

4.7 TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION

Introduction

This section of the EIR is based primarily on site visits, information contained in the Broadway-Brommer Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Connection DEIR (Brady/LSA, 1999), and a parking survey undertaken by staff of the City's Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department in November 2005. The proposed project would not generate significant additional vehicular traffic, and for this reason, a detailed traffic study by a registered traffic engineer for the project was not completed. The focus of the EIR analysis is upon parking demand within the neighborhood of the project.

Environmental Setting

Existing Streets. The main street serving the Arana Gulch site on the north is Agnes Street. Agnes Street is connected to the main east-west travel corridor, Soquel Avenue, via Mentel Avenue and Park Way South (see Figure 3-1).

Brommer Street provides access to the Upper Harbor at the south end of Arana Gulch and continues east to 41st Avenue near Capitola. This street is not a designated entrance to Arana Gulch but does provide access to paths at the south end of Arana Gulch and parking is available along Brommer Street.

Brommer Street crosses 7th Avenue southeast of the southern end of Arana Gulch (see Figure 3-1). These are two of the major roads within the County's jurisdiction: 7th Avenue, a north-south arterial, connects with Eaton Street and Murray Street to the south of Arana Gulch, and the Murray Street Bridge provides access across the Upper Harbor waterways.

The nearest main roads to Arana Gulch to the west of the site are Frederick Street, a north-south arterial that connects to Soquel Avenue to the north; and Broadway Avenue, an east-west corridor. There is currently no direct access to Arana Gulch provided by Broadway Avenue due to the steep terrain of Hagemann Gulch.

Parking. Parking for visitors to Arana Gulch is presently available along Agnes Street, Mentel Avenue, and Park Way South, all located at the north end of Arana Gulch (see Figure 3-1). A parking survey was undertaken in November 2005 to document the usage of available street parking spaces at various times of the day and week. The results are summarized in Table 4.7-1. Of the 70 available nearby on-street parking spaces included in the survey, the average usage over the three days of the survey was 20 spaces, or 29 percent of the total available spaces. The time of greatest on-street parking usage was in the mid afternoon of November 1, which was a Tuesday.

While public parking is available at the Upper Harbor, with metered parking spaces, this parking is provided for Upper Harbor visitors and not intended for Arana Gulch users. The "Entrance" locations denoted on Figure 3-5 include the Agnes Street entrance, the future

Table 4.7-1 Parking Usage of Nearby Arana Gulch Street Parking Spaces

Location (see below)	Total Spaces Available	Spaces Used ^a	Spaces Used ^b	Spaces Used ^c	Average Usage	Percent Usage
Agnes Street						
South side	19	8	10	5	8	42.1%
North side	13	2	2	1	2	15.3%
Mentel Avenue						
West side (Agnes to 100 ft. north)	4	1	0	0	1	25%
West side (100-250 ft. north)*	5	2	2	2	2	40%
East side	9	3	4	6	4	25%
Park Way South						
West side	11	3	0	3	2	18%
East side	9	3	2	1	2	22%
TOTAL	70	22	20	18	20	29%

Notes: The south side of Agnes Street abuts the north end of Arana Gulch and includes no residences. The survey extended along the entire length of Agnes Street. For Mentel Avenue, the survey extended on the west side from Agnes Street, 100 feet north, where no residences are located, and from 100 to 250 ft. north where commercial uses on Soquel could begin to impact parking demand. The survey on the east side of Mentel Avenue extended from Agnes Street 250 feet to the north. For Park Way South, the survey extended from Agnes Street north 250 feet on the west and east sides.

Average usage was calculated by adding the three days of usage and dividing by three. The average usage (rounded to nearest integer except for west side of Mentel that was rounded upwards to one) was divided by the total available spaces to determine percent usage.

^a **Date/Time/Weather:** Tuesday, November 1 / 2:45 PM / mild, slightly cloudy

^b **Date/Time/Weather:** Wednesday, November 2 / 10 AM / overcast, mild

^c **Date/Time/Weather:** Saturday, November 5 / 2:15 PM / sunny, mild

Source: City of Santa Cruz, 2005.

Hagemann Gulch entrance on the west, and the Creek View Trail entrance on the south. These latter two entrances are denoted as entrance points due to the proposed multi-use trail and visitors are expected to arrive by foot or bicycle via the trail at these two points. It is anticipated that Agnes Street would remain the main entrance for those arriving at Arana Gulch via automobile.

Bike Paths in Site Vicinity. The 2002 “Santa Cruz County Bikeways” map (Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission, 2002) identifies bike routes in the vicinity of the project site. Bicycle lanes on existing roads in the project vicinity exist on portions of Soquel Avenue and Capitola Road to the north, 7th Avenue to the east, Brommer Street to the southeast, Murray Street to the south, and Broadway to the west. Frederick Street to the west is designated as an “alternate route” which means that this road is not necessarily signed as a bike route but may be a preferred alternative road to use by bicyclists. Portions of Soquel Avenue north of Arana Gulch are also designated as an alternate route. An alternate route is also designated south of Arana Gulch on the road that encircles the Upper Harbor.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Significance Criteria. For the purposes of this Draft EIR, the proposed project would present a significant impact if it would:

- Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections);
- Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the County Congestion Management Agency for designated roads or highways;
- Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks;
- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment);
- Result in inadequate emergency access;
- Result in inadequate parking capacity; or
- Conflict with applicable policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks).

Less-Than-Significant Impacts. The project would not increase traffic or result in any exceedance of a level of service standard. The Master Plan includes new and improved trails but is not expected to result in significantly increased use of the site. Any new users to Arana Gulch are expected to arrive via bicycle or foot, and not to require vehicular access to Arana Gulch, since many users are expected to continue to be surrounding residents. No significant parking capacity impacts are anticipated. As shown in Table 4.7-1, an average of only about 29 percent of the available street parking spaces is used throughout the week. These street spaces are expected to continue to be adequate to serve future users of Arana Gulch. No on-site parking is proposed.

The project would not have any impacts related to air traffic patterns or hazards due to design features. Emergency access would not be impacted (this issue is also addressed under “Public Services”). The project would not conflict with any policies or plans supporting alternative transportation. Conversely, the multi-use trails proposed as part of the project would encourage bicycle and foot travel within the City. The multi-use trail crossing the site in an east-west direction would link to Class II bike lanes and would serve as a direct route into the City of Santa Cruz for bicyclists who live in Live Oak or other unincorporated communities in Santa Cruz County, as well as the City of Capitola.

Potentially Significant Impacts. The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant transportation/circulation impacts.

Cumulative Impacts. The proposed project would not increase traffic in the site vicinity and thus would not contribute to cumulative traffic impacts as related to levels of service, parking demand, or safety. The cumulative projects as identified in Chapter 6 are all resi-

dential and none are proposed in the immediate vicinity of the site. No significant cumulative transportation impacts would result from the project.

References

Brady/LSA, 1999. Broadway-Brommer Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Connection, Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment, November.

City of Santa Cruz Parking Survey, 2005.

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, 2002. Santa Cruz County Bikeways (Map).