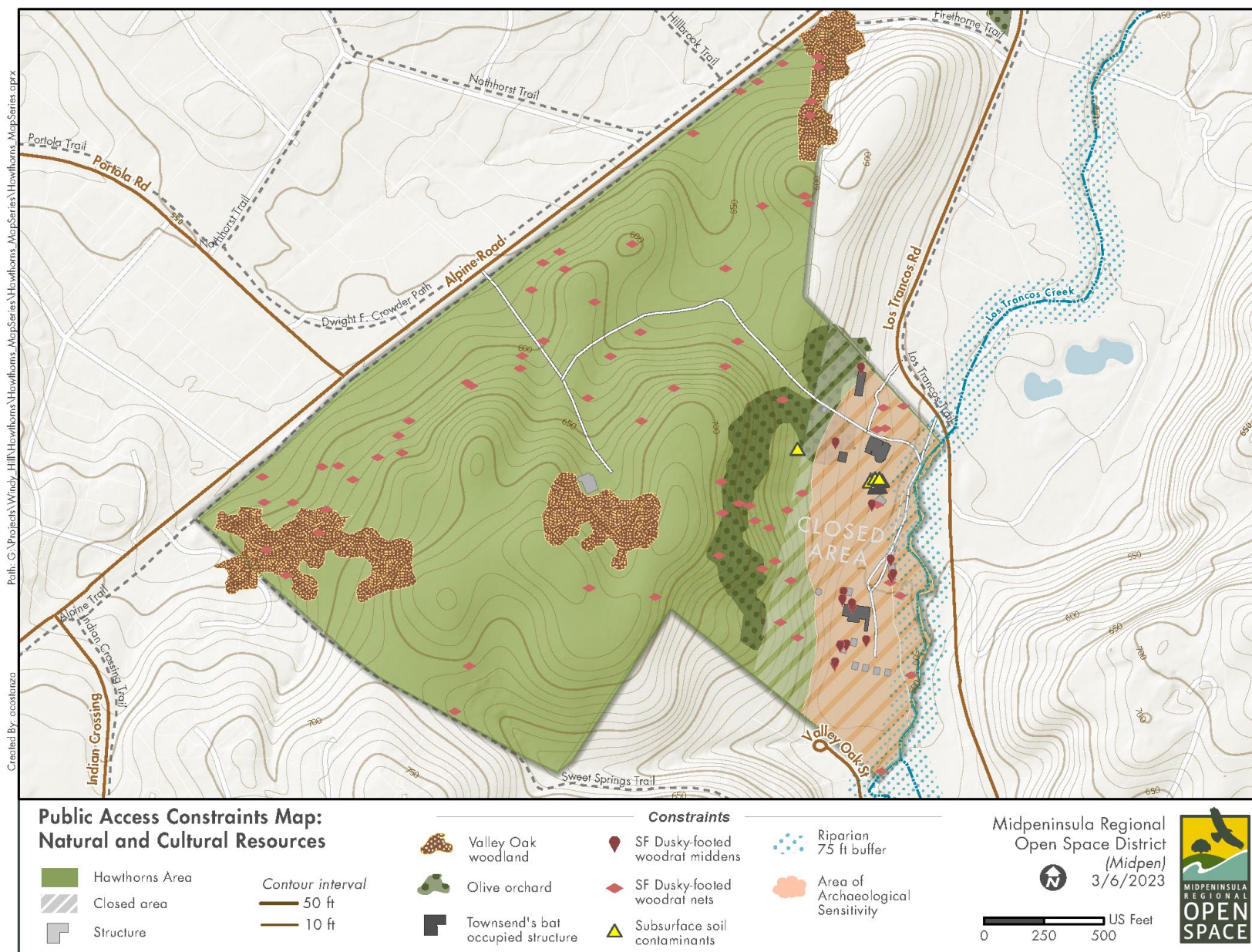


Supplemental Figure 4: Hawthorns Area Waters of the United States (2/4)

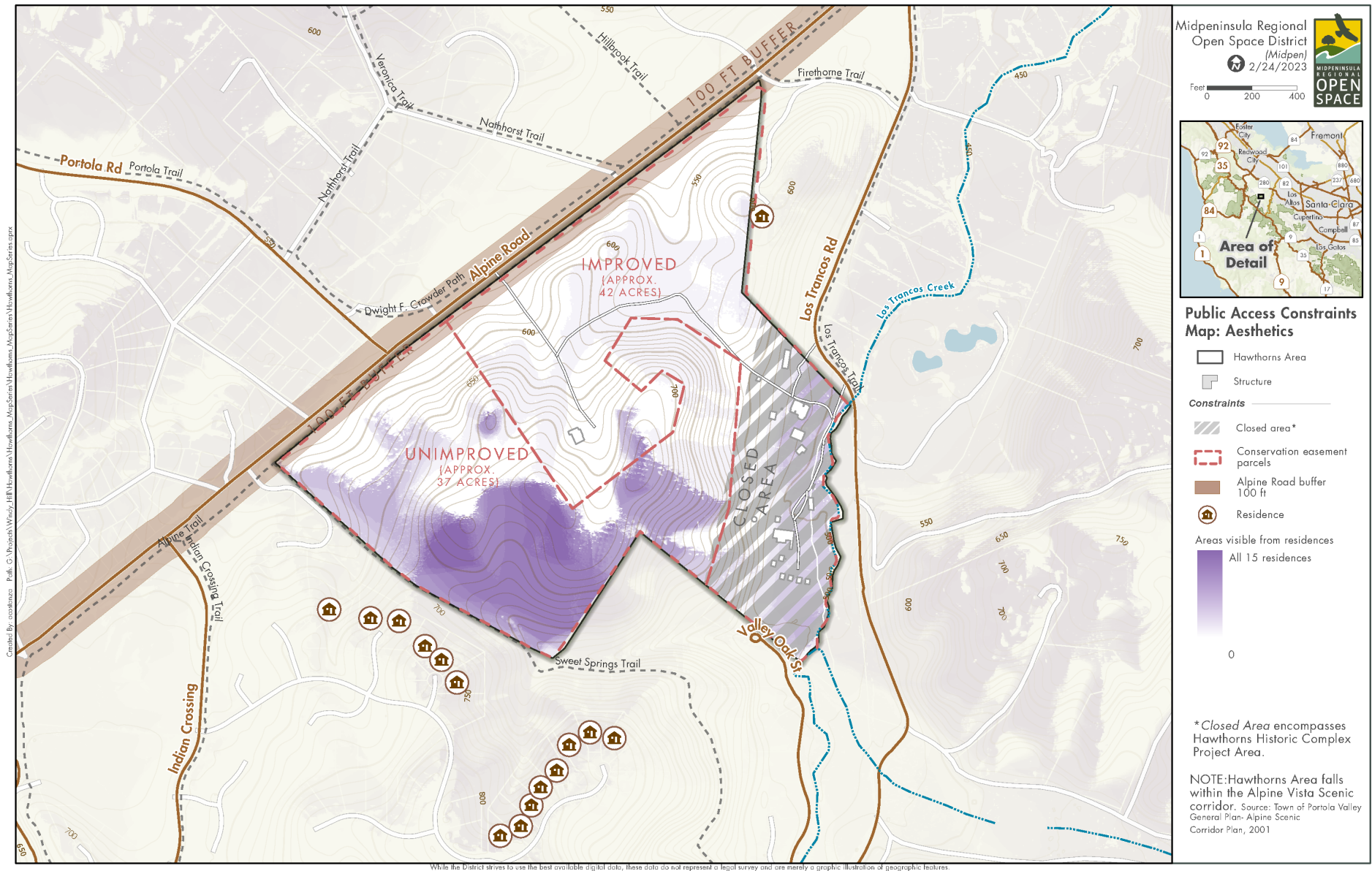




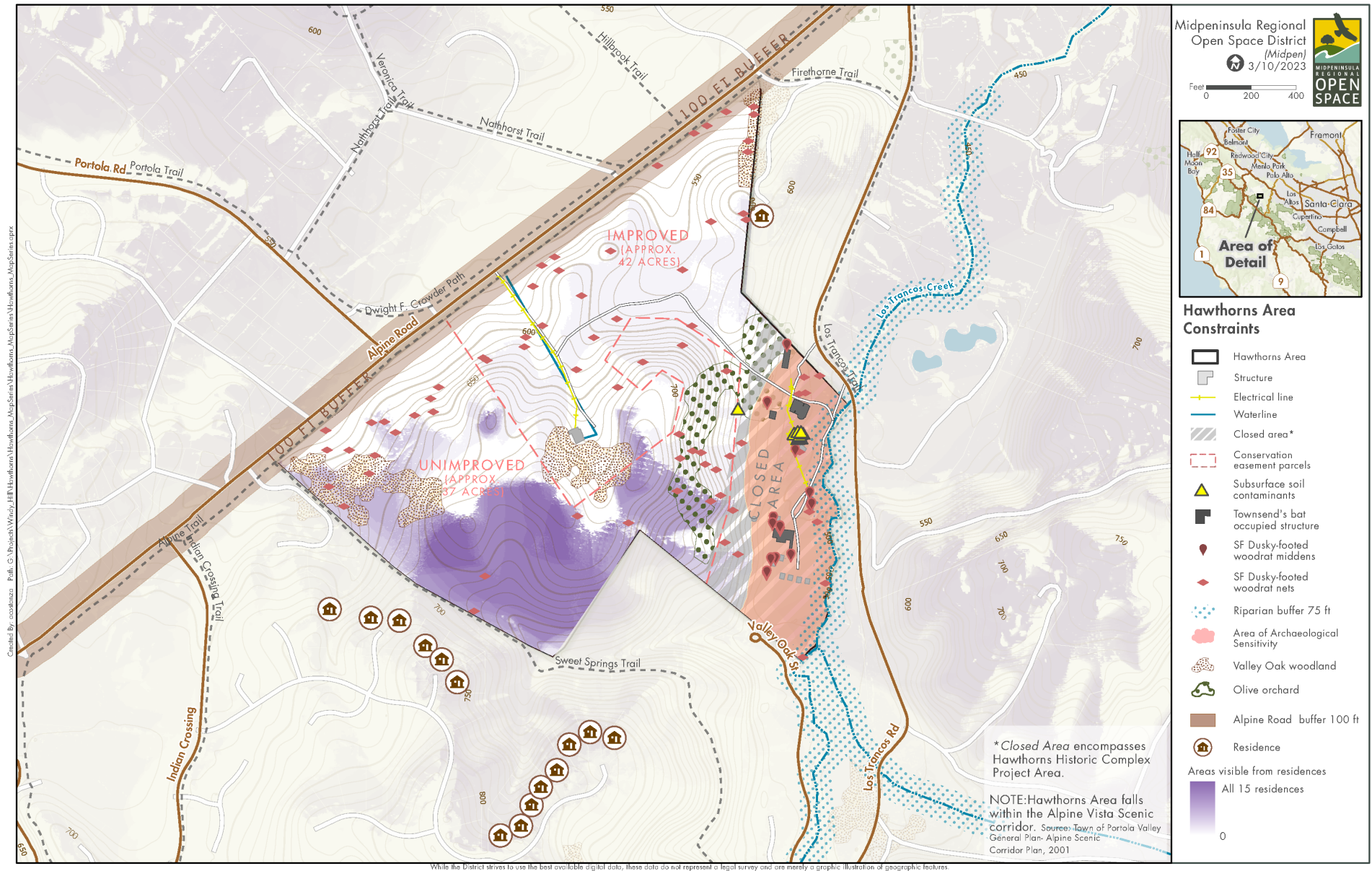
Supplemental Figure 6: Hawthorns Area Waters of the United States (4/4)



