

**Comments and Proposed Alternative by Dan Johnson**  
**Albany Resident, Beach User, Bay Trail Commuter Cyclist**  
4/16/17

**Albany Beach Restoration and Public Access Project at Eastshore State Park – Phases 2 and 3**  
**BCDC Permit Number 2014.005.01**  
**Exhibit package dated 4/17/17**

Thank you for working to complete this link in the Bay Trail. I am a "super user" of this existing area, from several angles: I cycle on the Bay Trail to commute to work, I bring children to Albany beach, and also visit the area for my own recreation. I see flaws in the proposed design that warrant revisiting the essential layout of the north parcel. The attached Proposed Alternate is only one solution, meant to illustrate the critique described below. The specific solution may vary.

**1. Designers are creating unnecessary conflicts between users.** Please refer to annotated site plan, attached. These are unnecessary conflicts drawn into the current design:

- People who park vehicles have to cross the Trail to access the beach. Kids wander and don't look for cyclists. If a child is struck by a bike, it would be the fault of the design that brought them into conflict, and not the cyclist or child.
- Northbound cyclists have to circuit an out-of-the-way loop at the north end, before an unnecessary merge with northbound autos exiting the Entry Road at the existing roundabout.
- Trail cyclists coming west on Buchanan from Richmond who turn southbound onto the 20' Entry Road (as per current custom) become separated by fencing and have no way of rejoining the Trail without going through the handicapped parking area. Indeed, this is a shortcut compared to the maze-like north end of the Trail in this plan.
- The Entry Sign location misguides Trail cyclists and peds --- it's oriented to auto drivers using the new parking.
- Users walking from existing parking need to cross the Entry Road and Bay Trail to reach the facilities. Most motorized users of the new facilities will arrive on foot, pulling wagons or equipment from existing parking.
- If the Trail were east of the Entry Road & new parking instead of west of the road, it would un-do most of these conflicts that the designers have created.

**2. Bike parking.** I'm curious why the bike parking is located remotely at the toilet instead of with the other vehicle parking, near the final destination? Maybe designers are thinking that long-distance Bay Trail riders only need to stop at this facility to pee, before continuing on the Bay Trail? These riders won't have locks with them. What about riding to this facility from Albany with kids to play at the beach? Where do you park the cargo bike or bike-with-trailer? These riders will

have locks. There would be foot traffic at the toilets and trailer bikes might block the whole thing.

Bike racks should be as close as possible to the actual destination. As we all know, we are most likely to ride and lock our bikes if the bike racks are within sight of our destination. No one's final destination is the toilet. The racks should be near wherever we will be going - picnic areas or beach, or a busy, well-traveled area near the start of a hiking/walking trail. Development could be focused on the Cove Area, originally planned by the now defunct Albany Waterfront Committee to have picnic tables and benches. That is where Albany Strollers & Rollers (AS&R) funded 12 bike racks. The paperwork indicates 16 bike parking spaces, which is fewer than already exists.

**3. Bike rack spec.** The specification of ribbon/wave bike racks is incorrect. Amazing that design engineers are still specifying those ten years or so after they were removed from the standard, such as NACTO. Please specify Inverted-U type racks that provide two points of contact on the bike frame. Also bear in mind that long-frame cargo bikes, and bikes with trailers will be using this facility to bring kids and beach gear. This affects the layout of the bike racks.

**4. Bay Trail striping.** I am happy to see a separated ped lane, but would also like to see the bike lane separated by a dotted line with directional arrows. The Ohlone Greenway through Albany has been marked with separate lanes for almost 4 years and it is a success. There is not 100% compliance but such a configuration definitely adds to safety and comfort for all user groups.

**5. Bay Trail "Relaxed" and "Rapid".** Please appreciate that there are at least two types of rider on the Bay Trail, the "relaxed" recreational riders and the "rapid" commuters. The rapid riders will try to avoid conflicts with slower users. The commuters currently ride on Buchanan rather than the Bay Trail in order to avoid conflicts with slower users. Please facilitate entry and exit from the new portions of the Bay Trail onto Buchanan, as well as continuity of the "relaxed" Trail. This is illustrated in the Proposed Alternate attached.

**6. Too much asphalt?** I'm measuring 20,700 sq.ft. of new asphalt being put down --- about 1/2 acre --- in order to provide 20 vehicle parking spaces (3,700 sq.ft). This seems like an inefficient use of resources. Please return this site to passive recreation and keep the asphalt and motor vehicles out. Could all the vehicle parking and turnaround be concentrated on the north end, **focused on consolidating and enhancing existing development**, to keep the remainder of the property unpaved? Might this also reduce the project cost as well as future maintenance costs? We can cut asphalt by 50%.

**7. Consolidate and enhance existing development.** There appear to be half-complete facilities at the western terminus of Buchanan street. New development should strengthen and enhance these adjacent facilities instead of bringing motor

vehicles deeper into the site, creating more maintenance liabilities, and neglecting existing facilities. Turn over as much site as possible to recreation in a natural setting, accessible by active transportation (human power). Motor vehicles create dangers for people on foot and pedaling, especially children.

**8. Flood level.** I bike through this property on my commute to work. There is already 8" of standing water at the north end of the property after a big rain, making it impassable. Slide 19 notes that "a storm surge could add 2 to 2.5 feet to that indicated." The slide shows that the proposed Trail is level with the 2017 100-yr flood elevation. Does it make sense to design a throwaway facility that could be destroyed by next year's 100-yr flood?

