



**Date:** September 29, 2016  
**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**From:** Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.M.W.*  
**Subject:** Sorrento Alamitos Bay Shoreline Trail Project Update

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### **Overview**

The Sorrento Alamitos Bay Shoreline Trail (Sorrento Trail) is currently subject to a planning, design, and public outreach process. This memorandum is intended to provide the Mayor and City Council with an update on the project, as well as an outline of next steps.

### **Background**

The Sorrento Trail project is a result of a mandate from the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The CCC is requiring the City to design, plan, and permit the Sorrento Trail in order to mitigate for loss of coastal resources due to the Naples Island Permanent Seawall Repair Project (Project), which is being implemented in phases. Until this condition has been met, the City cannot proceed with the critical repairs for the second phase of the Project. Funding for the Phase 2 Project has been approved by the City Council, and City staff is currently working on early design elements and community outreach efforts.

In October 2015, the City presented a proposed conceptual design of the Sorrento Trail to the community. Some residents suggested the City should obtain a "second opinion" regarding accessibility requirements, and a determination of whether the path needs to meet ADA requirements. The City concurred and assembled a team of three certified access specialists - including a qualified specialist referred to staff by the community -- to conduct an independent peer review.

The panel has provided their professional opinion to the City in a document titled "Access Requirements for the Sorrento Alamitos Bay Shoreline Trail." This report has been posted on the internet at <http://www.longbeach.gov/citymanager/tidelands-capital-improvement-division/>.

### **Report Conclusions**

The report concludes that the proposed path must be accessible and meet ADA standards if the City constructs a path, as required by the CCC. Overall, the panel recommends the City use the 2015 Architectural Barriers Standards Act, which is also mirrored in the 2015 California State Parks Accessibility Guidelines. These standards provide more leeway (compared to a traditional sidewalk) for complying with the CCC's mandate within a natural setting. By defining the project

as a "trail," the project can have steeper slopes and no handrails -- which means a lighter touch from a construction standpoint. Although the elevation changes on the path must still be addressed by sloping, the slopes can have a greater rise and a shorter run.

Given the constraints of the site, the panel recommended viewing areas be provided next to stairs, so that wheelchair users may have equivalent experiences on the path even though they may not be able to reach the water's edge. The City is committed to preventing the viewing areas from obstructing views from private property.

The northern sidewalk along Sorrento Drive will be made accessible, as described in the original conceptual design from October 2015. This will alleviate some of the challenges residents have expressed about the current sidewalk.

### **Next Steps**

The design team will incorporate these findings into a revised project design document. In addition, they will incorporate the feedback provided by the community. Following the release of the original conceptual design, more than 100 people responded to an open-ended questionnaire regarding the design details. These comments are in the process of being posted on the City's website. We anticipate hosting an open house in November 2016 to showcase the revised design to the community, and then proceed with obtaining the necessary permit approvals from the City's Development Services Department, as required by the CCC.

Christopher Koontz, Advance Planning Officer in the City's Planning Bureau, is assuming project management duties for the project and is the main point of contact as this process continues. Christopher can be reached at [Christopher.Koontz@longbeach.gov](mailto:Christopher.Koontz@longbeach.gov) or (562) 570-6288.

cc: Michael Mais, Assistant City Attorney  
Tom Modica, Assistant City Manager  
Arturo Sanchez, Deputy City Manager  
Amy Bodek, Director, Development Services  
Sean Crumby, Deputy Director of Public Works/City Engineer  
Linda Tatum, Manager, Planning Bureau  
Elvira Hallinan, Manager, Marine Bureau  
Christopher Koontz, Advance Planning Officer  
Eric Lopez, Project Management Officer  
Rebecca Jimenez, Assistant to the City Manager