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## TWIN PEAKS FOR ALL SFMTA STAFF RECOMMENDATION

### Summary

The SFMTA began the Twin Peaks for All project in October 2020 after the Burnett Avenue and Portola Drive gates on Twin Peaks Boulevard were closed earlier in the year to help provide recreational space for physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Twin Peaks for All project was initiated to improve overall access to the peak for all users and to examine the needs and impacts of the overall area including neighboring streets. SFMTA staff collected data including parking counts, bicycle and pedestrian counts and historic collisions, reviewed turning radii for tour buses, talked to neighbors, released a public survey and analyzed the results, reviewed street widths and coordinated with partner agencies.

As a result of these efforts, SFMTA staff recommend implementation of Option 2 – Portola Drive. This option provides the best combination of safety and access for all users, as well as addressing the externalities associated with the current closure affecting neighbors. The preferred option closes the Burnett Avenue gate to vehicles at all times, only allowing non-motorized modes to pass through the north side while keeping the Portola Drive gate open at all times to all modes, including passenger vehicles and tour buses. While staff originally reviewed opening Portola Drive gate during specific hours, the overall recommendation for the Twin Peaks for All project is to keep Portola Drive gate open during all days and times. Attachment 1 of this document presents the recommended option.

Note that SFMTA Board of Directors' approval would be required prior to implementation. Staff plan to bring this recommendation to the Board for consideration at a March 2021 Board meeting (exact date TBD).

### Project Background

The Twin Peaks Boulevard gates were closed early in the pandemic to reduce crowding at the Christmas Tree Point lookout parking lot. Since then, use of Twin Peaks Park has increased significantly among people walking, rolling, hiking, jogging and bicycling, with an average of more than 800 visiting each weekday and more than 1,100 on weekend days.

While the COVID-19 related road closure received support, it also resulted in community concerns regarding accessibility for people with disabilities and negative neighborhood impacts. To help address concerns, local roadway access is now available through the south end Portola Drive gate daily between 6:00 PM and midnight. However, some unresolved issues remain, so the SFMTA worked with the community and other city departments, including the Recreation and Parks Department, Police Department and Public Works, to ensure access and to balance the needs on Twin Peaks Boulevard.

## Project Goals:

- Ensure access to the viewpoint for all, especially for people with disabilities
- Provide space for people walking and rolling that allows for physical distancing
- Reducing negative impacts by park users on neighbors
- Retaining the extraordinary increase in new park users by maintaining safe, continuous routes for those traveling on foot, bicycle and assistive mobility devices

## Project Options

The options listed below were vetted by SFMTA and Recreation and Parks Department staff, the public through a survey and conversations, as well as other stakeholders including walking and bicycling advocates. The five options each attempt to balance the needs of the community and meet the overall Project Goals. For reference, graphics of the five options are included as Attachments 2-6 to this document.

1. Burnett Avenue - Burnett Avenue gate is open 24 hours, with parking and a vehicle turnaround available on Christmas Tree Point Road.
2. **Portola Drive (DRAFT RECOMMENDED OPTION)** - Continue keeping the Portola Avenue gate open, extending the hours from 12 PM to midnight daily.
3. One-Way Southbound - One-way, southbound vehicle traffic, from the north gate at Burnett Avenue to the south gate at Portola Drive. Reserve the northbound vehicle travel lane for people walking and bicycling.
4. One-Way Northbound - One-way, northbound vehicle traffic, from the south gate at Portola Drive to the north gate at Burnett Avenue. Reserve the southbound vehicle travel lane for people walking and bicycling.
5. Pre-COVID - Open both the north and south gates, as were conditions pre-pandemic. The east side of the figure eight is reserved for people walking and biking and the west side of the figure eight is reserved for two-way traffic.

## Evaluation Criteria

Given the community concerns and project goals, SFMTA staff evaluated the five project options against six criteria. These criteria, as defined below, are not the only considerations for the Twin Peaks for All, they are of the most important for future access, safety and use of the recreational resource. According to SFMTA staff, the overall level of importance for each of the criteria is noted in the parenthesis. While these levels of importance are based on staff's discretion, safety is paramount for the SFMTA to achieve its Vision Zero goal.

