Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

August 26, 2026
Board Meeting 26-20

SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with California Government Code section 54953.

DRAFT MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

President Kersteen-Tucker called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:	Jed Cyr, Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Margaret MacNiven, and Curt Riffle
Members Absent:	None
Staff Present:	General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Acting Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Rafaela Oceguera, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Acting Assistant General Manager Jane Mark, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Nelia Lopez, Planner III Ashley Mac, Senior Planner Jared Hart, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington

President Kersteen-Tucker announced that the public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website.

1. El Corte de Madera Creek Single-Use Biking/Hiking Trail Project (R-26-124)

General Manager Ana Ruiz provided opening remarks and assisted with answering questions. Planner III Ashley Mac and Senior Planner Jared Hart presented. Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, and General Counsel Hilary Stevenson assisted with answering questions.

Director Gleason noted that the policy question has both a trail use designation aspect and an aspect regarding the type of trail that can be built. He inquired whether the policy change could allow flexibility for building the trails while restricting the bike-only use to El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve (ECDM).

General Manager Ana Ruiz explained the policy change would be specific to this Measure AA (MAA) project rather than a larger change to the trail use policy. She stated that staff can review both the District policies and the standards for trails that allow bikes, but she believes the current standards would allow trail building flexibility to enhance the visitor experience while also improving the trail resilience.

Director Gleason noted that multi-use trails are four feet wide at a minimum, but a bike-optimized trail does not need to be four feet wide. He suggested that there be consideration for the type of trail that is being built.

Senior Planner Jared Hart stated that staff have the flexibility within the existing standards to implement a biking trail standard specifically in ECDM for this project.

Director Holman noted that speeds tend to increase beyond posted speed limits when there is one-way directional travel. She requested that staff consider potential habitat disruption that may be associated with the change to one-way travel.

Public comment period opened.

The following people provided comments:

- Jim Cairns
- Sean McKenna
- Glen Wegner
- Matthew Heck
- Mike Bushue
- Dave Evans
- Don Bergstedt

Public comment period closed.

Director Riffle requested that resource management issues be considered as part of the public engagement process.

Mr. Hart confirmed that staff will hold focus group meetings that include environmental advocacy groups.

Director Riffle suggested that the District's Natural Resources Manager also be included in the focus groups.

Director Kishimoto expressed support for the idea of a bike priority trail but noted that the definition of bike priority and associated enforcement would need to be considered.

Director Riffle inquired whether the Board of Directors (Board) needed to make changes to the *Trail Use Policy* as part of the vote.

Ms. Ruiz explained that staff is not requesting the Board to make a policy change at this time, instead staff will return to the Board at a future meeting with a specific change to the policy for this preserve in order to implement the project since the District does not currently have bike-only trails.

Director Holman suggested continuing the item to the end of the meeting or to a future date to allow the Board sufficient time to consider the complex matter presented.

Director Riffle suggested that the Board can provide direction to staff tonight to make a surgical change to the policy for this project only and staff can return to the Board if, as the project progresses, there appears to be a need to make a larger policy change for the preserve as a whole.

Ms. Ruiz explained that in order for the project to move forward and for staff to begin outreach, the Board would need to allow for a narrow change to the *Trail Use Policy* that would be specifically and solely for this project.

Director Holman expressed discomfort with making a policy change when the Board has not been presented with the policy language.

Ms. Ruiz stated she can work with staff to narrow the language to be specific to ECDM and to implement this specific MAA project without yet identifying a specific trail.

President Kersteen-Tucker noted that the District received many comments from the mountain biking community and it would be helpful to hear from other advocacy groups, including environmental groups and other users, such as hikers, equestrians, and visitors with disabilities. She suggested that additional public outreach occur before staff return with more specific policy language.

Director Gleason noted that public input initiated the project in the portfolio and expressed his preference to keep the project moving forward.

Director Riffle suggested adjourning the special meeting to allow staff time to prepare proposed draft policy language and reconvening at the conclusion of the regular Board meeting.

President Kersteen-Tucker noted that the Board has a mandate in MAA to build a single-use bike trail and the question is how the Board can allow District policy to accommodate that very special and single use that is specified in MAA. With the consensus of the Board, she requested staff to return to the Board with draft policy language at the conclusion of the regular Board meeting.

President Kersteen-Tucker continued the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to the close of the regular meeting at 7:16 p.m.

