

CONCORD HILLS REGIONAL PARK LAND USE PLAN

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Public Meeting #2: Design Concepts Review

Concord Senior Center | 2727 Parkside Circle | Concord, CA 94519

November 19, 2015 | 6:30- 8:30pm

EVENT OVERVIEW

Approximately 57 members of the public participated in a workshop to review land use alternatives for the future regional park at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. The workshop included a presentation of the project background and the two alternative land use concepts, followed by a small-group activity.

There were three additional interactive stations that workshop participants could visit during the event, including a map for showing where participants live in relation to the future regional park, a board for listing potential park names, and a board for sharing ideas for magazine re-use. Although not all participants completed these activities, outcomes of the map and magazine reuse stations are provided at the end of this document. No new names were suggested for the future regional park.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

The small group activity focused on refining the alternatives to create a preferred option. Groups were provided large versions of both alternatives, including the site plan and the Visitor Center detail. Each group began by selecting one alternative to use as their base map and was then prompted to annotate the map with changes or additions to the plan. Additionally, the maps include two question boxes to synthesize their ideas:

1. **WHY DID YOUR GROUP CHOOSE THIS ALTERNATIVE?** What features or characteristics are the most important? What do you like most about this alternative?
2. **WHAT WOULD IMPROVE THIS ALTERNATIVE?** Discuss how your group would change the alternative to better meet your visions, and annotate these changes on the map or in the space below. Consider the following:
 - » Roads
 - » Trails
 - » Picnic Areas
 - » Camping
 - » Interpretive Topics
 - » Recreational Uses



Participants were divided into twelve groups when they arrived at the meeting but were merged into six groups for a broader conversation. Summaries of the outcomes from each individual group are included in the following pages. Common themes and topic are included below.

Common Themes/Discussion Topics

Alternative A. Most groups began with Alternative A, and many noted that this was because they preferred the vehicular road pattern shown in this option. Most groups perceived this option to have fewer roads and that the roads that were shown took visitors to the areas that they considered most valuable for recreational use. Many of the groups indicated that although they selected Alternative A, they would like to add some of the trees shown in Alternative B, and all groups made some modifications to the selected Alternative.

Trail Network. Numerous groups indicated that either the level of trail development was adequate or could be expanded. Multiple groups discussed the idea that mode of use would be important to determine so as to avoid conflicts between user groups, specifically bicyclists, equestrians, and hikers. Groups also indicated the need for signage, both within the park and along trail corridors that connect to the future regional park.

Equestrian Facilities. Some groups highlighted the need for equestrian facilities, including larger staging areas for trailers, trail amenities such as troughs and hitching posts, and equestrian-only trails. Groups also considered the existing corrals to be equestrian opportunities that were overlooked.

Picnic Areas. Many groups added additional picnic areas, particularly near the Visitor Center Complex.