Supplemental Figure 8: Public Access Constraints Map— Natural and Cultural Resources



Supplemental Figure 9: Public Access Constraints Map— Aesthetics



Supplemental Figure 10: Public Access Constraints Map— All Constraints

Memo

To: Arianna Nuri & Tina Hugg, Midpen
From: Andrew Lee, PE, TE; Venera Mandanas, EIT; Parisi Transportation Consulting
Joakim Osthus, PE, Mead & Hunt
Date: February 16, 2023
Subject: **Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve,
DRAFT Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo**

This technical memorandum summarizes Parisi Transportation Consulting's (Parisi) initial findings of the existing transportation and circulation conditions at the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Hawthorns Area). This memo provides an overview of the surrounding circulation network (e.g., roadways and trails), a summary of recent traffic counts and collisions, a study of potential vehicle driveways for public access into the Hawthorns Area site, and a summary of relevant local and regional plans and policies.

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 79-acre Hawthorns Area is in the Town of Portola Valley (Town) in San Mateo County (Figure 1). The Hawthorns Area is in close proximity to two Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) preserves: Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Windy Hill), which is approximately one mile away via Alpine Road, and Thornewood Open Space Preserve (Thornewood), which is approximately three miles away via Portola Road (Figure 2). Midpen is preparing a long-term use and management plan for the Hawthorns Area with recommendations to steward the site's natural, cultural, and historic resources and introduce ecologically sensitive public access. The plan will include specific actions to open the Hawthorns Area to the public, including general specifications for an access driveway, parking area, and other public amenities. Access to the Hawthorns Area for land management purposes is currently provided by one driveway originating at Alpine Road and two driveways off Los Trancos Road (Figure 3).

2. EXISTING SITE ACCESS

Where it bounds the Hawthorns Area, **Alpine Road** is a two-lane minor arterial roadway with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour. The roadway ranges between 35 and 60 feet wide between the edges of the roadway shoulder.

Along the boundary of the Hawthorns Area, **Los Trancos Road** is a two-lane local road with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour. The roadway ranges between 20 and 36 feet wide between the edges of the roadway shoulder.

2.1 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

The Town collected traffic counts across nine days in October 2019 as part of a separate traffic study¹. The counts are summarized below (Table 1) and the locations are noted on Figure 2. There are two counts collected on Alpine Road where it bounds the north side of the Hawthorns Area (location 2 and 3) and one count on Los Trancos Road south of the east property boundary (location 6).

Table 1 Portola Valley 2019 Average Daily Traffic Volumes

#	Roadway Segment	Approx. Distance to Hawthorns Area	Roadway Classification ²	Weekday Average	Weekend Average
1	Alpine Road north of Westridge Road	1.5 miles east	Minor Arterial	12,100	9,300
2	Alpine Road east of Nathhorst Road	On the Project north boundary	Minor Arterial	7,800	5,600
3	Alpine Road west of Portola Road	On the Project north boundary	Major Collector	3,300	2,500
4	Alpine Road east of Willowbrook Road	0.8 miles west	Major Collector	300	400
5	Arastradero Road at the Town Limit	0.8 miles east	Local Road	3,700	2,900
6	Los Trancos Road near the Town Limit*	0.2 miles south	Local Road	3,000	2,100
7	Portola Road north of Wayside Road	2.0 miles north	Minor Arterial	6,000	4,800

Source: Town of Portola Valley, 2019.

The peak hour traffic volumes for the roadway segments bounding the Hawthorns Area are presented below (Table 2). Weekday peak hours correspond to morning and afternoon commute times: 7 to 9 AM and 4 to 6 PM. The Saturday peak hours of traffic were typically around noon (11 AM to 1 PM) and Sunday peaks occurred slightly earlier, between 10 AM and noon.

The weekday daily traffic on Alpine Road on the project boundary ranges between one quarter to two-thirds of the road's peak daily traffic demand within the Town limits at Westridge Road (12,000 daily vehicles), approximately one mile south of the Highway 280 interchange with Alpine Road.

¹ <https://www.portolavalley.net/departments/public-works/public-works-projects/2019-town-wide-traffic-counts>

² California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) California Road System Functional Classification (2022). <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/research-innovation-system-information/office-of-highway-system-information-performance/functional-classification>

Table 2 Portola Valley 2019 Average Daily Traffic Volumes

#	Roadway Segment	Average Weekday Peak Hour		Average Weekend Peak Hour
		AM	PM	
2	Alpine Road east of Nathhorst Road			
	Eastbound	360	400	370
	Westbound	410	330	260
3	Alpine Road west of Portola Road			
	Eastbound	270	170	160
	Westbound	260	150	160
6	Los Trancos Road near the Town Limit*			
	Northbound	170	150	110
	Southbound	120	140	120

2.2 COLLISION HISTORY

Using data from Statewide Integrated Traffic Records Systems (SWITRS) reports, Parisi completed a collision analysis for the Hawthorns Area spanning from 2016 to 2021. The collision analysis study area for the Hawthorns Area includes Alpine Road from Echo Lane to Golden Oak Drive (0.7 mile) and Los Trancos Road from Alpine Road to the town limits (0.4 mile, see Table 3). There were 13 collisions in total, including two at the Alpine Road / Los Trancos Road intersection, as summarized in Table A-1 of the Appendix.

The collision rate along Alpine Road is slightly higher than the Statewide average rate for comparable rural highways (0.92 vs. 0.82) but is approximately 20 percent lower than the collision rate on Los Trancos Road (0.92 vs. 1.14). There were four bicyclist-involved collisions, including two severe injury crashes, and no pedestrian-involved collisions. The reasons for collisions were unsafe speed (five crashes), automobile right of way (four crashes), improper turning (two crashes) and one collision due to hazardous parking (Table A-1).

These data indicate that measures to reduce vehicle speeds, like warning signs and refreshed pavement markings, providing greater separation between drivers and bicyclists, and maintaining or improving sight distance should be incorporated in the design for a future driveway entrance for public access into the Hawthorns Area site.

Table 3 Hawthorns Area Roadway Collision Rates

	A	B	C over 6 years	$D = (C * 1,000,000) / [(B * 365 * 6 \text{ yrs}) * (A)]$	Statewide Average Collision Rate (c/mvm)**
Roadway Segment	Length (miles)	ADT	# of Collisions	Collision Rate (c/mvm)***	
Alpine Road, Saddleback to Portola	0.5	7800	11*	0.92	0.82
Alpine Road, Portola to Golden Oak	0.2	3300			
Los Trancos Road, Alpine Road to Town Limits (Rolling Terrain)	0.4	3000	3 *	1.14	1.19
2-Lane Highway, Rural, Flat Terrain, <55 MPH	Collision rate applied to Alpine Road.				0.78+ (.35/ADT in thousands)
2-Lane Highway, Rural, Rolling Terrain, < 55 MPH	Collision rate applied to Los Trancos Road.				1.07+ (.35/ADT in thousands)

*Two collisions at the Alpine Rd. / Los Trancos Road intersection

**Rates from Caltrans 2016 Collision Data on California State Highways.

*** c/mvm – Collisions per Million Vehicle Miles, calculated as

$$\frac{[\text{Collisions} \times 1,000,000]}{[\text{Average Daily Traffic} \times 365 \text{ days} \times \# \text{ of study years} \times \text{Roadway Segment Length}]}$$

2.3 TRAIL, WALK, AND BIKE NETWORK

The Town's public trail network runs along the perimeter of the Hawthorns Area (Figure 4). The Alpine, Sweet Springs, Firethorne, and Los Trancos Trails are designated hiking and equestrian routes; there is a section of the Alpine Trail between Indian Crossing Road and Portola Road where bicycling is permitted. Allowed uses are indicated on trail posts.

Among the on-street circulation network, there are marked crosswalks at the Alpine Road / Portola Road intersection. There are no continuous sidewalks in the study area apart from the trail network. The striped shoulders on Alpine Road and Portola Road function as on-street bike lanes, although there are no signs or markings indicating them as designated bikeways. Alpine Road and Portola Road are popular local bicycling routes.

2.4 TRANSIT FACILITIES

SamTrans provides two school-oriented bus routes through the Town. Route 85 connects the towns of Woodside and Portola Valley to Ormondale Elementary School and Corte Madera School. Route 85 services Ormondale Elementary School and Woodside High School. Each route runs once per day on weekday afternoons only. The nearest stops near the Hawthorns Area are located near the Portola Road / Alpine Road intersection and the Alpine Road / Golden Oak Drive intersection. The bus route maps and schedules are provided as Figure 5 and Figure 6.

3. SIGHT DISTANCE EVALUATION AND SITE ACCESS RECOMMENDATION (PREPARED BY MEAD & HUNT)

Location: This evaluation is for the existing and potential driveway access points to the Hawthorns Area from Alpine Road and Los Trancos Road. Three locations along Alpine Road and two locations along Los Trancos Road have been evaluated. Figure 3 shows the locations of all evaluated access points.

