



Hawthorns Area of Windy Hill Preserve Public Access Working Group



Photo Credit: Midpen Staff

Meeting #3 – Design Discussion

October 2023



Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group
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Hawthorns Area Plan

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Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

August 26, 2023

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Hawthorns Property
4411 Alpine Road
Portola Valley, CA 94028**

ROLL CALL

Tina Hugg, Senior Planner, called the meeting of the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group (PAWG) to order at 9:05 a.m. Ms. Hugg introduced Project Planners and meeting facilitator, Cathy Garrett. She also shared the purpose of the site visit.

PAWG Members Present (✓) or Absent (x):

Board Director	✓ Margaret MacNiven, Ward 6
Town Liaison	✓ Sarah Wernikoff
Interest Area Representative	✓ Bryna Chang x Tyler Feld ✓ Charlie Krenz ✓ Rachel Oslund ✓ David Smernoff ✓ Karen Vahtra
Ward stakeholders	✓ Ward 1: Scott Mosher ✓ Ward 2: Vivian Neou ✓ Ward 3: Willie Wool x Ward 4: Sandy Sommer ✓ Ward 5: Jeff Greenfield ✓ Ward 6: Helen Quinn ✓ Ward 7: Kerry De Benedetti

District Staff Present:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✓ Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager | ✓ Mari Lanka, Administrative Assistant |
| ✓ Jane Mark, Planning Manager | ✓ Galli Basson, Planner III |
| ✓ Tina Hugg, Senior Planner | ✓ Ari Camponuri, Ecologist I |
| ✓ Bryan Apple, Capital Projects Field Manager | ✓ Natalie Jolly, Public Affairs Specialist II |
| ✓ Ashely Mac Planner III | ✓ Chris Barresi, Area Superintendent |
| ✓ Gretchen Laustsen, Senior Planner | ✓ Bill Dornbach, Planning Intern |
| ✓ Jared Hart, Senior Planner | ✓ Rachel Frost, Planning Intern |

PGAdesign Facilitator: Cathy Garrett

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were seven questions from the public, all specific to the Hawthorns PAWG project. Topics are expanded upon under the heading Working Group Business as all topics were discussed later in the site visit. Topics included:

- Project timeline
- Hawthorns Area users, specifically types of users and extent of bicyclist trails
- The extent of parking
- Fencing of the Hawthorns property

WORKING GROUP BUSINESS

PAWG members unanimously approved the July 27, 2023 Meeting #1 Summary.

The site visit consisted of seven stops where site-specific issues could be observed; then the group returned to Stop #1 making it an eighth stop.

A map presented to the PAWG members showed the location of the seven stops and a conceptual location of a possible loop trail (see Attachment 1). This trail has yet to be designed. Comments gathered at the meeting will inform Midpen's trail designers when they refine the proposed loop trail.

The project team explained that the Historic Complex portion of the site is not part of the PAWG's purview, as long term uses for that area are being studied under a separate planning process.

Staff shared background information on the site and project. Portions of the Public Access Framework, as relevant to the site, were touched on including:

- Legal Arrangements (easement)
- Parking and Partnerships
- Public Use
- Trails
- Safety and Security
- Driveways
- Scenic Corridor
- Gates and Fencing
- Utilities
- Site Amenities
- Topography
- View Sheds
- Wildfire Resilience
- Native American Resources
- Historic Complex
- Environmental and Hazards
- Aquatic Resources

At various times during the site tour, PAWG members raised overarching questions about balancing public access with Midpen's mission for resource protection and preservation. This will be a crux consideration for the PAWG.

Weighing potentially competing uses with habitat protection, fire safety, enhanced public access etc. is the typical challenge with all Midpen's preserve planning processes for public recreation, which includes trails, parking areas, and connections to local and regional trails. These different goals can be very difficult to balance. The PAWG will discuss these challenging issues and to evaluate the tradeoffs. While the goal is to strive for the best solution given the constraints and

site considerations, the PAWG also needs to think about the experiences that are desirable at the Hawthorns property.

Questions were asked at the stops, particularly at Stop #s 2, 4, 6 and the return to Stop #1 at the close of the tour and the following summarizes the discussion during the site visit, organized by broad topic.

1. TRAILS – Alpine Trail

- Alpine Trail, located along the northeastern boundary of the Hawthorns property along Alpine Road, is a designated Safe Route to School. Some view it having the qualities of a sidewalk along Alpine Road.
- In 2015, the Town requested that Midpen consider relocating the existing Alpine Trail in order to address the Town’s concerns about unsafe steep slopes immediately adjacent to Alpine Road and its fast-moving traffic.
- The realignment of the Alpine Trail has not yet been determined and the design, fence line, public safety, and security will be among the topics of future discussions and negotiations with the Town. However, in concept, a relocated Alpine Trail would replace the existing Alpine Trail. Options for the relocation of Alpine Trail could include an alignment that remains parallel with the existing route but offset inboard of the property line or one that moves deeper within the Hawthorns property if site conditions allow.
- Realignment options will need to consider existing site constraints including steep topography, dense vegetation, and existing trees along the frontage. In addition, they will need to consider the location of any new driveways, the parking lot, trailhead and internal trail system within the property.
- Other considerations include hours of operation. Like other Midpen preserves, the Hawthorns Area would be open one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset while in contrast, the Alpine Trail would need to be publicly available at all times. In concept, the Alpine Trail would need to be located outside the fenced preserve. Relocation of the existing fence line (see Safety/Security below) would be included with future realignment considerations of the Alpine Trail.
- Whether there should be opportunities for the Alpine Trail to connect to the internal trail system was discussed.
- Also discussed was whether two trails are needed: one within the preserve serving as recreational amenity parallel to another outside the fence serving as a commute corridor, or whether one could fulfill both functions.

2. TRAILS – Trails within the Hawthorns property including loop trail

- The proposed internal loop trail is estimated to be approximately 1.4 miles long. It is not intended to be visible from Alpine Road.
- The loop trail is envisioned to take the visitor around the property including near the knoll that is the high point of the property. The trail may be viewed within the treeline to minimize visibility from nearby residences in Portola Valley Ranch.
- The loop trail may have spur trails connecting to the knoll.
- There were questions about integrating the existing ranch roads into the internal loop trail system. Midpen will evaluate opportunities and present additional information to the PAWG.

- Preventing off-trail use of the existing road was discussed as well as where Midpen prohibits off-trail use. El Corte de Madera Preserve and the Mindego Ranch area of Russian Ridge Preserve are examples of preserves that prohibit off-trail use due to resource considerations. Off-trail use is evaluated during the trails planning process with consideration towards protection of natural resources. Appropriate trail infrastructure would be used to manage or prevent off-trail use.
- The possibility of more trail(s) than just a loop trail was raised.
- Because there are limited opportunities for children to bicycle around town, consider trails that are suited to children on bikes, perhaps a smaller loop trail.
- Consider possible future trail connections from the trail loop system to the Historic Complex for use when the latter is opened.

3. TRAILS – Connection to trails outside the Hawthorns property

- While there are no regional trails like the Bay Area Ridge Trail, Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, or San Francisco Bay Trail near the Hawthorns Area, there may be potential long-term future connections that can link the Hawthorns property to nearby open spaces such as Pearson-Arastradero Preserve. The challenge for the Town will be trail access over private properties.
- A consideration will be to connect the Hawthorns property to existing Town trails such as Sweet Springs Trail in Portola Valley Ranch, while bearing in mind the potential impact to neighborhoods.
- The goal is to limit potential impacts on local streets due to parking.
- A suggestion was made for a reasonably open perimeter to the Hawthorns site so that visitors can readily gain access to it.
- A suggestion was made for safe equestrian access linking Hawthorns to the Town's equestrian trails.

4. PRESERVE USERS

- Possible trail users at the Hawthorns property for the PAWG to evaluate include: hikers, dogs and dog walkers (leashed or unleashed), bicyclists, kids on bikes, and equestrians. Some selection of these users may be appropriate, or all of them. The PAWG would be asked to provide strong rationale to Midpen's Planning and Natural Resources Committee for recommended uses.
- Some voiced support for multiuse trails serving all users. Others requested that bicyclists have access to fire roads but not single-track trails, which would be marked for hikers.
- Portola Valley is well regarded for its many equestrian trails and Hawthorns, being in the middle of this network, could link to all of these trails. In of itself, Hawthorns and its loop trail would be too small for equestrians who can ride between 10 to 15 miles.
- When considering linking to adjacent trails, consider the uses that those trails allow, e.g. Sweet Springs Trail allows dogs but not bikes.
- Opinions differed on whether the Hawthorns property would be largely used by locals or by visitors from further afield. Some felt Hawthorns may attract more local than regional users, while others thought that, as Midpen serves a broad area, it is likely to be both.

5. PARKING AND CIRCULATION

- The PAWG will need to consider what is the appropriate size of a parking area, its location, and what types of visitors will use it. No fixed number of parking places is yet established; there are physical and environmental constraints within the 79-acre preserve that limit parking opportunities. Midpen looks to avoid and minimize parking impacts on the natural resources.
- All proposed parking will be on Midpen's property.
- The Conservation Easement defines an "Improved" area where any proposed site improvements, including parking, would need to be sited in areas.
- The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards must be met for accessible parking and an accessible path of travel to nearby amenities must be provided at a minimum e.g. trailhead signage and restroom. Midpen aims to provide some amount of easy access trail though a fully accessible trail is likely not feasible based on the site topography.
- The parking area will be designed for proper drainage, runoff and erosion control.
- Alpine Road being a Town-designated 'scenic corridor', adequate screening of parking will be a consideration. The Town has a 75-foot setback from the property line for structures along Alpine Road.
- Locations under consideration for parking are along Alpine Road or in the interior of the site adjacent to an existing grassy meadow.
- Pros and cons of each location were discussed and will need to be weighed by the PAWG. The interior of the site is not visible from Alpine Road but could negatively affect the meadow. The area along Alpine Road will keep cars at the perimeter of the site where it might be visible from the road. Topography in this area will limit the number of cars that can be accommodated. In both locations, natural resources should be considered.
- Concerns about potential overflow parking were raised and will need to be considered by the PAWG.
- Concern arose about parking being used by users not intending to visit Hawthorns but instead using it to stage for a long ride or hike. This also raised concern about possible overflow parking and how it might affect the streets and neighborhoods in the surrounding area.
- The Town's Housing Element identifies several hundred new homes to be developed along Alpine Road, which should be considered when providing public access at Hawthorns.
- There was support for including a vault toilet as part of the project as well as concerns about the volume of non-Hawthorns users who could use it.
- Equestrian trailer parking is provided at several Midpen open space preserves (El Corte de Madera, Bear Creek Redwoods, and Rancho San Antonio). Adding trailer parking spaces would expand the footprint of the parking area or reduce the number of standard spaces due to the amount of space required for trailer parking and circulation. The PAWG will need to assess the feasibility of offering equestrian parking at this constrained site.
- The PAWG was asked to consider accommodating buses for school groups or visitors from the broader spectrum of communities as well as flexible parking lot designs that can accommodate horse trailers or buses at different times.
- A phased parking approach was raised where a smaller lot would be design and built with a second phase identified, designed, and permitted, ready to be implemented if the demand is greater than the initial lot can accommodate.

- The parking design will include wayfinding and interpretive signage.

6. DRIVEWAY ACCESS

- Access into the property will be via Alpine Road.
- Los Trancos Road is not being considered for public access because of inadequate sight lines for general public access, a riparian corridor around Los Trancos Creek makes access challenging, and the Historic Complex is not currently part of public access considerations.
- Considerations for driveway access are safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists; turning radii for proposed vehicular access; slopes; sight lines; and the amount of room to stack arriving cars to avoid impacts vehicular and bicycle traffic on Alpine Road.
- The existing drive to the existing Midpen staff residence is very steep and may be a limitation as a means of access to a proposed parking area location.
- Motorists and bicyclists drive/ride at considerable speeds on Alpine Road.

7. SAFETY/SECURITY

- For the PAWG's consideration is the Town's fire evacuation routes, which are Alpine Road and Portola Road. Neither the design of the parking area nor visitors to the Hawthorns property should impede evacuation routes.
- The safety of children and others who currently use the Alpine Trail is a major reason to consider its relocation further away from Alpine Road.
- Pelotons of bicyclists ride swiftly on Alpine Road and are a factor in safe movement of vehicles into and out of the Hawthorns property.
- The Hawthorns Area is currently fenced and like other Midpen preserves, would be closed from dusk to dawn. Wildlife friendly fencing is designed with a raised and smooth bottom wire to allow for safe movement of wildlife.

8. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Regarding management for wildfire reduction, Midpen's Board of Directors approved a Wildland Fire Resiliency Program which prescribes vegetation management for Midpen's preserves. Midpen is balancing wildfire resiliency with grassland management for ecosystem value. Most grasses, including at Hawthorns, are non-native yet still provide habitat value.
- Midpen meets Woodside Fire Protection District's requirements for fire management, discing of fire breaks, fuel management etc. Much of the maintenance work Midpen is currently doing on the Hawthorns property is at the request of the Woodside Fire Protection District.
- Where there are resources or habitat (e.g. dusky footed woodrat nests), site improvements including trails may be sited to avoid them.
- When weighing potential impacts, Midpen's resource management policies direct projects to avoid impacts where possible. If not possible, the goal is to minimize any potential impacts. As a last resort, a project may have some impacts that would need to be mitigated. Depending on the type of habitat, type of species and area of impact, some of these mitigation measures are mandated by regulatory agencies.

- Horse manure from equestrians is not seen as an environmental threat at Hawthorns as a whole, though it may have potential water quality impacts for trails potentially sited near Los Trancos Creek. Prior property owners kept horses on the property.
- 9. PLANNING PROCESS AND PROJECT TIME-LINE**
- The planning and environmental review process for the Hawthorns Area Plan is expected to take approximately five years. The project is currently in the third year. The implementation phase would initiate in the sixth year, after the environmental review phase is complete, and would involve design development, permitting, construction documentation, bidding and construction, which could span two or more years. The Town's review and permitting process will influence the timeline and during each stage of the project, numerous unanticipated factors will likely come into play, which could potentially further delay the opening the property to the public.
 - The design, funding and management of the realignment of the Alpine Trail will entail future discussions and negotiation between Midpen and the Town; the trail relocation was initially proposed and requested by the Town in 2014.

10. PARTICIPANTS AND REPRESENTATION OF HAWTHORNERS USERS

- The two PAWG representatives who are Town residents are Karen Vahtra and Helen Quinn.
- Vice-Mayor Sarah Wernikoff described the Town's involvement and process including the recent setting up of an Ad Hoc Committee to be the communication liaison between Midpen and the Town Committees. Ad Hoc Committee members are welcome to attend PAWG meetings.
- It was suggested to invite the Woodside Fire Protection District representatives to the PAWG meetings.
- There was interest in having the PAWG members walk the proposed internal trails. Since the trail does not yet exist and there are areas of the site that are challenging to access and where habitats are vulnerable, staff offered to provide a video of the proposed trail route to both the PAWG and the public.

MEETING HOMEWORK

Review the materials provided in the packet to prepare for the October 26, 2023 PAWG meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments were received from ten (10) members of the public in addition to continued questions and discussion by PAWG members. Public comments provided during the tour were incorporated into the summary above and included the following topics:

- Fire evacuation routes from the Town
- Wildland fire resiliency management efforts by Midpen
- Possible public access from Los Trancos Road and connection to the Historic Complex
- The possibility of more than a loop trail being implemented and potential public use of existing road
- Connection to the existing Town trail network such as Sweet Springs trail

- Concerns about possible overflow parking onto public streets
- Potentially vulnerable habitats
- Safe routes to school for kids on bikes, trails within Hawthorns serving the needs of children
- A preference for multi-use trails at Hawthorns considering bicyclists, equestrians, hikers, and dog walkers
- Observation that Alpine Trail currently provides a connection between Windy Hills Preserve and Hawthorns and between Corte Madera School and Alpine Hills Tennis & Swimming Club
- Concern for improving drainage as water runs off Alpine Road and to improve drainage on the Alpine Trail
- Underground parking structure as a solution (not permitted by Conservation Easement)
- A Portola Valley Ranch resident thanked Midpen for a wonderful tour and for the carefulness of the process.

As public comments bear directly on the body of the discussion during the site tour, the details of the comments received by the public during the second Public Comment period have been woven into the summary above.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Note: The Alpine Road Trail design is subject to pending property rights negotiations.



US Feet
0 125 250



Hawthorns Conceptual Trail Diagram

- Hawthorns area property line
- Alpine Trail proposed realignment
- Conceptual Hawthorns Loop Trail
- Town trail

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Hawthorns PAWG Meeting #2 Site Tour
August 26, 2023 9 a.m.

1. Meadow
2. Alpine Road Frontage
3. Alpine Road Trail
4. Existing Driveway Entrance
5. View Point #1
6. View Point #2
7. Historic Home

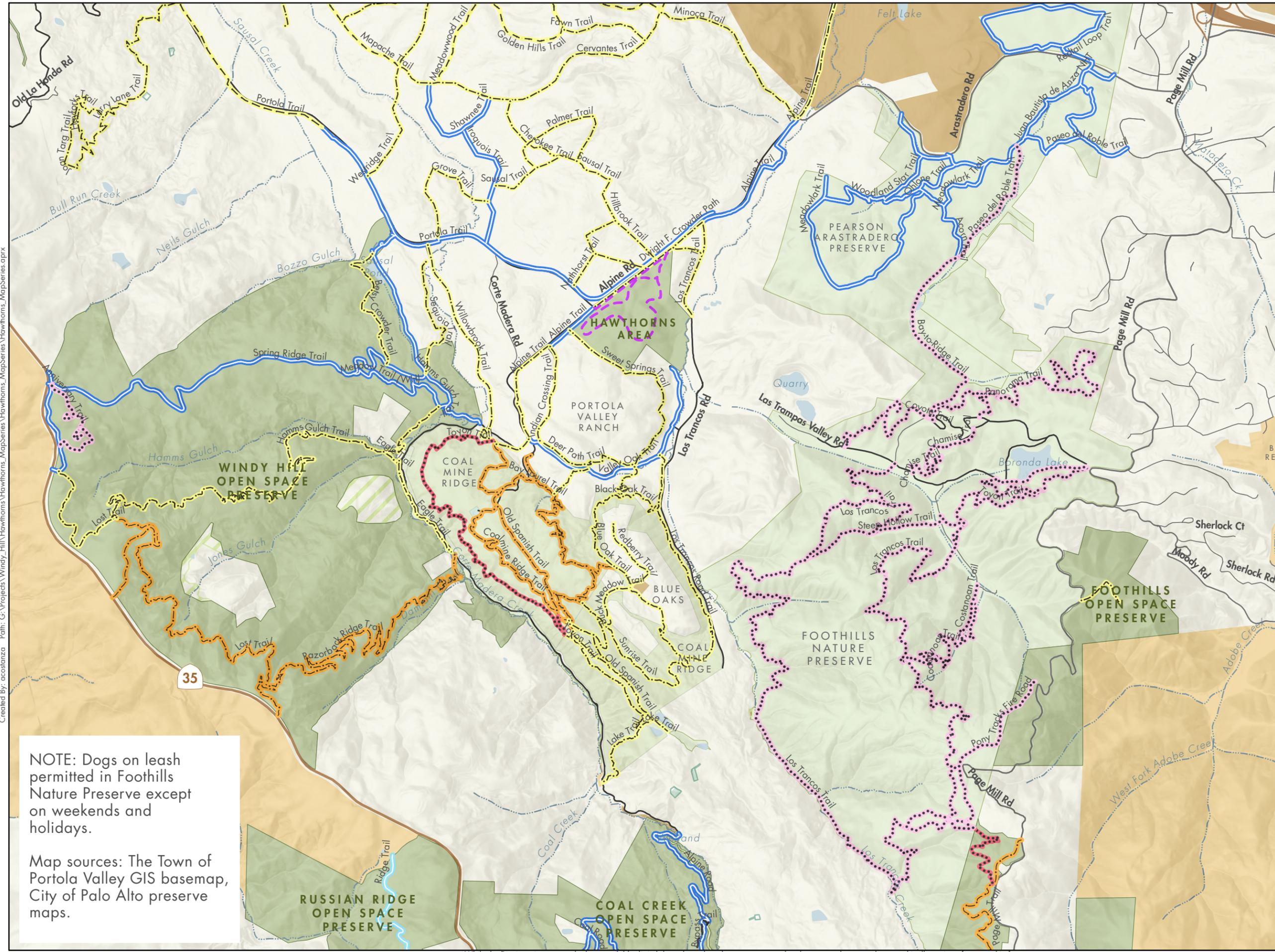


Hawthorns Area Regional Trail Map

- Midpen preserve
- Other protected open space
- Minor roads
- Paved roads
- Stream
- Conceptual Trail

