

Approval of the Devil's Slide Tunnels Project Aesthetics Committee Report Phase II



*Monday, March 24, 2003
7:00 pm
City of Pacifica
City Council Chambers
2212 Beach Boulevard
Pacifica, CA 94044*

*Tuesday, March 25, 2003
9:00 am
San Mateo County
Board of Supervisors
Board's Chambers
400 County Center
Hall of Justice
Redwood City, CA*

*Wednesday, March 26, 2003
7:30 pm
MidCoast Community Council
Seton Medical Center Coastside
Marine Boulevard & Etheldore
Fireside Room
Moss Beach*



California Department
of Transportation

Devil's Slide Tunnels Project

Aesthetics Committee Report

Phase II

March 2003

Prepared for

County of San Mateo Board of Supervisors
Pacifica City Council
Midcoast Community Council

Prepared by

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the public outreach process, Caltrans formed the Devil's Slide Tunnels Project Aesthetics Committee to gather public input for the aesthetic design of the critical project elements. The committee is comprised of two representatives from the Pacifica City Council, two non-participating representatives from the Half Moon Bay City Council, two representatives from the Midcoast Community Council and one representative from the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. The committee's goals were to: a) provide a project that conforms to the context of the Devil's Slide environment, b) minimize physical impacts to existing landscape elements including vegetation, drainage courses, and wetlands, c) minimize visual impacts to existing landforms and open spaces.

The Devil's Slide Tunnels Project Aesthetics Committee process consisted of two phases. In Phase I (August 2001 to March 2002), the committee made aesthetic recommendations for the South Rock Cut, South Portal and North Portal, Disposal Area, Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC), and Bridges. This report discusses the additional aesthetic recommendations made by the committee for Phase II (May 2002 to March 2003), which includes the portals, tunnel interior, South Rock Cut retaining walls, OMC Building, Disposal Area, bridge barrier and railing, and future access roads to trail connections.

To select a preferred portal design, the committee performed a number of public outreach activities, including holding 1) public workshops, to present the portal exhibits, and 2) a public portal survey at the Caltrans website and local libraries. Based on the public's input, the committee decided to pursue a portal design which combines some options from both the simple and elaborate alternatives. In addition, the committee recommended that the visible structures at the South Portal be minimized.

The committee reviewed a number of graphic options for the tunnel interior. Light reflectivity, distracting graphics and maintenance were taken into consideration. The committee recommended a design that is simple, easy to maintain, and enhances tunnel lighting.

The South Rock Cut (SRC) is required to provide sufficient space to construct the revised Route 1 roadway alignment to meet current highway design standards including an allowance for safe sight distance along the curve for the northbound roadway that approaches the tunnels. The committee reviewed many iterations of the Phase I recommendation to further reduce the amount of rock cut. The final design provided a reduction in rock cut by slightly increasing the retaining wall height and reducing the width and length of the maintenance road at the top of the retaining wall. As a result, the impact of the excavation at the top of cut, near the existing trail will be greatly reduced. The committee selected this SRC design as the preferred alternative. In addition, the committee recommended using retaining walls with a rock treatment similar to the existing retaining walls along Highway 80 at Crockett, near the Carquinez Bridge.

The OMC is a one-story building that will house the required equipment and support facilities to maintain and operate the tunnels. The committee made recommendations that would screen and hide views of the OMC Site from nearby trails and Route 1. The preferred alternative included locating the building pad at a lower elevation and partially burying it into the hillside, along the north side of the OMC Site. A vegetated berm will be located along the perimeter of the site and near the tallest portion of the building. The decisions included providing sod on the rooftop of the equipment bay. The committee recommended that all of the fill at the OMC Site should be maintained but minimized at the nearby seasonal low quality wetland.

The Disposal Area is designed to accommodate all of the excavated tunnels material. The committee recommended that the contractor have the option to modify the Disposal Site fill material volume if other suitable locations and methods for disposal of the excavated materials are available.

The bridges of the Devil's Slide Tunnels Project will provide a curved alignment connecting the existing Route 1 to the proposed North Portal. The committee recommended that the bridges provide a standard solid vehicle barrier with an open pedestrian/bicycle railing on top.

The segment of the California Coastal Trail along the existing (proposed to be abandoned) Route 1 right-of-way near the tunnels, will be easily accessible to all. Trailheads at each end will provide continued access to the coast for maintenance, emergency vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. The committee expressed concerns about balancing easy trail access with potential loitering and law enforcement problems in the northern access road to future trails. The owner and a resident of Shamrock Ranch have expressed similar concerns on this matter. The committee recommended that the City of Pacifica further address cul-de-sac location and egress options in a separate future project.

On the issue of the southern access road to future trails, the committee recommended that the location of the entrance to the access road have adequate separation distance from the tunnel to meet the Caltrans standard stopping sight distance requirement for a forty-five mile per hour design speed.

The committee did not reach consensus on preferred alternatives for both southern and northern access road parking locations due to location constraints, potential safety issues and future management workloads. The decision was made that on the northern side, parking would be included in some fashion near the abandoned roadway.

The committee made these recommendations in the best interest of preserving the natural environment and meeting the needs of the affected communities. The committee will continue to informally meet as needed to address detailed design issues as they come up during the design process. These recommendations conclude this phase of the Devil's Slide Tunnels Project public meeting process.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

As part of the Devil's Slide Tunnels Project Study, Caltrans initiated the Aesthetics Committee that participated in a two-phase process to address key aesthetic issues that impact the tunnel design. The committee is comprised of two representatives from the Pacifica City Council, two non-participating representatives from the Half Moon Bay City Council, two representatives from the Midcoast Community Council and one representative from the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. San Mateo County Supervisor Richard Gordon served as the chairman of the committee for both phases. The Aesthetics Committee met bi-monthly from August 2001 to March 2003. The committee's goals were to develop project concepts that a) conform to the context of the Devil's Slide environment, b) minimize physical impacts to existing landscape elements including vegetation, drainage courses, and wetlands, and c) minimize visual impacts to existing landforms and open spaces. Recommendations for Phase I were discussed in an earlier report issued in March 2002, entitled "Devil's Slide Tunnels Project Aesthetics Committee Report, Phase I". The Phase II recommendations are discussed in this report. The following sections summarize the two-phase process.

2.1 Background

At the end of the Phase I meetings, the committee selected preferred alternatives regarding the aesthetics aspects for the South Rock Cut, South Portal and North Portal, Disposal Area, bridge design at the north portal and tunnels. These first recommendations and discussions are recorded in the Aesthetics Committee Phase I Report. The Pacifica City Council, the Midcoast Community Council and the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors reviewed the report and approved it with appropriate comments toward Phase II. Half Moon Bay did not formally review the document.

In Phase II, the Aesthetics Committee discussed the following topics:

1. Portal structures and tunnel interior aesthetic elements
2. South Rock Cut retaining walls
3. OMC building and Disposal Area, including siting, design, visibility and screening
4. Bridge barrier and pedestrian/bicycle railing
5. City of Pacifica's trail proposal and north/south ingress and egress for vehicles leaving proposed Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) Lands; and coordination with GGNRA and the City of Pacifica on future acquisition of lands and easements
6. Trail connections and parking at the northern and southern ends of the project site
7. Clarification and delineation of scope and extent of revegetation programs.

2.2 Phase II Aesthetics Committee Process

In Phase II, the committee continued to meet bi-monthly from May 2002 to March 2003 to review and make decisions on aesthetic issues. Aside from the regularly scheduled meetings, the committee attended one site visit to the Calera Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility and two visits to review the future northern and southern trail connections.

