



**CITY COUNCIL - STUDY SESSION AGENDA
SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF HALF MOON BAY**

TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2020

REMOTE PARTICIPATION (SEE NEXT PAGE)

**Adam Eisen, Mayor
Robert Brownstone, Vice Mayor
Deborah Penrose, Councilmember
Harvey Rarback, Councilmember
Debbie Ruddock, Councilmember**

5:30 PM

This agenda contains a brief description of each item to be considered. Those wishing to address the City Council on any matter not listed on the Agenda, but within the jurisdiction of the City Council to resolve, may come forward to the podium during the Public Forum portion of the Agenda and will have a maximum of three minutes to discuss their item. Those wishing to speak on a Public Hearing matter will be called forward at the appropriate time during the Public Hearing consideration.

Please Note: Anyone wishing to present materials to the City Council, please submit seven copies to the City Clerk.

Copies of written documentation relating to each item of business on the Agenda are on file in the Office of the City Clerk at City Hall and the Half Moon Bay Library where they are available for public inspection. If requested, the agenda shall be available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132.) Information may be obtained by calling 650-726-8271.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, special assistance for participation in this meeting can be obtained by contacting the City Clerk's Office at 650-726-8271. A 48-hour notification will enable the City to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

<http://hmbcity.com/>

SPECIAL REMOTE PROTOCOLS

In accordance with Governor Newsom’s Executive Order No-29-20, this will be a teleconference meeting without a physical location to help stop the spread of COVID-19. This meeting will be conducted entirely by remote participation, in compliance with the Governor’s Executive Order N-29-20 allowing for deviation of teleconference rules required by the Ralph M. Brown Act.

This meeting will be conducted via Zoom Webinar. Members of the public are welcome to login into the webinar as Attendees. During any public comment portions, attendees may use the “raise your hand” feature and will be called upon and unmuted when it is their turn to speak. The meeting will also be streamed on Channel 27, on pacificcoast.tv, on Facebook in English at www.facebook.com/cityofhalfmoonbay and in Spanish at www.facebook.com/halfmoonbayrecreation. Please click to join the webinar: <https://zoom.us/j/99404200598> or join by phone at 669-900-9128, using Webinar ID 994-0420-0598.

CONVENE SPECIAL MEETING

1.. STUDY SESSION

1.A. STUDY SESSION – IMPACTS OF BEACH ACCESS AND VEHICLE PARKING

Staff Recommendation: Receive staff report on alternatives to address impacts associated with beach access, conduct a public study session, and provide feedback and direction to staff on next steps.

[STAFF REPORT](#)

ADJOURN SPECIAL MEETING

BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HALF MOON BAY

AGENDA REPORT

For meeting of: **July 21, 2020**

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

VIA: Bob Nisbet, City Manager

FROM: John Doughty, Public Works Director
Maz Bozorginia, City Engineer

TITLE: STUDY SESSION – IMPACTS OF BEACH ACCESS AND VEHICLE PARKING

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive staff report on alternatives to address impacts associated with beach access, conduct a public study session, and provide feedback and direction to staff on next steps.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with conducting the study session. After receiving direction from council on next steps, staff will provide estimated costs associated with implementation of any alternatives presented tonight.

STRATEGIC ELEMENT:

This action supports the Infrastructure and Environment & Healthy Communities and Public Safety Elements of the Strategic Plan.

OVERVIEW:

The City and Coastside is located within the California Coastal Zone and subject to the provisions of the voter approved California Coastal Act. One of the principal tenets of the Act is to ensure public access to the coast and beaches. Access includes reasonable parking and accommodation for all. As such, the City and County are limited in their discretion to address beach parking and access through measures available to other communities.

Beach access impacts can be characterized namely by the time of year; peak summer/fall and off-peak times the remainder of the year. This has and will continue to be part of living Coastside of a highly dense urban area like the Bay Area. Each year, beginning in the spring and through much of fall, Half Moon Bay and the entire Coastside becomes one of the more popular destinations for beachgoers and visitors. Beach going activity on the Coastside tends to be exacerbated during interior heatwaves, around major holidays, weekends and often during high school graduation time. Off-peak activity varies, but is generally manageable; however, the City itself devotes significant resources year round to operations, maintenance and enforcement of

City beaches and Poplar Beach particularly. These impacts vary somewhat by location, but are typically more acute at Francis State Campground (Kelly Avenue) and Poplar Beach (Poplar Street).

