



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

**La Honda Creek Parking Feasibility Study  
Public Access Working Group Meeting**

**La Honda Elementary School  
450 Sears Ranch Rd  
La Honda, CA 94020**

**February 6, 2020  
6:30 PM – 9:30 PM**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**ROLL CALL**

Chair Barbara Hooper called the meeting of the La Honda Public Access Working Group to order at 6:31 p.m.

**PAWG Members Present (✓) or Absent (✗):**

Board Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Curt Riffle, Ward 4</li> <li>✓ Larry Hassett, Ward 6</li> </ul>
La Honda area representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Ari Delay</li> <li>✓ Karl Lusebrink</li> <li>✓ Kathleen Moazed</li> </ul>
Ward stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ward 1: Melany Moore</li> <li>✓ Ward 2: Art Heinrich</li> <li>✓ Ward 3: Willie Wool</li> <li>✓ Ward 4: Sandy Sommer</li> <li>✓ Ward 5: Andie Reed</li> <li>✓ Ward 6: Lou Bordi</li> <li>✓ Ward 6: Barbara Hooper</li> <li>✓ Ward 7: Denise Phillips</li> </ul>

**District Staff Present:**

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|---|---|
| ✓ Ana Ruiz, General Manager                       | ✓ Korrine Spinner, Public Affairs Manager |
| ✓ Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager         | ✓ Melissa Borgesi, Planner I              |
| ✓ Jane Mark, Planning Manager                     | ✓ Tina Hugg, Senior Planner               |
| ✓ Luke Mulhall, Planning Administrative Assistant |   |

**MIG Consultants:** Lou Hexter, Ana Padilla

Chair Barbara Hooper called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

Facilitator Lou Hexter reviewed the objectives and agenda for the evening and reminded the group of the productive discussion held at the December meeting, which captured members' impressions of the various site locations.

Senior Planner Tina Hugg reviewed the PAWG's workflow and meeting schedule, noting that the PAWG will be providing a recommendations report to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee (PNR) with potential access options that could be pursued in a feasibility study in the next phase. Ultimately, the PNR will forward its recommendations to the Board of Directors for consideration and action.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – 1**

No public comments were made at this time.

**WORKING GROUP BUSINESS**

Chair Barbara Hooper asked for a motion to approve the December 12, 2019, meeting summary.

Sandy Sommer suggested that "currently" and "publicly available" be added to the Bay Area Ridge Trail presentation described on page 3, paragraph 4, to state that San Mateo County "currently contains the longest continuous stretch of publicly available trails." She also suggested adding "some were also concerned with the compatibility with the existing cattle grazing" for option C1 Sears Ranch Road – Former Residence. Andie Reed made a motion to approve the meeting summary with Sommer's edits, and Denise Phillips seconded. The PAWG approved the motion.

<b>Approval of October 19, 2019, PAWG Meeting Summary</b>	<b>Ayes</b> (10) – Lou Bordi, Ari Delay, Art Heinrich, Barbara Hooper, Karl Lusebrink, Kathleen Moazed, Melany Moore, Andie Reed, Sandy Sommer, Denise Phillips, Willie Wool <b>Noes</b> (0) <b>Abstentions</b> (0) <b>Absent</b> (1) – Ari Delay <b>Non-Voting</b> (2) – Larry Hassett, Curt Riffle
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Mr. Hexter provided an overview of the sites under consideration and summarized the key ideas and comments submitted by PAWG members about two potential sites suggested as part of the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. PAWG members visited these sites individually prior to the PAWG's February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**B3. Gate LH 15** – Some PAWG members commented that the site is not close to the center of the Preserve. Many PAWG members thought the site would be well suited for equestrian use and is well hidden from view from both the Preserve and Highway 84. PAWG members also shared comments related to the site's proximity to the La Honda Elementary School, with some sharing concerns about increased vehicle traffic and visibility from the school and others commenting that it offers a safer access point to the Preserve. Some supported having separate lots for equestrian use and hiking use. PAWG members noted the site has ready access to utilities.