Trail use type

- Pedestrian Trail, Dogs On leash
- Pedestrian Trail, No Dogs
- Pedestrian & Equestrian Trail Dogs On Leash
- Pedestrian & Equestrian Trail No Dogs
- Pedestrian, Bicycle & Equestrian Trail Dogs On Leash
- Pedestrian, Bicycle & Equestrian Trail No Dogs



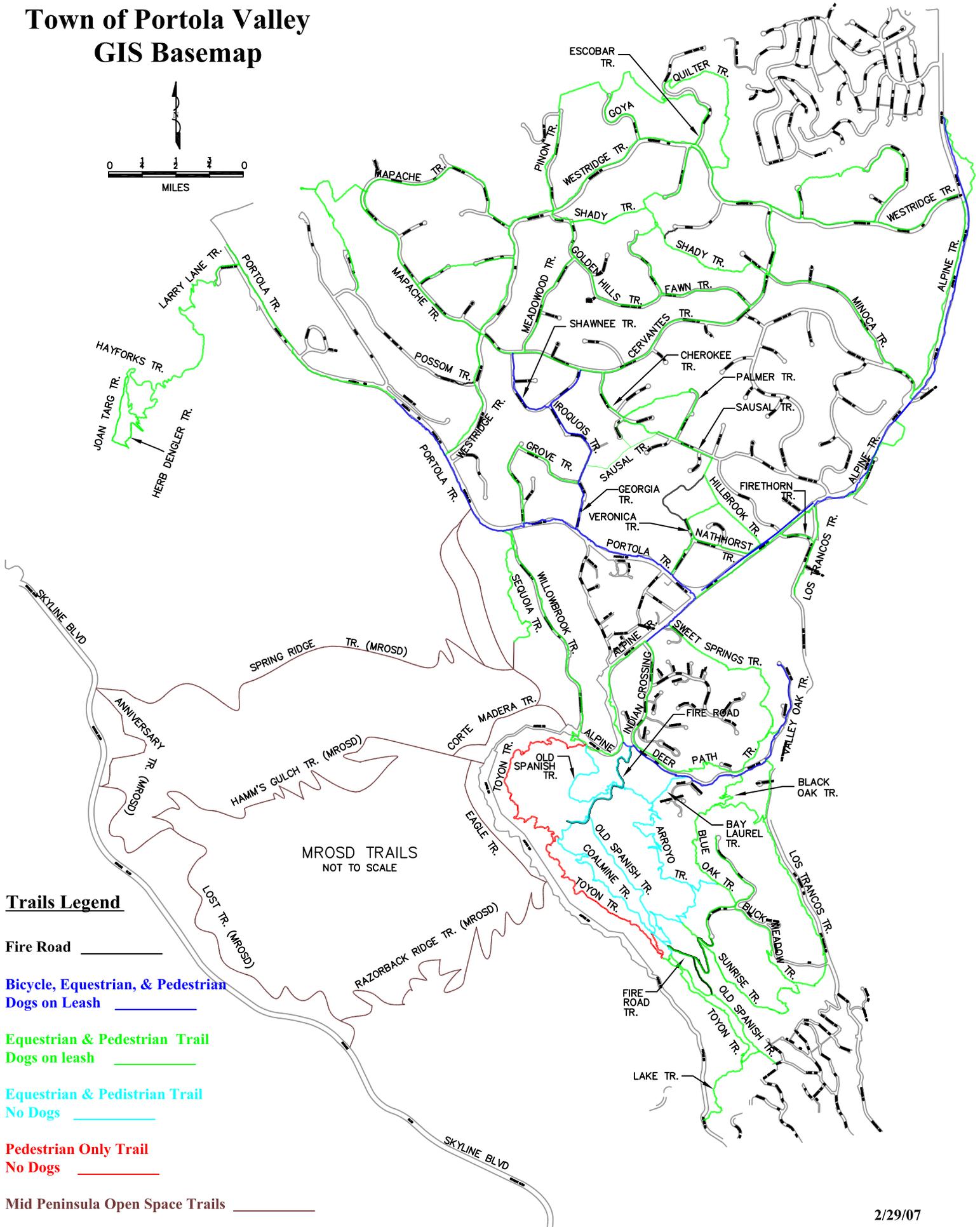
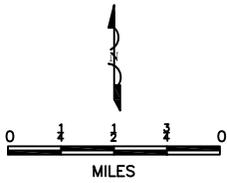
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NOTE: Dogs on leash permitted in Foothills Nature Preserve except on weekends and holidays.

Map sources: The Town of Portola Valley GIS basemap, City of Palo Alto preserve maps.

While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.

Town of Portola Valley GIS Basemap



Trails Legend

Fire Road _____

Bicycle, Equestrian, & Pedestrian
Dogs on Leash _____

Equestrian & Pedestrian Trail
Dogs on Leash _____

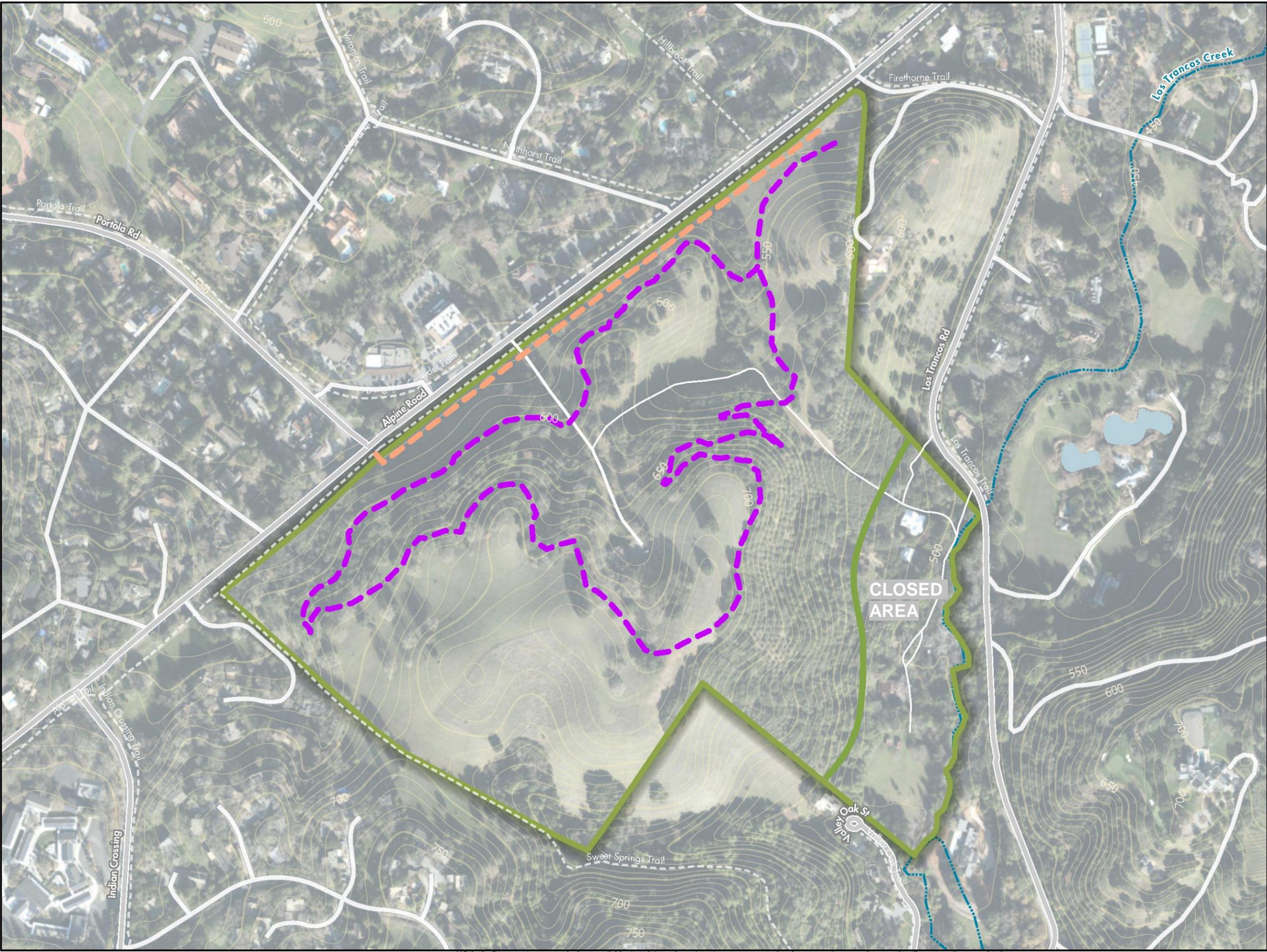
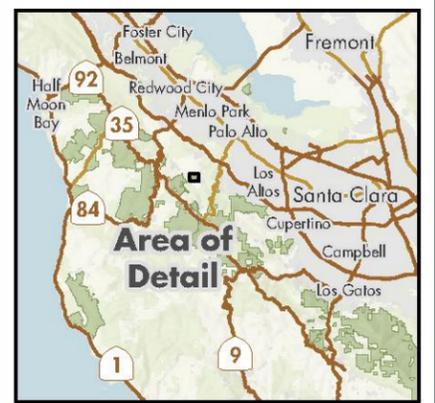
Equestrian & Pedestrian Trail
No Dogs _____

Pedestrian Only Trail
No Dogs _____

Mid Peninsula Open Space Trails _____

MROSD TRAILS
NOT TO SCALE

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Hawthorns Conceptual Trail Diagram

-  Hawthorns area property line
-  Alpine Trail conceptual realignment
-  Conceptual Loop Trail
-  Town trail

*The conceptual loop trail alignment is to avoid all identified constraints including the following:

- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Aesthetic Resources
- Public Access
- Operations and Maintenance

** The Alpine Road Trail design is subject to pending property rights negotiations in future phases.

While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group

Existing Conditions

Hawthorns Area Plan

Existing Condition Videos and Photos of Concept Trail Alignment

These visual resources serve as a research tool for members of the Public Access Working Group (PAWG) to gain a deeper understanding of the site existing conditions.