President Kersteen-Tucker reconvened the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 8:24 p.m.

Mr. Hart stated that staff developed example language for Board review. He clarified that the language is not proposed for adoption at today's meeting, but it is intended to illustrate the type of policy update staff is envisioning to allow implementation specifically for the project at hand. The draft language would be an addition to Board Policy 4.07 *Trail Use Policy* and would be added under section 2.4 as subsection 2.4.1. The draft language is:

> "Allow for an exception to section 2.4 to provide single-use bicycling on designated trail(s), exclusively at El Corte de Madera Open Space Preserve to implement the 2014 voter-approved Measure AA Portfolio 4. For purposes of this section, a single-use bicycle trail can be designed using any of the three trail classifications (A, B, or C)."

President Kersteen-Tucker commented that she understood that the proposed addition of subsection 2.4.1 to the *Trail Use Policy* would allow the District to move forward with the project, and that any other changes required to the *Trail Use Policy* would be addressed after the process of determining which option the Board will pursue. Furthermore, that specific policy language would then be brought back to the Board along with recommendations for the final project.

Mr. Hart confirmed the information and understanding was correct.

General Counsel Hilary Stevenson clarified that the Board is not being asked to adopt the draft policy language at tonight's meeting, rather that the language is a concept of what will be brought back to the Board for consideration.

Director Riffle suggested there be a hiking-only trail to prevent issues with intersections where bicyclists are allowed. He further clarified with staff that the Board had the option to also designate a hiking-only trail in addition to a bicycling-only trail.

Director Kishimoto commented that she would be interested in what other agencies are doing in terms of the wording for bike-only trails such as East Bay Regional Park District and Santa Clara County Parks.

Mr. Malone stated that background information is included in the staff report and noted that East Bay Regional Park District is the only local agency that currently has hiking prohibitions on biking-only trails. He added that there are other agencies that have bike focused trails. He stated that, if the District wanted to prohibit hikers, the District may be able to rely on the current closed area provisions but could potentially specify in the ordinance that this type of trail is closed to hiking and subject to citation.

Director Gleason commented that there had been previous discussion regarding Option 1 and stated that it is not clear to him that Option 1 addresses the original goal of the MAA project. He suggested that an approach that could benefit the trail system more broadly would be to designate trails as bike-preferred and indicate to hikers that a particular section of the trail may be more difficult to navigate than other trails. He stated that his preference is for Option 2, which he felt was in the spirit of the Watershed Protection Project at ECDM. He noted that staff had been successful with restoration and watershed protection efforts and that Option 2 would continue that work while taking a more creative approach to address some of the desired user experience. He noted there is the potential to create interesting trails that are both challenging and slow down cyclists.

Director Riffle also expressed a preference for Option 2, and that this option is the closest to delivering the MAA Portfolio #04 commitment. He requested that there be broad inclusion of interest groups to provide feedback. He stated he would like to get the resource management perspective as well as it is important that the District should not move backward in that regard when designing the trail. He also noted the importance of providing a voice to hikers, equestrians, and families, and that these perspectives should also be represented in the trail planning process.

Director Cyr commented that he echoes Director Riffle's comments and supports Option 2.

Director Holman expressed she initially favored Option 1, but the Board discussion led her to believe that Option 2 is likely the better option. She reinforced Director Riffle's comments regarding the importance of engaging non-bike users in the design consideration process. She also expressed concern with the language in Option 2, noting that the last sentence states, "Once redesigned and reconstructed, use designations can be considered as described in Option 1." She noted that assigning a use designation after the redesign and reconstruction had occurred would be too late and suggested that the language reflect that during the course of redesigning and reconstructing, use designations be considered.

Mr. Hart explained that staff intended to present the Board with a recommendation for seasonal use or a one-way directional trail after receiving input from the community engagement process.

Director Holman suggested the Board consider that the last sentence in Option 2 be reworded to reflect that the designations be part of the redesign process.

Director Riffle suggested omitting the last sentence in Option 2.

Director Holman stated she preferred to keep the language and not lose Option 1.

President Kersteen-Tucker stated that Option 1 would be lost [if the Board votes for Option 2] but the District would still be able to consider Sub-Option 1A for seasonal use and Sub-Option 1B for one-directional travel under Option 2.

Mr. Malone suggested removing the first four words on the last sentence of Option 2, to have the final sentence state, "Use designations can be considered as described under Option 1."

