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## McLaren Park Trails, Priority Projects

### Conceptual Design Key Maps and Summary of Proposed Improvements

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This document shows the current conceptual design for trail and natural features restoration work proposed in four priority project areas, as identified in the 2017 McLaren Park Vision Plan. Each key map page contains a summary of the design intent in that area and the specific lettered improvements are listed on the final page.



Trail and Path Improvements Map



# VISITACION AVENUE CORRIDOR

## LEGEND



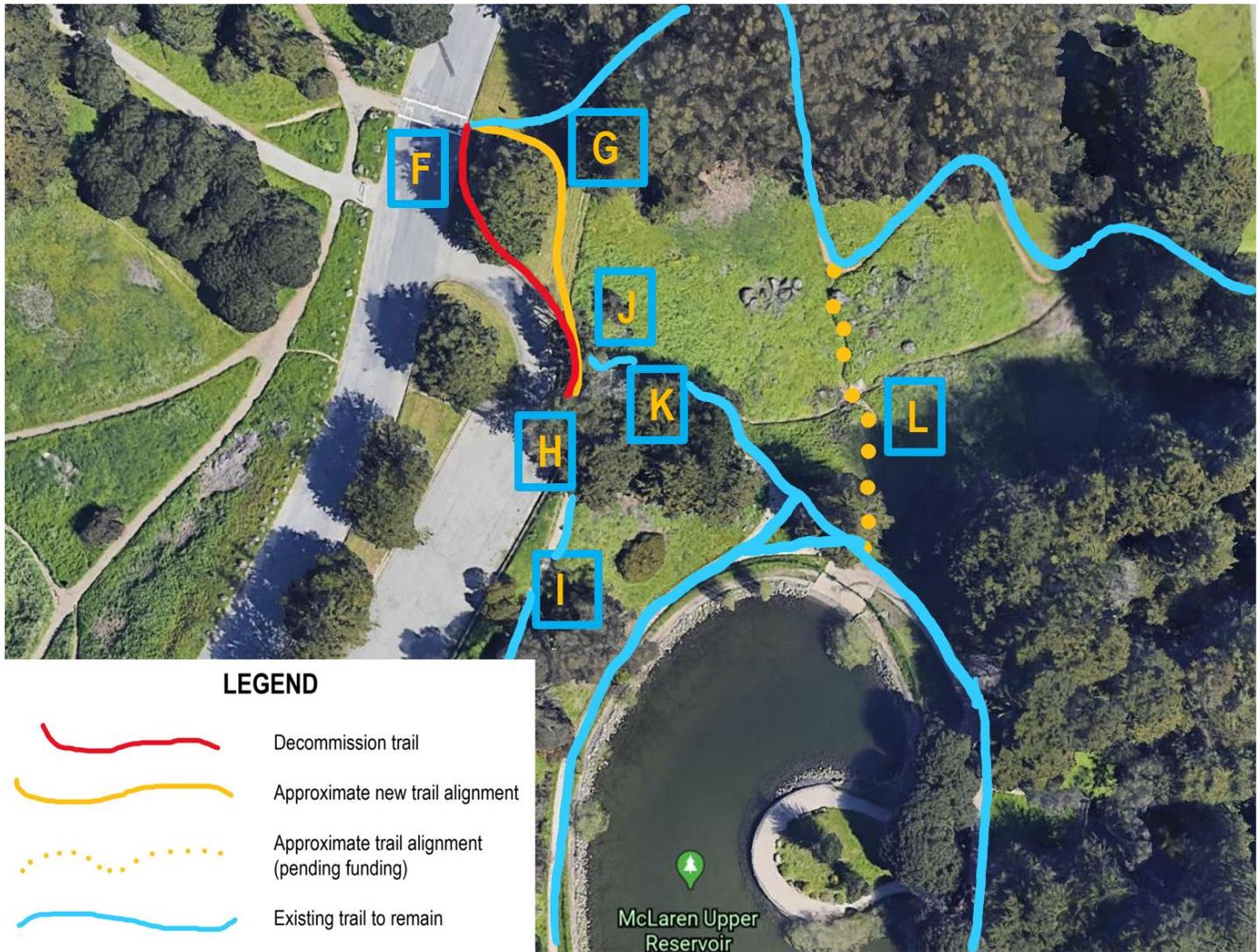
Approximate new trail alignment



*The project is in the planning phase. New trail alignments are approximate and will be refined in the design-build process.*

This new stabilized natural surface trail will better serve existing foot traffic, greatly enhance access to the interior of the park from Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale, and connect many recent and upcoming improvements along Visitacion Avenue.

