

August 3, 2022

Chair Packard and Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee
San Francisco City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 48
San Francisco, CA 94102
Via email to: publications@sfgov.org

Re: "Uses of The Great Highway and JFK Drive"

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for your time and commitment to the ballot simplification process for the November 2022 election. As a follow-up to yesterday's meeting (August 2, 2022), we are submitting the following suggestions for the committee's consideration. These items concern the digest for the initiative currently titled "Uses of The Great Highway and JFK Drive."

1. Further clarify the difference between Sunday, holiday, and Saturday closures of JFK Drive.

- a. We believe the addition of "**year-round**" would help voters better understand the closure times. We are concerned that voters may believe the April - September period applies to Sunday and holidays, as well as Saturdays.
- b. We suggest the following changes to the current digest:
 - i. "Proposition __ would repeal the Board's April 2022 ordinance and require the City to allow private motor vehicles to use JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays **year-round**, as well as on Saturdays in April through September."
 - ii. "If you vote "yes," you want to require the City to allow private motor vehicles on JFK Drive and connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays **year-round**, as well as on Saturdays in April through September."

2. Remove or revise language referencing the Great Highway Extension.

- a. We believe the current language may lead voters to believe that the City's plan to close and remove the Great Highway Extension is more definite than it is. Furthermore, we are concerned that the current language may also lead voters to believe that the closure and removal of the Great Highway Extension is required to "protect City infrastructure from damage caused by sea level rise," when the City has identified multiple project alternatives that achieve this goal and allow the Great Highway Extension to remain open, either fully or partially.
- b. We respectfully request the committee consider our proposed changes given the following facts:
 - i. State of the Project

1. The project (2019-020115ENV) is currently in a *proposal* phase. According to the City's Planning Department, it has been in this phase since October 2019 and is still "under review". ([Please review status here](#), [here](#), and also in **attached** Public Notice for City's Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) – "*The City and County of San Francisco (the city) is proposing...*")
 2. The City has only prepared a DEIR at this time. The City has yet to approve or disapprove of the project. (Please note the statement in Public Notice for City's DEIR (**attached**): "*A notice of preparation or EIR does not indicate a decision by the city to approve or to disapprove the project. The city must review and consider the information contained in the EIR prior to making a decision.*")
 3. Furthermore, as stated at yesterday's meeting, the project requires a permit that is expected in 2023. It is possible that this permit may not be granted. There are still many more steps. The project may change over time, or may even be derailed. The City *proposes* many projects.
- ii. Viabile Alternatives
1. Per CEQA guidelines, and as also stated in the City's DEIR (pg. 369), "The CEQA Guidelines, section 15126.6(a), state that an environmental impact report (EIR) must describe and evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives to the project that would feasibly attain most of the project's basic objectives but would avoid or substantially lessen any identified significant adverse environmental effects of the project."
 2. Section 6 of the City's DEIR identifies four possible project alternatives "that could avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts identified for the project while still meeting most of the project objectives" (pg. 369). **Three of the four viable alternatives (Alternatives A, B, and C) allow the Great Highway Extension to remain open to vehicular traffic, either in full or in part.**
 3. These three alternatives are (detailed information on the alternatives can be found in the City's DEIR - [File: Draft Environmental Impact Report \(DEIR\)](#)):
 - a. Alternative A: No Project
 - b. Alternative B: *Protect Critical Infrastructure* with Increased Beach Nourishment
 - c. Alternative C: *Protect Critical Infrastructure* with Conventional Seawall
- c. Given this information, we are requesting the Committee consider removing any language referencing the Great Highway Extension. If the Committee believes

reference to the Great Highway Extension should remain, we suggest the following changes to the current digest:

- i. “The City ~~intends to remove~~ **has proposed removing** the Great Highway between Sloat Boulevard and Skyline Boulevard ~~to protect City infrastructure from damage caused by sea level rise~~. The City would redirect vehicle traffic along Skyline, Sunset and Sloat boulevards.”
- ii. “Proposition ___ would require the City to allow motor vehicle use in both directions at all times on the Great Highway and would not allow the City to remove the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline boulevards as ~~planned~~ **proposed**.”
- iii. “You also want to require the City to allow motor vehicle use in both directions at all times on the Great Highway and not allow the City to remove the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline boulevards as ~~planned~~ **proposed**.”

