

# Midcoast Community Council

*An elected Municipal Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors*

*Serving 12,000 coastal residents*

Post Office Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038-0248

<http://mcc.sanmateo.org>

Len Erickson . Bill Kehoe . Neil Merrilees . David Vespremi . Bob Kline . Deborah Lardie . Leonard Woren

January 24, 2011

Honorable Carole Groom, District 2  
Honorable Don Horsley, Supervisor, District 3  
Honorable Rose Jacobs Gibson, District 4  
Honorable Adrienne Tissier, District 5  
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors  
455 County Center  
Redwood City, CA 94063

## **Re: Devil's Slide pedestrian and bicycle crossings**

The Midcoast Community Council recognizes the significant contribution Caltrans has made on the Devil's Slide Tunnel solution. We respectfully request that the Devil's Slide pedestrian/bicycle crossings be designed as under-crossings or over-crossings. Please support the community by working with Caltrans to reconsider the proposed at-grade crossings.

The "old Highway 1 Devil's Slide" road will become an important and very active segment of the California Coastal Trail. The spectacular ocean views will attract not only local visitors but visitors from all over the state and beyond. Visitors will hike, ride bikes, walk dogs, and push baby strollers. Visitor parking and SamTrans bus stops will be located near both the south and the north tunnel portals. This project is eligible for Measure A funding.

Caltrans engineering plans for at-grade crossings at the north and south Devil's Slide portals have residents of Pacifica, Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton, El Granada, Miramar, and Half Moon Bay concerned about public safety. Please see the Caltrans engineering plans: [http://www.scribd.com/full/45820096?access\\_key=key-26kk5c2hkdyp9ngdrujo](http://www.scribd.com/full/45820096?access_key=key-26kk5c2hkdyp9ngdrujo)

For over 20 years, Coastside parents, residents, and trail groups have voiced the need for safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings on Highway 1. On Dec. 3, 2009 twelve-year-old Julian Ruiz was struck by an SUV in Moss Beach while crossing Highway 1 on his bike at 5:20pm. KTVU channel 2 ran a news story and published a [video](#) about the dangers of Highway 1 and interviewed Julian after his right foot was amputated. This accident serves as an example of what can be expected if at-grade crossings are built near the tunnel portals on Highway 1.

At the Coastside Trails Forum on May 13, 2009, community members had an opportunity to discuss safety concerns with Skip Sowko, Caltrans Division Chief, District 4. The goal of the trails forum was to inform and update the community about trail progress, trail funding, trail mapping, provide resources for community involvement, and to discuss the current and future

Coastside trail system. During the meeting community members commented on the need for under-crossings and/or over-crossings at multiple locations along Highway 1. Presenters included Caltrans, Coastal Conservancy, Coastwalk, San Mateo County Parks, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Peninsula Open Space Trust, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, California State Parks, and the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council.

In 2009 Caltrans funded a three-day community-based planning workshop in El Granada. During the workshop the public expressed safety concerns about “at-grade” crossings throughout the Midcoast. Caltrans attended the public workshops and heard safety concerns firsthand.

In particular, drivers exiting the tunnel will be adjusting their eyes for daylight, and will not be expecting to encounter pedestrians as they exit the tunnel. Signalizing or otherwise stopping traffic will further compound traffic flows already rated at LoS “F” in numerous recent traffic studies. Highway 1 carries tens of thousands of vehicles on sunny weekends. Mixing such a large number of vehicles, many driven by visitors unfamiliar with the area, with pedestrian and bicycle at-grade crossings will jeopardize public safety.

In conclusion we believe the currently proposed at-grade crossing will be dangerous to pedestrians and drivers. We are requesting that Caltrans reconsider and redesign the crossing at this intersection. Under or overcrossings would be a much better solution and protect both drivers and pedestrians. We would appreciate your assistance in achieving this redesign by strongly endorsing this position to appropriate elected officials and Caltrans management who we have copied and to others you consider appropriate.

Sincerely,

Len Erickson  
Chair, Midcoast Community Council