

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

NORTH COAST DISTRICT OFFICE
1385 8TH STREET, SUITE 130
ARCATA, CA 95521
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W12b

1-23-0773

(California Department of Transportation)

December 8, 2023

CORRESPONDENCE



November 29, 2023

Abbie Strickland
Transportation Program Analyst
California Coastal Commission

via email: abigail.strickland@coastal.ca.gov

RE: Eureka South Broadway Complete Streets Project (CDP Application No. 1-23-0773)

Ms. Strickland:

Our organizations strongly support the Eureka South Broadway Complete Streets Project (“project”), which seeks to improve safety and comfort for people walking, biking, rolling, and riding the bus in Eureka’s Broadway (US Highway 101) corridor. Broadway is currently the most dangerous street in Humboldt County for pedestrians and bicyclists, with tragically common collisions resulting in serious injuries and deaths. This safety crisis is a direct result of the design of the street. The project will significantly improve the street design, and in doing so will save lives. Because Broadway currently acts as a barrier to safe bike and pedestrian travel between Eureka’s residential neighborhoods and Humboldt Bay, the project will also improve access to the coast, including the California Coastal Trail segment known as the Hikshari’ Trail, the Elk River Estuary, and the Elk River Spit.

This project is in part a result of our organizations’ advocacy for near-term safety improvements to Broadway. In response, Caltrans District 1 has invited input and collaboration from our organizations throughout the project development process. We have provided numerous comments directly to District 1 staff, many of which have resulted in improvements to project design. We are grateful to District 1 staff for their collaboration and responsiveness.

Our organizations also support the proposed conditions of approval for the Coastal Development Permit, particularly Special Condition 1, which calls for a Multimodal Use Monitoring Report to assess the project’s effectiveness. We also request two additional minor conditions.

We agree with your staff's assessment that additional traffic calming beyond what is proposed in the project is both possible and desirable. We also agree that it would be significantly better to use hard barriers such as metal or concrete bollards to protect bicyclists, rather than the proposed flexible bollards. The proposed flexible bollards will have benefits for traffic calming and bicyclist comfort, but will provide no meaningful physical protection from high-speed traffic.

We also have concerns about the design of the improved bus stops. Currently, the project proposes bus pull-outs with passengers loading and unloading directly in the bike lane. We feel this could result in significant conflicts between bicyclists and transit riders, particularly transit riders using wheelchairs and those with hearing and/or vision impairments who may have trouble assessing approaching bike traffic. We request that the bus stops and surrounding streetscapes be redesigned to fix this problem by separating the bus loading/unloading zone from the bike lane while ensuring safety for all street users.

Therefore, we ask that you approve the Coastal Development Permit with staff's recommended conditions, along with the following two additional conditions:

1. Replace flexible bollards with solid bollards which can provide physical protection for bicyclists.
2. Redesign transit stops to separate bus loading/unloading zones from bicycle lanes and provide safe conditions for all street users at and near bus stops.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Colin Fiske, Executive Director
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Caroline Griffith, Executive Director
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director@yournec.org

From: [Kassandra Grimm](#)
To: NorthCoast@Coastal
Subject: Public Comment on December 2023 Agenda Item Wednesday 12b - Application No. 1-23-0773 (Caltrans, South Broadway Complete Streets, Eureka)
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:58:27 PM

To whom it may concern.

I am writing to comment on the proposed Broadway Project in Eureka. I feel it is important to keep bus stops out of the bike lane. When I bike around Eureka and there is a bus in the bike lane, especially near a traffic light intersection, I feel very vulnerable making maneuvers around the bus.

Thank you for your time.
Kassandra Grimm

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December 8, 2023

California Coastal Commission
North Coast District
1385 8th Street, Suite 130
Arcata, California 95521

RE: Public Comments Regarding Application No. 1-23-0773 (Caltrans, South Broadway Complete Streets, Eureka) (the "Project"); ITEM W12b

Dear Commissioners:

My office represents Pierson's Building Center ("Pierson's") located at 4100 Broadway in Eureka, California. Pierson's entrance is located within the Project location.

Pierson's is in the business of selling home improvement goods, lumber, and garden supplies. It has been serving the City of Eureka and the surrounding communities for over 70 years. The sole ingress and egress to Pierson's business is off of U.S. Highway 101/Broadway ("U.S. 101" or "Broadway"). Pierson's has a large volume of customer traffic, estimated to be between 1,000 to 1,700 customer cars per day. It also has a large volume of 40' commercial tractor-trailer traffic entering and exiting throughout the day.

There is a slow down lane for vehicles entering Pierson's from Broadway on the southbound side. There is an "on-ramp" lane for vehicles exiting the store onto Broadway going southbound. Pierson's entry from and exit to Broadway northbound is light controlled. There is a turn lane for entering Pierson's from Broadway northbound. There is another turn lane for exiting Pierson's onto Broadway northbound. This layout minimizes congestion to the extent possible by providing an additional lane for customers to safely enter and exit.

