



APPENDIX G

California Coastal Commission & Conservancy Accessibility Standards

STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCESSWAY LOCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

These standards provide guidelines for the location, size and type of accessways along the California coast. San Francisco Bay accessway standards are available from the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission. The California Coastal Commission and Conservancy adopted these standards to ensure a consistent approach is used for access construction. Since sites and circumstances vary along the coast the application of these standards is flexible. These standards apply to all new and existing developments.

STANDARD NO. 1 PROTECT THE PUBLIC AND COASTAL RESOURCES

Coastal access facilities should be located where they safely accommodate public use. Their distribution should prevent crowding, parking congestion, and misuse of coastal resources. To fulfill this goal, accessway design and location should: a) minimize alteration of natural landforms and be subordinate to the setting's character; b) prevent unwarranted hazards to the land and public safety; c) ensure the privacy of adjoining residences; and d) protect environmentally sensitive habitats and agricultural areas.

STANDARD NO. 2 CORRECT HAZARDS

The management and construction of accessways should correct or at least not increase the potential of any hazard, such as fire or erosion. At times when there is an increased hazard, for example during pesticide application in agricultural areas, the accessway should be closed.

STANDARD NO. 3 ACCESS EASEMENTS: CONSTRUCTION AND LOCATION

Accessways built on easements, such as offers-to-dedicate, should be no wider than necessary. Width of accessways can vary from a minimum of 30 inches for a trail to 10 feet or wider for ramps or paved walkways, depending on topography and the existing development. Wheelchair access should be provided wherever possible.

STANDARD NO. 4 PRIVACY

The design and location of accessways should consider the privacy of adjoining residences. Vertical accessways may be fenced or screened with landscaping on the property line and be closed at night, depending on the needs of the adjoining residences.

STANDARD NO. 5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

Access projects to areas such as wetlands, tidepools, or riparian areas should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the projects: a) are consistent with the policies of Chapter Three of the Coastal Act; b) avoid adverse effects on the resource and, if possible, enhance the resource; c) are reviewed by the Department of Fish and Game and the California Coastal Commission.



STANDARD NO. 6 LATERAL ACCESSWAYS: CONSTRUCTION AND LOCATION

A lateral accessway is an area of land that provides the public with access and recreational use along the water's edge.

Lateral accessways should include a minimum of 25 feet of dry sand at all times of the year or the entire sandy area if the beach is less than 25 feet. They should not extend further inland than any shoreline protective structures; nor should they come closer than 10 feet to an existing single-family home. Specifications for construction will vary depending on the Local Coastal Program (LCP) requirements or Commission permit conditions.

Due to the proximity of the ocean and winter storm waves, construction of support facilities on lateral accessways should be kept to a minimum. Retractable ramps or boardwalks, however, not only enable the handicapped to reach the water, but they also can be removed as the seasons dictate.

STANDARD NO. 7 VERTICAL ACCESSWAYS: CONSTRUCTION AND LOCATION

A vertical is an area of land connecting the first landward public road, trail, or use area with a public beach or lateral accessway, used to get people to the shore. Vertical accessways should be a minimum 10 feet wide.

Urban areas: Vertical accessways in urban areas should be located where streets end at the shoreline, once every six parcels, or up to once every 500 feet. New multiple-family residential projects of five dwelling units or more should provide sufficient space for a vertical accessway and public parking and pay for their construction. Condominium conversions of the same type of units should provide a vertical accessway, either on-site or in the same general area. The existence of public beaches nearby could reduce the number of verticals needed.

Commercial development should incorporate or preserve views of the ocean and vertical access, as well as construct and maintain the accessway as part of the project. Industrial development should provide vertical access and parking improvements according to the extent to which the potential public use is displaced by the facility.

Rural areas: When beachfront parcels are subdivided in rural areas, owners should provide a vertical accessway either as a separate parcel or as an easement over the parcels to be created. More than one vertical accessway may be required if the parcels contain more than one beach area or the beach is ¼ mile or longer. Residential developments should use the standards suggested for urban development.

Vertical accessways in agricultural and timberlands should be wide enough to protect accessway users as well as the crops. At least one accessway should be provided or acquired on such lands if they contain a beach appropriate for safe public use.

Stairways, ramps, trails, over- or underpasses are some of the facilities that can be built on vertical accessways. Drainage systems to prevent erosion may also be necessary.