- Non-Motorized Transportation Safety (High) – Separating non-motorized transportation modes from vehicles helps create a safer environment for all modes.
- Neighborhood Impacts (Medium) – With the closure of Twin Peaks Boulevard, unforeseen consequences have resulted on neighboring streets.
- Tour Bus Access (Medium) – Twin Peaks Boulevard was a tour bus destination before the pandemic and will once again become a destination when citywide restrictions are lifted.
- Non-Motorized Transportation Access (Medium) – People walk and bicycle to, from and around Twin Peaks and with Twin Peaks Boulevard closed, this demand has increased.
- Survey Results (Medium) – The SFMTA conducted an electronic survey regarding the five options and more than 1,700 people responded with opinions.

- Implementation Cost (Low) – The different options have different costs, and this is especially important given the SFMTA’s fiscal constraints.

**Evaluation of Alternatives**

Staff reviewed the five options and evaluated them based on the six listed evaluation criteria. Criteria were also weighed based on importance included in the parentheses in the prior Evaluation Criteria section; Table 1 presents the results. Options 1 and 2 score the highest followed by Option 5 and the two one-way options score the lowest. Option 2 scores the highest for safety since it provides access to the peak without vehicles, for tour bus access since this is how tour buses accessed and egressed from the peak pre-COVID and for non-motorized transportation access since the Burnett Avenue gate would have dedicated pedestrian access (unlike pre-COVID).

Table 1- Results of Twin Peaks for All Evaluation of Alternatives

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Non-Motorized Transport Safety</b>	<b>Neighborhood Impacts</b>	<b>Tour Bus Access</b>	<b>Non-Motorized Transport Access</b>	<b>Survey Results</b>	<b>Cost</b>	
<b>Criteria Weight</b>	<b>HIGH</b> (max 9)	<b>MEDIUM</b> (max 6)				<b>LOW</b> (max 3)	<b>Score</b>
<i>Option 1 Burnett</i>	9	3	2	4	6	2	<b>26</b>
<b>Option 2 Portola</b>	9	4	6	6	4	2	<b>31</b>
<i>Option 3 Southbound</i>	6	5	4	4	2	1	<b>22</b>
<i>Option 4 Northbound</i>	6	5	4	4	2	1	<b>22</b>
<i>Option 5 Pre-COVID</i>	3	6	6	2	4	3	<b>24</b>
Non-Motorized Transport Safety – Higher score equals better safety Neighborhood Impacts – Higher score equals less neighborhood impacts Tour Bus Access – Higher score equals better access Non-Motorized Transport Access – Higher score equals better access Survey Results – Higher score equals more preferred in the survey Cost – Higher score equals less costly							

**Recommendation**

Staff recommend implementing Option 2 - Portola Drive, with access at all times. Option 2 requires closing the Burnett Avenue gate permanently to vehicles and therefore an approval action by the SFMTA Board of Directors. However, like some of the other options, the recommended design does not require modifications to streets that currently restrict tour buses. A key benefit of the Portola Drive option is that it provides continuous pedestrian access, free from vehicles, from the north side of Twin Peaks. Prior to the full pandemic closure, this was not available except on-street, in the shoulder of Twin Peaks Boulevard and adjacent to moving vehicles.

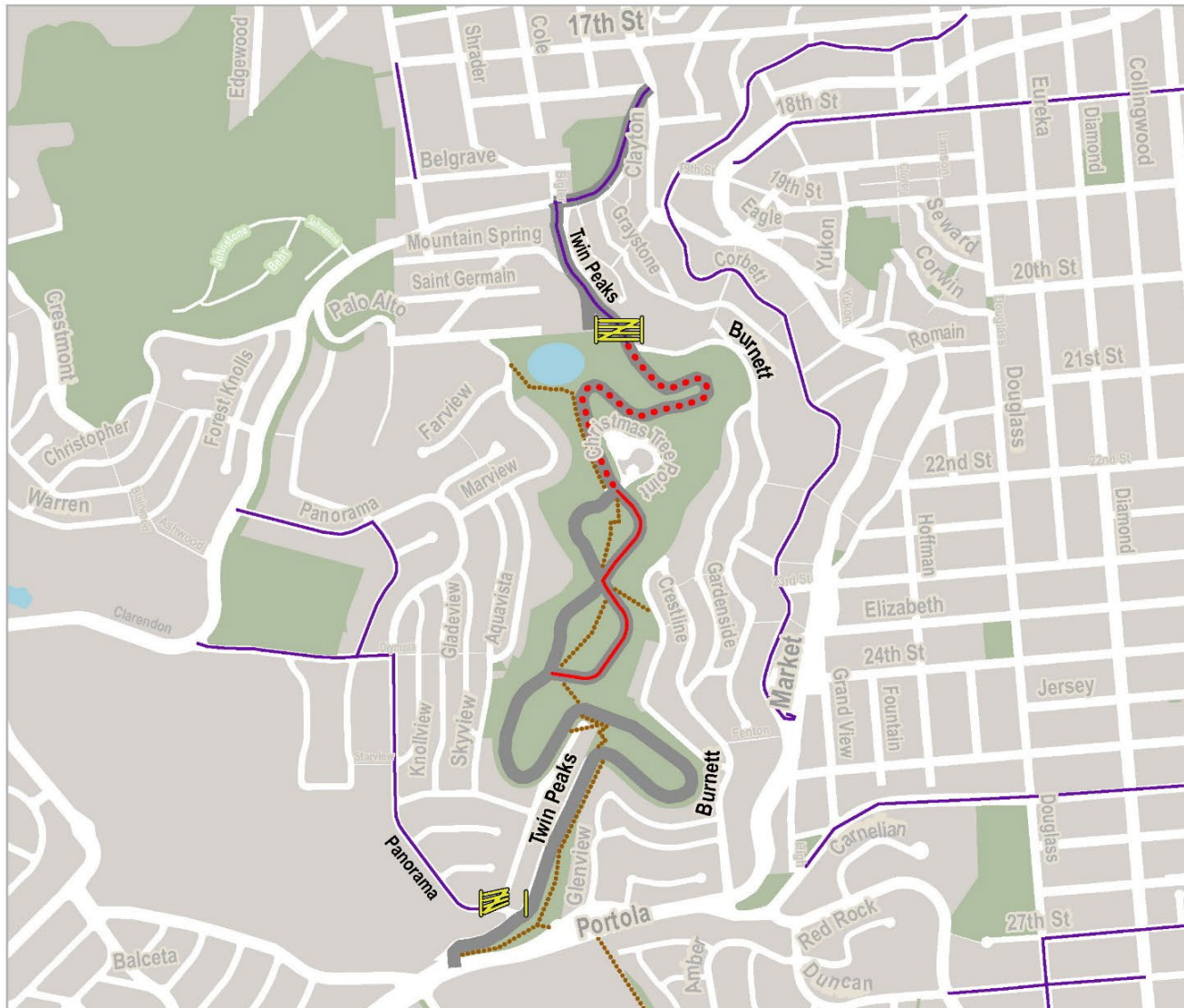
SFMTA staff heard concerns from neighbors of the Burnett Avenue gate, providing feedback that people tend to park near the gate and make noise, litter and are generally indifferent to the residential surroundings. With Portola Drive gate permanently open, people currently parking on the Burnett Avenue can access the top from Portola Drive and will park less in the neighborhood. With the proposal, SFMTA commits to monitoring and evaluating conditions with the proposal, and:

- Install additional wayfinding at the Burnett Avenue gate, directing drivers on how to access the top of Twin Peaks from the Portola Drive side.
- Work with navigation providers (Waze, Google, Bing, etc.) to update their maps to direct drivers to the Portola Drive gate for accessing the Christmas Tree Point parking lot and the top of Twin Peaks.

Permanent closure of the Burnett Avenue gate requires a more accessible path for pedestrians. Currently, pedestrians and bicyclists travel over the curb into the dirt and then back over the curb to access the closed roadway. SFMTA staff will work with San Francisco Recreation and Park Department staff to improve the gate, allowing people walking and bicycling of all ages and abilities to easily travel through on a level surface.

# Attachment 1

## Twin Peaks for All - Proposed Portola Drive Recommendation



### Twin Peaks for All

#### Project Recommendation

January 2021

- **Proposed Restriction** - Roadway closed to motor vehicles
- **Existing Restriction** - Roadway closed to motor vehicles
- **Vehicle Restriction** - Vehicles Over 9 Passenger Capacity
- **Twin Peaks Boulevard Speed Limit: 25 MPH**