Description: Alpine Road is a two-lane roadway with no roadside parking. The posted speed limit is 35 mph. The roadway is lined with trees and part of the west side of the street has a steep embankment starting at the paved shoulder.

Los Trancos Road is a two-lane roadway with no roadside parking. The posted speed limit is 35 mph with an advisory speed of 25 mph in the northbound direction. The roadway makes an S-turn at the location of the two evaluated driveway locations. There are existing trees on both sides of the roadway; most are set back from the roadway and do not obstruct the roadway visibility.

There are no existing traffic control devices or pedestrian crossings at any of the evaluated intersections. A future driveway is assumed to have stop control.

Sight Distance Evaluation: Appendix B includes exhibits showing the available sight distances at each of the five evaluated driveway locations. Sight distances have been compared to criteria included in AASHTO's A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 2018 7th Edition (HDM).

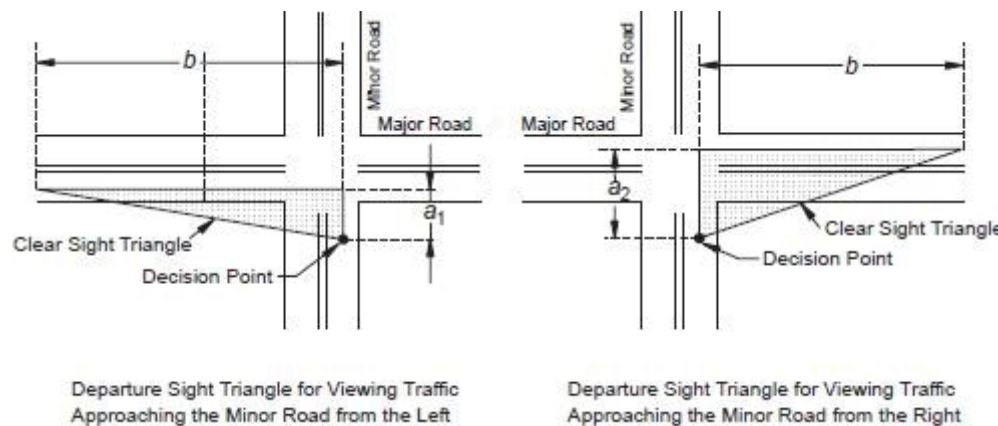


Exhibit 1 AASHTO Departure Sight Triangle Diagram

Exhibit 1 (above) shows the departure sight distance diagram for both left and right turns. The posted speed limits for these segments of roadway are based on engineering traffic and safety surveys (ET&S) prepared by the Town every five to seven years. Consistent with the California Manual for Setting Speed Limits (2020), "Speed limits set by E&TS are normally set near the 85th

percentile speed. The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the traffic is moving, and statistically represents one standard deviation above the average speed.”

The posted speed limits for the evaluated locations along both Alpine Road and Los Trancos Road is 35 mph. As such, the 85th percentile speed is assumed to be near 35 mph and below 45 mph. Required distances for left- and right-turn departures and stopping sight distances for design speeds of 35 mph and 45 mph are shown in Table 4 below. Grades of roadways are generally flat, so no adjustments to the required sight distances have been made due to the grade of either the major roadway or the potential driveways.

Table 4 Sight and Stopping Distance Requirements per AASHTO

	Left Turn Sight Distance	Right Turn Sight Distance	Stopping Sight Distance
Passenger Vehicle (35 mph)	386 ft	335 ft	250 ft
Passenger Vehicle (45 mph)	497 ft	430 ft	360 ft

The estimated intersection sight distances at the evaluated driveway locations are shown in Table 5. Those distances are compared to the distance requirements in Table 4.

Table 5 Intersection Sight Distance Summary

Location	Approximate Intersection Sight Distance Left (Right)	Meets HDM Criteria?	Meets Stopping Sight Distance Criteria?	Issue	Potential Mitigation
Current Alpine Road Driveway	490' (590')	Yes	Yes		
Original Alpine Road Driveway	695' (570')	Yes	Yes		
Potential Alpine Road Driveway	440' (650')	Yes	Yes		
Los Trancos Road Driveway (North)	265' (304')	No	Yes	Curvature of roadway	None
Los Trancos Road Driveway (South)	140' (125')	No	No	Curvature of roadway	None

All three locations along Alpine Road have adequate sight distance for both left and right turns. Neither of the two driveway locations along Los Trancos Road provide adequate sight distance for either a right or left turn. The main reason for the inadequate sight distance is the curvature of Los Trancos Road at these locations. Remedying the deficient sight distance would require realignment of a portion of Los Trancos Road; it is expected that this would be prohibitively expensive and time consuming and thus not identified as a feasible mitigation.

Recommendations: Based on the evaluation of the existing sight distance, it is recommended that any driveway entrance for public access to the Hawthorns Area be located along Alpine

Road. Any final design of the intersection should include analysis of any required adjustment to required stopping and intersection sight distances based on the grade of Alpine Road.

If an entrance is used for private entry, then it is recommended that deficiencies be mitigated by appropriate signage/markings.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Figures and Tables

Appendix B: Sight Distance Exhibits & Photos

Appendix C: Summary of Relevant Plans and Policies

APPENDIX A: FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1 Hawthorns Area – Local Map

