

Response to Connect the Coastside Virtual Meeting Inquiries

[Connect the Coastside](#) is a community-based transportation plan to help improve mobility and safety for residents and visitors of the San Mateo County Midcoast. The San Mateo County Planning and Building Department released a [draft of Connect the Coastside](#) in January 2020. In May and June 2020, the Connect the Coastside project team held three virtual public meetings to engage Coastside residents and other stakeholders in learning about the plan and to provide input into plan goals and proposed projects. The meetings included a presentation by County staff, question and answer session, small group discussions, and report-outs with all meeting attendees. About 130 community members attended the three meetings, provided feedback, and asked additional questions about Connect the Coastside.

The purpose of this document is to provide preliminary responses and clarifications to questions asked during the virtual meetings on May 30, June 15 and June 25, 2020. This document includes several of the frequently asked questions (FAQs) already present on the Connect the Coastside website (<https://planning.smcgov.org/connect-coastside-faq>); these are denoted with an asterisk (*).

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PLAN BACKGROUND AND STUDY AREA

1) How does Connect the Coastside relate to the Coastal Act and Local Coastal Program (LCP)?*

The California Coastal Act and the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program (LCP) require the preparation of Connect the Coastside, guide the content of the plan and will continue to guide the implementation of the plan after adoption.

Adopted in 1976, the California Coastal Act is a state law that directs the planning and management of the California coastal zone, the statewide stretch of coastline along the Pacific Ocean. The Coastal Act establishes a number of foundational goals that aim to protect the coastal environment and ensure maximum public access to the coast. The California Coastal Commission and local governments are responsible for carrying out the Coastal Act and for coastal management. The implementation of Coastal Act policies is accomplished primarily through the preparation of Local Coastal Programs (LCPs), which when completed by cities and counties located in the coastal zone, allow local governments to administer the Coastal Act within their jurisdiction, subject to certain retained powers held by the Coastal Commission.

San Mateo County's Local Coastal Program (LCP) is used to guide development in the coastal zone while protecting coastal resources. Any and all development projects in the Coastal Zone require either a Coastal Development Permit or an exemption from Coastal Development Permit requirements. For a permit to be issued, the development must comply with the policies of the Local Coastal Program (LCP). Before any of the transportation infrastructure proposals in Connect the Coastside are constructed, they must be evaluated and found to be consistent with the policies of the Local Coastal Program and authorized by a Coastal Development permit.

In 2012, the Board of Supervisors adopted significant amendments to San Mateo County's Local Coastal Program regarding the Midcoast. One of these amendments was Policy 2.53, which called for the preparation of a "Comprehensive Transportation Management Plan" to address the cumulative impacts of Midcoast development. Connect the Coastside is designed to fulfill the requirements of Policy 2.53 and inform the County's implementation of several other components of the Local Coastal Program, including the public works and new development components. Some of the standards proposed in Connect the Coastside, such as the Delay Index, need to be incorporated into the Local Coastal Program through an amendment.

2) What are the boundaries of Connect the Coastside compared to the Local Coastal Program (LCP)?

The San Mateo County LCP policies apply within the unincorporated San Mateo County coastal zone, which extends at varying widths from the southern border of Pacifica to the Santa Cruz County line. Connect the Coastside focuses on future development and traffic within the urbanized Midcoast (Miramar, El Granada, Princeton, Moss Beach and Montara). Connect the Coastside's traffic analysis studied an expanded area (which includes Half Moon Bay) outside of the urbanized Midcoast, to understand how traffic impacts the urbanized Midcoast.

Figure 7 (p.53) of the report "[Connect the Coastside Buildout Analysis and Traffic Projections Final Report](#)" (November 2014) shows the various jurisdiction and study area boundaries, including the coastal zone boundary and planning boundary. The report is available on the Connect the Coastside Documents & Meeting Materials webpage in the Public Drafts section. The project team will clarify the map in the next draft of the plan.

3) Is Half Moon Bay included in Connect the Coastside? In what ways?

Development and traffic projections for Half Moon Bay are included in the Connect the Coastside traffic analysis, because development and traffic in Half Moon Bay and the Midcoast are interconnected. The traffic analysis was used to create the recommendations to improve transportation in the unincorporated Midcoast, which is under the jurisdiction of the County of San Mateo. However, Connect the Coastside does not include project recommendations for the City of Half Moon Bay, because Half Moon Bay is a separate jurisdiction from the County.

The Connect the Coastside consultant team developed several recommended traffic improvements for Half Moon Bay that were included in past public presentations, but drafts of the Connect the Coastside plan have not included those recommendations. The County has shared these recommendations with the City of Half Moon Bay for consideration during its planning efforts.

The City of Half Moon Bay and the County have been preparing separate but coordinated transportation plans over the last several years. The Planning Director for the City of Half Moon Bay also serves on the Technical Advisory Committee for Connect the Coastside. The planning staffs of the two agencies continue to coordinate on these planning efforts.

4) How is Connect the Coastside related to other County planning efforts, like Plan Princeton?*

Connect the Coastside was shaped by previous planning efforts and will help inform future planning on the Coastside. Connect the Coastside was guided by existing community plans and regulations, including:

- California Coastal Act
- San Mateo County Local Coastal Program
- San Mateo County General Plan
- Montara - Moss Beach - El Granada Community Plan
- Highway 1 Safety and Mobility Study (Phases 1 and 2)

The goals and policies of these documents helped inform the Connect the Coastside public participation process, the contents of the plan, and the evaluation of possible projects.

The list of potential infrastructure improvements recommended in Connect the Coastside was compiled from a variety of sources, including several past and concurrent planning efforts. These planning efforts include Plan Princeton, the Highway 1 Safety and Mobility Study, the Highway 1 Congestion & Safety Improvement Project, the Coastside Access Study, and the SamTrans Coastside Plan. Additionally, some of the proposed infrastructure improvement recommendations were developed during the Connect the Coastside process.

