



## COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

### MODOC ROAD MULTI-USE PATH FAQ SHEET

#### What is the project?

- A roughly 1 mile 10-foot-wide multi-use path providing safe, ADA-compliant access along the corridor. The Modoc Road Multi-Use Path will start where the City of Santa Barbara path ends near Calle De Los Amigos and connect to the Obern Trail Bike Path across from Encore Drive. Construction will be phased:
  - Phase I: Calle De Los Amigos to Via Senda (1/3 mile) is currently under construction
  - Phase II: Via Senda to Encore (3/4 mile) is set to begin construction in summer 2023

#### What are the benefits?

- **Safety**
  - The project creates a separate low-stress path for people of all ages and abilities. It will provide a safer alternative to the unprotected bike lane adjacent to higher-speed traffic on Modoc Road.
- **Accessibility**
  - The project includes an ADA-compliant pathway that physically separates users from vehicles. Modoc Road currently lacks continuous sidewalks on either side of the roadway in the area.
- **Connectivity**
  - The project will complete a missing gap in the regional network of separated multi-use paths by connecting the City of Santa Barbara's recently constructed Las Positas and Modoc Road Multiuse Path to the Obern Trail. The project will provide local connections to schools, beaches, neighborhoods, and UCSB, completing a gap in the Coastal Access Route.

#### Did the County consider alternative alignments?

- Yes; the County considered three potential path alignments:
  - Alignment A would place the path directly adjacent to Modoc Road and increase the width of the roadway. Alignment A would be fully within County right-of-way and would not require any easements. This option avoids the Modoc Preserve but requires the most extensive tree removal, including the majority of the Canary Palm trees along Modoc Road.
  - Alignment B is also next to the roadway for portions of Modoc Road but would run along the backside of the Canary Palm trees on the eastern segment of Modoc Road. This alignment preserves the majority of the Canary Palms and reduces the overall amount of tree removal. The County prefers Alignment B because of the enhanced user experience and reduced impacts to trees.
  - Alignment C would follow Vieja Drive to Nogal Drive along an existing unimproved road. Public Works staff analyzed Alignment C but did not recommend it due to its remoteness, steeper grades, and lack of connectivity to the surrounding transportation network.

#### Was there environmental review?

- Yes; On May 13, 2022, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) notice of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was mailed to all residents and owners within 300 feet of the project and stakeholders, including the Audubon Society, the Environmental Defense Center, and SBBIKE+COAST. The public comment period was extended to June 17, 2022.
- The Draft MND will go before the County Board of Supervisors in mid-September for approval.
- Public Works staff have also coordinated with the La Cumbre Mutual Water District Company over the past year and walked the site with members of the public several times in recent months.

#### How many trees will be removed?



- The number of trees that may need to be removed is different for each alignment option. Trees will be replanted or relocated pursuant to CEQA mitigation requirements. Public Works will continue to coordinate with stakeholders on the size, location, and type of trees replanted during the detailed design stage.
  - Alignment A would require the removal of up to 49 trees including 29 palm trees. This is a decrease from the previous estimate of up to 60 trees, including 35 palm trees.
  - Alignment B would require the removal of up to 22 trees, including zero palm trees. Most of the trees would be eucalyptus trees and other non-native trees. This is a decrease from the previous estimate of up to 41 trees, including 25 palm trees. Any trees that are removed will be replaced in coordination with the managers of the Modoc Preserve.

### **Who owns the Modoc Preserve?**

- The Modoc Preserve along Modoc Road is owned by the La Cumbre Mutual Water Company. After reviewing various options for this land and seeking the approval of its shareholders, the Water Company in 1999 granted a conservation easement to the Land Trust to keep this land open and undeveloped for community benefit. The Water Company retains the right to build facilities like water wells, pipelines, and access roads, and otherwise, the land will remain as open space. (source: <https://www.sblandtrust.org/portfolio-item/modoc-preserve/>)

### **Cost and Funding?**

- The estimated project cost is \$8M, of which \$5.4M is funded by a grant from the California State Active Transportation Program (ATP).

### **Where can I find more information?**

- Additional information, including the Draft MND, Informational Sheets, and Draft Alignment Plans area available for download on the [Transportation Division Website](#).