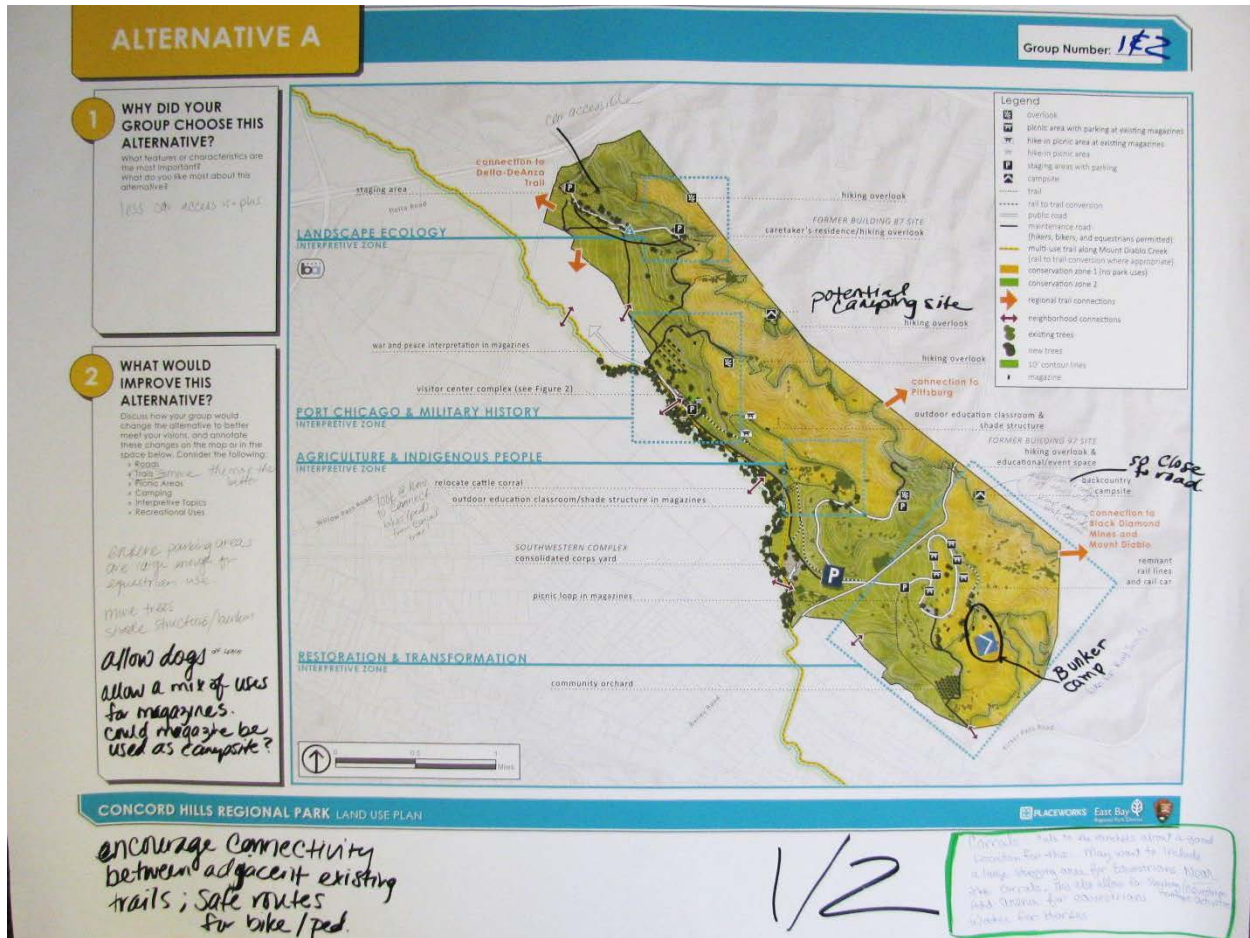
Corral. There were varying opinions about the placement of the corral with some groups pointing out that it is inconsistent with Visitor Center use, some groups considering it a recreational asset in proximity to the Visitor Center, and one group relocating it to another existing corral area.

Community Orchard. Numerous groups highlighted the community orchard as a positive addition to the park with multiple groups expanding infrastructure around the orchard or adding additional community garden-type features.

Camping. Most groups liked the concept of camping on the site and some expanded it to include drive-to sites in addition to hike-in facilities. Groups indicated that the backcountry site should feel like it is in the backcountry.

Habitat Protection. Numerous groups indicated that it was very important to ensure adequate habitat protection, and that habitat should be prioritized over development.





Group 1/2

This group selected **Alternative A** because they considered it to have less car access, which was a plus for the group, and because they felt the ridge trail was very important.

The group modified the site land use plan in the following ways:

Roads

- Changed trail between the staging area on Delta Road and Building 87 to a public road, creating a loop road up to that area.
- Created a new staging area just north of Bailey Road.

Trails

- Emphasized the need to encourage connectivity between adjacent trails and to create safe routes for bikes and pedestrians to the park.
- Indicated that they support lots of trails.

Picnic Areas

- Added additional picnic areas to Visitor Center (see description below)

Camping

- Created a new campsite within the magazines south of Bailey Road, could be hike-in for Boy Scouts.
- Relocated backcountry campsite to the primary area (where it is located in Alternative B) because of concern that it was too close to the road.

Interpretive Topics

- Suggested utilizing corrals for ranching/equestrian heritage activities – recommended contacting ranchers to receive suggestions on best locations.

Recreational Uses

- Suggested that equestrians might use existing corrals and that the site should consider equestrian needs, including:
 - Staging areas large enough to accommodate horse trailers.
 - Water troughs for horses.
 - Arena.

