



Unified Corridor Investment Study

July 2017

Project Summary

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is working with the public and stakeholders to develop a Unified Corridor Investment Study. The study will identify multimodal transportation projects on Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/Drive and Freedom Blvd, and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (see project area map below) that will provide the greatest benefit to the community. Goals and performance measures for this study are based on a triple bottom line analysis of environment, economy and equity; input from the public, partner agencies, decisions-makers and stakeholders; and consistency with federal, state and local goals. A scenario analysis will be performed to examine the impacts of various groups of projects for how well they advance the goals of the project. The scenario analysis considers the transportation needs of the entire county today and into the future. The modeling tools that were developed in the first phase of the project will be used to conduct the analysis.



Why is this study needed?

Highway 1 serves as an important local, regional and interregional route, connecting communities within and between the City of Santa Cruz and the City of Watsonville and other communities throughout the Monterey Bay. Soquel Ave/Dr and Freedom Blvd are important links in the local network and also often serve as an alternate route when Highway 1 is congested. These routes are heavily traveled, are often congested and have safety concerns. The acquisition of the rail line provides a third transportation facility along this corridor that has unused capacity. Santa Cruz County has one of the highest rates of fatalities and severe injuries in the state. Greenhouse gas emissions from transportation are of great concern and the transportation system needs to be equitable for all users. The Unified Corridor Investment Study will satisfy the mandate of Measure D, approved by voters in November 2016, to answer important community questions about possible future transit and other transportation uses of the rail corridor.



Major Milestones

- Approved in May, 2017: Corridor goals, Step 1 criteria and Step 2 performance measures were approved by the RTC based on recommendations from partner agencies, the public, RTC Committees, and RTC staff. Federal, state and local transportation planning goals have been considered including the 2014 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan, the 2040 California Transportation Plan, the FAST Act, State Transportation Improvement Program Guidelines, and the Smart Mobility 2010 Framework.
- Approved in May, 2017: The RTC approved the list of transportation projects and programs to be evaluated in the scenario analysis based on recommendations from partner agencies, the public, RTC Committees and RTC staff.
- Approved in June, 2017: Projects were grouped into six scenarios plus a no-build scenario for the Step 1 feasibility criteria analysis based on recommendations from partner agencies, the public, RTC Committees and RTC staff.
- Fall 2017: Results of Step 1 scenario analysis and selection of a maximum of five scenarios for more detailed analysis in Step 2. Input will be sought from partner agencies, public, RTC Committees.
- Fall 2018: Results of Step 2 scenario analysis and selection of a preferred scenario. Input will be sought from partner agencies, public, RTC Committees.
- December 2018: Final Report of Unified Corridor Investment Study

Project Team

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) is the lead agency for this project, to be implemented in partnership with Caltrans. Other stakeholders include the City of Watsonville, City of Scotts Valley, City of Santa Cruz, City of Capitola, County of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO), residents, businesses, and schools. A consultant team will help perform the analysis.



- You can sign up for the Unified Corridor Investment Study E-news List by emailing info@sccrtc.org, calling 831-460-3200 or signing up on the RTC website: <http://sccrtc.org/about/esubscriptions/>
- Comments can be sent to SCCRTC: info@sccrtc.org or 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

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