


Memo

To: Members, Board of Supervisors
From: Rich Gordon 
Date: 03/29/02
Re: Devil's Slide Tunnels Aesthetic Committee Phase One Report

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors accept the Phase One Report of the Devil's Slide Tunnel Aesthetic Design Committee.

BACKGROUND:

As part of its study of the proposed Devil's Slide Tunnel, CalTrans convened an Aesthetic Committee to advise CalTrans on key decisions which impact the design of the tunnel. This Committee was comprised to two representatives from the Pacifica City Council, two representatives from the Half Moon Bay City Council, and two representatives from the Midcoast Community Council. I served as a representative of the County of San Mateo.

The Committee met seven times to discuss issues related to the south rock cut, the south and north portal cuts, the siting of the Operations and Maintenance Center Building, and the bridge design at the north portal. At the conclusion of these meetings, the Committee selected preferred alternatives. These preferred alternatives represent the Phase One findings, as the Committee will continue to meet to advise CalTrans on additional design issues.

The preferred alternatives for Phase One are discussed in the attached report.

This report was presented to the Midcoast Community Council on March 27, 2002. The Council voted six to one to accept the report. The Council also requested that the Aesthetics Committee address the following issues in the Phase Two study: the fill site, the OMC Building, revegetation, habitat protection, LCP compliance, width of the tunnel bore and Federal Highway safety requirements.

DISCUSSION:

CalTrans sought consensus from the Aesthetics Committee on several issues which impact the proposed tunnel project on a macro-scale. These high level decisions impact major design considerations. There are many additional design considerations at a micro-level, such as trim for the portals, design of portal openings, and landscaping. These decisions will be considered during Phase Two of the work of the Aesthetics Committee.

In general, the Aesthetics Committee when considering an alternative selected those that had the least impact on the natural environment. In some cases, these alternatives were more expensive, but the Committee felt that these less invasive alternatives would have greater support from the community and regulatory agencies.

CalTrans will be present at the April 2, 2002 meeting of the Board of Supervisors to make a presentation based on the attached report. I remain available to answer any questions that you might have on this matter.