The group selected **Alternative A Visitor Center Complex** because they did not like the corral being so close to the Visitor Center. The group made the following modifications:

- Added the picnic area from Alternative B.
- Created a loop trail from the picnic area to the magazines.
- Utilized the magazines for art exhibits.





Group 3/4

This group selected **Alternative A** due to the drive-in picnic areas south of Bailey Road and the location of the ridge trail inside the park.

The group modified the site land use plan in the following ways:

Trails

- Suggested re-routing ridge trail to avoid sensitive habitat in the eagle's nest area, perhaps to the lower road below the ridge.
- Recommended creating an underpass or overpass across Bailey Road to create safe crossing for the ridge trail.
- Addition of trails throughout the site.

Picnic Areas

- Substantially increased picnic capacity at the Visitor Center.

Recreational Uses

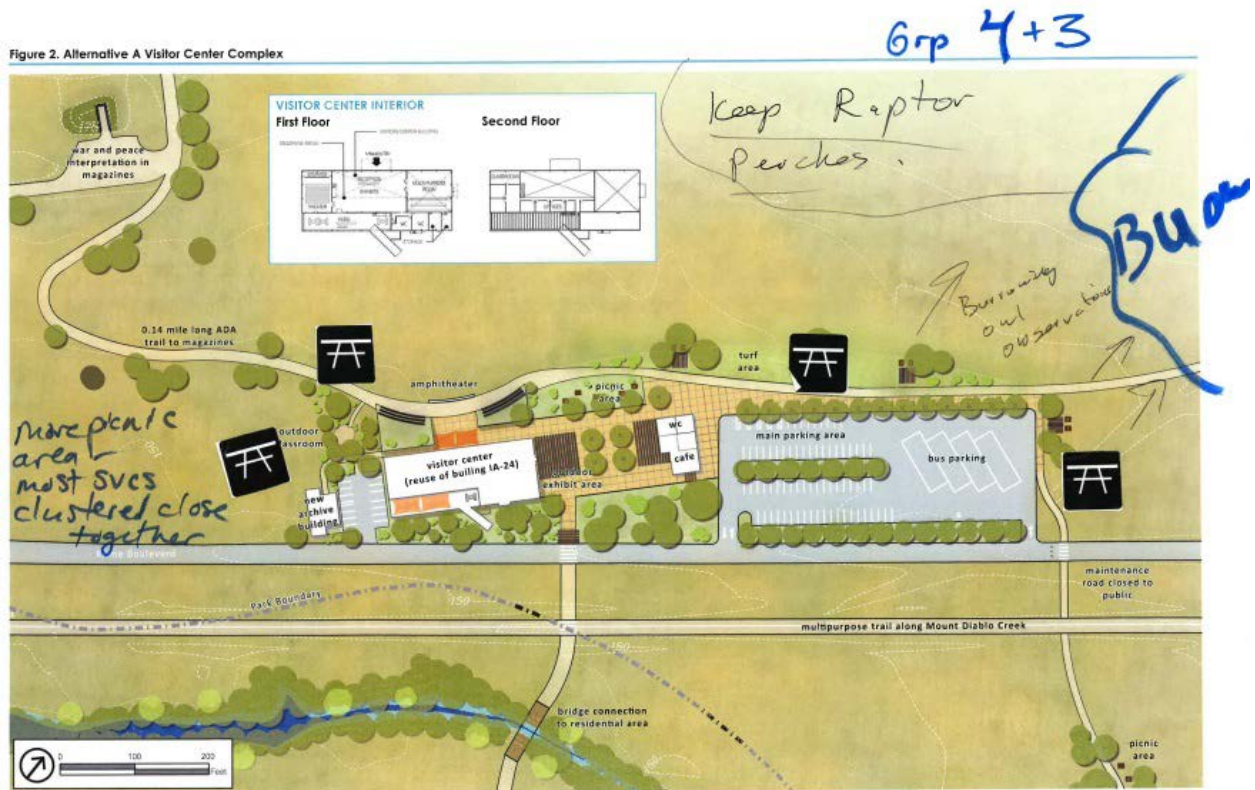
- Moved corral behind the Visitor Center Complex to the other existing corral area northeast of the magazines and suggested that it be used as an active corral to attract tri-colored blackbirds. Also indicated that the corral's location in Alternative A could hinder burrowing owls in the hillside behind the Visitor Center Complex.
- Emphasized interest in preserving/enhancing community orchard at the historic orchard location.

