



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)

AGENDA
Thursday, January 17, 2019
1:30 p.m.
RTC Conference Room
1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. Oral communications

The Committee will receive oral communications during this time on items not on today's agenda. Presentations must be within the jurisdiction of the Committee, and may be limited in time at the discretion of the Chair. Committee members will not take action or respond immediately to any Oral Communications presented, but may choose to follow up at a later time, either individually, or on a subsequent Committee agenda.

4. Additions, deletions, or other changes to consent and regular agendas

CONSENT AGENDA

All items appearing on the consent agenda are considered to be minor or non-controversial and will be acted upon in one motion if no member of the Committee or public wishes an item be removed and discussed on the regular agenda. Members of the Committee may raise questions, seek clarification or add directions to Consent Agenda items without removing the item from the Consent Agenda as long as no other committee member objects to the change.

5. Approve Minutes of the October 18, 2018 ITAC meeting – *Page 3*
6. Measure D Quarterly Revenue Updates – *Page 7*

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Status of ongoing transportation projects, programs, studies and planning documents
 - a. Verbal updates from project sponsors.
8. Draft Legislative Program – *Page 8*
 - a. Staff report
 - b. Draft Legislative Program
9. Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley (SLV) Complete Streets Corridor Plan Outreach – *Page 22*
 - a. Staff report
 - b. Executive Summary

10. Caltrans Draft Corridor Plan guidebook
 - a. Presentation from Caltrans
 - b. Draft document online at:
http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/omsp/system_planning/CPG.html
11. Transportation Funding Updates
 - a. Verbal updates on state, federal, and Measure D, and other programs
 - i. [Active Transportation Program \(ATP\)](#) – CTC action 1/30-1/31
 - ii. [Highway Safety Improvement Program \(HSIP\)](#) – Cycle 9 approvals 12/12/18
 - iii. SB1 programs
 - iv. Measure D
 - v. Others
12. Unified Corridor Investment Study Update – *Page 33*
 - a. Verbal update on January 17, 2019 RTC board action
 - b. Copy of January 17, 2019 staff report to RTC board and Attachment 1: Exhibit B
 - i. Full RTC board item online at: <https://sccrtc.org/meetings/commission/agendas/>
13. Meeting Guy Preston, RTC Executive Director – *Page 53*
 - a. Staff report/Bio
14. Next Meeting – The next ITAC meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2019. The meeting will be held in the SCCRTC Conference Room, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA. ITAC meetings will be canceled if there are no action items to be brought before the committee.

Adjourn

HOW TO REACH US: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; phone: (831) 460-3200 / fax (831) 460-3215
email: info@sccrtc.org / website: www.sccrtc.org

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**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)**

DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday, October 18, 2018, 1:30 p.m.
SCCRTC Conference Room
1523 Pacific Ave, Santa Cruz, CA

ITAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Bailey, County Public Works and Planning Proxy
Teresa Buika, University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC)
Murray Fontes, Watsonville Public Works and Planning Proxy
Paul Hierling, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)
Jessica Kahn, Scotts Valley Public Works and Planning Proxy
Kailash Mozumder, City of Capitola Public Works and Planning Proxy
Claire Fliesler, Santa Cruz Planning and Public Works Proxy
Pete Rasmussen, Santa Cruz METRO

RTC Staff Present: Grace Blakeslee, Ginger Dykaar, Joanna Edmonds, Rachel Moriconi

Others Present: Daryl Jordan, Scotts Valley Public Works; Lee Otter, California Coastal Commission (CCC); Stanley Sokolow; Fredrick Venter and Darryl dePencier, Kimley-Horn; Matt Marquez, METRO

By Phone - Caltrans District 5 staff: Richard Rosales, Garin Schneider, Kelly McClendon and Jennifer Calate

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1. **Call to Order:** Chair Fontes called the meeting to order.
 2. **Introductions:** Self introductions were made. The Committee welcomed Daryl Jordan, the new public works Director for the City of Scotts Valley.
 3. **Oral Communications:** Rachel Moriconi announced that the 2018 Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment report is now available at www.savecaliforniastreet.org. Committee members discussed presenting the report on roadway conditions at a future RTC meeting. She also appreciated agencies for providing updates on how they have used Senate Bill 1 funds to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and Caltrans. The expenditure reports are posted on the CTC website: www.catc.ca.gov. Paul Hierling reported that the state is expected to increase housing requirements statewide, but is also looking at ground water sustainability. Kelly McClendon reported that the 2019 California Transportation Planning Conference will be held February 25-27 in San Diego, where merging trends will be a focus area. He also reminded members that Caltrans Planning Grant applications are due November 30. A workshop on the application will be held in District 5 on October 19.
 4. **Additions, deletions, or changes to consent and regular agendas:** Items 8 and 9 were moved after Item 5. Item 6 was moved to the end of the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Committee unanimously approved a motion (Fliesler/ Mozumder) approving the consent agenda, with all members present voting "yes".

5. **Approved Minutes of the June 21, 2018 ITAC meeting**, with one modification from Lee Otter to clarify under Item 9-Early Mitigation for Transportation Improvements - that Tami Grove referenced the importance of agricultural lands for mitigations, including for greenhouse gas reduction.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. **Status of Ongoing Transportation Projects** – *item moved to the end of the agenda*
8. **Update on Caltrans State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP)** - *item moved after Item 5*

Richard Rosales, Caltrans District 5, provided information about SHOPP projects currently programmed in the SHOPP and candidates for the 2020 SHOPP. He encouraged agencies to identify any local projects that Caltrans should be aware of to discuss proposed scope, funding, timing, potential state highway impacts, and opportunities for coordination. He noted that for some projects it might be possible to incorporate striping, bicycle facilities, and other components into the scope, especially if there are developments planned in the area or additional funding to partner on projects. Claire Fliesler requested that retrofitting pedestrian crossings on Mission Street be incorporated. Garin Schneider noted that Caltrans is developing a GIS web viewer of all the projects.

9. Transportation Funding Updates

Rachel Moriconi reported that the CTC received requests for \$2.23 billion in Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds. Only \$446 million is available this cycle. CTC and Caltrans staff are reviewing the applications and CTC staff recommendations will be available by the end of the year. Caltrans received \$420 million in requests for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds, which is significantly higher than available funding amounts. It is anticipated that if Proposition 6 passes, many projects will be deleted from the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Many projects previously approved for funds in the 2018 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) could be impacted.

Committee members noted that possible applications for the Caltrans Planning grants include a Watsonville downtown specific plan, enhanced Cruz511 program, and an Active Transportation Plan for unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County.

7. Unified Corridor Investment Study – Draft Step 2 Scenario Analysis

RTC staff Ginger Dykaar and Grace Blakeslee and Kimley-Horn consultants Fredrick Venter and Darryl dePencier presented the results of the Unified Corridor Investment Study – Draft Step 2 Scenario Analysis (UCS). Staff requested committee input, which will be considered for the staff recommended preferred scenario. The RTC adopted preferred scenario will be used to inform future transportation investments in the study area.

Committee members discussed average speeds and travel times between destinations; transit travel times; and the benefit to businesses of adding HOV lanes. Stanley Sokolow suggested that the analysis should consider the range of uncertainty (Monte Carlo Method) of different findings. Lee Otter applauded use of performance standards to evaluate the scenarios. He noted that projects in the Coastal Zone will likely require coastal permits and that the Local Coastal Programs may need to be updated.

Claire Fliesler stated that City of Santa Cruz staff recommend Scenario B, with the addition of widening the San Lorenzo River Bridge and intersection improvements for autos on Soquel Ave/Drive and Freedom Boulevard corridor. She noted that Scenario A is inconsistent with city policies and goals. Daryl Jordan recommended Scenario B, as is. Pete Rasmussen noted that METRO staff has no preferred scenario, but support inclusion of transit in the rail right-of-way. Paul Hierling stated AMBAG's support of transit and scenarios that help the region achieve its greenhouse gas reduction goals. Teresa Buika noted that UCSC is one of the highest transit users, with a large transit-dependent population; increasing transit access to university facilities, including those on Delaware and the coastal science areas, is supported by transit on the rail line. She noted that equity and transit user benefits should be considered in the preferred scenario. Murray Fontes noted that Watsonville supports rail with trail and retaining existing freight service in Watsonville.

The committee approved a motion (Fliesler/Fontes) supporting transit service on the rail line, and at a minimum maintaining freight service on the rail line in Watsonville, with 4 yes votes from Fliesler and Fontes on behalf of Santa Cruz and Watsonville city public works and planning departments, 0 no votes, and 10 abstaining (Capitola (2), Scotts Valley (2), County (2), METRO (2), UCSC, AMBAG).

The committee approved a motion (Fliesler/Buika) supporting inclusion of buffered/protected bike lanes in the preferred scenario, if they do not negatively impact METRO's ability to access bus stops (friendly amendment from Pete Rasmussen), with Fliesler, Rasmussen, Fontes, Kahn, Hierling, Bailey, and Buika voting yes, 0 no votes, and Mozumder abstaining. Several committee members noted that buffered/protected bicycle lanes are supported by their agencies' planning documents. Murray Fontes noted that they would require a road diet or right-of-way on Freedom Boulevard and that it is important to ensure local agency autonomy on implementation.

The committee approved a motion (Fliesler/Buika) supporting scenarios that implement the adopted Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) Master Plan, with Fliesler, Fontes, Kahn, Hierling, and Bailey voting yes, 0 no votes. Buika, Rasmussen, and Mozumder abstained. Several agencies noted local jurisdictions have adopted positions supporting the MBSST Master Plan. Lee Otter stated that the Coastal Commission supports implementation of the MBSST Master Plan and rail transit to increase access to the coast.

Murray Fontes noted that Watsonville supports any improvements to the Highway 1 corridor. Claire Fliesler noted that Santa Cruz supports adding lanes on the Highway 1 bridge over San Lorenzo River and Mission Street intersection improvements. Paul Hierling stated that if projects impact the region's ability to meet SCS/MTP greenhouse gas reduction goals or increase greenhouse gas emissions that AMBAG would be concerned. Tim Bailey stated County public works staff supports improvements to Highway 1. Pete Rasmussen stated that

METRO staff supports scenarios that enhance transit service, and facilitate faster service in the three corridors. Teresa Buika stated support for transit, bike access and a multimodal approach. She stated UCSC does not currently have a position on highway projects, but noted that Mission Street and the San Lorenzo River Bridge provide access to UCSC.

Ginger Dykaar appreciated the committee input and requested that members submit any additional comments by November 2 in order for them to be considered for the staff recommended preferred scenario.

6. Status of ongoing transportation projects, program, studies and planning documents

Agencies agreed to email updates on Measure D-funded projects to Rachel Moriconi and to continue to inform members of the public of projects funded by the SB1 gas tax. Reports on FY17/18 expenditures of Measure D revenues are due to RTC by December 31, 2018.

Rachel Moriconi reported that the RTC is going out to bid for the Bicycle Signage project this month and appreciated the work local agencies have done to assist with the project.

Teresa Buika reported UCSC is considering green pavement markings for bikes. Claire Fliesler noted that FHWA has provided interim approval for bike boxes.

10. Next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2018.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Rachel Moriconi, RTC Planner

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SCCRTC
TRANSPORTATION TAX REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION FUND (TTRTF) - MEASURE D
SUMMARY OF REVENUE ALLOCATION BY MONTH
FY2019 ENDING JUNE 30, 2019

	KEY/OBJEC	RATE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	O/H ADJUST	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL	YEAR END ADJUSTMENT	ADJUSTED TOTAL
GROSS	729000/40186		1,873,758.57	1,528,778.68	1,904,968.80	2,650,590.95	1,641,036.24	1,944,487.95	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,543,621.19	0.00	11,543,621.19
BOE FEES			-	(71,380.00)	-	-	(71,380.00)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(142,760.00)	-	(142,760.00)
NET			1,873,758.57	1,457,398.68	1,904,968.80	2,650,590.95	1,569,656.24	1,944,487.95	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,400,861.19	0.00	11,400,861.19
ADMINISTRATION & IMPLEMENTATION - 729100/62315																		
ADMINISTRATION - SALARIES & BENEFITS	1%		18,737.59	14,573.99	19,049.69	26,505.91	15,696.56	19,444.88	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	114,008.61	0.00	114,008.61
O/H ADMIN			17,238.58	13,408.07	17,525.71	24,385.44	14,440.84	17,889.29	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	104,887.92	0.00	104,887.92
SALARIES & O/H IMPELME& OVERSIGHT			9,855.87	9,855.87	9,855.87	9,855.87	9,855.87	9,855.87	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	59,135.23	0.00	59,135.23
SERVICES & SUPPLIES			15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	90,000.00	0.00	90,000.00
Subtotal			60,832.04	52,837.93	61,431.27	75,747.22	54,993.27	62,190.04	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	368,031.76	0.00	368,031.76
TO DISTRIBUTE TO INVESTMENT CATEGORIES			1,812,926.53	1,404,560.75	1,843,537.53	2,574,843.73	1,514,662.97	1,882,297.91	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,032,829.43	-	11,032,829.43
1. NEIGHBORHOOD - 729200/75232	30%		543,877.96	421,368.23	553,061.26	772,453.12	454,398.89	564,689.37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,309,848.83	-	3,309,848.83
SLV SR9	Fixed \$		27,777.78	27,777.78	27,777.78	27,777.78	27,777.78	27,777.78	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	166,666.67	0.00	166,666.67
HWY 17 Wildlife	Fixed \$		13,888.89	13,888.89	13,888.89	13,888.89	13,888.89	13,888.89	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	83,333.33	0.00	83,333.33
			41,666.67	41,666.67	41,666.67	41,666.67	41,666.67	41,666.67	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	250,000.00	0.00	250,000.00
City of Capitola	5.6199%		28,223.77	21,338.85	28,739.86	41,069.47	23,195.14	29,393.35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	171,960.44	-	171,960.44
City of Santa Cruz	22.7328%		114,166.69	86,316.80	116,254.31	166,128.22	93,825.59	118,897.71	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	695,589.31	-	695,589.31
City of Scotts Valley	4.8981%		24,598.81	18,598.16	25,048.62	35,794.65	20,216.04	25,618.18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	149,874.46	-	149,874.46
City of Watsonville	15.1901%		76,286.40	57,677.05	77,681.35	111,007.19	62,694.44	79,447.67	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	464,794.10	-	464,794.10
County of Santa Cruz	51.5591%		258,935.62	195,770.71	263,670.45	376,786.92	212,801.02	269,665.80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,577,630.52	-	1,577,630.52
	100%		502,211.29	379,701.56	511,394.59	730,786.45	412,732.22	523,022.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,059,848.83	0.00	3,059,848.83
2. HWY Corridors - 729300/62888	25%		453,231.63	351,140.19	460,884.38	643,710.93	378,665.74	470,574.48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,758,207.36	-	2,758,207.36
3. TRANSIT/PARATRANSIT - 729400/75231	20%		362,585.31	280,912.15	368,707.51	514,968.75	302,932.59	376,459.58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,206,565.89	-	2,206,565.89
Santa Cruz Metro (SCMTD) 16%	80%		290,068.25	224,729.72	294,966.00	411,975.00	242,346.07	301,167.67	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,765,252.71	-	1,765,252.71
Community Bridges - 4%	20%		72,517.06	56,182.43	73,741.50	102,993.75	60,586.52	75,291.92	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	441,313.18	-	441,313.18
4. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION - 729500/62856	17%		308,197.51	238,775.33	313,401.38	437,723.43	257,492.70	319,990.64	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,875,581.00	-	1,875,581.00
5. RAIL CORRIDOR - 729600/62857	8%		145,034.12	112,364.86	147,483.00	205,987.50	121,173.04	150,583.83	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	882,626.35	-	882,626.35
DISTRIBUTED TO INVESTMENT CATEGORIES	100%		1,812,926.53	1,404,560.75	1,843,537.53	2,574,843.73	1,514,662.97	1,882,297.91	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,032,829.43	-	11,032,829.43
TOTAL ADMIN & IMPEM AND INVESTMENT CATEGORIES			1,873,758.57	1,457,398.68	1,904,968.80	2,650,590.95	1,569,656.24	1,944,487.95	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,400,861.19	0.00	11,400,861.19

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TO: Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)

FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner

REGARDING: 2019 State and Federal Legislative Programs

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) members identify State or Federal legislative issues that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) should consider, pursue or monitor in 2019.