Director Kishimoto expressed support for Option 2 and stated she would also be open to Option 3 if it created a significantly better trail for all users.

Director MacNiven expressed that her preference is for Option 1 but noted that the Board has a MAA obligation and therefore she would support Option 2.

President Kersteen-Tucker expressed support for Option 2 given the lengthy list of MAA projects. She noted that Option 2 embodies the spirit of the MAA language and is the best option given the density of the trail system in ECDM.

President Kersteen-Tucker commented that, moving forward it would be helpful for the General Manager's recommendations to more clearly specify the actions requested of the Board. She noted that, because two options had been recommended, it was unclear what the board was being asked to approve when confirming the project scope. She suggested that future recommendations clearly identify the specific action or direction being requested by the Board.

Director Kishimoto suggested an amendment to the motion to direct staff to return to the Board with clarification regarding the recommended changes to the *Trail Use Policy*.

The Board supported the suggested amendment.

Motion: Director Holman moved, and Director Gleason seconded the amended motion to confirm Option 2 as the selected project scope and planning process for the El Corte de Madera Creek Single-Use Biking/Hiking Trail Project and to direct staff to return to the Board with clarification regarding the recommended changes to the trail use policy.

<u>Option 2 – Reimagine and Improve an Existing Trail</u> - Recommended Option 2 modifies significant segments of an existing trail within the Preserve. This option can deliver the desired trail experience while incorporating design improvements that enhance trail sustainability and reduce erosion consistent with the WPP. Improvements may include narrowing the trail width, selective rerouting, reconstructing trail segments, enhancing drainage and erosion control, and/or adjusting grades to improve trail function, resilience, and the visitor experience. This approach can also incorporate sustainable trail features to improve the mountain biking experience while promoting bicycle speeds within the legal limits. Overall, Option 2 allows the District to effectively improve the trail user experience while addressing existing maintenance needs and reducing resource impacts. This approach is moderate in cost and would take more time to redesign and reconstruct segments of a selected trail. Use designations can be considered as described under Option 1.

Use designations under Option 1:

A. An alternating-seasons approach by re-designating an existing trail as biking only for certain seasons and re-designating the same trail as hiking only during the other seasons. This approach uses a land management tool to set use parameters based on seasons to offer single-use biking and single-use hiking trail(s) within the preserve. To reduce visitor confusion, support high compliance, and reduce operational demands on patrol and enforcement, seasons are recommended versus days of the week or days of the month.

B. As an alternative to two-way travel, the District could evaluate re-designating an existing trail as a biking-only for a one-way/directional travel. Establishing a single direction of travel for biking-only use could improve trail circulation, reduce conflicts between riders traveling in opposite directions, and provide greater flexibility to design the trail experience. This approach could be implemented as a year-around biking-only one-way travel designation or in combination with an alternating-seasons approach.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

<u>ADJOURNMENT</u>

President Kersteen-Tucker adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District meeting at 8:52 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

President Kersteen-Tucker called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:22 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Margaret MacNiven, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Acting Assistant General Manager Jane Mark, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Nelia Lopez, Resource Management Specialist III Miranda Melen, Resource Management Specialist II Lewis Reed, Field Resource Specialist Chelsea Young, Water Resources Technician II Kylie Kammerer, Senior Resource Management Specialist David Liefert, Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington,

President Kersteen-Tucker announced that the public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public comment period opened.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public comment period opened.

The following person spoke on Consent Calendar agenda item #3.

- Mike Bushue

Public comment period closed.

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

1. Approve the August 12, 2026 Board meeting minutes

2. Approve Claims Report

3. Funding Agreement with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission for the Highway 35 Multi-use Trail Parking and Crossing Project and the Spur Trail Project, both located at or adjacent to Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (R-26-125)

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution authorizing the General Manager to execute an agreement and accept up to $683,690 in funding from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission for construction of the Highway 35 Multi-use Trail Parking and Crossing Project and the Spur Trail Project.

4. Grant Award with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Priority Conservation Area Grant Program for the Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossings Project (R-26-126)

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution authorizing the General Manager to negotiate and execute a funding agreement in the amount of $750,000 awarded by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Priority Conservation Area Grant Program for the construction phase of the Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossings Project.