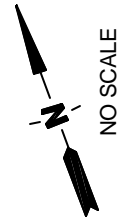
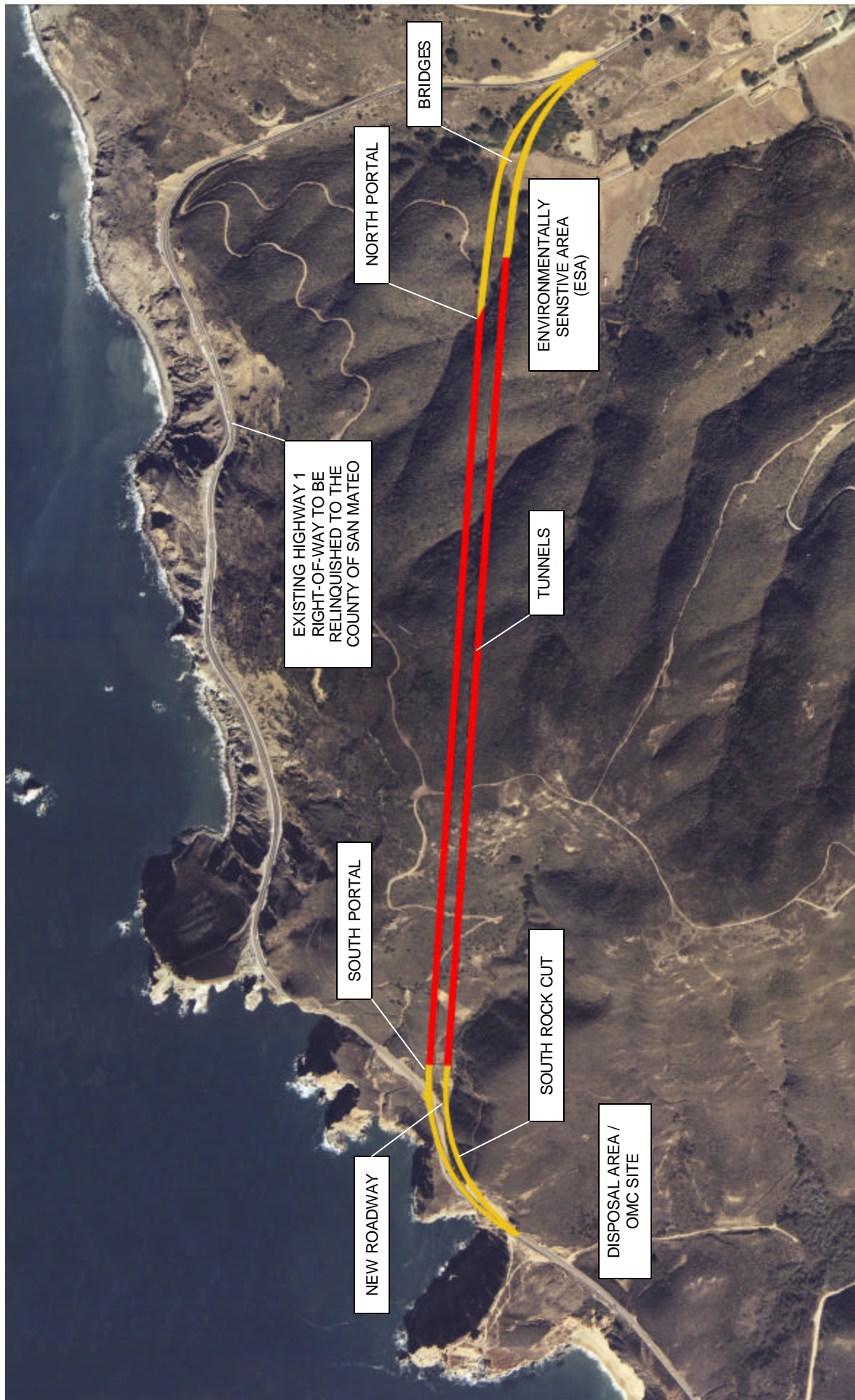
The members of the Aesthetics Committee consisted of San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Member Richard Gordon, Pacifica City Council Members Jim Vreeland and Julie Lancelle, Midcoast Community Council Members Chuck Kozak and April Vargas, and staff from Caltrans and HNTB. Supervisor Richard Gordon continued his role as chairman of the Aesthetics Committee for Phase II.

Efforts to involve the public were intensified in Phase II as the Aesthetics Committee continued to make recommendations on aesthetic issues. Community members expressed interest in public education and participation in the Aesthetics Committee process. In response, the committee advertised upcoming committee meetings via local newspapers. Those who attended had the opportunity to participate in the discussions. In addition, the Aesthetics Committee held four public workshops to educate and gather community input on the aesthetic issues. The workshops included slide presentations, a showcase of visual exhibits and open forum discussions. During the tunnel portal selection, Caltrans and HNTB provided a Portal Aesthetics Public Survey to gather the community's input on proposed portal designs. The public had access to the portal survey at three local libraries and via the internet at the Caltrans District 4 website. The survey results were displayed on the Caltrans website, and articles about the survey appeared in local and regional newspapers.

The Aesthetics Committee members will present this Phase II Report of recommendations to their constituents at three upcoming public meetings before the Midcoast Community Council, the Pacifica City Council, and the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. Caltrans will provide a public service announcement of the dates, times and location of all three council presentations on local public cable channels. In addition, Caltrans and HNTB staff is working closely with local access channels in developing a public information broadcast on the current project status.

The entirety of this report will be available on the Caltrans public website at www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/.

Figure 2.0 Devil's Slide Tunnels Project Limits



3.0 DISCUSSION OF PROJECT AESTHETIC ISSUES IN PHASE II

3.1 TUNNELS

3.1.1. Portal Structures

The tunnel portal structures are major aesthetic elements of the project. Determining what is important to the community; interpreting it and developing consensus on the interpretation was the goal of the community outreach process. The Phase II process focused on the conceptual design of the portals. Some recurring themes during the committee's deliberations were whether the portals would be an artistic element or simply an understated entryway that would not compete with the natural beauty of the area. Caltrans and HNTB created a wide variety of portal designs ranging from a simple approach to more elaborate design options, for consideration by the committee. The committee expressed the opinion that the best option would be a simple but functional design, something downplayed that would blend in with the natural surroundings and also provide rockfall protection at the portal areas.

Initially, the committee also felt that the public should have input related to the aesthetic style and treatments they would like incorporated in the design of the portals. The committee members discussed options for the public to voice their opinions. These options included a public survey or design competition. One option was to use the conceptual Caltrans structure design, but allow the public to "put the icing on the cake" by expressing their preferences for different aesthetic design elements. The committee decided to present a wide range of portal alternatives and allow the public to express their views in a survey.

To execute the public portal survey, the committee requested that Caltrans make survey forms available at community locations and at the Caltrans website where the public could choose their favorite portal option and provide comments. The survey results would assist the committee in assessing the public's opinions. The survey forms were located in three local community libraries. In addition, Caltrans and HNTB posted a series of display boards to represent the portal options. The committee allowed the public one month to respond to the survey. The majority of responses favored two of the more artistically elaborate designs. Many comments suggested that both ends of the tunnel should have some type of common design element. The survey also showed that the overall public opinion was equally divided between the minimal and the more elaborate design options for both portals. See Appendix A for the Portal Survey results.

The design team responded to the survey results by developing another portal option depicting a design between the extremes of simple and elaborate. The new design relates the curvature of the bridge and the roundness of the surrounding hills, increasing the visual continuity of the project, and establishing visual links with other aesthetic components used on the project. The portal has a perforated and cylindrical shaped brow that would allow light to shine through.

The committee recommended this design concept for both the North and South Portal.

The North Portal will also require a retaining wall due to space limitations between the mountain and the bridge abutment. The committee recommended that an aesthetic texture be added to the retaining wall, which will blend in well with the North Portal structure and the existing mountains.

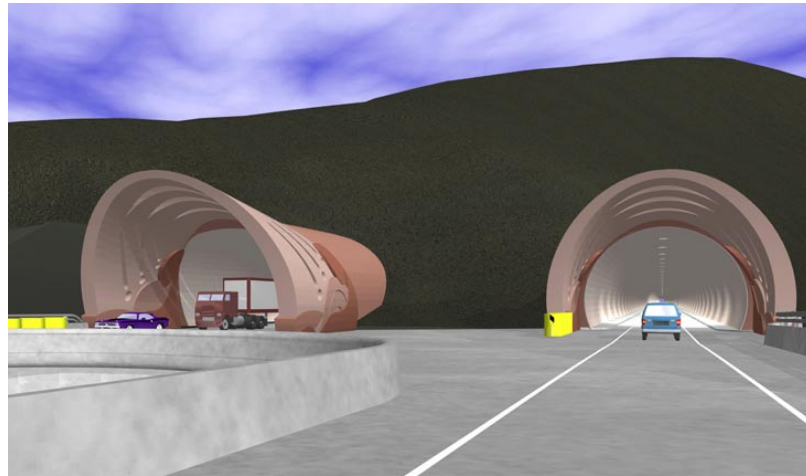


Figure 3.1.1a: Recommended North Portal Design Concept
(Note: Retaining wall is not depicted in the picture above)

At the South Portal, the committee recommended minimizing other visual structures, such as retaining walls. By moving the portal structures forward and away from the mountain or by burying more of the structures, the area between the portals could be backfilled to match the original ground slope.

