



LOS OSOS COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mr. Waddell,

My name is Deborah Howe, I am a member of the Los Osos Community Advisory Council (LOCAC) and the chair of the newly formed Active Transportation Committee. The purpose of this committee is to "Provide a forum for the community to discuss issues with respect to all forms of Active transportation." As a committee, we will be examining and commenting on projects within Los Osos/Baywood.

There is currently a project in design for the Baywood Elementary School at El Moro. The project calls for one block of sidewalk, curbs and gutters between 9th and 8th Street on El Moro. SLOCOG has approved \$170,000 for this project. Approximately \$50,000 has been spent on design and environmental review. No actual construction has begun due to the backlog of projects for public works.

While we appreciate the efforts to improve pedestrian infrastructure in Los Osos and around Baywood Elementary School, we request the current scope and location of the project to be reconsidered. There is a more immediate need for a sidewalk/walking path adjacent to the school and the school playground which is used by the community. A walking path on 11th between El Moro and Santa Maria would allow for safer walking and biking for children going to Baywood Elementary and for children going to the Los Osos Middle School via the El Moro Class 1 Multi-modal path. 11th Street currently has no sidewalks and is a fast-moving collector street with double yellow lines and a speed of 35 miles per hour. In addition to those elementary and middle school age children of Baywood Elementary, a bus to Morro Bay High School collects and drops off students at Baywood Elementary School on Santa Maria every school day. Therefore, three groups of children will be served by improving the pedestrian and cycling safety in this area.

A walking path at 11th would allow pedestrian and bicycle traffic to be channeled toward Santa Maria and away from El Moro which is a heavily trafficked street as indicated by the double yellow striping and the many stop signs on cross streets.

In contrast, Santa Maria is a low volume traffic street where people can and do walk and ride with less concern about vehicular traffic. Traffic calming strategies could be employed to increase awareness of pedestrians and children on Santa Maria at very little expense.

We would also point out there is a public transportation stop at the corner of El Moro and 11th. Installing infrastructure here would also improve the access to this bus stop. Is it possible that there might be some funds that could be appropriated from public transport to offset the expense of re-scoping this project? We request that you use funds from public transportation, or if necessary, local funds to conduct environmental and design work associated with the re-scoped project and reserve the remaining SLOCOG funds for construction.

Please keep in mind that 48% of the children that attend Baywood Elementary are classified as coming from socio-economic disadvantaged homes. It is important that these families have safe access to school and to public transportation.

LOCAC and the Active Transportation committee respectfully request that the County engage in a sincere dialogue with the community and coordinate with LOCAC in the future regarding public works projects. We know we have limited funds to work with and we all want the money to be used in the most efficacious way possible for the benefit of the community.

I will close with an excerpt from the Los Osos Community Plan dated December 15, 2020.

H. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities. Pedestrian and bicycle travel are discouraged by many factors, but the primary one is a lack of an adequate and convenient system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that connect residential areas, schools and commercial areas. Class I bikeways should be developed, or Class II bikeways need to be located on streets with minimal traffic in order to encourage bicycle use by school-age children, commuters, shoppers, senior citizens, and others

I would like to continue this discussion with you and your staff at your earliest convenience.

Deborah Howe

Committee Chair Active Transportation

Deborah.locac@gmail.com cell phone 559-960-0607