BACKGROUND

Each year the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) adopts legislative platforms to guide its analysis of state and federal legislative or administrative actions that could impact transportation funding or implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), and transportation projects in Santa Cruz County. Working with the Central Coast Coalition (regional transportation agencies from Monterey, San Benito, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Cruz Counties), the California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG), other transportation entities, and its legislative assistants, monitors legislative proposals, the RTC notifies state and federal representatives of the RTC's analysis of key issues, and provides input on other federal and state actions.

DISCUSSION

Staff is in the process of developing the RTC's 2019 State and Federal Legislative Programs (Attachment 1). New items that were not included in the 2018 Legislative Programs are shown with an asterisk. **Staff recommends that the RTC's advisory committees provide input on the draft legislative priorities and identify any additional issues that the RTC should consider, monitor or pursue in 2019.** The RTC board is expected approve the State and Federal Legislative Programs at its February 2019 meeting.

Generally, the RTC's legislative program focuses on legislative and administrative actions that:

- Involve funding or a funding mechanism for transportation
- Involve the implementation of transportation and greenhouse gas emissions reduction policies and programs
- Involve transportation and land use
- Involve the environmental review process
- Involve changes to the way transportation projects are delivered
- Affect the Commission directly (e.g. Commission responsibilities, policies or operations)

The California Legislature reconvened from winter recess on January 7, 2019 to begin the first year of a new two-year session. 2019 also marks the first year for the state's new governor, Gavin Newsom. In addition, there will be a new Congress in Washington, D.C. with new members holding leadership positions. While it is not yet clear what impact leadership changes in both California and Congress will have on transportation programs, the RTC legislative program is used to advance key goals and targets in the *2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan*, which focuses on sustainability – improving multimodal access and mobility, safety, maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure and services, cost effectiveness, and equity. The draft 2019 legislative program also focuses on advancing regional projects.

With state voters rejecting Proposition 6 in November 2018, SB1 programs remain intact and increased stability was brought to transportation funding. Senate Bill 1 (SB1, 2017) provides funding for state transportation programs, including formula funds for cities and counties, transit, the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), Freeway Service Patrol, and new competitive funding programs for active transportation, rail, congested corridors, freight corridors, and other state priorities. The RTC will be working with other agencies in the county and statewide to ensure these SB1 and other transportation funds are distributed equitably and efficiently. Staff will focus legislative efforts related to transportation funding on ensuring that statutes and guidelines are structured in a manner that recognizes Santa Cruz County's significant traffic congestion, maintenance, active transportation and transit system needs. As part of Governor Newsom's budget proposal, released on January 10, 2019, he suggested the possibility of tying some transportation funds to housing. Staff is interested in getting input from ITAC members on this proposal.

The RTC's federal legislative assistant has prepared a memorandum summarizing key activities in 2018 and the outlook for transportation in 2019 ([Attachment 2](#)).

Upon adoption, the RTC may take positions on bills throughout 2019 that are consistent with the adopted Legislative program.

SUMMARY

Committee members are encouraged to suggest items for the RTC to consider in its 2019 Legislative Program.

Attachment 1: Preliminary Draft 2019 Legislative Program
Attachment 2: Federal 2018 Wrap-Up & 2019 Outlook

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**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

DRAFT 2019 STATE Legislative Program

**New items that were not included in the 2018 Legislative Program are shown with an asterisk.*

Transportation Funding

- **Protect Transportation Funding:** Preserve funding for transportation projects, support protection of transportation funding resources, maximize funding for Santa Cruz County transportation projects, and preserve regional discretion and priority-setting.
 - Stable, formula funding is essential for addressing the backlog of transportation infrastructure repairs and improvements in Santa Cruz County. **Support protection of all current and future taxes and fees and other transportation funds** (including Highway Users Tax Account (HUTA), Transportation Development Act (TDA), State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Active Transportation Program (ATP), and other funds) from elimination or diversion to other State programs, General Fund loans, general obligation bond debt service, or to other non-transportation purposes.
 - Seek improvements at the Board of Equalization/California Department of Tax and Fee Administration to ensure that distribution of sales taxes on online sales do not negatively impact TDA-LTF and local sales tax measure revenues.
 - Capturing Sales Tax from Internet Sales: In June 2018, the Supreme Court ruled in *South Dakota v. Wayfair* that internet retailers can be required to collect sales taxes even in states where they have no physical presence if a seller's gross revenue exceeds a reasonable threshold of value or quantity. The decision was hailed as a victory for brick-and-mortar businesses and for states that have expressed concern about losing out on tax revenue as internet sales comprise an increasingly larger share of all sales. The State Legislature has recently begun to explore next steps to implement this ruling through informational hearings. Ensure legislative and regulatory efforts to conform state law to this ruling increase transportation funding from local-option sales taxes (METRO and Measure D) and TDA funding across in Santa Cruz County, as well as County of Santa Cruz and city resources.*
 - Oppose proposals that could tie transportation fund availability, especially HUTA to local jurisdictions, to non-transportation and development projects*
- **Ensure Fair Distribution of Funding:**
 - Ensure state and federal funds are made available for projects in Santa Cruz County, are distributed equitably, and are not disproportionately distributed to large regions. Ensure competitive programs make funding reasonably available for multi-modal projects in Santa Cruz County that address local and regional priorities.

- **Local Role:** Ensure a strong role for regional and local agencies in planning and determining transportation investment priorities. Support legislation protecting or expanding local decision-making in programming expenditures of transportation funds, rather than the State making top-down funding decisions that are not community-based.
- **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP):** Ensure equitable programming and allocation of STIP funds.
- **Active Transportation Program (ATP):** Ensure potential reforms to the Active Transportation Program (ATP) do not reduce the proportion of funds available for Santa Cruz County agencies to compete for.*
- **“Disadvantaged Communities” Definition:** Broaden the definition of “disadvantaged communities” (DACs) in order to ensure that projects that benefit low-income and other transportation disadvantaged residents of Santa Cruz County are not excluded from funding opportunities that support sustainable communities, transportation choices, and investments in alternative modes of transportation.
- **Increase Funding for All Transportation Modes:** Support measures that increase funding for and support implementation of transportation projects in Santa Cruz County, including funds for ongoing system maintenance, congestion reduction, safety, complete streets, active transportation bike, pedestrian, transit projects, transit-oriented development, and specialized transportation for seniors and people with disabilities in Santa Cruz County.
 - **New funding systems:** Phase in new funding systems which are tied to system use, rather than fuel consumption or fuel prices. May include new user fees, such as a Road User Charge or Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) fee and other alternative funding mechanisms.
 - **Expand local revenue-raising opportunities** and innovative financing options to address the significant backlog of transportation needs. Provide locals with the ability to supplement and leverage state funding for investments that protect state and local transportation assets
 - **Expand the authority of the RTC and local entities to increase taxes and fees** for transportation projects, including new gas taxes and vehicle registration fees.
 - Support clarifying amendment to Government Code Section 65089.20 that will give RTPAs equal treatment with Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) to seek voter approval for a local vehicle registration fee. *(SB83 cleanup)*
 - **Lower Vote Threshold:** Support efforts to amend the California constitution to lower the voter threshold for local transportation funding measures, such as local sales tax or vehicle registration fee ballot measures, from the 2/3 supermajority to a simple majority or 55% vote.
 - **Cap & Trade:**
 - Increase percent of Cap & Trade revenues allocated to transportation projects and programs that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Santa Cruz County.



- Support increases in Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) appropriations
- Support policy changes to the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program (AHSC) that increase funding opportunities for projects in Santa Cruz County
- Ensure continued funding for low and zero emission transit deployment. Ensure regulatory and legislative requirements related to transit electrification provide flexibility, consider cost and available technology, and do not place an undue burden on transit agencies.*
- **Support options to replace the loss of redevelopment funding**, to support economic development and affordable housing consistent with sustainable community strategies.
- **Increase and Preserve Funding for Priority Projects in Santa Cruz County:**
 - Projects on Highway 1
 - Local Street and Roadway Preservation
 - Transit projects
 - Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian facilities, including the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST)
 - Soquel Avenue-Freedom Boulevard Corridor*
- **Transportation Development Act (TDA):**
 - Monitor potential modifications to the TDA, including fare-box recovery requirements, and ensure funding for transit, planning, administrative, and other TDA purposes in Santa Cruz County are not reduced.*

Project Implementation

- **Streamlining & Expediting Project Delivery:** Support administrative and/or legislative efforts to streamline funding applications, simplify program administration and other efforts that modernize and accelerate project delivery.
 - Support the development of greater efficiencies of transportation program implementation, including eliminating any unnecessary, overly burdensome and/or duplicative mandates.
 - Opportunities to expedite transportation project delivery may include increasing contracting and financing options, increased flexibility in early allocation of programmed funds and initiating reimbursable work with local funds in advance of CTC allocation of all projects, efforts that expedite the Caltrans design review process, opportunities to expedite locally-sponsored projects on the state highway system, and increase in encroachment permit limits.
 - Support delegation of National Environmental Policy Act review and fund allocation responsibilities to Caltrans, environmental streamlining measures for bike, pedestrian, transit, and infrastructure preservation within existing public rights of way, and other measures that expedite project delivery.
- **Advanced Mitigation:** Support implementation of “advanced mitigation” environmental programs, including approving up-front environmental mitigation funding for projects, such as the Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing.



- **FAST Act Implementation:** Support legislation and administrative strategies to implement the FAST federal authorization bill, in a way that ensures the best possible outcome for transportation projects in Santa Cruz County.
- **SHOPP Program:** Support Caltrans' efforts to provide more outreach regarding State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) projects and to include measureable targets for improving the state highway system. Support clarification of existing laws to permit the expenditure of SHOPP funds for operational projects on state highways.

Support inclusion of complete streets within SHOPP projects, as appropriate, but especially in areas where state highways serve as main streets, such as Highway 9 and Highway 152 in Santa Cruz County.

- **Encroachments**
Support legislation that clarifies the authority under which rail property owners may remove, or by notice may require the removal of encroachments.
- **Active Transportation Facilities:**
Support modification to rules, regulations, and government codes that will make roadways more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly, including laws associated with sharing the road; ensuring complete streets components (e.g. accessible pedestrian signals) are considered during the design of all projects; increasing funds for pedestrian safety countermeasures; providing additional direction and consistency for accessible pedestrian design.
- **Land Use/Housing/Transportation Coordination:** Encourage new developments to incentivize active transportation and bus use.* Ensure SB743 (Steinberg, 2013) implementation supports infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and expedites transportation project delivery.
- **Administrative:** Allow advance payment of programmed funds, in order to expedite project delivery and resolve cash flow challenges faced especially by small regional agencies.
- **Unfunded Mandates:** Oppose unfunded mandates and seek funding for mandates imposed in recent years. Require new regulatory proposals to include an estimate of the cost and impact such proposals will have in the delivery of California's transportation program.
- **Commuter Programs:** Expand statutory authority for regions statewide to adopt and implement a regional commuter benefits ordinance similar to the successful program in the Bay Area.
- **Safety:** Support legislation and programs that improve transportation safety for all users and help achieve Vision Zero —aimed at eliminating all traffic-related serious injuries and fatalities. Support proposals to increase enforcement and support modification of traffic laws to better protect pedestrians and bicyclists, including proposals to authorize automated speed enforcement on a pilot program basis, proposals that would allow local jurisdictions to reduce speed limits*, and modifications to vehicle code to allow vehicles to cross a double-yellow line when passing cyclists*. Support commercial driver, bus driver, motorist, bicyclist, safe routes to schools training and education programs which reduce collisions.



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- **Shared Mobility:** Support policies that enable technological innovations to improve mobility, while protecting the public's interest. Monitor legislation and regulations related to shared mobility, such as transportation network companies and real-time carpooling, to ensure that mobility benefits are maximized, and access to critical data for transportation and land-use planning and operational purposes is assured.
- **Connected and Autonomous Vehicles:** Monitor and engage in legislation and regulations to facilitate deployment of connected vehicles and autonomous vehicles. In partnership with Bay Area cities and counties, transit agencies, the business community, and other transportation organizations, engage in regulatory and legislative efforts related to connected and autonomous vehicles with the goal of accelerating their safety, mobility, environmental, equity and economic benefits. Similar to the "shared mobility" strategy, support access to critical data for transportation and land use planning and operational purposes.
- **Electrification** of vehicle fleets: Support funding and coordination, including policy, planning, and infrastructure, for vehicle electrification. Support improved utility pricing for public transit fleets.



