



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PROCUREMENT AGENDA ITEM

R-26-94
Meeting 26-17
June 24, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 6

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract for Environmental Review Services for the Hawthorns Area Plan at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with SWCA to provide environmental review services for the Hawthorns Area Plan for a base contract amount not to exceed \$326,415.
2. Authorize a 15% contingency of \$48,962 to cover unforeseen tasks beyond the current scope.
3. Authorize a \$70,962 contract allowance for additional technical assessments, revisions, and reviews, if determined to be necessary, and additional engagement and coordination with the Town of Portola Valley to complete environmental review, for a combined not-to-exceed contract amount of \$446,339.

DISCUSSION

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) is developing the Hawthorns Area Plan (Project), a comprehensive use and management plan, for the Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. The Project is a multiyear planning effort to open the 79-acre property to the public. The property is located in the Town of Portola Valley (Town) and is subject to a conservation easement that allows low intensity, ecologically sensitive recreation and defines limits on potential future development. With Phases 1 (Vision and Goals), 2 (Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints) and 3 (Programming/Conceptual Planning) complete, the project is currently in the second half of Phase 4 (Area Plan/Environmental Review).

On May 6, 2026, the Board of Directors accepted the draft Hawthorns Area Plan Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs as the basis for the project description to conduct environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). To complete this CEQA work, the District needs to retain a qualified consultant to develop the environmental analysis for the and prepare the appropriate level of documentation as well as technical studies.

BUDGET / FISCAL IMPACT

The 2026-27 fiscal year budget for project MAA06-002 Hawthorns Area Plan contains:

- sufficient funds.

- insufficient funds; the next quarterly budget update will include a reallocation of unspent funds from other budgets to cover for this expenditure.
- insufficient funds; approval of this item requires a fiscal year budget augmentation.
- future fiscal year budgets will include additional funds to complete the contracted work.

Measure AA

- No, this contract is not part of a Measure AA project.
- Yes, this contract is part of a Measure AA project.

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.

MAA06-002 Hawthorns Area Plan Portfolio	
Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$12,740,000
Projected Expenditures (Life of Project):	
06-002 Hawthorns Area Plan	(\$1,206,240)
06-003 Hawthorns Area Plan Implementation - Parking Area	(\$2,871,000)
06-004 Hawthorns Area Plan Implementation - Trails Development	(\$390,637)
Total Projected Expenditures:	(\$4,467,877)
Proposed Portfolio Amount Remaining:	\$8,272,123

PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND SELECTION

On April 9, 2026, staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to three prequalified firms from the District’s list of prequalified CEQA consultant firms. The District held a mandatory site visit on April 20, 2026, to familiarize proposers with the property and provide an opportunity for questions. Responses to questions were provided in Addendum #1 that was shared with the firms on April 30, 2026. Proposals were due on May 8, 2026. The District received two proposals (Table 1).

Table 1 - Proposals Received in Response to the RFP

Consultant	Location	Proposed Fee
SWCA	Half Moon Bay, CA	Base: \$326,415* With Allowance Tasks: \$70,962*
Placeworks	Berkeley, CA	Base: \$288,798* With Allowance Tasks: \$49,989*

*This fee amount reflects adjustments made based on clarifications to consultant’s original proposal.

Staff evaluated the proposals using criteria outlined in the RFP, including the quality and completeness of the proposal, implementation approach, and demonstrated understanding of the

project's goals and challenges. The recommendation is to enter into an agreement with SWCA, who was deemed to be the most qualified and best suited for the project at a fair and reasonable price. SWCA assembled a robust team with a wide range of technical expertise, demonstrated a strong understanding of the project's complexity, and offered a thoughtful, methodical, and strategic approach to environmental review.

SWCA's CEQA Lead brings over 25 years of professional experience managing complex CEQA processes in the Bay Area. The project team also includes cultural and biological resource specialists, as well as the traffic subconsultant Parametrix, ensuring a diverse set of professional expertise for the effort. The firm brings relevant experience with similar open space public access projects with the District and other local public agencies. Examples of SWCA's environmental review projects include: Half Moon Bay's Smith Field Improvements, a new public park and aquatic center with a parking lot for the City of South San Francisco; Del Paso Regional Park Renfree Field Renovation Project for Sacramento County; and the Town of Los Gatos Vegetation Management Plan. The firm also maintains on-call professional consultant services with the City of Half Moon Bay, City of Mountain View, and County of Santa Clara.

