

Midcoast Community Council

*An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar*
P.O. Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038-0248 - www.MidcoastCommunityCouncil.org

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Date: July 22, 2015
To: James Hinkamp, Project Planner
Cc: Supervisor Don Horsley
Community Development Director Steve Monowitz
From: Midcoast Community Council/ Dave Olson, Chair
Subject: **Alignment Priorities for Midcoast Highway 1 Trail (aka Parallel Trail)
Southern Segment**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide early input on the alignment of the southern segment of the Midcoast Highway 1 Trail from Mirada Rd. at Half Moon Bay city limits to Coronado St. in El Granada.

Project Scope of Work (BKF Engineers) references the 2010 Mobility Study Phase 1 trail map. The Phase 1 Study acknowledged that *“charrette participants emphasized the need to connect existing trails [and] add new trails for all user groups...”* but there is no mention or depiction of the Midcoast Highway 1 Trail except in reference to Half Moon Bay’s concept plan for a *“continuous multipurpose separated trail for bikes and pedestrians that mostly services the east side of the highway the length of the corridor.”*

More appropriate for this project would be to reference the 2012 Mobility Study Phase 2, which did indeed discuss the Parallel Trail throughout the Midcoast:

“In addition to the Coastal Trail, participants at the meetings and workshops and various planning documents envision a continuous, predominantly separated trail for bicyclists and pedestrians on the east side of the highway from the City of Half Moon Bay to Montara. This would be a paved north-south route to provide a safe and convenient travel alternative for Midcoast residents of all ages and abilities. Dashed green lines show potential alternative or additional route alignments, or connecting routes between the parallel trail and other trails.” (p.23)

The 2012 southern segment map (attached) should be the starting reference for this project.

The MCC and the community have consistently supported the east-of-highway alignment, as that is where the population centers are located. MCC 3/28/12 letter summarized key themes in public comment on the Mobility Studies, including:

“The east-side parallel trail, as inter-community alternative transportation, has long been a priority and is identified in the Measure A Strategic Plan for 2009-2013.”

MCC 12/11/13 letter supported the funding application for this project:

“... an integral part of the Midcoast Highway 1 Safety & Mobility Studies. The trail will provide a safe convenient route for adults and children to travel to local work, school, activities, and errands without adding to or waiting in highway traffic. This will reduce highway congestion, vehicle miles traveled, and associated CO2 emissions and pollution.”

Midcoast crossing design alternatives considered in 2014-2015 have been controversial due to the concern that pedestrian-activated signals will add to highway congestion. Public input on Connect the Coastside asks for policies that will shift travel to bus and multi-modal to reduce roadway traffic and congestion.

The recently constructed Half Moon Bay Highway 1 trail segment north of Frenchman's Creek provides a good model for alignment. The trail runs on the east side, at the outer edge of the right-of-way where feasible, swinging closer to the roadway where necessary, such as conceptually planned at the drainage and willows north of Roosevelt.

Recommendation

The first priority is to keep the trail on the east side of Highway 1. The second priority is to keep the trail within the highway right-of-way to avoid unnecessary detours. The third priority is to keep the trail on the outer edge of the right-of-way wherever feasible, swinging closer to the roadway only where necessary, which will provide a more appealing trail experience and convenient access to the schools along this segment.