*For more information contact the RTC at 831-460-3200; info@sccrtc.org;
1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060*



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

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- **Priority Projects:** Seek and preserve funding for priority transportation projects and programs in Santa Cruz County, including:
 - Projects on Highway 1
 - Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
 - Transit operations and capital projects
 - Local street and roadway preservation
 - Bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST/Rail Trail)
 - 511 implementation
- **Stabilize and Increase Funding.**
 - **Increase funding levels** for all modes to bring transportation infrastructure up to a good state of repair and meet growing transportation needs in Santa Cruz County. Support increase and index of federal fuel taxes that are available for projects in Santa Cruz County.
 - **Infrastructure Initiative:** Ensure any new infrastructure funding initiative increases transportation investments for projects in Santa Cruz County, including funding for the existing Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) programs and formula fund programs. The federal investment in an infrastructure package should adhere to the traditional match requirements, so as not to disadvantage projects in Santa Cruz County from accessing those funds. The initiative should include a significant investment of **new** federal funds for transportation, stabilize the Highway Trust Fund and not be offset by reductions to other federal programs serving Santa Cruz County residents.
 - **BUILD:** Maintain the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD, formerly TIGER) grant program at or above current levels.
 - **Develop new funding mechanisms** that ensure the financial integrity of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and Mass Transportation Account. Without any new sources of dedicated revenue, the HTF would need an infusion of over \$100 billion from the General Fund simply to fund highway and transit programs at their current levels from 2021 through 2025.
 - **Innovative Financing:** Ensure proposals for public-private partnerships and innovative financing are favorable for project implementation in Santa Cruz County.
 - **Defend fiscal year 2019 and 2020 appropriations.** Ensure that Congress appropriates funding consistent with amounts authorized in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.
 - **Oppose rescissions or arbitrary cuts** that could reduce funding for transportation projects in Santa Cruz County.*
 - **Support transparent congressionally-directed spending** (earmarks) to allow for Congressional support of priority projects in Santa Cruz County
 - Oppose efforts to withhold federal funds from jurisdictions not in compliance with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement law, or from "sanctuary" jurisdictions.
- **Disaster Recovery:** Work with local and state partners to advocate for emergency relief appropriations and federal agency resources to support rebuilding and recovery efforts.



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- **Protect and expand transportation fringe benefits.** Reinstate the commuter benefit, which was eliminated under the tax reform bill. In addition, advocate for expanding pre-tax transportation fringe benefit eligibility to include shared mobility options, such as bike-share and shared ride carpool services.
- ~~**Marketplace Fairness Act:** Allow states and local governments to collect sales taxes on out-of-state online purchases. The MFA has the prospect of increasing infrastructure funding as a result of increased revenue from Measure D and the local transit sales tax and Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds. *Supreme Court Wayfair decision in 2018 addressed.*~~
- **Streamline Project Delivery:**
Support regulations to streamline and integrate federal project delivery requirements for project planning, development, review, permitting, and environmental processes in order to reduce project costs and delays.
- Oppose **unfunded mandates** and support legislation that provides funding for past mandates.
- **Transportation Act Implementation and Reauthorization**
 - Support legislation and administrative strategies to implement the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or "FAST Act" federal authorization bill, in a way that ensures the best possible outcome for transportation projects in Santa Cruz County. Ensure that U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) implementation of MAP-21 and FAST Act rules and regulations do not have a negative impact on local projects and programs.
 - **Active Transportation:** Support continued funding for pedestrian and bicycle projects
 - **Transit:** Support increased funding for transit, continued and accelerated growth of the Small Transit Intensive Cities Program (STIC), funding for acquisition of transit capital (Bus and Bus Facilities, and Low and No Emissions Bus Programs), and increase funds for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) implementation, state of good repair, and other transit programs.
 - **Reauthorization:** As Congress begins discussions on reauthorization of the FAST Act, which expires in 2020, support increases to programs that provide funds for projects in Santa Cruz County.*
- **Performance Measures:** Support development of performance measures which are consistent with RTC approved goals, policies, and targets and which recognize data limitations of many regions.
- **Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Support development of new funding programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, expand eligibility for CMAQ and other funding programs to Santa Cruz County. Support funding and coordination of vehicle electrification planning and infrastructure.
- **Climate Change and Resiliency:** Strengthen federal partnership to support resiliency and climate change preparedness and efforts that could support local efforts to improve resiliency, respond to new or worsening environmental hazards and meet regional climate goals.
- **Autonomous Vehicles:** Oppose federal efforts to preempt local authority to regulate the use of autonomous vehicles in their communities.*



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*For more information contact the RTC at 831-460-3200; info@sccrtc.org;
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**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY RTC
WASHINGTON OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

TO: Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner

FROM: Chris Giglio, CapitalEdge

DATE: December 2018

SUBJECT: 2018 Wrap-Up & 2019 Outlook

The following are some federal items and activities from 2018 that may be of interest, as well as some thoughts on potential transportation items in 2019.

Department of Transportation Budget

While the Trump Administration has proposed steep cuts to some popular transportation programs in its last two federal budget proposals, Congress has soundly rejected those suggestions, and in fact, has provided increases to a number of Department of Transportation programs.

Examples include:

- The popular TIGER discretionary program (rebranded as “BUILD” by the Trump Administration), which was targeted for elimination but instead received \$1.5 billion in FY 2018 from Congress, an increase of \$1 billion over FY 2017.
- The Trump Administration budget also proposed the phasing out of the Capital Investments Grant (CIG) program, which funds light rail, streetcar, and bus rapid transit projects, and Congress responded by awarding the program a \$230 million increase in FY 2018.
- Amtrak also experienced a \$450 million increase in FY 2018, whereas the Trump Administration has proposed phasing out subsidies for the railroad.

Federal highway and public transit formula programs in FY 2018 were funded at or near the levels authorized for them in the 2015 FAST Act, which in most cases was an increase of about 2% from previous year levels.

- The FAST Act also authorized a new program at the Federal Railroad Administration, the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program, and Congress allocated almost \$600 million for the program in FY 2018, representing a \$525 million increase.

The increases to these and other domestic discretionary programs was made possible through an agreement reached by Congress in early 2018 that increased the very tight overall spending caps for FY 2018 and FY 2019. The 2011 Budget Control Act established those caps with the intent of reducing the federal deficit by \$1.5 trillion over

10 years. If Congress cannot come to a similar agreement with the President for FY 2020 and FY 2021, spending at DOT and other agencies could experience some significant reductions in the future.

Infrastructure Package

The Trump Administration unveiled some aspects of a proposed infrastructure package earlier this year, but the proposal, which did not include any new federal investment, was roundly rejected on Capitol Hill.

Approximately 80% of the \$1 trillion package would have come from state, local, or private investment, with the remainder coming from the federal government – those resources derived from cuts to existing infrastructure programs. The proposal took the wind out of the sails of infrastructure package discussions in Congress, and the matter received little attention for the remainder of the year.

- The infrastructure plan rollout did, however, provide a look into how the Trump Administration is making awards to existing DOT programs. Proposals that include significant local contributions (“overmatch”) or participation of private entities do receive priority consideration in many cases. The RTC could conceivably benefit from this direction, using resources realized from the combination of Measure D and state gas taxes to demonstrate local commitment.

Online Sales Tax Collection

The Supreme Court provided some finality this year to the debate over online sales taxes. The decision in *Wayfair v. South Dakota* allows state and local governments to require out-of-state remote retailers to collect sales taxes on purchases, overturning a 1993 decision that maintains that a retailer must have a physical nexus in a jurisdiction in order to be compelled to collect sales taxes.

Conservative estimates are that California was losing over \$1.5 billion annually in uncollected online sales taxes prior to the *Wayfair* decision. The state Department of Tax and Fee Administration has reportedly been tasked with developing rules to govern collections in California with the goal that they would begin in 2019.

Tax Credits

For the last several years, Congress has approved one-year extensions of a group of tax breaks that cover a variety of areas. This package of “extenders” usually includes a tax break for railroad track maintenance on short line railroads (commonly known as the “45G” tax credit, after its section of the IRS Code).

House leaders recently introduced a bill to provide one-year extensions for most of the extenders but has proposed a permanent extension of the railroad track maintenance tax credit. IN exchange for that permanency, the credit would be reduced from 50% to 30%. The extenders package also includes a retroactive, one-year extension of the alternative fuels tax credit from which Santa Cruz METRO receives a rebate for clean fuels purchases.

Outlook for 2019

Certainly, the biggest change in 2019 in Washington will be the transfer of control of the House to Democrats for the 116th Congress. Some key players in the transportation arena are expected to be:

- Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR), incoming Chair of the House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee
- Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY), incoming Chair of the House Appropriations Committee
- Rep. Richard Neal (D-MA), incoming Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee
- Rep. David Price (D-NC), incoming Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee with jurisdiction over DOT

DeFazio is expected to be the Democratic point-person for infrastructure package discussions, as well as the reauthorization of the FAST Act, which expires in 2020. Lowey and Price will be important to the DOT annual budget, particularly programs at the agency not funded through the Highway Trust Fund, such as TIGER/BUILD, Capital Investment Grants, and most rail programs. As Chair of the tax-writing committee, Neal will be responsible for coming up with a financing mechanism to keep the federal Highway Trust Fund solvent.

Infrastructure – 2019

There will likely be discussions about an infrastructure package in 2019, and the President has even reportedly expressed interest in providing more federal funding to his proposal, but there are some barriers to a true “stimulus” like the 2009 Recovery Act.

The first is the 2017 tax bill. That measure is expected to add over \$1.5 trillion to the deficit over the next ten years and adding another \$1 trillion or more will be a hard sell with congressional Republicans – and some Democrats. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) on one hand reportedly discussed the possibility of an infrastructure package with likely Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) right after the November election, but has also said that he did not want to replicate the “Obama stimulus package in 2009.”

While there is some hope that infrastructure will be an issue on which the President and congressional Democrats can negotiate, a more likely path for federal investments in infrastructure may be increasing funds through reauthorization of existing programs and increasing the overall spending caps for the annual budget. The FY 2018 and FY 2019 budgets already include an additional \$10 billion each in spending for a variety of existing infrastructure programs, resulting in the increases for TIGER and other programs mentioned above.

FAST Act Reauthorization

The FAST Act, which authorizes federal highway and transit programs, expires in 2020 and discussions over a new bill are likely to begin in 2019. The most significant hurdle will be finding a funding mechanism to keep the Highway Trust Fund (HTF), which

provides guaranteed funding for many highway and transit programs, solvent. Federal gasoline taxes fund the HTF, but the current level of 18.3 cents per gallon is not enough to fund programs beyond 2020.

While other types of funding are being examined to potentially replace the gas tax as the primary source of funding for the HTF, such as charging drivers by vehicle miles travelled (VMT), none have garnered a consensus. The gasoline tax has not been increased since 1993, and while an increase (as well as indexing the tax for inflation) has broad appeal behind closed doors on both sides of the aisle in Washington, Members of Congress remain nervous about their electoral prospects if they raise taxes.

Without any new sources of dedicated revenue, the HTF would need an infusion of over \$100 billion from the General Fund simply to fund highway and transit programs at their current levels from 2021 through 2025. Sponsors of the FAST Act managed to find approximately \$70 billion in one-time transfers into the HTF, but Congress will have a hard time repeating that feat in 2020.

Earmarks

When Republicans took control of the House in 2011, they instituted a rule that banned the practice of spending for specific projects in legislation. This ban on congressionally-directed spending (or “earmarks”) was also agreed to by the Senate.

While GOP leaders liked the optics of banning “pork-barrel” spending, the truth of the matter is that the ban did not help reduce the deficit (funds that were traditionally earmarked were distributed by federal agencies through competitive grants) and Members on both sides complain that it takes away Congress’ Constitutionally-granted power of the purse.

There is a chance that House Democrats will end the earmark ban when they take control in January, and Senate Republicans could conceivably follow suit (Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was a legendary earmarker for Kentucky during his time on the Appropriations Committee).

The RTC has benefitted from earmarks in the past for projects such as Highway 1 improvements, the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, and purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. However, we would caution that if earmarks do return, they will likely be fewer in number and smaller in size, and in some cases, the additional requirements that come with federal funding in these instances may not be worth the small federal investment.

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TO: Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)

FROM: Brianna Goodman and Rachel Moriconi, Transportation Planners

RE: Draft Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Corridor Plan Outreach

RECOMMENDATIONS

This item is for information only.

BACKGROUND

Highway 9 is the primary travel corridor through San Lorenzo Valley. It serves as the “Main Street” and economic center for the towns of Felton, Ben Lomond, Brookdale, and Boulder Creek, and as an interregional arterial connecting Silicon Valley and Santa Cruz. San Lorenzo Valley community members, the County of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District, Caltrans, the RTC and other stakeholders have identified significant transportation deficiencies along the corridor. However, since state, federal, and local revenues are severely constrained, a comprehensive plan is needed to prioritize transportation investments for this important corridor.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) was awarded a Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning Grant (FTA 5304) of \$249,000 from Caltrans to prepare a complete streets corridor transportation plan for the Highway 9-San Lorenzo Valley corridor and the RTC committed local funds as match to the grant. The consultant team of Kimley-Horn and Trail People was hired to prepare the plan, with oversight provided by RTC, Caltrans, Santa Cruz METRO, and County of Santa Cruz staff.

DISCUSSION

The draft Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley (SLV) Complete Streets Corridor Plan is expected to be posted online and available for public review by January 17 (*online at: www.sccrtc.org/slv*). The draft plan identifies, evaluates and prioritizes the most critical and cost effective transportation improvements in the corridor. The Executive Summary is attached (Attachment 1). This multimodal plan focuses on safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists; access to schools, businesses, and bus stops; traffic operations, pavement conditions, drainage and other needs in this important travel corridor.

The corridor plan includes:

- Information on existing conditions and identification of infrastructure gaps;
- Answers to questions about what can be done within Caltrans’ right-of-way;

- Conceptual complete street designs that may be used to facilitate subsequent design, environmental review, and construction of priority infrastructure projects;
- Data, evaluation, analysis of conceptual projects;
- Summary of public outreach and input;
- Prioritization of transportation projects that can be implemented in the short-term and longer term to address transportation challenges on the corridor.

Public Outreach

This plan builds upon past outreach efforts led by County Supervisor McPherson's office, County Public Works and Caltrans, as well Town Plans developed in the 1980s and 1990s, the Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan, the 2006 SLV Trail Feasibility Study, and other plans. For the Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley (SLV) Complete Streets Corridor Plan, over 400 people provided input on transportation priorities and issue areas in San Lorenzo Valley through an online survey and community meetings during Phase 1. Staff and the consultant team also met with Caltrans, Santa Cruz METRO, the County of Santa Cruz public works and planning departments, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District staff, community organizations and community leaders to solicit input on transportation needs and project concepts along the corridor. Focus groups provided input on the draft priority project list in 2018.

Wide-spread public participation and engagement is also being sought on the draft plan. The Executive Summary, full plan and appendices are expected to be available on the RTC website: www.sccrtc.org/slv by January 16. Hard copies will be available for review at the RTC's downtown Santa Cruz office and at the Santa Cruz Central and SLV libraries.

ITAC members and community members are encouraged to review the draft plan and provide any input by February 15, 2019.