Figure 2 Hawthorns Area – Regional Map

Figure 3 Hawthorns Area – Aerial Map + Driveway Locations

Figure 4 Town of Portola Valley Public Trail Network

Figure 5 SamTrans Route 85 Map & Schedule

Figure 6 SamTrans Route 87 Map & Schedule

Table A-1. The Hawthorns Area Reported Collisions, 2016-2021



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
6/18/2021

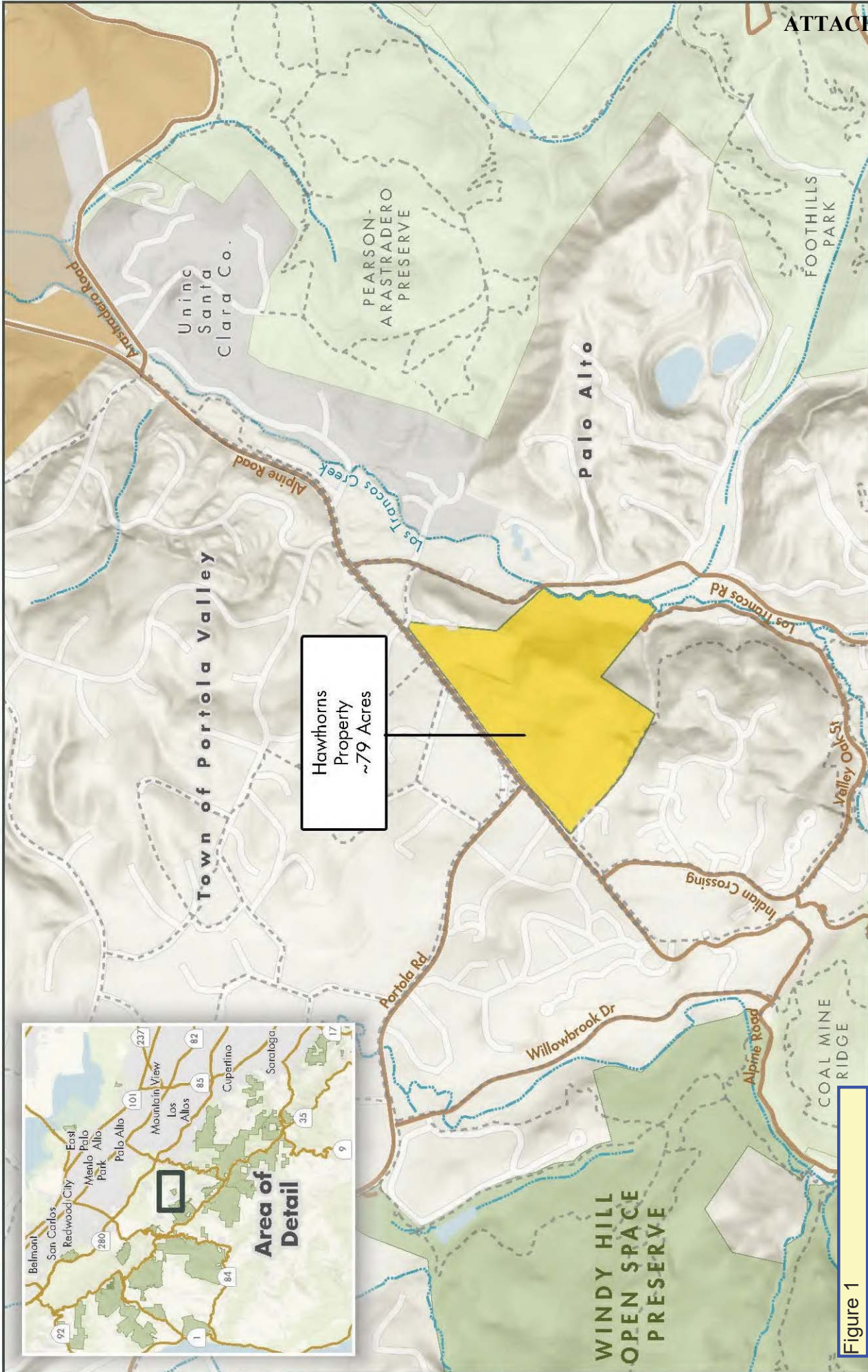


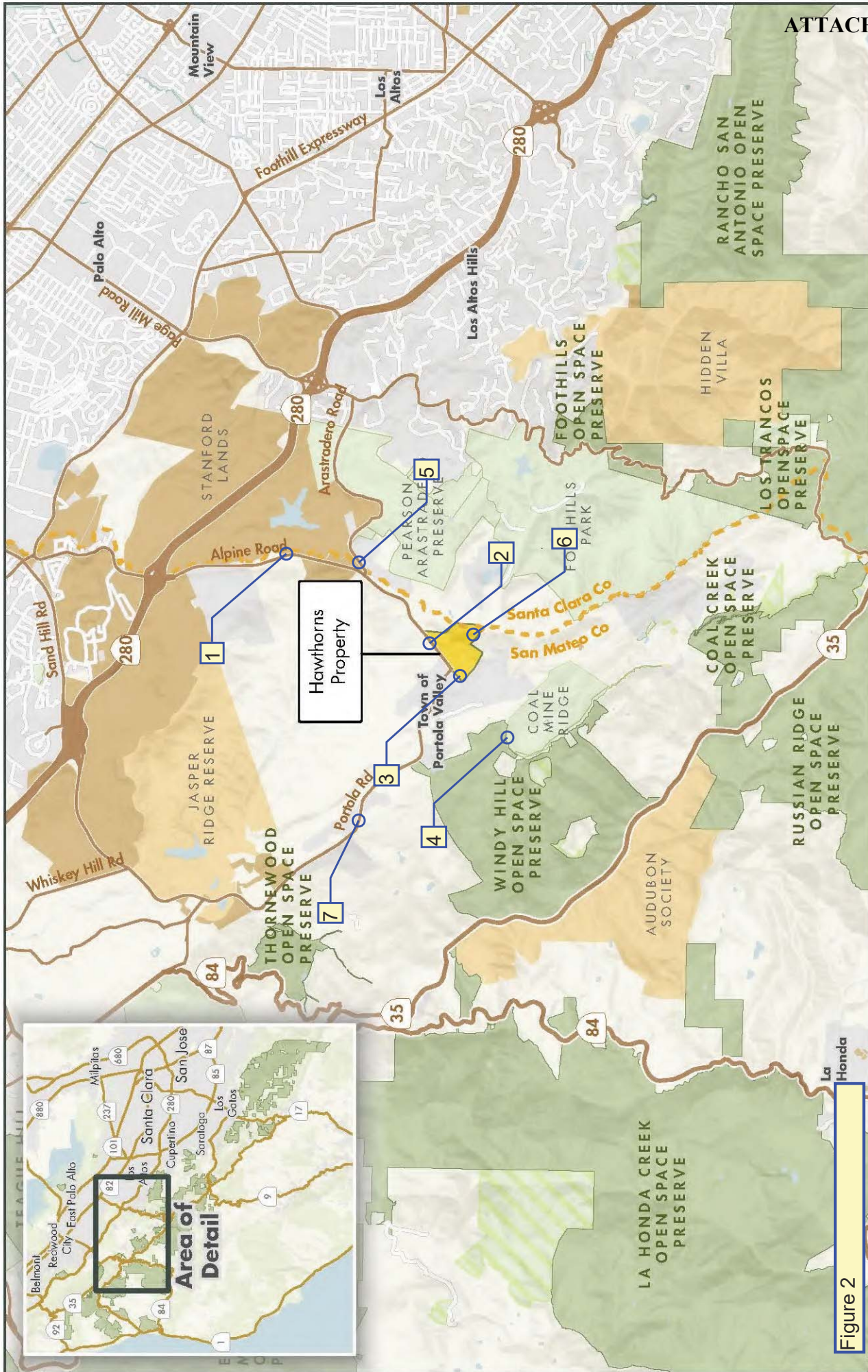
Figure 1

Hawthorns Area - Local Map

- MROSD Preserves
- Other Protected Lands
- Private Property
- Other Public Agency
- Hawthorns Area
- Unincorporated Area



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
6/16/2021



2019 Traffic Count Locations

- MROSD Preserves
- Other Protected Lands
- Private Property
- Land Trust
- Other Public Agency
- Hawthorns Area

Hawthorns Area - Regional Map

Figure 2



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(Midpen)
9/9/2022



Figure 3

Hawthorns Area - Aerial Map

Hawthorns Area

Building

Data Sources:
2007 Town of Portola Valley GIS Basemap



Town of Portola Valley Public Trail Network

Hawthorns area

Building

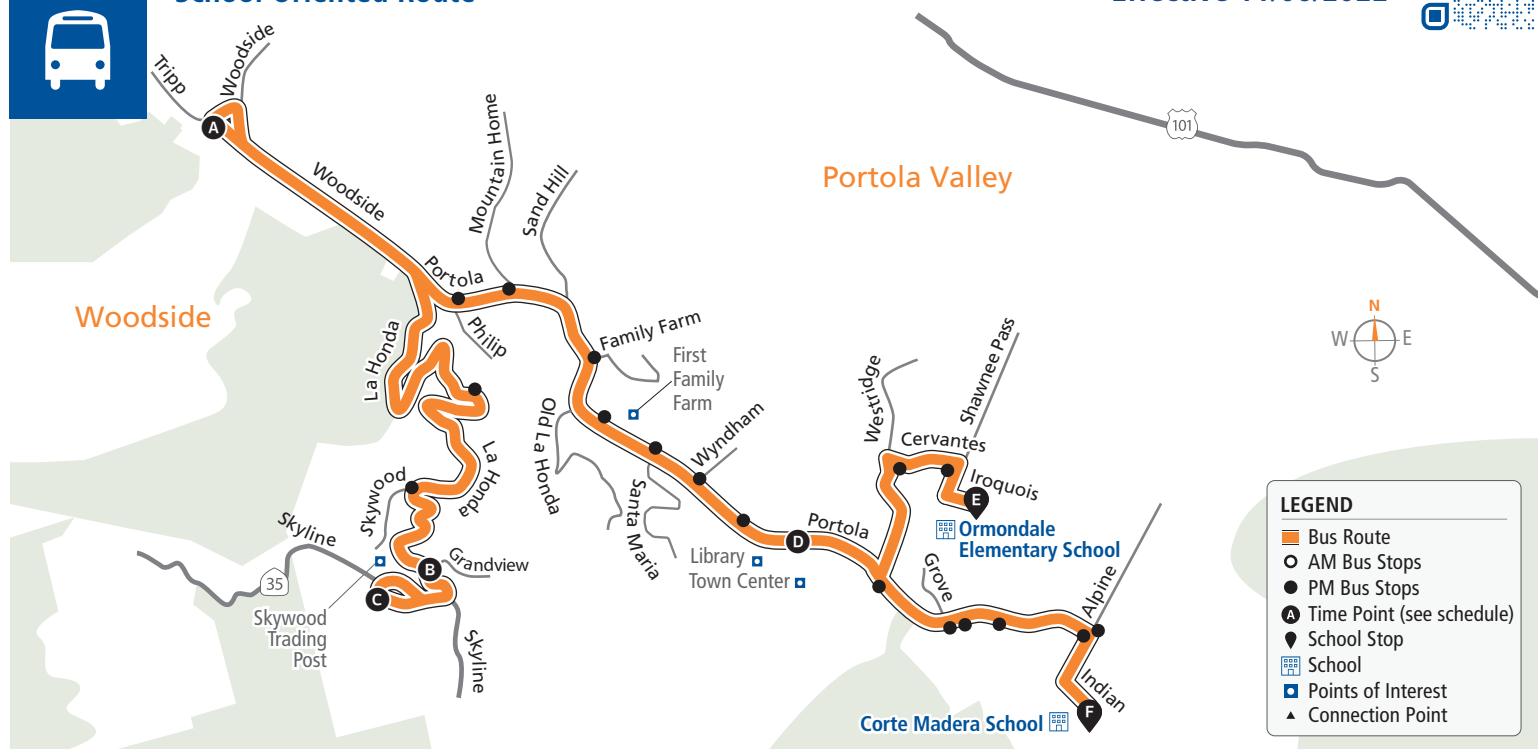
Trail use type

..... Bicycle route

----- Hiking, equestrian uses

———— Hiking, bicycling,
equestrian uses

Figure 4

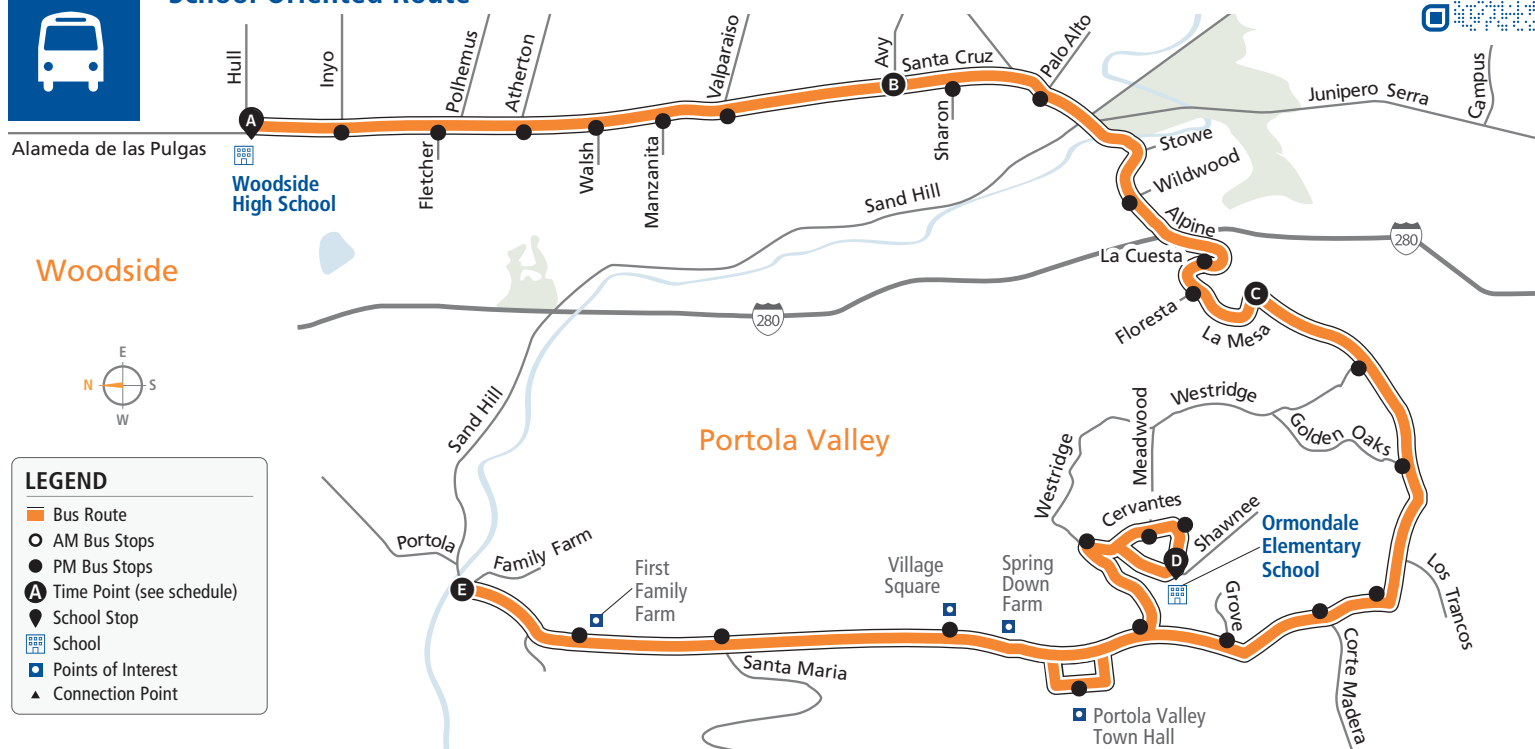


PM to La Honda/Grandview

Bus Stops		Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri	Wednesdays Only	
E	Ormondale Elementary School	3:05p	12:30p	—
●	Shawnee Pass/Cervantes			
●	Cervantes/Meadwood			
●	Portola/Grove			
●	Portola/Corte Madera			
●	Portola/Alpine			
F	Corte Madera School	3:19p	12:42p	2:00p
●	Portola/Alpine			
●	Portola/Woodside			
●	Portola/Grove			
●	Portola/Westridge			
D	Portola Valley Town Hall	3:26p	12:47p	2:07p