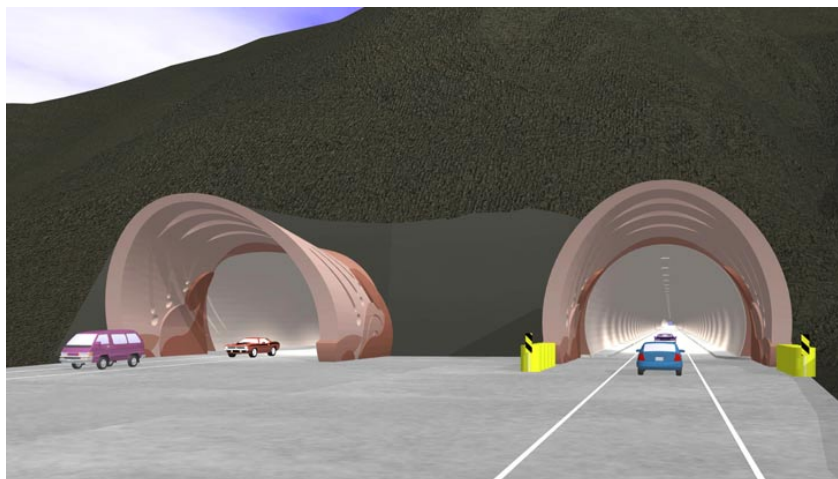


Figure 3.1.1b: Recommended South Portal Design Concept

3.1.2. Tunnel Interior

The Aesthetic Committee discussed graphic design options for the tunnel interior. The key issues considered in the development of this design included creating a wall treatment that is aesthetically pleasing yet not distracting to drivers, while at the same time easy to maintain and replace. The design team developed preliminary graphic designs for the tunnel interior. The committee recommended that the interior graphic design, if any, should be subtle to eliminate distractions to drivers.

In response to the committee's recommendation, HNTB proposed two color options for the tunnel interior design that consisted of a color scheme gradation concept. The first option consisted of a solid color at the base with the color gradually transitioning to a light color as it reached the top. The second option was similar to the first option but the intensity of the colors was reversed with the lighter color on the bottom transitioning to a deeper shade on top.

The H3 tunnel in Honolulu, Hawaii, has a similar design concept using tiles in three shades of blue. The darker blue at the bottom masks the road grime between cleaning cycles while the lighter color towards the top enhances light reflectivity.

The committee accepted the first alternative, with the lighter color at the top and darker shades at the bottom, as the preferred tunnel interior design concept.



Figure 3.1.2: Recommended Tunnel Interior Design Concept



3.2 SOUTH ROCK CUT

The South Rock Cut (SRC) is located immediately south of the South Portal, along the east side of the existing highway. The cut is required to provide a revised roadway alignment that meets the current highway design standards including an allowance for safe sight distance along the curve for the northbound roadway. It will also provide a haul road to transport excavated materials from the portals and the tunnels to the disposal area without disrupting traffic flow on existing Route 1 during tunnel construction.

In Phase I, the committee reviewed five alternatives differing in excavation quantities and retaining wall heights. Behind the retaining wall, a maintenance road would allow access for rock debris collection and removal. As a result, the committee recommended the option that balanced the least amount of cut with the least amount of retaining wall. The Phase I selected option consisted of two-single level walls with a cut extending above it. The committee recommended adding a connecting wall between the two retaining walls to screen views of the maintenance road and to provide visual continuity. The SRC retaining wall layout was modified to appear as a single continuous wall with rock carved texture blending into the surrounding environment.



Figure 3.2a South Rock Cut Phase I Preferred Alternative

-  Proposed Rock Cut
-  Retaining Wall

Upon further review of the SRC, the design team found opportunities for reducing the south rock cut by slightly increasing the retaining wall height and incorporating a reduction of the maintenance road width and length. As a result, the impact of excavation on the mountain and the trail above will be greatly reduced. The design team will look into revegetating opportunities in the rock cut areas. The committee selected this SRC design as the preferred alternative.



Figure 3.2b South Rock Cut Phase II Preferred Alternative

In addition, the committee reviewed examples of existing retaining wall configurations and aesthetic treatments at other local projects. The committee selected the walls with a rock carved texture treatment, similar to those along Route 80 in Crockett, as shown below.



Figure 3.2c Retaining Wall along Route 80 in Crockett

3.3 DISPOSAL AREA / OMC SITE

The Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) building will be located at the Disposal Site, which is directly south of the South Rock Cut along Route 1. This one-story building will house the required equipment and support facilities necessary for the maintenance and operation of the tunnels. In Phase I, the Aesthetics Committee approved of the OMC building location in the southern portion of the Disposal Site. In Phase II, the committee discussed the visibility and screening options for the OMC building. The goal was to hide it completely from Route 1 and to screen it as much as possible from surrounding trails.

3.3.1. OMC Building Location Alternative

Although the committee accepted the location of the OMC building near the Disposal Site in Phase I, they expressed interest in investigating other possible building site locations to eliminate the visual impacts and environmental affects of placing this facility in the proposed location.

The committee considered an alternate location in the City of Pacifica near the Ace Hardware Store on San Pedro Avenue. Although this location is feasible, the Pacifica committee representatives were not in favor of this alternative. The City of Pacifica stated their preference for maintaining this site for commercial use to generate tax income for the city. After consideration of the alternate site, the committee accepted the location of the OMC building at the Disposal Site as initially proposed.

3.3.2. OMC Building Visibility and Screening

The committee analyzed various screening options to hide the facility from Route 1 and nearby trails.

One option was to reduce the size of the OMC facility by locating functional spaces proposed for the building, such as the tunnel equipment storage, at the tunnel South Portal. Because the distance between the tunnel bores is required for ventilation and electrical equipment, there is insufficient room to accommodate additional functional uses. For example, the soap storage room could be included in the space between the portals, but after additional discussions it was deemed an inappropriate location.

The second option, a multi-level OMC building concept, decreased the building footprint. However, a multi-level building would be more noticeable from the surrounding hills, require heightened screening from the highway. In addition, an elevator would be required to meet ADA requirements. The committee rejected this option.

A third option lowered the building pad elevation and partially buried a portion of the building in a hillside on the north side of the OMC Site. This scheme is similar to the Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant Facility in Pacifica. A vegetated berm was proposed along the perimeter of the site and the tallest portion of the building. It was proposed that the equipment bay have a sod roof. Refer to Figure 3.3.2. All proposals would screen the facility from the surrounding trails, as shown in Appendix B (OMC Site Contour Grading Plan). The committee accepted this third option. Refer to Section 3.6 (Mitigation) for details of this option.



(a) OMC Building with a Sod Roof



(b) OMC Site with a Partially Buried Building

Figure 3.3.2: OMC Site

3.3.3. Minimizing Impacts to a Nearby Seasonal Low Quality Wetland Area

During the initial phase of construction, the excavated material from the South Rock Cut will be placed at the OMC site to create the building pad elevation and form the surrounding berm. This initial excavated material is suitable for this use. Excess material from the South Rock Cut and the tunnel excavation will be placed in the Disposal Area or other suitable location. The committee recommended minimizing the fill of the nearby seasonal low quality wetland area located between Route 1 and the OMC Site. The design team developed two alternatives that provided for minimum and maximum fill options for this portion of the OMC Site. In both options, the OMC building pad was set at an elevation of 65-meters. The minimal fill option did not provide as high a berm to screen along Route 1 as the maximum fill option. However, the committee selected the minimal fill option due to its reduced impact on the seasonal low quality wetland while still providing reasonable screening of the OMC building.

The contour grading of the Disposal Site is being designed to accommodate all or a portion of the excavated tunnels material. The OMC pad and surrounding berm elevation will be constant as specified in the contour grading plans. The contractor will have the option to modify the Disposal Site fill material volume if other suitable locations and methods for disposal of the excavated materials are available. This could be accomplished through a number of methods which can be incorporated into the contract including the selling of the material or by identifying alternative disposal sites, such as the local quarry in Pacifica. The Disposal Site was provided to ensure there was an environmentally suitable, cost effective and easily accessible means for disposing the excavated materials without disrupting traffic on Route 1 during construction.

At a regular meeting of February 26, 2003, “the Midcoast Community Council formally voted 5-1 (with 1 abstaining) requesting that the excavation from the Devil’s Slide Tunnels project be prohibited from being used in the currently designated fill disposal site on the south side of San Pedro Mountain (north side of Green Valley). . . .” Refer to Appendix C for the official statement letter.