There are several ways to learn more and provide input on the Highway 9/SLV Corridor Plan:

- RTC website: www.sccrtc.org/slvplan
- Open houses (**Commissioners are encouraged to attend**)
 - January 31 from 6:00-7:30pm at the Felton Community Hall (6191 Hwy 9, Felton, CA)
 - February 6 from 6:00-7:30pm at the Boulder Creek Elementary School, Multi-Purpose Room (400 W. Lomond St., Boulder Creek)
- RTC board meeting February 7
- Written comments can be submitted via [email](mailto:slvplan@sccrtc.org) to: slvplan@sccrtc.org, or by postal mail to the RTC office.
- Staff is presenting information on the draft document to the RTC Bicycle Committee and Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC) at their February meetings.

Input is also being solicited through the RTC's Highway 9/SLV eNews group (which has over 500 email subscribers), neighborhood social media groups, the RTC's web

newsfeed, Facebook and Twitter pages, as well as through newsletters, news media, local business, and community partners.

SUMMARY

Caltrans awarded the RTC a planning grant to prepare a complete streets plan for the Highway 9 corridor through San Lorenzo Valley (SLV). The draft plan identifies, evaluates, and prioritizes transportation concepts that improve safety, access to schools, businesses, and bus stops, and traffic operations. ITAC members are encouraged to review the draft plan (*which is expected to be posted online by January 17*), attend informational open houses, and provide input on the draft plan through an online survey or via email by February 15, 2019 for consideration during development of the final document.

Attachments:

- 1) Executive Summary
- 2) Draft Highway 9/SLV Complete Streets Corridor Plan (*to be available electronically by January 16 on the RTC website – www.sccrtc.org/slv*)

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Executive Summary

Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Complete Streets Corridor Plan

Shaped by community input about transportation challenges that San Lorenzo Valley residents currently face and desires for the future, the **Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Complete Streets Corridor Plan** (SR9/SLV Corridor Plan) is a planning study that provides a vision, guiding principles, and realistic strategies to improve how people get around San Lorenzo Valley.

This complete streets corridor plan focuses on the section of Highway 9 which serves as the “Main Street” and economic center for the villages of Felton, Ben Lomond, Brookdale, and Boulder Creek, as well as connecting county maintained roads (**Figure ES1**). Priorities identified in the plan improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists; improve access to schools, businesses, residences, and transit; and improve traffic operations throughout this travel corridor.

This is a “Complete Streets” plan, which means it is focused on planning, designing, operating, and maintaining transportation facilities that improve mobility for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles, and truckers, as appropriate to the function and context of the facility. A well-designed complete street does not just work better; it *feels* better, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, and it *looks* better, with enhanced aesthetics and amenities that complement the setting and adjacent uses.

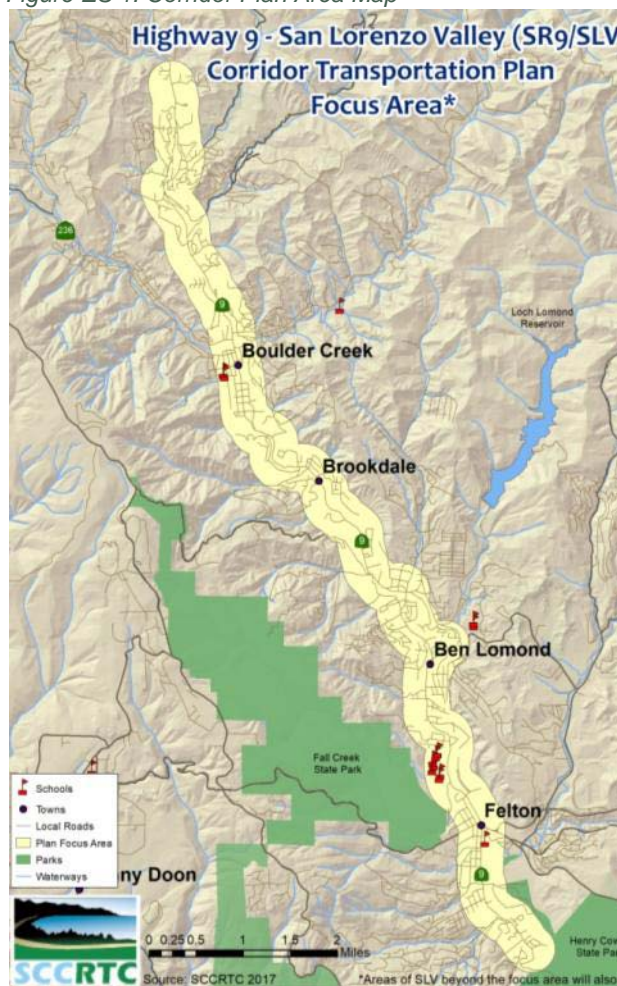
Existing Conditions

This mountainous area of Santa Cruz County has narrow curving roadways frequently impacted by steep terrain, high collision rates, significant gaps in bicycle and pedestrian facilities, limited transit service, traffic backups at a number of choke points, as well as pavement, drainage, and other assets in disrepair.

Daily traffic volumes: Highway 9 is used by over 16,000 vehicles between Ben Lomond and Boulder Creek and over 21,000 vehicles each day between Felton and Ben Lomond, with use expanding with tourism and special event traffic during summer months. (see **Figure ES 2**)

Traffic choke points: While traffic volumes through SLV are relatively low compared to other state highways and major arterials in Santa Cruz County, during peak travel periods motorists regularly experience moderate to severe backups through the village cores, in front of SLV Elementary, Middle and High Schools (SLV Schools Campus) just north of Felton, and at major

Figure ES 1: Corridor Plan Area Map



intersections, including the Highway 9/Graham Hill Road intersection in Felton and Highway 9/Bear Creek Road intersection in Boulder Creek.

Figure ES 2: Average Daily Traffic Volumes on Highway 9

Post Mile	Location Description – HIGHWAY 9	Daily Traffic Volume
5.64	FELTON, north of SAN LORENZO AVENUE	7600
6.46	FELTON, south of GRAHAM HILL ROAD	12,100
6.46	FELTON, north of GRAHAM HILL ROAD	20,800
8.11	BEN LOMOND, south of GLEN ARBOR ROAD	19,600
9.71	BEN LOMOND, SAN LORENZO RIVER BRIDGE	15,200
11.3	BROOKDALE, north of ALAMEDA AVENUE	11,400
13.04	BOULDER CREEK, south of SOUTH JCT. RTE. 236	12,000
13.24	South of BEAR CREEK ROAD	17,700
13.24	North of BEAR CREEK ROAD	10,700
20.86	North of WATERMAN GAP, NORTH JCT. RTE. 236	2800

Source: Caltrans Traffic Census Program, 2017

Collisions: There have been a number of significant collisions in the past decade in SLV. Leading causes of injury and fatal collisions from 2013 to 2017 involved unsafe speed or improper turning. Residents are justly concerned about speeding on roadways throughout SLV, especially near schools, residential and commercial areas. The narrow curving right-of-way and close proximity to buildings, fences, and trees meant nearly 40% of all collisions 2013-2017 were “hit object” collisions, rather than a collision between two vehicles. Impaired driving from alcohol or drugs is also a significant challenge. California Highway Patrol (CHP) is responsible for traffic enforcement through SLV, though officers are responsible for covering very large areas.

Walking: While there are some pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, paths, and crosswalks) in village centers, the rural nature of the area has left most pedestrians outside of the village cores walking in dirt along the shoulders of Highway 9 and on local roads. Especially as more vehicles use the roads, more formalized separation of pedestrians is desirable. Many existing sidewalks in village cores are not compliant with the latest accessibility (American’s with Disabilities Act or ADA) standards. Narrow roadways, pinched by hillsides, gullies, and trees make construction of walking paths between town centers difficult.

Bicycling: While there are no dedicated bicycle lanes or paths along Highway 9 or local roads in SLV, the highway is regularly used by bicyclists commuting through and between town centers, cyclists accessing parks, as well as recreational cyclists, sometimes traveling the entire length of Highway 9 from Santa Clara County/Saratoga to Santa Cruz. Where shoulders exist, cyclists often use that space, but otherwise are sharing the road surface with motorists.

Transit: SLV is served by three public bus routes, school buses, as well as paratransit services for seniors and people with disabilities offered by Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line. Santa Cruz METRO’s three bus routes have an average monthly ridership of approximately 40,000.

Figure ES 3: Downtown Felton looking north



Credit: SCCRTC

Goals and Objectives

The primary purpose of the Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Complete Streets Corridor Plan is to create an actionable short-term and longer-term multi-modal complete streets corridor plan that addresses transportation challenges for all modes of transportation along the Highway 9 corridor through San Lorenzo Valley (generally Felton to Boulder Creek) and within the village cores. In evaluating potential transportation projects, the project team considered how well projects address objectives identified by the community. Chapter 1: *Introduction* provides greater detail on objectives and criteria used to evaluate priority projects.

Project Objectives

- *Safety*
- *Pedestrian Access and Connectivity*
- *Bike Access and Connectivity*
- *Sustainability/Reduce emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT)*
- *Traffic Flow for Vehicles*
- *System Preservation/Maintenance*
- *Transit Connectivity*
- *Economic Vitality*
- *Town Character Compatibility*
- *Public Support*
- *Ease of Implementation, including cost and available funding*
- *Anticipated Use Level*

Implementation Priorities

In recognition that funding for transportation projects is limited, the Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Complete Streets Corridor Plan prioritizes transportation investments that improve multi-modal transportation access and connectivity, safety and security, operations, economic vitality and environmental quality through San Lorenzo Valley. In order to identify priorities, the project team (SCCRTC, Caltrans, County Public Works, County Planning, Santa Cruz Metro, and consultants) reviewed existing conditions (collisions, facilities, traffic volumes, etc), conducted extensive community outreach, and considered information from other relevant documents and past community input. After reviewing hundreds of project ideas and challenge areas, the project team developed a consolidated list of a priority projects. The team then evaluated how well those projects address goals and primary objectives and solicited stakeholder feedback on project components. The overall vision for the corridor, including corridor-wide priorities and sample cross sections (see **Figure ES4**) are included in Chapter 2.

Figure ES 4: Village Core Enhanced Cross Section (Design concept only)



Source: Trail People

Priority Projects: Chapter 3 *Priority Projects by Location* identifies priority projects along the corridor. A more exhaustive list of ideas and concepts for SLV are included in Appendix B, *Identified Projects List*. A range of potential short and longer term infrastructure modifications in these areas are described in Chapter 3, **Figures ES 5 to ES 8** show these priority projects, split according to mode of transportation. Based on how well the priority projects meet objectives listed above, some of the highest priorities for the corridor include the following.

- SLV Schools Campus Circulation: Improving traffic flow and bike and pedestrian access to SLV Elementary, Middle, and High Schools has consistently been identified as one of the highest priority for SLV. (Projects 9 and 10)
- Highway 9/Graham Hill Road Intersection: redesign intersection to improve circulation, pedestrian, and bicycle access through the intersection. (Project 8)
- Felton: Pedestrian, roadway and parking modifications (Projects 4, 6, and 7)
- Ben Lomond: Multimodal improvements in the village core (Project 14)
- Brookdale crosswalk safety improvements (Project 20)
- Boulder Creek sidewalk and crosswalk improvements (Projects 23 and 25)
- Corridor-wide priorities: roadway maintenance, speed reduction, increase transit service, increase number of turnouts, add lighting at crosswalks, and wider shoulders for bicycles

Discussion on how these projects were determined to be the highest priorities can be found in Chapter 4 *Project Evaluation and Implementation Plan*.

How this Plan will be Used

This Complete Streets Corridor Plan will be used to guide and coordinate transportation investments along the Highway 9 corridor through SLV. It serves as a resource for Caltrans, County Public Works, County Planning, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), SLV Unified Schools District (SLVUSD), residents and businesses to use to improve this transportation corridor. It prioritizes infrastructure projects (Chapter 4 *Project Evaluation and Implementation Plan*); shows preferred roadway cross sections for town centers, suburban areas and rural areas which can be used as a framework for future updates to infrastructure in areas not identified in the priority projects (Chapter 2 *Corridor Vision*); includes a “toolkit” illustrating a range of potential transportation facility modifications, projects, and programs and answers questions about what can be done within Caltrans’ right-of-way (Appendix A *Complete Streets Improvements Toolkit*); and identifies potential funding sources, including opportunities to use \$10 million of Measure D revenues earmarked for the area to leverage other local, state and federal funds (Chapter 4 *Project Evaluation and Implementation Plan* and Appendix C *Funding Opportunities*).



While it is anticipated that many projects will be implemented independently, as other transportation and non-transportation projects are implemented along the corridor, public and private entities are expected to consider and incorporate complete streets components and concepts identified in this corridor plan. This may include Caltrans maintenance, operational, and preservation projects (SHOPP), new land use developments, or major infrastructure modifications.