There are several concurrent planning efforts that will also influence transportation on the Midcoast. These projects include Reimagine SamTrans, the San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan, Plan Princeton, County Climate Action Plan, and the Half Moon Bay Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The Connect the Coastside project team has been working to make sure the various plans are appropriately coordinated and complement each other.

Once Connect the Coastside is adopted by the Board of Supervisors, the recommended projects will need to be incorporated into local, regional, and state transportation plans to secure funding. These plans include:

- San Mateo County Transportation Authority Strategic Plan
- San Mateo County Congestion Management Plan
- San Mateo County Road Fund
- County of San Mateo's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Plan Bay Area
- State Transportation Improvement Program

Following adoption of Connect the Coastside by the Board of Supervisors, a priority action for County staff will be to integrate Connect the Coastside projects in local and state transportation plans.

5) How does Connect the Coastside address the cumulative impact of development?

The purpose of Connect the Coastside is to recommend a suite of transportation projects and programs to address the impact of forecasted future development in an effort to maintain access and mobility to the California coast for visitors and for coastside residents. The cumulative development projections in the "[Development Forecast for the San Mateo County Comprehensive Transportation Management Plan](#)" (available on Connect the Coastside's project website) serve as the basis to forecast future development, traffic and conditions of the transportation system, including projected levels of service and delay. In addition to recommending transportation projects to address cumulative development impacts, Connect the Coastside recommends land use policies to reduce future development on the Coastside. The lot merger, transportation impact fee and lot retirement program are described in Section 4.3 (p.64) of the draft Connect the Coastside Plan.

6) How will Connect the Coastside advance County sustainability goals?

As described in the 2013 Community Climate Action Plan entitled [San Mateo County Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan](#), the transportation sector accounts for over 60% of emissions annually countywide. The County is committed to implement actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet local and statewide goals and mandates. Projects in the Connect the Coastside are aimed to reduce traffic congestion and encourage a shift from vehicles to walking, bicycling, and transit and help implement goals 6 and 9 of the Climate Action Plan. As individual plan projects are designed in detail, the County will ensure opportunities for green streets (e.g., bioswales, permeable pavement, and others) are considered. The Planning and Building Department is working closely with the Office of Sustainability to update the [County's Community Climate Action Plan](#) and to coordinate with the County's Active Transportation Plan, both of which promote alternatives to driving and County policies to support projects in Connect the Coastside.

7) How does Connect the Coastside promote roadway safety?*

The Connect the Coastside plan proposes many infrastructure projects that will make walking, biking, and driving on the Midcoast safer for both residents and visitors. The plan addresses safety by analyzing existing conditions and developing improvement strategies. The proposed projects are evaluated and prioritized using six measures, one of which is safety and circulation. For more information on the six prioritization measures see Chapter 6 Plan Implementation in the public draft of the Connect the Coastside plan. Many of the proposed projects score highly on the safety and circulation measure, such as projects that would add:

- Turn lanes or acceleration lanes
- Stop signs
- Standardized paved shoulders
- Roundabouts
- Bike lanes
- Sidewalks
- Curb extensions
- Crosswalks

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

8) How were the projects in Connect the Coastside derived? Can you summarize the process?

The projects in Connect the Coastside originate from a variety of places. Most of the projects come from ideas or concerns heard from the community, some projects are carried over from previous planning efforts, and some projects were added to fix a specific problem found by the traffic analysis. Recommendations were developed through input from the community, county staff, the consultant team, and the technical advisory committee (which includes agency partners).

Generally, recommended projects aim to address transportation safety and roadway performance based on current transportation and land use conditions, and future conditions inclusive of forecasted new development and land uses. The projects borrow heavily from past planning efforts (such as the Highway 1 Safety and Mobility Study) and concurrent planning efforts (such as Plan Princeton and the San Mateo County Unincorporated Area Active Transportation Plan). As such, Connect the Coastside addresses a broad range of Midcoast stakeholder needs and viewpoints.

The project team will clarify the history of Connect the Coastside and project development process in the next draft update.

CLARIFYING INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

9) Can Connect the Coastside clarify the purpose of each proposed pedestrian crossing?

The project team will look for opportunities to further clarify the purpose of each proposed pedestrian crossing in the next draft update. In the current draft plan, Section 2.2 describes the conditions that form the basis of recommendations, including pedestrian movements, performance standards and design, and existing conditions. Proposed marked pedestrian crossings are based on pedestrian demand for key destinations and associated traffic volumes. In locations with higher traffic volumes, higher visibility pedestrian facilities are needed to alert drivers to pedestrian crossings and create safer conditions for pedestrians. Figure 2 (p.27) shows the location of key pedestrian hot spots and points of interest, such as beaches, trails, viewpoints, surfing destinations, shopping areas, and trail crossings. Section 4.2.2.4 (p.56) describes proposed pedestrian and bicycle facilities, Figure 6 (p.58) shows proposed pedestrian crossings on a map, and Appendix A, Project Pe-1, p.16 (p.112 of 309) lists recommended striped pedestrian crossing locations. Marked pedestrian crossings will be included at locations recommended for intersection control.

10) Will people continue to cross the freeway at various locations with the proposed pedestrian crossings in place?

The proposed pedestrian crossings intend to connect key destinations and provide a higher quality and safer crossing experience so that people are less likely to cross at different locations on a given roadway stretch. Research has shown that pedestrians typically use the shortest distance to reach their destination; further, people walking will go out of their way more often if a high-quality crossing facility is provided. For example, a marked crossing of Highway 1 will be more likely to draw people to it if it includes additional safety features, such as signage and flashing beacon. The location of a pedestrian crossing also needs to be near destinations it intends to serve.

11) What will be the impact of the recommended pedestrian crossings on traffic flow?

The ultimate design of pedestrian crossings will influence traffic flow. Pedestrian crossings that are designed to halt traffic to allow pedestrians to cross will contribute a modest amount to overall delay. However, the programming of crossing signals can reduce potential impact on traffic flow. If signals are designed to hold pedestrians for a time to keep traffic moving and only allow crossings on fixed intervals (e.g., no more than one crossing every few minutes), then the impact on traffic flow can be minimized. The final design of highway crossings will have to be determined in collaboration with Caltrans.