3.4 BRIDGES

The bridges of the Devil's Slide Tunnels Project will provide a curved alignment connecting the existing Route 1 to the proposed North Portal. In Phase I, the committee recommended a Segmental Cast-in-Place Box Girder Bridge type that will allow construction without falsework encroaching on the identified Environmental Sensitive Area (ESA) underneath the bridge with the exception of the falsework required for construction of the pier tables. In Phase II, the committee reviewed the bridge barrier and railing aesthetic options.

3.4.1. Bridge Barrier and Railing Options

For public safety, a standard vehicle barrier and a pedestrian/bicyclist railing are required for the inner and outer edges of the bridges. The committee reviewed only those crash barriers that were currently pre-approved by Caltrans. Existing reports have found that, "crash tests on various patterns and textures with high relief extending from the base to the top of the barrier may cause excessive passenger compartment deformation to the vehicle." On the other hand, "patterns and textures with subtle relief, set into the surface of the barrier have shown encouraging results."¹

Caltrans presented a solid vehicle barrier in various textured patterns. Refer to Appendix D for exhibits. The edges of bridge roadway will provide standard crash-tested barriers with tubular pedestrian/bicyclist guard railing (a total height of 54") for safety purposes, as shown below.



Figure 3.4.1a: Standard Solid Bridge Barrier with Pedestrian/Bicyclist Railing

The Coastal Commission has expressed concern regarding the use of view-blocking vehicle barriers on bridges in scenic coastal areas in California. They reviewed four types of see-through barrier designs (Type 80, Alaska, Wyoming, and Minnesota barriers) that have been crash-tested and approved for use in California. Refer to Appendix E for exhibits.

¹ California Highway Barrier Aesthetics Report, Edition 1, Caltrans, January 2002.



Figure 3.4.1b: Type 80 Bridge Barrier with Pedestrian/Bicyclist Railing

The Coastal Commission concluded that “the Minnesota rail would not be useful in the coastal zone, due to the limited visibility it would provide for bridge users. Of the remaining three alternatives, the Alaska rail was judged superior overall, based on the relatively large openings that it offers between the rails and supports. In settings where views from the bridge itself are not the primary objective, the Wyoming and Type 80 rails may be preferred.”² In response to the Coastal Commission’s past comments on proposed barrier designs, the Aesthetics Committee reviewed the four open bridge barrier designs and the additional three textured solid barrier designs.



Figure 3.4.1c Alaska Bridge Railing
(Note: Barriers shown here do not include the pedestrian/bicyclist railing that is required for this project)

The committee concluded that although there are no coastal views from the bridge, the surrounding views of the mountains and valley are valuable. Because the bridge deck has a cross slope towards the valley it was felt that the roadway tilt provides adequate

² Letter from the Coastal Commission to Jeff Morales (Director of Caltrans), June 29, 2001.

easterly views over the top of a solid barrier. The views of the mountains and valley could be seen with either type of barrier, as shown in Figures 3.4.1a and 3.4.1b.

The committee is aware that an open barrier design with a pedestrian/bicyclist railing may be required to address the view blockage concerns expressed by the California Coastal Commission. Considering the roadway alignment, the aesthetics of the other pre-approved designs, and the potential noise and light pollution the committee selected the proposed solid vehicle barrier with an open pedestrian/bicycle railing on top as the preferred choice.

3.5 FUTURE ACCESS ROADS TO PROPOSED TRAIL CONNECTIONS

The segment of the California Coastal Trail along the existing (proposed to be abandoned) Route 1 right-of-way near the tunnels, will be easily accessible to all. Trailheads at each end will provide continued access to the coast for maintenance, emergency vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. Any future public parking areas will include handicapped access at both the north and south end of the trailhead. In the future, this trail may be extended through future Golden Gate National Recreation Area lands, state park lands, and Caltrans right-of-way in Pacifica pending funding, future appraisals, etc. Public safety concerns need to be addressed to confirm advisability of providing public vehicle access to the north and south cul-de-sacs.

The County of San Mateo will initially own and manage the relinquished portion of Route 1. The County may later choose to operate and maintain this amenity, or to arrange for the transfer or management of the facility to an appropriate public recreational agency. Visitors will benefit by having access to the trail and adjacent parks. Destinations south of Pacifica and San Pedro Point will provide spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean and the coastline. See Appendix F for Pacifica's Future Trail Proposal.

Various field and coordination meetings were held between GGNRA, the Midcoast Parks and Recreation Committee, and Caltrans. The Aesthetics Committee and the multiple agencies involved will need to concur with the Caltrans prepared cul-de-sac and access road alternatives before the Coastal Commission will make its final approval. Caltrans is committed to working with these agencies.

As a result of the committee's discussions, the northern access point is proposed to include adequate parking to ensure that visitors can access the San Pedro Point Headlands and the old Highway 1 properties from a safe trailhead location. Caltrans is committed to working with the City of Pacifica, the County and GGNRA to help identify the needs for the area and funding opportunities so that the Pedro Point Trail is consistent with the park improvements in this area.

The following sections discuss the alternatives reviewed by the committee.

3.5.1. Northern Access Roads to Future Trails

The committee expressed concerns about balancing easy trail access with potential loitering and law enforcement problems in the dark and isolated places. This has historically occurred in areas with minimal police surveillance. The owner and a resident of Shamrock Ranch have expressed similar concerns on this matter. See attached letters in Appendix I.

In addition, the Committee and GGNRA have stated their concern about visitors potentially cutting across highway traffic if no road connection is provided to allow visitors to return north from the northern cul-de-sac.

In response, the committee reviewed two alternatives for the north cul-de-sac location differing in distance from the bridge intersection with Route 1 and egress options for vehicles leaving the Northern Access Road.

The first alternative located the cul-de-sac approximately 400-meters westerly from the bridge intersection with Route 1. It consisted of a road crossing under the bridge located

on private property, which would allow vehicles to return to Pacifica without an at-grade highway crossing. The undercrossing road was based on a 40-mph design speed and a maximum roadway grade slope of 9%, which required two separate retaining walls with cut and fill. Also, a right turn egress from the access road is provided.

The second alternative located the cul-de-sac 160-meters westerly from the bridge intersection with Route 1, a closer distance than the first alternative (as shown in Appendix G). An undercrossing road is not feasible with this shorter access road alternative, being steeper than allowable 9% grade. This alternative provided only a right turn egress from the access road.

The third alternative was similar to the previous option, but eliminated the need for an undercrossing road and instead provided a left turn egress from the Northern Access Road with an at-grade highway crossing. This alternative was considered unfeasible for safety reasons due to the inadequate sight distance.

After reviewing the three alternatives, the committee rejected the bridge undercrossing road due to potential loitering.

Although, the Aesthetics Committee and cooperating agencies have not at this time selected feasible alternatives, the committee recommended that the City of Pacifica further address cul-de-sac location and egress options in a separate future project. GGNRA has expressed interest in participating in future design resolution meetings to resolve the safety and operational concerns for the north and south cul-de-sacs.

3.5.2. Southern Access Roads to Future Trails

The southern access road to future trails will serve as a drop-off point for visitor access to the trail. Caltrans provided two design alternatives for this access road and cul-de-sac.

The first alternative provided for a road located 27-meters south of the tunnel entrance. Vehicles traveling northbound would use the signalized intersection for egress and ingress. The committee did not accept the proposal because of inadequate site distance between the exit of the tunnel portal and the entrance of the access road.

The second alternative relocated the entrance to the access road 130-meters south of the tunnel entrance to meet the Caltrans standard stopping sight distance requirement for a forty-five mile per hour design speed. The committee accepted this second proposal. Refer to Appendix H. No parking will be available in this area except for designated handicap parking. At this intersection, Caltrans will install signal lights to provide safe left turn movements into the cul-de-sac area and future pedestrian crossing.

The committee agreed that the design decisions should not preclude possible trail alignments and connections at the portals, including possible trail connections through Green Valley from the Grey Whale Cove Parking lot and McNee Ranch State Park, and the utilization of the Half Moon Bay-Colma Road roadbed that runs above the south portal area.

3.5.3. Parking Accommodations

Parking accommodations will allow visitors accessibility to the California Coastal Trail segment in the proposed abandoned right-of-way and a convenient connection to the City of Pacifica's trail to the north. The committee reviewed parking location options developed by Caltrans for both southern and northern areas of the tunnels.

The first southern parking option allowed thirty to forty cars to park along the side of the southern access road. The second option proposed a parking area located in the existing low grade seasonal depression, near the OMC Site. Trail users could park their cars, walk along the South Rock Cut road shoulder towards the tunnel entrance and then cross the highway using a signalized pedestrian crosswalk to access the trails. Consequently, this option would require filling the existing seasonal low quality wetland to an elevation matching that of the adjacent highway. Although the approved Environmental Document identified filling this seasonal low quality wetland due to its poor quality, local citizens continue to reject the fill option.

