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Cc: [Sue Moore](#)
Subject: RE: Old Arcata Road Rehab Project Roundabout Design
Date: Thursday, March 03, 2022 9:34:56 AM
Attachments: [2021-02-22 CityOfArcataREOARoad Project.pdf](#)

March 3, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

It has come to our attention that County representatives have been asked to look at issues related to the proposed roundabout at the corner of Old Arcata and Jacoby Creek roads, a City of Arcata project which includes some County property.

As representatives for one of the properties near this corner, Bayside Community Hall, we have concerns about the impact of the project as proposed.

Bayside Hall has participated in the planning for this project since the beginning, and hosted charrette meetings at the hall in the early stages. We expressed our concerns about the current 30% design in a letter to the City of Arcata, Attn: Netra Khatri, on February 22, 2021. Those concerns remain unaddressed, so we are attaching this letter here.

We want to reiterate these concerns, and further point out that for many decades, the Bayside Community Hall has relied upon the extra public parking provided at this corner to support community events at the hall. The City of Arcata has created a graphic intended to show mitigation for the loss of parking spaces on public property, but that graphic is misleading. Not only are no new public parking spaces created to offset the loss, but the mitigation uses parking on private property (Bayside Hall and Mistwood School) to counter this loss. The parking layout that is provided is completely at odds with what is happening on the actual site: spaces have been created which cross a drainage ditch, eliminate our trash storage area, block access to our back stairs, block a fire hydrant, eliminate our bicycle parking, eliminate our ADA parking, and encroach upon a utility pole. Some of the spaces shown are completely inaccessible. A series of spaces along the westbound side of Jacoby Creek Road are quite dangerous as they are adjacent to a deep drainage ditch and will encroach upon the roadway.

Please take a careful look at these problems as you consider whether a large and expensive roundabout is really the right solution for this intersection.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Jones, President
For the Board of Directors of
Bayside Community Hall
(also a Jacoby Creek Road resident)



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www.avast.com

**Bayside
Community Hall**
incorporated 1949

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***Our mission is to
foster social and
community life for
residents of Bayside
and Humboldt county.***

*Our historic community
center is an affordable
venue for social and
cultural gatherings,
entertainment and
activities that support
local organizations and
community causes.*

**501c3 nonprofit
tax ID 23-7529744**

February 22, 2021

To: Netra Khatri

From: Bayside Community Hall
Board of Directors

RE: Comments on the Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for
Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation and Pedestrian/Bikeway
Improvements, SCH 2021010176

Bayside Community Hall has long been interested in improving road safety through our neighborhood. We are pleased that Hall representatives were participants in early planning for this project. And we thank the City of Arcata, and the County for taking it on.

We are excited about the formal bike lanes, paved sidewalk and road re-paving that are included in the project. All three will be positive contributions to both the safety and the ambience of this stretch of roadway. We recognize that there are a variety of impacts that must be addressed (including some likely not yet spelled out), but to us they seem relatively minor and a fair trade-off for the benefits of these aspects of the project.

However, we have major concerns about the proposed roundabout at the junction of Old Arcata Road and Jacoby Creek Road. The more that we examine the (as yet incomplete) details of the roundabout, and walk the ground where it is proposed to sit, the less convinced we are that this is the best solution for improving safety at this intersection. As community members who walk and drive this intersection every day, our thoughts are informed by real, on-the-ground, experience. Those thoughts are:

- 1) Though it is a small roundabout compared with the others on Old Arcata Road, the roundabout is simply too large for the land area that it is to occupy. To make sufficient space, the following sacrifices are made:
 - a. Loss of a large area, admittedly on public-right-of-way, that is crucial parking for Mistwood School and Bayside Community Hall, with no plan for mitigation.
 - b. Movement of the roadway much closer to Mistwood School, (the Temperance Hall), which will increase noise and the possibility of traffic damage to the oldest building in the area.
 - c. Adding the roundabout does not seem to improve access to the post office, which even now is problematic for anyone who is southbound on OAR (requiring crossing of a double yellow line). In the current design, that access appears to become more difficult for both directions of traffic.

- 2) The primary problem at this intersection is the speed of the northbound traffic entering it, not the need to manage a high volume of traffic. There is not a large number of vehicles. Vehicles are not left waiting long times to turn from one road onto the other. They simply drive too fast along Old Arcata Road. And while we agree that a roundabout would force traffic to slow, we feel that there must be other, less invasive, and far less expensive, strategies that could be implemented to slow vehicles to a reasonable speed as they enter the area. The roundabout seems a costly solution for a problem that doesn't really exist.
- 3) Construction of the roundabout will increase the complexity of drainage issues which already impact the structures on the southwest corner (Mistwood and Bayside Hall), which lay directly adjacent to wetlands

It is also clear that the other parts of the project, the paving and bike lanes and sidewalk, will impact dozens of properties, and that every stretch of roadway poses specific challenges, be it losing trees or shrubbery, taking back portions of yards, dealing with ditches and drainage and driveways, etc. It seems only fair that landowners be able to understand the impacts on their properties. We are asking many of them to make sacrifices to their current situation to help build a good for the greater community, but the extent of those sacrifices is unclear.

The construction of this project will be hugely impactful on the community for the extended period of time that it will take to complete. Unlike the stretches of Old Arcata Road closer to town, this stretch is densely populated on both sides of the street, and contains two schools. The period of construction will be messy, noisy and inconvenient. Again, the greater good demands that we all put up with it, but that is going to go a lot better if there is widespread buy-in on the project benefits. We just don't think you have that buy-in. We hope that you eventually will.

In our view, this MND should not be approved. However, we don't feel that an EIR is necessary at this time either. It is not our goal to stop or delay the project, but to get it right.

In our view, what would be most helpful in moving this project forward with the community would be a fuller design so that we could better understand its impacts. In our view, the roundabout should be eliminated and a variety of traffic calming measures be applied to the current 3-way intersection. Those could include speed reductions and warning signals, attractive landscaping and other signage that signals drivers that they are entering the community of Bayside. A more complete design could be shared with impacted property owners along the route. They need to understand which trees and shrubs will be removed, what parts of their property will disappear, what possibilities they will have for on street parking once bike lanes and sidewalks are in place.

Finally, the vast majority of these issues were raised during the last round of discussions about this project, well over a year ago. We hoped that more answers would now be available, but the current MND document does not address any of those ongoing concerns in detail.

Again, we appreciate your hard work and look forward to seeing what comes next. Sincerely,



Carolyn Jones, President (for Bayside Community Hall)