Bus Stops		Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri	Wednesdays Only	
●	Portola/Village			
●	Portola/Wyndham			
●	Portola/Santa Maria			
●	Portola/First Family Farm			
●	Portola/Family Farm			
●	Portola/Mountain Home			
●	Portola/Phillip			
A	Tripp/Woodside	3:32p	12:52p	2:13p
●	La Honda/Fox Hill			
●	La Honda/Skywood			
B	Skyline Blvd/La Honda	3:47p	1:10p	2:28p
C	La Honda/Grandview	3:54p	1:17p	2:35p

Figure 5

**PM****to Portola/Family Farm**

Bus Stops	Wednesdays Only	Mon, Tues, Thurs, & Fri Only	Bus Stops	Wednesdays Only	Mon, Tues, Thurs, & Fri Only
A Alameda de las Pulgas/Hull	2:50p	3:55p	Alpine/Golden Oak		
Alameda de las Pulgas/Inyo			Portola/Alpine		
Alameda de las Pulgas/Fletcher			Portola/Woodside		
Alameda de las Pulgas/Atherton			Portola/Grove		
Alameda de las Pulgas/Walsh			Westridge/Cervantes		
Alameda de las Pulgas/Manzanita			D Ormondale Elementary School	3:18p	4:23p
Alameda de las Pulgas/Valparaíso			Shawnee/Cervantes		
B Alameda de las Pulgas/Avy	2:55p	4:00p	Cervantes/Meadwood		
Alameda de las Pulgas/Sharon			Portola/Westridge		
Santa Cruz/Palo Alto			Portola Valley Town Hall		
Alpine/Wildwood			Portola/Village		
La Cuesta/Alpine			Portola/Santa Maria		
La Cuesta/West Floresta			Portola/First Family Farm		
C La Mesa/Alpine	3:06p	4:11p	E Portola/Family Farm	3:26p	4:31p
Alpine/Westridge					

Figure 6

	Bus Fares	Cash	Clipper*	Day Pass	Monthly Pass	Cash	Clipper*	Day Pass	Monthly Pass
	Youth (Age 18 & younger)	\$1.10	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$27.00	Adult (Age 19 through 64)	\$2.25	\$2.05	\$4.50

*Free 2-hour transfers between local SamTrans routes on Clipper or SamTrans Mobile App. **Tickets available on SamTrans Mobile.**

Table A-1. The Hawthorns Area Reported Collisions, 2016-2021

Year	Primary Road	Nearest Intersection	Collision Severity	Violation Category	Collision Type	Pedestrian Collision	Bicycle Collision
2016	ALPINE RD	HILLBROOK DR	Other Visible Injury	Unsafe Speed	Other	No	Yes
2017	ALPINE RD	PORTOLA RD	Complaint of Pain	Unsafe Speed	Rear End	No	No
2018	ALPINE RD	LOS TRANCOS RD	Other Visible Injury	Unsafe Speed	Other	No	Yes
2018	ALPINE RD	GOLDEN OAK DR	Property Damage Only	Unsafe Speed	Hit Object	No	No
2019	ALPINE RD	GOLDEN OAK DR	Complaint of Pain	Unsafe Speed	Rear End	No	No
2019	GOLDEN OAK DR	ALPINE RD	Property Damage Only	Unsafe Speed	Rear End	No	No
2020	PORTOLA RD	ALPINE RD	Other Visible Injury	Improper Turning	Broadside	No	No
2021	ALPINE RD	GOLDEN OAK DR	Severe Injury	Automobile Right of Way	Overtaken	No	Yes
2021	PORTOLA RD	ALPINE ROAD	Other Visible Injury	Automobile Right of Way	Broadside	No	No
2021	ALPINE RD	LOS TRANCOS RD	Severe Injury	Automobile Right of Way	Other	No	Yes
2021	ALPINE RD	LOS TRANCOS RD	Property Damage Only	Hazardous Parking	Hit Object	No	No

APPENDIX B: SIGHT DISTANCE EXHIBITS & SITE PHOTOS



ATTACHMENT

PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Parisi
TRANSPORTATION CONSULTING

801 Bancroft Way, Ste 203
Berkeley, CA 94710
(916) 343-5000

DATE: 12/23/2022

PROJECT NO: 22038

DRAWING: SD-T-2

SHEET NO: 1 OF 5

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
HAWTHORNS AREA
CURRENT ALPINE ROAD DRIVEWAY

REVISIONS	
NO.	DESCRIPTION



SIGHT DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS PER HDM			
GOVERNING SPEED (MPH)	RIGHT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)	LEFT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)	
35	335	386	
45	430	497	

PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Parisi
TRANSPORTATION CONSULTING

800 Bancroft Way, Ste 203
Berkeley, CA 94710
(916) 343-5000

DATE	DATE	DATE
VM	VM	AL
VM	AL	AL

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
HAWTHORNS AREA
ORIGINAL ALPINE ROAD DRIVEWAY

REVISIONS	
NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



SIGHT DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS PER HDM			
GOVERNING SPEED (MPH)	RIGHT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)	LEFT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)	
35	335	386	
45	430	497	

PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Paris
TRANSPORTATION CONSULTING

800 Bancroft Way, Ste 203
Burlington, MA 01803
(818) 343-5000

DATE: 12/23/2022

BY: [Signature]

DESIGNED: VM

CHECKED: AL

APPROVED: AL

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
HAWTHORNS AREA
POTENTIAL ALPINE ROAD DRIVEWAY

REVISIONS	
NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



SIGHT DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS PER HDM		
GOVERNING SPEED (MPH)	RIGHT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)	LEFT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)
35	335	386
45	430	497

ATTACHMENT



PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

800 Bancroft Way, Ste 203
Berkeley, CA 94710
(916) 343-5000

Parisi
TRANSPORTATION CONSULTING

DATE: 1/10/2022
BY: VM
CHECKED: AL
APPROVED: AL

MIDPENINSULA OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
HAWTHORNS AREA
NORTH LOS TRANCOS ROAD DRIVEWAY

REVISIONS

NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

DATE: 1/10/2022
PROJECT NO.: 22038
DRAWING: SD-4
SHEET NO.: 4 OF 5



SIGHT DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS PER HCM			
GOVERNING SPEED (MPH)	RIGHT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)	LEFT TURN CORNER SIGHT DISTANCE (FT)	
35	335	386	
45	430	497	

PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Parisi
TRANSPORTATION CONSULTING

800 Bancroft Way, Ste 203
San Jose, CA 95128
(408) 345-5000

DATE: 12/23/2022

BY: [Signature]

DESIGNED: VM

CHECKED: AL

APPROVED: AL

MIDPENINSULA OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
HAWTHORNS AREA
SOUTH LOS TRANCOS ROAD DRIVEWAY

REVISIONS	
NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



Hawthorns Area Transportation Study



Current Alpine Rd Driveway Looking East



Current Alpine Rd Driveway Looking West

Hawthorns Area Transportation Study



Original Alpine Rd Driveway Looking East



Original Alpine Rd Driveway Looking West

Hawthorns Area Transportation Study



North Los Trancos Rd Driveway Looking North



North Los Trancos Rd Driveway Looking South

Hawthorns Area Transportation Study



South Los Trancos Rd Driveway Looking North



South Los Trancos Rd Driveway Looking South

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF RELEVANT PLANS AND POLICIES

The following section summarizes planning work undertaken in parallel to the Hawthorns Area study and their potential relevance to the Project.

MIDPEN PROJECTS

Rancho San Antonio Multimodal Access Project

Conducted from 2019 through 2020, the Rancho San Antonio Multimodal Access project explored and evaluated non-motorized mobility, transit options, and parking alternatives for Midpen's Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve in Santa Clara County to encourage visitors to use greener modes of transportation and reduce parking demand and traffic, while maintaining equitable access for both local and regional visitors. The resulting report identified 26 potential TDM strategies that were scored and prioritized. The first priority TDM strategies are the following:

- Bike facilities
- New and improved bike access
- Subsidized ride-hail
- Free or low-cost shuttle service
- Carpool restricted lot
- Dynamic or variable signage

The study report also includes high-level next steps for the prioritized TDM strategies. Several first priority TDM strategies are currently being planned and implemented.

Purisima Creek Redwoods Multimodal Access Project

The Purisima Creek Redwoods Multimodal Access project was commissioned by Midpen in mid-2021 and completed in November 2022. The project's goals were to evaluate the existing parking, access and visitation; identify ways to address high visitor parking and traffic demand, including increasing non-drive modes; and develop an implementation plan for the preferred strategies. High priority travel demand management (TDM) strategies produced by the study include the following measures:

- Parking management: Parking reservations during peak periods. Priority parking for carpools or reserved parking.
- Parking capacity: Configure parking areas to delineate parking stalls to improve parking efficiency.
- Alternative modes: Bicycle parking at trailheads. Shuttles from satellite parking lots.