Additionally, SWCA's proposal identified several essential tasks necessary to complete environmental review, including compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, support in the AB52 Tribal Consultation process, attendance at necessary public meetings, and completion of all draft and final environmental review deliverables. The scope's allowance includes, if deemed necessary, an updated transportation analysis, tree survey, and visual simulations, additional review and revision time for preparation of EIR-related deliverables and additional engagement and coordination with the Town of Portola Valley. SWCA showed appropriate levels of staff time and expertise to support public meetings, as well as respond to public comments on the environmental document. The firm's overall experience and thoughtful proposal demonstrated their aptitude to successfully complete environmental review for the Hawthorns Area Plan. In order to secure these services for a fair and reasonable price, the project team further negotiated a 6% reduction to arrive at a proposed contract amount of \$326,415.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION SUPPORTING THE PROJECT

- **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](#))
- **March 21, 2023:** PNR reviewed the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition and formation strategy. ([R-23-35](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **April 26, 2023:** Board approved the Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report, Existing Transportation Conditions Technical Memo, Public Access Framework, and the Public Access Working Group composition and formation strategy. ([R-23-44](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **June 21, 2023:** Board interviewed and selected candidates as Interest Area Representatives on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group ([R-23-69](#))
- **June 28, 2023:** Board appointed members to serve on the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group ([R-23-75](#), [meeting minutes](#)).
- **August 9, 2023:** Board approved the award of contract with CSW|ST2 to provide preliminary site plan and conceptual design services for the Hawthorns Area Plan. ([R-23-78](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **February 14, 2024:** Board approved the amendment of contracts with Parametrix (transportation consultant, formerly Parisi Transportation Consulting) and PGAdesign (PAWG facilitator). ([R-24-17](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **September 17, 2024:** PNR reviewed the PAWG recommendations, made no modifications, and supported the next step of presenting the recommendations to the Town before returning to a Study Session of the Board. ([R-24-115](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **February 26, 2025:** At this Study Session, Board reviewed the PAWG recommendations and public feedback and directed staff to return to a regular meeting of the Board for consideration and approval of the recommendations with any modifications requested by the Board. ([R-25-23](#), [meeting minutes](#)).
- **March 12, 2025:** Board reviewed and approved public access recommendations. ([R-25-33](#), [meeting minutes](#)).
- **July 23, 2025:** Board approved the award of contract with CSW|ST2 to provide schematic design services for the Hawthorns Area Plan ([R-25-100](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **March 27, 2026:** PNR reviewed the Hawthorns Area Plan Draft Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs for Consideration as the Basis for the Project Description to Conduct Environmental Review ([R-26-35](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **May 6, 2026:** Board reviewed and approved the Hawthorns Area Plan Action Table and Schematic Parking Designs as the Basis for the Project Description to Conduct Environmental Review ([R-26-59](#), [meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act and to the Hawthorns, Windy Hill Preserve, and Coal Creek Preserve Interested Parties list.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The scope associated with the contract under Board consideration includes completion of the necessary environmental review under CEQA for the implementation of the actions associated with the Hawthorns Area Plan. The Board will have the opportunity to review and consider the draft Comprehensive Use and Management Plan and environmental review findings at a future Board meeting.

NEXT STEPS

Following Board approval, the General Manager will execute a contract with SWCA to complete environmental review as required under CEQA based on the tentative schedule outlined below.

Phase	Tentative Schedule
Project Kickoff and Background Information Review	Summer 2026
Project Description Development	Fall 2026
Notice of Preparation Issued and Public Scoping Meeting	Fall/Winter 2026
CEQA Draft Document Public Review Period	Summer 2027
Public Hearing for CEQA Certification and Project Approval	Fall/Winter 2027

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