**E3. Red Barn Shed area** – PAWG members agreed the site would provide access to the central part of the Preserve. Some also noted that the site would be tucked away from view from the Preserve and Highway 84, and potentially be further screened with foliage. Others were concerned about views to it from Highway 84. Additional comments related to the site's good views out to the Red Barn and Preserve and concerns about the close proximity to the Red Barn. All PAWG members expressed concerns about safe access from Highway 84, suggesting that having the site as part of a suite of options would require additional traffic and engineering studies during the feasibility study phase. A couple members suggested a permit only lot or access via a docent-led activity while another suggested that a permit lot could offer access to the site for those with disabilities who cannot hike there. Some suggested a phased approach, starting out small first, and studying further potential traffic calming measures. Concerns were raised about the ability to modify the highway, which Caltrans oversees. An alternate site north of the existing ranger residence, named E4, was proposed as homework for the Working Group to visit individually with a permit and assess before the Working Group's next meeting.

Ms. Hugg provided an overview of other options and iterations that could offer different ways to provide access and meet project goals such as providing permit only access, holding docent-led activities, or spreading out amenities or uses over multiple sites rather than just one site. Mr. Hexter suggested that these could then be combined with sites under consideration in suites of options to recommend forwarding to the PNR.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT – 2**

Mike Bushue, Equestrian Trail Riders' Action Committee, stated that any of the "E" sites (near the Red Barn) would not be a good solution. He preferred Gate LH15. He asked about the possibility of recommending additional sites, as he knows a property for sale off Highway 84.

Sharon Dooley, a La Honda community member, inquired whether "E2" is still under consideration. Mr. Hexter responded that based on the PAWG's discussion, the group did not appear supportive of this site. Ms. Dooley expressed concern about high traffic speeds on Highway 84.

Eva Knodt, a La Honda community member, was surprised that the "E" options are still being considered. She said that if one of these options were chosen, the safety problem would need to be resolved. She asked if there is a proposal to make it safer.

Nigel Webb, a La Honda community member, participated on the site tour and thought that the ingress would be difficult for site "D", and it is not a safe access point. He stated that the "E" sites are very dangerous and not functional.

Lynette Vega, a La Honda community member, went on the tour and thought site "B2" was a better option and was more spacious for equestrians. She stated the "E" Sites should not be considered.

Rick DeBenedetti, a Woodside resident and equestrian, stated that requiring permits for "E" sites would not make them safer, and the "E" sites would not be able to accommodate trailers. He also said that having an access point at the "C" sites would allow an equestrian to ride from Sears Ranch to the Red Barn area in about two hours.

Lilia Lopez, a La Honda community member, stated she lives around the bend near to the Red Barn, and that it is very dangerous. She stated the area needs more enforcement and none of the “E” sites should be considered.

Keith Simon, a La Honda community member and cyclist, stated the straight stretch of Highway 84 is used for illegal passing, and the “E” sites should not be considered.

Peter Marchi, a San Gregorio community member, stated that safety should come first, and the “E” sites should not be considered.

Rita Jaramillo, a La Honda community member, was no longer present to provide verbal comments but provided a written comment about keeping the Red Barn off limits.

Ed Haazes, a Woodside resident, was no longer present to provide verbal comments but provided a written comment about traffic concerns on the highway.

### **WORKING GROUP BUSINESS**

Senior Planner Tina Hugg and Meeting Facilitator Lou Hexter described the scope of the recommendations the PAWG will make, which will include a site, sites, or combination of sites and options that members feel are deserving of further consideration as part of a future feasibility study. To gauge members’ support for the various sites under consideration, Mr. Hexter reminded the PAWG of the voting guidelines established for the process, which allowed for the expression of support along the following scale:

The polling adhered to the following scale:

1. I can say an unqualified “yes” to the recommendation.
2. I find the recommendation acceptable. It appears to be the best of the real options available to us at this time.
3. I can live with the recommendation, although I am not especially enthusiastic about it.
4. I do not agree with the recommendation, but I am willing to live with it so the CPAC process can move forward.
5. I do not agree with the recommendation and I would like the CPAC to do more work to see if we can reach a higher level of agreement.
6. I do not agree with the recommendation and I will work actively to oppose it.