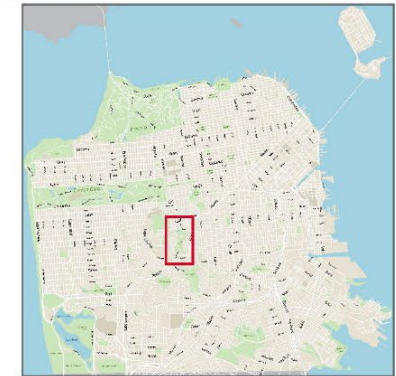
#### Twin Peaks Gates

- Closed Gate
- Open Gate

#### Trails and Parks

- Twin Peaks Hiking Trails
- Parks

#### Map Extents:



0.1 miles

Scale 1:7,588

Date Saved: 1/7/2021

For reference contact: [brian.liang@sfmta.com](mailto:brian.liang@sfmta.com)

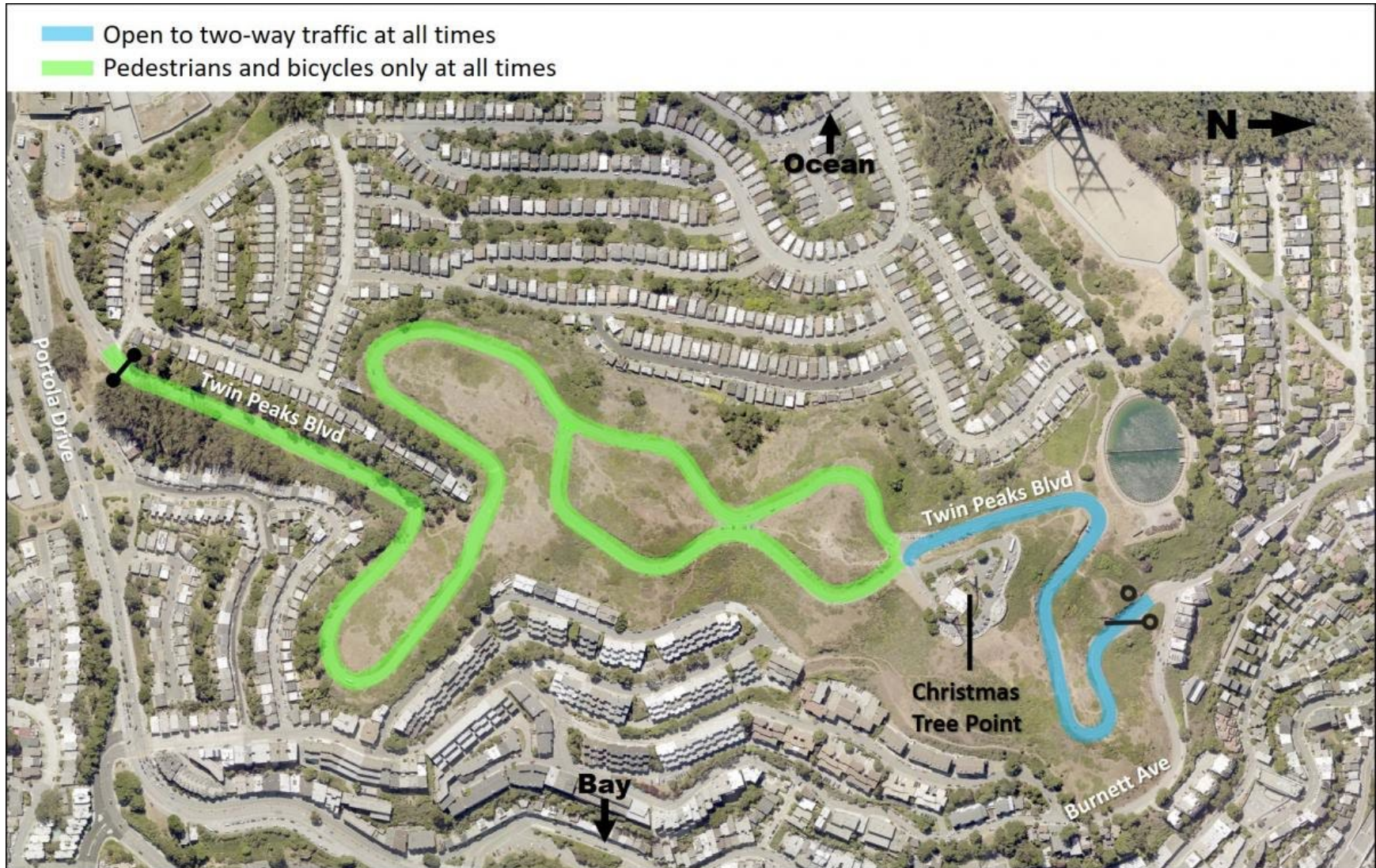
By downloading this map, you are agreeing to the following disclaimer: "The City and County of San Francisco ("City") provides the following data as a public record and no rights of any kind are granted to any person by the City's provision of this data. The City and County of San Francisco ("City") makes no representation regarding and does not guarantee or otherwise warrant the accuracy or completeness of this data. Anyone who uses this data for any purpose whatsoever does so entirely at their own risk. The City shall not be liable or otherwise responsible for any loss, harm, claim or action of any kind from any person arising from the use of this data. By accessing this data, the person accessing it acknowledges that she or he has read and does so under the condition that she or he agrees to the contents and terms of this disclaimer."





