

Midcoast Community Council

representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar
P.O. Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038-0248 - www.MidcoastCommunityCouncil.org

Claire Toutant . Len Erickson . Dave Olson . Barbra Mathewson . Dan Haggerty . Tamar Powell . Michelle Weil
Chair Vice Chair Secretary Treasurer

Date: May 8, 2019

To: Supervisor Horsley

cc: California Department of Transportation
California Highway Patrol

From: Midcoast Community Council/ Claire Toutant, Chair

Subject: **Follow-up to recent MCC meetings on road closure and emergency concerns**

In response to the Tom Lantos Tunnels closure and related events on March 12th, the Midcoast Community Council held a series of three meetings investigating the reasons for the lengthy closure and lack of communication out to the community during the event. We appreciate the attendance of representatives the California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, the San Mateo County Sheriff, the Office of Emergency Services, and the Coastside Emergency Corps. In this letter, we focus not on the details of the events, but on our overall areas of concern.

The closure was not associated with a large-scale disaster with attendant life threatening incidents and large-scale physical damage. It did, however, highlight specific concerns that should receive priority attention:

- Commitment to provide a power source that could ensure minimal disruption of service, such as a battery, generator, or redundant power supply. (Caltrans)
- Understanding of the fact that there are only two major entrance/exit routes (Highways 1 and 92) to the Coastside, and an effort to keep at least one road open at all times. (Caltrans / CHP)
- Communication out to the community through the SMC Alert system for any disruption longer than an hour, and ongoing alerts sent out regularly until the issue is resolved. (OES)
- Addressing the disruption of technical communication and operational decision processes between the operation control at the tunnel (closure site) and Caltrans Oakland Headquarters. (Caltrans and CHP)
- Clear lines of direct communication between onsite operations and local emergency communications services. (CHP and OES)
- Need for comprehensive and well-publicized emergency plans for the Coastside, especially regarding evacuation.

We expect that these changes will be made to prevent a similar event from occurring in the future, and to ensure that the community and the agencies that control infrastructure and safety in the area are prepared should a larger-scale emergency occur.