

Jim Zoellick  
1766 Old Arcata Rd.  
Bayside, CA 95524

April 26, 2022

County of Humboldt Planning Commission  
3015 H Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

Subject: Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation and Pedestrian/Bikeway Improvements Project  
CC: Humboldt County Planning Department, Humboldt County Supervisor Mike Wilson

Dear Humboldt County Planning Commission,

My name is Jim Zoellick and I live at 1766 Old Arcata Road in Bayside, CA. I am the homeowner and have lived here for the last 23 years. My wife and I walk our dog daily in our neighborhood and I walk and bicycle frequently in the area. We are huge supporters of the Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation Project, including the installation of a roundabout at Jacoby Creek Road. We encourage you to approve the Coastal Development Permit that the City of Arcata has requested for this project.

We live three houses north of the Jacoby Creek Road intersection where the proposed roundabout will be installed. The current roadway through Bayside is not safe, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists. This is especially concerning for the many children who live in our neighborhood and who walk to Jacoby Creek School, Mistwood School, or local school bus stops.

The key roadway safety issues in our neighborhood are a lack of safe places for pedestrians to walk, insufficient bikeway facilities, and most importantly excessive speeds for traffic passing through the area (i.e., 40 to 50 mph speeds in a 25 mph speed zone). We are supportive of the proposed Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation Project because it will address all of these issues.

It is important to note that the proposed roundabout at Jacoby Creek Road is a critical element of the proposed project. Although the EIR for the project identifies Alternative 2 as a feasible alternative, it fails to acknowledge that Alternative 2, which does not include a roundabout, will not adequately slow traffic coming into Bayside from the south and therefore will fail to meet a critical objective of the project. Roundabouts are proven to reduce speeds, reduce accidents, and reduce injuries and deaths at intersections. Without a roundabout at Jacoby Creek Road, Alternative 2 would actually increase hazards for pedestrians by providing a cross walk near the intersection without successfully slowing speeds. This is not acceptable.

I have been very active talking with my Bayside neighbors about the proposed project and I have found that the majority of the Bayside community is in favor of the proposed project, including the roundabout at Jacoby Creek Road. This includes residents of the City of Arcata and community members who live outside of Arcata City limits. This is especially true for those

who live in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project and roundabout. Attached is a map of the Bayside area showing at least 20 households who are in favor of the proposed project and roundabout. I have spoken directly with most all of these households. Many of them have children who attend local schools, all of them are concerned about pedestrian and bicycle safety in Bayside, and all of them support the proposed project and the proposed roundabout at the Jacoby Creek Road intersection.

The Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation Project has been in the works for many years, and the local community has been thoroughly engaged throughout that time, participating in community workshops, attending public meetings, and submitting public comments. The City of Arcata has done an excellent job of soliciting and responding to input from the Bayside community, including input from both City of Arcata residents and from community members who live outside of City boundaries. In addition, they have put together a solid Environmental Impact Report that satisfies CEQA requirements and has been reviewed by the Arcata Planning Commission and adopted by the Arcata City Council. While it is impossible to please everyone, the City has done a good job of finding a solution that minimizes environmental impacts and offers the greatest benefit to the whole community.

In addition, the City has coordinated extensively with the County Department of Public Works on the proposed roundabout as attested to by Mr. Bob Bronkall of the Humboldt County Public Works Department during the March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 Humboldt County Planning Commission meeting. In fact, Mr. Bronkall noted that the Humboldt County Department of Public Works had already identified the Old Arcata Road and Jacoby Creek Road intersection as a prime intersection for a roundabout to improve traffic flow and increase safety. The County has implemented a roundabout at Indianola Cutoff and the City of Arcata has constructed two roundabouts along Old Arcata Road. The community has adapted well to these roundabouts, which have proved successful at slowing traffic, increasing safety, and improving traffic flow. Also, as population growth increases and the Bayside cutoff intersection at Highway 101 is modified to eliminate cross traffic, there is likely to be a significant increase the flow of traffic along Old Arcata Road, and this will make the need for a roundabout at the proposed intersection even more important.

In case you are wondering about the current issue of speeding traffic and compromised safety at the intersection of Old Arcata Road and Jacoby Creek Road, there have been a large number of traffic accidents at that intersection over the years. Bob and Ginny Ellis live at 1895 Old Arcata Road directly west of the Jacoby Creek Road intersection. They have had nearly 20 cars come speeding through the intersection and fly over the embankment into their yard. The most recent occurrence was on 4/2/22, when a vehicle came speeding through the intersection from Jacoby Creek Road at a speed of about 80 mph, took out the stop sign at Jacoby Creek Road (which ended up in a neighbor's tree), blew out about 10 feet of asphalt curb and strewn it across their yard, and propelled itself about 30 feet into their yard. Had it taken a slightly different trajectory it would have crashed through their home; that would not have been the first time that a car crashed into their home. Then a few days later, on 4/13/22, a car lost control due to excessive speed while traveling southbound around the sweeping curve at the Jacoby Creek Road intersection and it veered off the roadway and into a tree at 1945 Old Arcata Road, the property immediately adjacent to Bob and Ginny Ellis' home. Safety improvements that slow traffic along this section of roadway are needed before someone is killed.

As a resident of Humboldt County, I urge you, my County Planning Commissioners, to approve the Coastal Development Permit for this project as requested by the City of Arcata. The vast majority of the Bayside community wants this project. This proposed project and roundabout will best serve the Bayside community and all who travel through this community by improving bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular safety.

Thank you for your consideration and for the planning work you do for the County of Humboldt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Zoellick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jim Zoellick

Enclosure: Map of some of project supporters

## Map of some of the supporters of the Old Arcata Road Rehabilitation and Pedestrian/Bikeway Improvements Project, September 2021