Another option was the completion of a trail from the existing Grey Whale Cove parking lot through Green Valley to the OMC Site and then either (a) back out to the highway or (b) above the highway and the portals, using the existing/restored Half Moon Bay/Colma Road trail that runs up and over the South Portal. This alternative remains viable, but is beyond the scope of this project.

On the northern side, the committee reviewed two parking options. The first alternative provided parking along the access road to the future abandoned portion of Route 1. Another alternative provided a trailhead and parking located in Pacifica near San Pedro and Grand Avenues (by the Ace Hardware Store).

The committee did not reach consensus on preferred alternatives for both southern and northern parking areas due to location constraints, potential safety issues and future management workloads. It was recommended that on the northern side, parking would be included in some fashion near the abandoned roadway.

The Committee and cooperating agencies will continue to work together to develop a safe design that provides access to the public. The GGNRA would like to see these discussions involve potential connections with transit systems in the area.

3.6 MITIGATION

3.6.1. Stabilization and Revegetation Concept for Disturbed Areas

The project will restore disturbed areas by initially stabilizing impacted areas followed by revegetation using site specific native vegetation. Care will be taken to minimize the amount of graded or cleared areas only to that amount needed to facilitate construction. Adjoining areas will be protected by installing perimeter barriers. Graded areas will be treated with either salvaged topsoil or compost depending on the extent of grading, nature of the parent material and erosion potential of the disturbance. Stepped grading at the South Rock Cut is being considered to minimize erosion and help retain material on steep 1:1 slopes. A combination of biodegradable, mechanical and vegetative erosion control measures will be used in combination with native and sterile grasses to provide an initial herbaceous cover. For revegetation, a composition of coastal scrub cover will be used to restore in kind what is already present. Planting and seeding with native material that is of the same species and stock found in immediately adjacent areas will naturally blend in new plantings and maintain visual and genetic continuity.

The committee has agreed that the revegetation effort for the recent test drilling project be used as a model and reference for the projected success of the proposed revegetation process of the tunnels project. Currently, the test drilling project has achieved basic slope stabilization, erosion control, and invasive removal, and initial level of reseeding. In completion of the revegetation portion of the project, Caltrans anticipates that the full scope of reseeding, topsoil preservation, and propagation of replanting stock will be achieved.

For the OMC Site, areas above the portals, Disposal Area, and areas underneath the bridge the processes of stockpiling and possible amendment and/or composting of removed topsoil may be a critical key element in the eventual revegetation of disturbed area. The revegetation efforts in the SRC area will continue to be explored.

Where additional screening is required, larger native vegetation such as Tree Ceanothus will be used. The typical plant that would be used for revegetation is 2 to 5 feet tall. Planting composition and distribution will be commensurate to what is found in adjacent areas such that one species is dominant. The overall intent will be to create a natural looking landscape that matches the surrounding areas with the exception of select plantings around the OMC building. Tree Ceanothus (*Ceanothus arboreus*) is an existing (non-native but beneficial) plant that will achieve a fifteen to twenty-foot maximum height that may be used as screening for the OMC building. Careful plant selection and placement is a key element in successfully screening the OMC facility. Small plants will be planted on top of the buried portion of the OMC building to create a natural transition between surrounding vegetation and the building's rooftop while adding a minimal weight load to the structure's roof. The contoured graded fill areas at the Disposal Area will be revegetated with the same revegetation concepts already outlined.

3.6.2. Drainage Course near South Portal

A drainage area and seasonal waterfall is located to the immediate east of the existing Route 1 at the South Portal area with a seasonal low quality wetland area at the bottom. Although the approach roadway to the tunnel will completely fill the existing seasonal low quality wetland, the drainage course and waterfall will not be impacted.

The approved Environmental Impact Report (EIR) classifies the seasonal low quality wetland as “containing very low habitat value because of its small size and location. The depression provides only marginal habitat for amphibians due to the lack of a permanent water source.”¹

The drainage course will be maintained throughout the period of construction.

¹ Devil’s Slide Final Second Supplemental to the 1986 Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and State of California Department of Transportation, Volume 1, May 2002.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This report concludes the formal public process for the Aesthetics Committee. Informal meetings may occur to provide updates on the project status and the design details as the project progresses. Listed below are the Aesthetics Committee's recommendations for the selected issues.

Table 4.0: Phase II Aesthetic Issues and Approved Recommendations


AESTHETIC ISSUES		AESTHETICS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS
TUNNELS	Portal Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A balance of simple and elaborate portal design • Minimize retaining walls and visible structures at the South Portals
	Tunnel Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple and non distracting design; easy to maintain • Design option that consisted of a solid color at the base with the color gradually transitioning to a light color as it reached the top
SOUTH ROCK CUT	South Rock Cut Retaining Walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining wall with rock carved texture treatment • Retaining wall heights will screen the maintenance road
DISPOSAL AREA / OMC SITE	OMC Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMC building located near the Disposal Area • Partially buried building • Sod on roof top
	Seasonal Low Quality Wetland near OMC Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize fill and maintain the seasonal low quality wetland
	Disposal Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposal Area located near the OMC Site • Contractor will have the option to modify the Disposal Site fill material volume if other suitable locations and methods for disposal of the excavated materials are available
BRIDGES	Bridge Barrier and Railing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a solid bridge barrier with an open pedestrian/bicycle railing on top
FUTURE ACCESS ROADS TO TRAIL CONNECTIONS	Northern Access Road to Future Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate cul-de-sac near abandoned Route 1 • Access Road should not cross under the bridge
	Southern Access Road to Future Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance to the access road should provide sufficient sight stopping distance • Unresolved design issues should not preclude/exclude potential trail connections at the portals
	Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking should be provided in both northern and southern areas of the trail
MITIGATION	Stabilization and Revegetation Concept for Disturbed Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacted areas should be restored with native vegetation • Provide larger native revegetation where screening is needed
	Drainage Course near South Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the drainage course

5.0 APPENDICES


- A. Portal Survey Results
- B. OMC Site Contour Grading Plan
- C. Letter to San Mateo County Supervisor Richard Gordon from the Midcoast Community Council –
MCC Position on Fill Disposal Area for Devil's Slide Tunnels Project
- D. Bridge Vehicle Barrier with Textured Pattern Options
- E. Open Bridge Railing Designs
- F. Pacifica's Future Trail Proposal
- G. Northern Access Road near the Future Abandoned Highway
- H. Southern Access Roads near the Future Abandoned Highway
- I a. Letters from the Owner of Shamrock Ranch
- I b. Letter from a Resident of Shamrock Ranch