## Attachment 2

### Burnett Avenue Option

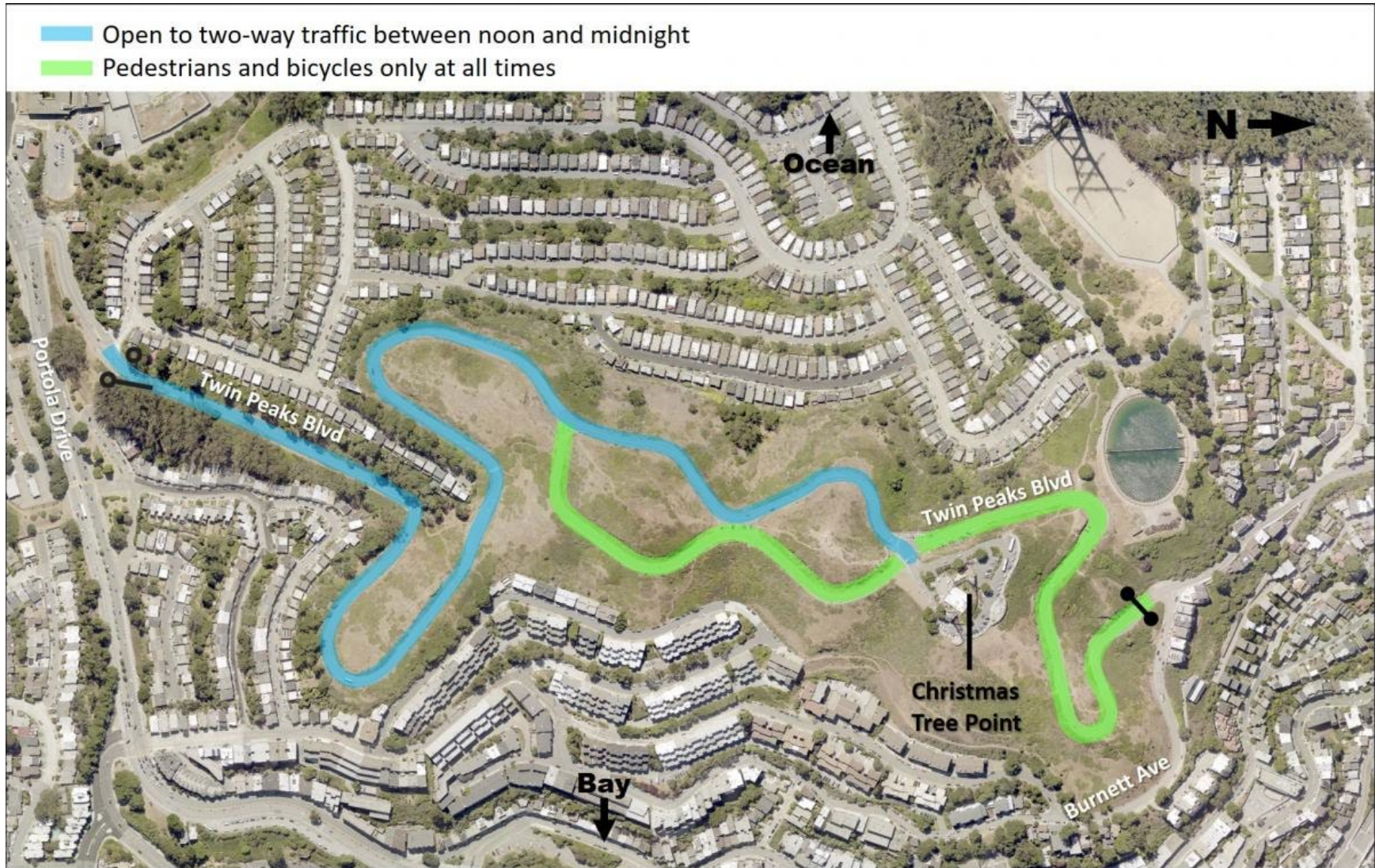


Burnett Avenue gate is open 24 hours, with parking and a vehicle turnaround available on Christmas Tree Point Road.



