



Staff Report

File #: REPORT 18-0139, Version: 1

**Honorable Mayor and Members of the Hermosa Beach City Council
Regular Meeting of February 27, 2018**

**REPORT ON ADA ASSESSMENT AND PROPOSED
DECOMPOSED GRANITE PATH ON GREENBELT**

(Public Works Director Glen W.C. Kau
and Planning Director Ken Robertson)

Recommended Action:

It is recommended that City Council, after receiving information for the subject item, provide direction to staff as to possible further review and policy direction for ADA accessibility upon the Greenbelt.

Background:

During the FY 17-18 budget process, an item was proposed to install decomposed granite on the Greenbelt (\$280,000). Subsequently, at its scheduled meeting of October 24, 2017, Council decided to not move forward and instead allocated \$28,000 to study the issue and to consider a demonstration project.

Analysis:

Two items were completed. One was the legal memorandum by the City Attorney regarding improvements on the Greenbelt. The other was a field assessment performed by m6 Consulting of the accessibility of the existing Greenbelt Facility between Longfellow Avenue and Herondo Street relative to ADA access compliance of current surface materials.

Per the City Attorney's memo (Attachment 1), the City may only improve the Greenbelt with a hardscape pathway if it finds that the path is landscaping consistent with the open space designation. One benefit of hardscape might be that it increases accessibility of the Greenbelt. The City is not obligated by State or Federal law to undertake such improvements unless the City is making other improvements. However, there are currently no standards to determine what improvements would achieve a level of accessibility to comply with the ADA.

Per the m6 Consulting draft report (Attachment 2), their field observations noted that in general, Greenbelt surfacing 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 are consistent within a railroad right-of-way. However, along the path between

Gould Avenue and Pier Avenue, the west-east slope between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue are significant, which results in slopes that are challenging to a person with ambulatory disabilities.

The most significant barrier to disabled access to the Greenbelt is the surfacing of the trail itself. The current bark mulch which has been placed along the pedestrian pathways does not meet the current California Building Code 11B-302, which calls for floor or ground surfaces to be stable and slip resistant.

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 crossings. The requirement to construct curb ramps or to improve non-compliant ramps comes up with adjacent roadway improvements such as street overlays.

PLAN Hermosa Policies Related to the Greenbelt

Overall, PLAN Hermosa does not commit the City to a specific course of action related to the Greenbelt, but does highlight the need to seriously consider improving it, and/or the adjacent pedestrian facilities along Valley and Ardmore to create a more complete, efficient, and accessible pedestrian network. PLAN Hermosa also clearly emphasizes the need for community outreach in making this decision, especially since the greenbelt has been established, maintained and used as a trail with significant public dialogue and involvement over the last thirty years.

The Parks and Open Space element speaks most directly to the question of whether the greenbelt should be improved or made more accessible than its existing status as a trail with wood chips. Several other elements, including the Mobility, Land Use and Design, Governance and Infrastructure elements address this issue more indirectly.

The Parks and Open Space Element under Goal 4 "Direct and accessible routes and connections to parks, recreational facilities, and open space are provided," contains policies that addresses the issue of accessibility most directly. Policy 4.4 calls for "ADA accessible park access and promotes the installation of ADA and universally accessible amenities and equipment so that all parks, beach, and trail networks are accessible to all persons." The Parks and Open Space element also includes policies (4.2 and 4.3) to enhance access point to parks and open space, and to develop a safe and efficient trail network. While policy 4.4 is strongly worded, it does not commit the City to upgrade all portions of all facilities, nor does it address the priority facilities/locations, timing of such upgrades, or what methods make the most sense in each context.

The Mobility Element identifies the greenbelt (in conjunction with the Valley/Ardmore Corridor) as part of the safe routes to school network. Due to the proximity of schools, city facilities, and parks, this corridor is collectively treated as a key north-south connection for the safe routes to school network and can help achieve the purpose of a safe network for pedestrian linkages.

The Governance Element includes policies that emphasize the City's commitment to engaging the community in the decision-making process. This is particularly important given the lengthy community process that was undertaken to purchase and establish the greenbelt. Therefore, any proposals to enhance the greenbelt and change in how it functions are important decisions that should follow the principles of engaging the community in a meaningful dialogue.

The Land Use and Design Element also contains policies that addresses the value of corridors like the greenbelt to provide opportunities for multiple transport modes to connect neighborhoods, commercial areas, and the City's green open space network.

Staff's identified relevant policies from PLAN Hermosa are attached.

New information:

No new information at this time.

Fiscal Implications:

None at this time.

Attachments:

1. City Attorney Memorandum, Improvements on the Greenbelt
2. m6 Consulting DRAFT Report, Facility Surfacing, ADA Access
Observations/Recommendations
3. Relevant policies from PLAN Hermosa

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Noted for Fiscal Impact: Viki Copeland, Finance Director

Legal Review: Mike Jenkins, City Attorney

Approved: Sergio Gonzalez, City Manager