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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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AGENDA: JANUARY 26, 1999

January 19, 1999

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

SUBJECT: ROUTE CONCEPT PROPOSAL FOR CAPITOLA ROAD BETWEEN SEVENTH AVENUE AND THIRTIETH AVENUE

Members of the Board:

Over the past several years a number of actions have been taken by your Board relative to the future improvement of Capitola Road. The purpose of this letter is to obtain the Board's direction on the route concept for those improvements, and lay out a process for finalizing a plan line/conceptual design for improving this important east-west arterial street in order to allow Public Works to proceed with the next phase of construction.

At the County's request, the Transportation Commission has approved \$3,090,000 in Regional Transportation Program funding for the construction of various improvements on Capitola Road from the city limits of Santa Cruz to the city limits of Capitola. In combination with \$3,015,000 in funding already identified from ISTEA, the County Redevelopment Agency and County Service Areas, this represents the entire estimated funding necessary to complete the construction of the basic curb, gutter, sidewalk, signalization, street lighting, storm drainage, and streetscape improvements on this major arterial.

While we have surveyed the entire length of Capitola Road and prepared conceptual layouts for segments of the roadway, some basic decisions are still necessary at this time in order to allow this next phase of design to proceed. On local and collector streets, Public Works and Redevelopment Department staff typically would initiate a community input process at this stage of project design to determine the concerns of residents and property owners, attempt to address those concerns, and prepare a plan line which would then be submitted to your Board for approval. However, because of the regional significance of Capitola Road, staff is recommending that the Board first make certain determinations regarding the basic design prior to beginning the community process.

The attached report describes issues related to the determination of the basic design, and recommends approval of several critical aspects of a route concept proposal for Capitola Road from Seventh Avenue to Thirtieth Avenue in the Live Oak planning area. The report includes two attachments showing the project vicinity of the segment of Capitola Road for which a route concept is being considered and the proposed street cross-sections for the various segments of the route concept.

There are several aspects of the route concept for the construction of this project which staff is recommending the Board adopt as requirements at this time, and other aspects on which staff will seek public input and return to the Board with a report and further recommendations.

Those which staff is requesting that the Board adopt at this time are:

- that striping of a five-lane width with channelizers is necessary at the current time in the proximity of the signalized intersections in order to provide an acceptable level of service.
- that the remainder of the road be striped for three lanes with planters and limited parking along the shoulders.
- that the curb, gutter, and sidewalk be constructed at the 65-foot width between Seventh Avenue and Maciel Avenue wherever feasible.
- that the curb, gutter, and sidewalk be constructed at two lanes within the existing paved area between Maciel Avenue and Thirtieth Avenue at the existing riparian crossing.

Those which staff is suggesting be discussed through a community input process for a report back to the Board are:

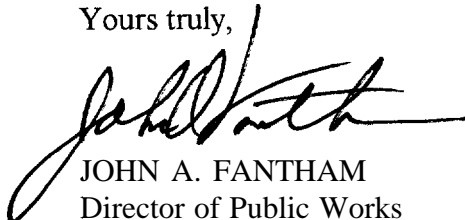
- pedestrian safety issues.
- whether additional traffic control devices are desired.
- the design and location of parking and planting areas along the shoulder of the three-lane segments of the road.
- any other issues raised by participants at the community meeting.

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors take the following action:

1. Approve the proposed route concept for Capitola Road between Seventh Avenue and Thirtieth Avenue.

2. Direct Public Works and Redevelopment staff to initiate a community input process for Capitola Road and report back to the Board on or before June 8, 1999, with any additional recommendations which arise from that process,

Yours truly,

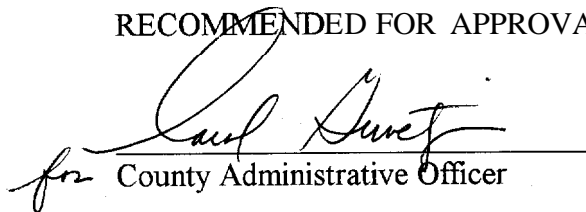


JOHN A. FANTHAM
Director of Public Works

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Attachments

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL:



for County Administrative Officer

copy to: Public Works Department
 Redevelopment Department
 Planning Department

REPORT ON PROPOSED ROUTE CONCEPT FOR CAPITOLA ROAD
BETWEEN SEVENTH AVENUE AND THIRTIETH AVENUE

BACKGROUND

Capitola Road is designated as an arterial street in the County's General Plan, and currently has a 50- to 80-foot wide right-of-way. The existing laneage on Capitola Road varies in different segments; four lanes between the Santa Cruz city limits and Seventh Avenue, three lanes between Seventh Avenue and Maciel Avenue, and two lanes between Maciel Avenue and the Capitola city limits. Sidewalks and on-street parking exist in limited areas along the street.