California Home
Wednesday, March 5, 2003


Welcome to **California**



California








My CA
 This Site

Route 87 Project Between Coleman Avenue and Route 101 in San Jose

California Department of Transportation

Governor Gray Davis

Business, Housing & Transportation Agency


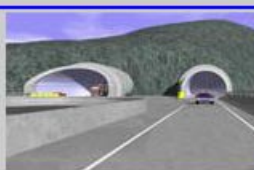

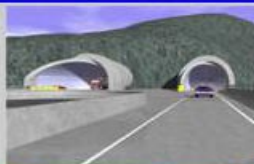



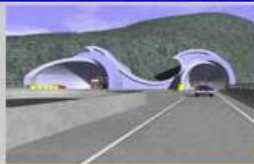




Devil's Slide Animation

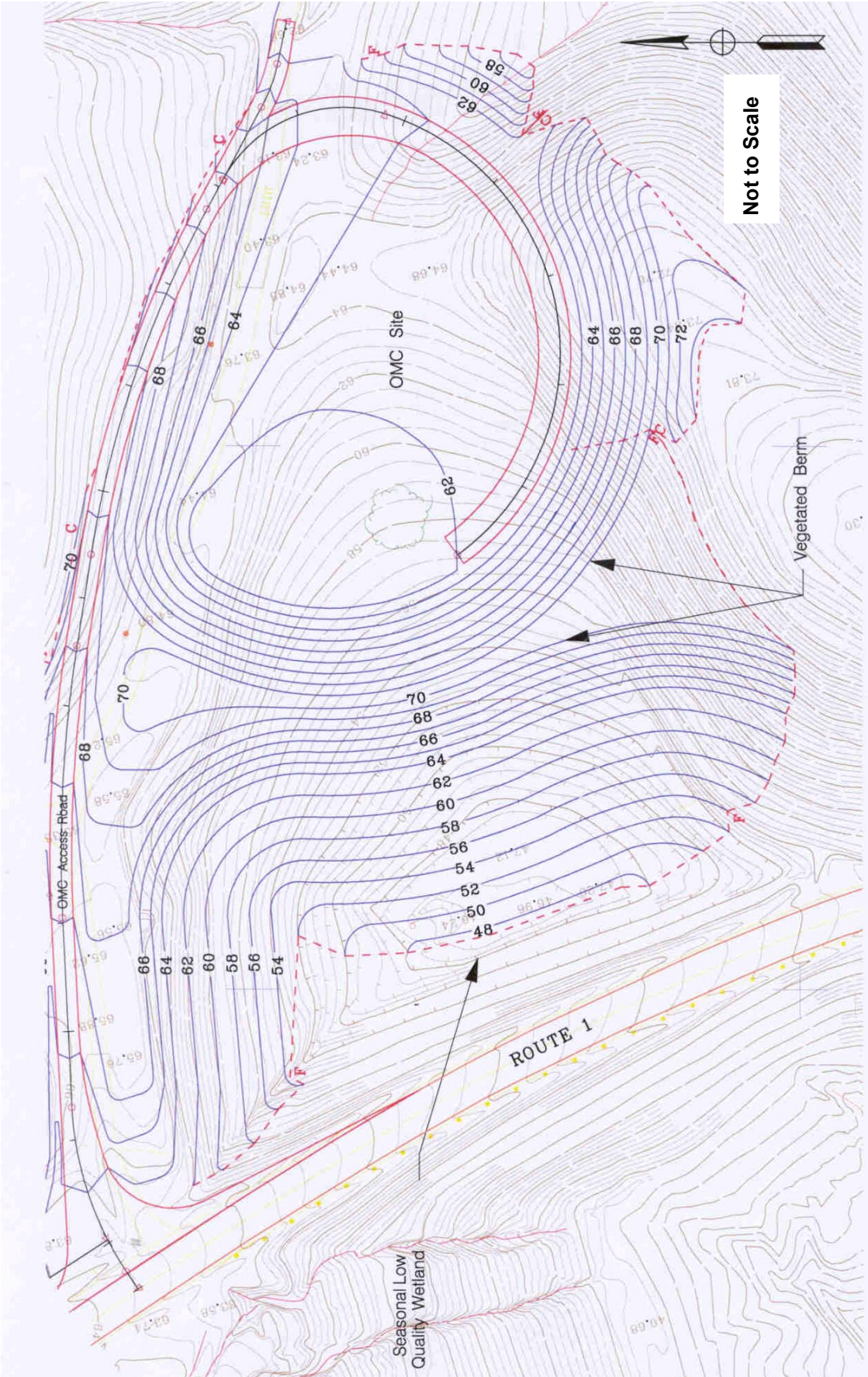
Survey voting ended, December 5, 2002

Caltrans > District 4 > Devil's Slide Home Page > Devil's Slide Survey

Devil's Slide Tunnels Phase II - Portal Alternatives & Survey

▶ SOUTH PORTAL OPTIONS		▶ NORTH PORTAL OPTIONS	
	OPTION SP-A 236 Votes		OPTION NP-A 172 Votes
	OPTION SP-B 327 Votes		OPTION NP-B 336 Votes
	OPTION SP-C 66 Votes		OPTION NP-C 473 Votes
	OPTION SP-D 327 Votes		OPTION NP-D 830 Votes!
	OPTION SP-E 902 Votes!		OPTION NP-E 148 Votes

Appendix B: OMC Site Contour Grading



**Appendix C: Letter to San Mateo County Supervisor Richard Gordon
From the Midcoast Community Council –
MCC Position on Fill Disposal Area for Devil's Slide Tunnels Project**

MidCoast Community Council

An elected Municipal Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Serving 12,000 coastal residents
Post Office Box 64, Moss Beach, CA 94038-0064
Office Fax: (650) 728-2129

February 27, 2003

Via Email & Fax: 1 Page

To: Supervisor Rich Gordon
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

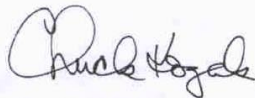
cc: Karen Yap, HTNB - KYap@hntb.com
Skip Sowko, Caltrans - skip.sowko@dot.ca.gov
Jim Vreeland, Pacifica City Council - jimvreeland@earthlink.net
Julie Lancelle, Pacifica City Council - Julielan@pacbell.net
Francis Mensah, Caltrans - francis_mensah@dot.ca.gov
Bijan Ahmadzadeh, Caltrans - Bijan_Ahmadzadeh@dot.ca.gov
MidCoast Community Council - mcc@sanmateo.org

Dear Supervisor Gordon,

At our regular meeting of February 26, 2003, the MidCoast Community Council voted 5-1 (with 1 abstaining) to request that the excavation from the Devil's Slide Tunnels project be prohibited from being used in the currently designated fill disposal site on the south side of San Pedro Mountain (north side of Green Valley) and that this position be reflected in any future reports on the project.

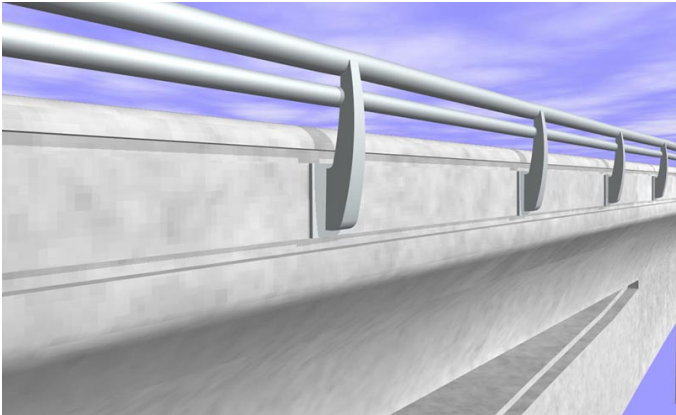
We thank you for your careful consideration of our recommendations. If you have any questions on this matter, please contact either me at the number(s) below.

