



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## **PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

R-15-32

March 10, 2015

### **AGENDA ITEM 3**

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Proposed Approach for Conducting the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study

#### **GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

Review and confirm the proposed approach of the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study, including:

- a. Project goals
- b. Phase 1: Site and Opportunities/Constraints Analysis of each facility, including selection of top two staff facilities with the highest priority needs for further study
- c. Phase 2: Feasibility Studies of top two facilities with consultant service support
- d. Phase 3: Interim Solutions for lower priority facilities

#### **SUMMARY**

A proposed approach for conducting the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study is being presented to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) to kick-off the project and ensure that the proposed approach is supported by the PNR before staff proceeds with implementation. The proposed approach would (1) identify the broad, high level capacity issues with existing staff facilities, (2) include meaningful feasibility studies that provide order of magnitude costs, (3) ensure alignment with the Board on desired outcomes and permissible cost ranges for staff facility projects, and (4) lead to recommended short-term interim solutions while pursuing long term solutions. The proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16 Budget includes sufficient funds to conduct the study.

#### **BACKGROUND**

With the successful passage of Measure AA in June 2014, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) anticipates increased staff growth agency-wide to effectively deliver Measure AA projects while fulfilling other core functions and meeting the Board of Directors' (Board) direction to expedite the implementation of public access projects. The District is also simultaneously preparing itself for an agency-wide restructuring, which includes the formation of new departments and divisions, for the purpose of increasing internal efficiencies and building the necessary business systems to support and sustain the substantial ramp up in project delivery. It is clear, however, that existing staff facilities cannot accommodate the additional staff growth and reorganization over the medium to long-term. If left unchanged, the existing configuration and space limitation of staff facilities would significantly impede the District's ability to pursue

aggressive project timelines and successfully transition fully into the new organizational structure.

## **DISCUSSION**

The District operates four (4) main staff facilities:

1. Administrative Office (comprised of AO, AO2, and AO3) in Los Altos
2. Foothills Field Office (FFO) in Cupertino
3. Skyline Field Office (SFO) in Santa Clara County (note: septic system is in San Mateo County)
4. South Area Outpost (SAO) in Los Gatos

Each facility has its own history and unique site opportunities and challenges, and they share a central theme—each has been gradually expanded, remodeled, and used more intensely than originally intended and originally designed. This increased intensity of use has been managed over the years, but there are now fundamental constraints at each facility that would ultimately impede the District's ability to ramp up the staff capacity needed to implement the expanded work program brought on by Measure AA.

The expansion and/or increased maximization of these facilities is affected by various factors, including: (1) limitations of existing infrastructure, e.g. water and septic systems, (2) increased staffing numbers that exceed the available work space and storage, and (3) lack of space and capacity to accommodate staff growth and associated infrastructure or equipment.

The Financial and Operational Sustainability Model (FOSM) includes recommendations for streamlining work flow and project delivery processes, as well as a new staffing structure to improve business systems and additional staffing to provide the needed capacity and support to manage the larger project workload. The FOSM is also reconfiguring department layouts and reporting structures. These recommendations are critical to informing the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study (Study). Equally important will be the anticipated deployment of current and prospective staff to various regions/office locations and the associated facility needs for each site. As part of the Study, the District will also need to think strategically about potential new locations for staff facilities, and the purpose and ultimate build-out of these facilities.

## **DISCUSSION**

In light of the anticipated organizational changes coming from FOSM, including the potential need to accommodate as many as 40 new positions over the next three (3) years, the District is expected to make significant changes to its workplace environment while ensuring effective internal and external customer service from its administration and field offices. To this effect, the Action Plan for FY2015-16 includes implementation of the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study. To effectively kick-off the project and the planning process, the General Manager seeks PNR consensus on the Proposed Project Goals and Proposed Approach:

### Proposed Project Goals:

1. Utilize forward looking and creative approaches for evaluating and designing each facility.
2. Build in sufficient capacity for the duration of a facility's expected lifetime.
3. Optimize staff deployment.
4. Strive to locate within proximity to public transportation or major thoroughfares.