Capitola Road (see Attachment 1) is the main arterial street connection between the cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola, and is the most heavily traveled east-west vehicle route through Live Oak, with an existing average daily traffic volume (ADT) of approximately 18,000 vehicles per day. The projected ADT for buildout under the County's General Plan is approximately 23,000 vehicles per day. The General Plan has included the construction of Capitola Road as a five-lane road since at least 1980, and all subsequent development along the corridor has dedicated right-of-way and constructed improvements at a 65-foot width. Capitola Road is a Congestion Management Program (CMP) street segment, and is identified in the June 1996 Santa Cruz County CMP.

The route concept presented for your consideration has been initiated by staff to enable design to proceed on the Capitola Road project, now scheduled for construction in 2000. The Board approved a plan line for the portion of Capitola Road between Sixteenth Avenue and Chanticleer Avenue in December 1991 during the design of the Chanticleer Avenue improvement project. Because of the proximity of the signalized intersections at Seventeenth Avenue and Chanticleer Avenue, this segment was approved at a five-lane width, with bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides, and no on-street parking (see Attachment 2). The Board also approved a plan line for the portion of Capitola Road between the Santa Cruz city limits and Seventh Avenue in January 1995 as part of a private development application. That plan line includes four travel lanes, two bike lanes, left turn lanes at Capitola Road Extension and at Seventh Avenue, four-foot sidewalks on both sides, a landscaped median where adequate width is available, and no on-street parking.

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to being a major vehicular thoroughfare, Capitola Road is also a primary bicycle and pedestrian route. Two elementary schools, a middle school, a public swimming facility and community center, several park sites, a senior center, and a regional shopping mall are all on or near Capitola Road. Neighborhood commercial sites also attract pedestrians and bicyclists to Capitola Road.

Because of the high traffic volumes and the need to provide safe pedestrian and bicycle travel, all options for improvements to Capitola Road include bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street. Bike lanes currently exist on Capitola Road, and provide connections between bike lanes on Seventh Avenue, Seventeenth Avenue and Chanticleer Avenue. Sidewalks currently exist only on limited sections of Capitola Road. Completed sidewalks will provide safe pedestrian connections between existing sidewalks on many intersecting streets.

SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Capitola Road experiences chronic congestion at current traffic volumes during commute hours, with the most significant problems occurring at signalized intersections, particularly Seventh, Seventeenth, and Chanticleer Avenues. During these peak hours, queues typically extend several blocks from the signals and vehicles are often delayed through several green phases before being able to pass through the intersections. In order to alleviate the congestion at the signals, it is necessary to provide two through lanes in each direction of travel on Capitola Road and dedicated left turn lanes on all four approaches to each intersection. These transitional sections will vary from 300 to 400 feet per intersection. Because of the width required for these proposed improvements at the major intersections, separated sidewalks will be possible only along the frontages of properties which are currently undeveloped, and most landscape plantings will have to be done either behind the sidewalk or within the street section itself.

The improvements to Capitola Road will also include storm drainage improvements where needed, turnouts and shelters for Transit District buses where necessary to remove stopped buses from the travel lanes, modifications to existing traffic signals and interconnection of the signals at Seventeenth and Chanticleer Avenues, improved street lighting, pavement rehabilitation and overlay, and planting of street trees and other landscaping.

ROADWAY GEOMETRICS

With the intersection improvements described above, at current traffic volumes, the intervening segments of the road can be expected to function at an acceptable level of service with three lanes. However, to accommodate possible increases in traffic volume at buildout, additional lane striping may someday be necessary. Between Capitola Road Extension and Thirtieth Avenue, approximately one-third of the total street frontage has existing curb, gutter, and sidewalk. With the exception of one parcel, all of these improvements are constructed at a 65-foot width and could be incorporated into the new project. In order to preserve existing improvements and avoid constructing improvements which would have to be removed and replaced if additional widening becomes necessary, staff is proposing that the new curb, gutter, and sidewalk generally be constructed at the 65-foot width. In the sections other than within the major intersections, the extra area between the curbs would be utilized for parking and landscaped planters.