Virtually all visitors to the Coastside are coming by private automobile. Mass transit is not really a viable option given the distance many visitors travel and practically, it is difficult to bring coolers and beach gear onto a bus or shuttle—which is not to say that we should not look for solutions. Until that time comes, the simple reality is that Half Moon Bay and the Coastside are often impacted heavily by traffic from those visiting. This also means that those visitors will be looking for a place to park and human nature being what it is, looking for a parking spot as close to the beach as possible. Any given day in the summer months, the overflow of parking demand at Poplar Beach and Half Moon State Beaches are met by on-street parking on public streets in neighborhoods to the east; the degree of neighborhood parking varies significantly during the peak season and by proximity to the beach access. Off-season, the public lots tend to meet the demand. Residents of the adjacent neighborhoods have reported issues typically revolving around after-hours parties, bonfires, and the like.

Within City limits, there are four major public (fee) day use areas; three that are part of the Half Moon Bay State Beach and the other being the City-owned Poplar Beach Parking Lot. It has been pointed out and staff have confirmed that often times the Poplar Beach Parking Lot is full while the day use lots at the Half Moon State Beach are not (and sometimes not even fully open). The City is hopeful that many of the intergovernmental issues can be resolved in due time.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, there has come an increased concern from local residents regarding the influx of visitors and the overflow of vehicles and persons into neighborhoods. These concerns have been voiced in many forms and as a result, the Council directed staff schedule this study session to discuss potential mitigation measures for beach access impacts. The purpose of tonight's session is to provide context to the existing regulatory structure, the intergovernmental nature of the work, and generally outline potential pathways to reduce the impacts of public beach access.

BACKGROUND:

The Coastside has long been a destination for many seeking the natural beauty and benefits the area provides, whether it be a short stay or a permanent one. As the weather warms each spring, a new season of travelers start to make their way to the coast and the many local beaches. With the influx of visitors, each year the residential areas west of Highway 1 are impacted with increased traffic and congestion, higher parking occupancy and in many cases littering. With the general public trying to maintain social distancing practices, increased traffic to the beaches has concerned residents with some requesting the City Council to once again consider residential parking permits to limit immediate exposure concerns as well as address the ongoing summer beach challenges.

This is not the first time the City has considered options to address this issue. In 2005, the City considered alternatives to address resident concerns that beachgoers were blocking driveways, littering neighborhoods, and defacing property¹. Following public and City Council discussion and consultation with the Coastal Commission, it was determined that the best course of action was to pursue a nighttime residential parking permit parking program. Over the next year, the City worked on environmental review and Coastal Commission review of the proposed program.

On October 17, 2006, the City Council adopted resolution No. C-74-06 (Attachment 1), authorizing the establishment of a nighttime permit parking program to be in effect from midnight to 4:00 am daily on specified street blocks in the Miramar/Naples and Alsace Lorraine Neighborhoods, as approved under a Coastal Development Permit CDP-02-04. A Draft Initial Study and Negative Declaration was prepared and adopted for this CDP. This action also approved Permit Parking for residents. For a fee, two vehicles per home were allowed to park in the public right-of-way during those certain hours without receiving a citation. No guest or temporary parking permits were available under that program. This action was appealed by the Coastal Commission and approved with conditions.

DISCUSSION:

There are several alternatives (each with benefits and drawbacks) to consider in minimizing the impacts of beach access. This report will discuss Off-Street Public Parking Management, On-Street Public Parking Management, Signage & Wayfinding, Traffic Calming and Additional Parking Alternatives.

Off-Street Public Parking Management

Collectively, the beaches in the Half Moon Bay area have approximately 900 paid automobile parking spaces with the State Parks charging a flat rate of \$10.00 per day. Most of the State parking lots have large spaces, old markings and unstriped areas so additional parking could be realized with renewed maintenance and redesign of striping. The Planning Commission recently approved a coastal development permit to adopt a flat rate structure, consistent with State Parks/Beaches. It is acknowledged that when parking is unavailable at public beach lots, visitors seek parking nearby and many times finding unregulated parking on residential streets. It is also clear that some visitors choose to avoid paying for parking even when paid parking is available.

The City has not been able to reach out to State Parks to determine what empirical data is available on daily parking lot occupancy exists. City staff has access to Poplar Beach Parking Lot data, but has not initiated compilation. Even without empirical data, we are aware that many days during the year, the Poplar Parking Lot is filled to capacity (with many visitors parking in the adjacent neighborhoods), State parking lots in Half Moon Bay are not full and often times are not available to the public. The question is, in the short term, how do we get better

¹ Hoffman, S. (2005, November 9). *City considers permit parking for beach neighborhoods*. Half Moon Bay Review. https://www.hmbreview.com/news/city-considers-permit-parking-for-beach-neighborhoods/article_1fc14b2f-0812-5dae-86cd-30e845e672ca.html

utilization of all four public parking lots and lessen demands on Poplar Beach and Francis Campground day parking on Kelly Avenue?