## UPPER RESERVOIR

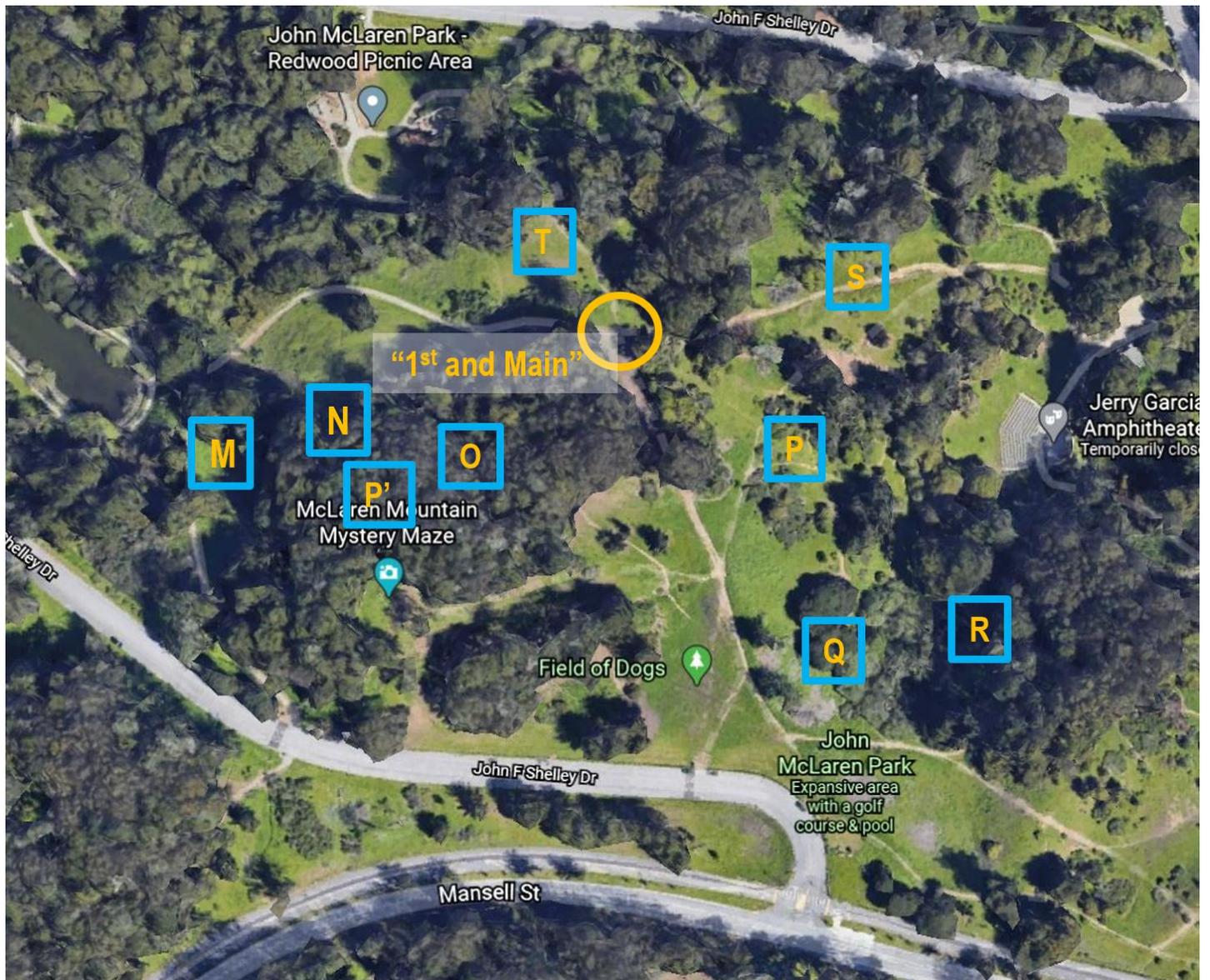


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Improvements at the Upper Reservoir are primarily intended to repair the foundational trail system, while improving accessibility and safety, mitigating erosion from storm water surges, and enhancing habitat values.