It is important to note that the project is currently in its conceptual planning phase, and **no trail has been established yet**. There can be unanticipated site conditions that affect the trail alignment as it is further refined. The video recordings trace the future potential alignment of the proposed loop trail. Project staff has made diligent efforts to navigate through dense vegetation, including areas with an abundance of Poison Oak and uneven rugged terrain. Please know that the actual trail experience will be different as the vegetation will be brushed and cleared during construction. The video recordings follow a counterclockwise direction.

In terms of design considerations, the goal for the trail loop is to maintain a running grade of 5 - 8%. An additional goal of this trail alignment is to avoid all constraints identified on the Constraints Map within the Existing Conditions Opportunities and Constraints Report.

Here are links to videos and photos illustrating the current site conditions.

Video 1: <https://youtu.be/IMJjrBOONm0>

Video 2: <https://youtu.be/GKu8pgdUSFw>

Video 3: <https://youtu.be/ub9qoy6Cfz8>

Video 4: <https://youtu.be/a-yMP0CuDuA>

Video 5: <https://youtu.be/HpE96Zglwvg>

Photo 1: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/vYFYPqKu93biEyt9A>

Photo 2: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/MneKtWdrXyw3KVEq6>



Hawthorns Area Transportation Study – Parking Demand Analysis

October 20, 2023

FINAL

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1. Parking Demand Analysis

A. Collected Data

This parking demand analysis is based on various sources of data collected as part of this project. This data includes: existing parking lot utilization at entrances to the Windy Hill and Thornewood preserves; transportation mode share and trends collected from big-data sources prior to and following the COVID pandemic; responses to the public survey; and review of industry publications on parking demand.

B. Analysis

A very common practice when estimating parking demand is to utilize the Institute of Transportation Engineer’s Trip and Parking Generation Manual. This publication contains data from previously performed parking surveys and categorizes it based on the type of destination. The current version of this publication (11th Edition) does not have a category for open space preserve, but it has a category for a Public Park (Land Use Code: 411). However, the data sample size for this category is small and has a large range (0.17 – 5.08 vehicles/acre). Therefore it was decided that this would not be a reliable method of estimating parking demand at the Hawthorns Area. Instead the data that was collected locally would be a better starting point for the parking demand calculations.

The entrance to the Hawthorns Area will most likely be situated along Alpine Road and, as such, be in close proximity to the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve entrances along Portola Road (main parking lot) and the Alpine Road Trailhead. It is assumed that, although the Hawthorns Area is much smaller than Windy Hill, with a regionally connected trail network the recreation options will be similar to what is offered at Windy Hill. This assumption would cover the conditions that would generate the highest demand at the Hawthorns Area. It is further assumed that the time for peak visitation demand at the Hawthorns Area will be consistent with the peak demand time observed Windy Hill. This was observed to be mid-day on weekends. The observed parking demand at the Windy Hill main entrance and Alpine Road trailhead are therefore used as the starting point for the Hawthorns Area parking demand. This demand was observed during two separate times and is summarized in Table 1 below.

Preserve Entrance	Oct 2022	May 2023
Windy Hill Main Parking Lot:	60	42
Alpine Road (including Willowbrook Drive):	51	72
Total:	111	114

TABLE 1 OBSERVED PEAK PARKING DEMAND (WEEKEND MID-DAY)

It is assumed that the trails in the Hawthorns Area will be connected regionally to other trails. This will allow for longer hikes like what is currently possible at Windy Hill. For highest use scenario, this analysis assumes that other recreational uses (biking, dog walking, equestrian etc.) will be similar to that of Windy Hill and thus no change to the peak parking demand would be expected due to the recreational opportunities that exist at both locations. Therefore the peak parking demand observed at Windy Hill (114) will be the starting point for estimating the peak parking demand at the Hawthorns Area. However, as described below, a number of factors will decrease or increase demand.

Pedestrian access to the main entrance of Windy Hill is very limited and therefore it is assumed that there is not a significant amount of visitor demand beyond what was observed during the parking utilization data collection. On the other hand, during the public survey about 37% responded that they would walk or bike to access the Hawthorns Area. That difference in mode split will reduce the amount of vehicle parking demand for Hawthorns from 114 to 72.

The addition of the Hawthorns Area will increase the amount of open space accessible to the public. This increase in supply could induce additional total peak use demand in the area. This is supported by the fact that capacity at the Alpine Road entrance is exceeded during peak visitation times and potential visitors could be deterred. The lack of parking was also the primary complaint received from survey respondents. Based on observations of overflow parking at Windy Hill this increase in total peak use demand stemming from the addition of the Hawthorns Area and associated parking lot is assumed to be in the range of 15-35% and results in a peak demand of 83-97.

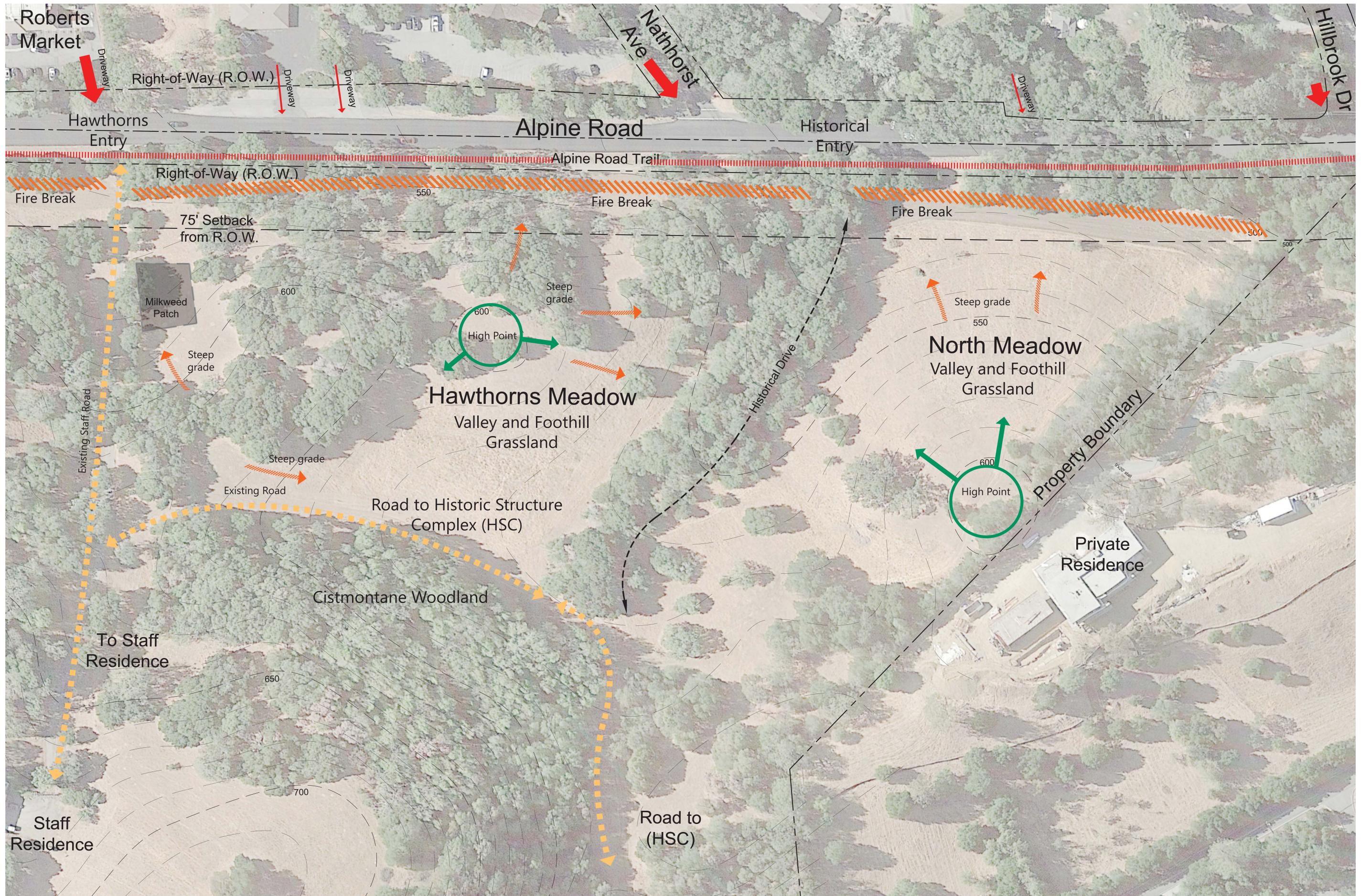
However, that total demand is now also distributed between both Windy Hill and the Hawthorns Area. It is assumed that the Hawthorns Area will attract between 30-70% of the overall visitors. The remainder is assumed to visit Windy Hill. That results in a reduction of the peak demand at the Hawthorns Area to a range of 25-68. These calculations steps are summarized in Table 2 below.

