Avila Beach Drive at Highway 101 Interchange

Project Approval and Environmental Document Phase

Project Review Comments

No.	Questions/Comments	Response
A.1.	What is the maximum capacity of park and ride?	The park-and-ride lot design and stall layout will be refined during the next phase of the project, so the number of spaces is subject to change. The current preliminary layout shows 26 paved parking spaces and 14 spaces located in a gravel overflow parking lot on the west side of the driveway off of Avila Beach Drive. That is a total of 40 parking spaces.
A.2.	Is the billboard on the inland side of Northbound 101 between Pismo and Avila going to be removed?	The billboard along the northbound inland side of 101 appears to be on private property located approximately ½ mile to the south of our project limits. This is beyond the scope and limits of this project to address and is not included as a part of this project.
A.3.	Would like to see the revised retaining wall treatment figure with the color and texture options that AVAC approved.	A potential wall layout and surface treatment options was presented in concept form for review in the Visual Impact Analysis and at public meetings. This exhibit was also provided to the AVAC reviewers on February 6, 2020. Please note that final decisions on treatment have not been made and the walls are on Caltrans right of way and will therefore be state property.
A.4.	Our understanding is that Public Works intends a meeting in the fall of this year for public input and intends a Mitigated Negative Declaration to fulfill requirements for environmental review.	Public Works participated in the AVAC meeting on January 13, 2020, during the circulation of the draft environmental document.
A.5.	We understand that funding is available to complete plans, that a ready to construct project is wanted for ability to seek construction funding when available, and that final project design is projected in 2022.	This is correct. Funding for the next phase (design) is available, and this phase will refine the design and prepare construction ready documents. Currently, this project is not fully funded for construction, but fully developed plans will improve the ability to secure full funding.
A.6.	Also understood is that the northbound off-ramp alignment will be improved for better sight distance and that parking will be in two sections, one paved and one gravel.	Improvements to the northbound off-ramp are proposed but the ramp is not proposed to be realigned as part of this project. The slope between the stop sign at the eastbound Avila Beach Drive move and the northbound off-ramp will be regraded to provide the required corner sight and stopping sight distance. Additional speed reduction treatments are proposed on the northbound off-ramp, such as advance warning signs, curb and hardscape enhancements, and pavement markings. The park-and-ride lot is shown as two sections. One area is paved and the other will be a gravel overflow parking area.
A.7.	Retaining walls planned should have an abstract sea wave design, as is appropriate for an access road leading to a beach town. The design would mitigate appearance of large walls.	Retaining wall aesthetics will be determined in next phase. There are a variety of treatments being considered.
A.8.	The plan should be modified for greater clarity before presentation to the public by denoting Monte Road and the northbound off-ramp, numbers of parking spaces and parking surfaces for park & ride areas, and retaining walls and their heights.	Project plans will continue to be refined through the next phase of the project. Additional details were included in the presentation materials for the January 13, 2020 public workshop.
A.9.	The plan should address personal safety and vehicle security of parking areas by limiting height of vegetation to under 4' near parking spaces and other pedestrian areas, plus there should be video camera surveillance that connects to CHP.	Reduced height vegetation is planned near the pedestrian crossing areas. Lighting will be provided in the park-and-ride lot and around the roundabout. Additional security considerations may be evaluated in the final design phase of the project.