### Attachment 3

#### Portola Drive Option

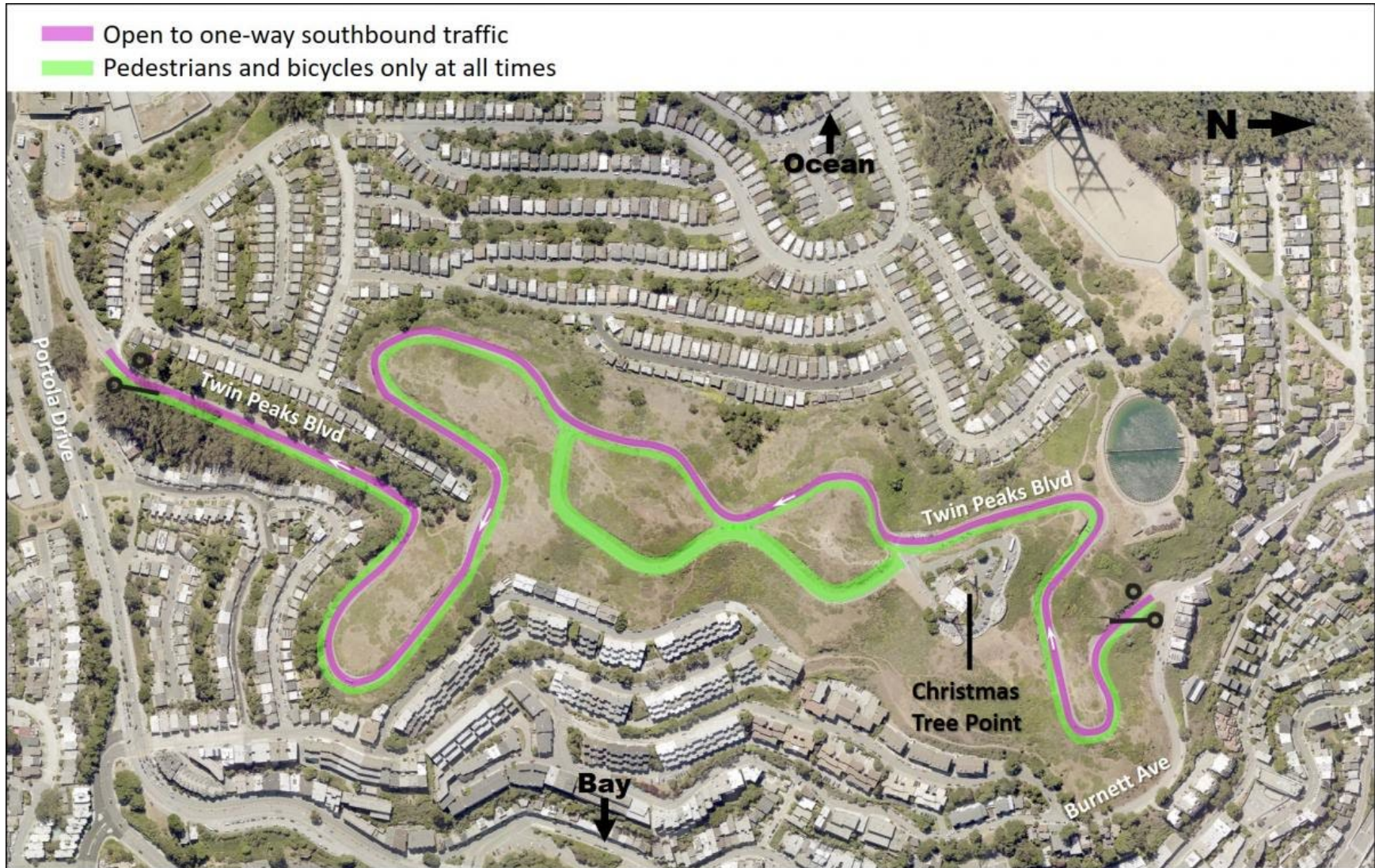


Continue keeping the Portola Avenue gate open, extending the hours.