	Impact on Demand	Peak Parking Demand
Existing Windy Hill Peak Parking Demand:	N/A	114
Greater number of visitors arriving by foot or bicycle at Hawthorns Area:	-37%	72
Increased visitation demand due to opening of Hawthorns Area:	(+15% to +35%)	83-97
Some people will still elect to visit Windy Hill:	(-70% to -30%)	25-68
Final Hawthorns Area Peak Parking Demand:		25-68

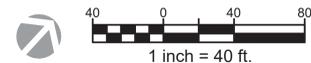
TABLE 2 PARKING DEMAND CALCULATION

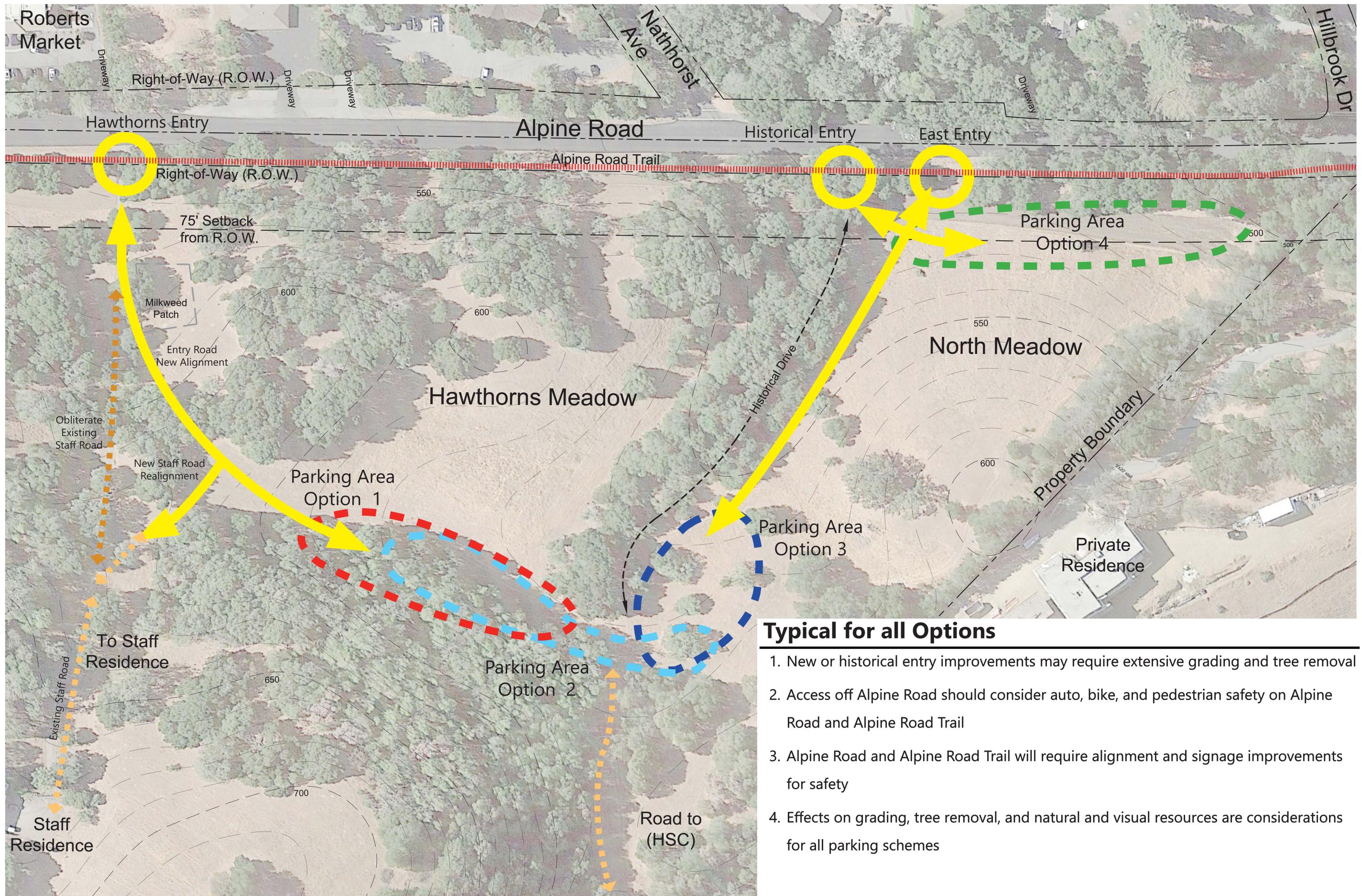
C. Recommendation

With all these factors considered, the estimated peak parking demand for the Hawthorns Area is between 25 to 68 vehicles. Vehicle parking is not all that should be accommodated in the parking lot. Almost 20% of survey respondents indicating that they would access the Hawthorns Area by bicycle. Amenities for this group of visitors should also be included and this aligns with Midpen’s goal of promoting visitor access by means other than personal automobile. Therefore, in addition to vehicle parking spaces, it is also recommended that bicycle parking in the amount of at least 15 spaces be incorporated into the parking lot design.



HAWTHORNS AREA - SITE INVENTORY



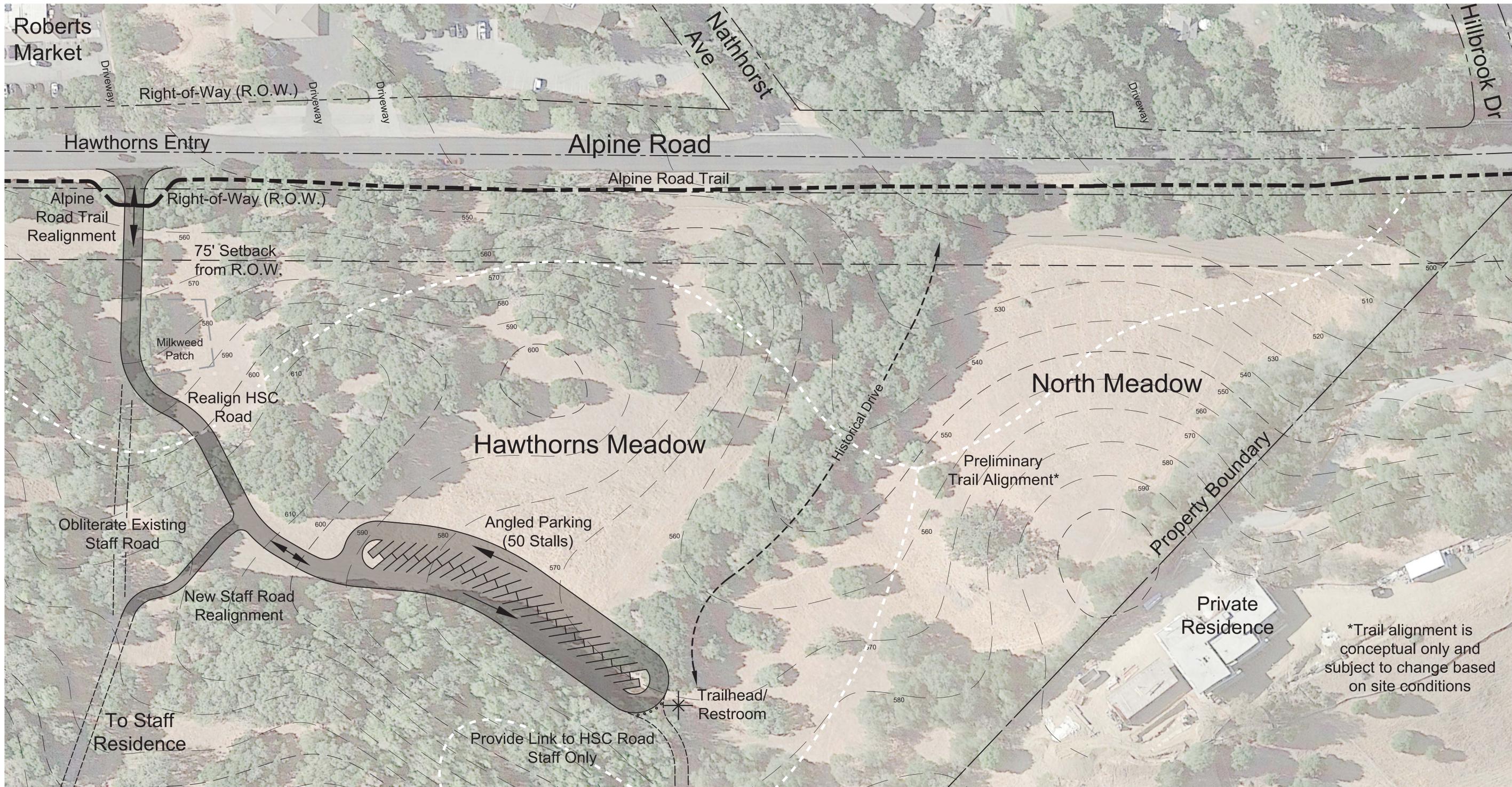


Typical for all Options

1. New or historical entry improvements may require extensive grading and tree removal
2. Access off Alpine Road should consider auto, bike, and pedestrian safety on Alpine Road and Alpine Road Trail
3. Alpine Road and Alpine Road Trail will require alignment and signage improvements for safety
4. Effects on grading, tree removal, and natural and visual resources are considerations for all parking schemes

HAWTHORNS AREA - SITE CONSTRAINTS FOR ALL PARKING OPTIONS





*Trail alignment is conceptual only and subject to change based on site conditions