Natural features restoration funds will be used to remove invasive plants and establish a seasonal wetland at the west to east sloping hillside north of the reservoir, to slow stormwater surges and provide higher quality habitat.

## SHELLEY LOOP INTERIOR

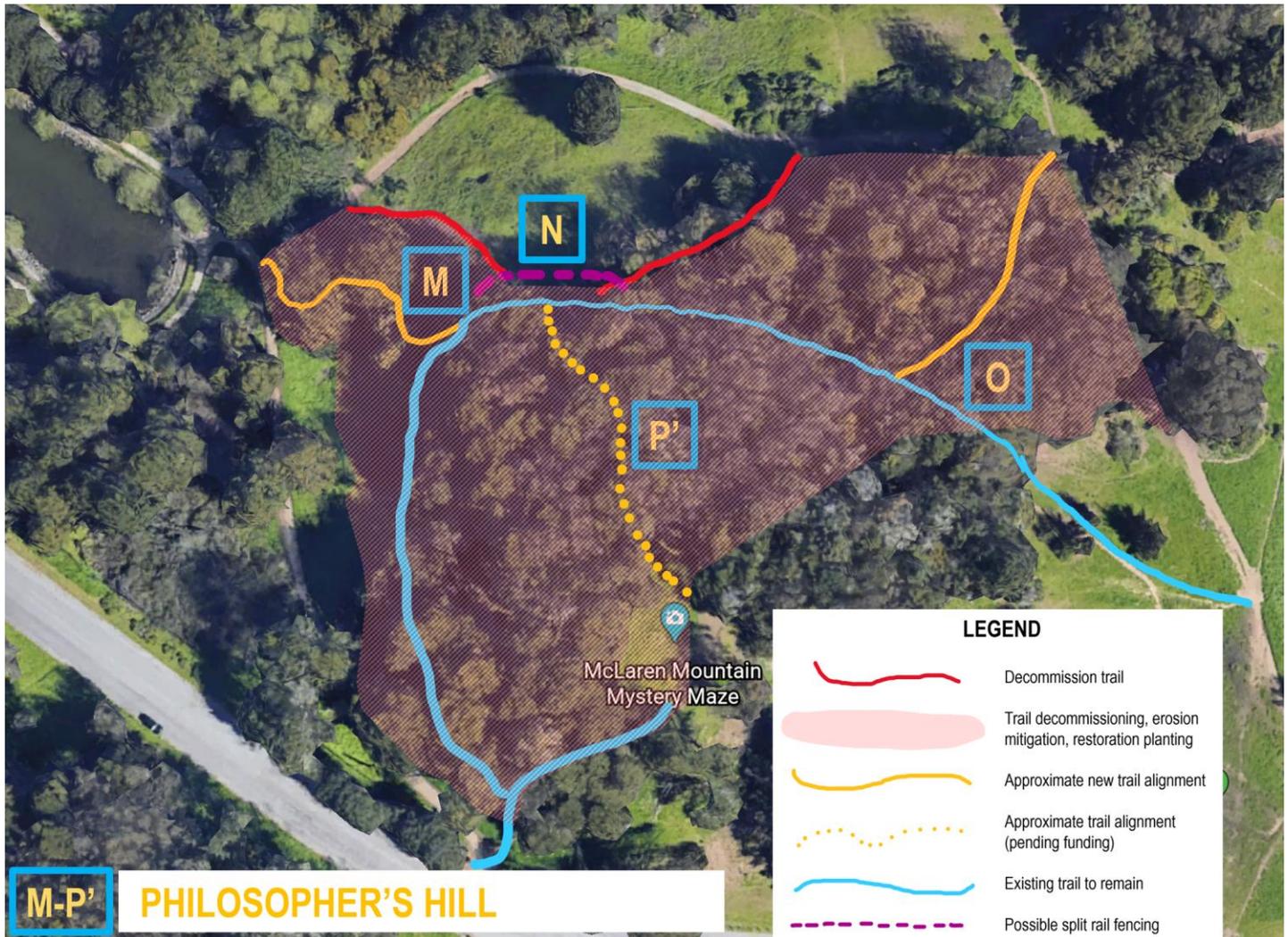


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This is a large area with varied topography and plant communities, home to nesting birds and endemic plant species. Proposed improvements capitalize on the abundant opportunities to maintain and build on natural character and protect natural resources, while clarifying circulation routes and reinforcing sustainable trails that allow park users to experience views of the San Francisco skyline, sunny scrub, shaded forest, and birdsong along Grey Fox Creek.

In an effort to share as much information as staff presently have, the proposed work in the Shelley Loop Interior is shown with three different key maps, zoomed in on: Philosopher's Hill; the core area around Grey Fox Creek and surrounding the amphitheater; and connectivity around 1st and Main. (The project team has been calling the noted intersection of two major trails 1st and Main. This intersection would continue to be a primary multi use trail junction and an organizing element for the trail network in the area.)

## SHELLEY INTERIOR LOOP – PHILOSOPHER’S HILL



*The project is in the planning phase. New trail alignments are approximate and will be refined in the design-build process.*

Note that all existing and proposed trails on Philosopher’s Hill are pedestrian only. New alignments will be earthen trails, made of native soil, and a minimum of 3’ wide.

At (M) and (O) the project will reinforce trails installed by Volunteers for Outdoor California (VoCal) in 2017, by doing some restoration planting work throughout the area, and potentially decommissioning steep erosive trails as budget allows. The project will also create a sustainable route to connect the VoCal Trail with the primary intersection at 1st and Main (O).

The northern slope (N) contains a biologically diverse wildflower meadow as mapped in the 2016 Natural Resources Management Plan. The project will remove two adjacent unsustainable steep and eroding trails that lead to a lookout at the top of this “Sidalcea Slope.” These desire lines are met with the trail improvements at M and O. Staff have considered previous community feedback in opposition to split rail fencing carefully, and are still recommending split rail fence for this location (N). While several alternatives were considered, staff determined that a informal overlook framed by a modest amount of split rail fencing would be the best approach to preserving the overlook access and habitat values of the site.