Other

- Recommended more trees for shade or other shaded facilities, especially around picnic sites, and particularly those near Bailey Road.

The group selected **Alternative A Visitor Center Complex** but made the following modifications:

- Created a burrowing owl observation area that looks out at hillside.
- Suggested keeping raptor perches.
- Added more picnic areas since most services at the park are clustered in this area.





Group 5/6

This group selected **Alternative A** because it felt the alternative was more appropriate for the urban setting, and they preferred fewer trees be added to the site.

The group modified the site land use plan in the following ways:

Camping

- Created additional hike-in campgrounds south of Bailey Road behind the vehicular road.

Other

- Created a shuttle connecting BART to the park.

Recreational Uses

- Desired an equestrian staging area and a corral for public use.

The group selected **Alternative A Visitor Center Complex** but made the following modifications:

- Kept the corral in its existing location (as shown in Alternative B).
- Added bike rental facilities.





Group 7/8

This group selected **Alternative A** due to the use of the rail lines and rail car as a display south of Bailey Road.

The group suggested considerations in the following areas:

Roads

- There was some support in the group for closing area South of Bailey Road to cars. The group indicated that they were split about whether to allow vehicular access.

Trails

- Support having the ridge trail.
- Add a stronger connection to BART.

Recreational Uses

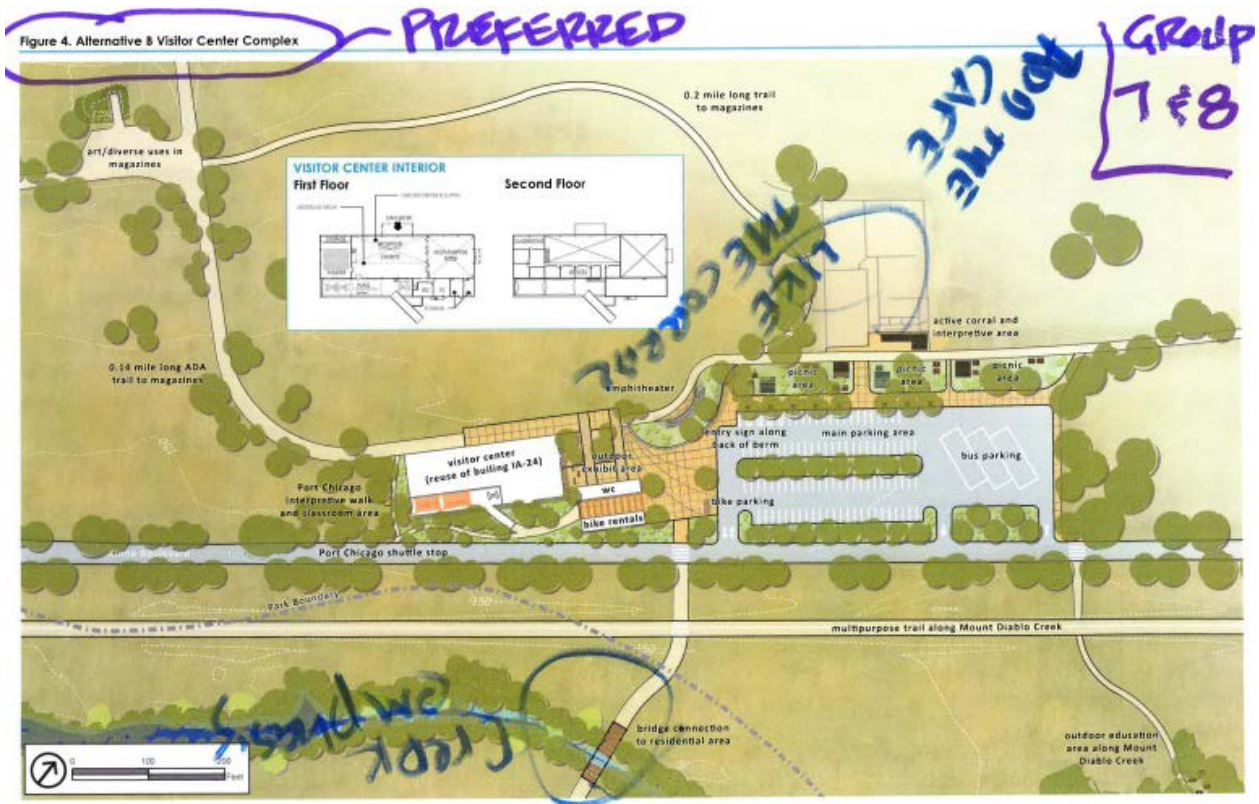
- Would like to see more emphasis on railroad history – would like to keep some of the old line or if converted to trail, keep some of the signage and legacy items, like crossings or memorabilia – particular emphasis on the Bay Point – Clayton Rail line and the multi-layered history of the line.

