

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report



Meeting: September 14, 2023

From: Public Works Department

Subject: Pedestrian Pathway from the Upper Beach and Village Parking Lot to Monterey Avenue

Recommended Action: Direct staff to proceed with developing the final design of pedestrian pathway from the Upper Beach and Village Parking Lot to Monterey Avenue consistent with pathway configuration Alternative 3, described below.

Background: On March 25, 2021, the City Council approved an agreement with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) for the study and construction of a pathway to connect the Upper Beach and Village Parking Lot (Parking Lot) and Monterey Avenue. The proposed pathway is proposed to align with the existing driveway to the parking lot, following the slopes and alignment of the area. This alignment ensures separation between vehicles and pedestrians, providing a safe pathway for pedestrians. Additionally, the pathway will provide access to Segment 11 of the Coastal Rail Trail at the Monterey/Park Avenue intersection.

On February 10, 2022, staff presented a schematic plan of the pathway configuration to the City Council. The City Council directed staff to return with a preliminary path design, using the proposed route, showing the least amount of impact on the area trees.

Discussion: To meet the goals of removing conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles entering and exiting the Parking Lot and reducing tree impacts, staff evaluated several configurations for the pathway. Additional improvements include curb and striping modifications.

Pathway configuration considered three main factors: tree impacts, width of drive lanes and sidewalk, and construction costs associated with retaining structures. The pathway layout alternatives with the fewest potential tree impacts are included in Attachment 1 and summarized below.

Table 1. Pathway Configuration Summary

Alternative	1	2	3
Sidewalk Width	5.5'	5.5'	5.0'
Drive Aisle Width	11'/10'	11'/10'	10'/10'
Potential trees impacted	9-10	8-10	6-9
Retaining Wall Impacts	Moderate (3')	High (4'+)	Low (2')

Staff also evaluated the species of trees impacted. Most are mature oaks ranging from 15 to 40 feet in diameter, as detailed below. The alternative layouts are based on a 2015 survey, since this time a 9" oak has fallen and a 4" non-oak tree has died and are not included in the table below. There are approximately 50 City trees in the project area.

Table 2. Tree Impacts by Pathway Configuration

Alternative	1	2	3
Diameter (inches)	Impact		
Oak Tree			
15			
18			
18			
20			
24			
24			
40			
Other Tree Species			
3			
8			
12			
High likelihood of impact/removal	8	7	4
Moderate likelihood of impact	1	2	3
Total Trees Impacted	9	9	7



Based on the factors considered above, staff recommends moving forward with the pathway configuration of Alternative 3. Alternative 3 impacts the fewest number of mature oak trees and fewer trees overall, in addition to having the lowest retaining wall height. The configuration of Alternative 3 does have the narrowest drive lanes and sidewalk, but still meets City and ADA standards for these facilities. Alternative 3 also requires some curb and gutter modifications and additional curb ramp modifications, however, the costs of these modifications are anticipated to be significantly less than the retaining structures required by Alternatives 1 and 2.

On September 7, 2023, trees that may be affected by the construction of Alternative 3 were marked for City Council and public viewing. These markings are still in place. Trees that are likely to be removed as part of the project have been marked in red, while trees that have the potential to be impacted by the project are marked in yellow. When staking the project, an arborist will evaluate potential field modifications, such as raising the height of the sidewalk, to preserve the maximum number of trees and preserve the health of the remaining trees. Staff proposes replacing the trees ultimately removed by this project at a 2:1 ratio in the lower parking lot and along Park Ave adjacent to the rail line.

Upon City Council direction, staff will move forward with the final construction documents and cost estimation for this project and return to the City Council for authorization to bid and approval of a Coastal Development Permit (inclusive of tree removals). Construction is anticipated for late Winter to Spring of 2024.

Fiscal Impact: The project has previously received \$250,000 in RTC grant funding and \$50,000 in General Fund. The City has expended \$30,000 on surveying, previous route layouts and coordination with the RTC. Remaining funding is anticipated to be sufficient to complete design and construct this project.

Attachments:

1. Pathway Alternative Layouts

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Reviewed By: Julia Moss, City Clerk; Samantha Zutler, City Attorney

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager