

# One-way traffic loop endorsed for Beach Flats

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A plan to create a one-way traffic loop around the beach area of Santa Cruz was endorsed by the city Planning Commission last night.

The plan was one of several suggestions made by DKS Consultants, a Santa Clara firm hired by the Santa Cruz City Council to recommend improvements for traffic flow and parking in the beach area.

The cost of the study was \$55,400.

Other changes recommended by the consultants were: four new traffic signals in the beach area; a tiered parking lot between downtown and the beach; a residential permit parking program for the Beach Flats; and a bridge at Ocean Street.

The plan will go to the City Council for final approval.

As explained by Robert Grandy of DKS Consultants, Riverside Avenue would be one-way from Barson Street going across the bridge and through to Beach Street. Traffic that didn't turn right on the Second Street, which is already one-way, would have to turn left at Beach Street.

The one-way loop would con-

tinue to the end of Beach Street to Third Street where traffic would head out of the beach area.

An Ocean Street bridge would then be one-way for traffic leaving the beach area.

"The loop avoids the neighborhood areas and discourages people from cutting through neighborhoods," Grandy said.

He said the proposed three-lane bridge wouldn't require tearing down any residential structures in the Beach Flats neighborhood.

Traffic signals are recommended at the intersections of Riverside Avenue and Beach Street, Riverside Avenue and Barson Street, Pacific Street and Washington Street Extension, and at the entrance to the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf.

The costs of these changes, if approved, would be high, the consultant said. Road improvements would cost about \$4.73 million and the Ocean Street bridge would be about \$2.3 million. The plan probably couldn't be fully implemented for at least seven years.

Few people were on hand to comment on the plan.

Jane Yokoyama, a Beach Flats neighborhood activist, said she worried about exces-

sive speeds of cars as a result of one-way streets. She said this may prove to be a hazard to people living in the Beach Flats.

Mo Reich, a planning commissioner, echoed these thoughts. "My main concern is that not enough attention is made to protecting the neighborhood streets." He said he would like to see it "exceedingly impossible for tourists to use the side streets, whether it be with barricades or streets that terminate in the middle."

A plan to rebuild the Laurel Street Extension was rejected by the commission.

Commissioner Andy Schiffrin said it was a poor idea because it meant tearing down some low-cost housing.

Chairwoman Dee Hansch said more concern should be paid to the cost of the recommendations. She said another alternative in which traffic would flow clockwise instead of counter-clockwise would greatly reduce costs.

The DKS report also recommended changes in the transit system. The consultants said buses should run alternately between the beach and Ocean Street and the beach and downtown every 7½ minutes.