PROS

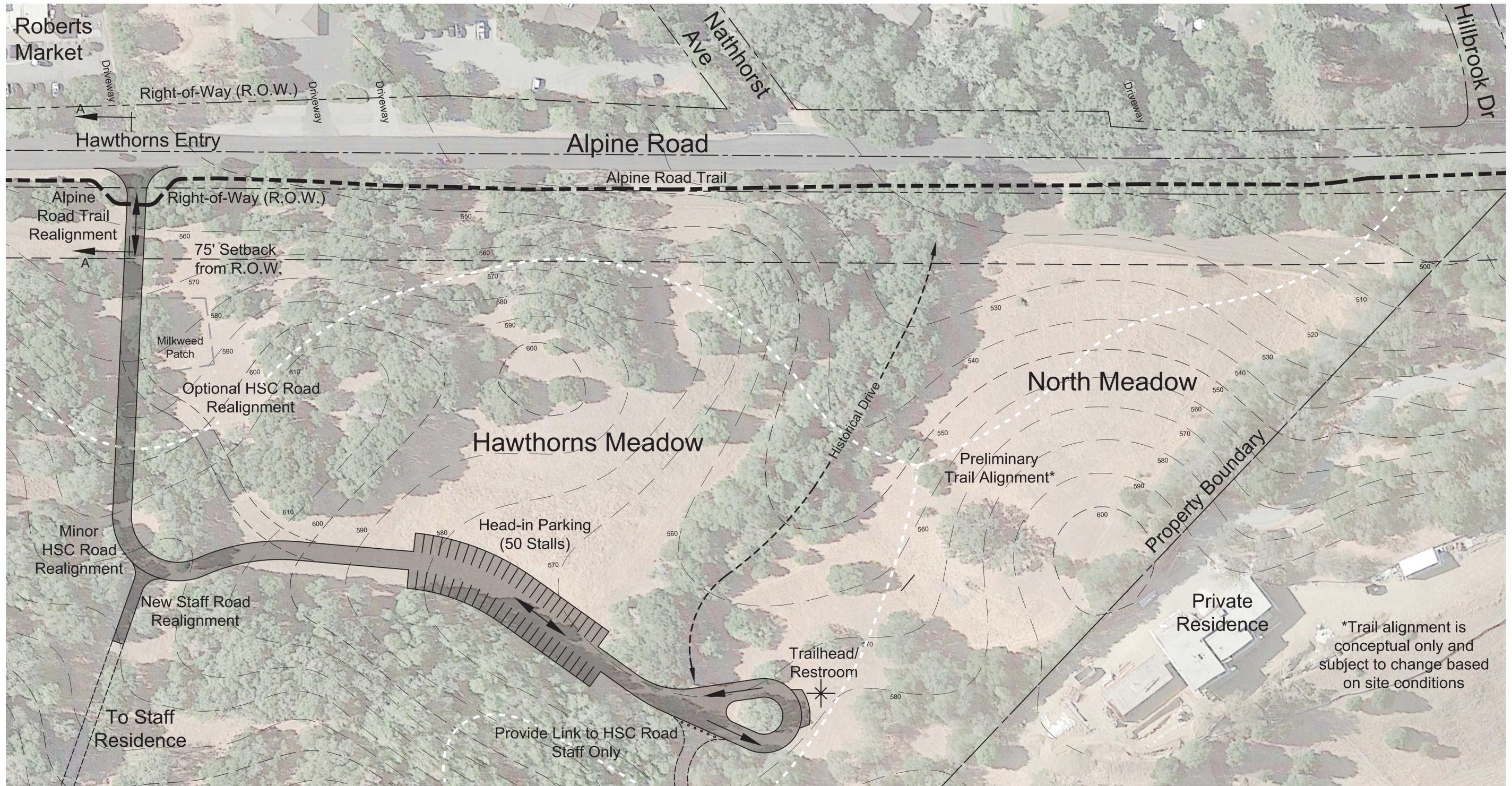
1. Uses 4411 Alpine Road Driveway Entry while realigning Staff Road to heighten site and parking surveillance
2. Topography and oak trees shelter parking off HSC Road
3. No Habitat disturbance to North Meadow

CONS

1. Sheltered parking area not surveillable by Police/Fire off Alpine Road
2. Large parking layout affects Hawthorns Meadow and HSC Road
3. Parking layout encroaches on steep topography
4. Entry Road slope approach 20%
5. Grading extends into Hawthorns Meadow

HAWTHORNS AREA - OPTION 1 SCHEMATIC





*Trail alignment is conceptual only and subject to change based on site conditions

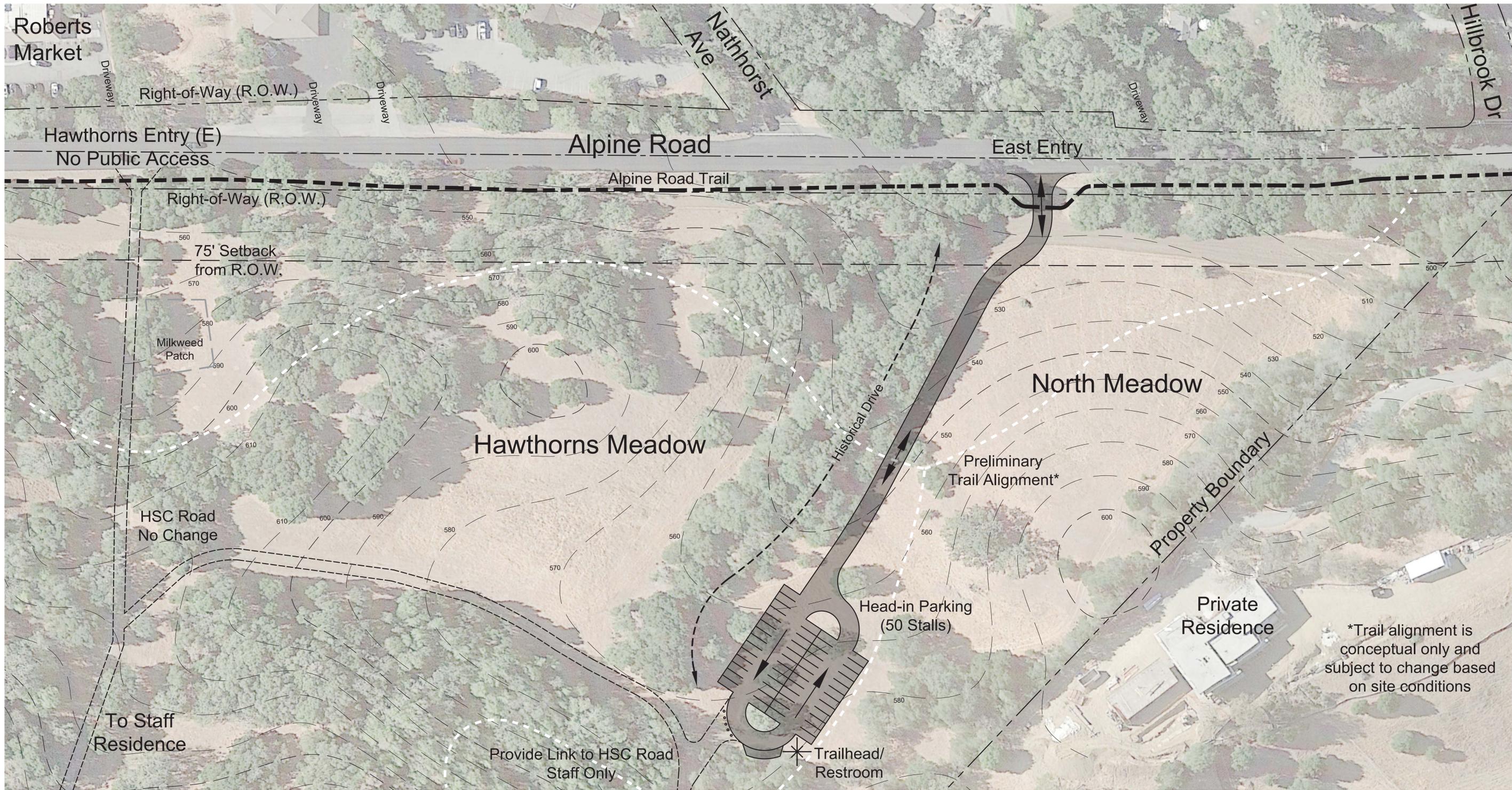
PROS

1. Uses 4411 Alpine Road Driveway Entry (Option to realign HSC Road)
2. Topography and Oak trees shelter parking off HSC Road
3. Head-in parking reduces grading into Hawthorns Meadow

CONS

1. Sheltered parking area not surveillable by Police/Fire off Alpine Road
2. Large parking layout affects Hawthorns Meadow and HSC Road
3. Turn-around increases parking footprint and does not provide ideal trail head drop-off or parking queuing
4. Entry Road slopes approach 20%