Avila Beach Drive at Highway 101 Interchange

Project Approval and Environmental Document Phase

Project Review Comments

No.	Questions/Comments	Response
A.10.	The plan should include ample lighting for the roundabout, underside of the 101 overpass and park & ride areas.	Lighting will be provided in the park-and-ride lot, around the roundabout on the west side of US 101 and at the intersection on the east side of US 101.
A.11.	It is uncertain if a pedestrian could access Monte Road from the park & ride.	As shown on the updated plans presented for public review, pedestrians can access Monte Road from the park-and-ride by crossing at the crosswalks on the western and northern legs of the roundabout and using the shared-use paths.
A.12.	The Visual Impact Assessment mentions removal of oaks which were planted as mitigation for an earlier project; these have aesthetic value. Before the landscape plan is presented to the public it should show and identify existing trees and denote those intended for removal.	An exhibit showing existing tree impacts was prepared and shared with the public at the January 13, 2020 meeting. The final landscape plan will be completed in the next phase, native trees shall be preserved and protected to the maximum extent feasible. Coast live oaks will be incorporated into the landscaping plant palette to be planted within the project area at the end of construction.
A.13.	An existing billboard is located within the 101 northbound offramp approach. Its' removal could mitigate tree removal, and more.	See Response #A.2.
A.14.	All respondents wanted the "Natural" texture. However, of those preferring Natural, multiple people would like a beach motif instead, such as wavy lines with flying gulls. The majority preferred "Compost" color, followed by "Khaki." One preferred "Slate gray." If a beach motif is used, a different color could be preferred.	See Response #A.7.
B.1.	Monte Rd @ US 101 Northbound on-ramp has collision issues and excessive speeds by drivers using Northbound 101 on-ramp	See response #A.6.
C.1.	Please have County SLO Public Works and Caltrans present this version (1/13/2020) of the Presentation or the latest version at the County BAC.	The County has coordinated with BAC for future outreach.
C.2.	Tonight's presentation has incorporated some of the comments from the County BAC Members from about 7 months ago. Thank you.	We appreciate your input. Please let us know if there are more questions or concerns.
D.1.	On behalf of the Friends of the Bob Jones Trail, the roundabout design looks great for people on bikes and will improve safety for the bicycle transportation network between South County and SLO. This project will increase trips by bike.	Thank you, research shows roundabouts encourage and support non-motorized modes of travel. The vehicle speeds are controlled through the roundabout with specifically designed geometry. The reduced speeds are closer to cyclist speeds. As an additional option bike ramps are provided in advance of the roundabout to give cyclists the option of exiting the roadway and navigating the roundabout using the shared-use path and crosswalks.
D.2.	Future presentations should include the staging area for the trail on Ontario Road.	The Bob Jones Trail on Ontario Road is a separate project being undertaken by the County and there are plans to have public meetings regarding that trail. Trail staging areas are outside the scope of this project.
E.1.	Northbound 101 exit to Avila Beach Drive and crossing for Northbound 101 entrance- Understand the proposed grading for improved sight line of oncoming traffic.	See response #A.6.

Avila Beach Drive at Highway 101 Interchange

Project Approval and Environmental Document Phase

Project Review Comments

No.	Questions/Comments	Response
E.2.	For today however, could the stop area for NB 101 entrance include an electronic signal warning of oncoming traffic? This would provide “vision” beyond the current sight lines.	For the NB off-ramp intersection with Monte Rd/Avila Beach Dr, sight distance and traffic calming improvements are proposed. Please see response to #A.6.
F.1.	I'm still thinking the roundabout would be more efficient if it was 2 lanes wide. After looking at the plan brochure my husband noted that it appears there is not enough room for 2 lanes in the roundabout.	The roundabout is designed to have one lane circulating the central island. One lane will provide sufficient capacity for the intersection, even in 2042 at the peak hour. One lane roundabouts are also less confusing to users and provide greater safety benefits.
F.2.	The roundabout is the best solution for this area, and we thank you for your work on it!! (Now if we could get a flashing warning sign for the people who are traveling east on Avila Dr. and must cross traffic exiting from the northbound 101 Avila Dr. exit, can't tell you how many times people have cut in front of us there!! Maybe the new ramp will help with that).	See response #E.2. and #A.6.
G.1.	Ontario Ridge hikers will have a high impact on the parking spaces.	As a public park-and-ride lot the proposed lot will serve a variety of users including parking for nearby trails. The County also plans improvements at the Cave Landing parking lot to serve Ontario Ridge users.
G.2.	The extension of the Bob Jones Trail will increase the number of bike riders through the roundabout.	Additional bike traffic is anticipated. See response #D.1.
G.3.	Consider educational outreach to the public regarding use of the roundabout.	Educational and public outreach meetings have been conducted, including a workshop at the AVAC January 13, 2020 meeting. Additional outreach will be continued through the next phase of the project.
H.1.	On Monday January 13, 2020, county staff presented the proposed Avila Beach Drive at US 101 interchange project at the PG&E Community Center at 6588 Ontario Road. As a long term resident of the area, I was very much interested in the proposed roundabout reconfiguration of this intersection.	Thank you for attending and participating.
H.2.	I had several questions and arrived at the informal open house shortly after the scheduled start time. I was pleased to see that many others were also interested.	We appreciate community involvement.
H.3.	I sought out one of the individuals from the department of Public Works to ask several questions. I referred to the purpose and need for the project as presented in the November 2018 flyer. The need was due to "The intersection is currently operating at Level of Service (LOS) 'F' during p.m. peak periods." It is interesting to note that per the 2019 information "The general increase in traffic…is forecast to degrade the southbound ramp at Avila Beach Drive intersection to a level of Service 'F' by 2032." Is the level of service 'F' now or in the future? Which ramp is being described, the on-ramp or the off-ramp?	The five-legged intersection of the southbound ramps, Avila Beach Drive, and Shell Beach Road experiences operational issues during the weekend peak travel times and the summer tourist seasons. Prior studies used counts conducted during the prior phase of project development. During this current phase, new counts were conducted and current Level of Service (LOS) was reported based on these counts. Traffic modelling will have some variability based on counts and each LOS includes a range of congestion before triggering a new letter designation. The intersection is currently operating at Level of Service (LOS) “D” during the weekend peak period. Anticipated traffic growth is forecast to degrade the southbound ramp terminal intersection from level of service D to F by 2032.