12) Why does Connect the Coastside recommend at-grade crossings instead of over/underpass crossings for pedestrians?

Although pedestrian overpasses and underpasses have the advantage of complete separation of pedestrians from vehicle traffic, there are several drawbacks:

- They can be visually intrusive and poorly utilized when a more at-grade crossing is possible
- They must meet ADA requirements, often requiring extensive ramping, creating longer crossing distances and steeper slopes for people walking
- They are much more costly to provide (\$1 M to \$11 M)

- Research has shown that pedestrians may not use them if they can cross the street in a shorter or same amount of time
- Underpasses are often perceived as unsafe, can flood and require ongoing maintenance, such as lighting and cleaning

The [Federal Highway Administration recommends](#) that these be implemented as a measure of last resort and that it is usually more appropriate to use traffic-calming measures and/or install a pedestrian-activated signal. For these reasons, Connect the Coastside recommends improved at-grade pedestrian crossings; however, one location in Moss Beach near the northern terminus of Carlos Avenue is a candidate for an overcrossing and this will be evaluated in the next draft of the plan.

13) Will street lighting along Highway 1 be provided in Moss Beach as part of Connect the Coastside?

Additional street lighting is not included in the current draft of Connect the Coastside. Based on the feedback received from community members, the project team will consider this as part of the next draft and discuss feasibility as part of a technical advisory committee meeting. New intersection controls may include lighting based on Caltrans and Federal Highway Administration safety criteria.

14) What influences the types of intersection controls along Highway 1?

Many factors shape when and what type of control (traffic signal and roundabout are two examples) can be placed at the intersection of two roadways. Transportation engineers must consider the needs of all potential users, including drivers, trucks, buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Other factors like speeds, crashes, delay, turning movements, and roadway geometry are also important considerations. Highway 1 is under the jurisdiction of Caltrans, the California State Department of Transportation, which means Caltrans will have to approve the final intersection control choice and design. In order to weigh the compatibility of different intersection control types with the specific context, Caltrans requires the completion of an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE). The County will collaborate closely with Caltrans to complete the ICE process and determine the different tradeoffs between intersection controls where they are needed along Highway 1. The County continues to include roundabouts in the Connect the Coastside draft plan, and will analyze their effectiveness, cost and environmental impacts as part of a Caltrans' required ICE analysis (<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/intersection-evaluation-control>).

15) Will roundabouts be effective in areas with varying levels of traffic congestion? Are they feasible considering sewer and water locations? Will they accommodate large vehicles?

Roundabouts are circular intersections designed to eliminate left turns by requiring traffic to exit to the right of the circle. The design of roundabouts results in lower vehicle speeds, generally 15-25 miles per hour, throughout the roundabout. Commonly cited advantages of roundabouts include traffic calming, less maintenance (compared to signalized intersection control), opportunities for landscaping, and reduce certain crash types and their severity. Roundabouts can be single or multiple lanes, depending on traffic volume levels on each approaching roadway to facilitate traffic flow. Roundabout projects may require relocation of existing utilities to allow for safe ongoing

maintenance. Roundabouts can be designed to accommodate large trucks (e.g., emergency vehicles and recreational vehicles); this has been done in many locations in California. If roundabouts are recommended through the intersection control evaluation process described above and funding for implementation secured, the County will prepare detailed roundabout designs that address these considerations.

16) Why doesn't Connect the Coastside recommend road widening or new roads?

As described in the Executive Summary of the [2016 Evaluation of Recommended Alternative to Address Potential Future Transportation Deficiencies Draft Report](#), early recommendations for transportation projects to address level of service (LOS) deficiencies included roadway-capacity projects (e.g., road widenings). However, these projects were not adequately supported by the community and therefore, community members encouraged the provision of a different set of roadway performance metrics that emphasized multi-modal (walking, bicycling, and transit) improvements in addition to those supporting driving. In addition to community concern of road widening or new roads impacts on Midcoast character and emphasis on automobile use, the County is aware of environmental constraints such as endangered species and topography that would make road widening and creating new roads challenging to implement. Lastly, providing increased road capacity can often lead to a challenge called "[induced demand](#)," where new road lanes fill up quickly by people who either would not have made a trip otherwise or would have previously used an alternative mode of travel. Finally, any widened section of Highway 1 could eventually lead to a one-lane bottleneck, either at the Tom Lantos tunnel or eastbound Highway 92.

17) Can Connect the Coastside clarify the purpose of new parking lots, where they will be located, environmental impacts, and if street parking be removed along Highway 1 with the addition of new parking lots?

The project team will work to further clarify proposed parking in the next update of the draft. Section 4.2.4 (p.61) of the draft plan describes recommended recreational and transit parking facilities and Figure 8 (p.62) shows the proposed locations of parking improvements. Additional parking paired with wayfinding and active transportation facilities is recommended to improve circulation. Parking is recommended to allow for park and ride facilities for transit use and to address the performance measure of 85% parking occupancy (i.e., 85% of parking spots filled with 15% open) during peak recreational times. The [2014 San Mateo County Buildout Analysis and Traffic Projections Report](#) (beginning on p.34) and [2015 San Mateo County Coastside Access Study](#) includes detailed information on parking utilization and recommended strategies to address parking demand. Environmental impacts of proposed projects, including parking lots, will be addressed in the environmental review of Connect the Coastside. Individual projects will also go through environmental review prior to implementation. The current draft plan does not recommend removing street parking along Highway 1; the project team will identify if removal of roadside parking in El Granada near Surfer's beach is necessary to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

18) Why does Connect the Coastside recommend wayfinding?

Wayfinding can help residents and visitors understand how to best reach their destinations. Wayfinding is a recommended strategy from previous studies to minimize circling for parking and

directing visitors to designated areas to minimize congestion. Wayfinding can encourage walking and bicycling by showing how much time it would take to use active transportation to reach key points of interest and can promote transit use by directing people to where and how to use the transit system.