Installing the curb and gutter at the proposed width would allow the most efficient use of available funds, and will allow the existing curbs, gutters, and sidewalks to remain in place. Storm drain construction costs would be minimized, as continuous flow could be maintained in the gutter to a greater extent than if the road width varied.

On-street parking currently exists in some areas on Capitola Road, and there is at least one area where the removal of the parking would appear to have a significant impact, near El Dorado Avenue. Two properties on the north side, a convalescent hospital and a townhouse subdivision, apparently have insufficient onsite parking, and a large number of vehicles are parked on both sides of Capitola Road on a regular basis. Neither property has room on site to create a significant number of additional parking spaces, but the three-lane striping would allow parking to continue at these locations.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

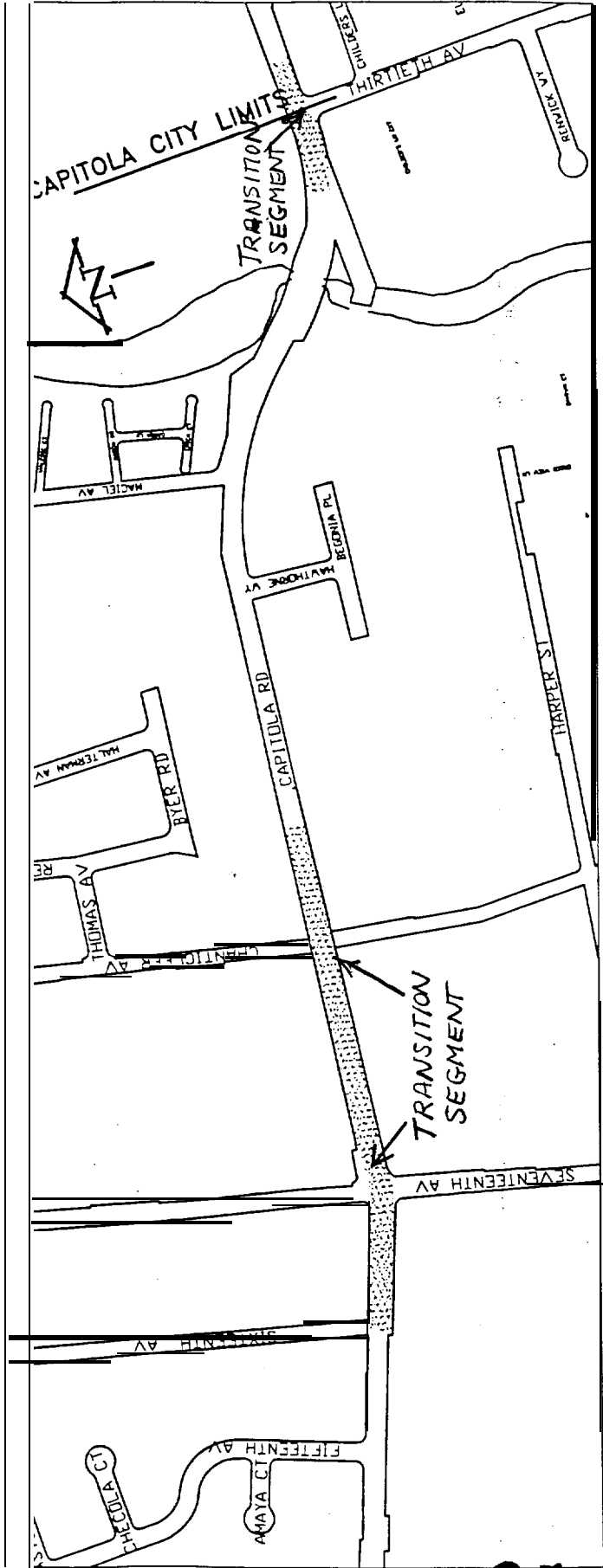
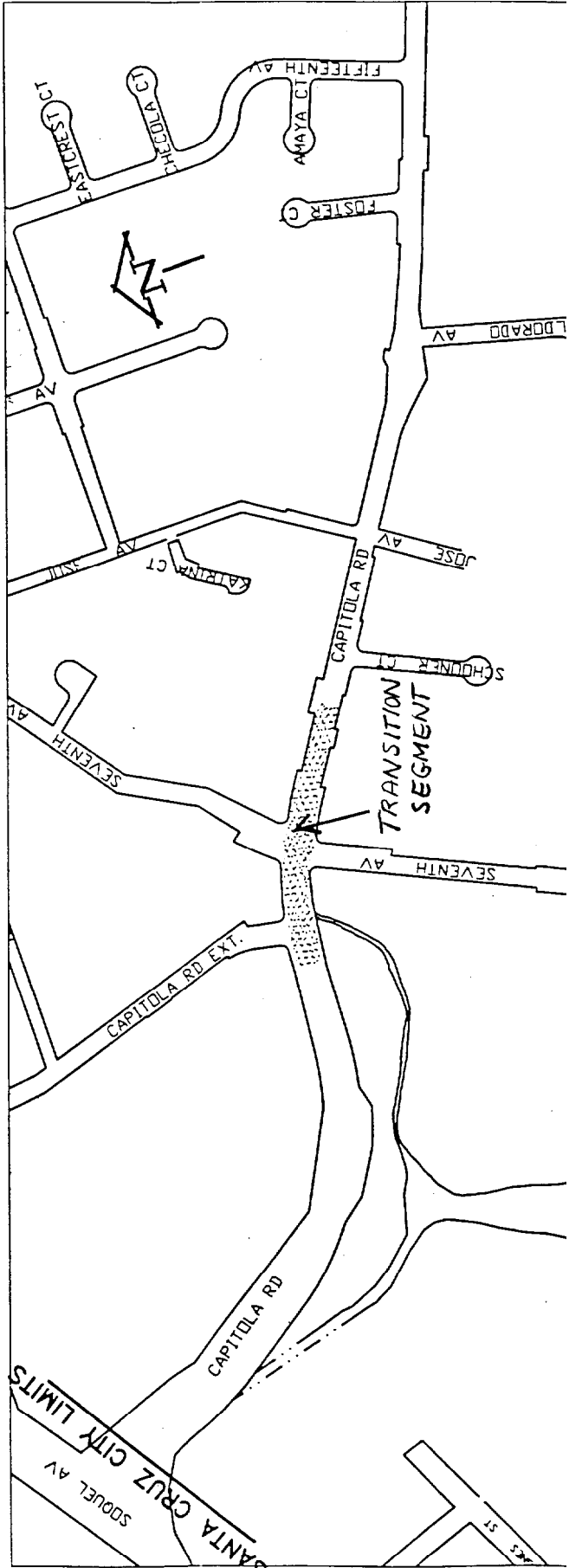
Construction of the improvements included in the route concept described in this report will necessitate the removal of up to 15 trees 12 inches in diameter or larger. As the design of the improvements proceeds, staff will attempt to minimize tree removal and, wherever possible, design the improvements, including sidewalks, around these trees. The project will include the planting of trees and other landscaping in shoulder planters as well as in planter strips or behind sidewalks where possible. While no landscape plan has yet been prepared, it is anticipated that a minimum of 200 trees will be planted as part of the project, which will reduce the immediate impact of the tree removal and assure the existence of a mature streetscape in the future.