Avila Beach Drive at Highway 101 Interchange

Project Approval and Environmental Document Phase

Project Review Comments

No.	Questions/Comments	Response
H.4.	How much of the low level of service is being caused by the backup on south-bound 101?	Three different peak hour periods were studied for this interchange: weekday morning and evening peak periods and weekend afternoon peak period. The traffic analysis shows that for the weekday morning and evening peak periods, the southbound off-ramp has the highest amount of delay of all the other movements in the intersection. However, on the weekend afternoon peak, the northbound movements from Shell Beach Drive experience the highest amount of delay. This northbound Shell Beach Road delay was the controlling or highest congestion condition.
H.5.	One of the presentations showed the amount of traffic as it is currently and estimates of the level of traffic in the future. I asked if the reduction in traffic due to the closure of Diablo Canyon Power Plant had been taken into account and was told "I think so". Not very informative.	As discussed in response #H.4., the controlling condition was weekend afternoon traffic and not directly correlated to what could be considered a Diablo employment commute issue. The traffic projections assume no change in the number of employees at Diablo Canyon. They are therefore conservative as the plant decommissioning will reduce the number of employees and associated traffic generation.
H.6.	As I often use my bicycle, I inquired as to how bicyclists were to move through the roundabout. I was informed that it would be safe as the cars would not be traveling very fast.	Research shows roundabouts improve safety for non-motorized users, please als see response #D.1.
H.7.	I asked if the walkways would be lighted and the response was yes.	Lighting will be provided; see response #A.10.
H.8.	If electricity is available, why not put in traffic lights? This would allow those vehicles on north-bound Shell Beach Road to proceed through the intersection with minimal delay. It would also greatly reduce the cost as a roundabout would not have to be constructed.	An Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) Step 1 report was developed by Caltrans in 2015. This report evaluated different intersection control options for the following control types: 1) stop control; 2) signal control; and 3) yield control (roundabout). The roundabout alternatives were found to provide superior AM/PM peak hour operations over either the stop controlled or the signal-controlled alternatives. The roundabout alternatives would preserve the existing US 101 overpass bridge, simplify the existing intersection configuration, reduce the number of decision points, and accommodate design vehicles. The signalized alternative at the southbound ramp intersection would not accomplish an acceptable LOS and would require reconstruction of the US 101 bridges to accommodate the laned configuration needed for turn moves, which would be very costly. The signalizaiton option was dropped as a result of the ICE Step 1 analysis.
H.9.	As a first step, why not install stop signs as has recently been done at the intersection of San Luis Bay Drive and Ontario Road?	Each intersection must be evaluated independently based on the traffic volumes and conditions at the individual site. An ICE Step 1 study (see response #H.8.) concluded that stop sign control of this intersection would cause unacceptable levels of service and queuing.
H.10.	I asked about the potential for stop signs or traffic lights and was told that the signs/lights had been explored but that the roundabout was the preferred alternative. By whom? Considering the estimated cost of 4-7 million dollars published in November 2018 and 9-13 million dollars published in December 2019 (a significant increase in just 13 months) this taxpayer, motorist, and bicyclist would prefer a cheaper alternative.	See response #H.8. and #H.9. The signalized and stop controlled alternatives did not provide acceptable traffic operations for the interchange.