19) Why are there bicycle facilities parallel to each other?

To make bicycling accessible for as many people as possible, Connect the Coastside includes different types of bicycle facilities. A multimodal path completely separated from traffic could best serve people walking, jogging, biking, and scooting, and may be better for children, recreational cyclists, or those new to bicycling. Bicycle speeds tend to be slower on shared paths. Experienced cyclists hoping to commute or travel long distances at higher speeds may prefer a facility that is dedicated for bicycling and follows the roadway network. Ideally, when the projects in long-range plans, such as Connect the Coastside, [Caltrans' District 4 Bicycle Plan](#), and the [Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan](#) are implemented, there will be a complete, [low-stress bicycle network](#).

20) Will future trail alignments be multiuse (e.g., for bicyclists, pedestrians, dog walkers)?

Proposed trails in the current draft of Connect the Coastside (e.g., Highway 1 Multi-modal Parallel Trail) are envisioned to serve people walking (includes those using scooters, wheelchairs, walking dogs, etc.) and people bicycling. The trails are not intended to serve equestrians.

21) Can you clarify the alignment and status of the Parallel Trail?

The alignment of the Multimodal Parallel Trail is shown in the draft plan Appendix A, project Pe-2, p.17 (p.113 of 309). The project was conceptualized in the Highway 1 Safety and Mobility Improvement Study in Phase 1 and is planned from Montara south to Miramar to connect to the Naomi Patridge Trail in Half Moon Bay. The first funded segment of the trail is from Mirada Road to Coronado Street. More detail on the funded project section is available on the [Midcoast Multimodal Trail Project website](#).

TRAVEL DELAY AND DATA

22) Why does Connect the Coastside recommend using the delay index?

Connect the Coastside recommends using the delay index to understand how well a roadway is performing and to recommend roadway improvements that meet the specific needs and character of the Midcoast community.

Currently, the Midcoast Local Coastal Program (LCP) includes “Level of Service” or LOS to measure roadway performance. To measure how well a segment of roadway is performing, level of service measures the ratio between traffic volume and roadway capacity and assigns letter grades. A letter grade of “A” can be considered free-flow and “F” can be considered as stop and go (see the [San Mateo County Traffic Impact Study Requirements](#) for more information). Level of Service measures the impact to people in cars, leaving out the experience for people taking any other mode of travel (i.e., people walking, bicycling, or taking transit). The Midcoast Local Coastal Program sets the LOS performance standard for Highway 1 and Highway 92 at LOS E during commute times and recreation peak periods, and at LOS D during all other times. For example, Highway 1 is not meeting the defined performance standard if level of service is an “F” during commute hours. In order to improve roadway segment LOS, roadway capacity needs to be increased or traffic volumes need to be decreased. This is typically achieved by increasing the number of cars that can go on a road through road widening or by reducing the number of cars on that road by diverting traffic to another road.

A primary goal of Connect the Coastside is to address future roadway deficiencies due to development and meeting the standards as defined by the LCP. As described in the Executive Summary of the [2016 Evaluation of Recommended Alternative to Address Potential Future Transportation Deficiencies Draft Report](#), early recommendations for Connect the Coastside’s transportation projects to address deficiencies as measured by LOS included roadway-capacity projects (e.g., road widenings) along Highway 1. However, these projects were largely unsupported by the community and community members encouraged providing a different set of roadway performance metrics that emphasized multi-modal (walking, bicycling, and transit) performance, in addition to driving performance. The [2016 Evaluation report \(referenced above\)](#) describes the existing and proposed roadway performance standards beginning on page 5. The Delay Index is one of the proposed roadway performance standards.

Using the Delay Index instead of LOS to measure the performance of roadway segments responds to the community’s desire to broaden the types of projects included in Connect the Coastside. The Delay Index is defined as the ratio of peak period travel time on a segment to the free-flow travel time. For example, the delay index would be 2 if a trip took 5 minutes during free-flow travel conditions and 10 minutes during the morning commute period (10 minutes divided by 5 minutes is equal to 2). In contrast to LOS, the delay index focuses on travel times and user experience for people driving.

The delay index allows for different thresholds for performance. If a high-quality multimodal facility is provided parallel to a roadway, then the delay index deficiency threshold is above 3; in other words, a roadway is deficient if it takes longer than three times to travel it by car during peak

periods than free-flow conditions. If a roadway segment provides for vehicle-only travel, then the threshold at which it becomes deficient is above 2.

The goal of Connect the Coastside's recommended projects are both to meet community desires and needs under current conditions and address future traffic conditions based on projected new development. Changing the standard by which roadway performance is measured influences the types of projects that can be recommended. For example, if the Multimodal Parallel Trail is built, Highway 1 would no longer be considered deficient under future conditions as measured by the delay index; delay index projections for Highway 1 fall under 3.0. If roadway segment LOS is used as the roadway performance measure, the Multimodal Parallel Trail would no longer be an effective strategy because adding the trail does not change projected LOS. Using the delay index allows Highway 1 to meet roadway performance measures by adding walking and bicycling projects as an alternative to widening the highway. Therefore, Connect the Coastside recommends amending the LCP to use the delay index to measure roadway segment performance instead of roadway segment LOS.

23) Does the County plan to update the data used in Connect the Coastside?

Connect the Coastside began in 2014, and the data used for projecting development and traffic was gathered in 2014. Since that time, the County has tracked development using building permits and found that the forecast, based on 2014 data, is over-predicting development. Building permits are approximately half of what is predicted by the model. In addition, the County gathered traffic data in 2017 and 2019 to inform the design of roundabouts in Moss Beach. Although these are targeted traffic counts, they provide an opportunity to check 2014 projections, particularly for weekend traffic. Recent traffic counts show no appreciable change in traffic since 2014. The project team will look to provide additional context and data to clarify this in the next update of the plan.