Figure ES 5: Auto Priority Projects

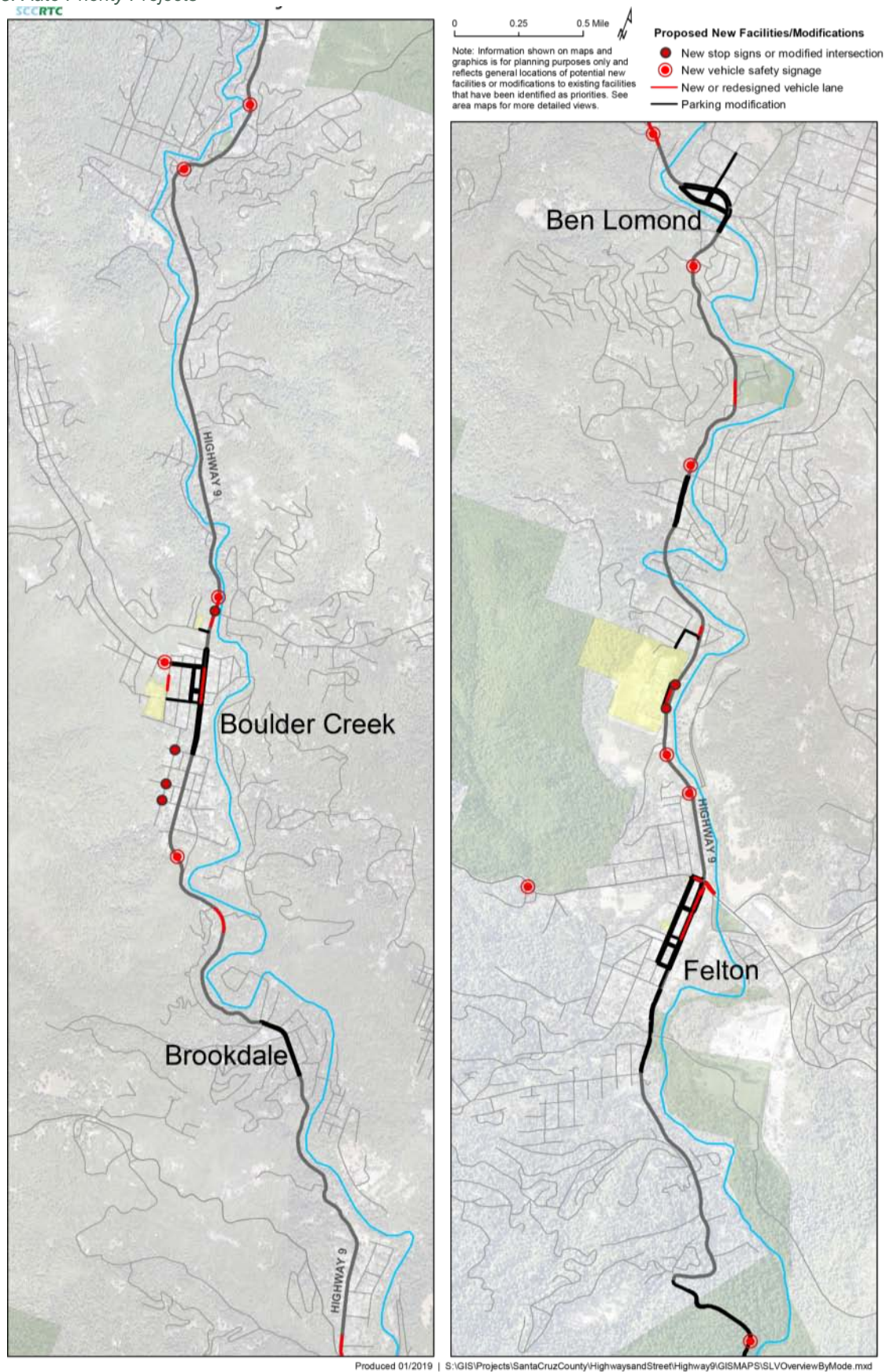


Figure ES 6: Pedestrian Priority Projects

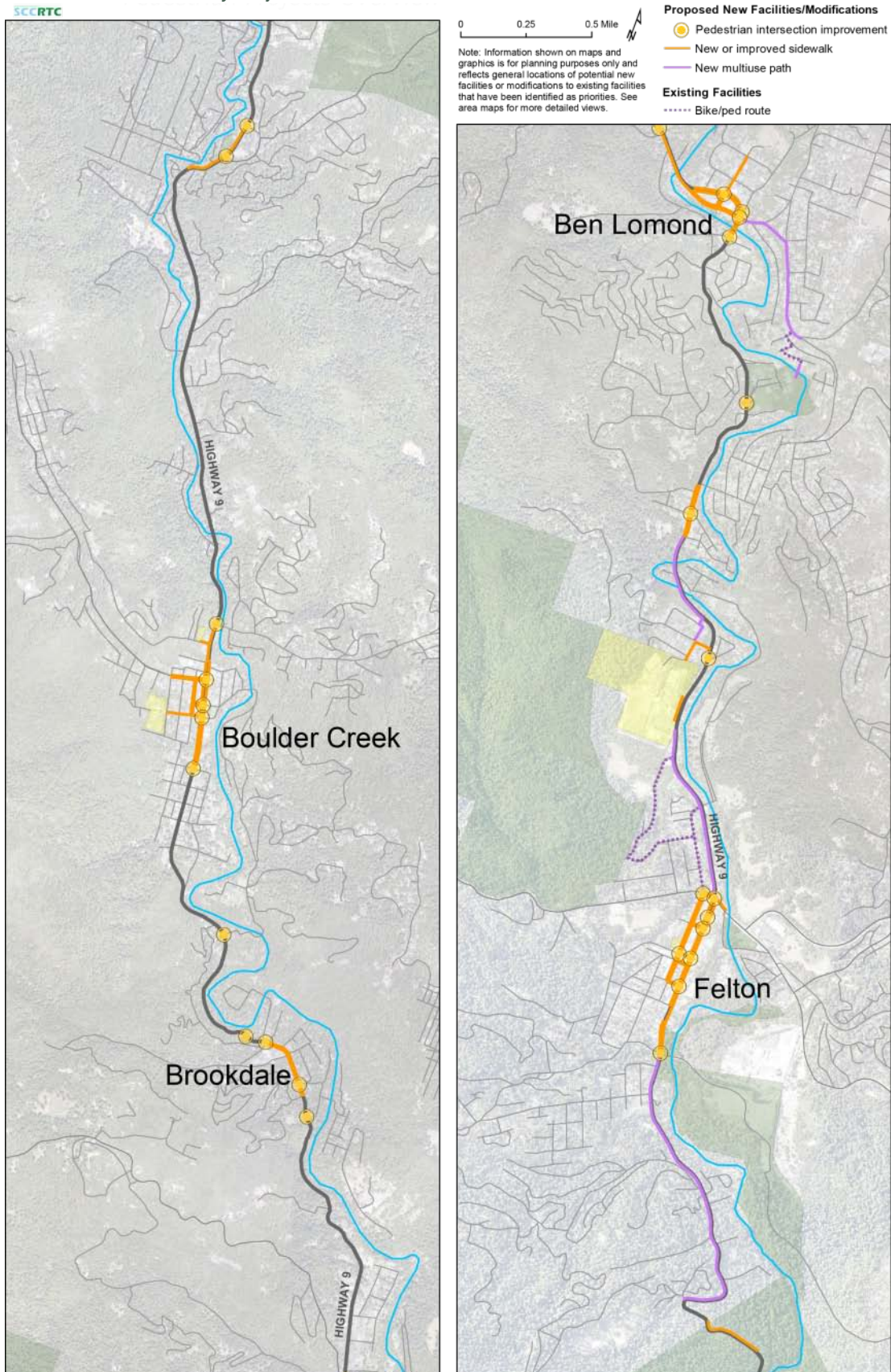
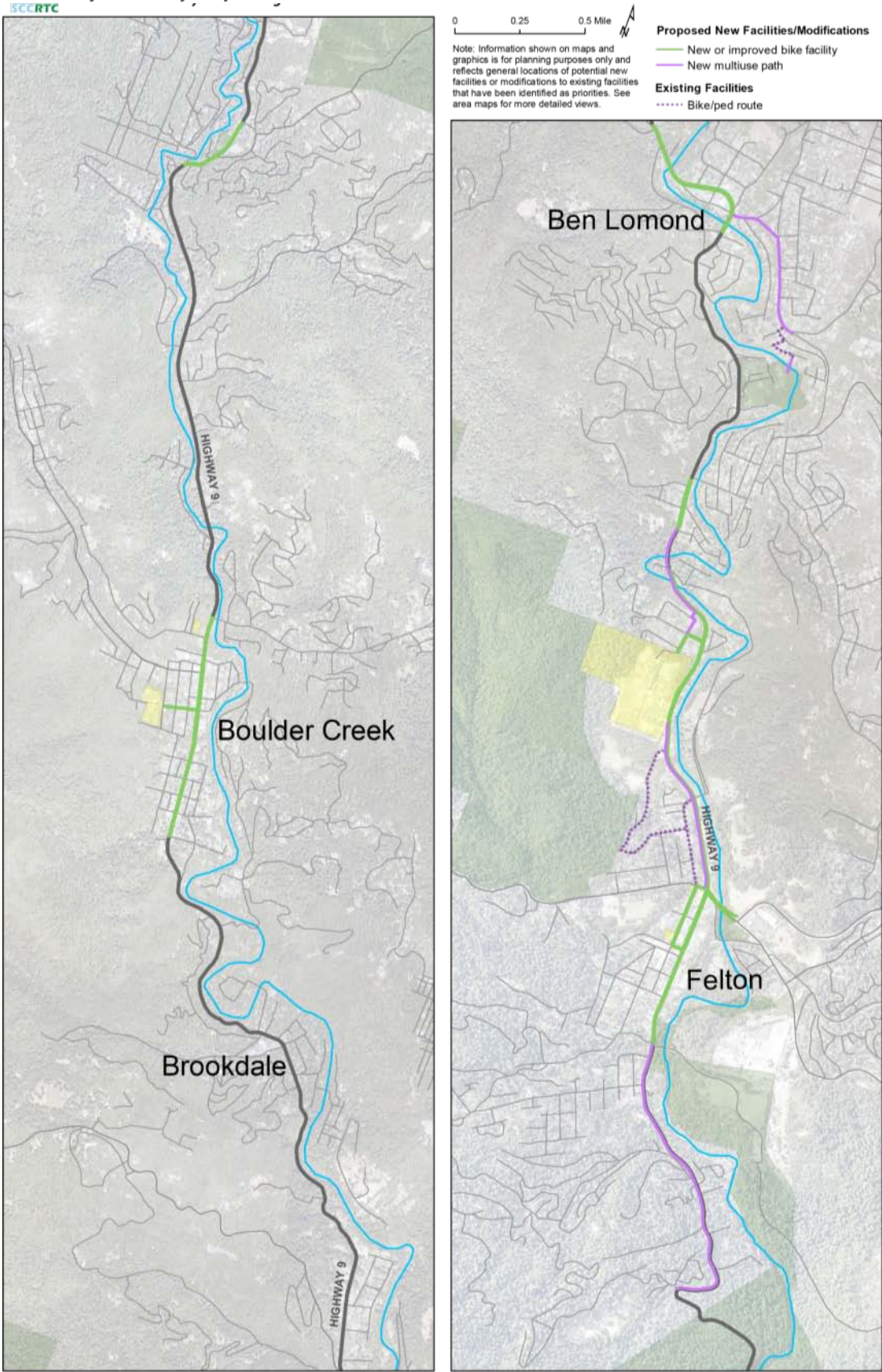
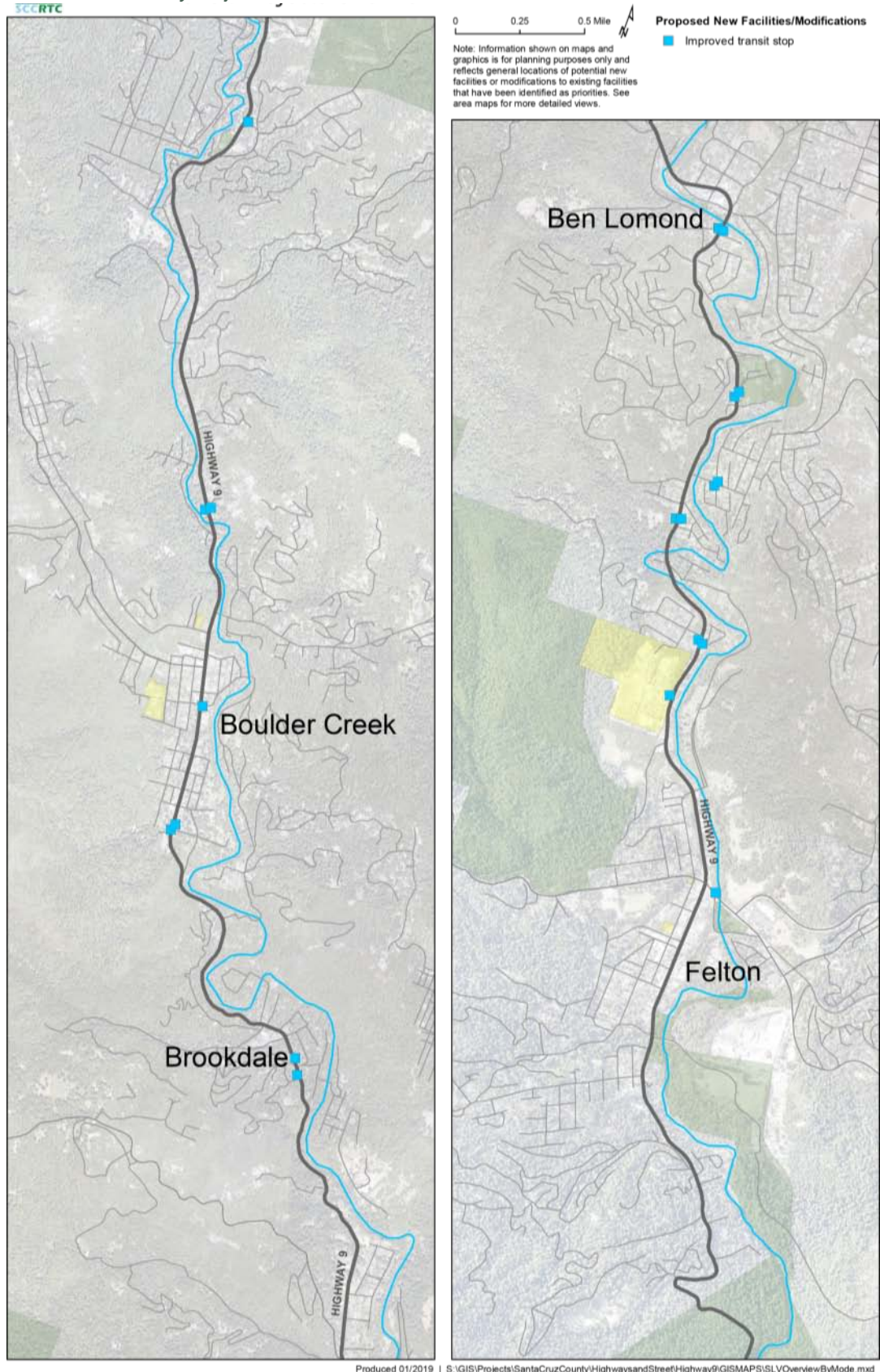


Figure ES 7: Bicycle Priority Projects



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Figure ES 8: Transit Priority Projects



TO: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Guy Preston, Executive Director and Luis Mendez, Deputy Director
Ginger Dykaar and Grace Blakeslee, Sr. Transportation Planners

RE: Unified Corridor Investment Study – Final Report & Determination of
Exemption from CEQA & Grant of Phase II of the Administration,
Coordination and License Agreement to St. Paul and Pacific Railroad

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Consider the findings of the Final Draft Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) and adopt a resolution ([Attachment 1](#)) accepting the UCS, which selects a preferred scenario ([Attachment 1: Exhibit B](#)) and determines this action to be exempt from CEQA ([Attachment 1: Exhibit A](#)); and,
 2. Grant St. Paul & Pacific Railroad a license to use the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) to provide excursion services (in addition to freight services) as specified under 2.4.1 of the Administration, Coordination and License agreement entered into on June 12, 2018 by the RTC.
-

BACKGROUND

The objective of the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) is to identify multimodal transportation investments that provide the greatest potential benefit and most effective use of Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/Drive and Freedom Boulevard, and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line to travel between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. Goals for the UCS focus on developing a sustainable transportation system which seeks to maximize benefits in terms of safety, efficient mobility, health and equity, the natural environment, and economic vitality. Input from the public, community organizations, stakeholders, RTC advisory committees, and RTC has been solicited at key milestones of project development. The UCS report has been developed by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. and Strategic Economics, Inc. with input from RTC staff. This planning effort is funded through a Caltrans' Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning Grant (FTA 5304) and local voter-approved Measure D funds.

