

**BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HALF MOON BAY**

**AGENDA REPORT**

For meeting of: **September 17, 2019**

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**VIA:** Bob Nisbet, City Manager

**FROM:** Jill Ekas, Community Development Director

**TITLE: ADOPTION OF THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN, MITIGATED  
NEGATIVE DECLARATION, AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING  
PROGRAM**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

By resolution, adopt the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and its Guidelines, the Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and errata based upon the Findings and Evidence contained in Exhibit A of the Draft Resolution (Attachment #1).

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and associated environmental review were funded through the Capital Improvement Program budget.

**STRATEGIC ELEMENT:**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan supports all of the elements of the strategic plan: Fiscal Sustainability, Healthy Communities and Public Safety, Inclusive Governance, and Infrastructure and Environment.

**BACKGROUND:**

City Council approved inclusion of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in the Capital Improvement Program and directed staff to commence work on the plan in Fiscal Year 2016-17. Throughout preparation of the plan, extensive engagement opportunities were provided to ensure that the forthcoming plan would address the diverse needs and interests of the community. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was drafted with oversight by a newly formed Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). In summer 2017, the BPAC held a joint study session with the Planning Commission to coordinate their direction and review. The BPAC held numerous sessions throughout plan development, including a biking tour through Downtown and some residential neighborhoods. The BPAC subsequently reviewed and recommended approval of a final draft version of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to City Council in spring 2018.

City Council confirmed the scope and recommendations in the draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan on June 5, 2018. At that same meeting, Council directed staff to commence environmental review of the draft plan to ensure conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). At that same meeting, Council also directed completion of environmental review of the Parks Master Plan. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and Parks Master Plan were prepared concurrently up through summer 2018. At that point, because staff could not provide project management for both environmental analyses at the same time, the Parks Master Plan was prioritized, most specifically to ensure that it was adopted in advance of Proposition 68 park funding grant opportunities. City Council adopted the Parks Master Plan in February 2019. Staff was able to return to complete the environmental review of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in late spring.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and its associated environmental review documents (Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program) were presented to the Planning Commission August 27, 2019. The Planning Commission recommended that City Council adopt the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; Mitigated Negative Declaration; and Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program. The Commission also found that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is consistent with the Local Coastal Program and the California Coastal Act.

The final draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is provided in Attachment 2 and plan Guidelines are in Attachment 3. The environmental review documents are provided in Attachments 4 and 5. Minutes from the Planning Commission's final recommendation regarding the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan are provided as Attachment 6. The Planning Commission's recommended revisions to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan are presented in Attachment 7. These recommended revisions will be incorporated into the adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan if they are approved by City Council.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identifies needs and prioritizes improvements to the City's bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs. The plan recommends improvements to address current and future demand based on current conditions and anticipated infill development. The master plan also provides the City with the necessary tools to apply for grant funding for implementation. A number of studies are also included for potential future improvements for cases where alignments or other details are not well defined. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is further supported by a robust set of guidelines to provide options for how to implement plan components in different settings.

Although the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has been positively received by a broad cross-section of the community, a number of important topics are highlighted herein to ensure that City Council is aware of these remaining concerns and gives them their fullest consideration.

Studies: The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan includes specific projects for pedestrians, bicyclists, and both pedestrians and bicyclists. These projects include trails, routes, crossings, and spot improvements with fairly well defined locations and scope. In addition to these

projects, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan also identifies a number of “studies.” Studies are potential improvements for which feasibility, location, and many other aspects of potential project design are unknown. In most cases, potential improvements are designated as studies because of the presence of environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHAs) or other important site constraints such as agricultural soils, slopes, or drainage requirements. Because of a heightened concern about ESHA in several cases, staff initially directed, as presented in the final draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, that certain study areas be considered only for pedestrian use. These include the potential Beachwood Path, Frenchmans Creek Trail, and Vista Walking Trail (see page 3-8 of the final draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan).

The Planning Commission deliberated about the scope of these studies and the potential future improvements. The Commissioners specifically discussed reconsidering these study areas for both pedestrian and bicycle use. Fully understanding that the outcome of a feasibility analysis may determine that both or neither use could be accommodated in any of these cases, the Commission’s motion referred the matter to the City Council. The Commission requested that Council consider amending the final draft plan to include both pedestrian and bicycle use within the study areas noted above. The Commission did not make a final determination about their recommendation to Council, but rather emphasized the importance of rigorous assessment by qualified engineers and other applicable specialists, based on a body of evidence in order for any of these studies to result in future improvements.

To amend these study areas to include bicycles, several changes to the plan will be required. They are presented in Attachment 8. It is important to note that these changes do not affect the environmental review that was prepared pursuant to CEQA because none of these potential projects are well-defined by the plan and they are identified only conceptually. Staff also notes that potential equestrian use could also be a consideration for some of these cases, but the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was not focused on that mode.

*Pilarcitos Creek Trail Study:* In June 2018, when they directed completion of the environmental review of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, City Council instructed staff to revise the plan with respect to a potential extension of the Pilarcitos Creek Trail west of Highway 1 to the California Coastal Trail. Although this trail has been on various maps and plans for many years, Council directed that the time was not ripe to pursue the trail segment west of Highway 1 as a project because affected property owners were not currently willing to accommodate such a project. City Council’s specific motion was to remove the Pilarcitos Creek Trail west of Highway 1 from the list of priority projects, but to keep it in the plan as a future item.<sup>1</sup> In their deliberation leading up to the motion, Council made a reference to presenting it as a “hatched line” or to otherwise indicate the trail in a conceptual way.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee prioritized several projects for soonest possible implementation and added the Pilarcitos Creek Trail to that list upon their final review of priority projects. Council’s direction to staff reconsidered this ranking by re-designating this potential improvement as a study. Staff updated the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee about this change last year.