24) How does Connect the Coastside reduce the number of drivers on the road?*

Connect the Coastside recommends projects that will increase transportation options and policies that will reduce development. More transportation options and less development on the Midcoast can help to reduce the number of drivers on the road.

The way land is used has a significant impact on travel patterns. Midcoast communities are mostly low density, suburban and residential. Small commercial areas can be found along Highway 1 in each of the Midcoast communities. This type of community layout encourages automobile trips. A range of other factors also encourage driving on the Midcoast, including:

- The configuration of local streets
- Limited access provided by Highway 1 and State Route 92
- Distance from major job centers and local services
- A lack of multi-modal transportation choices

The transportation improvements envisioned in Connect the Coastside will expand mobility choices, while land use strategies to limit development can serve to reduce future traffic demand. Improving safe routes to schools will provide parents and students alternatives to driving to school, such as walking and bicycling.

The lot merger program could reduce the number of homes built in existing single-family neighborhoods and result in some larger lots with more on-site, private open space. The lot retirement program will limit the development potential of rural lands on the Midcoast, preserving additional open space and natural resources.

A transportation impact mitigation fee program would collect fees for new residential and non-residential development. Fees would be collected on a per-housing-unit basis for residential and per-square-foot basis for non-residential development. These fees would help pay for projects included in Connect the Coastside and serve as a potential check on development.

Many of the recommended projects will increase transportation choices for residents and visitors. Bike lanes, sidewalks, trail improvements and safe crossings will make it easier and safer for people to walk or take their bike. Investments in bus stops and expanded weekend bus service will help reduce traffic and encourage people to take public transit.

25) Which projects will reduce traffic congestion and specifically on the weekends?

The project team will aim to clarify these findings in the next plan update. In section 5.1 of the current draft plan, Table 18 includes proposed projects and their “network impact” or ability to address deficiencies. A more detailed description of potential projects and their ability to address roadway performance standards beginning on p.37 of the 2016 [Evaluation of Recommended Alternatives to Address Potential Future Transportation Deficiencies](#); however, not all of the projects as listed in the 2016 document are in the current draft of Connect the Coastside.

26) Can vehicular speeds be slowed without causing additional travel delay?

As summarized by the [Federal Highway Administration’s Office of Operations](#), traffic congestion and its associated travel delay is typically linked to traffic incidents, work zones, weather, fluctuations in normal traffic, special events, traffic control devices, and physical bottlenecks. Interventions to slow speeds must be carefully planned and placed to not cause physical bottlenecks, but rather, create a normal fluctuation and flow of traffic that is predictable at the desired speed.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

27) Can you clarify the lot merger and retirement programs and their impacts?

The lot merger and retirement programs are described in Section 4.2.4 (p.63) of the current draft plan and in the [2016 Evaluation of Recommended Alternatives to Address Potential Future Transportation Deficiencies](#) (p.35 and p.52).

The lot merger program would establish a process (first voluntary, then mandatory) for substandard (undeveloped and less than the minimum size requirement) parcels next to each other and under the same ownership to be merged. Voluntary mergers would be eligible for certain development incentives. The lot merger program would reduce the number of undeveloped parcels along the Midcoast; draft plan estimates showed the lot merger program could reduce development potential by about 216 lots.

The lot retirement program would be a mandatory program that would require one-to-one retirement of development rights on existing lots in exchange for new lots as part of a subdivision.

Draft plan estimates show that development potential could be reduced by approximately 148 units. The project team plans to update these assessments in the next Connect the Coastsides draft.

28) Can you clarify the definitions of each zone (village, fringe) recommended in Connect the Coastsides?

The current draft plan describes the village and fringe zones in section 4.2.1 (p.46). Figure 3 (p.49) shows where village and fringe shoulder treatments are recommended. The recommendations for creating standardized shoulder and edge treatments is originally from [the Highway 1 Safety and Mobility Improvement Study Phase 1](#) and [Phase 2](#). The definitions are:

- Fringe Zone: Transitional segments approaching or leaving coastal communities with increased pedestrian and bicycle activity and side street access/egress with lower vehicle speeds. Design recommended is valley gutter to define roadway edge and consistent lane widths less than 12' on segments where speeds are below 45 mph.
- Village Zones: Coastal communities with potential for multimodal conflicts due to parking, retail and restaurant use, transit stops, and controlled intersections with lower vehicle speeds. Design recommended is curb and gutter to define roadway edge, consistent lane widths less than 12 feet and raised medians where currently striped.

29) Can Connect the Coastsides include enforcement a strategy that can be used to address speeding?

The California Highway Patrol and County Sheriff both have representatives on Connect the Coastsides's Technical Advisory Committee and are the responsible entities for law enforcement. The project team will share this feedback with them for consideration. It is possible for future draft of Connect the Coastsides to include traffic calming measures on certain County-maintained roads that commonly experience speeding by people driving.

30) Why doesn't Connect the Coastsides recommend roadway pricing (tolls for tunnel)?

Roadway pricing of highways and the tunnel are out of the scope of the Connect the Coastsides plan and are beyond the authority of the County to implement on a state highway. In addition, the Coastal Commission's policies and the County's Local Coastal Program encourage the provision of low-cost visitor access to public beaches and tolls could be an additional burden, especially for disadvantaged residents.

31) What is the impact of short-term rental properties on traffic and does Connect the Coastsides take this into account?

The current draft of Connect the Coastsides does not discuss the transportation impacts of short-term rental properties (e.g., Airbnb). The project team will research whether data is available on the numbers and locations of short-term rental properties in the Midcoast.

CLARIFYING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

32) What is the process to get a project funded, designed, permitted and built?*

Each of the transportation-related projects proposed in Connect the Coastside will require separate funding, design, permitting, environmental review, and construction. Local governments often seek grant funding to prepare project designs. Project designs are necessary before permitting and environmental review can start.

Each project will require a Coastal Development Permit issued by the County of San Mateo, except for a few projects that are outside the Coastal Zone. Although the overall Connect the Coastside plan is evaluated based on the California Environmental Quality Act, individual projects will need specific assessments of environmental impact as part of the Coastal Development Permit process.

