**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**
**PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

**DATE:** October 28, 2026

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Planning Staff

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of a Coastal Development Permit, pursuant to Section 8.252.050 of the County Ordinance Code, to establish a "No Oversized Vehicle Parking" zone on both sides of Capistrano Road in the unincorporated Princeton area of San Mateo County. This project is appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

County File Number: PLN2026-00260 (SMC Dept. of Public Works)

## PROPOSAL

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is requesting a Coastal Development Permit to establish a "No Oversized Vehicle Parking" zone on both sides of Capistrano Road, starting just south of the intersection of Capistrano/Highway 1 and ending at a point approximately adjacent to the north edge of the parking lot for the Meza Luna restaurant. The proposed signage will be installed on paved and non-paved road shoulders on both sides of the road and spaced approximately 200 feet apart.

In recent years, DPW has received numerous complaints from the public regarding the parking of oversized vehicles (typically RVs) in public Right of Way (ROW) of Capistrano Road. This situation has resulted in reduced site distances for vehicles using Capistrano Road, and in some instances, accumulation of trash and potential impacts to adjacent riparian habitat.

## RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Coastal Development Permit, County File Number PLN2026-00260, by making the required findings and adopting the conditions of approval as listed in Attachment A.

## BACKGROUND

Report Prepared By: Michael Schaller, Senior Planner

Applicant: San Mateo County Department of Public Works

Owner: San Mateo County

Public Notification: Ten (10) day advanced notification for the hearing was mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the project parcel and a notice for the hearing posted in a newspaper (San Mateo County Times) of general public circulation.

Location: Capistrano Road right of way, Princeton

APN(s): Public Right of Way

Existing Zoning: Light Industrial District/Design Review District/Coastal Development District (M-1/DR/CD)

General Plan Designation: Airport

Local Coastal Plan Designation: Airport

Sphere-of-Influence: Half Moon Bay

Existing Land Use: Public street

Flood Zone: Zone AE (Base Flood Elevations Determined), FEMA Community Panel 06081C-0138F, Effective Date: August 2, 2017.

Environmental Evaluation: The project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15301 (*Minor Alterations to Land*). The project will involve no expansion of the existing road, and the installation of signs is a minor alteration to an existing facility.

Setting: Capistrano Road is relatively narrow, averaging about 22 feet in width along most of its length. For large sections of the road, the road shoulders are only 1-3 feet wide and unpaved. Denniston Creek and its associated riparian habitat border Capistrano Road on both sides. This portion of Denniston Creek lies within a Special Flood Hazard Zone (Zone AE), more commonly referred to as the 100-year floodplain. Additionally, Airport Safety Zone 3 (Inner Turning Zone) for Half Moon Bay airport overlays most of Capistrano Road. At this location, adjacent to the airport runway, human occupancy of buildings, which would include people residing in RV's, is prohibited.

## DISCUSSION

### A. KEY ISSUES

#### 1. Conformance with the County General Plan

The project complies with the provisions of the General Plan, including the following specific policies:

Chapter 12 - Transportation

Policy 12.16 – (*Urban Road Improvements of the Transportation Policies*) states: “In urban areas, where improvements are needed due to safety concerns or congestion, support the construction of interchange and intersection improvements, additional traffic lanes, turning lanes, redesign of parking, channelization, traffic control signals, or other improvements while enhancing the functionality of travel routes for all transportation users.”

The Department of Public Works is requesting the proposed parking restrictions to avoid conflicts between parked Oversized Vehicles on Capistrano Road and other users travelling on the road, including bicyclists. Capistrano Road is relatively narrow with no curb and gutter or other areas that would provide adequate space between vehicles parked on the side of road and vehicles traveling on the paved road. This results in drivers drifting to the center of the roadway to avoid potential contact with parked vehicles, thus increasing the potential for collisions on Capistrano Road. Prohibiting oversized vehicles from parking in the limited roadside spaces will allow drivers to maintain their proper location within their lane.

Chapter 15 - Natural Hazards

Goal 15.1 – (*Minimizing Risks from Natural Hazards*) states: “Minimize the potential risks resulting from natural hazards, including but not limited to, loss of life, injury, damage to property, litigation, high service and maintenance costs, and other social and economic dislocations.”

Policy 15.45 – (*Abatement of Flooding Hazards*) states: “Support measures for the abatement of flooding hazards, including but not limited to removal or relocation of development from flood hazard areas.”