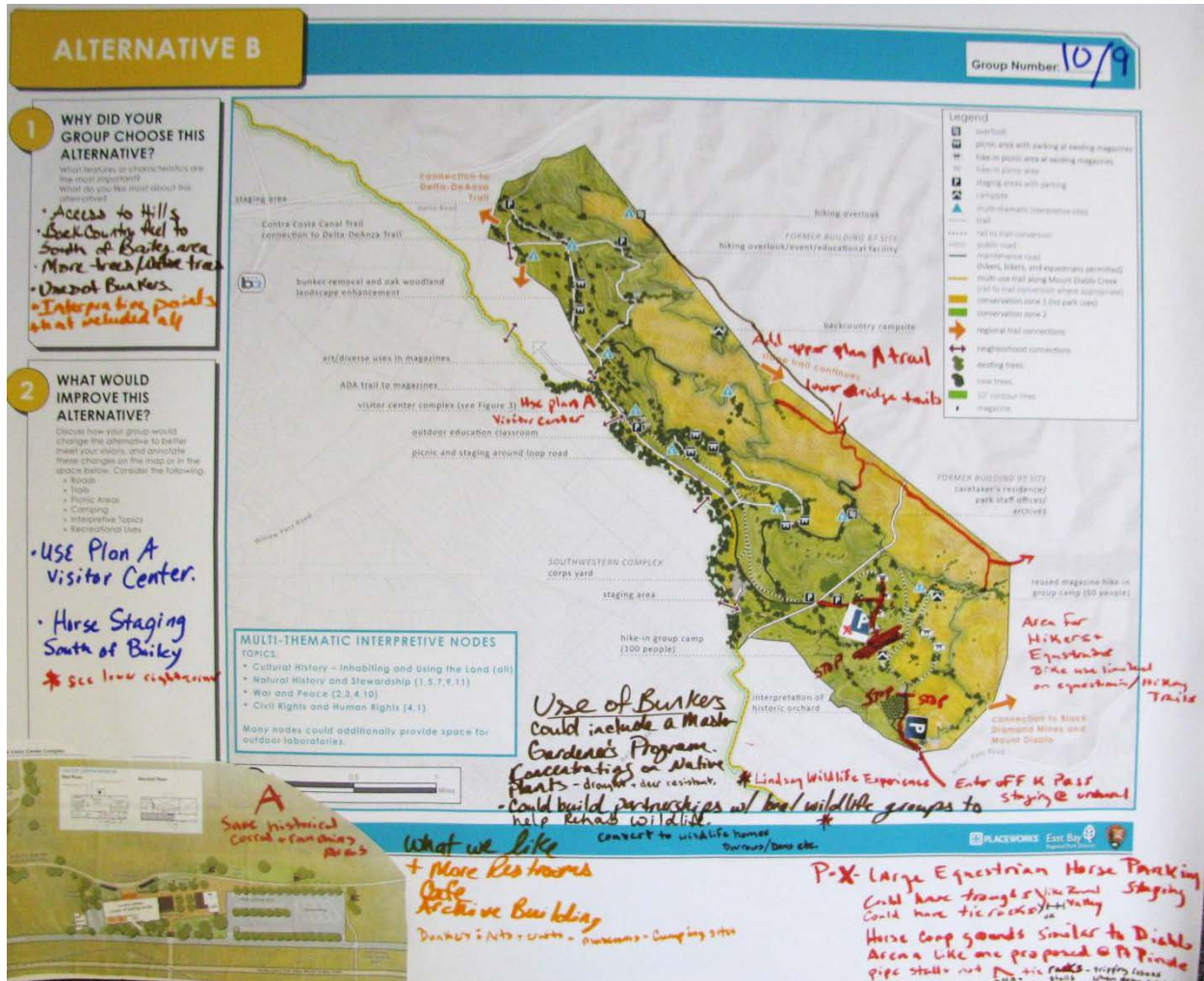
Other

- Some members in the group expressed interest in providing more trees in Conservation Zone 2. The group indicated that they were divided about whether they wanted more trees. The group suggested that there should be more tree planting in the flat area and fewer along the ridge to preserve views.
- Emphasized that the park does not provide any of the same uses as adjacent facilities, such as the proposed City of Concord park the northwest of the site.

The group selected **Alternative B Visitor Center Complex** because they supported utilizing the corral. The group added the following modifications:

- Greater emphasis on Mount Diablo Creek.





Group 9/10

This group selected **Alternative B** due to a preference for vehicular access to the hills and ridge trail. The group also preferred that the area South of Bailey Road had a “backcountry” feel, that there were more trees, that the bunker [magazines] were reused, and that the plan had interpretive points that included all topics.

The group modified the site land use plan in the following ways:

Roads

- Extended vehicular access from the staging area south of Bailey Road to the first row of bunkers and moved the staging area to the end of the road.
- Created vehicular access to the community orchard from Kirker Pass Road with a staging area at the entrance.

Trails

- Added a second trail up in the hills on the Pittsburg side to create a loop along the ridge.
- Continued ridge trail south of Bailey Road.

Camping

- Suggested utilizing magazines near the Visitor Center Complex for camping.