Once a project is funded, designed, and permitted, it can be published for bids. This competitive public process allows construction companies to compete for a project by responding to a request for proposals (RFP) issued by the County. Once a contract is awarded, the contractor can begin to build the project.

Projects identified through Connect the Coastside will take place in phases, as funding becomes available. While some projects or parts of projects could be implemented fairly quickly, some high priority projects will likely take a long time to get through all of the steps required. Implementing transportation projects can be challenging, due to the variety of funding sources, environmental concerns and the permitting process.

It is anticipated that many projects identified in this plan will be implemented independently as stand-alone projects. However, some projects or parts of projects will instead be incorporated into other transportation or non-transportation projects on the Midcoast. This may include projects under the Caltrans State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), San Mateo County maintenance, operational, and preservation projects, land use developments, or major infrastructure modifications.

33) Who will provide funding for improvements identified in Connect the Coastside?*

The Connect the Coastside plan creates a vision for transportation on the Midcoast and clarifies the Board of Supervisor's priorities for investments in transportation infrastructure. Funding for different Connect the Coastside projects could potentially come from a mix of a number of local, regional, state, or federal programs. Agencies that could potentially fund various recommended improvements through grants and other programs include:

Federal:

- US Department of Transportation (US DOT)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

State:

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

- California Transportation Commission (CTC)
- Office of Traffic Safety (OTS)
- California State Parks
- California Strategic Growth Council
- California Natural Resources Agency
- California Air Resources Board
- State Coastal Conservancy

Regional:

- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)
- City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG)
- The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans)
- San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA)

Local:

- County of San Mateo

For a list of potential grant programs and funds, please see Table 23 (p.74) in the public draft of the Connect the Coastside plan.

Another possible funding source is a “transportation impact mitigation fee.” This kind of fee could be charged to new development projects on the Midcoast to help pay for transportation projects needed to address the impacts of growth. For more information on this fee, see section 5.2.2 (p.77) in the public draft of the Connect the Coastside plan.

34) What is the cost, timeline, and priority of each recommended project in Connect the Coastside? When will the projects in Connect the Coastside be implemented? Can project implementation be phased so implementation happens more quickly?

The estimated costs of proposed projects are discussed in Chapter 5 (p.68) of the draft plan. The project team is planning to update and refine the cost estimates in the next plan update.

Connect the Coastside includes a project evaluation system to prioritize projects and project timing (pg. 81-86). Projects are evaluated based on six metrics: project cost, ease of implementation, multimodal connectivity, safety and circulation, shoreline access, and annual cost. Table 28 (p.84) shows the project implementation performance scores, and Table 29 shows the short, medium, and long-term project implementation priorities. The project team plans to update this project prioritization system to incorporate the feedback received at the virtual meetings.

Connect the Coastside is a planning document; because there is no dedicated funding allocated for any specific projects, the timeline for implementation of each project will vary. If Connect the Coastside is adopted by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, County staff will work to implement its recommendations and seek funding (as described above) to engage partners in

developing detailed designs, project costs, and environmental review. Once the Plan is adopted, it can also serve as a basis for requiring improvements as a part of new development. The project team will address project phasing and opportunities to implement low-cost improvements as a part of routine maintenance in the next draft.

35) How will the County collaborate with other agencies, like SamTrans, on implementation?*

Putting the Connect the Coastsides plan into action will require the County to work with a number of other agencies. These agencies may play a wide range of roles, including:

- Owning the land where Connect the Coastsides recommends projects
- Overseeing the construction of recommended projects
- Playing a part in permitting improvements
- Providing recommended transportation services
- Providing money to help pay for projects
- Providing support or guidance to ensure plan goals are met

Likely collaborators include Caltrans, SamTrans, the California Coastal Commission, San Mateo County Parks, the California State Parks Department, the City of Half Moon Bay, San Mateo County Transportation Authority, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the City County Association of Governments.

Below is a list of those agencies with an explanation of how they can support the Connect the Coastsides implementation.

Caltrans

Caltrans is the State's transportation agency and the manager of Highways 1 and 92. Many of the projects contained in Connect the Coastsides rely on active partnerships between the County of San Mateo and Caltrans. Caltrans must approve all modifications within the Highway 1 and Highway 92 right of way. Caltrans will also most likely construct many of the improvements within the right of way envisioned in Connect the Coastsides. Caltrans can provide funding for improvements from state and federal funding sources, as well. The County will need Caltrans' assistance for design, planning, funding and constructing these improvements.

SamTrans

Connect the Coastsides will rely on a partnership with SamTrans, San Mateo County's transit agency. SamTrans provides bus service to the Coastsides and broader county community. Any expansion of transit service will require investments by SamTrans in vehicles, maintenance and labor. In addition, SamTrans is currently conducting "Reimagine SamTrans," a planning effort that could identify further improvements to Coastsides service.

California Coastal Commission (CCC)

The California Coastal Commission (CCC) implements the California Coastal Act and oversees development within the Coastal Zone. The County's Local Coastal Program (LCP), which is certified by the Coastal Commission, includes a policy requiring preparation of the Connect the Coastsides

plan. The LCP includes policies that address roads and transit, promoting coastal access and protecting coastal resources. These policies will be used in evaluating transportation projects within the Coastal Zone.

San Mateo County Parks and California State Parks Departments

Both San Mateo County Parks and the California State Parks Department provide wonderful recreational opportunities at beaches, parks and nature preserves on the Coastsides. Some of the improvements in Connect the Coastsides, including segments of the Coastal Trail and Multi-modal Trail, and recreational parking lots, will be located in state or county parks. Park managers can obtain grant funds, secure entitlements, conduct environmental review, construct, maintain, and manage these Connect the Coastsides improvements.

City of Half Moon Bay (HMB)

San Mateo County will coordinate with the City of Half Moon Bay on key transportation investments and management strategies. Half Moon Bay is an important partner in alleviating the traffic congestion on Highways 1 and 92 that can hamper coastal access and affect quality of life for residents. Half Moon Bay can collaborate with the county, plan, design and fund improvements, including obtaining grant funding for its own projects.