HAWTHORNS AREA - OPTION 2 SCHEMATIC



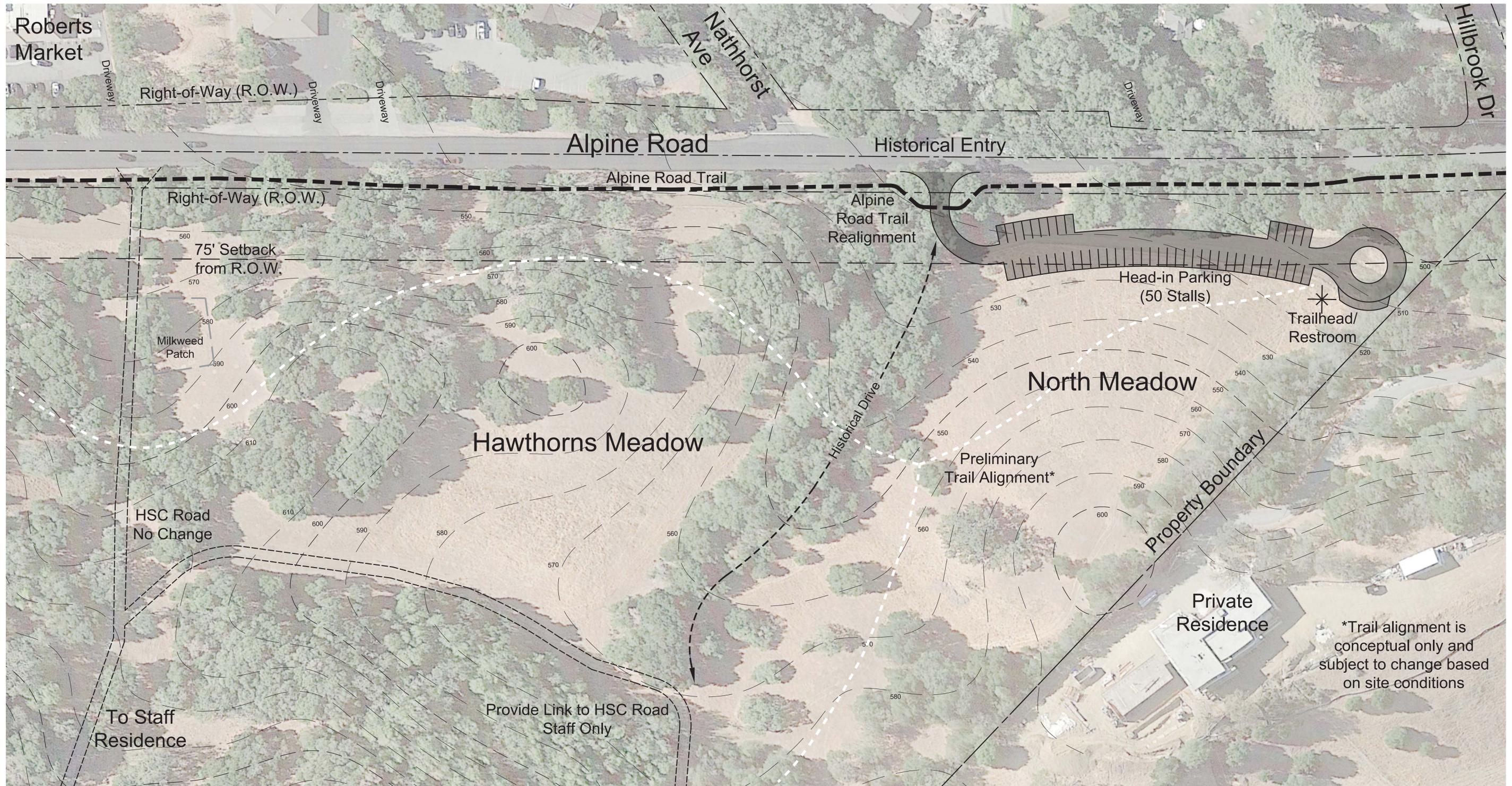
PROS

1. Existing Staff Road creates separate staff access
2. Head-in parking loop is compact and efficient
3. Limits new improvements to North Meadow
4. Driveway slopes are moderate, 10% maximum

CONS

1. East Entry will require extensive grading and tree removal
2. Creates second access way and grading extends into North Meadow
3. Sheltered parking area not surveillable by Police/Fire from Alpine Road





PROS

1. Uses Alpine Road Historical Driveway Entry and increases site circulation
2. Parking off Alpine Road is surveillable by Police/Fire
3. Existing Staff Road creates separate staff access
4. Parking is sited on the fire break
5. Limits new improvements to lower North Meadow

CONS

1. Alpine Road Historical Driveway will require grading and tree removal
2. Creates second access way and impacts North Meadow
3. Turnaround at north end does not provide ideal trail head drop-off or parking queuing
4. Grading into lower North Meadow may require walls

HAWTHORNS AREA - OPTION 4 SCHEMATIC

Hawthorns Area Public Access Working Group
Frequently Asked Questions
Hawthorns Area Plan

Updated October 2023

#	Question	Answer
1.	What kinds of amenities will be considered at the Hawthorns Area?	Future amenities to be provided at the Hawthorns Area will be considered in the next phase of the planning process, anticipated to begin in 2023. At minimum, Midpen will consider a public parking area, trailhead, and a trail system. Other potential site amenities include a vault restroom, signage, benches, and similar elements found at Midpen open space preserves.
2.	Have there been discussions about uses at the Hawthorns Area?	Future recreational uses at the Hawthorns Area will be considered in Phase 3 of the planning process as part of the Public Access Working Group’s efforts. The Working Group started in July 2023.
3.	Would public restrooms be allowed? Would they be connected to the sewer?	A public restroom would be considered at the Hawthorns Area. The Conservation Easement specifies “pit toilets” as an allowable component of the future parking area, aligning with the amenities Midpen provides at other open space preserves. The Conservation Easement restricts construction of new connections or extensions to the municipal sewer system.
4.	What are the limitations of the conservation easement?	Refer to Table 1 for a summary of allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area as dictated by the Conservation Easement.
5.	Will the preserve be closed at night?	Once open to the public, the Hawthorns Area will be accessible during the same hours of operation as Windy Hill Open Space Preserve, which is open one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.
6.	What is the history of the Hawthorns Historic Complex?	In 2013, Midpen prepared a Historic Assessment describing the history of the Hawthorns Area, which is publicly available on Midpen’s webpage .

#	Question	Answer
7.	Would public access be allowed at the Hawthorns Historic Complex? How would public access be restricted to the Hawthorns Historic Complex if buildings are unsafe for visitors?	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. Midpen 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 these structures as well as cost estimates that would be presented to Midpen’s Board of Directors for review. Future plans regarding the availability or restriction of public access within the Historic Complex will be informed by the Structural Assessment process.
8.	Why is the Hawthorns Historic Complex project separate from the Hawthorns Area Plan?	Midpen is preparing the Hawthorns Area Plan and concurrently conducting the Hawthorns Historic Complex Structural Assessment Project as two distinct projects to provide Midpen with flexibility to evaluate potential opportunities for public access connections within the Hawthorns Area and Historic Complex. If Midpen’s Board decides to continue discussions regarding the long term uses in the Historic Complex, those discussions could continue outside of the project timeline to complete and implement the Area Plan.
9.	What would the Hawthorns Historic Complex be used for? Could it be used for a community space, housing, museum, or educational center?	Future uses at the Hawthorns Historic Complex are subject to the restrictions established by the Conservation Easement. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area, which includes the Hawthorns Historic Complex. In general, the conservation easement allows public open space operations as well as limited residential occupancy; however, commercial and revenue-generating uses are prohibited.
10.	Could the property be used as a horse boarding facility?	The Conservation Easement prohibits commercial development or uses at the Hawthorns Area, which would exclude use of the property as a horse boarding facility. Refer to Table 1 for summary allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area, as dictated by the Conservation Easement.
11.	What is indigenous use of the site?	The Hawthorns Area exhibits evidence of Native American occupation and usage. Midpen is currently conducting archeological resource studies to further characterize the indigenous history at this preserve to avoid potential impacts to Native American cultural resources.

#	Question	Answer
12.	What are the fire considerations at the Hawthorns Area? Is Midpen thinning the forests/woodlands on the property? Will fire plan/fuel reduction be open to public review before it's implemented?	In partnership with the Woodside Fire Protection District, Midpen is conducting ecologically sensitive vegetation management to reduce fuels as a component of Midpen's Wildland Fire Resiliency Program. Refer to Midpen's webpage for more information on this Program at http://www.openspace.org/fire . Wildland fire resiliency projects are developed and approved at public meetings by the Board of Directors during Midpen's annual budget and capital improvement and action plan development process.
13.	Can the Hawthorns Area ever be developed? Can Windy Hill Open Space Preserve ever be developed?	The majority of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve is <i>dedicated</i> open space. In accordance with California Public Resources Code 5500, dedicated property is permanently protected for park and open space uses. Midpen voluntarily eliminates its ability to sell or convey dedicated property except under narrow statutory exceptions. The Hawthorns Area is not dedicated open space at this time. However, it is subject to a Conservation Easement that limits allowable use and development of the property. Refer to Table 1 for an excerpt of the Conservation Easement, which establishes allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area. Minor development, such as passive recreational trails and limited staging areas could be developed, pending approval from Midpen's Board and permits from the Town of Portola Valley.
14.	Who is doing the traffic study?	Midpen selected a consultant team consisting of Parisi Transportation Consulting and Mead & Hunt to conduct the traffic study.
15.	What is multimodal access?	The term <i>multimodal access</i> refers to a transportation corridor or facility that accommodates several modes of transport. In this context, multimodal access at the Hawthorns Area refers to the consideration of different strategies to encourage non-automobile transportation (e.g., pedestrian, bicycle, and/or equestrian trails, and transit) to the preserve.
16.	Will Midpen retain the on-site staff residence at 4411 Alpine Road?	At this time, the residence at 4411 Alpine Road will remain on the property.
17.	What is the timeline for each phase of the planning process?	<p>The tentative Hawthorns Area Plan timeline is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: Vision and Goals: 2021 – 2022 (complete) • Phase 2: Existing Conditions: 2022 – 2023 (complete) • Phase 3: Programming / Conceptual Planning: 2023 – 2024 • Phase 4: Area Plan / Environmental Review: 2024 – 2026 • Phase 5: Implementation: 2026 – TBD

#	Question	Answer
18.	Will Midpen plant native species at the Hawthorns Area?	The Hawthorns Area Plan will include ecological management objectives. Although specific goals have not been established yet, the Hawthorns Area Conservation Easement includes native vegetation restoration. Management priorities at the Hawthorns Area will align with the directives of the Conservation Easement. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area as dictated by the Conservation Easement.
19.	Is Midpen looking into easements on the creek?	At this time, Midpen is not considering additional easements on the property. However, Midpen has conducted a wetland delineation to characterize water resources at the Hawthorns Area to inform future management.
20.	Does the Hawthorns area have to be opened to the public?	Public access at the Hawthorns Area is a Midpen Board of Directors-approved Vision Plan Priority Project that was included in and funded through Measure AA, a bond measure that was approved by voters in 2014.
21.	How big of a parking lot is Midpen considering at any of the entry points?	Parking options at the Hawthorns Area will be determined during the Programming/Conceptual Planning Phase of the project. The placement and size of any future parking area will be informed by the outcomes of the traffic study, the property's site constraints, and the Conservation Easement. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area as dictated by the Conservation Easement.
22.	Would a trail be aligned along the perimeter of the meadow to preserve it?	Trail alignment options will be evaluated and proposed during the Programming/Conceptual Planning Phase of the project. Ultimate trail placement will be in accordance with the public access and natural resource management goals established by the Hawthorns Area Plan.
23.	What kind of restoration alternatives are being considered for the olive grove?	At this time, Midpen is characterizing existing conditions at the Hawthorns Area. Management goals, including any objectives for the olive grove, will be determined during the Hawthorns Area Plan process.
24.	Would Midpen consider a more natural parking lot surface as opposed to asphalt?	Any parking area at the Hawthorns Area will be constructed in alignment with the Conservation Easement. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area as dictated by the Conservation Easement.