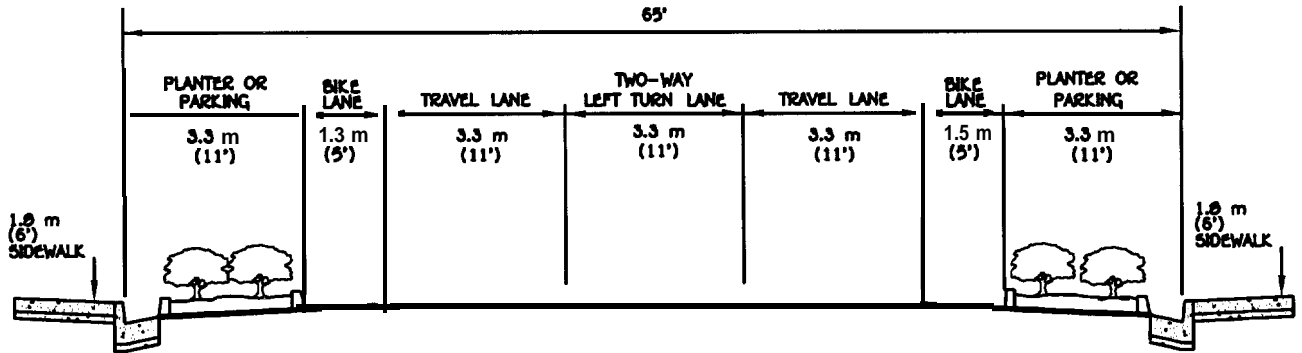
There are several parcels within the limits of the project where modifications to existing onsite parking spaces and driveways will be needed. It appears that these changes will not be detrimental to the existing uses. As the design of the improvements is formalized and the right-of-way acquisition process occurs, staff will work with the affected property and business owners to minimize any impacts.