The sites under consideration are:

- A. Event Center
- B1. Sears Ranch Road Parking Area - Expansion of Existing Lot
- B2. Sears Ranch Road Parking Area – Site West of Existing Parking Area
- B3. Preserve Gate LH15
- C1. Sears Ranch Road – Former Residence Area (1 mile from the existing lot)
- C.2 Sears Ranch Road - Cattle Corral – Former Residence Area (1 mile from the existing lot)
- D. Preserve Gate LH07 (West Access Gate)
- E1. Red Barn – Area Behind Ranger Residence
- E2. Red Barn – Area Down Slope from Red Barn

E3. Red Barn – Shed area

The results of the voting were:

	<b>A</b>	<b>B1</b>	<b>B2</b>	<b>B3</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E1</b>	<b>E2</b>	<b>E3</b>
<b>BORDI</b>	2	6	1	1	5	1	3	6	6	6
<b>DELAY</b>	Absent									
<b>HEINRICH</b>	6	3	3	2	5	5	1	6	6	4
<b>HOOPER</b>	1	5	1	6	5	5	6	6	6	6
<b>LUSEBRINK</b>	1	2	3	2	6	6	4	3	6	3
<b>MOAZED</b>	3	1	3	1	1	1	5	6	6	6
<b>MOORE</b>	2	4	1	4	1	1	5	6	6	5
<b>PHILLIPS</b>	3	2	3	3	6	6	3	2	6	2
<b>REED</b>	2	3	5	2	6	6	1	6	5	1
<b>SOMMER</b>	5	5	3	3	2	2	1	4	6	2
<b>WOOL</b>	6	5	4	3	6	6	3	6	6	1
<b>Total # of 1-4 scores</b>	7	6	9	9	3	4	7	3	0	6
<b>Total # of 5-6 scores</b>	3	4	1	1	7	6	3	7	10	4

The vote confirmed site E2 is not supported by the PAWG and likely will not be included among its recommendations. Understanding that one site may not fulfill all of the project objectives, District staff next presented a list of potential “suites” of options for the PAWG to consider. These are combinations of the sites and other options/iterations, and the samples presented by District staff are meant to be starting points for discussion. The PAWG may suggest additional configurations and uses for each site being considered by the PAWG.

Regarding Sample Suite #1, a PAWG member asked about adding hiking access at sites A and B3 to the configuration. Another suggested including a picnic area in the redwood grove at site D as an iteration to be included in one of the suites. Another suggestion including creating a “hub and spokes” staging area and trail configuration at sites C1 and C2.

The PAWG agreed additional time is needed to consider sample suites and develop their own suites of options, which will be completed as homework. The PAWG agreed an additional meeting is needed for March 5, 2020 to prioritize PAWG recommendations for consideration by the PNR.

Chair Hooper asked when the future trails will be completed. District staff stated that the goal is for the next phase of trails to be completed by 2024, assuming that no issues arise.

**PUBLIC COMMENT - 3**

Maryann Chwalek, a La Honda community member, asked when the trail at Sears Ranch will open because there is an interest to go on the trail. District staff reported the Sears Ranch trail is in the planning phase.

Karen Read, a San Jose resident, thanked the PAWG and District staff for their work, time and commitment. She appreciated the PAWG and District staff are hearing the community’s concerns regarding safety on Highway 84.

Alex Roa, a Bay Area Ridge Trail consultant, thanked Midpen for its support, resources, and processes. He said that the Bay Area Ridge Trail organization will support access to the Preserve and will support any iteration.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Hooper adjourned the meeting of the La Honda Public Access Working Group at 9:37 pm.

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Tina Hugg, PLA, ASLA  
Senior Planner

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