## Attachment 4

### One-Way Southbound Option

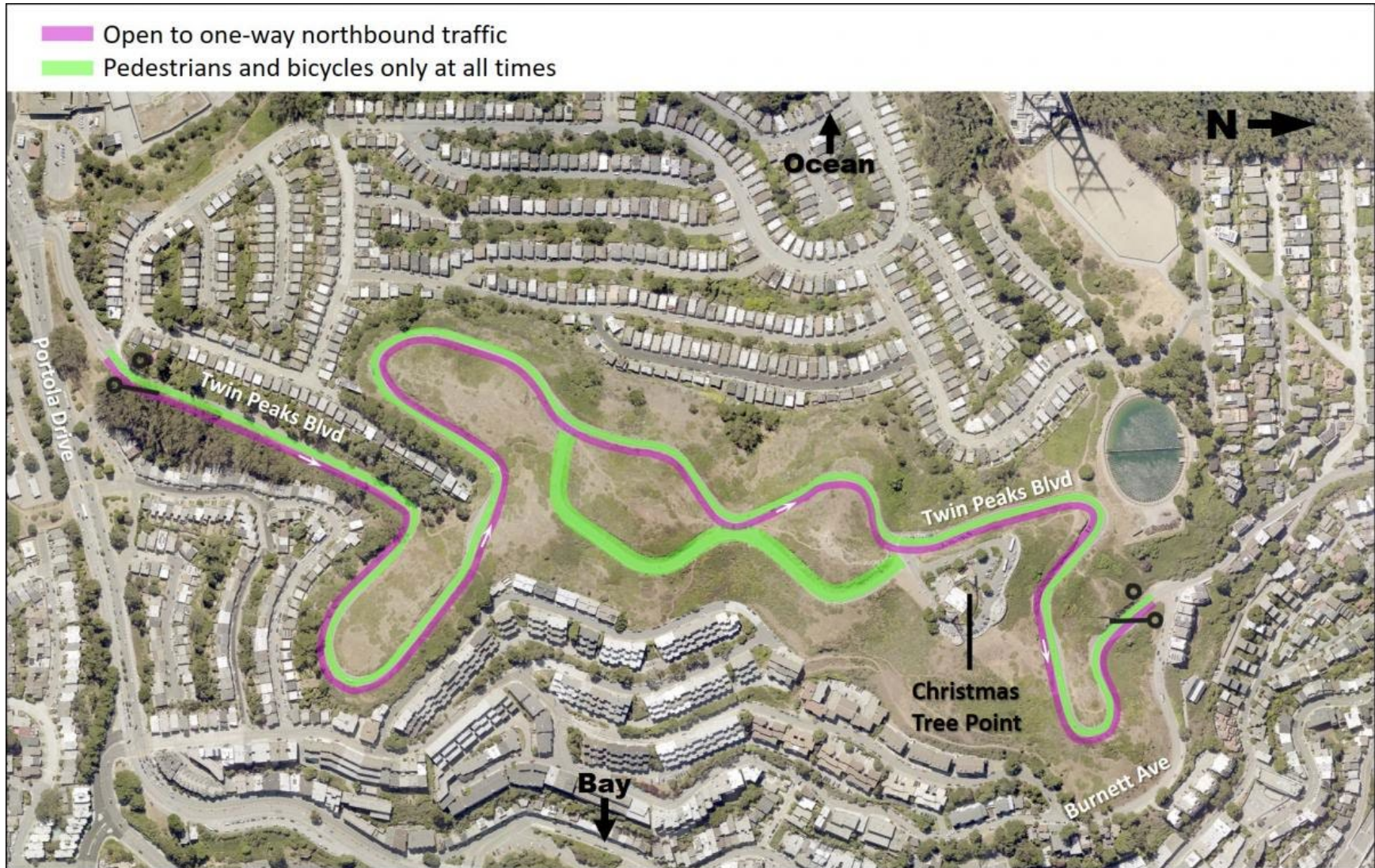


Implement one-way, southbound vehicle traffic, from the north gate at Burnett Avenue to the south gate at Portola Drive. Reserve the northbound vehicle travel lane for people walking and bicycling.