- Traveler information: Social media outreach to publicize TDM strategies. Real-time parking lot occupancy traveler information.

Applicability to the Hawthorns Area

Both the Rancho San Antonio and Purisima Creek Redwoods Multimodal Access studies provide a framework through which strategies for the Hawthorns Area can be viewed and evaluated. Rancho San Antonio is a well-visited preserve and is located in a more urban setting whereas Purisima Creek is situated in a more rural, coastal area in unincorporated San Mateo County. Certain TDM strategies (or iterations of the strategies) identified for these two preserves may be applicable to the Hawthorns Area based on level of use expected and likelihood of effectiveness.

LOCAL BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLANS

Town of Portola Valley

The following section summarizes the plans, policies and committees that govern multimodal circulation in the Town of Portola Valley; this section also includes references to recent studies commissioned by the Town to address circulation and traffic safety issues.

General Plan

Multimodal circulation in the Town of Portola Valley is governed by the Town General Plan Circulation Element and Trails and Paths Element. Policies relevant to the Hawthorns Area include the Town's desire to emphasize the "country lane" quality of roads to the maximum extent possible while still meeting an acceptable level of safety (3106.1). Alpine Road is identified as a major arterial roadway that should be maintained as a two-lane road within Town Limits (3110) and also as one of two corridors that the Town should monitor for safety problems (Circulation Element Appendix 1).

Town Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety (BPTS) Committee

The Town has a Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety (BPTS) Committee that meets monthly. Based on meeting agendas from 2022, the BPTS meetings typically discuss traffic collisions and citations as reported by the County Sheriff's department, project updates by Town Public Works staff, parking conditions at the Windy Hill Preserve, and public questions. This committee has also discussed the Town's interest in widening and/or realigning the existing Alpine Trail to accommodate better access along the Hawthorns property's frontage on Alpine Road. The Hawthorns Area Plan includes evaluation of a potential trail alignment. The BPTS has an assigned liaison to assist with the Midpen Hawthorns Area Plan project.

Town Trail and Paths Committee

The Town has a Trail and Paths Committee that meets monthly. Based on meeting agendas from 2022, the committee meetings typically discuss maintenance needs on the Town's trail network. The Trails and Paths Committee has an assigned liaison to assist with the Midpen Hawthorns Area Plan project.

BPTS 2019-2020 Safety Study

The Town commissioned a pedestrian safety study in 2019 to identify areas needing safety improvements.³ The Town's consultant, Krupka Consulting, solicited input through interviews with community representatives, from outreach via social media, and at public meetings. The study identified a list of issues and opportunities near schools and on the Alpine Road and Portola Road corridors and developed a list of proposed improvements to address these issues. In the Hawthorns Area vicinity, the Safety Study observed and recommended the following:

- A3 Alpine / Golden Oak (West)
 - Observation: Limited motorist and pedestrian visibility (sight distance) between two reversing curves and conflicts at local street and driveway intersections.
 - Recommendation: crosswalk signs, markings, and rapid flashing beacons
- A4 Alpine / Los Trancos
 - Observation: Conflicts between eastbound drivers making right turns, southbound drivers leaving the Portola Valley Garage, and pedestrians and bicyclists. Overgrown foliage from the northbound Los Trancos Road approach.
 - Recommendations: Advisory and warning signs and lane markings
- A5 Alpine / Portola
 - Observations: Notable pedestrian volumes crossing Portola Road, drivers making "rolling stops" to turn right from Alpine onto Portola Road, and high A.M. commute vehicle traffic demand at the southbound right turn onto Alpine Road. There is an adult crossing guard stationed here during school commute times.
 - Recommendations: crosswalk signs and markings

The Town Council accepted the recommendations of the safety study in August 2019 and directed Town staff to develop improvements for funding in the Town's five-year Capital Improvements Program and apply for grant funding.

Traffic Improvement Projects 2021

Based on the 2019/2020 Safety Study, the Town installed crosswalk signs and pavement markings at nine (9) intersections in 2021, including three locations on Alpine Road, at Portola Road, Corte Madera Drive, and Westridge Drive.⁴ According to BPTS Committee notes from April 2022, nine of

³ <https://www.portolavalley.net/government/town-committees/bicycle-pedestrian-traffic-safety-committee/bpts-2019-2020-safety-study>

⁴ <https://www.portolavalley.net/departments/public-works/traffic-improvement-project>

the 14 locations are complete and the remaining five (5) locations are awaiting rapid flashing beacon installations.⁵

BPTS Portola Road & Willowbrook Drive Parking Study, December 2021.

The Town commissioned a study of parking restrictions at the Portola Road / Willowbrook Drive intersection in response to overflow parking by visitors to Windy Hill Preserve⁶. The study evaluated proposed parking restrictions that included no parking areas denoted by red curb paint and signs, signs advising drivers to avoid parking in the roadway shoulders or trails, and signs indicating allowable off-pavement parking areas.

The study found substantial weekend midday parking demand on Portola Road, Willowbrook Drive and Alpine Road attributed to Windy Hill visitors, with peak parking demand at 10am; the sampled day yielded 30 to 60 parked cars on Portola Road north of Willowbrook Drive and 60 to 90 parked cars in the Willowbrook Drive/Alpine Road area south of the Willowbrook Drive divided road. The count day also showed 120 to 150 bicycles and 50 to 60 pedestrians per hour in both directions on Portola Road, and 10 to 20 bicycles and 20 to 30 pedestrians per hour in both directions on Willowbrook Drive. Both pedestrians and bicyclists tend to use the roadway shoulder, which can lead to intermodal conflicts with drivers making parking maneuvers.

According to the study, the recommendations from the study were either implemented by Town staff in November 2021 or are in the design process.

Applicability to the Hawthorns Area

The Town's ongoing traffic and travel demand management will inform the access design for the Hawthorns Area and identify potential operational issues needing further management.

Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan (2018)

The Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan identifies infrastructure improvements that can enhance bicycle safety and mobility throughout District 4 and remove some of the barriers to bicycling in the region. The Plan was developed in cooperation with local and regional partners to ensure that the improvements on the State Highway system complement proposals for local networks.

Applicability to the Hawthorns Area

The plan identifies Highway 84 as a mid-tier project. Better bicycle connection to areas around Portola Valley could encourage bicycle access to the Hawthorns Area.

The ⁵ <https://www.portolavalley.net/home/showpublisheddocument/16536/637974685171000000>

⁶ <https://www.portolavalley.net/home/showpublisheddocument/15940>

SHUTTLE/TRANSIT

SamTrans – Proximate Transit Routes

Several SamTrans routes currently provide service in the vicinity of the Hawthorns Area and were recently updated following the Reimagine SamTrans planning process. The following is a brief description of their routes and their service.

Route 85

Route 85 is a school-oriented route that provides PM weekday service from Ormondale School to La Honda/Grandview. The bus route serves Woodside and Portola Valley with stops including Portola Valley Town Hall and Skyline Boulevard & La Honda Road. The stop closest to the Hawthorns Area is located at Portola Road & Alpine Road and while this stop may provide opportunities to visit the Hawthorns Area, the route is in operation only on weekdays after school hours so opportunities would be limited.

Route 87

Route 87 is a school-oriented route that provides PM weekday service from Woodside High to Portola Valley. The bus route serves Palo Alto, Portola Valley, Woodside, Atherton, and Menlo Park with stops including Portola Valley Town Hall. The stop closest to the Hawthorns Area is located at Alpine Road & Golden Oak Drive. While this stop may provide opportunities to visit the Hawthorns Area, the route is in operation only on weekdays after school hours so opportunities would be limited.

Applicability to the Preserve

These routes may serve as opportunities to incorporate multimodal travel options to the Hawthorns Area using a combination of transit and other modes. However, it should be acknowledged that operation is limited due to nearby routes being based on after school hours. There is also a partnership opportunity with SamTrans to explore other transit (e.g., microtransit) or shuttle possibilities together.

Hawthorns Area Public Access Framework

Purpose: The Hawthorns Area Public Access Framework outlines proposed natural resource and land management considerations specifically related to public access at the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. Overarching themes informing the framework include diversity, equity, and inclusion; accessibility; climate change; financial sustainability; natural resource protections, the District’s mission; and the Board-approved vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area.

Within the context of the Public Access Framework, the Public Access Working Group will consider:

- Preserve and trail uses
- Parking and driveway access locations
- Trail system pathways, including options for a closed trail network versus an open system connected to other nearby existing trails

Management Areas	Sub-Topics	Public Access Considerations
Natural Resources	Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site public access and facilities to minimize detrimental impacts to vegetation communities (e.g., minimize tree removals, prevent habitat fragmentation and shrub encroachment to historic grassland areas, prevent proliferation of invasive species, etc.). • Avoid siting facilities in a way that would impact special status plant species if found.
	Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site public access elements sensitively to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat and movement, reduce barriers for wildlife (e.g., using wildlife-friendly fencing), and protect wildlife habitat connectivity. • Ensure public access continues to allow for monitoring, protection, and on-site habitat for special status species present.
	Aquatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access in the closed area around Los Trancos Creek and ensure future public access is sited away from the Los Trancos Creek riparian corridor and wetlands.

	Wildfire Resiliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site public access in alignment with the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, ensuring sufficient defensible space and site access for emergency personnel. • Utilize hardened surfaces in parking area material design to reduce likelihood of wildland fire ignitions.
Cultural Resources	Native American Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access in the closed area with known cultural resources and ensure future public access avoids impacts to areas with cultural resource sensitivity. • Conduct tribal consultations as appropriate throughout public access development process.
	Historic Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access to the Historic Complex area until (1) the long-term disposition of the structures has been determined through the Hawthorns Historic Complex Partnership project, and (2) the Historic Complex area and associated uses have been incorporated into the Hawthorns Area Plan. • Ensure future use of the Historic Complex is compatible with public access and other land/resource management considerations.
Aesthetic Resources	Viewsheds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site proposed infrastructure and amenities to minimize effects on viewsheds in the vicinity of the Hawthorns Area. • Site proposed infrastructure and amenities to highlight key vistas visible from the Hawthorns Area, such as the San Francisco Bay and nearby open spaces. • Showcase the Hawthorns Area's natural beauty and internal features for public enjoyment. • Where feasible, use materials complementary of the Hawthorns Area's natural landscape and cultural features.
	Scenic Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site proposed infrastructure and amenities to minimize effects on the Alpine Road Scenic Corridor in alignment with the Town of Portola Valley's Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan.