#	Question	Answer
25.	Would Midpen allow docent-led hikes before the preserve is officially open?	Docent-led hikes in the Hawthorns area are available on an approximately quarterly basis and can be found on the docent-led activities webpage, listed under Windy Hill Preserve. Due to site constraints, reservations are required. (openspace.org/events/guided-activities).
26.	Can the parking area be sited off Los Trancos Road?	The transportation consultant on the project conducted assessments, which revealed that Los Trancos Road does not meet the line-of-sight standards required by Caltrans for a commercial driveway. These Caltrans standards are commonly used by various jurisdictions, including Midpen, to guide the design and placement of parking area entryways. In contrast, Alpine Road offers sufficient line of sight, making it the recommended entry point for future public access, as advised by our transportation consultant. If a driveway were to be considered off Los Trancos Road, discussions would be required with the appropriate permitting jurisdictional agencies to confirm whether a driveway off this road is viable given that the property fronts Alpine Road, which does provide adequate lines of sight. In addition, there may be other considerations that preclude Los Trancos Road, including the final location and proximity to the preferred parking area location and potential impact concerns to uses and management of the Hawthorns Historic Complex.
27.	Is selling off pieces of the property, such as the Historic Complex, an option for Midpen?	The Conservation Easement prohibits subdivision of the Hawthorns Area, except for lot line adjustments and transference to a qualified agency for open space uses. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of allowed and prohibited uses at the Hawthorns Area as dictated by the Conservation Easement.
28.	What is the Public Access Working Group (PAWG)? Who are members of the PAWG? What is the PAWG meeting schedule?	More information about the Public Access Working Group (PAWG), members of the PAWG, and the group's meeting schedule can be found here: https://www.openspace.org/what-we-do/projects/hawthorns-public-access-working-group

#	Question	Answer
29.	What time are the Hawthorns meetings? Will they be on Zoom?	The tentative schedule for the Public Access Working Group (PAWG) meetings can be found on the project web page at openspace.org/hawthorns . Because the meeting dates and times are subject to change, we encourage you to check the schedule online regularly. To receive public notifications about the Public Access Working Group meeting times, please sign up at openspace.org/hawthorns . The PAWG meetings at Midpen Admin Office will be hybrid and offered on Zoom for members of the public to participate. Meetings on site will be held in person only. You can find details of the meeting agenda and packet at https://www.openspace.org/who-we-are/public-meetings . Regular meeting agendas will be posted a minimum 72 hours prior to the meeting.
30.	Can you encourage the Town to put all Hawthorns information on the Town calendar and to share information on Hawthorns meetings? Residents may want to attend meetings and they want to stay informed.	The project team continues to communicate with Town staff to share Midpen’s PAWG meeting information in the Town newsletter and through the Town’s communication channels. Note that Midpen’s project process and notification schedule are different from the Town’s and may not align with the timing of the Town’s newsletters or other communication methods. The project team therefore encourages all interested parties to sign up to receive project notifications directly from Midpen at openspace.org/hawthorns .
31.	Who are on the Town Ad Hoc Committee?	Refer to Table 2 for a list of seven members selected by the Town to serve on the Town Ad Hoc Committee. Membership is current as August 26, 2023, the date of the PAWG’s second meeting.
32.	What are the responsibilities of the Town Ad Hoc Committee? How will the Town Ad Hoc Committee be able to provide input? What are the next steps for the Town's Ad Hoc Committee members?	Refer to Table 2 for a description and a flowchart illustrating input opportunities for the Town Ad Hoc Committee.
33.	Are the Town Ad Hoc meetings open to the public?	The Town is administering the Town Ad Hoc meetings including how they are noticed and whether they are open to the public.

#	Question	Answer						
34.	What timeline do you anticipate for the process described above?	<p>The tentative schedule that has been presented to the Midpen Board of Directors for developing the Hawthorns Area Plan is shown below. The project team has not yet identified specific meeting dates for Midpen Planning & Natural Resources Committee or Midpen Board of Directors, as these would be based on the progress made by the PAWG. When the project team has a better idea of when those would be, they would communicate with Town staff so that Town staff can coordinate with the Town Ad Hoc Committee members to set up their meetings. Please check Midpen’s Project webpage for updates on upcoming meetings: https://www.openspace.org/what-we-do/projects/hawthorns-area-plan</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>2021 - 2022</td> <td>Develop vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022 - 2024</td> <td>Prepare Hawthorns Area Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024 - 2025</td> <td>Conduct environmental review per CEQA</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	2021 - 2022	Develop vision and goals for the Hawthorns Area	2022 - 2024	Prepare Hawthorns Area Plan	2024 - 2025	Conduct environmental review per CEQA
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2024 - 2025	Conduct environmental review per CEQA							
35.	How long would it take for Hawthorns to be open to the public?	<p>The planning and environmental review process for the Hawthorns Area Plan is expected to take approximately five years. The project is currently in the third year. The implementation phase would initiate in the sixth year, after the environmental review phase is complete, and would involve design development, permitting, construction documentation, bidding and construction, which could span two or more years. The Town’s review and permitting process will influence the timeline and during each stage of the project, numerous unanticipated factors will likely come into play, which could potentially further delay the opening the property to the public.</p>						

Table 1 - Hawthorns Area Conservation Easement Prohibited and Permitted Uses*Prohibited Uses*

Subdivision, except for lot line adjustments and transference to a qualified agency for open space uses.

Commercial or industrial development or activity, including agricultural use.

Construction of additional buildings.

Activities that cause significant soil degradation, erosion, or pollution of aquatic features.

Tree removal, except as required for safety, fire protection, or resource management.

On-site dumping or disposal of waste, refuse or debris.

Installation of new utility systems or extension of existing utility system. (The repair, replacement, and relocation of existing utility systems may be allowed.)

Exploration, development, or extraction of minerals.

Commercial grazing.

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.

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.

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.

Storage or disassembly of inoperable vehicles.

Alteration of landforms by grading or excavation.

Activities that would degrade the property's scenic and natural character, such as clearing, stripping of native vegetation, grading, or storage of materials.

Draining, filling, dredging, clearing, or diking of wetland and riparian areas.

Alteration or manipulation of watercourses, or the creation of new water impoundments or watercourses, other than permitted agricultural and ecological enhancements.

Placement of signs or billboards, except to display the property's name and use as an open space area, or to control unauthorized use.

Golf courses, driving ranges, or sport courts.

Excavation, removal, destruction, or sale of archeological artifacts or remains, except as part of an authorized archeological investigation.

Allowable Uses

Reasonable measures for fire safety, erosion control, and tree removal for safety, fire protection, or resource management purposes.

Removal of non-native vegetation and restoration with native vegetation.

Maintenance and use of existing paved and unpaved roadways, passages, and trails.

Use, maintenance, and improvements to the existing spring and ground water system to service the property.

Passive recreational uses such as hiking, bicycling, and equestrian use.

Construction of unpaved trails or paths for non-motorized uses.

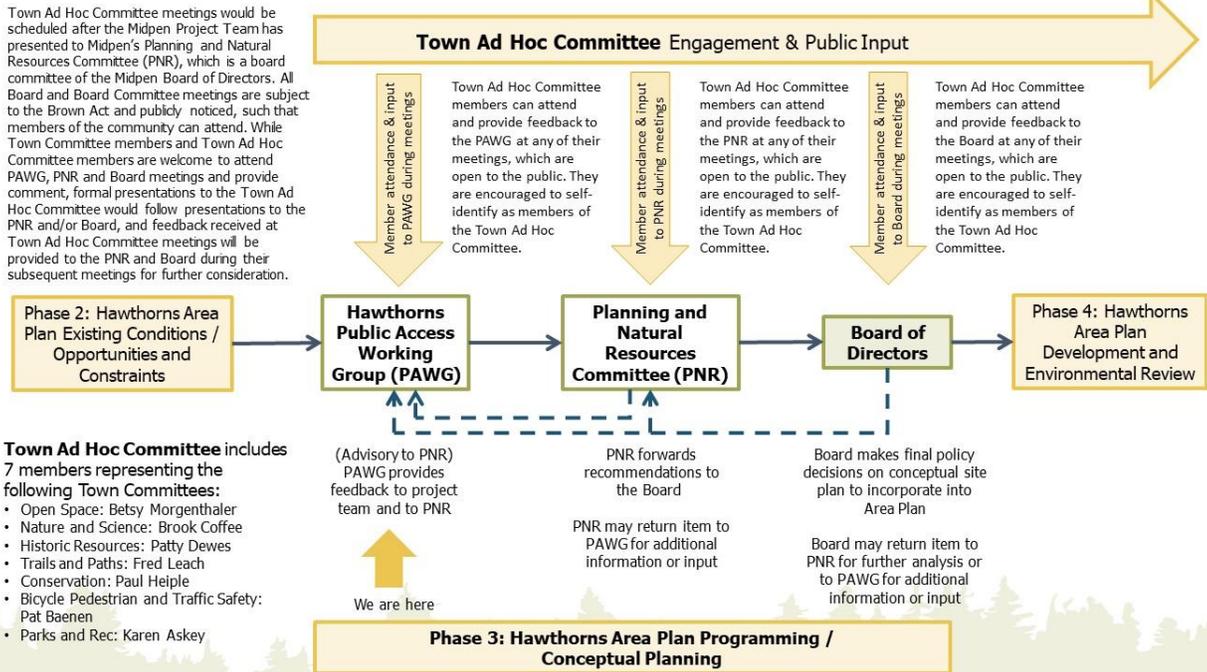
Use, occupancy, repair, reconstruction, or replacement of existing buildings and improvements directly related to the public open space operations of the property owner.

Construction of a limited staging area (gravel parking lot, pit toilets, wood rail fencing, trail markers, etc.) to facilitate public access and recreational uses.

Table 2 – Town of Portola Valley Ad Hoc Committee Members and Opportunities for Input

Working Group Workflow and Town Ad Hoc Committee Involvement and Input Opportunities

Town Ad Hoc Committee meetings would be scheduled after the Midpen Project Team has presented to Midpen's Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR), which is a board committee of the Midpen Board of Directors. All Board and Board Committee meetings are subject to the Brown Act and publicly noticed, such that members of the community can attend. While Town Committee members and Town Ad Hoc Committee members are welcome to attend PAWG, PNR and Board meetings and provide comment, formal presentations to the Town Ad Hoc Committee would follow presentations to the PNR and/or Board, and feedback received at Town Ad Hoc Committee meetings will be provided to the PNR and Board during their subsequent meetings for further consideration.



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