STANDARD NO. 8 TRAILS

A trail provides continuous public access either along a coastal bluff or links inland recreational facilities to the shoreline. Specifications for construction will vary according to the LCP.

Trail easements should be a minimum of 25 feet in width. They should never be closer than 10 feet to an existing residence.

Trails should be established on ocean front parcels, depending on the topographic conditions. These trails should connect: a) the shore with inland units of the federal, state, or local park systems; b) access easements; or c) the road with a scenic overlook. Such trails must avoid geologically unstable and erosive soils. Prime agricultural soils should also be avoided except where the trail will not interfere with agricultural production.

Trails can feature steps, footbridges, appropriate paving materials, adequate trail drainage system, trash receptacles, benches, barriers, restrooms, and signs.

STANDARD NO. 9 SCENIC OVERLOOKS

A scenic overlook provides the public a unique or unusual view of the coast.

Development of scenic overlooks can vary from a simple roadside turnout with only trashcans, parking, and fencing as appropriate, to a more elaborate roadside rest area. Overlooks that are not next to a road should be accessible by trail, ramps or stairs, and be accessible to those with physical disabilities.

STANDARD NO. 10 COASTAL BIKEWAYS

Coastal bikeways are paths specifically designated to provide access to and along the coast by nonmotorized bicycle travel as defined in Section 2373 of the Streets and Highway Code. There are three classes of bikeways:

Class I Bikeway – Bike Path: A completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians. Minimum surface width of 8 feet for a two-way path and 5 feet for a one-way path and provision for a 2 foot wide graded area adjacent to either edge of the paths.

Class II Bikeway – Bike Lane: A Class II bikeway is a right-of-way in the paved areas of highways that is restricted for the use of bicycles. Motor vehicle parking and cross-flows are permitted. To be classified as a Class II bikeway, the bikeway should be four feet wide on roads in outlying areas where parking is prohibited, 5 feet wide when parallel parking is allowed, or 11 to 13 feet wide when parallel parking is allowed and designated by specific striping.

Class III Bikeway – Bike Route: A Class III bikeway is a surface street that is shared with pedestrians or motorists. These routes are used primarily to provide a continuous link between Class I and II bikeways.

All classes of bikeways must feature a graded and paved path, bike racks, vehicle barriers, fencing, and signs. On a Class II and III, signs and striping are required.



STANDARD NO. 11 HOSTELS

Hostels are low-cost public travel accommodations that provide sleeping, kitchen, and bath facilities for traveling families, groups, and individuals of all ages. Following the example of the hostels in Europe, which generally allow a maximum stay of three nights, California coastal hostels combine low-cost lodging with educational, social, and cultural opportunities.

Hostels should have sufficient space for a minimum of 24 people, and one parking space for every eight guests and each residential staff person. Existing buildings, such as lighthouse stations, preferably on public or parkland, should be used for hostel sites whenever renovation is economically feasible and the structures are appropriate to current surrounding land use.

Ideally, hostels should be located at intervals of 20 to 40 miles, on or near the coast, and within two miles of recreational trails. If more than five miles of normal bicycle travel is required to get from one campground or hostel to another then campgrounds should be used to provide lodging.

Hostels should feature beds, kitchens, and bathrooms mentioned above as well as public telephones, location signing along highways, and public transit stops.

STANDARD NO. 12 SUPPORT FACILITIES

Support facilities are structures that make it easier for people to use and maintain coastal accessways: signs, trash receptacles, public telephones, restrooms, showers, bike security racks, public transit loading and unloading areas, campgrounds, and parking areas fit into this category. The support facilities that each accessway will require should be decided on a case-by-case bases. Directional and resource interpretation signs are available from the Coastal Conservancy.

STANDARD NO. 13 BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

All accessways must be made wheelchair-accessible unless this would present an unreasonable hardship. Grounds for an unreasonable hardship are to be determined by the enforcement agency for the region.

Accessways that accommodate or plan to accommodate those with mobility problems are the highest priority for State funding. The standards for these accessways and their support facilities should at least meet, if not exceed, the requirements of Title 24 of the California Administrative Code. The Office of the State Architect has written a guide to Title 24, the California State Accessibility Standards Interpretive Manual. This manual is available for \$8.00 from the Office of the State Architect, Access Compliance Unit, P.O. Box 1079, Sacramento, CA 95805.



