




Outlook

[PDF] My opinion about Bay Avenue & Hill Street intersection

From Judy <judy@thenotebox.com>

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To City Council <citycouncil@ci.capitola.ca.us>

 1 attachment (71 KB)

Microsoft Word - Document1.pdf;

Judy Kishimura
527 McCormick Court
Capitola, CA 95010

September 25, 2025

Dear Capitola City Council,

I am writing as a local resident who regularly passes through the intersection of Bay Avenue & Hill Street on my way to the freeway and for daily errands. I'd like to express serious concerns about the traffic modifications made to this intersection last year. While I appreciate the city's commitment to pedestrian safety, the current configuration has created significant negative consequences that I believe warrant immediate review.

Current Situation and Impact

The modifications—which included the elimination of one through lane in each direction on Bay Ave has resulted in:

- Severe traffic backups extending multiple blocks in both directions on Bay Avenue, particularly during morning and evening commute hours
- Significant congestion when the local school dismisses students, creating additional safety concerns as parents attempt to navigate through backed-up traffic
- Weekend traffic delays that deter tourists trying to reach The Village, potentially impacting local tourism revenue
- Dramatically increased commute times for residents trying to reach the freeway or conduct basic errands like grocery shopping
- Potential safety hazards as frustrated drivers try to navigate through the gridlock
 - I have personally experienced two near-miss collisions as impatient drivers attempted aggressive lane merges off of southbound Hwy 1 onto Bay Avenue.
 - It is also common place for drivers to be forced to turn into the Nob Hill parking lot (near the car wash) because they are unable to merge to the left (in the direction of the Village).
- Economic impact on local businesses due to reduced accessibility, particularly tourism-dependent establishments in The Village
- Increased vehicle emissions from idling traffic during extended backups

Proposed Solution

I respectfully request that the city consider reverting to the original four-lane configuration while maintaining other safety improvements. Alternative solutions might include:

- Restoring the original lane count while keeping enhanced pedestrian signals
- Installing pedestrian crossing signals with dedicated walk phases
- Adding more visible crosswalk markings and signage
- Implementing timed traffic signals instead of four-way stops during peak hours

Community Impact

This intersection serves as the primary route to The Village, as well as a critical thoroughfare for residents accessing the freeway and essential services. The current bottleneck affects not only daily commuters but also tourists visiting our city, parents picking up children from school, residents running routine errands, and emergency vehicle response times.

Safety Concerns Beyond Pedestrians

While the original intent was to improve pedestrian safety, the modifications have created new vehicular safety hazards. The forced lane reduction causes dangerous merging situations as frustrated drivers jockey for position in the single remaining lane. These aggressive driving behaviors pose risks not only to other motorists but potentially to the very pedestrians the changes were meant to protect.

Economic Impact on Tourism

Another concern is the impact on our city's tourism economy. Weekend traffic delays discourage visitors from accessing The Village, potentially reducing tourism revenue that our city depends on. Frustrated tourists encountering significant delays may choose alternative destinations in the future, creating long-term economic consequences.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Judy Kishimura