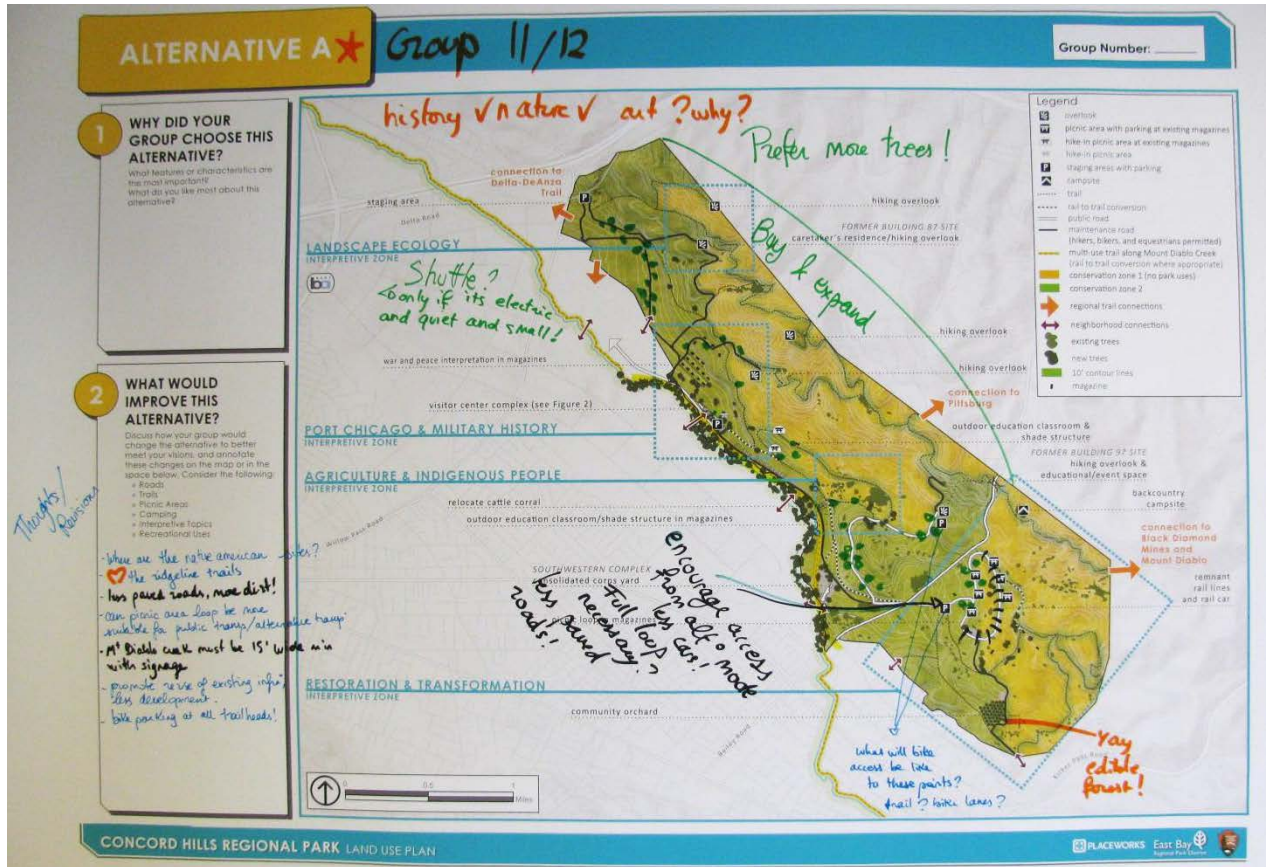
Recreational Uses

- Suggested that the area South of Bailey Road should be used for equestrian and hiking trails with limited bikes to avoid conflict.
- Included expanded equestrian facilities, including:
 - Large equestrian horse parking
 - Troughs and tie racks (like Round Valley Regional Preserve) – although prefer pipe stalls to tie racks because it reduces tripping issues
 - Horse campground (like Mount Diablo State Park)
 - Arena (like the one proposed at Point Pinole)
- Suggested additional uses for magazines near the Visitor Center complex, including:
 - Master gardener program focused on native plants that are drought and deer tolerant
 - Wildlife rehabilitation – could form partnership with wildlife groups – could convert bunker to wildlife homes (dens/burrows)

The group selected **Alternative A Visitor Center Complex** because it had more restrooms, a café, and a separate archive building. The group made the following modifications:

- Kept the corral in its existing location (as shown in Alternative B).
- Added additional uses to the magazines, including: arts and crafts shows, museum exhibits, and camping.
- Added trees (as shown in Alternative B).





Group 11/12

This group selected **Alternative A** because of the ridgeline trail, the community orchard, and the reuse of existing infrastructure. The group indicated a preference for less development and fewer paved roads overall and that the plan should emphasize non-vehicular access. The group also indicated a preference for more trees than presented in Alternative A.

The group suggested considerations in the following areas:

Roads

- Fewer paved roads and more dirt roads or trails.
- Considered whether the public roads are accessible by public transit.

Trails

- Would like to know where bike access is allowed.
- Specified that the multi-use path along Mount Diablo Creek must be at least 15 feet and include directional signage.
- Suggested that there should be bike parking at all trailheads.

Interpretive Topics

- Would like to consider Native American history and important cultural sites.