DISCUSSION

As communicated in the November 15, 2018 staff report the recent community discussion for improved travel options between Watsonville and Santa Cruz can trace its origins to about 1990 (see [Attachment 2](#)). Since then the RTC has

conducted vast analysis of a variety of potential transportation improvements, held innumerable public meetings to consider analysis and recommendations, and before making decisions, obtained much public input in written and oral forms through public meetings, workshops, stakeholder groups, surveys, email, etc. Decisions made by the RTC, many of which have been unanimous or nearly unanimous, include various actions to improve Highway 1, the purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line to preserve and improve rail transportation, and various actions to build a bicycle and pedestrian trail next to the existing railroad track on the rail line right-of-way (ROW). Working with a variety of partners and the community, the RTC has achieved the following:

1. Highway improvements along Mission Street, safety improvements at the Highways 1 and 17 interchange and merge lanes between Morrissey Boulevard and Soquel Drive at a total cost of about \$115 million.
2. Acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line ROW with grants of over \$20 million in rail and transit funding.
3. Replacement of the La Selva Beach railroad trestle.
4. The completion of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) master plan and program level environmental document for a bicycle and pedestrian path adjacent to the track.
5. Securing over \$40 million for development of multiple path projects.
6. Passage of Measure D, which provides a dedicated funding source for a multi-modal countywide expenditure plan.
7. The commencement of an environmental document for the North Coast segment of the MBSST, between Wilder Ranch and Davenport.
8. The award of a MBSST construction contract to replace the San Lorenzo River River Railroad Trestle Bridge pedestrian walkway with a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail.
9. The completion of a Highway 1 - Tier 1 (Program Level) Environmental Document for comprehensive highway improvements between San Andreas/Larkin Valley Road and Morrissey Boulevard with a Tier 2 (Project Level) Environmental Document for auxiliary lanes between Soquel Avenue and 41st Avenue and a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge over Highway 1 at Chanticleer Avenue.
10. The commencement of final design work for auxiliary lanes between Soquel Avenue and 41st Avenue and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge over Highway 1 at Chanticleer Avenue.

The UCS is the latest phase of that community conversation and provides a rigorous analysis of how various groups of projects or scenarios advance the transportation goals of the Santa Cruz County community. The UCS evaluates transportation improvements using performance-based planning and a scenario analysis consistent with Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration guidance for evaluating future investment decisions. The passage of Measure D in November 2016 provided funding for the RTC to evaluate future transportation uses of the rail ROW. The UCS provides an analysis of the options for the rail ROW as specified by the Measure D expenditure plan, in combination with a study of potential improvements on Highway 1 and Soquel Avenue/Drive and Freedom Blvd.

Outreach

The UCS project team has undertaken a significant level of effort to solicit input on transportation priorities for Santa Cruz County. Since the December 6, 2018 RTC meeting, the following input has been received from partner agencies:

- A letter was received from the Chair of the METRO Board of Director's ([Attachment 3](#)) supporting BRT Lite improvements in the Soquel Avenue/Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard corridor, a Bus on Shoulders facility for Highway 1, and public mass transit service in the rail corridor. METRO recommended a non-mode specific alternatives analysis, a full analysis of operations and capital funding sources, mass transit use in the corridor adjacent to bike and pedestrian facilities, but not under the "rail banking" concept, and an RTC policy that would commit to funding METRO with TDA-LFT, TDA-STA and TDA SGR at current percentage levels in perpetuity.
- Comments were received from Caltrans District 5/Caltrans Headquarters Division of Rail in support of HOV lanes on Highway 1 and passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. Caltrans states a number of state funding opportunities for both Highway 1 improvements as well as for further evaluation of passenger rail along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line consistent with the California State Rail Plan ([Attachment 3](#)).
- Comments were received from the University of California at Santa Cruz supporting: the range of transportation options identified in the preferred scenario released on November 15, 2018 that include highway improvements, bus service enhancements and passenger rail service on the rail right-of-way along with bike and pedestrian improvements; requesting that multimodal intersection improvements on Mission St and reconstruction of the Highway 1 Bridge over San Lorenzo River be added to the preferred scenario; and, support for development of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail along the rail corridor ([Attachment 3](#)).
- Comments were received by community organizations and members of the public since the December 6th RTC meeting can be found on the UCS webpage (https://sccrtc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/AllComments_20181114_20190109.pdf).

The UCS project team responded to questions from members of the public through a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document posted on the UCS webpage (<https://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/unified-corridor-study/>).

Final Report and Modified Preferred Scenario

The final draft of the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) is available on the UCS webpage (<https://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/unified-corridor-study/>). The second draft of the Unified Corridor Investment Study – Step 2 Scenario Analysis, including a draft preferred scenario, was provided to the RTC at the November 15, 2018 meeting. The draft preferred scenario was modified ([Attachment 1: Exhibit B](#)) and other minor revisions were made to the report ([Attachment 4](#)) since the November 15, 2018 meeting. The modified preferred scenario included in the Final

Draft UCS to be considered at the January 17, 2019 RTC meeting emphasizes the protection of the rail right-of-way for high-capacity public transit service. The package of projects in the Preferred Scenario of the UCS (Attachment 1: Exhibit B) advances the UCS goals for the Santa Cruz County transportation network to advance safety, reliability and efficiency, economic, environmental, and equity in transportation. The Preferred Scenario provides guidance for RTC to provide a range of multi-modal transportation options with auto, transit, bike and pedestrian improvements that are integrated together as part of an overall transportation system. The Preferred Scenario emphasizes regional projects that include highway improvements, bus service enhancements, and high-capacity public transit service along with bike and pedestrian improvements including a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle facility next to a transit facility within the existing rail right-of-way. The Preferred Scenario establishes a vision of an integrated transit network that includes bus transit services via Bus on Shoulder on Highway 1 and high-capacity public transit services on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line to serve as main line transit routes between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. The RTC will work with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District to develop of a scope of work for additional analysis of high-capacity public transit alternatives on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line including their cost, operations, and funding plans to inform future decisions about public transit services on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and protect Metro's current funding sources.

As communicated above, since the 1990's, the RTC has made numerous decisions regarding improvements to Highway 1 and development of transportation options on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. The staff recommendation on the Preferred Scenario of the Unified Corridor Investment Study is consistent with the many decisions of the RTC over the last two to three decades.

Freight (Phase I) and Excursion Rail (Phase II) Service

In July of 2018, the RTC entered into a 10-year Administration, Coordination, and License Agreement (ACL) with St Paul & Pacific Railroad, a subsidiary of Progressive Rail Incorporated (PGR). Phase I of the agreement granted PGR the right to provide freight service on the entire Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL). As part of Phase I of the agreement, the RTC is responsible to pay for (or cause payment for) repairs to the Freight Easement Property necessary to allow Railroad to operate the Freight Easement to MP 7.0.

According to the ACL, if after completion of the Unified Corridor Investment Study and prior to the grant of a license to provide Transportation Service (Phase II), the Commission determines that the Freight Easement Property, a 20' wide section of the rail right-of-way, should not be used for Freight Service from MP 7.0 to MP 0.0, the Commission will terminate the Agreement and pay Railway (PGR) \$300,000. If the RTC determines that the freight service should continue between MP 7.0 and MP 0.0, the RTC is not required to make a payment to PGR.

As specified in the ACL, upon completion of the Unified Corridor Investment Study (considered to be November 15, 2018), if the commission determines that the

SCBRL should be used for transportation of passengers (excursion trains), the Commission will grant PGR, a non-exclusive license to use the SCBRL to provide excursion services, Railway Transportation Service (Phase II). One year after receiving approval from the RTC to implement excursion service, the operator must present a plan for approval to the RTC detailing the excursion services, which must be approved by the RTC prior to commencing excursion train operations.

If the commission grants a license for Phase II excursion train operations, the RTC would be responsible to pay for (or cause payment for) repairs from MP 7.0 to MP 31.39 (up to Class 1 track classification) within a 3-year period. If repairs are not completed in 3-years, PGR's service requirements for excursion travel will be extended accordingly at no penalty to the RTC. The overall term of the agreement will remain 10-years, irrespective of repairs. Once the RTC's initial repairs are completed, PGR would be able to resume common carrier freight service beyond MP 7.0 and potentially commence new excursion services, subject to the Commission's approval of an excursion service plan. PGR would then be responsible for maintenance of the entire freight easement. Since the ACL does not include a provision for termination of the agreement, without cause, beyond the proposed decision to continue Freight Service from MP 7.0 to MP 0.0, any future potential decision to change the use of the Freight Easement would be subject to negotiations between the parties and subject to the approval of the Surface Transportation Board (STB), the federal agency responsible for regulating freight rail. However, the ACL does allow for the operator to abandon service on part of the line, with STB approval.

The Measure D expenditure plan provides approximately \$1.6 Million per year for infrastructure preservation and analysis of options for the rail corridor, including environmental analysis. Regardless of the ultimate use of the rail right-of-way, the RTC has an obligation to effectively maintain the right-of-way. At a minimum, the right-of-way needs to be kept clear of overgrown vegetation, fallen trees, and landslides. Drainage must also be maintained. In 2012, the RTC's consultant, JL Patterson & Associates, Inc. (JLP), performed a high-level analysis to identify, reassess, and prioritize \$6 Million in capital improvements for the rail line, primarily associated with bridge and culvert structures. Since then, one of the biggest priorities, the La Selva Beach Trestle, has been replaced using over \$4 million in State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Public Transportation Account Funding (PTA) funding. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) are reimbursing RTC for damage from the 2017 storms. To obtain a more current assessment of the work need, the RTC contracted with RailPros, Inc. to provide additional inspections on all 37 railroad bridges and 22 culverts. The report is expected to be completed in 2019. An additional analysis will be needed to assess the current condition of the track and other infrastructure to update the cost estimate associated with RTC's maintenance obligations.

By March 15, 2019 (120 days from November 15, 2018), if the commission fails to grant PGR a license for Phase II of the agreement to provide excursion services, PGR can terminate the agreement. Although there are no specified damages to the

RTC for failing to grant a license to provide Transportation Service (Phase II), there is considerable uncertainty as to what would happen to the freight rail common carrier designation as well as the RTC's ownership of the SCBRL, if PGR chooses to terminate the entire ACL. Termination is not effective until the STB approves abandonment or transfer of Freight Service. The STB may choose to not release PGR from its common carrier obligations, until and unless another suitable common carrier is found.

On November 2, 2018 the California Transportation Commission (CTC) wrote then Executive Director George Dondero a reminder that Proposition 116 funds must be used for rail projects within Santa Cruz which facilitate recreational, commuter, intercity and intercounty travel. Further, the CTC's adopted resolution requires that if the RTC ceases to utilize the Branch Line for the original purpose as approved by the RTC, SCCRTC commits, via a board resolution, to reimburse the State, the greater of either the amount allocated (\$11 million in Proposition 116 funds and \$4 million in STIP PTA funds) or then present fair market value of the rail line right-of-way (ROW). If the RTC decides not to issue a transportation easement for passenger rail service, there is a good chance that the CTC will immediately request that these funds be reimbursed and present value of the ROW.

PGR has been meeting its obligations under the ACL. Granting of a non-exclusive transportation license (excursion travel) is not a guarantee of any future service on the rail line. Any future transportation service will be subject to RTC's ability to fund and complete necessary repairs, as well as PGR's submittal and the Commission's approval of a plan for excursion travel. However, granting the excursion travel easement will likely appease the CTC's concerns that the rail line is being used for transportation services, while the RTC conducts additional studies of the high-capacity public transit alternatives. It also provides a mechanism for transferring maintenance obligations to PGR.

Any present or future decision as to the continuance of freight on the line is not under the direct control of the RTC, due to the regulatory authority of the STB. The responsibility to meet common carrier freight obligations will not go away by refusing to grant a transportation (excursion travel) easement. Since the preferred scenario includes protecting the right-of-way for high-capacity public transit, it is prudent to not risk losing control over rail line ownership and/or agreements for a freight common carrier. A change of direction will expose the RTC to unnecessary risk at a time when cooperation with State and Federal funding agencies could lead to more opportunities to fund the many needed transportation improvements identified in the UCS.

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) adopt a resolution (Attachment 1) accepting the Unified Corridor Investment Study, which selects a preferred scenario (Attachment 1: Exhibit B) and determines this action to be exempt from CEQA (Attachment 1: Exhibit A); and, grants St. Paul & Pacific Railroad the license to use the SCBRL to provide excursion services (in addition to freight services) as specified under Phase II of the ACL (2.4.1).

The acceptance of the Unified Corridor Investment Study:

- Provides Commission support of the UCS as a Comprehensive Corridor Plan that is required as part of the application for the Senate Bill 1 Congested Corridors Program Funding. California Streets and Highways Code Sections 2391-2397 state that Congested Corridors Program funding “shall be made available for projects that make specific performance improvements and are part of a comprehensive corridor plan designed to reduce congestion in highly traveled corridors by providing more transportation choices for residents, commuters, and visitors to the area of the corridor while preserving the character of the local community and creating opportunities for neighborhood enhancement projects.” Performance criteria requirements that are to be evaluated in the corridor plan as applicable are Safety; Congestion; Accessibility; Economic Development and Job Creation and Retention; Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction; and Efficient Land Use. The Unified Corridor Investment Study has evaluated performance measures under these criteria.
- Provides an acknowledgment that the UCS included an analysis of future transportation use options for the rail right-of-way consistent with the Measure D Expenditure Plan;
- Provides acceptance that the UCS studied existing conditions data and 2035 forecasts for 16 performance measures that include safety, travel time, mode share, person trips across a screenline, vehicle miles traveled, cost estimates and potential funding, GHG emissions, and household transportation costs. This data set and analysis can be used for applying for funding for priority projects.
- Provides acceptance of a preferred scenario, which will assist in guiding staff on how to advance priority projects as outlined both below as well as in the draft resolution (Attachment 1).

SUMMARY

The Unified Corridor Investment Study uses a performance-based planning and scenario analysis approach to evaluate the transportation investments on Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/Soquel Drive/Freedom Blvd, and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and their ability to advance sustainability goals. **RTC staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission adopt a resolution (Attachment 1) accepting the Unified Corridor Investment Study, which selects a modified Preferred Scenario (Attachment 1: Exhibit B) and determines this action to be exempt from CEQA (Attachment 1: Exhibit A); and, grants St. Paul & Pacific Railroad the license to use the SCBRL to provide excursion services (in addition to freight services) as specified under Phase II of the ACL (2.4.1).**

NOTE- Only Attachment 1: Exhibit B included in ITAC packet. Other attachments are available in the RTC board packet.