As any local resident will tell you, traffic becomes severely backed up during Pierson's busiest time. Lines of idling vehicles will stretch from Pierson's exit/entrance to the lumber yard and snake through the parking lot. Pierson's has received customer complaints that entering and exiting its business is challenging. Customers also inform Pierson's that wait times coming and going would influence their decision to shop there.

Certain elements of the Project's design make Pierson's congestion issues worse. Those design details include: (1) the location of the proposed bus stop at Mile 75.2 just south of Pierson's entrance and the elimination of the merge lane exiting Pierson's onto Broadway southbound; (2) the elimination of the slow down lane entering Pierson's from Broadway southbound to accommodate the bike lane.

Eliminating the turn lanes into and out of Pierson's will only increase the congestion. More congestion means increased customer vehicles and tractor trailers idling in Pierson's parking lot. Adding bike lanes and bus stops will not solve this problem. Moreover, the design has potential safety impacts. Reducing travel lanes for large commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles, and pedestrians means more potential for accidents. The safety problems of this design should be obvious.

These potential impacts are not analyzed in the staff report. There is no traffic study measuring the potential increase in congestion at Pierson's store. There is also no analysis of how much use these bike lanes and bus stops will get. While a use report is a subsequent condition of the Project, this is putting the cart before the horse. There is simply no way to balance the Project's potential harm to Pierson's and the public with the Project's benefits. The Project materials do not even consider any less harmful designs for this portion of the Project.

Other design elements potentially harm the aesthetic of Pierson's location. For instance, the proposed landscaping will block the public's view of the iconic "Big Hammer" and the mural painted on Pierson's exterior walls. The "Big Hammer" is a local landmark and blocking it with trees does not make sense. The mural on Pierson's exterior walls pays tribute to local people who have worked at Pierson's through the years and is a unique part of the fabric of south Broadway. Again, blocking the view with trees does not make sense. It appears the impact from the proposed landscaping on the already existing aesthetic of south Broadway was not analyzed.

This letter is not the first time these Pierson's has raised these concerns to Caltrans. Pierson's managers called the Caltrans Project Team to voice their concerns. No call back was received. Pierson's complaints were not included in the Caltrans materials. While it appears several stakeholder meetings were held on this Project, those meetings all occurred during the COVID pandemic. Given the timing of the meetings, those meetings did not provide Pierson's with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the Project's design. Caltrans also never solicited Pierson's input concerning the Project's design.

Despite the lack of engagement,

Pierson's is willing to work with Caltrans to address its concerns and mitigate the potential harms of the Project design.

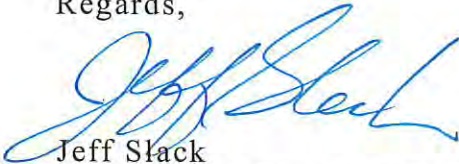
California Coastal Commission

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Page 3

Pierson's is willing to make available different portions of its real estate fronting Highway 101 south to accommodate the bus stop, the turn lanes, and the landscaping while minimizing those elements potential impacts to Pierson's business. Pierson's request of you is to postpone your determination on Caltrans coastal development permit application until such time as the potential harm of the current Project design can be analyzed and potential mitigations to that harm can be proposed.

Regards,



Jeff Slack

Attorney for Pierson's Building Center

FW: Comment on Item 12b Wednesday 12/13/23

ExecutiveStaff@Coastal <ExecutiveStaff@coastal.ca.gov>

Mon 12/11/2023 9:37 AM

To:Strickland, Abigail@Coastal <abigail.strickland@coastal.ca.gov>;Kraemer, Melissa@Coastal <Melissa.Kraemer@coastal.ca.gov>

Fyi - -

From: Wendy Ring <wring123@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:40 PM
To: ExecutiveStaff@Coastal <ExecutiveStaff@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Comment on Item 12b Wednesday 12/13/23

I cycle in Eureka and the only safe way to ride down Broadway at present is on the sidewalk, (which may be illegal but is better than being dead). I strongly support the plan to narrow the car lanes and add class 4 bike lanes but share Coastal Commission staff's concern about the plastic barriers. CalTrans gave us a pilot of the flexible "poles" they want to install and they showed damage within a week. Rather than inspire a feeling of safety, these scuffed and deformed plastic poles serve as evidence that cars drive into the bike lane and hit things. The result is hardly inviting.

Humboldt County has the second highest rate of cyclist/pedestrian fatalities in the state. Car on cyclist collisions at the speed limits on Broadway pose a high risk of serious injury or death. Many people here who would like to use bicycles for transportation do not because they justifiably feel it is too dangerous. If we want those people to feel comfortable riding, we must put more between them and the cars than a bendable strip of plastic.

CalTrans staff said they'll put the flimsy poles in first and replace them with something better later, if needed. Mode shift to active transportation is essential to cut transportation emissions and achieve California's climate goals. People won't do it unless we make it safe. With global warming already at 1.4 degrees, there is no time to waste. Please require CalTrans to install better bike lane barriers from the start.

Thanks,

Wendy Ring MD, MPH