One alternative to consider is how technology can assist. Current technology is available to provide “real-time” information on parking lot occupancy. The City currently has access to this data by virtue of the electronic pay station. Presently, State Parks has not adopted electronic pay station technology (they collect by hand). With the State adoption and implementation of technology, parking availability can be monitored by the City and State to better manage parking. Ultimately, this information could be used to develop signage and online access to direct visitors to available parking through any number of navigation applications available on the market. Again, this alternative would be predicated on State Parks implementing electronic parking system or other technology and their willingness to share data with the City.

The City is highly engaged with the community through various methods including the City website, e-news, social media and advertising. There is room for collaboration with public agencies including State Parks, San Mateo County, Caltrans, San Mateo County Sheriff as well as with private groups like the Chamber of Commerce and hoteliers to ensure visitors are aware of the options for beach access in Half Moon Bay and beyond the City limits (north and south). If directed, staff will initiate discussions with public agencies, private parties including hoteliers to develop a coordinated strategy. The City can also evaluate ways to address in apps such as Google Maps and Waze.

Finally, we believe that signage can be part of the solution. This issue is discussed in the Signage and Wayfinding section below.

Conclusion: Ultimately, with or without technology, there is a significant number of off-street public parking spaces available in Half Moon Bay and many of these spaces sit empty while neighborhoods are impacted with visitors. There is a need to ensure that public off-street spaces are being filled whenever possible and a strong collaboration with State Parks will be needed. There is likely some education and communication that will be needed as many visitors tend to go “where they have always gone”.

On-Street Public Parking Management

For many years, residents of neighborhoods have suggested establishment of resident parking restrictions. These discussions tend to ebb and flow with the seasons and the beach operational issues of the day. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to renewed calls for resident only parking restrictions. The challenges of implementing are many. Staff will touch on a few of the more pertinent ones. First, the California Coastal Commission has claimed jurisdiction over parking management as it directly and indirectly impacts public access to the coast and beaches. Our research finds that the Coastal Commission has a long held and strong position against management strategies including paid parking and permit parking programs based upon their feeling the strategies impede “maximum access”. For example, the City of Newport Beach has been involved in an extended process to adopt residential parking permits which, on appeal in 2019, resulted in the Coastal Commission upholding its decision to deny its residential

parking permit program. Although each case has unique considerations, the Coastal Commission staff report (<https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2019/3/F9a/F9a-3-2019-staff%20report.pdf>) does provide insight into the bigger conversation of preserving coastal access. Secondly, not every resident wants to see a permit system placed on their block or in their neighborhood given that the program does limit parking availability and would be subject to enforcement. Finally, there is a significant financial cost that will have to be borne by residents should a program be allowed by the Coastal Commission.

Any proposed program would be subject to a coastal development permit which is ultimately appealable to the Coastal Commission. The City would be required to conduct environmental review, file an application and proceed through what would likely be an extended process with the Coastal Commission.

If approved, the program would require additional investment by the City including costs associated with fabricating and installing required signage (and long term maintenance), administration of the permit program and enforcement of the program. For example, the cost of signage for Poplar Street and the adjacent minor roads (1st, 2nd & 3rd Avenues) one block north and south, would be approximately \$75,000. A successful program would require ongoing enforcement. Whether by the San Mateo County Sheriff, the City or a private party, a Community Service Officer (CSO) or equivalent would be needed along with equipment. There is also the administration of permits, annual renewals, and other overhead costs that would need to be considered. Based upon estimates, annual permit fees could be up to \$200 per vehicle per household. Keeping in mind there is an economy of scale aspect to any parking program. If the program were focused on a small area, costs of permits would likely increase due to fixed operational costs. As a rule, the City Council has adopted a standard of 100-percent cost recovery for programs and user fees.

Conclusion: Pursuing any residential permit program in Half Moon Bay will be time consuming, costly and difficult to given the Coastal Act. Implementing a program will require initial capital investments and long term operational costs that will be borne by program participants. Given these factors, staff would suggest initially focusing City efforts on other alternatives.