Attachments:

1. Resolution that determines this action to be exempt from CEQA (Exhibit A) and accepting the Unified Corridor Investment Study which selects a Preferred Scenario (Exhibit B); and granting to St Paul & Pacific Railroad,

- a subsidiary of Progressive Rail Incorporated the license to use the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line for excursion rail services
2. Rail Right-of-Way Timeline from November 15, 2018 RTC Meeting
 3. Letters of Support from Partner Agencies
 4. List of Revisions to the second draft of the Unified Corridor Investment Study. A printed copy of the second draft was provided to the Commissioners at the November 15, 2018 meeting. The Final Draft of the Unified Corridor Investment Study *in its entirety is available at* <https://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/unified-corridor-study/>.

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Unified Corridor Investment Study Preferred Scenario January 2019

Already challenged by significant congestion along many of its primary travel routes, Santa Cruz County's population is forecast to grow approximately 10% to over 300,000¹ residents by 2035. Responding to transportation challenges within Santa Cruz County is exacerbated by land scarcity and use restrictions that make transportation improvements prohibitively costly in many locations. Recognizing the need to address both mounting existing transportation problems and future needs of Santa Cruz County, the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) has been undertaken to consider transportation options between Santa Cruz and Watsonville along three of the most important north to south transportation routes in the County: Highway 1, Soquel/Freedom and the Rail Right-of-Way (ROW). The forecast year for the study is 2035.

A 2035 Preferred Scenario has been developed based on the results of the UCS and extensive public and stakeholder input. The preferred scenario is designed to promote the development of a sustainable transportation system that is reliable and efficient, to protect the natural environment, and to provide for economic vitality, and to improve access for all users. **Table 1** provides a graphical representation of the Preferred Scenario alongside the Unified Corridor Study Scenarios on which it is based.

The Preferred Scenario establishes a commitment from RTC to respond to a frequently expressed public desire that "people need a range of transportation options" with meaningful auto, transit, bike and pedestrian improvements that are integrated together as part of an overall transportation system. The Preferred Scenario emphasizes regional projects that include highway improvements, bus service enhancements, and public high capacity transit service along with significant bike and pedestrian improvements including a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle facility within the existing rail right-of-way (**Figure 1**).

Approximately 100,000 people per day will benefit directly from improvements to Highway 1, the most heavily traveled roadway in Santa Cruz County. South county residents who commute to north county for employment face congested conditions in the AM northbound peak period on a daily basis, often taking 2 to 3 or more times longer to get to work compared to off peak times. Even more congested, the southbound PM peak period commute home for south county residents from Santa Cruz to Watsonville can often take 3 or more times longer than during off peak times. The Preferred Scenario includes the six sets of auxiliary lanes and ramp metering between San Andreas Rd and Soquel Drive by 2035 to improve safety and traffic flow and will make room between the interchanges for the addition of High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes (also known as carpool lanes) in the future. Three of the six sets of auxiliary lanes are moving forward as directed by voters through Measure D. Following the addition of auxiliary lanes and ramp metering and beyond the 2035 timeframe of the UCS, the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes would add a lane for carpools and transit, which requires widening all the interchanges to accommodate the additional lanes. Full implementation of HOV lanes on Highway 1 will require seeking a significant level of funding at a time when state and federal funding for highway capacity increasing projects is extremely limited and therefore will not likely be implemented until after 2035.

The existing and planned auxiliary lanes projects along Highway 1 included in the UCS preferred scenario offer an opportunity for bus on shoulder operations to deliver a faster transit travel time service during peak congested

¹ AMBAG 2018 Regional Growth Forecast

periods. A Feasibility Study was conducted by the Santa Cruz County Metropolitan Transit District (Metro) and partner agencies in Monterey County to provide the opportunities, constraints and a financial analysis for bus on shoulders along Highway 1. Metro and the RTC are working with Caltrans to develop an operating concept and to receive formal Caltrans approval and environmental clearance for the bus on shoulder operations.

The Preferred Scenario includes protection of the rail right-of-way for a high-capacity public transit service and facility. Transit on the rail right-of-way provides an equitable option for both south county and north county residents to avoid traffic congestion in commuting to work. The UCS studied two potential high-capacity public transit service projects, passenger rail service and bus rapid transit in the rail corridor. Passenger rail service between Santa Cruz and Watsonville with local stops and an interregional connection at Pajaro Station is forecasted to serve approximately 3,500 people per day (approximately 7,000 boardings per day) with capital and operating costs estimated at \$325 million and \$15 million/per year, respectively. Bus Rapid Transit between Watsonville and Santa Cruz on the rail right-of-way with portions of route on parallel roadways including Highway 1 south of State Park Drive is forecasted to serve approximately 2,000 people per day (approximately 4,000 boardings per day) with operating and maintenance costs estimated at \$265 million and \$10 million /per year, respectively. Passenger Rail travel time was projected to be 41 minutes for peak hour travel between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, whereas BRT on the rail right-of-way with portions of the route on parallel roadways including Highway 1 south of State Park Drive is projected to have travel times of 63 -minutes for Bus Rapid Transit Express northbound in the am peak period and 53 minutes for Bus Rapid Transit Express southbound in the pm peak period. The ability to deliver an integrated countywide system that meets the needs will require additional funding that is yet to be completely identified. Funding availability for transit capital projects at the state level, particularly rail transit, is on an upward trend due to ability of transit to provide a new transportation option, equitable access for transportation disadvantaged, and ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Implementation of transit service has the potential to leverage opportunities identified in the State Rail Plan as discussed below, if passenger rail options are pursued. Technologies for both rail and bus transit are evolving at a rapid pace, and the preferred alternative will provide flexibility in determining the most appropriate high-capacity public transit service for the rail corridor.

Establishing a connected multimodal system with two new main line transit routes between Watsonville and Santa Cruz via a high-capacity public transit service on the rail line and bus on shoulders on Highway 1 would provide for faster transit service on dedicated facilities separate from motor vehicles. Transit on Soquel/Freedom is envisioned to continue to provide for local service to the many origins and destinations on this route. Where feasible, transit signal priority and bypass lanes at intersections on Soquel/Freedom will be provided. Bus feeder routes will connect the main line transit routes to major origins and destinations in the county as well as other first and last mile solutions such as bike share and the multi-use trail on the rail right-of-way. A more detailed evaluation of the transit route structure which includes local bus transit connections to transit on the rail right-of-way would be undertaken during future studies. The preferred scenario helps protect the rail right-of-way for future potential high-capacity public transit service in part by keeping freight and excursion (non-commuter) passenger service on the rail line.

The trail in the rail right-of-way, along with buffered/protected bike lanes on Soquel/Freedom and bike connections via neighborhood routes, support an integrated walk/bike/transit network. The preferred scenario is consistent with a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail as envisioned in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail

Network Master Plan² to not preclude future rail transit services. The multi-use trail on the rail right-of-way is forecasted to serve approximately 7,000 cyclists and another 3,500 pedestrians daily. In addition to transportation benefits, the trail will provide recreation benefits, and will add to the tourism attractiveness of the area. Bicycle ridership is forecasted to increase on the Soquel/Freedom corridor to as many as 4,500 cyclists per day with implementation of buffered/protected bike lanes. Bicycle access is expanded by bike connections that link neighborhoods to the trail. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements to intersections on Soquel/Freedom will also improve safety and access. Multiuse trails and buffered/protected bicycle lanes are examples of safe, comfortable, transportation infrastructure that promote greater physical activity. The act of walking or biking to school, work, or to other places that are a part of our daily routine improve our health and quality of life.

By promoting a full complement of transportation options, the Preferred Scenario will be best positioned to take advantage of the changing transportation landscape both in terms of new regional and state programs/plans and the rapidly evolving state of transportation technologies. As discussed above, the available funding programs from state and federal agencies are trending away from financing roadway capacity improvements that would likely encourage more people to drive single occupant vehicles and are increasingly favoring projects that provide enhancements to multimodal mobility (such as carpool, transit, bike and walk trips), safety, efficiency, and extending the life of existing facilities. Funding for highway, transit, and bike/walk projects are often available from different sources. By prioritizing a mix of projects and being “shovel ready” with environmental review and project design completed, Santa Cruz County can be in a much more competitive position to be awarded funding. Measure D is a valuable tool for Santa Cruz County to use those locally generated funds to compete more effectively for grants and funding programs, making each dollar generated worth much more. The projects in the preferred scenario are all good candidates for funding based on current trends.

Emerging vehicle technologies will change mobility options in the future and may result in reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, but not necessarily vehicle miles traveled. The technologies will impact all modes of transportation including rail, bus, bicycle, and automobile. Prioritizing regional projects that will benefit from vehicle technology improvements such as Highway 1 and passenger rail service will allow Santa Cruz County to best take advantage of these new technologies. Automated vehicles on a dedicated regional facility can make much more impact than if mixed with other vehicles. The transportation industry is currently in a research mode to develop methodologies to forecast the impacts of emerging vehicle technologies and what they mean for future mobility options. Staying apprised of and anticipating these changes will be critical as projects step forward towards implementation.

² The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail Master Plan developed the planning work for the trail and entailed extensive outreach and engagement with stakeholders and community groups. A program-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was also prepared. All local jurisdictions through which the trail will traverse have also adopted the Master Plan.

Table 1: All Scenario Comparison with Preferred Scenario

All Scenarios Comparison

Including Preferred Scenario


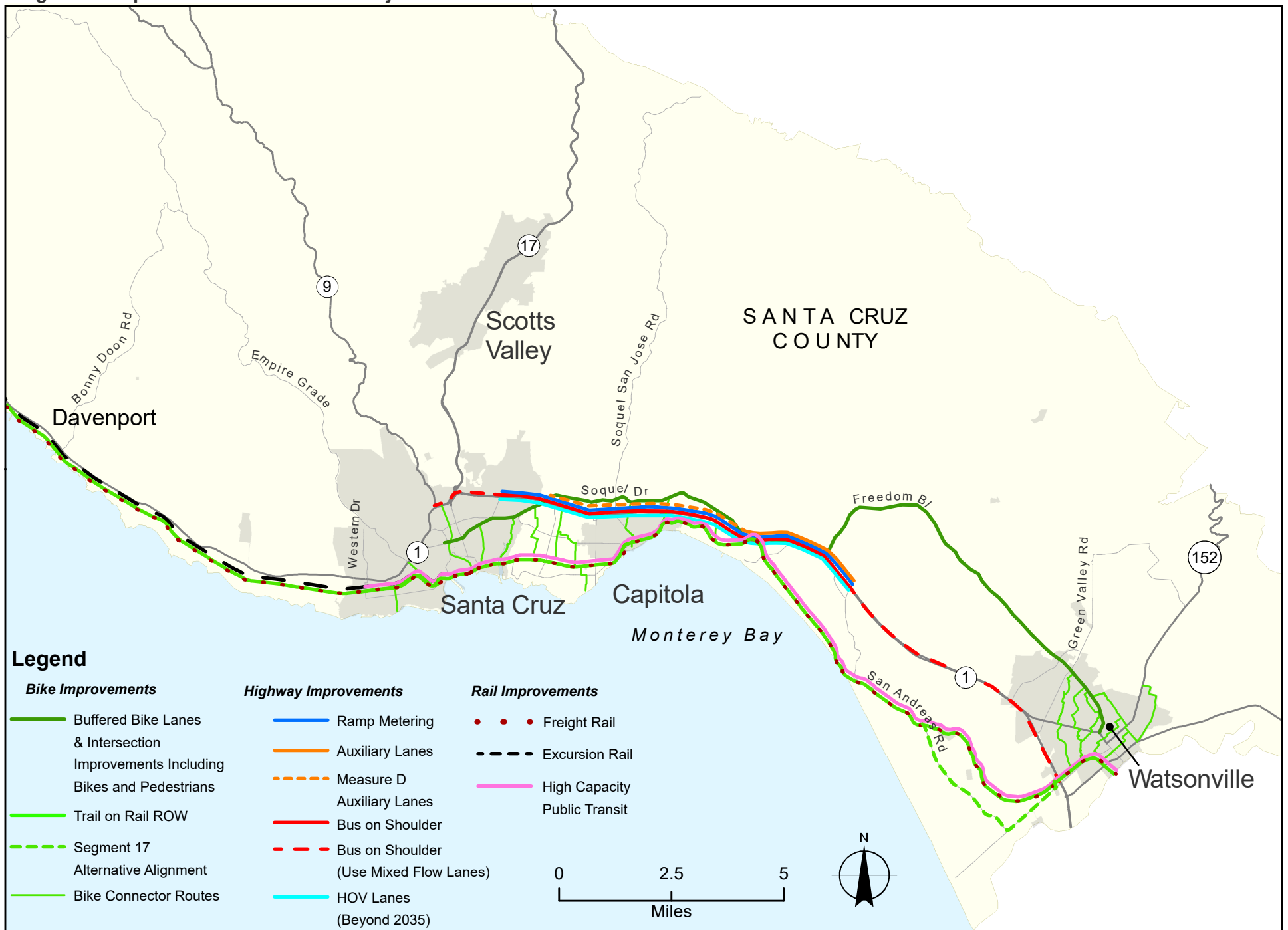
	2035 Preferred	Beyond 2035	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario E
Highway 1 Projects						
Buses on shoulders						
High occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV) and increased transit frequency		 	 			 
Auxiliary lanes to extend merging distance IN ADDITION TO MEASURE D						
Metering of on-ramps						
Additional lanes on bridge over San Lorenzo River						
Mission St intersection improvements						
Soquel Avenue/Drive and Freedom Blvd						
BRT lite (faster boarding, transit signal priority and queue jumps)						
Increased frequency of transit with express services						
Buffered/protected bike lanes						
Intersection improvements for auto						
Intersection improvements for bikes/pedestrians	 	 	 	 	 	 
Rail Corridor						
Bike and pedestrian trail	 	 	 	 	 	 
High-capacity public transit service	 	 				
Local rail transit with interregional connections						
Bus rapid transit						
Freight service on rail					 Only Watsonville	
Overall Project Area/Connections between Routes						
Improved bike/pedestrian facilities throughout urban area closing gaps in network	These projects are evaluated in all scenarios.					
Additional transit connections						
Bike share, bike amenities, transit amenities, park and ride lots						
Multimodal transportation hubs						
Automated vehicles/connected vehicles						
Transportation Demand and System Management						
Employers and residences - incentive programs	These projects are evaluated in all scenarios.					
Education and enforcement - electric vehicle, motorist safety, and bike safety						

Figure 1: Map of Preferred Scenario Projects



Protect the Rail Right of Way

Rail corridors often have complex land ownership histories that lead to a delicate balance of conditions that allow the rail line to persist. One example is that portions of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail line are owned by private entities that have granted easement rights for rail services. If and when rail services were discontinued, the easements may revert back to the adjacent landowners by operation of law, or those land owners may have the right to terminate the railroad rights, fracturing the rail corridor and potentially making it impossible or very expensive to restore to a continuous corridor in the future.