If budget allows, staff proposes creating a new sustainable trail that connects the lookout with the top of Philosopher’s Hill. This route would contain some box steps (P’).

## SHELLEY LOOP INTERIOR – CORE



### **P-R CONSOLIDATE TRAILS AND ENHANCE HABITAT IN CORE**

***The project is in the planning phase. New trail alignments are approximate and will be refined in the design-build process.***

The intent of project work in this area is to clarify circulation by emphasizing a handful of trails that follow key desire lines, while otherwise establishing larger undisturbed contiguous areas in order to enhance habitat. During the 3/7/20 trail walk there was no opposition voiced to the concept of consolidating the mesh of social trails in the scrub habitat (P) nor to decommissioning the trail across and trails adjacent to Grey Fox Creek (R).

Staff recognizes the need to integrate improvements and circulation projected for the amphitheater project with the trails in the scrub habitat to the west (P).

It is notable that this project area does not propose any capital improvements to the existing steep trail connection south of Grey Fox Creek. Previous plans for a rerouted trail including box steps in this location have been discarded based on community feedback.

## SHELLEY LOOP INTERIOR – PRIMARY CONNECTIVITY



### **S-T** IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND REDUCE EROSION

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The goal of these specific improvements is to enhance connectivity and clarify circulation while reducing the negative impacts of erosion. Repair of the eroding access road (S) has been a top priority for the community for many years, and this capital project will make much needed improvements through slight re-routing, addition of drainage features, and repaired surfacing.

There are multiple trails from the access road towards the group picnic area, and the concept design proposes decommissioning redundant trails and establishing a slightly re-routed and more sustainable 5' wide multi-use trail between 1<sup>st</sup> and Main and the Group Picnic Area, as was laid out during the Vision Plan process (T).