San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA)

The San Mateo County Transportation Authority administers the proceeds from Measure A, which is a voter-approved half-cent sales tax that funds many different transportation-related projects and programs. The County can apply to the Transportation Authority for Measure A funds to help pay for many of the recommended improvements in the Connect the Coastsides plan.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. MTC collaborates with a network of other public agencies to help support the streets, roads, highways, transit systems and other transportation resources that help millions of people get to where they need to be. MTC and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) lead the preparation of Plan Bay Area 2050, which includes the regional transportation plan and allocates and prioritizes a variety of transportation funding.

City/County Association of Governments, Congestion Management Agency (C/CAG-CMA)

The City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG), is a Joint Powers Authority whose membership includes San Mateo County and its 20 cities. The City /County Association of Governments works on multiple issues that affect quality of life in general and is the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) for San Mateo County. As the Congestion Management Agency, the City/County Association of Governments prepares a Congestion Management Program every two years. This program identifies future transportation needs and incorporates projects intended to ease and control congestion. The Congestion Management Program also includes priority allocations of federal, state and regional monies for City and County transportation projects. The Congestion Management and Environmental Quality Committee (CMEQ) provides advice and recommendations

to the Board of Directors of the City County Association of Governments. The committee provides guidance on all matters relating to traffic congestion management, travel demand management, coordination of land use and transportation planning, mobile source air quality programs, energy resources and conservation, and other environmental issues facing the local jurisdictions in San Mateo County.

36) How does COVID-19 and impacts to the County budget affect Connect the Coastsides?

Funding to develop the Connect the Coastsides plan was allocated before the COVID-19 crisis. At present, County staff is working to revise and finalize the plan. For implementation of the plan, the County will be largely dependent on state, federal, and local grant funds. At present, these opportunities continue to exist, underscoring the importance of plan completion; however, COVID-19 may impact future transportation funds available for implementation.

37) How will future infrastructure projects be maintained?

Maintenance of improvements on County-maintained rights-of-way will be assumed by the County and incorporated into standard planned maintenance cycles; this is detailed further on the Department of Public Works [webpage on road maintenance](#). Maintenance agreements would need to be established for projects that are outside of County-owned rights-of-way and depend on facility location and type. In some cases, the County may maintain projects that are within Caltrans' right-of-way.

38) How much money is expected from the Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee and over what period of time? What portion of projects recommended will be paid for by new development?

Section 5.2.2 of the current draft plan (p.77) describes the Potential Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee (TIMF). Only a portion of the plan's recommended projects' costs can be allocated to new development because some of the locations included in the study area are already deficient, without the addition of new development. In order for new development to pay fees and/or contribute to projects, there must be a nexus (i.e., specific connection) between the transportation project need and the new development. Based on the current project cost estimates, approximately \$15.7 million of the total project costs could be attributable to future development. The fee has been divided across different development types based on the projected growth estimates through 2040 (see Tables 24, 25, and 26). The proposed TIMF would need to undergo a separate nexus study and adoption process; it does not go into effect automatically if the Connect the Coastsides plan is adopted. If a TIMF is adopted, all of the forecasted development, in the amount that it is estimated by each land use type, would have to occur in order to generate the projected \$15.7 million. Without the adoption of a TIMF, only developments of a certain size would cause transportation impacts where they could be required to fund transportation improvements; these are evaluated on a case by case basis.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

39) What kind of environmental review process will be done for Connect the Coastside? How does Connect the Coastside address environmental concerns, like endangered species?

The project team anticipates preparing an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which can be found in the California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and the CEQA Guidelines found in California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et seq., as amended. An initial study is a document that describes a project's potential impacts and determines what type of environmental review document should be prepared. A mitigated negative declaration is prepared when a project has significant environmental impacts under CEQA and describes the mitigation measures that will reduce impacts below a level of significance. Pursuant to State Law, the environmental document will be made available to the public for a minimum 30-day review period prior to Board of Supervisors' consideration for plan adoption. Endangered species and other related concerns will be further addressed as part of the environmental review for Connect the Coastside.

40) How does Connect the Coastside address other needs of residents, such as more health care facilities, improved school facilities, water, and sewer?

Connect the Coastside is a transportation and land use plan. It plans for the provision of transportation facilities and services and proposes certain limited land use policies. Provision of other services such as schools, health care, water and sewer are beyond the scope of the plan, and generally are provided by agencies other than the County.

41) How does the County plan for emergency situations and evacuations?*

Mobility on the Coastside is of particular concern in emergency situations and if an evacuation is required. The following is an overview of different County departments and special projects related to emergency response:

- In the event of a disaster, the Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates countywide response and protection services. One of the missions of the Office of Emergency Services is to maintain and improve the Countywide Emergency Operations Plan. This plan establishes policies and procedures and assigns responsibilities to keep residents safe during an emergency situation.
- During an emergency or disaster, law enforcement is responsible for evacuation and the movement of the public away from a hazard area. Representatives from law enforcement and public safety agencies were part of the Connect the Coastside Technical Advisory Committee that reviewed and helped refine the plan proposals.
- In the event of an emergency, public safety agencies such as police and fire will be able to provide emergency information directly to people who have registered for the San Mateo County (SMC) Alert service. These alerts may include life safety, fire, weather, accidents involving utilities or roadways or disaster notifications. For example, the SMC Alert service would be used to notify Coastside employees and citizens of available evacuation routes during an emergency.