As stated previously, Capistrano Road lies entirely within the mapped 100-year flood plain of Denniston Creek. The parking of inhabited RVs, even temporarily, within this flood plain places both the vehicles and their inhabitants at risk during storm events.

Chapter 16 – Man Made Hazards

Policy 16.35 – (*Minimize Risks Surrounding Airports*) states: “Minimize health and safety risks from hazards related to aircraft operations for persons living and working in areas surrounding San Mateo County airports.”

Policy 16.42 – (*Limit Land Uses at Ends of Runways*) states: "Limit land uses in approach zones, clear zones and other areas of high accident potential at ends of airport runways to low intensity, nonstructural uses including, but not limited to, agriculture, open space, and storage."

As stated previously, Capistrano Road lies almost entirely within Airport Safety Zone 3 (ITZ - Inner Turning Zone) for Half Moon Bay airport. This Zone encompasses locations where aircraft typically turn from the base to final approach legs of the standard traffic pattern and are descending from traffic pattern altitude. The ITZ also includes the area where departing aircraft normally complete the transition from takeoff power and flap settings to climb mode and have begun to turn to their enroute heading. The accident risk level is considered to be moderate to high within ITZ zones. Allowing oversized vehicles to be parked and occupied at this location places the occupants at an unacceptable risk if a plane were to crash while landing or taking off from the adjacent airport runway.

2. Compliance with the Local Coastal Program

The project complies with the provisions of the Local Coastal Program (LCP), including the following specific policies:

a. Sensitive Habitats Component

Policy 7.12 – (*Permitted Uses in Riparian Buffer Zones*) states that within buffer zones, no new residential parcels shall be created whose only building site is in the buffer area. While no new residential parcel is proposed as part of this project, the intent of the policy is to prohibit placement of residential structures within a riparian buffer zone. As stated previously, Capistrano Road lies almost entirely within the required buffer zone for Denniston Creek. Allowing oversize vehicles to be parked, even temporarily, within this sensitive habitat area would conflict with the intent of this policy.

b. Visual Resources Component

Policy 8.5 – (*Location of Development*) requires that new development be located on a portion of a parcel where the development: (1) is least visible from State and County Scenic Roads; (2) is least likely to significantly impact views from public viewpoints; and (3) consistent with all other LCP requirements, best preserves the visual and open space qualities of the parcel overall. Through this portion of the urban Midcoast, Highway 1 is designated as a County Scenic Road. The proposed signs will not be visible from Highway 1 due to their relatively small size (when viewed from the Highway), the winding nature of Capistrano Road and intervening vegetation. Each sign has

a face of approximately 2.5 sq. ft. in size and will be placed on poles with a 7-foot minimum vertical clearance from the bottom grade. Per California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards, the signs will have a red legend and border with a white background and will be spaced out every 200 feet. While visible to travelers on Capistrano Road, they will not significantly block views of or towards the Coast. Eliminating oversized vehicle parking along Capistrano Road will reduce the visual impact of these oversized parked vehicles blocking coastal views, particularly from the vantage point of a pedestrian or bicyclist traveling within the road right-of-way.

Policy 8.6 – (*Streams, Wetlands, and Estuaries*). Removing oversized vehicle parking along Capistrano Road also meets the goals of this policy which requires development to be setback from the edge of streams and other natural waterways a sufficient distance to preserve the visual character of the waterway.

c. Shoreline Access Component

Policy 10.22 – (*Parking*) addresses parking as it relates to coastal access. Specifically, this policy prohibits the formalizing of unofficial parking areas when those areas are in or adjacent to sensitive habitats. As stated previously, Denniston Creek and its associated riparian habitat runs throughout the length of the proposed restricted parking area. Additionally, with regards to coastal access, the pull-out areas along Capistrano Road that will be impacted by the parking restriction lack safe pedestrian access to nearby shoreline areas. There are areas closer to the shoreline in Princeton where oversize vehicles can be safely parked. Restricting oversized vehicle parking along Capistrano Road will not prohibit public access to the shoreline.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (*Existing Facilities*) because the project will involve no expansion of the existing road and the installation of signs is a minor alteration to an existing facility.

C. REVIEWING AGENCIES

California Coastal Commission
Mid-Coast Community Council

In response to the project referrals sent to the California Coastal Commission and the MidCoast Community Council staff received the following comments:

California Coastal Commission:

*I apologize for the delay in sending our comments for PLN2026-00260 regarding oversized vehicles on Cabrillo Highway. We do have the following questions:*

- *I see that the proposed signs completely restrict oversized vehicles of any kind from parking in this zone. Has the County considered an overnight ban or a time limit as opposed to a complete parking ban?*

  Staff Response: See discussion below.