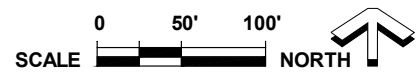
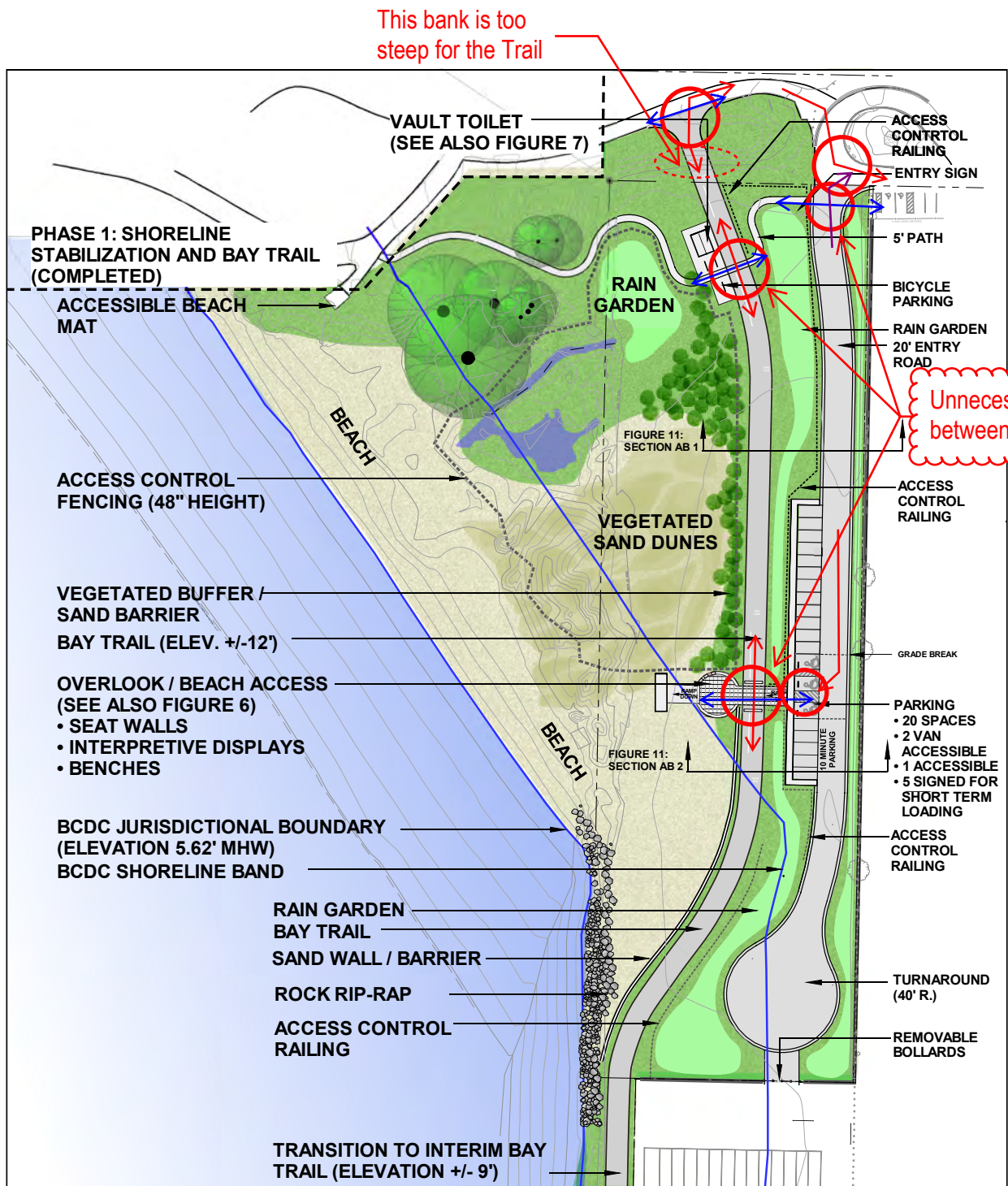
Why not elevate the Trail as a 3'-high causeway on the back (east) side of the property, to keep it dry for decades to come? The sea level in 30 years is estimated to be 16" higher, as noted on the slide. A Trail on the east would also remove the risk of kids crossing the Trail from the vehicle parking to access the beach. You get better views from a higher Trail. Concentrate the parking on the north end, consolidate this with existing development, and elevate the parking area on 18"-24" of fill to keep it dry. Much less flood damage to the facilities for decades to come.

Thank you for considering these points from an avid user as you rework the north parcel layout to avoid creating new conflicts between user groups.

Kind regards,

Dan Johnson

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This drawing is conceptual and for planning and permit processing purposes only. Program information, scale, location of areas, and other information shown are subject to field evaluation and modification.

Figure 5  
**ALBANY BEACH SITE PROGRAM**

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**ALBANY BEACH RESTORATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS PROJECT: PHASES 2 & 3**  
 AT MCLAUGHLIN EASTSHORE STATE PARK

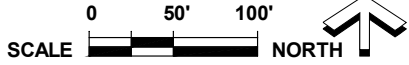


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**PROPOSED  
ALTERNATE**



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# TOO MUCH ASPHALT