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Howard Chabner and Richard Correia
Proponents, “Access for All”

Attachment 1: Public Notice for City’s Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)



PUBLIC NOTICE

AVAILABILITY OF NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Date: September 9, 2020
Case No.: **2019-020115ENV**
Project Title: **Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project**
Zoning: P (Public) and RH-1D (Residential House, One Family Detached)
Zoning Districts, OS (Open Space) Height and Bulk District
Western Shoreline Area Plan
Neighborhood: Outer Sunset
Cross Streets: Ocean Beach and the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline Boulevards, and Ocean Beach north of Lincoln
Project Sponsor: San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department
Staff Contact: Julie Moore, San Francisco Planning Department
Julie.Moore@sfgov.org
(628) 652-7566

Purpose of Notice

The San Francisco Planning Department has prepared a notice of preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) for the Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project. An EIR must be prepared for the proposed project prior to any final decision regarding whether to approve the project. The purpose of the EIR is to provide information about potential significant physical environmental effects of the proposed project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe and analyze possible alternatives to the proposed project. A notice of preparation or EIR does not indicate a decision by the city to approve or to disapprove the project. The city must review and consider the information contained in the EIR prior to making a decision.

You may participate in the public process concerning the project's environmental effects by:

- Contacting Julie Moore via email, phone, or by mail; OR
- Attending a virtual public scoping meeting on Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom conference or telephone. You can register for the meeting via the online platform link at <http://bit.ly/oceanbeachscoping> or join by phone, using the following phone number: 877-853-5247 (Meeting I.D. 828 5908 1146). To request a language interpreter, please contact Candace SooHoo at 628-652-7550 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to help ensure availability.

The notice of preparation, scoping meeting presentation, and virtual scoping meeting instructions are available here: sfplanning.org/sfceqadocs. You may also request a CD or paper copy of the NOP by contacting Julie Moore.

Project Description

The City and County of San Francisco (the city) proposes a coastal adaptation and sea level rise resiliency project to improve the portion of Ocean Beach from Sloat Boulevard to Fort Funston known as "South Ocean Beach." The proposed Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project ("project") would address shoreline erosion, severe coastal storm and wave hazards, and sea level rise which threaten city infrastructure, coastal access and recreational facilities, and public safety. The project is a collaborative, multi-agency initiative involving the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), San Francisco Recreation and Parks, San Francisco Public Works, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), the Federal Highway Administration, and the National Park Service. Major project components include: (1) permanently closing the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline boulevards, and reconfiguring affected intersections and San Francisco Zoo parking access; (2) removing pavement, rock and sandbag revetments, and rubble and debris from the beach, and recontouring the bluff and planting dune vegetation; (3) improving public access, maintaining coastal parking and continuing to provide restroom facilities; (4) installing a buried wall to protect existing sewer infrastructure from shoreline erosion; and (5) long-term beach nourishment (sand replenishment).

Ocean Beach comprises a 4½-mile stretch of sandy beach that forms the western boundary of San Francisco. The beach and bluff at South Ocean Beach are subject to severe erosion from coastal storms and waves. Since the 1990s, the city has responded to the erosion challenges by implementing a series of both hard shoreline armoring (e.g., rock and rubble revetments) and soft shoreline protection measures (e.g., beach nourishment and sandbag revetments). In the intervening period, the city has also undertaken planning initiatives aimed at developing a long-term strategy for managing the South Ocean Beach shoreline. Notably, the city partially funded and participated in the preparation of the 2012 Ocean Beach Master Plan. Led by the San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), the master planning process brought together community members, agency representatives, and other stakeholders to develop a sustainable long-term vision for Ocean Beach, addressing public access, environmental protection, and infrastructure needs in the context of erosion and climate-related sea level rise. The terms of a 2014 legal settlement agreement and a 2015 California Coastal Commission permit establish timelines for developing and implementing a long-term solution to shoreline management at South Ocean Beach. The project aims to preserve and enhance public access, coastal recreation, and scenic resources at South Ocean Beach, while protecting critical wastewater system infrastructure from damage due to coastal hazards.

Public Comment

The planning department welcomes your comments concerning the potential environmental effects of this project. You can submit your comments verbally at the public scoping meeting, and/or via email or mail to the staff contact below.

The planning department will hold a **PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING** on **September 30, 2020 at 6 pm**. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, in order to protect the health of city staff and members of the public, the meeting will occur virtually through video and teleconference. The meeting will consist of a staff presentation describing the background of the project and proposed features, followed by an opportunity for the public to provide oral comments regarding the scope of environmental review. The staff presentation, meeting procedures and instructions are available at sfplanning.org/sfceqadocs. See meeting details above. Written comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. **on October 9, 2020**. Written comments should be sent to Julie Moore, San Francisco Planning Department, 49 South Van Ness Avenue Suite 1400, San Francisco, CA 94103 or emailed to CPC.OceanBeachEIR@sfgov.org. If you have questions or comments concerning this notice, **please contact Julie Moore at Julie.Moore@sfgov.org or (628) 652-7566 by October 9, 2020**.

If you work for an agency that is a Responsible or a Trustee Agency, we need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR when considering a permit or other approval for this project. We will also need the name of the contact person for your agency.

Members of the public are not required to provide personal identifying information when they communicate with the department. All written or oral communications available, including submitted personal contact information, may be made available for inspection and copying upon request from the public. These communications may also be posted on the department's website or in other public documents.

Recipients of this notice are encouraged to pass on this information to others who may have an interest in the project.