

**Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation and Pedestrian/Bikeway Improvements  
Coastal Development Permit**

Record Number: PLN-2022-17654

Assessor's Parcel Number: County right-of-way (no APN)

**Recommended Commission Action**

1. Describe the application as a public hearing;
2. Request that staff present the project;
3. Open the public hearing and receive testimony;
4. Close the public hearing and adopt the Resolution to take the following actions:

*Find that the Planning Commission has considered the EIR, including the environmental effects of the project, and as a Responsible Agency, agrees with the lead agency's findings, and make all of the required findings for approval of the Coastal Development Permit as recommended by staff subject to the recommended conditions.*

**Executive Summary:** A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for the portion of the Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation and Pedestrian/Bikeway Improvements project within the County's jurisdiction of the Coastal Zone. The project was approved by the City of Arcata, the lead agency. The project as a whole would improve motorized and non-motorized transportation and user safety in Bayside. The Project would repave Old Arcata Road, include bike lanes on both sides of the roadway alignment, and improve and extend an existing shared use walkway along the west side of Old Arcata Road from approximately 600 feet south of the Buttermilk Road Roundabout and extending south to approximately 300 feet beyond the Jacoby Creek Road intersection. The total Project length is approximately one mile. The portion of the project within both the Coastal Zone and the County's jurisdiction is located at the southern end of the project, is approximately 530 feet in length, and includes approximately half of the proposed roundabout.

Jacoby Creek Road Roundabout:

A new roundabout is proposed for the intersection at Jacoby Creek Road and Old Arcata Road to improve traffic flow and user safety. Crosswalks, signage, lighting, and paved walkways would be integrated into the roundabout. A new retaining wall would extend along the west side of Old Arcata Road adjacent to the roundabout. The total length of the wall would be 200 feet. Modifications and repaving of the roadway that serves the Bayside Post Office may also be required.

The roundabout would be configured to be within existing City and County right of way with no permanent encroachments onto private property (easements may be required for temporary construction, but the Project has been designed to avoid all permanent acquisition of private property). Excavation to accommodate the roundabout and roadway approaches is expected to be approximately two to four feet, although some isolated deeper excavations may be required to remediate poor soil/subgrade conditions.

Concrete improvements associated with the roundabout, including the roundabout apron, sidewalk, and walkways would include integral color to darken the concrete and provide a weathered look, designed to blend into the existing community aesthetic and character and avoiding a stark visual alteration. If desired by community members, sculptural pieces may also be installed in the roundabout center, in coordination with the City of Arcata and other stakeholders.

The boundary between the City of Arcata and the County of Humboldt is located approximately through the center of the proposed roundabout. The improvements proposed within County jurisdiction are all entirely within the County road right-of-way and consist of part of the

landscaping in the center of the roundabout, approximately half of the travelled way within the roundabout, and portions of the new walkways and landscaped medians. This includes a new walkways and landscaped strip to be developed in the portion of the right-of-way that is currently utilized for parking for Bayside Corners.

The figures below show the location of the Coastal Zone boundary and the location of the City of Arcata and County boundary. The project elements that require a Coastal Development Permit from Humboldt County are only those areas inside the Coastal Zone and outside the City of Arcata boundary.