- In March of 2019, Supervisor Don Horsley allocated \$75,000 of discretionary Measure K funds to launch the development of a countywide standardized emergency evacuation zone project. The goals of the project are to reduce the amount of time it takes to notify the public, create a common operating evacuation platform for all jurisdictions, information sharing, and help people to safely & efficiently evacuate in case of an emergency. Since the project began, the CAL FIRE San Mateo Division has worked with every fire and law enforcement agency in San Mateo County to identify over 300 evacuation zones. The project includes a public webpage that will show a map of each evacuation zone and a software application that will help first responders call for evacuations using the standard zones. This will greatly reduce the time from when an evacuation is called to when the public is notified. Additionally, the application integrates with Waze and Google Maps, so as soon as a zone is closed people will be directed accordingly. The project team anticipates launching this evacuation management platform in summer 2020.
- The County of San Mateo will be implementing updates of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Safety Element of the General Plan in the fall of 2020. The County will be working with emergency service providers such as CalFire, the Office of Emergency Services, and the new Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District. These efforts will further evaluate hazard risks and identify safety measures on the Midcoast.

42) How does Connect the Coastsides promote safety in the event of an emergency?*

The projects recommended in Connect the Coastsides have been selected to improve safety and mobility for residents, businesses and visitors. In addition to the projects that promote everyday roadway safety, Connect the Coastsides also evaluates traffic conditions during times of peak traffic and suggests improvements to ease roadway congestion. In the event of an emergency, keeping traffic moving efficiently will be important for both emergency responders and those leaving during a possible evacuation. Many of the projects in Connect the Coastsides will improve the flow of traffic, such as projects for additional turn lanes, intersection controls and passing/climbing lanes.

Connect the Coastsides also suggests improvements to bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure that could aid in the evacuation of visitors and residents in certain emergency situations. For example, in the event of a Tsunami Warning, the County of San Mateo Office of Emergency Services suggests walking to high ground or inland immediately. Improvements to trails and walking paths will make it easier and safer for people to travel by foot.

43) How does Connect the Coastsides address the needs of older adults, children, and people with varying abilities?

Goal 3 of the draft Connect the Coastsides plan is to “Increase opportunities for walking, biking, and riding transit on the Midcoast to provide an alternative to motor vehicles and reduce roadway traffic.” In meeting this goal and its objectives, the County aims to better meet the needs of older adults, children, and people with varying abilities, who are often less likely able to drive. When specific projects are implemented, the County will aim for universal accessibility and ensure projects meet Americans with Disabilities Act design requirements. The project team will incorporate opportunities for other support projects and programs, like Safe Routes to School, as part of the next draft.

NEXT STEPS TO UPDATE CONNECT THE COASTSIDE

44) How will community feedback be incorporated into Connect the Coastsides?

The draft plan incorporates community feedback received prior to January 2020. The project team is reviewing feedback received since then to identify potential changes to the draft plan. This may include revisions to plan language for clarity, adding projects that are missing due to safety concerns, modifying recommended projects, and adding sections to address other concerns such as Safe Routes to School and emergency operations. The project team will add a chapter to the plan to summarize community engagement and feedback received.

45) What is the approval process for Connect the Coastsides? What is the timing projected for final adoption of the plan?

The [Connect the Coastsides project homepage](#) includes a tentative timeline of next steps. Once the final draft plan and associated environmental documents are produced, the project team anticipates the following review and approval process:

- Midcoast Community Council meeting to consider recommendation on plan,
- Half Moon Bay Planning Commission meeting to consider recommendation on plan,
- Planning Commission meeting to consider recommendation on plan, and
- Board of Supervisor meeting to consider plan approval.

The project team anticipates the final review and approval process commencing in December 2020 and ending in February 2021.

VIRTUAL MEETING DESIGN

46) How will comments and questions received during the virtual meetings be addressed and shared?

This document addresses frequently asked questions from the May and June 2020 Connect the Coastsides (CTC) virtual meetings. Comments and questions from the virtual meetings will also be shared, summarized and addressed in a forthcoming meeting summary report, which the County anticipates completing by September 2020. The meeting summary report will be posted on the Connect the Coastsides website and shared through email with everyone who registered for the virtual meetings. Additionally, materials from the workshops are currently available on the Connect the Coastsides website under the [Documents & Meeting Materials](#) page. Materials include meeting presentations, large group discussion recordings, small group discussion notes, and meeting room chat transcripts (where applicable).

47) Why were participants arranged in small group discussions during the virtual meetings instead of having everyone participate in one room?

The virtual meetings were designed to offer a wide variety of Coastsides community members the opportunity to learn about Connect the Coastsides and have a conversation with each other about how to shape the future of transportation on the Midcoast. Breakout groups have several benefits:

- They allow participants to have a dialogue with each other
- Breakout groups allow more time for each individual to share their ideas, rather than restricting attendees to 2-3 minutes of comment as is common in public town hall meetings
- The small group discussion format can provide a less intimidating setting for those who are not yet ready to speak in front of a large group or who may feel uncomfortable expressing a different perspective than others
- Breakout groups allow for shorter meetings, which makes it possible for more people to find time to attend

The County heard both positive and negative feedback on the format of the virtual meeting breakout rooms. For those who prefer providing public comments in a large setting, there will be other opportunities to do so at future Midcoast Community Council, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings.

48) Why is the County continuing to work on Connect the Coastside during COVID-19?

Connect the Coastside has been in development since 2014 and its completion continues to be a priority for County staff and elected officials in order to begin implementation of the important transportation safety and congestion relief projects in the plan. The project team had to change its engagement approach to receive feedback on the most recent January 2020 draft of Connect the Coastside from in-person to virtual meetings due to COVID-19. The project team requested feedback about the format of the virtual meetings in a post-meeting evaluation survey. Some community members appreciated the virtual meetings because they would not have been able to attend an in-person meeting. Other community members gave feedback that they would have preferred to engage in person. The project team continues to learn and refine its engagement efforts to reach as broad and large of a stakeholder group as possible. Presentations at forthcoming Midcoast Community Council and Planning Commission meetings will allow for additional engagement opportunities.

Participants at the virtual meetings noted changes in travel patterns and travel demand due to COVID-19-restrictions. The long-term impacts of COVID-19 on the transportation system are unknown; however, notable safety concerns still exist. Opportunities for implementation of transportation safety improvements through grants and new development continue and without an adopted plan, the County cannot take advantage of these opportunities.