5. Seek flexible and adaptable options to meet evolving needs.
6. Pursue cost-effective and sustainable design and construction options.

### Proposed Approach

#### ***Phase 1: Site and Opportunities/Constraints Analyses***

To begin Phase I of the Study, the General Manager recommends a comprehensive Site Analysis and subsequent Opportunities and Constraints Analysis of the four staff facilities to identify priorities, confirm the top two facilities to address first, and preliminary cost implications. As part of this work, preliminary research would encompass: (1) an evaluation of the capacity, constraints, and issues of each facility, (2) an evaluation of potential alternative sites, and (3) key findings. Staff would conduct this analysis which would build upon and update the existing baseline information that was assembled during prior facilities analysis work done in 2009 and 2010. Findings would be presented to the PNR to confirm the goals and vision for staff facilities, discuss conceptual cost implications, and recommend consultant services for the feasibility studies as the next steps for the two highest priority District facilities (Phase 2).

#### ***Phase 2: Feasibility Studies***

Feasibility studies for the two highest priority facilities would entail the assistance of outside consultants to fully assess code requirements, other related issues, and site constraints that may impact the expansion potential of each site. The Study would also evaluate the feasibility and desirability of other potential alternate sites.

Based on current information, it is reasonable to assume that the AO and SAO may be selected as the top two priority facilities for improvements, particularly since these sites may experience the largest amount of immediate new staff growth. If the AO and SAO are confirmed as the top two facilities, the feasibility study may include an evaluation of the following options:

#### AO options:

1. Demolish the existing AO and build a larger building on site with underground parking.
2. Rent or sell the AO and find a new lease space to relocate the entire AO staff.
3. Sell the AO and purchase a new location to construct a new facility.

#### SAO options:

1. Demolish the existing SAO and rebuild a new facility on site.
2. Select a new location nearby and build a new facility.
3. Repurpose the existing SAO for Visitor Services and build a new facility for Land and Facilities.

Phase 2 is envisioned to be an iterative process with the PNR and Board as key milestones are reached. The range of costs is expected to be highly variable, depending on the options above, and may range upwards of \$25M for the AO and \$3M for a fully built out SAO. If the SAO is split between two sites, costs would likely increase.

#### ***Phase 3: Interim Solutions for Lower Priority Facilities***

Due to the inherent long term, multi-year phases of large facility capital projects, the General Manager recommends pursuing interim improvement measures for lower priority facilities to effectively scale up and address immediate needs while long term solutions are analyzed and implemented. Staff would evaluate and recommend to the Board short term solutions which may include: (1) implementing immediate, high priority improvements and maintenance work at SFO (SFO analysis and immediate projects would be discussed at a subsequent PNR meeting), (2)

buying and installing a mobile trailer for the SAO as a temporary office to accommodate additional staff, which will be needed when Mt. Umunhum opens, and (3) potentially utilizing a mobile trailer at a temporary outpost to deploy a subset of SFO staff to the coast, which will be important with the opening of additional areas in La Honda OSP. These proposed actions permit the District to not only pursue more lasting, longer term facility projects that have more comprehensive benefits, but also scale up in the short-term and effectively deploy staffing to deliver and manage Measure AA projects.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Planning Department's FY2015-16 Budget includes \$169,000 for the District-wide Long-term Staff Facilities Study. The Controller's Report to the Board on the proposed FY2015-16 Budget projected \$30 million for new staff facilities over 30 years.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

### **CEQA COMPLIANCE**

No compliance is required as this action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Future actions to implement staff facility improvements would be subject to CEQA review.

### **NEXT STEPS**

If recommended by the PNR, the General Manager will direct staff to proceed with the Site and Opportunities and Constraints Analyses of the four staff facilities, and return to the PNR in the fall 2015 to discuss initial findings and recommend the two top priority facilities for the Phase 2 Feasibility Study.

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