

## Project Vision and Approach



*Some portions of the trail will be easy to implement*

The proposed trail will allow the public to enjoy this wonderful mile of coastline without “loving it to death.” This spectacular segment of coast is being impacted by the ongoing processes of shoreline and wave erosion, exacerbated by sea level rise, and also by the intense public use from parking, trail and shoreline access by visitors and local residents. This project provides the opportunity to address these impacts and competing objectives in a thoughtful and balanced design that will improve the habitat, protect sensitive coastal resources, provide a more enjoyable overall user experience, and provide trail and parking facilities that are more sustainable over the long term.

### Project Goals

The Point Pinos Trail Project will complete the California Coastal Trail in this 1-mile segment, eliminate existing informal trails that encroach into sensitive dune habitat, improve pedestrian safety and enhance the user experience. The overarching goal is to facilitate public enjoyment of the Point Pinos coastline in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

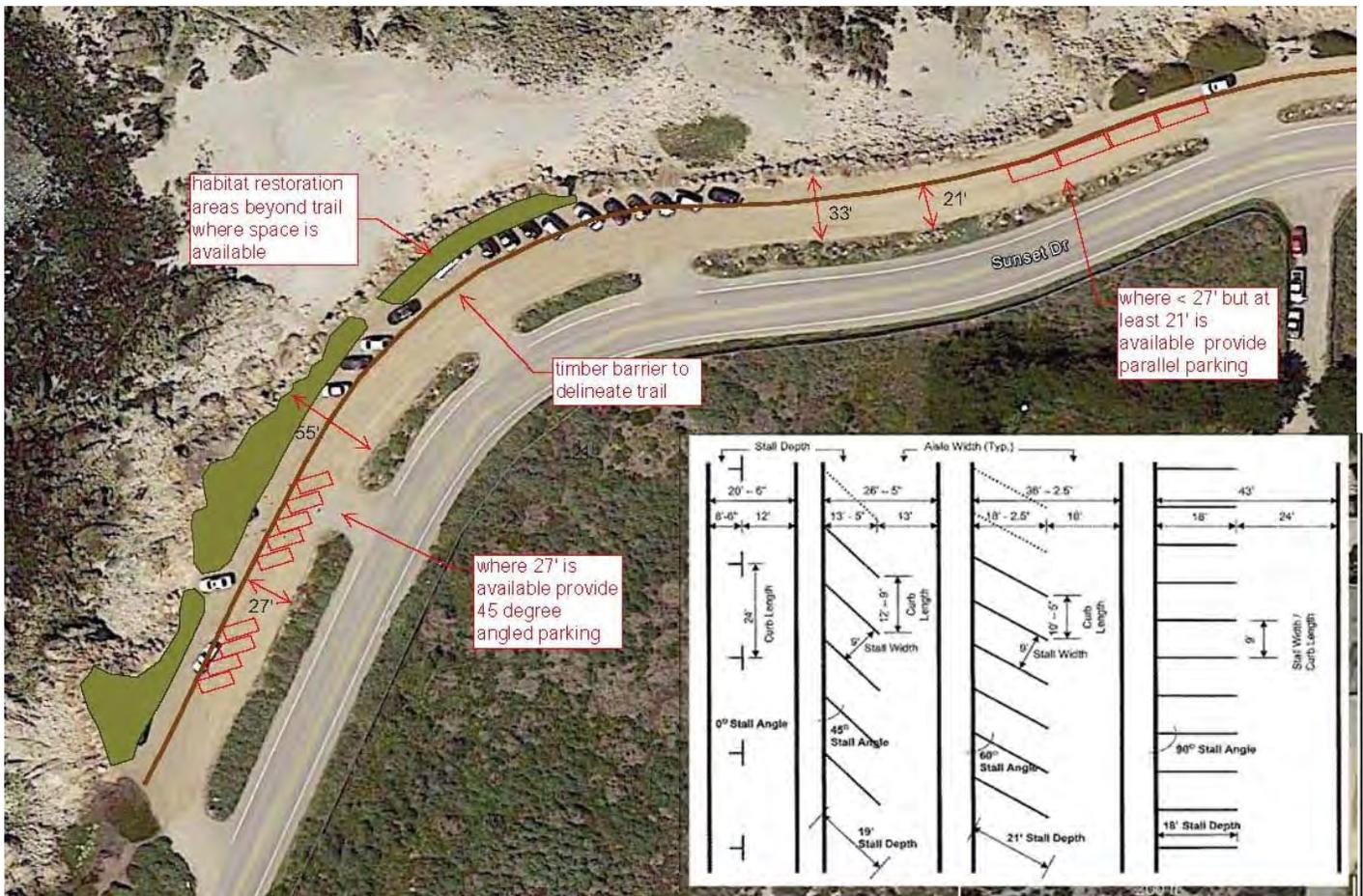
Specific project conditions and objectives were clarified at the pre-proposal conference and in our research for the proposal, as outlined below. Some of these are potentially conflicting, including potentially conflicting goals of the City and the Coastal Commission that will need to be resolved during the course of the project:

- **Provide a continuous 5’ wide decomposed granite trail**, generally following the alignment shown on the 2012 Conceptual Plan – typically the trail is on the ocean side of the parking areas and there will need to be a barrier to keep people from parking on the trail. The objective is to have one meandering trail, rather than multiple “goat trails.”
- **Evaluate a 30 year coastal bluff recession setback line** and design to that, at least as an alternative. Discuss sea level rise and coastal erosion hazards that would cause bluff recession (episodic hazards as well as long term rate), ocean wave run-up and sea spray, and subareal erosion associated with runoff.