Figure 1: Coastal Zone Boundary and City-County boundary line

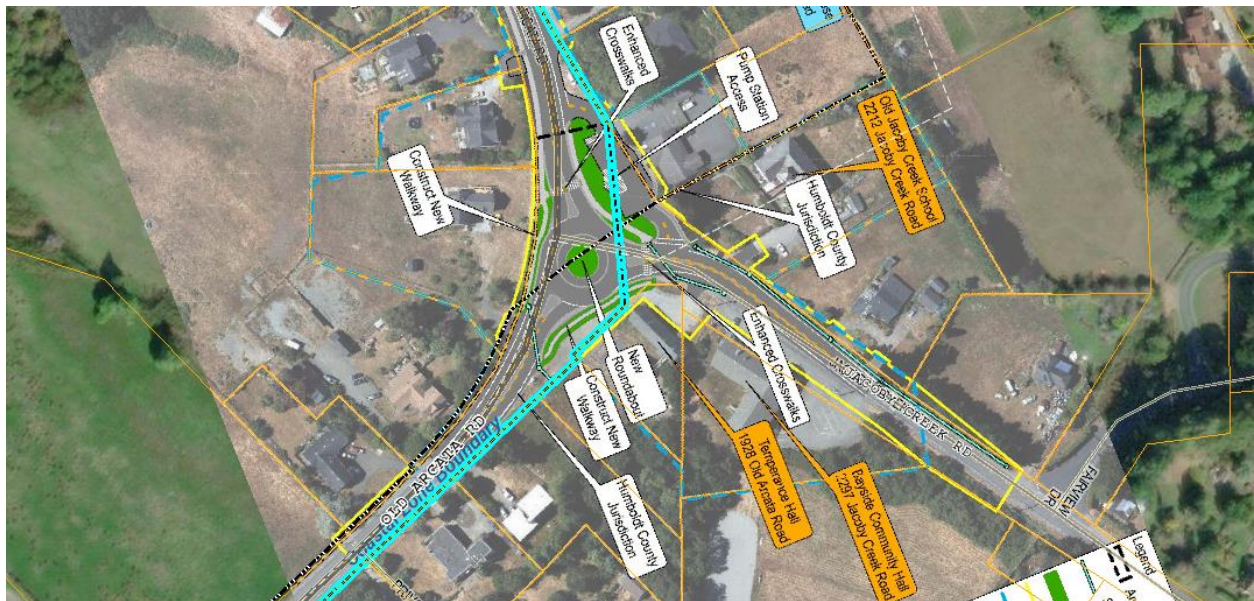


Figure 2: Proposed roundabout overlaid on the City-County boundary line

**CEQA:** The City of Arcata is the lead agency under CEQA. The City of Arcata certified an EIR (SCH #2021010176). There are no anticipated impacts to the environment that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. The County of Humboldt is a responsible agency under CEQA and must consider the environmental effects of the proposed project as shown in the EIR. Mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level are summarized below. No significant and unavoidable impacts were identified.

Mitigation Measures:

**Aesthetics:** Avoid visual impacts by reducing construction disturbance and restoring and revegetating areas of disturbance

**Biological Resources:** Pre-construction surveys and avoidance protocols for Northern Red-legged frogs. Removal of trees outside of the bird nesting season or pre-construction surveys and disturbance protocols. Seasonally appropriate plant surveys for specific portions of the project area, and compensatory mitigation for wetland impacts.

**Cultural and Tribal Resources:** develop an MOU with consulting tribes to include tribal monitors and discovery protocols.

**Geology and Soils:** Discovery protocol for paleontological resources.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Pre-construction soil borings and analysis for lead concentrations in soil and groundwater, and occupational safety training.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:** Installation of silt-fencing to prevent inadvertent sediment delivery to watercourses and wet areas.

**Transportation:** Contractors to provide adequate emergency access to all properties during construction.

Public Comment:

Public comment has been submitted both in favor and opposed to the proposed project. Comments in opposition are primarily comments that have previously been submitted on the draft EIR and responses to those comments are included in the Final EIR (FEIR) which is attached to this staff report. Specifically related to the portion of the project that is within the County's Coastal Development Permit jurisdiction the primarily comments appear to be:

- Removing the existing parking in the right-of-way Bayside Corners School will result in an impact to users of the property and may result in illegal parking in the right-of-way.
- That pedestrian safety is compromised by the lack of a crosswalk on the southern side of the roundabout and the fact that the improvement project stops at a certain point past the roundabout and this termination results in an unsafe situation.

Regarding the proposed removal of parking for the Bayside Corners, this parking is occurring within the County's public road right-of-way. The primary use of public road rights of ways are for transportation movements. However public road right of ways can be utilized for parking of vehicles until such time as that right of way is needed for transportation movements. It is not uncommon for parking to be eliminated to enhance transportation movements. In addition, County Code Section [313-109.1](#) addresses off street parking in the coastal zone:

313-109.1.1.2 It shall be the responsibility of the developer, owner or operator of any specific use to provide "adequate off-street parking," even if the amount of such parking

is in excess of the minimum requirements set forth in this section. "Adequate Off-Street Parking" means an amount of parking sufficient to meet the level of anticipated parking demand generated by the use for which the parking is required

Regarding pedestrian safety south of the roundabout, while not shown on the preliminary design plans the County will be requiring the City of Arcata to install a crosswalk on the south side of the roundabout (**COA #2**). Additionally, while the project with its enhanced pedestrian and bicycle improvements does terminate south of the proposed roundabout, it terminates into existing Class 2 bike lanes on both sides of the road which allows for continued safe travel. An appropriate transition between the proposed and existing road cross sections will be provided in the final design to aid pedestrians in safely transitioning between cross sections.

**Staff Recommendations:** Based upon the submitted materials, review of Planning Division reference sources, and comments from all involved referral agencies, Planning staff believes that the applicant has submitted evidence in support of making all of the required findings for conditionally approving the Coastal Development Permit. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission considers the environmental effects of the EIR and concurs with the findings of the EIR.

**Alternatives:** The Planning Commission could elect not to approve the project or require the applicant to submit further evidence. These alternatives could be implemented if the Commission is unable to make all of the required findings.

As a responsible agency under CEQA, the alternatives are more limited than those of the lead agency. The County only has responsibility for mitigating or avoiding only the direct or indirect environmental effects of those parts of the project which it decides to carry out, finance, or approve. If the Planning Commission finds any feasible alternative or feasible mitigation measures within its powers that would substantially lessen or avoid any significant effect the project would have on the environment, the Commission shall not approve the project as proposed. Staff did not identify any feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures within the County's powers that would substantially lessen or avoid any significant effect on the environment.