

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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April 7, 2011

The Honorable Jackie Speier
United States Congress-12th District
400 S. El Camino Real, Suite 410
San Mateo, CA 94402

Dear Congresswoman Speier:

Thank you for your recent letter about the concerns communicated by San Mateo County Supervisor Don Horsley to you regarding the pedestrian access on Devil's Slide Tunnels project. We have worked with the local communities and permitting agencies for over ten years towards a safe and context sensitive project. A special Task Force was created as part of our Coastal Development Permit to deal with the public access issues at Devil's Slide. At the time of the tunnel break through celebration, that you attended, the Mid-Coast Community Council (MCC) chair, Mr. Len Erickson, raised concerns about the at-grade crossing near the south portal. We have had numerous communications with Mr. Erickson and have exchanged information. We have had the opportunity to meet with members of the MCC (including Messer's Len Erickson, Bill Kehoe, and Neil Merrilees), and Ms. Sabrina Brennan (a resident of Moss Beach) at two separate meetings. The first meeting was arranged by Mr. David Burruto (Senator Yee's District Director) on March 2, 2011, at the Senator's District office in City of San Mateo. The second meeting was held on March 16, 2011, at our District Office in Oakland, with Ms. Nicole Fernandez from the Office of State Assembly Member Jerry Hill and Ms. Katie Ferrick, from your office.

We reviewed our design with the attendees and highlighted safety enhancements that we have added to the approved design. We believe the current design accommodates current and future anticipated pedestrian and vehicular traffic demand at this location safely and efficiently. In addition to the typical highway signage and pavement striping and markings, the crosswalk will have enhanced signing and safety features such as electronic advanced warning signs in each direction, roadside flashing beacons and in-pavement lighting that outline the edge of the crossing, and advance stop bars to alert oncoming traffic of the presence of pedestrians in the crossing. A major safety and mobility advantage with this system is its real-time operation of these lighting features which are activated by a push button by the pedestrian only when needed. The current crossing is deemed appropriate for the available pedestrian volume projections obtained from the California State Parks and San Mateo County Parks representatives on the Devil's Slide Coastal Access Task Force and commensurate with the constrained and limited public parking, facilities, and services. In addition, we anticipate the crossing can be scaled up to a fully signalized intersection if and when warranted by future changed conditions or circumstances.

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We have also developed, as requested by the MCC representatives during the March 2, 2011, meeting, three conceptual options that could be implemented later as part of future park development, including over-and under-crossings. The three conceptual options were shared at the March 16, 2011, meeting.

I would like to also note that a Community-Based Transportation Planning (CBTP) grant was awarded to San Mateo County by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The location is covered within the limits of this CBTP grant for the San Mateo Mid-Coast Hwy 1 Safety and Mobility Improvement Study Phase 2 with participation from the MCC, providing yet another opportunity to review public access.

We will continue to work with the San Mateo County through the Devil's Slide Coastal Access Task Force that has representation from Golden Gate National Recreation Area, California State Parks, California Coastal Commission, California Coastal Conservancy and the City of Pacifica. The next Task Force meeting has been scheduled for April 29, 2011, at the Board of Supervisors Conference Room in Redwood City.

I appreciate the opportunity to update you on this project. If you need additional information, please call me at (510) 286-5900, or contact Skip Sowko, District Division Chief, Design South, at, (510) 622-0814.



BIJAN SARTIPI
District Director

c: Assembly Member Jerry Hill, California State Assembly-19th District
Supervisor Don Horsley, San Mateo County