The Board and the Public Works Department have been contacted recently by the owners of several businesses on Soquel Avenue within the City of Santa Cruz regarding the implementation of a residential permit parking program on the streets surrounding the Santa Cruz Medical Clinic and North Bay Ford. The owners have requested that the County consider allowing on-street parking on the portion of Capitola Road near Soquel Avenue to reduce the impact of the parking program on their employees. In order to do so, the Board would have to approve a revision to the approved plan line for this segment of Capitola Road to either delete the median, or remove and replace the existing sidewalk on the north side of the road, or possibly encroach into the adjacent riparian corridor south of the roadway. Staff would therefore recommend that the request for permanent parking in this area be denied in conformance with General Plan provisions which discourage parking on major arterials, and that the business owners instead develop alternative parking prior to the construction of the County project.

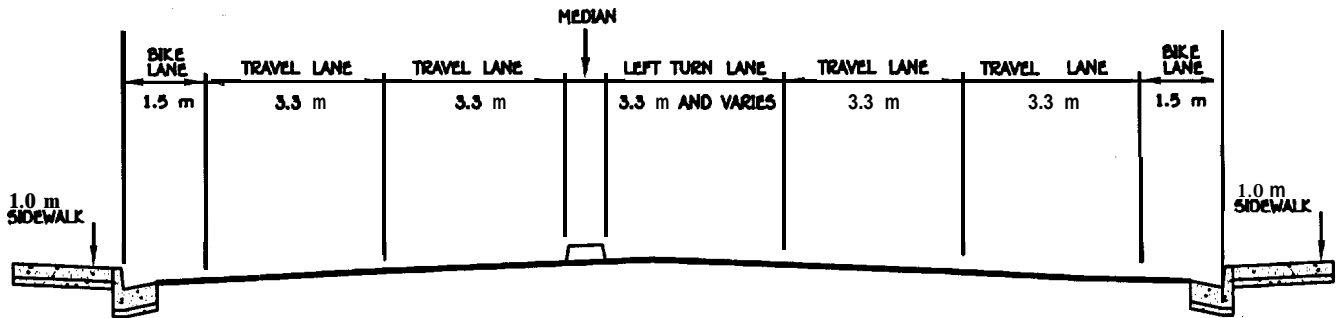
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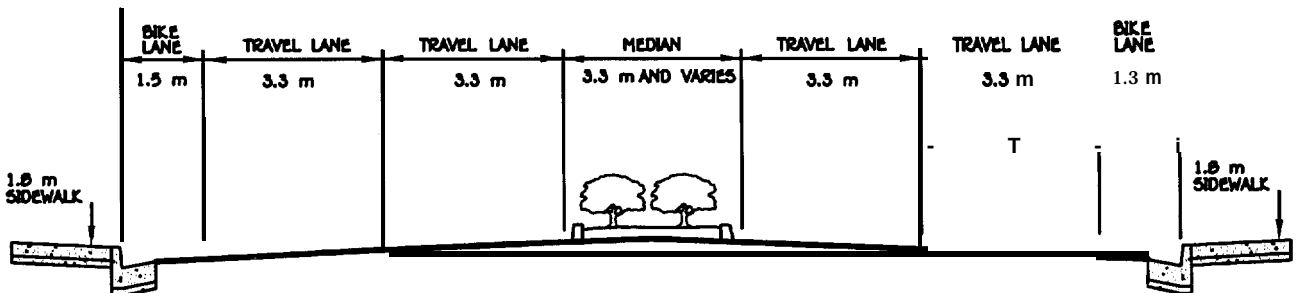




**CAPITOLA ROAD
TYPICAL SECTION 3 LANES**



**CAPITOLA ROAD
TYPICAL SECTION AT MAJOR INTERSECTIONS**



**CAPITOLA ROAD
TYPICAL SECTION WITH PLANTED MEDIANS
NEAR MAJOR INTERSECTIONS**