



Robert Kirwin &lt;808kirwin@gmail.com&gt;

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## Scout project needs city approval to protect alameda bicyclists

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Robert Kirwin &lt;808kirwin@gmail.com&gt;

Sun, May 18, 2014 at 1:30 PM

To: mgilmore@alamedaca.gov, mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov, ltam@alamedaca.gov, schen@alamedaca.gov, tdaysog@alamedaca.gov

Bcc: David K &lt;alamedadave@gmail.com&gt;

I would like to introduce the city of Alameda to my planned Eagle Scout project, and ask for your help getting the permission I need to proceed. The goal of my project is to make the Otis Street Bridge Boardwalk, the wooden bicycle and pedestrian bridge that leads to the bay trail by the Harbor Bay Club, a safer and smoother experience.

Anybody who has ridden across that bridge recognizes it's risk of accidents, like last year, when a man shattered his knee into about 17 pieces after losing control on the bridge.

I personally have gotten multiple flat tires from riding over that bridge, and I've seen people changing flats that they got from riding over the bridge. It is an unpleasant head-rattling hazard to the community and I plan on fixing it.

Because East Bay Regional Parks has units dealing with shoreline parks and regional trails, I included them in my initial email requests for further information about the bridge, asking for review and advice on my plan and permission to carry it out. EBRPD Michael Anderson, Assistant General Manager of our East Bay Parks, took the time to provide me with some information and told me some of the requirements and contacts I should have for the project. It seems as though there may be a joint relationship of who actually owns this wooden bridge and who is responsible for maintaining it. Therefore the city and the parks need to both give their "OK" to the project. I sent out at least two additional rounds of emails to City of Alameda Public Works and Mayor's office, without getting a response from anyone with the city.

I ask your help in getting a response from Public works, so I can try to proceed to make the much needed repairs to the wooden bridge. Mr Anderson agrees it is a good project despite the complications of multiple entities involved. I had no idea it would be so difficult to get a response, and I really need to get this project moving along or I will have to abandon it for a different project. I believe this would be disappointing for all the bay farm bike riders who use it.

If anyone can help me get in touch with the authorities needed to get permission from so I can follow through with my plan, please contact me, or have the proper city personal contact me. I need to get the wheels rolling, or by next month I will need to begin to work on my alternative plan.

If you have any requests, questions, or additional information, please contact me.

Robert Kirwin  
Alameda Boy Scouts Troop 73  
(510) 846-3956  
808kirwin@gmail.com

Submitted by Robert Kirwin  
Under Oral Communications  
at the 5-20-14 meeting

## **Safety and Ride Improvements to the Otis Street Boardwalk**

- an Eagle Scout Project Proposal by Robert Kirwin, Troop #73, Alameda

Far too many people have been injured or had their bikes damaged by the unevenness of the planking of the wooden bicycle and pedestrian bridge connecting the bike paths of Island Drive and the Bay Farm and Oakland waterfront trails to each other and the pedestrian drawbridge. The basic plan is to level the boardwalk planks. To do this safely and efficiently, the steps include:

- Drape the bottom side of the bridge to avoid any possible environmental harm.
- Use grinders and industrial floor sanders, to level the bridge planking into a smooth crossing rather than a rough, head rattling one, made worse by the existing splintering wood that can pop tires and cause injury.
- Continuously vacuumed up sawdust during the process.
- Provide long term wood protection by application of several coats of deck sealer to match the color of the bridge.

Draping the bottom will require a rowboat, visqueen, and two crews working together both on the bridge and on the water. The draping will be done when the tide is at a convenient height. The goal of the drapes is to catch any sawdust or sealer from falling between the planking. Then, using grinders and large floor sanders, the planks of the bridge will be smoothed and leveled, and splinters that can cause flat tires or physical harm will be eliminated. The walk-behind sanding machines have dust collection systems which will be supplemented with Shop-Vacs or HEPA vacs. The City will determine if a white centerline is desired create the idea of lanes. The bridge will then get multiple coats of a decking sealer to ensure the wood is sealed and protected. After the final step of sealing is completed the visqueen will be carefully collected into rowboats and taken ashore for proper containment and disposal.

The bridge will be temporarily closed when necessary during the hours it is being worked on. Safety standards required by the Boy Scouts of America and OSHA shall be implemented. Public shall be informed of this when public trail bridge will need to be closed by signage and public notice in the papers.

The schedule for the job will be determined when all necessary permissions are granted. It is planned that the work will be completed in two consecutive weekends this summer. Because we will have a rowboat, scouts with rope training, and extra volunteers on site, it is expected that additional estuary clean-up will also take place. This would include the removal of tires, machine parts and appliances that are reminders of society's past disdain for the environment.

I will not ask the City to provide any direct funding for this project, however I will inquire about the possibility of the public agencies involved to provide a dumpster for the trash removed, a porta-potty for the crew that, (like the dumpster will be unlocked only while we are there working), and stain-sealer that matches the rest of the bridge.