Signage and Wayfinding

Signage in various forms can be beneficial to informing visitors of the location of State Beaches (brown signs) and the presence of parking lots in Half Moon Bay. In particular, little/no signage exists to direct westbound motorists on Hwy 92 to Half Moon State Beaches and parking areas to the north. In addition, signage on Highway 1 and Venice Boulevard and Highway 1 and Young Avenue is lacking and old. These signs would be located in Caltrans right-of-way and part of signage typically provided and installed by Caltrans on behalf of State Parks. The City could also choose to expedite process by offering to purchase and install signs under a Caltrans encroachment permit. These signage locations could ultimately be redesigned to provide the parking management information discussed earlier.



Examples of State Park/Beach signs

The City fabricated and installed wayfinding signage (See photo below) directing motorists to public parking lots. It is unclear whether many motorists see these signs given their current locations and weathering. Similar signs could be fabricated and placed to provide additional information and direction to public parking areas in the City (and beyond?).



Google Streetview – Kelly Avenue near Francis Beach

City staff is planning to initiate redesign of City identification and wayfinding signs in Half Moon Bay. This work will be follow-on to efforts initiated in 2014. These signs can be designed and located to direct motorist/visitors to beaches and parking lots among other things. These signs are typically found along major highways like Hwy 92 and Hwy 1. Prioritization could be given to placement of signs focusing on beaches and parking.



Example of wayfinding sign

Finally, staff can work with State Parks to identify potential signage to assist visitors in finding State Beach parking areas.

Conclusion: Many visitors arrive to the Coastside by private automobile. All arrive to the City by Hwy 92 and/or Hwy 1. Even as people utilize online apps, improving and expanding signage on Hwy 92 and Hwy 1 would assist drivers. In relative terms, this is a low cost—high return alternative.

Traffic Calming and Restrictions

Residents over the years have also suggested that the City utilize traffic calming, one-way streets and traffic restriction as a means to address the impacts of beach parking on local streets. These types of improvements can be found in various forms on the California coast.

Traffic calming is a general term for physical improvements made to either reduce travel lane widths or give the appearance of a narrower path of travel. The intent of traffic calming is to reduce travel speeds in neighborhoods. The improvements often reduce on-street parking. Traffic calming methods, include, but is not limited to:

- Speed humps
- Bulb-outs
- Chicanes
- Traffic Circles



Example – various Traffic Calming Measures in Rural Setting

Traffic restrictions represent a set of more drastic measures intended to direct motorists away from “undesirable” areas to more desirable areas. These measures often negatively impact local motorists and their use is typically of concern to emergency services (Police and Fire) and other services like street cleaning and garbage collection. Used sparingly and designed appropriately, traffic restrictions can be beneficial. It should be clear that with this method, traffic will be refocused to other streets and routes representing greater traffic impact to those areas.

Re-designating streets to one-way has been mentioned by the public at times. This is an option available, but would not be recommended by staff. Today, the trend is to convert one-way streets to two way streets. In addition to obvious issues for residents accessing those streets on a daily basis, there are Vehicle Mile Traveled (VMT) implications to forcing longer day-to-day trips in a one-way road network.

Conclusion: There is a significant financial consideration with any of these alternatives. There are implications to adjoining streets, public safety and municipal services that have to be considered prior to implementing. Nevertheless, traffic calming and traffic restriction can provide some relief when implemented with full community disclosure of positives and negatives.

Additional Parking Alternatives

Over the last several months community members have suggested the City should develop new public parking; presumably at Poplar Beach. The expansion potential of parking at Poplar Beach is extremely limited given the constraints of the closed County landfill to the south, Poplar Street to the north, the bluff/ocean to the west and delineated wetland on the parcel directly east. The Poplar Gateways Plan and Environmental Impact Report (currently on hold due to budget constraints) identified alternatives for expansion of parking to the north; there has not been consensus in the community to date regarding parking expansion. Currently, no funding has been identified for Poplar Gateways area when entitlements are issued. Similar environmental constraints exist west of Highway 1.

Given the challenge of developing on undeveloped land, staff evaluated potential options for use of existing developed parking areas. Frankly, there are very few options in this regard. Staff has spoken to Cabrillo Unified School District (CUSD) regarding the use of Hatch Elementary School parking for weekend peak season use. The District indicated a willingness to discuss. This could be implemented in summer 2021.

CONCLUSION:

Staff has attempted to reflect community comments and expressed sentiment on beach access impacts throughout the City. We have attempted to provide some research and professional insight into the report. The report is not intended to be an exhaustive in its identification of potential solutions or in recommending one over another. We hope that the report generates community input and perhaps alternatives not considered by staff. We will also be making a presentation that will expand on the subject matter. Ultimately we anticipate any strategy to include a mix of actions and measurements of success.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.