



# County of Santa Cruz

---

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

**DATE:** May 9, 2025

**TO:** Justin Enders, Assistant Real Property Agent

**FROM:** Stephanie Hansen, Assistant Director of Community Development and Infrastructure; Natisha Williams, Policy Planner

**SUBJECT:** General Plan consideration for Summary Vacation of a portion of Lodge Road abutting APNs 086-041-59, 086-041-60, 086-041-61, 086-041-62, 086-041-63, 086-041-64, and 086-371-14

---

You have requested a report regarding General Plan consistency for a proposed abandonment of the County's right to a portion of Lodge Road abutting APNs 086-041-59, 086-041-60, 086-041-61, 086-041-62, 086-041-63, 086-041-64, and 086-371-14 within Big Basin State Park.

The Real Property Section of the General Services Division (GSD) confirms that the County currently maintains a 2.43-mile stretch of Lodge Road, of which approximately 1.2 miles lie within Big Basin State Park and serves primarily as park access. State Parks has formally requested to assume control of this 1.2-mile segment. The Public Works Division of the Community Development and Infrastructure Department (CDI) has reviewed this request and determined the road to be unnecessary for present or prospective County use. GSD is recommending this portion of Lodge Road to be removed from the County Road inventory and to be formally vacated in order to streamline maintenance responsibilities and eliminate County liability for a road segment that primarily serves state park public uses.

County Counsel has previously determined that the abandonment of the County's right-of-way is not subject to the procedures listed in Government Code Section 65402. However, Streets and Highways Code Section 8313 requires the Board of Supervisors to consider the General Plan prior to vacating a street or highway, and County Code 2.14.040(A) requires an informal determination from the Director of Planning. The effect of this action will be to remove this portion of the road from County maintenance and transfer that maintenance to State Parks.

In response to the request and in anticipation of a similar request from the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Division of CDI makes the following recommendations:

**1. Can the property be developed independently?**

No. The subject road is not a lot of record, lies within the boundaries of a state park, and is unsuitable for independent development.

**2. Would disposition of the property be consistent with the County General Plan?**

Yes. This portion of Lodge Road is located within Big Basin State Park, and the primary purpose for transferring this property to State Parks ownership is to ensure adequate maintenance and management of a road within State Park jurisdiction. Therefore, this transfer would help streamline future improvements to Lodge Road and is consistent with General Plan Objective PPF-2.5 (Support for Local Park Providers).

Future improvements to this road not only provide necessary access for State Parks staff but could serve the greater public as an additional walking and biking trail within the park as well, allowing greater access to public lands and recreational opportunities, pursuant to County goals. This includes GOAL AM-4.0 (Access to Recreational Opportunities), Policies PPF-2.7.5 (Coordinate with State and Local Agencies) and PPF-2.1.2 (Access to Recreation Facilities), and Implementation Strategies 2.5a, 2.5b, and 2.5g, which encourage coordination with State Parks to improve and expand maintenance and management of existing state park facilities.

Consistent with Implementation Strategy AM-4.1g, all transportation agencies, including the County, are required to “coordinate their actions to provide for the CCT [California Coastal Trail] as identified in the MBSST Master Plan. In particular, no highway, *County road* or street right-of-way will be transferred out of public ownership unless it has first been evaluated for its utility as part of the CCT or other public access, and is found to have no reasonable potential for such use.” This portion of Lodge Road currently maintained by the County is not near the coast and has no reasonable potential for use as part of the CCT. The road does provide public access to state parkland; however, ownership will be transferred from one public agency to another and its maintenance by the state will ensure that any potential utility as public access to Big Basin State Park will be assessed by the public agency who manages the parkland and is best fit to make that determination.

This roadway abandonment does not constitute new development, construction of a new road, or a land division, and therefore is not subject to the secondary access requirements in the General Plan Public Safety Element. However, given the length and rural mountain location

of Lodge Road, maintaining this road as secondary access, both for the private properties on Lodge Road adjacent to the state park as well as for users within the park, is appropriate pursuant to Policy 6.5.4 of the Public Safety Element, and as recommended by the County Fire Marshall. This secondary access could be retained through an existing access agreement, or established if one does not already exist, and would not conflict with the proposed roadway abandonment.

Therefore, the roadway abandonment of this portion of Lodge Road will not interfere with the public's access to adjacent properties or with any other public interest. In addition, public safety and health would not be impacted by this summary vacation. The action aligns with the Santa Cruz County General Plan's goals of efficient infrastructure planning and maintenance, coordination with local park providers and state agencies, and support for expanding recreational opportunities, as previously discussed. Therefore, the abandonment of this portion of Lodge Road can be considered consistent with the General Plan.

**3. Would the disposition of the property be categorically exempt from CEQA?**

Yes. The roadway abandonment of this right-of-way is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15312, Surplus Government Property Sales, and there is no reasonable possibility that summary vacation of this street easement will have a significant effect on the environment.

Please contact us if you have any questions regarding these recommendations.

**CC:** Matt Machado, Deputy CAO/Director of Community Development and Infrastructure; Michael Beaton, Director of General Services