Sincerely,
For the MidCoast Community Council

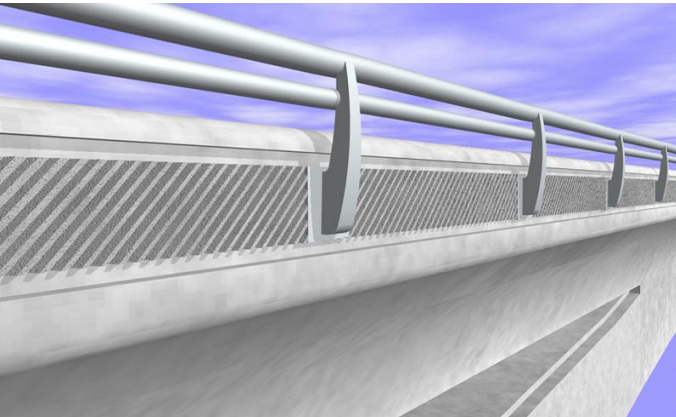


Chuck Kozak
Member, MidCoast Community Council
650 996-8998 or 650-728-8239

Appendix D: Bridge Vehicle Barrier with Textured Pattern Options



(a) Solid Design



(b) Rib Textured Design

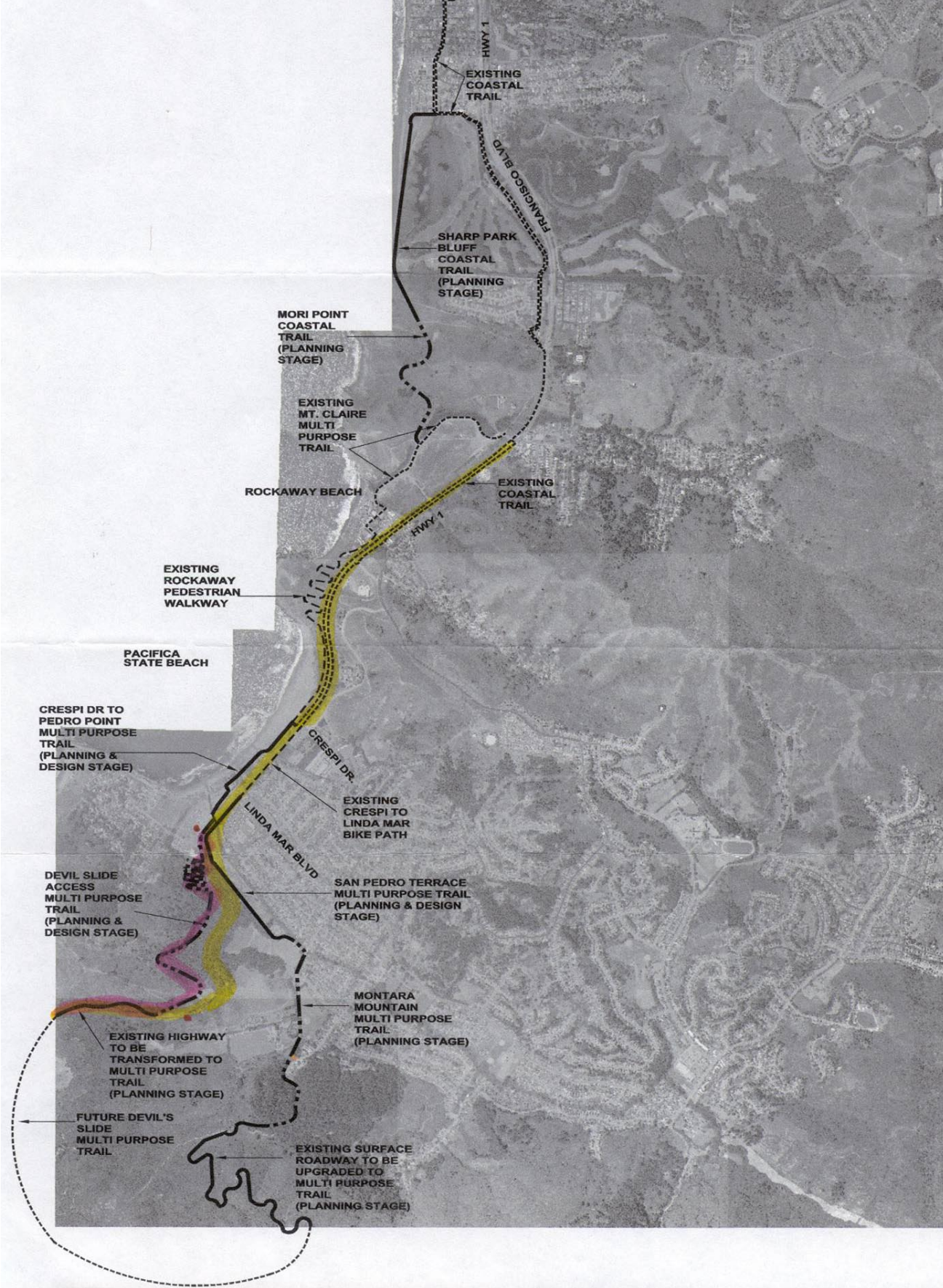


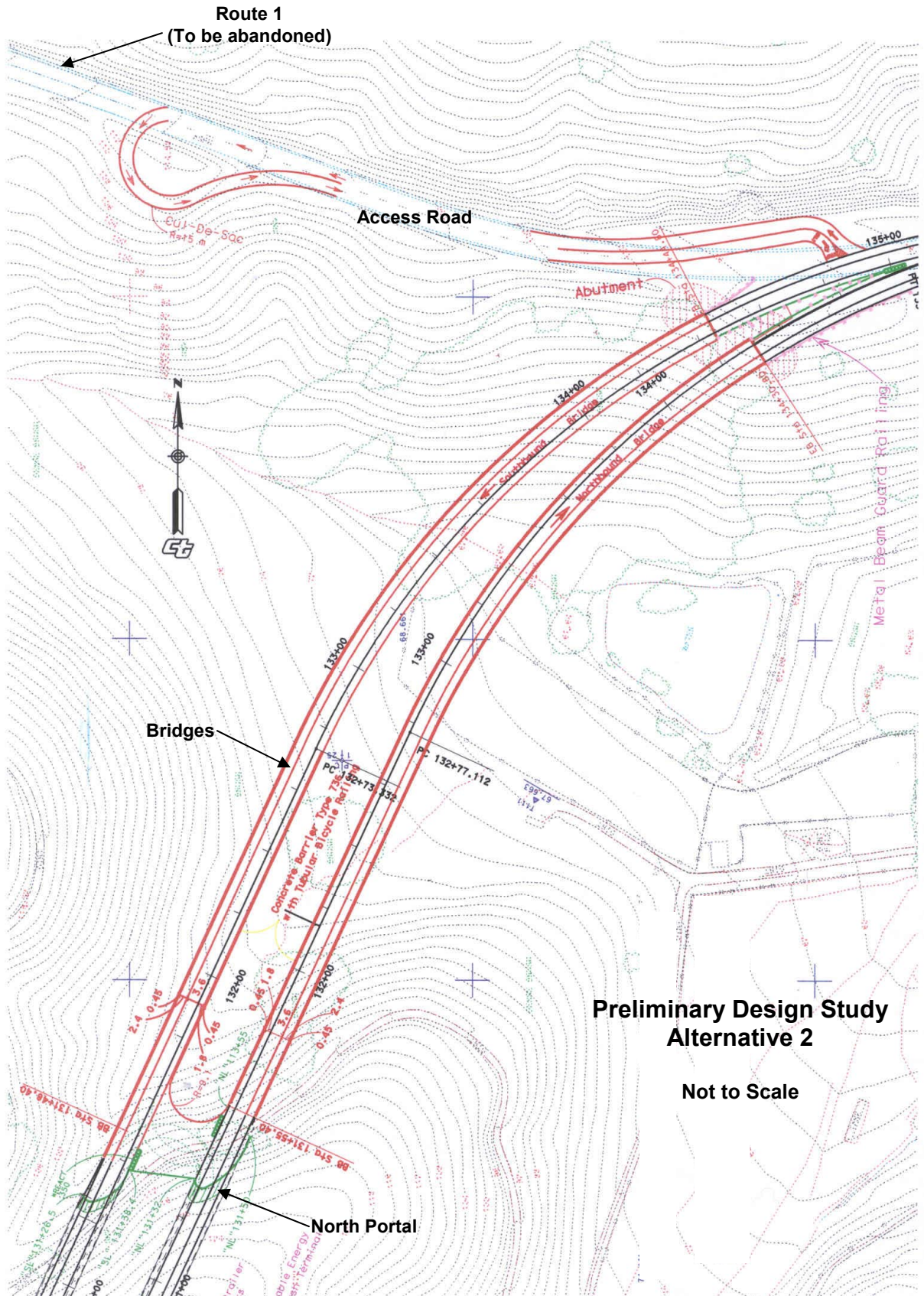
(c) Wave and Rib Textured Design

Appendix E: Open Bridge Railing Designs



Appendix F: Pacifica City's Future Trail Proposal

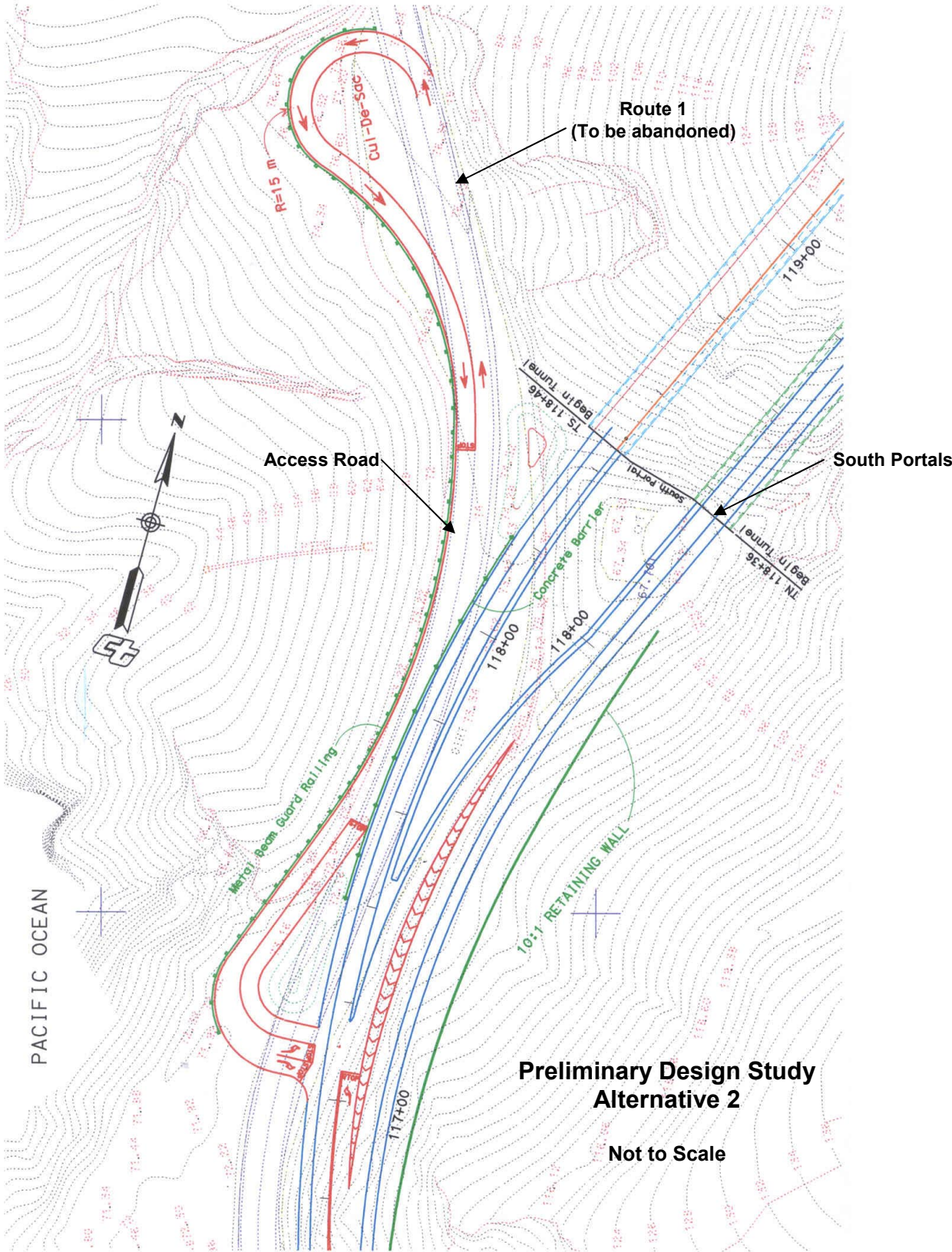




Preliminary Design Study
Alternative 2

Not to Scale

Appendix H: Southern Access Road near the Future Abandoned Highway





Shamrock Ranch

Kennels & Stables

March 4, 2003

Devil's Slide Tunnels Project
Aesthetics Committee
C/o Karen Yap
HNTB
By FAX 510 208-4595

Re: COMMENTS ON AESTHETICS COMMITTEE REPORT

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am writing with several concerns that I hope will be addressed during the design and construction of the Tunnels and design and construction of the Public Access to the proposed trail on the existing Highway #1.

1. I am greatly concerned about the proposed Public Access and Parking at the North end of the project. As the landowner and person that lives along highway #1 I can tell you that there was a time when there was a chronic need for law enforcement at the turnout just above the Ranch and across the road and up a bit from the Pacifica Land Trust property. It was the scene of much drinking, bon fires, screaming and yelling, urinating over the embankment towards the Ranch, bottle throwing onto the Ranch and gunshots at all hours of the night.

I know that the Coastal Commission wants maximum Coastal Access. So it would seem incumbent on the recipient of this access to provide for a gate and fencing that can't be easily cut, climbed or bypassed and that the gate would be locked at sunset every day. I know that the City of Pacifica has suggested that they would be the party that will secure the gate daily. If another Pacifica City Council decided that it no longer wanted to be responsible for this task then the gate must be locked, for public safety and welfare, until another agency can be found to perform this task.

Not doing this would create a dark, isolated area for people to drink and party. It would also then turn those very same people out onto Highway #1 and through the Tunnels, possibly in an intoxicated state. I think this would be a reckless and

irresponsible action no matter what the mandate. Do we not also have a mandate for social welfare and a responsibility not to create a public nuisance and jeopardize public health and safety?

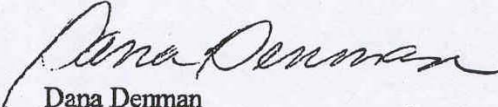
I think both concerns can be met with a guarantee that there will be an adequate gate locked at sunset with adequate fencing. This should commence on the very first day the parking is established. Who will be responsible for this must be defined from the onset. This is not an issue that can fall between the cracks or be forgotten – there is too much at stake.

2. It is important to me as a landowner adjoining the proposed parking and access trail that my property rights be respected. I think this can be accomplished in the following ways:
 - a. Strong fencing, gate, and signage should include fencing off access to my private land;
 - b. Public education as to where the public and private lands lie: with maps, promotional material and web based material. This should contain the advice not to trespass and state the criminal consequences of trespassing.
3. I would request that you take noise impacts on Shamrock Ranch into consideration in the design and implementation of the Bridge Barriers and Railings. I know that it has been stated that the Coastal Commission wants an open railing and I am requesting that this be accomplished with minimum noise intrusion onto the Ranch. I am also requesting that the design of the bridge railing be aesthetically pleasing from the land looking at the bridge and not just the bridge looking out onto the land. The railings that we saw during the committee meetings, where a taller barrier was added for bicycle safety, were not aesthetically pleasing. They looked like a pipe rail add-on and definitely an afterthought.

