



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** COUNTY MANAGER

**File #:** 19-971

Board Meeting Date: 10/8/2019

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Michael P. Callagy, County Manager

**Subject:** Board of Supervisors' Response to the 2018-2019 Civil Grand Jury Report, "Crystal Springs Regional Trail- Where Do We Go From Here?"

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the Board of Supervisors' response to the 2018-2019 Civil Grand Jury Report, "Crystal Springs Regional Trail- Where Do We Go From Here?"

### **BACKGROUND:**

On July 25, 2019, the 2018-2019 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury issued a report titled "Crystal Springs Regional Trail- Where Do We Go From Here?". The Board of Supervisors is required to submit comments on the findings and recommendations pertaining to the matters over which it has some decision-making authority within 90 days. The Board's response to the report is due to the Honorable Donald J. Ayob no later than October 23, 2019.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Grand Jury made 15 findings and four recommendations in its report. The Board responses follow each finding and the four recommendations that the Grand Jury requested that the Board respond to within 90 days.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Finding 1:**

A completed CSRT is envisioned in the Parks Department's *San Mateo County 2001 Trails Plan* and later in its April 2019 *Ohlone-Portola Heritage Trail Feasibility Study* (Heritage Trail Study) as a continuous trail extending from San Bruno to Woodside.

**Response:** Agree

### **Finding 2:**

The Heritage Trail Study gives the CSRT gap between the Sawyer Camp and Crystal Springs segments a high priority ranking and presents options for completing the CSRT gap which overlaps

with the proposed Heritage Trail.

**Response:** Agree

**Finding 3:**

In the Heritage Trail Study, the Parks Department has requested that multiple alternatives be considered for completing the one-mile gap and integrating with the proposed roundabout at the Highway 92/35 intersection in the “Connect the Coastsides” *Comprehensive Transportation Management Plan* report.

**Response:**

Agree. The Office of Sustainability (OOS) is currently examining the gap between the Crystal Springs and Sawyer Camp trails and section of Highway 35 between Hayne Road and Crystal Springs Road as part of the development of the Unincorporated County Active Transportation Plan, which seeks to close gaps in the on-street unincorporated County cycling network, as well as improve on-street connections to County trails, among other objectives. On-street improvements to the right of way that makes up the gap between the two trails is referenced as one potential alternative in the Parks Department’s Heritage Trail Study. Recommendations in the Unincorporated County Active Transportation Plan will consider the integration of proposals and designs included in the Heritage Trail Study and the “Connect the Coastsides” Comprehensive Transportation Demand Management Plan.

**Finding 4:**

The Parks Department has not adopted a schedule for further improvements to close the remaining one-mile gap in the CSRT.

**Response:** Agree

**Finding 5:**

Five percent of the proceeds from SamTrans’ Measure W (2018) must be used for bicycle, pedestrian, and active transportation projects throughout the County. The Measure presents a possible funding source for helping to close the gap or improve trails like the CSRT.

**Response:**

Agree that this is a possible funding source, but there are multiple active transportation projects in need of funding throughout San Mateo County. Measure W is an additional half-cent sales tax approved by voters in 2018 for a 30-year period. It is expected to generate approximately \$45 million annually for the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) to administer for transportation projects in the County, five percent of which must be dedicated to pedestrian and bicycle projects. The criteria for project selection are currently in development by the TA under the umbrella of the TA’s 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, and OOS has contributed to the development of project criteria through participation on the TA Strategic Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group. Once project criteria are finalized, OOS, in collaboration with Parks and Planning and C/CAG, will evaluate the criteria in order to determine the eligibility of the CSRT improvements discussed in this report for Measure W funding.

**Finding 6:**

Usage among County residents in the CSRT has been increasing.

**Response:**

Neither agree nor disagree as we only have trail use counter data for the Sawyer Camp trail segment of the CSRT.

**Finding 7:**

The entrance of the Sawyer Camp segment at Crystal Springs Road is the most popular access point along the CSRT.

