

August 25, 2015



Stacy Blackwood, Director
OC Parks
13042 Old Myford Road
Irvine, CA 92602

RE: Peters Canyon General Development Plan

Dear Ms. Blackwood:

The Safe Trails Coalition (STC) reviewed the General Development Plan (GDP) vision for Peters Canyon Regional Park. We've also closely examined the two alternatives proposed for the Class 1 bikeway. This letter offers feedback for inclusion in the process.

Peters Canyon is a valuable asset to not only the regional park system, but also local residents that enjoy the park on a daily or weekly basis. We are pleased to see OC Parks gathering input during the GDP process that allows existing users, residents, neighbors and stakeholders to provide important information for the future of the park. The Coalition looks forward to providing input during the environmental review process as well.

As you know, the park includes important natural communities and species that make it such a special place. We believe any new GDP for the park needs to begin with a thorough inventory of the resources, including but not limited to documentation of breeding populations of California Gnatcatcher (federally threatened), Least Bell's Vireo (federally endangered), and coastal Cactus Wren (species of special concern).

Hiking, equestrian and bicycling activities are already featured activities in Peters Canyon—and the park offers several multi-use trails. As you know, a Class 1 bikeway is paved for exclusive use of bicyclists and hikers with limited vehicular interaction. We believe adding a paved bikeway through the regional park will be detrimental to the existing habitat, increase user conflicts, deter equestrians from using the park, and could be more appropriately placed elsewhere. Further, Class 1 bikeways usually encourage road bike speeds up to and exceeding 30 MPH. This would be in excess of the OC Park ordinances.

The purpose of this letter is to provide OC Parks with a new alternative (Alternative 3) for the Class 1 bikeway. We believe Alternatives 1 and 2 fail to offer substantively different alternatives. Instead they offer the same route with a slight alignment variation on the south end of the bikeway. To this end, the Coalition believes the Class 1 bikeway should be converted to a Class 2 bikeway and placed on each side of the existing Jamboree Road.

With a reduction in the width of the center median and with additional striping along Jamboree this would be a more desirable bikeway location for multiple reasons. Adding the Class 1 bikeway to the Park, since the trail is intended for commuter use, actually adds mileage to the trip. Using a Class 2 on Jamboree allows for a more direct route for commuters. Alternative 3 would be included within existing infrastructure—infrastructure that is now under capacity since the 3,000 units proposed by The Irvine

Company will no longer be constructed. Therefore, the daily commuter trips in the morning and afternoon peaks will not get significantly worse than they are right now.

By creating a Class 2 bikeway outside the park, it allows for bicyclists to increase their speed, go with the flow of traffic, and reduces the anticipated user conflicts. Further, the City, OC Parks and the Orange County Transportation Authority may actually receive credit for inclusion of an active transportation project because it aligns with the Regional Transportation Plan goals and SB 375.

We hope you find this alternative suitable for inclusion in the Plan. Should you have any questions, please call me directly at 714-779-7561.

Sincerely,

Melanie Schlotterbeck
Facilitator, Safe Trails Coalition