It is my understanding that the Ranch is also considered a Public Resource in the Coastal Zone and I think that it should be treated with the same respect and consideration that is given to the public areas.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on these issues and would like to say that my concerns are not limited to these comments.

Respectfully,


Dana Denman

/dd

March 4, 2003

Devil's Slide Tunnel Aesthetics Committee
c/o Karen Yap
HNTB

Re: **PUBLIC ACCESS COMPONENT—DEVIL'S SLIDE TUNNEL**

**STRONG PREVENTIVE DESIGN MEASURES NEEDED TO PREVENT
LAW ENFORCEMENT PROBLEMS DUE TO ILLEGAL AFTERHOURS
USE**

Dear Ms. Yap and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Public Access Component of the Devil's Slide Tunnel project.

I am writing to alert the Committee, and particularly those members who represent jurisdictions which will have law enforcement responsibility for any public access facilities, of a potentially serious public safety issue concerning public access.

Any proposed parking facilities and any access to public trails, must be designed to prevent after hours use, or a chronic after hours use problem will result. This will require Pacifica and the County to divert law enforcement resources to respond to calls and to patrol the area, resources that may be scarce and much needed elsewhere.

Unfortunately, I have personal experience of this issue. I am the occupant of the residence closest to the proposed parking area. In the past, there was a small pull out area on the left side of Highway One as one approaches Devil's Slide. The area is directly above my home and Shamrock Ranch.

For literally years, this area was a nightly party spot for teenagers and others who have few private places to go in Pacifica. As a result, there was a chronic law enforcement problem. I personally had to call either the County Sheriff or the Pacifica Police Department frequently. Problems were typically drinking, partying, trespass, throwing beer bottles and trash over the hillside in to the Ranch, fires, and not infrequently, gun shots due to people deciding this was an uninhabited area ideal for illegal target practice.

I am not at all exaggerating when I say that on more than one occasion I had to lay flat on the floor in my bedroom while shots were fired down at the Ranch valley in fear that I or a member of my family would be hit.

This resulted in a need to call for law enforcement, which would promptly respond, break up the gathering, and resolve the issue for that day. It would reoccur shortly thereafter.

A large parking lot in this area is guaranteed be a much greater enforcement problem, wasting scarce law enforcement resources, unless it is carefully designed to avoid these problems in the first place.

This can be done with adequate design, fencing, gates, signage, and so forth.

Mere cyclone fencing is completely inadequate, as these were routinely cut during Devil's Slide closures, as CalTrans' staff well knows. Adequate design will have to include fencing that cannot be easily cut, and cannot be scaled or bypassed. The parking lot will have to have very secure gates that cannot be cut or opened after dusk. I can assure you from sad experience that where there is a will there is a way, unless proper design addresses this issue squarely.

Public access and the safety of the public and adjacent residents are NOT incompatible. Both can exist, provided this issue is anticipated in the design phase and preventive design measures are an integral part of the Public Access Component. These techniques can be effective, but must be addressed seriously.

If this issue is overlooked, it will result in the resumption of this problem on a much greater scale, at a time when law enforcement resources are very strained.

Please insure that the design team is directed to develop strong preventive measures to avoid this problem resurfacing.

Thank you very much for considering my comments. I am a strong supporter of the Tunnel Project, but needed to make the Committee aware of the unfortunate history of after hour use and abuse of this sensitive area.

Please consider my comments and **include a strong recommendation for strong preventive measures to prevent after-hours use in your design recommendations.**

Thank you for your attention.

Very truly yours,

Susan Schectman
106 Shamrock Ranch
Pacifica, CA 94044
(650) 355-9235