Recreational Uses

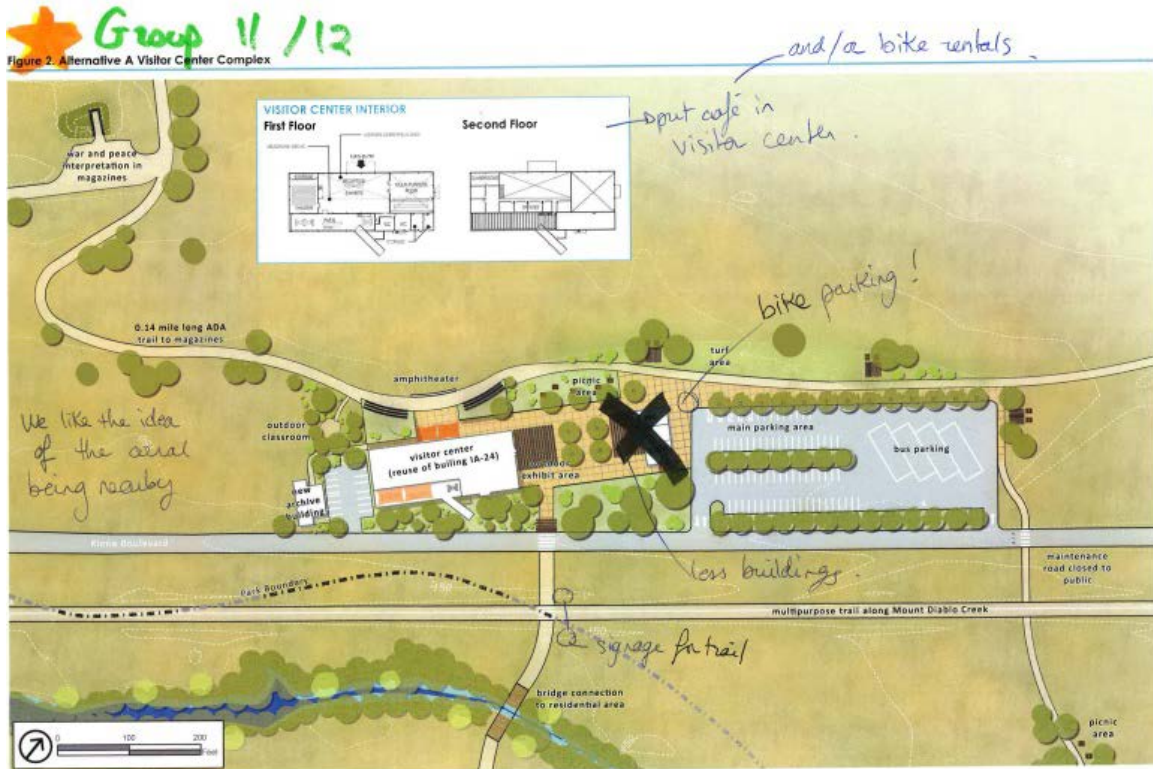
- Supported the community orchard and would support additional edible garden elements.

Other

- Prefer the trees from Alternative B.
- Add a shuttle from BART (electric – small and quiet).

The group selected **Alternative A Visitor Center Complex** but made the following modifications:

- Placed the café inside the Visitor Center and do not create a new building.
- Added bicycle parking.
- Added signage for all trails.
- Considered placing the corral near the Visitor Center complex.

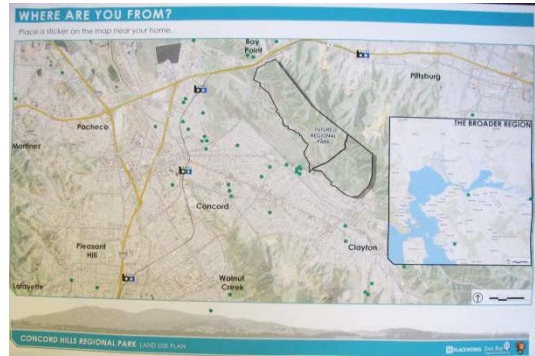


INTERACTIVE STATIONS

Following are outcomes from the interactive stations that workshop participants could provide feedback at throughout the event.

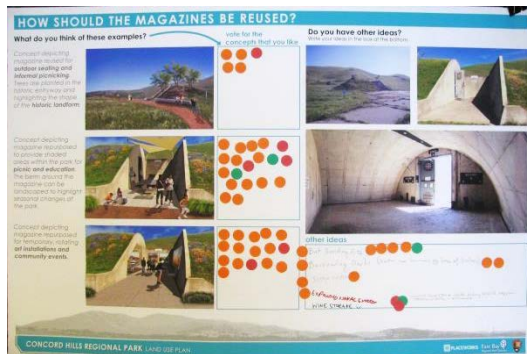
WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

As shown at right, participants came from locations around the Bay Area with the majority coming from Concord or nearby with some participants living directly adjacent to the future park site.



MAGAZINE REUSE

One board showed three alternative uses of existing magazines that could be utilized at the future park site, including a closed magazine that is filled to maintain the historic form; magazines open for picnic space; or magazines open for community events, such as art exhibits. Participants were asked to vote on these concepts or suggest new ideas. Results of this activity are provided below.



Example	Number of Votes
Filled magazine	5
Picnic magazine	19
Event magazine	16
<i>Other:</i>	
Bat roosting habitat	7
Burrowing owl habitat	4
Indoor hostel	3
Expanded naval exhibit	2
Wine storage	1
Campsite	1
Rehabilitating wildlife (partnership with Lindsay Wildlife Experience)	1
Art museums	1