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September 21, 2010

President Judy Arnold
Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Dr # 329
San Rafael, CA 94903-4193

Re: Mill Valley to Corte Madera Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridor Study

Dear Supervisor Arnold and members of the Board,

The Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Mill Valley to Corte Madera Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridor Study.

MCBC thanks the Board of Supervisors and the Marin County Department of Public Works for the completion of this Study, which marks a significant milestone for planning safer non-motorized transportation between Mill Valley and Corte Madera.

We are grateful that many of the questions that we raised were answered in the final Study draft, including the "use" numbers, which indicate that as many as 1.85 million pedestrians and bicyclists may use the Alto Tunnel each year if reconstructed.

Now that this Study is completed, we hope that the Board will take the next step to address unanswered questions regarding the Alto Tunnel route. In order to provide more accurate cost estimates (by reducing contingency margins) it will be necessary for engineers to enter the tunnel to conduct a geotechnical study to assess the tunnel's condition. Additionally we believe that it will be important to resolve property/easement issues regarding properties that are above the tunnel. (Appendix G of the Study indicates the means by how this might be done.)

Only with this information will policymakers be able to comprehensively evaluate the costs and benefits of investing in improvements for each of the three routes between Mill Valley and Corte Madera.

MCBC therefore urges the Board of Supervisors to accept the Mill Valley to Corte Madera Bicycle and Pedestrian

Corridor Study as complete, as per the County Department of Public Works' recommendation, and to direct staff to seek funding to conduct a geotechnical and property/easement study and analysis of Alto Tunnel so that all three routes can be evaluated equally.

Closing this important safety gap for the North South Greenway will produce many benefits for the County of Marin, including enhancing the health of Marinites by providing a facility that will promote more physical activity and increased safety. Improving the route between Mill Valley and Corte Madera will help get more individuals and families out of their cars thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing traffic congestion on both Highway 101 and in local communities.

Thank you very much for considering our comments, and for the County of Marin's strong commitment to improving bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

Sincerely,



Deb Hubsmith
Advocacy Director
Marin County Bicycle Coalition

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