Public Access	Public Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider adjacent uses, potential user groups, and user perspectives in determining allowable uses within the Hawthorns Area to reduce management, conflict, and safety concerns. • Provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public recreation, including hiking and equestrian access. • Consider allowing bicycle uses along the perimeter of the Hawthorns Area at Alpine Road to connect to regional bicycle accessible trails. • Consider evaluating the site for dog access. • Seek Easy Access trail opportunities where feasible and practical.
	Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the site's topography, vegetation, and other natural features, develop an internal trail system that aligns with the Board-approved Hawthorns Area vision and goals, is financially and operationally sustainable, considers the trail user experience, and strives to accommodate a range of hiking and equestrian abilities. • Explore opportunities for local and regional trail connections. Conversely, consider providing a closed loop trail system within the property boundaries. • Consider opportunities for Easy Access trails. • Seek opportunities to realign the Alpine Road Trail and offer safer passage within the Alpine Road corridor that align with the Board-approved Hawthorns Area vision and goals and minimize impacts to the site's natural resources and public access opportunities.
	Driveways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop driveway(s) accessing future on-site parking with adequate lines of sight and consideration to local traffic and congestion patterns, including adjacent roadways and trails. Consider utilizing existing driveway to access potential parking if practical and feasible and if adequate separation from staff residence is achievable. • Consider relocation of the Alpine Road Trail in designing and/or developing driveways intersecting with Alpine Road.

	Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop on-site parking with surface material and location that aligns with the conservation easement, maintenance needs, and defensible space requirements. • Consider impacts to adjacent roadways and neighbors in locating and developing parking amenities. • Consider the appropriateness of multiple, smaller parking areas versus one large parking area based on existing resources, site conditions, and characteristics. • Consider required stormwater C3 treatments in the selection and development of on-site parking. • Consider accommodating transportation demand management strategies as appropriate (e.g., providing bicycle and/or equestrian amenities to encourage non-automobile access).
	Site Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide benches in select locations to enhance public enjoyment of vista points and other key property features. • Consider a vault toilet at the future on-site parking and consider an associated rain catchment system for resource management use.
	Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure public access amenities include relevant signage where appropriate to guide and inform members of the public (e.g., trail directional signs, a trailhead signboard, interpretative panels, and applicable regulation and resource management signs).
Operations and Maintenance	Gates and Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include perimeter and internal fencing and gates to ensure appropriate public access, site security, aesthetics, and historic resource management goals.
	Staff Residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard privacy for the staff residence to the extent feasible when siting parking and trail infrastructure.
	Roads and Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize use of existing driveways and internal roads required for public access and District operations before developing new driveways and roads.

	Safety and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize gates, fencing, dark sky security lighting as needed, and signage on District property where appropriate to maintain site security and meet public safety objectives in alignment with the District's Good Neighbor Policy. • Site parking area to facilitate law enforcement/ranger patrol and access for emergency response personnel. • Consider impacts to the adjacent Town roadways when siting parking and trail connections (e.g., line of sight, pedestrian safety, etc.).
	Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider restrictions set by the conservation easement regarding improvements to on-site utilities (e.g., no electrical or sewer improvements).
	Environmental Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict public access in the closed area with known environmental hazards and ensure future public access avoids environmental hazards if found.
	Legal Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop public access in alignment with stipulations set forth by the conservation easement held by the Peninsula Open Space Trust. • Explore options for the re-alignment and widening of the Alpine Trail, considering the District and the Town's shared long-term maintenance and operational needs.
	Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider and identify local and regional partnership opportunities that encourage multimodal access to the Hawthorns Area and adjacent open spaces.

Hawthorns Area Working Group Procedural Guide and Ground Rules *Hawthorns Area Plan*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND CHARGE

The purpose of the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (Working Group) is to provide an interactive forum for the District's regional constituency, local neighbors, and different user groups to collaborate with the District and develop a plan to introduce public access at the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (Hawthorns Area) in a manner consistent with the vision and goals adopted by the District's Board of Directors (Board) on March 23, 2022 and the land and natural resource management parameters established by the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report and the Public Access Framework. Feedback on public access options from the Working Group will be considered by the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee, and the PNR Committee will forward their recommendation to the full Board for review and consideration. The Board will make final policy decisions informed by input from both the Working Group and PNR to determine which options to incorporate into the final Hawthorns Area Plan and advance to the environmental review phase per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

1.2 GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The working group will work directly with the District project team to evaluate the following public access components:

- Parking area(s) and driveway location(s)
- Trailhead location(s) and internal trail layout
- Trail connections with the Town of Portola Valley's (Town's) surrounding trails and pathways
- Opportunities for regional trail connections

The working group process will establish the Hawthorns Area Public Access Conceptual Plan Alternatives that will be shared with the PNR Committee prior to distribution to the full Board for consideration. The Public Access Conceptual Plan Alternatives would undergo further refinement to facilitate selection of a Public Access Preferred Alternative by the Board, which would be compiled into the Hawthorns Area Plan and carried forward through environmental review, District project approval, final design, Town permitting, and implementation.

1.3 FORMATION AND TERM

Formation of the working group would be established by the Board and would extend until Board approval of a Public Access Preferred Alternative. This process is expected to begin in summer of 2023 and last approximately 12 months but may be extended for another 6 months as needed. Upon approval of a Public Access Preferred Alternative, the Board would determine whether the working group has fulfilled its charge and, if so deemed, direct the General Manager to dissolve the working group.

2.0 COMPOSITION

Table 1 outlines the proposed Working Group composition, which would consist of nine voting members (four Ward Stakeholders and five Working Group Members) as well as three non-voting members (a District Board Liaison, a Town Liaison, and a Meeting Facilitator). The five Working Group members may represent a single topic area or multiple topic areas, provided that the ultimate composition of the Working Group is balanced in its representation of perspectives. In addition, Working Group members would not be currently serving as a member of the Town of Portola Valley Town Council, Architectural & Site Control Commission, Planning Commission, or any other Town Committee that has advisory or regulatory oversight related to the project.

Table 1 – Working Group Composition

Quantity	Member	Representation	Recruitment Pathway	Voting Member
4	Ward Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County of San Mateo County wards District mission 	Board appointment	Yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County of Santa Clara County wards District mission 		
5	Working Group Members	<i>May represent a single or more of the following perspectives:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource conservation Recreational uses Regional and local trail connections Neighborhoods Safe routes to schools Interpretative/education 	Application	Yes
1	District Board Liaison	District mission and interests	Board appointment	No
1	Town Liaison	Town interests	Town appointment	No
1	Meeting Facilitator	Neutral party	Board appointment	No

2.1 MEMBER VACANCIES

In the event of a working group member vacancy, the vacancy will be filled using the following process:

1. If the vacancy is a Ward Stakeholder, the Board for that ward would select a new representative from the affected County to serve on the Working Group.
2. If the vacancy is a Working Group Member, the Board will appoint a new member to the Working Group from the interviewee list established previously by the Board.
3. If the vacancy is the District Board Liaison, the Board will appoint a new Board Member to the Working Group.
4. If the vacancy is the Town Liaison, the Town will appoint a new member to the Working Group.

3.0 NON-VOTING MEMBER ROLES

3.1 DISTRICT BOARD LIAISON

The District's Board President will appoint one Board liaison not currently on the District's PNR Committee to the Working Group to represent the District's mission and interests, answer questions about District policy, and function as a conduit between the Board and the Working Group. The Board liaison will attend all meetings, participate in conversations, and conduct homework assignments, but will not vote in working group decisions. The liaison will also provide updates to the full Board at their regularly scheduled meetings.

3.2 TOWN LIAISON

The District will work with Town staff to invite one member from the Town Council or a Commission to join the working group as a non-voting member. Together with non-voting Town staff, the Town liaison will represent the Town's interests, answer questions regarding Town policy, and if needed, function as a conduit between the Town and the District.

3.3 DISTRICT PROJECT TEAM AND TOWN STAFF

District staff and consultants will coordinate, host, and facilitate the Working Group's activities in a non-voting capacity. Town staff will be welcome to attend to observe and clarify questions pertaining to Town policies and resources.

4.0 GROUND RULES

The Working Group members shall strive for a collaborative, constructive process with active participation of all members in discussing issues and shall honor the following ground rules to ensure open and productive discussions:

1. Attend scheduled meetings. Working Group members shall strive to attend each scheduled meeting. Working Group members who cannot attend a meeting shall call or email the Working Group Co-Chairs and District staff liaison or District Clerk at least two working days prior to the meeting. Two consecutive absences and up to three total indicate an inability to serve and may result in removal and/or replacement from the Working Group by the Board of Directors. Working Group members who are unable to attend a particular meeting but would like to share their views on agenda topics have two options:

- a. They can submit written comments to District staff 24 to 48 hours before the meeting to be shared with Working Group members at the meeting, or
- b. They can ask another Working Group member to make comments on their behalf.

2. Attend scheduled site visits. Site visits are key to understanding the Preserve's suite of opportunities and constraints with regard to providing parking and trailhead access. Working Group members shall strive to attend each site visit. No more than one site visit can be missed.

3. Participate in meeting discussions. Working Group members will read each packet of meeting documents before the scheduled meeting and come prepared to engage in discussions.

4. Keep an open mind and be respectful. Working Group members will keep an open mind and remain respectful of the opinions expressed by fellow Working Group members, the public, and information presented by the District project team.

5. Represent stakeholder perspectives. Working Group members represent and will actively and constructively voice the interests and concerns of their respective community and/or stakeholder groups.

6. Work together towards solutions. Working Group members will hold each other accountable to work together towards solutions for the project that meet the Board-approved project goals and objectives.

7. Avoid sidebar conversations. Working Group members will avoid side conversations, which may detract from the meeting.

8. Avoid repetition. Working Group members will express their points and avoid continuing to reiterate the same points. If Working Group members share viewpoints previously raised by another Working Group member, they shall note the shared opinion and avoid otherwise repeating the points to help move the process forward.

