

Photos and text below shared with permission of [longtime Monterey County resident Paola Berthoin](#), an advocate for traffic safety. Paola is very familiar with this section of Highway 1, Carmel, having biked it herself for over 47 years now.

In chronological order below are some excerpts from Paola Berthoin's communications from November 2, 2020 to January 26, 2022. Also included are details about the photos by Paola shown in @bikemonterey's Feb 20, 2021 tweet about Hwy 1, Carmel, which is part of the Pacific Coast Bike Route.

On Nov 2, 2020 (and still persisting as of Jan 26, 2022), Paola began advocating for a remedy about this stretch of highway, beginning with communication to the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC). With her permission, a portion of her communications in this effort are provided below (*sans* responses from TAMC or California Department of Transportation / Caltrans, the agency responsible for Hwy 1 / CA State Route 1).

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On Nov 2, 2020, Paola wrote:

Caltrans has recently resurfaced and re-striped Hwy 1 from CV Road to Carpenter. Unfortunately, there are pinch points of the bicycle riding space from Ocean to Carpenter that were already very slim for bicyclists that are now non-existent or just a mere foot in width at the most. In addition, with the new layer of tar and no curb for the last third or so of the roadway, the drop off is a good eight to ten inches into the soft dirt. With little to no room to ride on the inside of the white line in some sections, combined with the steep drop off and cars/trucks going 45 mph or more, it makes for a very dangerous riding environment.

Additionally, the storm grates that span the width of the bike lane in three places between Morse Drive and Ocean Ave. Now, with the higher layer of roadway, the deeper dip for bicyclists to traverse is also a hazard. Going around the grate requires bicyclists to ride well outside of the fog line into the roadway where cars are going 45 mph or more.

Why were bicyclists' safety concerns not taken into consideration with this resurfacing/re-striping?...What can TAMC/Bike and Ped Committee do to have Caltrans rectify these safety hazards? Forcing bicyclists to ride in the car lane is also a safety hazard for car and truck drivers.

On Nov 8, 2020, she clarified:

From a bicyclist's point of view, it is questionable that bicycle safety was fully considered.

I am not claiming that the pavement was reduced. Where the white line was painted, while certainly visible, leaves no room for bicyclists to claim some semblance of their own space on the right side of the line in these pinch points. Today, while riding from Ocean to Carpenter, a person yelled from their car for me to get out of the roadway....and I was only about a foot on the other side of the white line as that is only about a foot and half away from the edge

of the roadway surface. The areas where there are pinch points could have some additional road surface put down and then there would be the 2' minimum space (as noted below) for bicyclists to travel in their own bit of road. What makes it highly unsafe is that these pinch points occur after a good width section, so car drivers think bicyclists have room to travel...and then another pinch point comes up forcing bicycle riders to go into the car lane.

As this is the Pacific Coast Bike Route, then it would seem the least that could be done is to fix these pinch points that are worse now than before the project was done.

On Dec 4, 2020, she wrote:

I rode up Highway 1 today and was elated to see that Cal Trans has fixed the two grates on the first part. Will the grate at Ocean Ave. at Carmel High School also be treated in the same way?

When will the very narrow shoulder areas be widened to be consistent with the wider shoulder sections between Ocean Ave and Carpenter?

And on Dec 8, she added:

As a regular bicycle rider of that road section for 46 years, I know my own experience to be true that the sections are narrower. I know how it feels to not have the same road space as before (already scant space) when cars are bearing down on you at 45-50 or even 55 mph.

On Feb 20, 2021, she wrote:

***Now the problem is even worse.** When riding the road today, I encountered even **less road space for bicyclists now confined by a curb**... (more tar road edge was added to make this curb possible). With the new curb, the pinch points of barely any road space for bicyclists outside of the white line is now even greater.*

*I have attached photos of the roadside in question...two photos from January 8 when rain had exposed the previous road surface. There is a red line that shows the **road was wider before the new layer was added.***

And three photos from today showing the new curb and further reduced space for bicyclists. Why was this done?

Photo on February 19, 2021 of road edge near Handley Drive with new curb



Photo on Feb 19, 2021 of road edge north of Flanders Drive with new curb



Photo on January 8 2021 of road edge showing red line on old pavement.



On October 25, 2021, Paola reminded TAMC again about the unsafe conditions for people who bike (and, in turn, for people who drive) along Highway 1 from Ocean Ave to Carpenter. She is among the many who hope that her persistence in appealing to Caltrans—thus far by communicating via the channel of her county’s transportation agency, TAMC— will result in appropriate action.

There is little to no area on the right side of the fog line in several locations along this stretch. It did not used to be like this before they repaved it and put the curb in. I have ridden this stretch of roadway since I was fourteen, so I know what was there before the repaving. I have provided TAMC and Caltrans photographs showing these areas.

...

*While there is room to add additional pavement to accommodate bicyclist safety in these pinch points, at the very minimum, there should be a couple signs alerting car drivers to **SHARE** the ROAD with bicyclists.*

On January 26, 2022, Paola reminded TAMC again about this public safety situation.

It seems like there is a passing of the responsibility somewhere in this bureaucratic process....How long will it take to right the situation? When someone is injured or killed?

*As I have mentioned in previous emails, at the very least, a sign should be posted to alert drivers to **Share the Road** until the shoulder is made right for bicyclists.”*

Paola Berthoin is among the many who look forward to a remedy to this Highway 1, Carmel situation. On behalf of residents and visitors who use this section of the Pacific Coast Bike Route, Bicycling Monterey thanks Paola for her persistent advocacy.