5. Award of Contract for the Kings Mountain Manzanita Ecosystem Resiliency Project at El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve (R-26-127)

General Manager's Recommendations:
1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Forster & Kroeger Landscaping Maintenance, Inc., for the Kings Mountain Manzanita Ecosystem Resiliency Project at El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve for a base amount not to exceed $346,135.
2. Authorize a 10% contingency in the amount of $34,614 to be reserved for unanticipated issues, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount to $380,749.

6. Contract Amendment for Construction Services for the Foothill Field Office Annex Foundation Repair Project (R-26-128)

General Manager's Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with Altor Construction, LLC of San Francisco, California for the Foothill Field Office Annex Foundation Repair Project in the amount of $45,133, bringing the total contract to a new, not-to-exceed amount of $197,857.

BOARD BUSINESS

7. Comprehensive Ecologically Sensitive Vegetation Management Report (R-26-129)

Resource Management Specialist III Miranda Melen, Resource Management Specialist II Lewis Reed, and Field Resource Specialist Chelsea Young presented. Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter assisted with answering questions.

Director Cyr suggested that in future presentations staff avoid using blue and green in graphs, noting that the two colors can be difficult to distinguish, particularly along the bottom portions of the bars.

Director Holman left the dais at 7:44 p.m. and returned at 7:47 p.m.

President Kersteen-Tucker expressed appreciation for close collaboration with grazing tenants and emphasized that as new grazing leases are considered and additional properties are evaluated for grazing, a willingness to partner with the District on new experimental techniques and early detection efforts should be an important consideration in selecting grazing tenants.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

No Board action required.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

8. Award of Contract for Grazing Water Distribution Infrastructure for the Johnston Ranch Habitat and Agricultural Water Supply Improvements Project at Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve (R-26-130)

Water Resources Technician II Kylie Kammerer presented. Senior Resource Management Specialist David Liefert assisted in answering questions.

President Kersteen-Tucker commented that the project has received significant pushback from some community members and emphasized the importance of communicating the project's broader benefits, including the extent of the District's investment in agricultural infrastructure on the coast side. She encouraged continued outreach and communication regarding the project. In addition, she invited her colleagues to visit the project site when visiting Purisima Creek for a hike.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

Motion: Director MacNiven moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to award a contract to Top Line Engineers Inc. of Hayward, California to develop water infrastructure on the Johnston Ranch Grazing Unit for a not-to-exceed base contract amount of $158,002 and authorize a 10% contingency in the amount of $15,800 to be reserved for unanticipated issues, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount of $173,802.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Director Riffle reported on the August 18, 2026 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting.

Director Holman reported on the August 25, 2026 Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee meeting.

B. Staff Reports

Ms. Ruiz reported that she and staff attended the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) grand opening of the Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail on August 20, 2026.

C. Director Reports

Director MacNiven reported attending the ribbon-cutting event of the new Don Horsley County Park at Tunitas Creek Beach. She also tabled at the Pescadero Arts Festival.

Director Kishimoto reported attending the Right Relations meetings.

Director Holman reported that Sempervirens Fund will be honoring retired Congresswoman Anna Eshoo on October 4 for her conservation legacy, as well as hosting a benefit for Big Basin.

Director Riffle reported that he attended the ribbon-cutting event for the Don Horsley County Park at Tunitas Creek Beach and attended three Right Relations meetings along with staff, noting that a report will be provided to the Board this fall.

Director Cyr reported attending the August 18 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting and the August 25 Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee meeting. He also attended the August 26 Santa Clara Valley Water Commission meeting, which was canceled due to a lack of quorum. Following the cancellation, he participated in a tour of Llagas Creek.

Director Gleason reported that on August 18, he and staff presented to the Monte Sereno Town Council. On August 23, he tabled at Monte Sereno’s annual picnic at Vasona Park. On August 25, he rode the new SFPUC trail. On August 26, he attended the District’s ranger badging ceremony for three new rangers and four promotions. Lastly, he reported that former Ward 1 Director Kay Duffy, who served from 1972 – 1992, would be attending the Guardians of Nature event.

President Kersteen-Tucker reported attending the ribbon-cutting event for the new Don Horsley County Park at Tunitas Creek Beach and also tabled at the Pescadero Art and Fun Fair.

ADJOURNMENT

President Kersteen-Tucker adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, and reconvened the special meeting at the close of the regular meeting at 8:24 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC
District Clerk