- *Has the County thought about where alternative parking for the displaced from this ban might be?*

  Staff Response: See discussion below.

- *Could you please confirm if this CDP is for the establishment of the parking restriction zone and the installation of the corresponding signs, or if it is just for the signs*

  Staff Response: This CDP is for both actions.

MidCoast Community Council:

*Thank you for sending the updated referral regarding the proposed parking restrictions on Capistrano (PLN2026-00260).*

*We discussed this request at this week's Council meeting. While there is support for the proposed restrictions on Capistrano, the full Council also has broader concerns about the increasing amount of oversized vehicle parking occurring throughout the community.*

*Attached is our request for an opportunity to address this important community-wide concern through a broader, neighborhood-wide approach as part of the County's ongoing planning and coastal development efforts. We believe a comprehensive approach would help ensure that parking restrictions are considered consistently and in the context of the needs and impacts across the entire community.*

Staff acknowledge that the larger issue of oversized/overnight vehicle parking throughout the MidCoast community is a complex issue that impacts a broader region than the location of the proposed project. The purpose of this project is to address the specific and significant safety and environmental concerns associated with the presence of oversized vehicles on Capistrano Road. These include conflicts with the Half Moon Bay Airport Safety Plan and the LCP's riparian protection measures that would not be sufficiently addressed by overnight parking

restrictions or time limits. The oversized vehicles that currently park along this stretch of roadway are directly under the very low flight path leading to the airport's runway, and immediately adjacent to the riparian habitat of Denniston Creek. The fluids leaking from these vehicles, and the waste and debris left by those that inhabit them, have significant adverse impacts on this environmentally sensitive habitat area. Additionally, oversized vehicles on Capistrano impact vehicle sightlines and traffic flow, thereby creating circulation hazards, and consume parking spaces for extended periods of time that would otherwise support coastal access and visitor-serving businesses.

## ATTACHMENTS

A. Recommended Findings and Conditions of Approval
B. Map of Proposed "No Oversized Vehicle Parking" Zone on Capistrano Road

Attachment A

County of San Mateo
Planning and Building Department

## RECOMMENDED FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Permit or Project File Number: PLN2026-00260 Hearing Date: October 28, 2026

Prepared By: Michael Schaller
Senior Planner

For Adoption By: Planning Commission

## RECOMMENDED FINDINGS

Regarding the Environmental Review, Find:

1. That the project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

Regarding the Coastal Development Permit, Find:

2. That the project, as described in the application and accompanying materials required by Section 8.252.080 of the County Ordinance Code, and as conditioned in accordance with Section 8.252.160 of the Ordinance Code, conforms with the plans, policies, requirements and standards of the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program (LCP) as described in the staff report related to the Sensitive Habitats, Visual Resources and Shoreline Access Components.

3. Where the project is located between the nearest public road and the sea, or the shoreline of Pescadero Marsh, that the project is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act of 1976 (commencing with Section 30200 of the Public Resources Code). The project is not located between the sea and the first public road.

4. That the project conforms to specific findings required by policies of the San Mateo County LCP with regard to Sensitive Habitats, Visual Resources and Shoreline Access.

## RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Current Planning Section

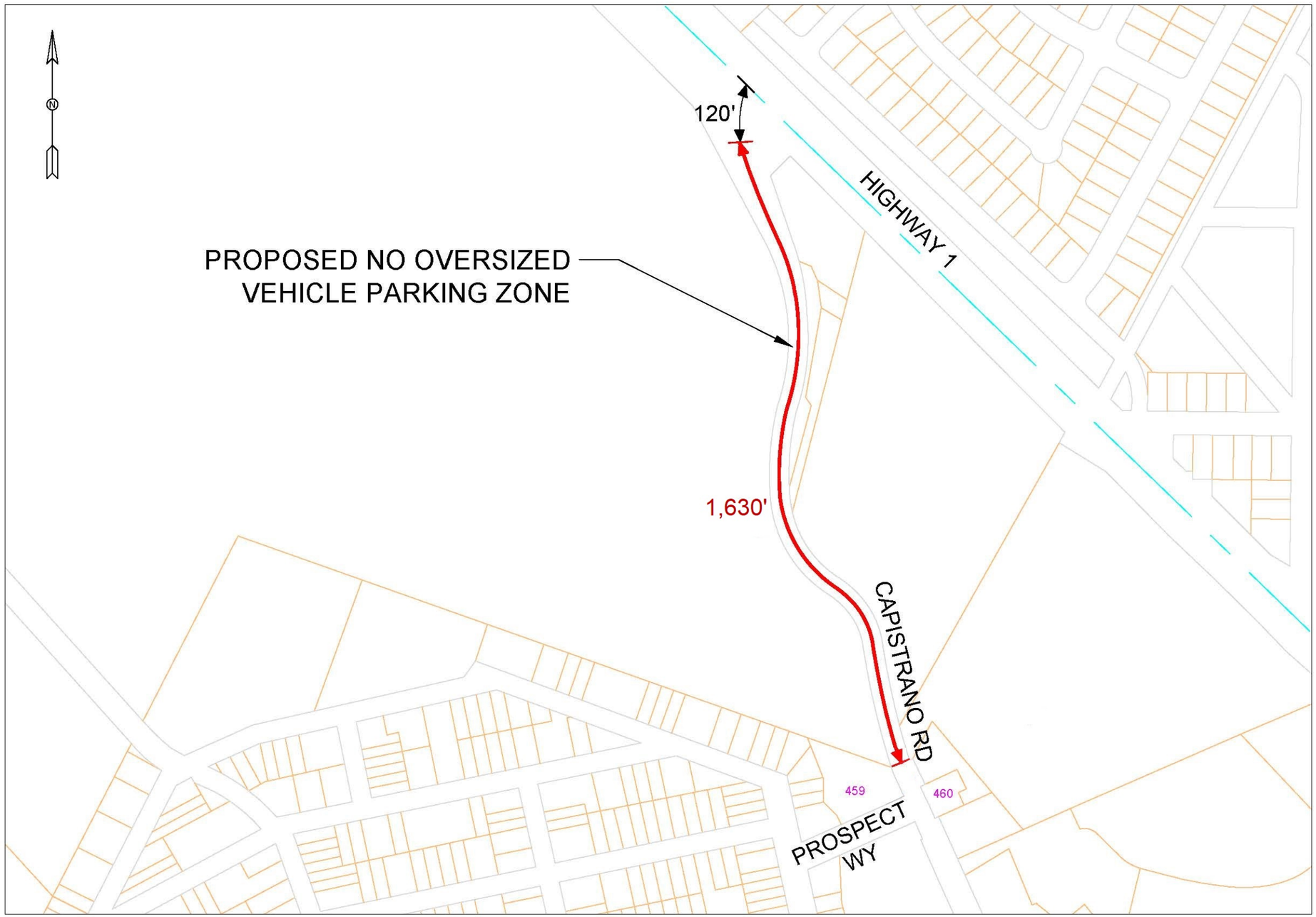
1. This approval applies only to the proposal, documents and plans described in this report and approved by the Planning Commission on October 28, 2026. The Director of Planning and Building may approve minor revisions or modifications to the project if they are consistent with the intent of, and in substantial conformance with, this approval.

2. This permit shall be valid for two years from the date of approval during which time the project shall be completed. Any extension of this permit shall require submittal of an application for permit extension and payment of applicable extension fees 60 days prior to the expiration date.

County of San Mateo - Planning and Building Department

# ATTACHMENT B

APPROVED:
DATE: 4/28/2026
KRZYSZTOF LISAJ
COUNTY ENGINEER
R. C. E. # 84003













R28D (CA)
18"x18"

FILENAME: C:\USERS\DEGRACA\DESKTOP\CAPISTRANO RD SITE PLAN.DWG (NO OVERSIZED PARKING ZONE)

# NO OVERSIZED VEHICLE PARKING ZONE ON CAPISTRANO ROAD
## EXHIBIT A

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | DESIGNED BY: ID | NO OVERSIZED VEHICLE PARKING ZONE ON CAPISTRANO ROAD IN UNINCORPORATED HALF MOON BAY SIGNAGE PLANS | SCALE: NTS |
| | | CHECKED BY: TC | | DATE: 4/24/2026 |
| | | DRAWN BY: ID | | FILE NO: |
| | | TORY A. NEWMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS COUNTY OF SAN MATEO | | 555 COUNTY CENTER, 5th FLOOR REDWOOD CITY, CALIFORNIA 94063 |
| REVISION | DATE | | | SHEET 1 OF 1 |