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Mr. Lucho Rodriguez, PE
Interim Public Works Director
City of Hermosa Beach
1315 Valley Drive
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-3885

Subject: City of Hermosa Beach
Hermosa Valley Greenbelt
Facility Surfacing: Disabled Access Observations and Recommendations

Dear Lucho:

At the request of the City, Robert Woodward, PE of m6 Consulting ("Consultant") has been engaged to provide an assessment of the existing City Greenbelt facility located along Valley Drive between Herondo and Longfellow relative to disabled access compliance of current surfacing materials and recommendations for viable alternatives. This assessment entails field observations, code characterization and recommendations for further action.

Background

The Hermosa Valley Greenbelt ("Greenbelt") was developed in 1986 on an abandoned Santa Fe Railroad spur, which provided for the connection of the Redondo Beach Wharf to downtown Los Angeles. The development of the Greenbelt as a recreational amenity commenced in the late 1980's, with the planting of vegetation, installation of a jogging trail, work out stations, and related improvements.

Observations

Photo documentation and observations were completed for the length of the Greenbelt facility from Herondo to Longfellow. The surfacing materials generally consist of wood chips and mulch over much of the path length, with occasional areas of dirt. These improvements are typical of the developed portions of the Greenbelt, with the exception of transitional areas at street intersections. Path grades are moderate along the length of the Greenbelt, which is consistent with grade limitations within a rail road right of way. However, there are areas along the path alignment, namely between Pier and Gould Avenues, where the east to west grade transition between Ardmore Avenue and Valley Drive is significant, resulting in access grades that are challenging to a person with ambulatory disabilities.

Disabled Access

The City of Hermosa Beach is considered a Title II which regulates, and is regulated by, the disabled access provisions of the 2010 Federal Americans with Disabilities Act and

associated Standards (ADAS), as well as the related provisions of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations contained in Part 2, Volume 1 (Chapter 11 of the 2016 California Building Code). Without extensive citation, the intent of the disabled access provisions of both the Federal and associated State disabled access provisions is to require that individuals with disabilities be provided the same opportunities to utilize public facilities and services as their able-bodied counterparts. The presence of features that do not comply with disabled access requirements is considered a barrier to access, having the effect of exclusion based on construction.

The most significant barrier to disabled access to the Greenbelt is the surfacing of the trail itself. Surfacing of disabled paths of travel shall be firm, stable and slip resistant (11B-302). The current bark mulch which comprises the pedestrian pathways does not meet this standard, and presents a barrier to utilization of the Greenbelt facility by disabled members of the public. Grade transitions across the Greenbelt accommodate elevation differences which are, in places, significant given the hillside nature of the community in this area. Thus the means of access, particularly in mid-block locations, may be steep and non-compliant with respect to allowable grades for the user paths of travel. The maximum allowable cross slope (1:48) in the predominant direction of travel (north to south) is exceeded in many locations.

The City's duty to provide for disabled accessible improvements to the Greenbelt arises in the event of alterations to the facility and its included elements. The City has provided for incremental access improvements to the Greenbelt with construction of curb ramps and disabled access ramps at cross streets and some mid-block points of access. The requirement to construct curb ramps, or to improve non-compliant ramps, arises in conjunction with adjacent roadway improvements, such as asphalt overlays. Alterations to the Greenbelt facility, including facility elements such as surfacing, drinking fountains, exercise equipment, or parking, would trigger disabled accessible improvements to the area of alteration. Required improvements are prioritized by those actions that improve points of access, path of travel, and provide disabled accessible drinking fountains. For small alterations, the scope of required improvements is limited by the disproportionality provisions of the ADA to those which are no more than 20% of the cost of the total improvement. It should be noted that the requirement to provide disabled accessible improvements may not be evaded by performing multiple small scale improvements that could have been performed as a single undertaking.

Limitations

The observations contained herein are based on a visual survey of the existing Greenbelt facility. The intent of the observation was to determine the general condition of representative portions of the existing recreational facility and related disabled access compliance, to the extent that such visual observation would allow. No subsurface or detailed topographic surveys were completed as part of this initial effort, nor were destructive or non-destructive testing or other investigations completed.

Exclusions

The observations contained herein did not attempt to quantify or analyze specific disabled access compliance conditions, and these observations should not be considered an official CASp survey or deficiency report.

Closure

The observations and recommendations contained herein should be considered the opinions of m6 Consulting Inc., subject to the limitations and conditions noted herein. These observations do not purport to be either complete or exhaustive, but rather limited to what observations a pedestrian level visual survey would reasonably reveal.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service in this effort. If you have any questions, or require additional information, please feel free to contact us at (805) 379-1015.

Very truly yours,

m6 Consulting, Inc.



Robert P. Woodward PE, CASp #727

cc: File

Attachment: Photo documentation