## Attachment 5

### One-Way Northbound Option

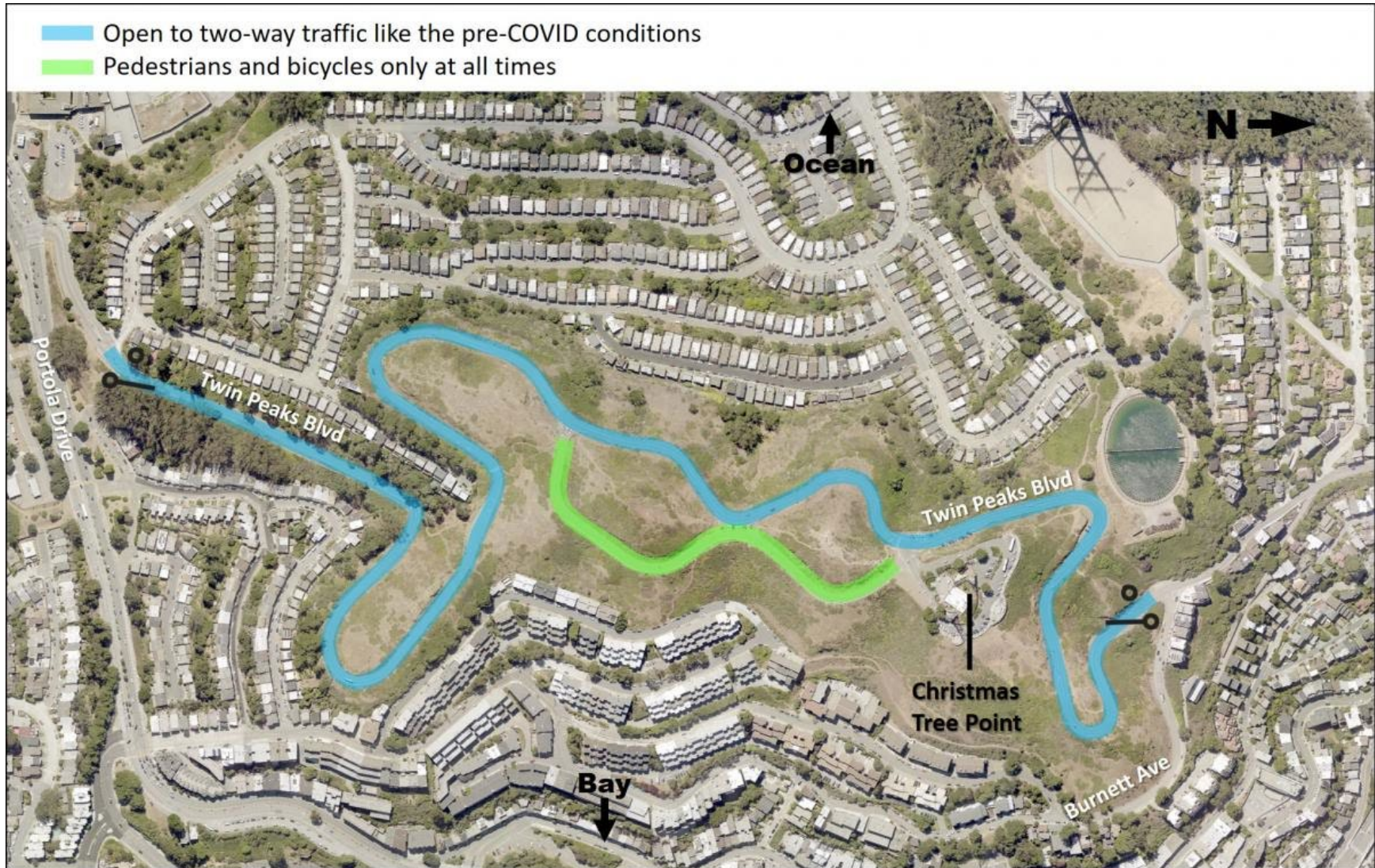


Implement one-way, northbound vehicle traffic, from the south gate at Portola Drive to the north gate at Burnett Avenue. Reserve the southbound vehicle travel lane for people walking and bicycling.



## Attachment 6

Pre-COVID Option



Open both the north and south gates, as were conditions pre-pandemic. The east side of the figure eight is reserved for people walking and biking and the west side of the figure eight is reserved for two-way traffic.