## UNIVERSITY HILL (CONNECTION BETWEEN LOUIS SUTTER AND MANSELL COURTS)



**The project is in the planning phase. New trail alignments are approximate and will be refined in the design-build process.**

Primary goals for this area are to ensure safe recreation and access, clarify circulation, and protect and improve habitat. A sustainable multi-use trail will be created with several wide switchbacks that meander through the shaded forest and into the western edge of the grassland, providing a dynamic experience in multiple plant communities (W). This trail to be 6' wide, in order for park maintenance vehicles to be able to occasionally use the trail without damaging the trail edge. Replacing asphalt paths with earthen tread treatments was a theme that came out of the Vision Plan.

The design intent is to remove the switchbacks and all social trails in the hatched area (X). The sandstone substrate is inherently erosive and RPD operations staff cannot effectively manage negative impacts from erosion off trails that do not follow grade. The runoff has negatively impacted the asphalt path from University to Dwight in recent years. In addition, this grassland, which contains a diverse wildflower meadow, was categorized as having the highest biological conservation value in the Natural Resource Management Plan. In order to prevent erosion, create a sustainable and maintainable trail network, and protect the rare grassland resources, and connect the new ribbon trail to the adjoining neighborhood, a single trail would be created between the switchback trail and University Street.

## **PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS DESCRIBED**

### VISITACION AVENUE CORRIDOR TRAIL

*Yellow ribbon shows approximate alignment of new stabilized natural surface trail from Hahn Ave to Visitacion Valley Middle School*

- (A) Trailhead at Hahn is slightly off the corner, to allow for rolling access between trail and sidewalk*
- (B) Project will be coordinated with the installation of a new native plant garden, primarily funded by Community Challenge Grant [separate community project; construction planned for early 2021]*
- (C) The existing dirt pathway along the east side of the upper segment of trail will not be removed as part of the capital project*
- (D) Trailhead location at the Middle School is still to be determined.*
- (E) New crosswalk from north of Middle School driveway to fire road enhances connectivity between Visitacion Valley and the rest of the McLaren Park trail network [this scope is a separate capital project; construction planned for summer 2020]*

### UPPER RESERVOIR

- (F) Formalize crosswalk*
- (G) Decommission existing asphalt path and add stabilized natural surface trail between crosswalk and parking lot, along a more accessible alignment that is farther from the road*
- (H) Paving improvements and ADA striping for a van accessible parking spot and add curb ramp*
- (I) Repair existing asphalt path west of reservoir for improved accessibility*
- (J) Remove asphalt drain ditch, remove invasive plants, add drainage swales and native plantings*
- (K) Replace box steps and asphalt path and replace in-kind with stabilized natural surface trail*
- (L) New habitat enhancement area/ seasonal wetland and if funding allows construct trail improvements to maintain (E) trail*

### SHELLEY LOOP INTERIOR

- (M) Formalize sustainable trail*
- (N) Shape overlook at Sidalcea slope*
- (O) Reinforce VoCal trail and connect to 1st and Main*
- (P\*) If funding allows, formalize new trail to top of hill*
- (P) Consolidate trails and enhance scrub habitat*
- (Q) Consolidate trails above Grey Fox Creek riparian zone*
- (R) Formalize trail through cypress eucalyptus; remove trails across and adjacent to creek; establish a new overlook at riparian zone*
- (S) Repair and slightly reroute access road to mitigate erosion and improve accessibility*
- (T) Consolidate trails to improve multi-use trail connection between 1st and Main and Group Picnic Area*

### UNIVERSITY HILL (CONNECTION BETWEEN LOUIS SUTTER AND MANSELL COURTS)

- (W) Remove asphalt and steps; add stabilized natural surface trail with several switchbacks, from Louis Sutter Playground to Mansell Courts. New ribbon of 6' wide trail weaves through the trees and the western edge of the grassland*
- (X) Decommission erosive switchback and all social trails across grassland and establish a single trail on grade, between new stabilized natural surface trail switchback and dead end at the uphill side of University*
- (Y) Remove asphalt and steps from bridges into key intersection node; add stabilized natural surface trail connections with minimal stairs to connect Hidden Bridges and picnic area with main trail.*
- (Z) If funding allows, add a run of box steps from upper University to lower University at Dwight to provide a more direct path up/ down the hill*