**Response:** Agree

**Finding 8:**

Currently on sections of the CSRT and along certain adjacent roads, specifically the area of the gap and the section of Highway 35 between Hayne Road and Crystal Springs Road, bicycle riders and pedestrians must travel along roads with little to no shoulder and along roads that are shared with vehicles entering and exiting the freeway.

**Response:**

Agree. OOS is currently examining the gap between the Crystal Springs and Sawyer Camp trails and the section of Highway 35 between Hayne Road and Crystal Springs Road as part of the development of the Unincorporated County Active Transportation Plan, which seeks to close gaps in the on-street unincorporated County cycling network, as well as improve on-street connections to County trails, among other objectives. OOS has received numerous comments from members of the public, organizations, and special interest groups about this area both during in-person outreach activities and through an online interactive map designed to solicit feedback from community members to help shape the Plan's recommendations. It is thus anticipated that recommendations will be included in the Plan for this roadway segment. OOS will also discuss the recommendations with Caltrans, who owns the right of way and is therefore a key stakeholder, prior to finalizing the plan.

**Finding 9:**

There are three access points north of the Sawyer Camp segment entrance at Crystal Springs Road, covering a span of 8.6 miles. The Parks Department currently has no plans to add additional access points along the CSRT, and it has not asked the SFPUC for additional easements to provide such access.

**Response:** Agree

**Finding 10:**

The Parks Department originally envisioned having more trail entrances, which would more evenly distribute users and reduce parking requirements at individual locations. However, these multiple access points have not been implemented.

**Response:**

Although multiple access points may have been planned years ago when Sawyer Camp Trail was opened, due to cost, parking and management considerations, there are no current plans to increase access points.

**Finding 11:**

Based on the parking design goals set forth in the *San Mateo County 2001 Trails Plan*, there is inadequate parking along the 17.5-mile Trail at almost all entrances and intersections north of Highway 92, not only at the Crystal Springs Road entrance, but also at the Larkspur, Hillcrest, and

South of Dam Trail extension entrances as well as at the Millbrae, Trousdale, and eastern Highway 92/35 intersections.

**Response:** Agree

**Finding 12:**

The Parks Department has not asked the SFPUC for easements for additional parking spaces along SFPUC land.

**Response:** Agree

**Finding 13:**

As of March 2019, the Planning Department has not taken the CSRT into account in planning the redesign of the Highway 92/35 intersection proposed in its Connect the Coastside report.

**Response:**

Agree. However, the revised Connect the Coastside draft will incorporate the planned route for the CSRT, and the roundabout proposed for the Highway 92/35 intersection can and will accommodate bicyclists, either within the eastern north-south crosswalk, in a bike lane adjoining vehicle lanes or by mixing bicycles with vehicles in the roundabout. The determination will be made in the future when a Project Initiation Document is prepared evaluating all options and selecting the option that provides the safest method for facilitating cyclists' navigation of this intersection and implementation of the CSRT.

**Finding 14:**

Four separate studies have been undertaken in 2019 that involve or could involve trail improvements relating to the CSRT, particularly in the area of the Highway 92/35 intersection. The studies are: Connect the Coastside (Planning Department), the *Unincorporated San Mateo County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* (Office of Sustainability), an update to the *San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (C/CAG)*, and the Heritage Trail Study (Parks Department). The Heritage Trail Study has been finalized and was recommended for acceptance and approval by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors at their June 25, 2019 meeting.

**Response:**

Agree. OOS is currently examining the gap between the Crystal Springs and Sawyer Camp trails and the section of Highway 35 between Hayne Road and Crystal Springs Road as part of the development of the Unincorporated County Active Transportation Plan, which seeks to close gaps in the on-street unincorporated County cycling network, as well as improve on-street connections to County trails, among other objectives. OOS has received numerous comments from members of the public, organizations, and special interest groups about this area both during in-person outreach activities and through an online interactive map designed to solicit feedback from community members to help shape the Plan's recommendations. It is thus anticipated that recommendations will be included in the Plan for this roadway segment. OOS will also discuss the recommendations with Caltrans, who owns the right of way and is therefore a key stakeholder, prior to finalizing the plan.

