Trail Planners Advisory Council (TrailPAC)
Transportation Agency for Monterey County—Conference Room
55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA
Friday, March 27, 2015
2:30 pm – 4:15 pm

MINUTES

1. Welcome & Introductions

Trail PAC Members Present
Bhupendra Patel Association for Monterey Bay Area Governments
Rachel Saunders Big Sur Land Trust
Sarah Hardgrave Big Sur Land Trust
Julie Armstrong Big Sur Marathon
Joan Carpenter California State Parks
Victoria Beach (by phone) City of Carmel-by-the-Sea
Justin Meek City of Marina
Scott Waltz Fort Ord Red Trail and Greenway
Fred Watson Fort Ord Red Trail and Greenway
Johnathan Garcia Fort Ord Reuse Authority
David Spaur Monterey County Economic Development Dept.
John Akeman Monterey County Parks
Melanie Beretti Monterey County Resource Management Agency
Carl Holm Monterey County Resource Management Agency
Toby Uptain-Villa State Senator Monning’s Office

TAMC Staff Present
Debbie Hale, Executive Director Ariana Green, Associate Transportation Planner
Todd Muck, Deputy Executive Director Virginia Murillo, Assistant Transportation Planner

Debbie Hale, TAMC Executive Director, thanked everyone for participating in the first Trail Planners Advisory Council (TrailPAC). She mentioned that City of Carmel-by-the-Sea Councilmember Victoria Beach was the inspiration for the TrailPAC, since Councilmember Beach has spearheaded local trail planning efforts.

2. Roundtable on Trail Planning Activities
   a. Current Projects
   b. Future Projects

Ms. Hale asked TrailPAC members to share their current and future work.

Rachel Saunders, Big Sur Land Trust, reported that the Big Sur Land Trust is working on a vision plan for the Carmel Valley, and the the Carmel River Parkway Plan, which links trails, promotes
habitat conservation and improves bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and the Carmel River Flood Plain Reservation Project. Ms. Saunders also mentioned that Big Sur Land Trust is working on the San Jose Creek Trail that is current closed off from public access. Ms. Saunders mentioned that there is an opportunity for collaboration between Big Sur Land Trust, TAMC and California State Parks.

Sarah Hardgrave, Big Sur Land Trust, noted that the Carmel River Flood Plain Reservation Project will be completed in June. She noted that it is primarily a flood control project, but that the Project also connects trails and provides access to Rancho Cañada.

John Akeman, Monterey County Parks, reported that the County is focused on the Fort Ord Recreation Trails, and is working on the Habitat Management Trails Park. The County is also creating accessible trails at Ferrini Ranch, and would like to develop trails that connect to the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail. Mr. Akeman noted that the County recently applied for a Federal Lands Access Program grant for improvements to the Fort Ord National Monument.

Mr. Akeman asked if the group if there is a comprehensive map that includes the County’s trail network. Councilmember Victoria Beach, City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, reported that the Fort Ord Reuse Authority Board of Directors recently directed Fort Ord Reuse Authority staff to create a comprehensive map of the Fort Ord National Monument trails.

Joan Carpenter, California State Parks, reported that State Parks is currently working on a Carmel Area State Plan that will include a study of trails with better distribution. Ms. Carpenter noted that State Parks is currently working on a variety of other projects, which include:

- Carmel Area State Parks General Plan
- Point Lobos Reserve: trail that parallels entrance to the park (set to open next year)
- Garrapata State Park: new trail bridge
- Andrew Molera State Park: realigning an ADA accessible trail from entrance to the beach
- Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park: new trails to pool; new river loop that is ADA accessible
- Limkiln State Park: trail restoration
- Fort Ord National Monument: 1st Street underpass to new campground, new Class I bike route from Beach Range Road to campgrounds, tunnel connecting to the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (pending permit from Coastal Commission)

Ms. Hale asked if the trail would parallel Beach Range Road. Ms. Carpenter said that utilities are currently an issue, and that there would be detours during construction.

Toby Uptain Villa, State Senator Monning’s Office, reported that Senator Monning’s Office is currently looking for a lead agency to continue the California Coastal Trail. Ms. Carpenter mentioned that the State Parks trail network connects to the Coastal Trail, and that this connection is part of the State Parks’ overall vision.
Councilmember Beach reported that Carmel-by-the-Sea has a list of about 25 projects. About one-third of these projects are within the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, but two-thirds of these projects require regional collaboration. Councilmember Beach mentioned that the San Francisco Bay Trail project has been an inspiration to her. The San Francisco Bay Trail project promotes trail connectivity in the San Francisco Bay Area, and was a collaborative multi-jurisdictional effort. She mentioned that mapping trail linkages in the Monterey Bay area can be a first step to identifying missing links in the regional trail network.