This direction was followed throughout revisions made to the final draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The Pilarcitos Creek Trail west of Highway 1 was taken off the priority projects list and made into a study. It is indicated on maps only as a study and is shown on maps with no implication of if or where such a future improvement might ever be established. As drafted, the status of the Pilarcitos Creek Trail west of Highway 1 is conceptual and would require an extensive feasibility study, including evaluation of alignment options, environmental review, funding, and policy assessment.

Narrative in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan on page 3-8 further explains the context for all of the study corridors presented in the plan area as follows:

*“The BP Master Plan recommends several studies for corridor improvements. Studies are necessary to assess feasibility and/or evaluate routes or design options before specific recommendations can be made, and are especially important for projects with limited available roadway width or environmental concerns, or for projects that require additional community engagement or would involve several jurisdictions. Studies for facilities near an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) would take into account Local Coastal Program and Zoning Code requirements in regard to biological assessment, permitted uses, setbacks and development standards, and all studies would consider compatibility with adjacent uses. Studies can help the City and the public understand potential tradeoffs that may arise during implementation. An open and public process when considering potential changes is important for successful coordination and implementation.”*

This is highlighted in this report because additional comments were received about the Pilarcitos Creek Trail Study during the Planning Commission’s review. Staff would like to reassure City Council that Council’s direction from June 2018 has been heeded; and moreover, that the plan is fully mindful of the requirements associated with the Coastal Act and Local Coastal Program. The plan is not positioned to overstep the Local Coastal Program, dismiss the interests of property owners, or otherwise introduce land use conflicts. Staff believes that the final draft of the plan fully conforms to City Council’s direction with respect to study areas generally as well as specifically for the Pilarcitos Creek Trail west of Highway 1.

Wavecrest Trails: Several bicycle and pedestrian paths in the Wavecrest area are included in the final draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Public and Commission comments expressed the need for caution with respect to the number of these trails because they could cause divisions within a larger habitat area. The Commission did not change the draft plan with respect to the Wavecrest trails, but instead confirmed with staff that project level environmental review would be required for these projects to proceed. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that there are many informal/social trails laced throughout Wavecrest. A principle intent to formalizing a trail system in the Wavecrest area is to provide high quality interlinked access via trails that are implemented as required by the LCP and to in turn eliminate informal trails that may negatively impact the habitat value of this area.

Cumulative Impacts of Increased Trail Use: The Planning Commission also deliberated about the potential cumulative impact of increased trail use, especially by bicyclists. The concern was primarily focused on the trail linkages between the Miramar and Casa del Mar neighborhoods and the California Coastal Trail. Staff has considered numerous approaches to evaluating the future cumulative impacts on these trail linkages, and provided language for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to address this matter through maintenance and monitoring over time.

Other clarifications of note that came up through the Planning Commission review include the following:

Bicycle Circulation Facilities on Highway 92: The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan indicates a Class III facility (a bike route) along Highway 92 east of the city limits on page 2-5, Figure 2-4: Regional Bicycle Network. Commissioners expressed concern about the safety of such a provision in this location. Staff clarified for the Commission that this is not a City designation. For areas outside the city limits, the Half Moon Bay Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan reflects the San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (adopted 2011). For Highway 92 east of the city limits, San Mateo County's plan designates the route as "unclassified on street" for bicycle circulation (page 59, Figure 18: Countywide Bikeway Network Map Coastal). The category most consistent with this classification in the Half Moon Bay Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is a Class III facility.

Naomi Patridge Trail Alignment: It is possible that improvements for the sake of trail safety near the Casa del Mar neighborhood may require relocation of portions of the trail closer to or onto Frontage Road, possibly as bike lanes. The narrative in the plan provides flexibility for this potential future improvement.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Environmental review has been conducted on the final draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. A CEQA determination has been made and an Initial Study and draft Mitigated Negative Declaration have been prepared. A draft Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program was also prepared, which lists the mitigation measures and the timing of the mitigation measures. The environmental document was circulated to the State Clearinghouse and available for review at City Hall for the required 30 days. It is included as Attachment 4. Comments received are addressed in an errata and response to comments document in Attachment 5. Because of specific conditions related to individual sites, implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will require Coastal Development Permits and further environmental review as needed for a number of the recommended projects; however, projects that are fully contained within existing rights-of-way may be exempt from such review. Staff will evaluate the requirements for environmental review for each project as the plan is implemented going forward.

**CONCLUSION:**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will be a strategic planning tool for the City. It facilitates coastal access consistent with the LCP and non-motorized transportation policy of the General Plan Circulation Element of the General Plan. Based on the above analysis, staff concludes that the draft Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan is complete and that the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration conforms to the requirements of CEQA. Staff recommends that City Council adopt the final draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan with the modifications made by the Planning Commission presented in Attachment 7, and other modifications as outlined in Attachment 8 should Council determine they are appropriate. In adopting the plan, Council will also adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and its associated Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft Resolution with Findings and Evidence
2. Final Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (available at <https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/2243/Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Master-Plan-Final-Draft?bidId=>)
3. Final Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Guidelines (available at <https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/2297/1122018-HMB-Design-Guidelines?bidId=>)
4. Environmental Review Documents: Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (available at [https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/1942/Public-Draft-ISMND\\_final\\_combined-reduced\\_20181030?bidId=](https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/1942/Public-Draft-ISMND_final_combined-reduced_20181030?bidId=))
5. Environmental Review Documents: Response to Comments and Errata (available <https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/2300/Response-to-Comments-Errata-BPMP?bidId=>)
6. Excerpt of Planning Commission Minutes, August 27, 2019
7. Planning Commission Recommended Plan Revisions
8. Optional Plan Amendments to Pedestrian Only Studies