*Other portions may be an engineering challenge to design for sustainability*

- No net loss of parking** – Pacific Grove depends on tourist revenue and many locals are also used to having access to their favorite shoreline spots; also the Coastal Commission shares this goal. Parking areas will continue to be surfaced with decomposed granite, which constrains formal delineation of parking spaces. The trail will pass through several parking areas and will inevitably displace parking spaces. The potential solutions to meet the “no net loss” objective are to 1) have more organized/efficient parking layout (while a decomposed granite area can’t be striped, we have designed such lots with low-level signs and timber wheel stops that help cue people how to park); 2) develop some consolidated parking areas in existing ice plant areas with an efficient layout per #1).



*Concepts for parking reorganization in conjunction with trail*



*Some areas have plenty of room for more organized parking*



*Other areas are more constrained and will require a buffer between the trail and parking to prevent “dooring” and obstruction of the trail*



*Access to the shoreline is important to visitors and residents*

- **Avoid use of concrete for construction;** if possible find alternative materials with a more natural appearance (concrete is required for handicapped parking pads).
- **Provide lateral access to the beaches or shore** with steps or stairs. Concrete structures are much more durable than wooden stairs or steps during wave impact, and require much less maintenance, repair and replacement. But given the “no concrete” objective our design scope and budget assumes wood steps.
- **Use of fencing is to be avoided** except for protection of new restoration area (typically current ice plant areas).

Other important considerations for planning and design include:

- The project area is outside the Area of Special Biological Significance, so the special stormwater constraints do not apply.
- The City of Pacific Grove does not have an approved LCP, so the Coastal Development Permit anticipated for the project will be reviewed and approved by Coastal Commission staff.

- The recently enacted Assembly Bill 52; the “Native Americans: California Environmental Quality Act” and the emergence of the Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation (OCEN) as a tribe that will comment during the environmental review process will need to be considered. There are apparent cultural resources along the shoreline in the form of shell middens. The typical approach of capping over the resources to avoid impact will be challenging in this case because of the impact on drainage patterns.



*Potential shell middens exposed in vicinity of the trail*

### **Project Approach**

There are potentially competing/conflicting objectives that will need to be resolved in design of the trail. Avoiding the impacts of coastal erosion, wave run-up, and coastal retreat exacerbated by sea level rise would tend to push the trail away from the edge of the bluff (and potentially imply that Sunset Blvd or Ocean View Drive need to be relocated inland, along with the trail). But the conceptual plan locates the trail along the bluff edge, and this will be the inevitable desire of trail users. This alignment also has the least impact on parking.

There are issues and options associated with parking configurations and locations, drainage of the parking and trail to avoid concentration of runoff and the need for drainage conveyances; restoration of native habitat and closure of multiple “volunteer” trail alignments. There are also options for the location and configuration on lateral access to the shoreline – balancing public demand with environmental protection and sustainable facilities.

All of these options must be resolved in the context of obtaining approval from the California Coastal Commission, completing the CEQA review process, and meeting the interests of the citizens of Pacific Grove and the countless visitors to this popular shoreline, and the needs of City staff who are responsible for the trail and parking and the stakeholder agencies who share responsibility for shoreline parks.

The TrailPeople Team has the expertise and approach to respond to and balance these completing factors. We will work with the Coastal Commission staff and other technical stakeholders, as well as the public, City committees, and City Council to help make an informed decision on the best trail/parking configuration. We have proven experience working as a team to see similar coastal trails through design, environmental review, permitting and implementation.

Our work plan starts with development of detailed site conditions, opportunities and constraints, so that alternatives can be developed that show the pros and cons of different trail alignments and

configurations. Each member of the team will contribute in their own area of expertise and TrailPeople will prepare a consolidated set of maps and alternatives that help technical staff and laypeople understand the challenges and potential solutions, and trade-offs between competing objectives.

Shoreline protection structures are not a stated objective of the project. However, currently significant portions of the shoreline parking areas that would feature the trail are protected by old non-engineered rock revetment structures and are partly underlain by fill.



*Existing rock and fill structures are impacted by ground squirrels and wave run-up*

The lifespan of a trail located along this edge would be short without extensive ongoing maintenance and repair, or an improved shoreline protection structure. Coastal Commission staff generally is resistant to new shoreline protection structures. We will need to determine the CCC position regarding the potential improvement or replacement of these revetment structures.

Our experience has been that in order for CCC to evaluate this, the Coastal Commission staff will require an alternative analysis that addresses the pros and cons of:

1. **No Project;**
2. **2012 Alignment:** A seaward trail location following the 2012 design. This alignment may reduce parking and be subject to erosion damage in some areas;
3. **Inland Trail Alignment:** An inland trail location that minimizes coastal erosion hazards along the trail (e.g. located inboard of parking lots);
4. **Coastal Protection Alignment:** A seaward trail location that maximizes parking area with coastal erosion hazards mitigated by revetment repair and maintenance or construction of new shoreline protection structures (seawalls).

We have scoped the Conceptual Design process to develop these alternatives and use them to efficiently work with all parties to understand the trade-offs and select a preferred plan that is the best balance that is acceptable to the City, can be permitted, constructed, maintained, and will serve the users well.