In addition, recommendations in the Plan will be informed by existing Planning documents reviewed as an initial task in the Plan's scope of work, including the Connect the Coastside (Planning Department) and the Heritage Trail Study (Parks Department). Recommendations in the Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan will in turn inform the

development of C/CAG's San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Finding 15:**

The CSRT could experience increased use and benefit from additional funding if the Ohlone-Portola Heritage Trail becomes recognized as a state historic trail.

**Response:**

The County lacks sufficient information or knowledge to agree or disagree with this Finding at this time but could re-visit the matter if in fact the Ohlone-Portola Heritage Trail becomes recognized as a state historic trail.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 1:**

By March 31, 2020, the Parks Department should present a report to the County Board of Supervisors at a public hearing assessing the options for completing the gap between the Sawyer Camp and Crystal Springs segments of the CSRT.

**Response:**

The County will not implement this recommendation within the current two-year budget period. The Board of Supervisors approved the FY 2019-21 Parks Budget and project priorities in September of 2019. Substantial funding was provided in that budget for three high priority projects: Re-Imagine Flood Park, comprehensive infrastructure improvements at Memorial Park in preparation for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of that facility and complete replacement and environmental enhancements to the eastern promenade at Coyote Point Recreation Area. Parks planning and project management staff and available funding are fully committed to these projects and other park maintenance work in the upcoming two years. The Parks Department will include completing the gap in the CSRT in the FY 2021-23 budget priority setting discussions with the Parks Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

**Recommendation 2:**

By March 31, 2020, the Parks Department should present a report to the County Board of Supervisors at a public hearing assessing the options for providing additional access points along the CSRT north of the Crystal Springs Road entrance to the Sawyer Camp segment.

**Response:**

The County will not implement this recommendation within the current two-year budget period. As noted in the response to Recommendation 1, the Parks Department staff and project resources are fully committed to projects that have been approved by the Board of Supervisors over the next two fiscal years. The Parks Department will include additional access points to Sawyer Camp Trail in the FY 2021-23 budget priority setting discussions with the Parks Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

**Recommendation 3:**

By March 31, 2020, the Parks Department should present a report to the County Board of Supervisors at a public hearing assessing the options for providing additional off-street parking at all intersections as well as at existing and any proposed new entrances along the CSRT north of Highway 92.

**Response:**

The County will not implement this recommendation within the current two-year budget period. As noted in the prior two responses, neither staff or funding is available for this assessment in the current budget period. The Parks Department will include an assessment of added off-street parking along the CSRT to the FY 2021-23 budget priority setting discussions with the Parks Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

**Recommendation 4:**

By September 30, 2019, the County Planning Department, the County Parks Department, the County Office of Sustainability and C/CAG should establish a means of coordinating their planning efforts related to the CSRT, including planning related to the intersection of Highways 92 and 35, just east of the reservoirs, as well as closing the CSRT gap and providing additional access and parking along the Trail.

**Response:**

This recommendation will be implemented within the next six months. The Planning Department, the Parks Department, OOS, and C/CAG currently coordinate on the topic of planning for active transportation within the County. More specifically, C/CAG, as well as the Parks and Planning Departments, collaborate on a regular basis with OOS in the context of the OOS-led Unincorporated County Active Transportation Plan through participation on the Plan's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). In addition, the County Manger's Office will convene the departments and organizations listed in the recommendation to discuss coordination of any work around the intersections of Highways 92 and 35 and any considerations of additional access or parking long Crystal Springs Trail. Given that the Active Transportation Plan is scoped to identify and recommend improvements on connectivity to existing and planned County trails, the CRST will be addressed in the Plan's recommendations and discussed by the Plan's TAC members. Should additional collaboration beyond that occurring in the context of the Active Transportation Plan be required, OOS will organize a specific working group to convene the abovementioned parties to coordinate planning efforts related to the CSRT.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There are no fiscal impacts associated with implementation of the recommendations in the current two-year budget cycle beyond multi-department staff time to coordinate planning.