9. Take space, make space. Working Group members will speak up to make their points and avoid dominating the conversation.

10. Be a liaison to the public. Working Group members will be available to hear from and discuss interests and concerns about the project with members of the public. Working Group members will remain alert to issues, problems, and needs expressed by the public, neighbors, and special interest groups and will raise these to the Working Group. Working Group members will also strive to keep their communities informed of the work and progress of the Working Group.

11. Provide feedback to the District's Planning and Natural Resources Committee through the Working Group Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs of the Working Group will present feedback from the Working Group to the PNR Committee.

Although the Working Group will strive for consensus, if consensus is not reached, the Co-Chairs will present differing views, e.g., majority and minority views.

12. Provide opportunities during meetings for members of the public in attendance to address the Working Group.

Working Group meetings and site tours will be open to the public. Working Group members will remain open to hear from the public about the project.

13. Have fun. Enjoy the process and learn from each other.

5.0 MEETING OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Working Group shall conduct its meetings as described below.

1. Adoption of Ground Rules and Operating Procedures. At the first meeting, the Working Group shall review, modify as necessary, and adopt the Procedural Guide and Ground Rules.

2. Co-Chairs. The Working Group shall select two Co-Chairs who will be responsible for presenting feedback from the Working Group to the PNR about the project. One Co-Chair will be a resident of the Town, while the other Co-Chair would represent regional perspectives. Board members on the Working Group would not serve as Co-Chairs. See additional responsibilities under the Co-Chair Responsibilities and Decision-Making Process sections below.

3. Frequency. The Working Group will meet approximately a minimum of five to seven times, but the timeline and process may extend to a meeting every six to eight weeks over the course of 12 to 18 months depending on the Working Group's progress. Meeting dates and times may need to change or be added due to unforeseen situations such as inclement weather conditions.

4. Quorum. A quorum (five members) of the nine voting members of the Working Group must be present to transact business.

5. Agendas and materials. Agendas will be developed by District staff and reviewed by the Working Group Co-Chairs. Agendas and materials will be posted on the District website at least 72 hours before each meeting. One notification of the meeting schedule will be distributed to interested parties and the Portola Valley area via mail and email. Thereafter, notifications will be sent only in the event of a schedule change.

6. Public participation. Members of the public may speak during public comment periods provided at each meeting, one at the beginning of the meeting and another to be held at the discretion of the Working Group Co-Chairs. A handout with rules for public participation will be available at all meetings.

7. Motions for a vote. If a vote is needed, motions for a vote may be made by any voting member of the Working Group. All motions must be seconded by a different member of the Working Group.

8. Facilitation. A facilitator and District staff will work together to facilitate the meetings. The Co-Chairs will assist with running the meeting and ensuring order, flow, and adherence to the Working Group Purpose and Charge as well as Procedural Guide and Ground Rules. Meetings will be run by the Co-Chairs, or in the absence of the Co-Chairs by District staff, consistent with the Procedural Guide and Ground Rules and general rules of professional courtesy.

9. Meeting summaries. The facilitator and District staff will prepare meeting summaries, which will include recommendations made by the Working Group. With the exception of the last summary prepared after the last Working Group meeting, meeting summaries from Working Group meetings are approved at the following meeting of the Working Group, transmitted to the Board, and made available on the District website. The last summary that follows the dissolution of the Working Group would be provided to the Working Group, Board liaison and Town liaison by email to review and would be then approved by the PNR or Board.

6.0 CO-CHAIR SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

The Co-Chairs will alternate facilitating Working Group meeting operating procedures, such as stepping through the agenda, calling for votes, calling for public comment, and calling for respect towards their fellow Working Group members as appropriate. When one Co-Chair is leading the meeting, the other will serve as a secondary facilitator and support as needed. Both Co-Chairs should be present at all Working Group meetings; however, in the event one is unable to attend, another Working Group member will be selected by the group to serve as secondary Co-Chair. In addition to the regular Working Group meetings, Co-Chairs will attend meetings with District staff to prepare for and debrief each meeting. The Co-Chairs will assist with the preparation of the meeting summary(ies) that document the Working Group's final discussion and recommendations.

7.0 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The Working Group shall strive for making decisions and recommendations through a consensus-based process, as described below. Throughout the process, when the Working Group is ready to make a formal vote, the Co-Chairs have the responsibility to ensure that the interaction remains orderly.

7.1 PROCEDURE FOR SEEKING CONSENSUS PRIOR TO OFFICIAL VOTING

The Working Group shall strive for full member participation in discussing issues in order to make decisions through a consensus-based process. Consensus is defined as general agreement by all members of the Working Group present at the meeting when a decision item is on the meeting agenda.

Prior to conducting an official or formal vote on items, the Working Group will first hold informal voting to test the level of support for a proposal by employing a tool called the Gradients of Agreement. The intent is to determine what, if anything, may be modified or proposed to gain a higher level of consensus prior to official voting. The Gradients of Agreement are a mechanism for testing the level of agreement on a proposal that expands on the traditional "yes" or "no" voting. The Gradients of Agreement are typically described as follows:

1	I can say an unqualified "yes" to the recommendation.
2	I find the proposal acceptable. It appears to be the best of the available options at this time.
3	I can live with the proposal, although I am not especially enthusiastic about it.
4	I do not fully agree with the proposal, but I am willing to stand aside, remain neutral, so the process can move forward.
5	I do not fully agree with the proposal. I have some suggestions and I would like the working group to do more work to see if we can reach a higher level of agreement.
6	I do not agree with the proposal, and I will work actively to oppose it.

Values from 1 to 4 on the Gradients of Agreement are considered supportive of a proposal. Full consensus is reached if all members are between a 1 and 4 on the Gradients of Agreement scale. Majority consensus is reached if a simple majority of all members are between 1 and 4 on the Gradients of Agreement scale.

During the informal voting process, the Working Group may discuss and deliberate each proposal and offer potential modifications or alternatives to gain a higher level of consensus. During this process, the Working Group may also determine if any proposals, alternatives, or modifications require additional study by staff, at which point informal voting will pause and resume at a subsequent meeting once staff complete the additional work. The informal voting process ends when a Co-Chair calls for a formal vote (see Section 7.2); this typically occurs after the first or second round of informal voting, when there is a clear majority and no requests for alternatives or modifications have been raised. If there are no signs of members changing their level of support despite alternatives or modifications, a Co-Chair will call for a formal vote after three rounds of informal voting, regardless of the level of consensus reached.

7.2 OFFICIAL VOTING

Official voting will employ the Gradients of Agreement described above. After attempting to seek consensus through the aforementioned informal voting process, a Co-Chair may call for a formal vote. A simple majority of the quorum present is needed for a proposal to pass and be recommended to the PNR Committee. A consensus is desired, but not necessary, for the official vote.

Final voting results will then be forwarded to the PNR Committee.

7.3 WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Group will provide recommendations to the PNR Committee. The meeting summaries shall include the results of each of the proposals voted on by the Working Group. The total results for each of the proposals receiving votes from the members of the Working Group shall be presented to the PNR Committee. The PNR Committee will then make recommendations to the full Board, who will make final policy decisions.

Hawthorns Area Working Group
Application Form
Hawthorns Area Plan

Please print or type. Hard copies are available at Midpen's administrative office at 5050 El Camino Real, Los Altos upon request. *[Pending Board approval, staff will add application due date and portal information.]*

Why do you want to serve on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group?

As a public agency, Midpen strives for inclusivity in our public input processes. Please check all of following open space interest areas that apply to you.

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian | <input type="checkbox"/> Mountain Biking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local resident | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Access | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

Please tell us about any community groups or organizations you are involved with and your level of participation
(Examples: Sierra Club – member and hike participant, Silicon Valley Mountain Bikers – member)

What experience, qualifications, expertise, and/or specialized knowledge do you bring to the Working Group?

If you have served on other working groups, committees or advisory boards/commissions, please list and briefly describe your role.

How often do you visit Midpen preserves?

- ☐ Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Which preserves do you visit and why?

Do you currently visit Windy Hill Open Space Preserve? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How would opening the Hawthorns Area change your use or visitation to local and regional open spaces?

Are you currently serving as a member of the Town of Portola Valley Town Council, Architectural & Site Control Commission, Planning Commission, or any other Town Committee? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Active participation and consistent attendance will be important to ensure the Working Group is able to make informed recommendations. If selected to serve on the Working Group, would you have the capacity and willingness to participate in regular in-person meetings and site tours over a 12 - 18 month time span? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please provide two references, including name, phone number, and relationship.

How did you hear about this recruitment? Check all that apply.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midpen website | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member or friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer | <input type="checkbox"/> Midpen e-mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midpen mailing | <input type="checkbox"/> Community bulletin | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

By submitting and signing this application, I acknowledge that I have sufficient time to devote to this responsibility and plan to attend the scheduled meetings if I am appointed to fill a spot on the Public Access Working Group.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Occupation: _____

Street Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____
(if different from Street)

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Thank you for your interest in the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group. We appreciate your interest in the District.

Please submit your application online at: [application portal] or by email or mail to:

La Honda Public Access Working Group
c/o Maria Soria, District Clerk
5050 El Camino Real
Los Altos, CA 94022
(650) 625-6544
clerk@openspace.org

Hawthorns Area Working Group
Application Review Criteria Form
Hawthorns Area Plan

Applicant: _____

Criteria	Applicant Qualifications	Additional Notes
Place of residence (local or regional perspective relative to Hawthorns Area)		
Reasons for wanting to serve on the working group and work on the Hawthorns Area Plan project		
Open space interests (such as resource conservation, recreational uses, regional and local trail connections, neighborhoods, safe routes to schools, and/or interpretative/education)		
Prior experience participating in advisory boards, community groups, or organizations		
Additional qualifications, expertise, or specialized knowledge that would enhance the working group		
Regular visitor of District preserves and/or familiarity with the District as an agency, District preserves generally, Windy Hill specifically, and the Hawthorns Area		

Criteria	Applicant Qualifications	Additional Notes
Testimony of capacity and commitment to the working group if selected		
Two professional and/or character references		
Confirmation that applicant is not currently an elected or appointed Town of Portola Valley official with discretionary or advisory authority over the project		