

Commission on Disability

INFORMATION CALENDAR
July 15, 2003

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: Commission on Disability

Subject: Bay Trail Extension to the Berkeley Marina Preliminary Project Description

INTRODUCTION

At its June 11, 2003 meeting, the Commission on Disability passed a motion in support of the proposed trail width as developed in the Preliminary Project Description for the Bay Trail Extension to the Berkeley Marina and as recommended by staff of the Parks and Recreation Department (Rodolfo-Sioson/Betcher) Ayes: Rodolfo-Sioson, Smith, Shaw, Wilcox, Allamand, Rabkin, Betcher, Rose; Absent: Todd

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Bay Trail extension to the Berkeley Marina project currently calls for a 12-foot wide multi-use trail extending from the new Bay Trail into and through the Marina. There has been discussion in subcommittees of the Waterfront Commission of reducing this 12-foot width to 6 feet for selected portions of the trail. Narrowing the trail width will force many people with disabilities, in particular those using wheelchairs, to use the trail in a single-file line thus greatly impacting people's ability to interact with friends and family as they enjoy the park and walk along the trail. The narrower width also will greatly increase the potential for conflict between bicyclist and pedestrians as they vie for space on the trail, a situation that is easy to avoid by providing a wider trail and maintaining the 12-foot width throughout.

Berkeley's marina is in the middle of a major urban area; when the improvements to the Marina are completed, this trail will be heavily used. Berkeley's marina has the potential to be a jewel in the system of trails circling the Bay. Making the trail less accessible and usable to everyone can only lessen this potential. The trail must be maintained at its current 12-foot width

BACKGROUND

Multi-use trails, by their very definition, are intended for the enjoyment of a wide variety of users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, people on roller skates, parents with strollers and on and on. It is easy to imagine all of these groups using the trail simultaneously. While current federal and state guidelines all indicate that multi-use trails be as wide as possible in order to facilitate this use, common sense also dictates the trail be wide enough to accommodate everybody. The current design reflects this intent and reinforces Berkeley's commitment to its citizens of providing equal and enjoyable access to its parks and services for all.

Bay Trail Extension to the Berkeley Marina
Preliminary Project Description

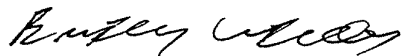
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Approved:



Emily Wilcox