Avila Beach Drive at Highway 101 Interchange

Project Approval and Environmental Document Phase

Project Review Comments

No.	Questions/Comments	Response
H.11.	Why not just shelve this project and work on putting in a south entrance to Avila Beach?	While there appear to be significant cost and environmental impacts for a potential southern entrance to Avila Beach (such as private property takes, sensitive environmental and coastal resource areas) that study is not in the scope of this project.
I.1.	Strongly in favor. Like the fact you built a simulation.	Thank you for the feedback.
I.2.	Explicit bike lane in roundabout would be desirable. Lots of bike traffic to/from Shell Beach Rd. that will increase, possibly dramatically.	Please note that designated bike lanes in the circulatory roadway are prohibitted and see response to #D.1. From the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) report #672 Second Edition, "If there is a bike lane on the outer area of the circulatory roadway, crashes typically occur between entering cars and circulating bicyclists as well as between exiting cars and bicyclists that are circulating around the outer edge of the circulatory roadway."
I.3.	Planned (but not approved) expansion of housing and accommodation in Avila (Rossi, et al) will increase traffic considerably beyond projections.	The forecasts reflect projected traffic levels under the current General Plan land uses. Planned expansion of housing and accommodation that is consistent with the General Plan are therefore reflected in the analysis, but projects requiring amendment to the General Plan are not. Any amendments to the General Plan would require additional impact analysis for those specific projects.
I.4.	Paint bike lane in roundabout green as in SLO and others.	Please see response to #I.2.

Avila Beach Drive at Highway 101 Interchange

Project Approval and Environmental Document Phase

Environmental Document Comments

No.	Questions/Comments	Response
J.1.	The MND should acknowledge the potential for project site activities to result in the release of hazardous wastes/substances. In instances in which releases may occur, further studies should be carried out to delineate the nature and extent of the contamination, and the potential threat to public health and/or the environment should be evaluated. The MND should also identify the mechanism(s) to initiate any required investigation and/or remediation and the government agency who will be responsible for providing appropriate regulatory oversight.	The Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography section (page 39) discusses a Hazardous Materials Prevention and Response Plan to be prepared to allow for a prompt and effective response to any accidental spills, should they occur.
J.2.	If any sites within the project area or sites located within the vicinity of the project have been used or are suspected of having been used for mining activities, proper investigation for mine waste should be discussed in the MND. DTSC recommends that any project sites with current and/or former mining operations onsite of in the project site area should be evaluated for mine waste according to DTSC's 1998 Abandoned Mine Land Mine Preliminary Assessment Handbook (https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/11/aml_handbook.pdf).	No sites within the project area have been used or are suspected of having been used for mining activities.
J.3.	Refiners in the United States started adding lead compounds to gasoline in the 1920s in order to boost octane levels and improve engine performance. This practice did not officially end until 1992 when lead was banned as a fuel additive in California. Tailpipe emissions from automobiles using leaded gasoline contained lead and resulted in aerially deposited lead (ADL) being deposited in and along roadways throughout the state. ADL-contaminated soils still exist along roadsides and medians and can also be found underneath some existing road surfaces due to past construction activities. Due to the potential for ADL-contaminated soil DTSC, recommends collecting soil samples for lead analysis prior to performing any intrusive activities for the project described in the MND.	The recommended effort (for ADL) has already been conducted and is discussed in the MND (pages 44-45).

Avila Beach Drive at Highway 101 Interchange

Project Approval and Environmental Document Phase

Environmental Document Comments

No.	Questions/Comments	Response
J.4.	If building or other structures are to be demolished on any project sites included in the proposed project, surveys should be conducted for the presence of lead-based paints or products, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulk. Removal, demolition and disposal of any of the above-mentioned chemicals should be conducted in compliance with California environmental regulations and policies. In addition, sampling near current and/or former buildings should be conducted in accordance with DTSC's 2006 *Interim Guidance Evaluation of School Sites with Potential Contamination from Lead Based Paint, Termiticides, and Electrical Transformers* (https://dtsc.ca.gov/wpcontent/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/Guidance_Lead_Contamination_050118.pdf).	No building or structures will be demolished as a result of the proposed project. Regardless, Measure AQ-16 in the Air Quality section of the MND (page 49) discusses asbestos.
J.5.	If any projects initiated as part of the proposed project require the importation of soil to backfill any excavated areas, proper sampling should be conducted to ensure that the imported soil is free of contamination. DTSC recommends the imported materials be characterized according to *DTSC's 2001 Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material* (https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/SMP_FS_Cleanfill-Schools.pdf).	Measure Bio-13 (page 64) discusses clean imported fill.
J.6.	If any sites included as part of the proposed project have been used for agricultural, weed abatement or related activities, proper investigation for organochlorinated pesticides should be discusses in the MND. DTSC recommends the current and former agricultural lands be evaluated in accordance with DTSC's 2008 *Interim Guidance for Sampling Agricultural Properties (Third Revision)* (https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/Ag-Guidance-Rev-3-August-7-2008-2.pdf).	The project site has not been used for agricultural or weed abatement activities.