Fred Watson, Fort Ord Red Trail and Greenway, reported that the Fort Ord Rec Trail and Greenway (FORTAG) is proposed as a 30-mile regional network of paved recreational trails and greenways connecting communities to open space. Mr. Watson noted that the FORTAG project would promote connectivity between the Peninsula and Salinas through the Fort Ord National Monument. Both he and Scott Waltz have been working to gather motions of support for the proposed trail loops. The trail loops are intended to be accessible and safe for multiple users.

Bhupendra Patel, Association for Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), reported that AMBAG is currently working on launching an interactive mapping tool for the Monterey Bay Area region. He noted that AMBAG is also working on a collaborative effort to update the region’s orthoimagery (high resolution aerial photography) at a cost of approximately $400 per square mile. The new orthoimagery would have a one foot resolution in rural areas, and a three inch resolution in urban areas, making it easier to identify new trails. Mr. Patel mentioned that AMBAG’s Monterey Bay Area Regional Bicycle Travel Demand Model project, which analyzed bike counts, route data, inventories of existing bike facilities, and included a survey of travel behavior to improve planning for bicyclists is nearing completion. AMBAG will be hosting a workshop on the project on May 5th.

Councilmember Victoria Beach mentioned that she recently learned that the Monterey Convention and Visitor’s Bureau has been participating in the Google Trekker Loan Program.

Carl Holm reported that the County of Monterey is updating its Trails Master Plan. The Plan includes a planning element, an administrative and a legal element.

Ms. Saunders noted that there is a need for a comprehensive greenspace map, that includes ADA accessible trails. Joan Carpenter, California State Parks, mentioned that State Parks has a model for trail accessibility. Rachel Saunders, Big Sur Land Trust, also mentioned that April 4th is Take it Outside Day.

Johnathan Garcia, Fort Ord Reuse Authority, mentioned that the Fort Ord Reuse Authority just wrapped up its trails symposium, as well as its design colloquium for its Regional Urban Design Guidelines. Mr. Garcia stressed the importance of having trails for ecotourism, and as amenities for residents.

Julie Armstrong, Big Sur Marathon, thanked the group for allowing the Big Sur Marathon to have a seat at the table. She mentioned that the Big Sur International Marathon has an
economic impact of about $20 million.

Justin Meek, City of Marina, reported that the City of Marina is currently working on its Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Virginia Murillo, TAMC Assistant Transportation Planner, reported that TAMC is currently working on a bicycle and pedestrian wayfinding signage plan, and is working on updating the Monterey County bicycle map, which was last updated in 2008. The goal of the plan is to improve regional connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians, and to encourage more people to walk and bicycle. She mentioned that a Wayfinding Plan Advisory Committee has been established to assist staff in the development of the plan, including identifying regional bicycle and pedestrian routes. She also mentioned that TrailPAC members can find more information about the wayfinding plan at: http://tamic.mindmixer.com/

3. Opportunities for Collaboration:
   a. Countywide/Regional trails map and GIS database
   Mr. Patel noted that AMBAG maintains a repository of GIS data for the region. Councilmember Victoria Beach mentioned that she was recently involved in an effort led by California State University, Monterey Bay students to map the Fort Ord trail network.

   b. Funding
   Mr. Uptain-Villa mentioned that Senator Monning’s Office is working on a bill for a new parks bond for the November 2016 ballot that would serve disadvantaged communities. The amount of the bond is unknown at this time, as the bill is still in very preliminary stages. Ms. Saunders expressed her support for the bill. Ms. Hale asked that the Senator’s office consider the criteria of disadvantaged communities, and reach out to agencies for feedback on the definition. She mentioned that other State programs have narrowly defined the criteria for disadvantaged communities, excluding some communities in the Monterey Bay Area. Mr. Uptain-Villa said he would update the group on the bill’s progress.

   c. Shared goals?
   d. Other
   TrailPAC members asked that a TrailPAC contact list be created and shared with the group.

4. Next meeting
   a. Who else should we invite?
   TrailPAC members suggested the following groups be invited to be part of the TrailPAC group:
   - City of Salinas
   - Congressman Sam Farr’s Office
   - CalFire
   - Equestrian Group
   - Monterey Offroad Cycling Association
   - Monterey Convention and Visitors Bureau
   - Google

   b. Proposed to meet quarterly – Next Meeting: June 19, 2:30 pm