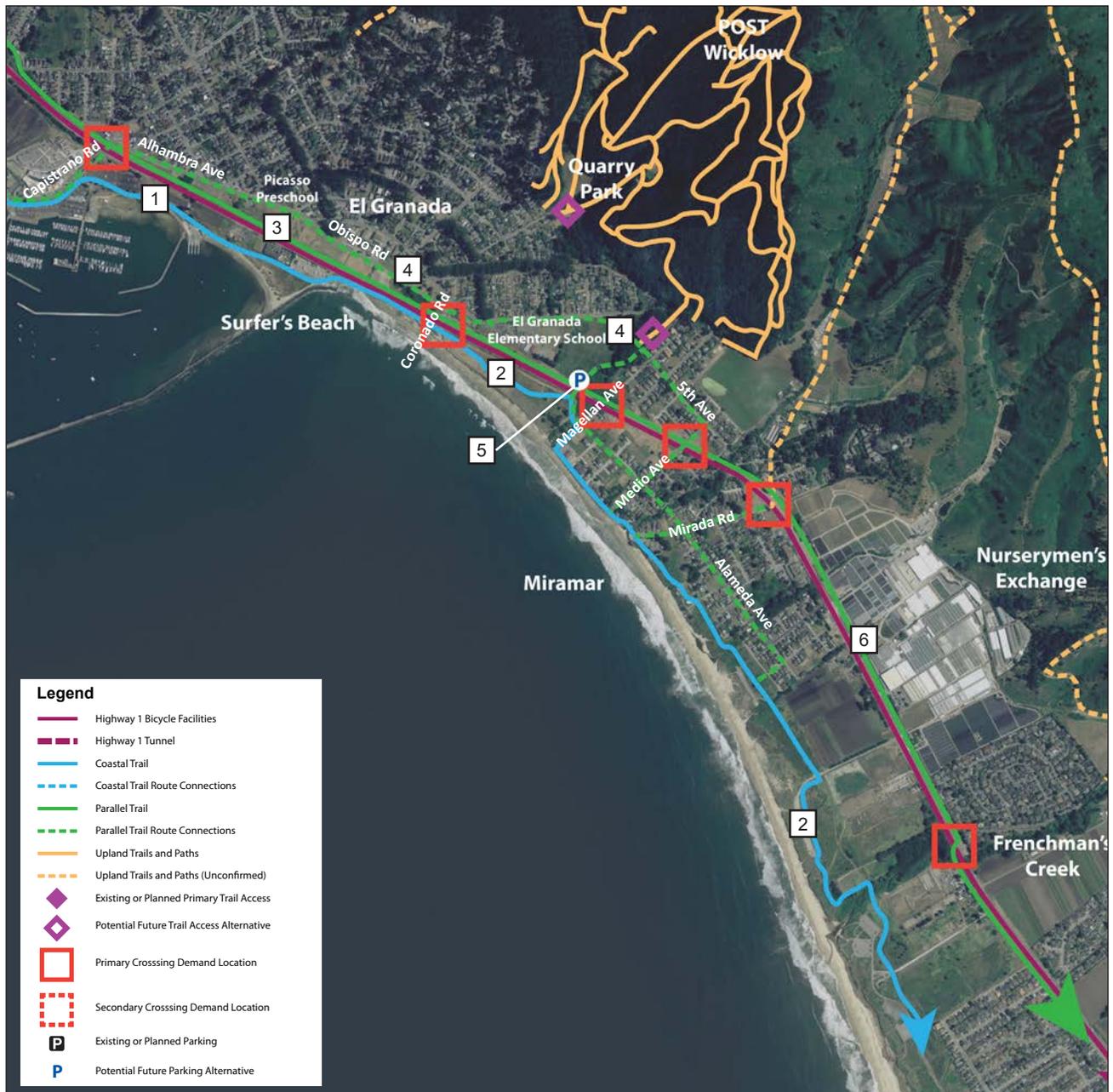
The Project Scope of Work proposes to offer at least three alternative routes, which we number and comment on here:

Alternative 1: within the eastern right-of-way. Avoiding the willow riparian area at Magellan seems to be the reason for Alternatives 2&3. Trails on public land are a permitted use in riparian corridors (LCP Policy 7.9). If it is determined to be infeasible to traverse the Magellan willows, even via a low bike/ped trail causeway, then the trail could be routed next to the highway along this ~400-ft section, with a guardrail divider between trail and highway shoulder. The willows can be pruned back to restore space for the trail along the highway. They grow rapidly and require periodic pruning to maintain access, a practice observed throughout the Midcoast, such as at the Coastal Trail at Surfer's Beach, along West Point Ave at Pillar Point Marsh, on Prospect and Capistrano next to Denniston Creek, and even along the Mirada Surf East service road mentioned in Alternative 2 as a detour to avoid the willows.

Alternative 2: eastern right-of-way, with detour of Magellan willows, via Medio/5th/Mirada East service road. The trail route needs to be simple, direct, safe and inviting. The proposed eastern detour to avoid the Magellan willows adds significant distance and steep elevation change and leads directly away from the intended travel direction through a quiet residential cul-de-sac neighborhood.

Alternative 3: west of highway, requiring two highway crossings, via Mirada Rd to Alameda Rd & right-of-way to Mirada West Coastal Trail to Coronado signal. Our purpose is defeated by creating a north/south highway corridor trail that requires multiple east/west highway crossings which will add to highway congestion, and make the trail less appealing and less safe.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Network: El Granada to Half Moon Bay



Legend

- Highway 1 Bicycle Facilities
- - - Highway 1 Tunnel
- Coastal Trail
- - - Coastal Trail Route Connections
- Parallel Trail
- - - Parallel Trail Route Connections
- Upland Trails and Paths
- - - Upland Trails and Paths (Unconfirmed)
- ◆ Existing or Planned Primary Trail Access
- ◇ Potential Future Trail Access Alternative
- Primary Crossing Demand Location
- Secondary Crossing Demand Location
- P Existing or Planned Parking
- P Potential Future Parking Alternative

1 Existing paved trail past east jetty, transitioning to dirt trail, then paved route through parking lots and on-street through Princeton.

2 Existing paved, separated trail Surfer's Beach to City of Half Moon Bay.

3 Potential alignment along "Burnham Strip."

4 Potential alignment using paths and existing streets.

5 Potential future parking lot/trail access alternatives to Quarry Park and POST Wicklow property.

6 Planned City of Half Moon Bay trail to City/County boundary at Mirada Road.