Federal legislation was enacted in 1983 (the “National Trails Act”) to allow railbanking, a method by which freight rail lines proposed for abandonment can be preserved for future freight rail use while allowing for interim conversion to trail or other uses. Although railbanking is part of the federal abandonment process administered by the U. S. Surface Transportation Board (STB), if a line is railbanked, under the National Trails Act, the corridor is treated as if it had not been abandoned since rail service could be restored in the future. As a result, the integrity of the corridor can be maintained, and any reversions that could break it up into small pieces are prevented.

Some of the challenges with railbanking include:

- The STB has jurisdiction over freight railroad rate and service issues and rail restructuring transitions including mergers, line sales, line construction, and line abandonments. (The STB also has some limited jurisdiction over interstate passenger rail operations.)
- As part of the abandonment process, the STB provides procedures for petitioners, as well as for those who would like to purchase the line and assume the common carrier freight obligation to provide service over the line, and also procedures that allows for the acquisition of the right of way for railbanking and interim trail use if no one offers to acquire the line for continued freight rail use.
- If the STB allows for railbanking, the decision does not stop adjacent landowners who have provided easements for the rail corridor from suing the United States claiming that the trails represent a new use of their land which entitles them to compensation. The Federal Government has been sued numerous times and courts have ruled in favor of property claims of adjacent landowners depending on the nature and quality of title of the landowners. Neither the RTC nor the railroad operator SPP would be liable for damages to the adjacent landowners.
- The STB has the authority to require the rail line be reactivated for freight rail use at any time even if the line is railbanked and/or actively being used for a trail if there is a need to use the line for freight rail service.
- Some costs associated with converting the trail back to rail use could fall on the agency responsible for the trail depending on the terms of the interim trail use agreement that would be negotiated between the agency and the railroad.
- Funds from the California Transportation Commission from Proposition 116 and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Public Transportation Account (PTA) are tied to rail service. According to the funding agreement with the State, the funding is subject to repayment requirements if there is no rail service on the rail line. Railbanking would likely not prevent the State from requesting repayment of the funds.
- The legislation was first enacted in 1983 to allow for railbanking. The RTC is unaware of any paved trails that have been converted back to rail once it has been railbanked.
- To develop a trail under the railbanking concept, the RTC or trail agency would need to look for alternative funding. Such funding may be more difficult to obtain than the funding for a trail

adjacent to the rail line, given the requirement for potential reactivation for rail service. Funding for a trail under the railbanking concept may require repayment if reactivation of the rail line were to occur.

As projects move into the implementation phase, it is critical that the RTC remain mindful of its obligations to maintain the rail right-of-way in accordance with the various land ownership agreements that are in effect to avoid loss of right-of-way that could jeopardize both future rail service and construction of a trail.

Next Steps

In recognition of the timing and availability of funding, project development requirements, and the desire, to the extent possible, to begin immediately addressing the communities' transportation needs, the Preferred Scenario has been structured into Near Term (through 2027), Mid-Term (through 2035), and Long Term (beyond 2035) timeframes for delivery. **Table 2** provides preliminary detail regarding the timing and sequencing of projects in the Preferred Scenario. As shown, the Preferred Scenario begins advancing regional projects on all three routes immediately, with a focus on delivering sooner those projects that have a lower cost and/or those projects that are further along in their development.

Infrastructure projects similar in nature to the UCS projects have a typical schedule that can vary from 7-10 or more years. The focus should thus be on phasing of the UCS projects due to constructability and funding schedules, and to mitigate the impacts of construction on daily commutes.

Table 2 - Timeframe for Project Completion

	Time frame for Project Completion		
	Near Term (2027)	Mid Term (2035)	Long Term (Beyond 2035)
Highway 1 Projects			
buses on shoulders			
3 sets of auxiliary lanes - Soquel Dr to State Park Dr			
3 additional sets of auxiliary lanes - State Park Dr to San Andreas Rd			
metering of on-ramps			
interchange improvements and high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV)			
Soquel Avenue/Drive and Freedom Blvd			
buffered/protected bike lanes			
intersection improvements for bikes/pedestrians			
Rail Right-of-Way			
bike and pedestrian trail			
Capitola trestle repair/replacement for rail/bike/walk ¹			
High-capacity public transit service			
freight and excursion train service on rail			

1-Results of a structures evaluation on the Capitola Trestle will be available in 2019. The result of the evaluation will inform the timing for repair/replacement of the Capitola Trestle.

Fulfillment of the Preferred Scenario consistent with Table 2 involves specific project considerations on each route, which include:

Highway 1 Improvements

- Continue to advance development of the three sets of auxiliary lanes between Soquel Avenue/Drive and State Park Drive as authorized by voters through the Measure D Expenditure Plan, which could be completed within the next 6-8 years.
- Utilize Measure D funds as matching funds to compete for and secure state and federal competitive grant funds for construction of these auxiliary lanes. This may enable some of the Measure D funds to be shifted to the additional three sets of auxiliary lane projects from State Park Drive to San Andreas Rd to be implemented by 2035.
- Integrate bus on shoulder with the construction of the auxiliary lanes in Measure D from Soquel Avenue/Drive to State Park Drive and in the longer term will include State Park Drive to San Andreas Road. When the HOV lanes are constructed in the long term beyond the study period, transit services could move to the HOV lanes.
- Increase transit frequency (express service) as part of the bus on shoulders project to provide short term faster transit options between Watsonville and Santa Cruz.
- Prioritize development of the additional 3 sets of auxiliary lanes between State Park Drive and San Andreas Drive once complete funding plans for the first three auxiliary lanes are finalized.
- Preparation for ramp metering such as on-ramp widening will occur where feasible with the delivery of the initial Highway 1 projects. Implement ramp metering when feasible to improve freeway flows and extend period of acceptable flow during the peak hours.
- The HOV lanes project is a long-term project that will require substantial improvements to the interchanges between Soquel Drive and San Andreas Rd and will likely occur beyond the study timeframe sometime after 2035.

Rail ROW

- Protect the Rail corridor for high-capacity public transit use and an adjacent bicycle and pedestrian facility, by maintaining the railway tracks and allowing freight and excursion (non-commuter) passenger service on the railway.
- Continue the development of the trail from along the rail right-of-way as presented in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Master Plan and EIR, which could be completed within the next 10 years.³ Prioritize funding and implementation of trail segments that are most competitive for grant programs, which will allow the fastest possible implementation of the trail.
- Continue to consider passenger rail service options on the rail right-of-way consistent with Prop 116⁴ requirements, with consideration of other high-capacity public transit options.
- Collaborate with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District to develop a proposal to evaluate transit alternatives on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

³ Final design of segments of this trail next to rail are in progress, construction of segment 7 is scheduled to begin in 2019.

⁴ There have been numerous decisions by the many commissioners at the RTC starting in the early 1990's to purchase the rail right-of-way using voter-approved Proposition 116 funds that were available for passenger rail projects in Santa Cruz County.

- Results of a structures evaluation on the Capitola Trestle will be available in 2019. The result of the evaluation will inform the timing for repair/replacement of the Capitola Trestle. Determine feasibility of designing a structure to replace the Capitola trestle that would accommodate both a trail and rail or other transit options.
- Support development of an integrated transit network, which includes a dedicated transit facility on the rail right-of-way that incorporates the latest technologies.

Soquel/Freedom

- Prioritize the construction of buffered/protected bike lanes along Soquel Drive and Freedom Boulevard. Many segments can be either protected or buffered indicated with striping to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles. Buffer widths will vary along the corridor. In urban settings with multiple driveways, protected bike lanes will be limited.
- Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle improvements to intersections and if feasible, the addition of right turn pockets or bypass lanes for bus service and transit priority.

Goals and Performance Measures

Based on the similarity of many aspects of the Preferred Scenario to other Scenarios evaluated in the UCS, an estimate of the Performance Measures for the Preferred Scenario was developed based on information previously included in the UCS Step 2 Analysis. **Table 3** provides the results of the Performance Measures analysis for the Preferred Scenario if passenger rail service as defined in the UCS is implemented. Using passenger service for quantifying the goals and performance measures is for comparison purposes only and is not a bias against any other potential high-capacity public transit alternative on the rail corridor.

Table 3 - Performance Measures Results for Preferred Scenario if Passenger Rail Service as defined in UCS is Implemented

Goals and Performance Measures	2015 Baseline	2035 Preferred	Beyond 2035
Safety			
Fatal, Injury and Property Damage Only Collisions	1110	865	965
Reliability and Efficiency			
AM Peak Period Countywide Mean Automobile Speed (mph)	40.5	39.4	40.6
AM Peak Hour Hwy 1 Mean Automobile Speed (San Andreas to Branciforte Overcrossing) ¹ (mph)	28.2	21	39
Peak Period AM Mean Transit Travel Time Watsonville to Santa Cruz (minutes)	70	Bus on Shoulders: 40 Rail Transit: 41	HOV Transit: 32 Rail Transit: 41
Peak Period Travel Time Reliability	Less Reliable	More Reliable	Most Reliable
Mode Share (% trip by car)	83.2%	79.4%	79.6%
Person Trips across N-S Screenline (41st Ave) 4-6PM	27,411	33,000	38,912
Economic Vitality			

Level of Public Investment - Capital Cost Estimate/Funding Potential	–	\$948 million/\$455 million	\$1.28 billion/TBD
Level of Public Investment - Annual Operations & Maintenance Cost Estimate/Funding Potential	–	\$35 million/\$26 million	\$40 million/TBD
Visitor Tax Revenue (\$1,000,000)	\$28.6	\$40.1	\$40.1
Other Economic Impacts	-	Moderate	Moderate
Cost Reductions Associated with Collisions (\$/year)	-	-\$77,500,000	-\$55,000,000
Environment and Health			
Automobile VMT (daily)	5,477,870	5,925,500	6,095,639
Environmentally Sensitive Areas (miles of impact)	–	40.6	40.7
Greenhouse Gas Emissions (CO2e metric tons/day) ²	2,617	1,899	1,928
Criteria Pollutants (metric tons/day)	27	6.15	6.23
Equitable Access			
Transit VMT (million miles per year)	3.33	5.03	5.23
Household Transportation Costs	24%	25%	25%
Benefits and Impacts to Transportation Disadvantaged Communities	–	24.4%	23.5%

1-Data from Hwy 1 Final Environmental Impact Report (<https://sccrtc.org/projects/streets-highways/hwy1corridor/environmental-documents/>)

2-Highly dependent on extent of electric vehicle use and other vehicle technology changes

The Preferred Scenario meets the specific goals of the UCS by:

- Increasing **Equity** by increasing transit vehicle miles, serving transportation disadvantaged populations and providing options that could provide some households with the option of decreasing the number of cars owned.
- Promoting **Economic Vitality** by increasing access to businesses and affecting business location decisions through highway improvements and improved bicycle and transit connections and by way of creating new access to businesses through local rail transit and trail investments on the rail right-of-way. Increases opportunities for increasing property values and rents by including projects that attract visitors and enable higher intensity development.
- Providing **Reliable and Efficient** transportation system by implementing improvements on Highway 1 and integrating bus and rail transit services to improve transit travel speeds and time and reliability and provide a range of transportation options.
- Advancing **Safety** by implementing projects that are documented to reduce the opportunities for collisions such as a multi-use trail and ramp metering.
- Further **Environment and Health** goals by offering more transit and safer bike and walk options. Operational improvements on the highway could reduce GHG emissions by reducing stop and go traffic. HOV lane implementation beyond 2035 could increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by redirecting traffic onto a faster highway (longer route but shorter time). A substantial increase in zero-emission vehicles on Santa Cruz County roadways by 2035 could negate any increase in

GHG emissions due to an increase in VMT. It is also possible that in the future, as gas taxes become ineffective as a source of transportation funding, a tax imposed on VMT will minimize increases in VMT.

Regional/State Rail Priorities

The 2018 California State Rail Plan identifies the Santa Cruz Branch Rail line as part of the state rail system with direct passenger service connectivity with Monterey. The Transportation Agency for Monterey County has studied passenger rail service along its portion of the corridor as well and has expressed interest in introducing passenger rail service in that county. Expansion of the passenger rail service studied as part of this report into one connected system with Monterey County rail transit would likely provide further increases to system ridership, would provide a broader regional benefit, and would in turn be more competitive for state and federal funding programs. Providing service in both counties under a single operator would reduce operating overhead cost, simplify fare structures and provide even more opportunity for future system expansion to other nearby communities and integration into the larger state rail system.

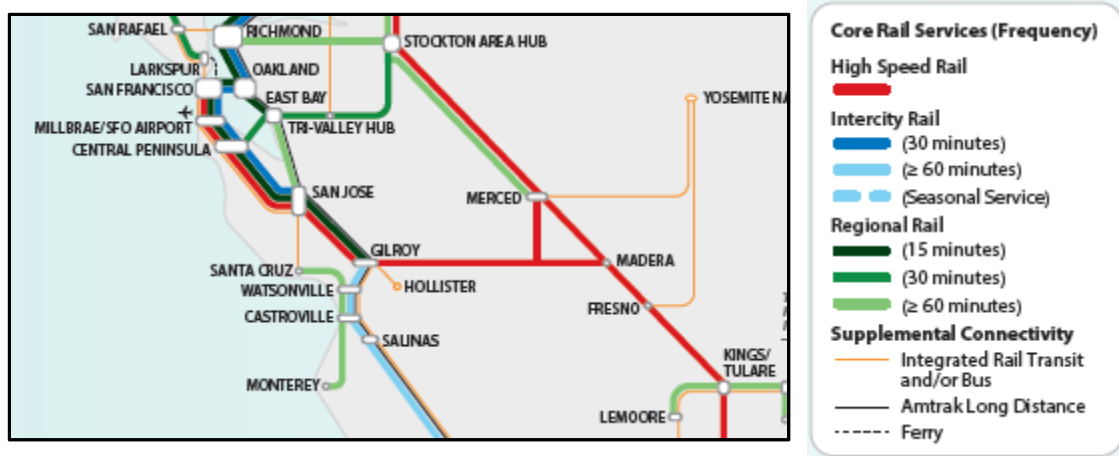
Continuing to consider Local Rail Transit with Regional Connections along the Santa Cruz Branch Line is an element of the Preferred Scenario. The proposed transit service, extending from Watsonville to approximately Natural Bridges Drive northwest of downtown Santa Cruz, is shown to have independent utility, generating approximately 7,000 passenger trips (3500 people/day) on a typical weekday in the horizon year of the Unified Corridor Study (2035). This service would connect with rail service at its southern terminus at Pajaro Junction, providing interregional transit access to nearby communities served by existing and proposed passenger rail service along the Union Pacific Railroad corridor. Existing service includes Amtrak Coast Starlight intercity passenger. Future service includes commuter rail under development between San Jose and Salinas and intercity rail service along the coast with planned implementation of a Coast Daylight service. Regional connectivity benefits ridership on local rail transit along the Santa Cruz Branch Line, albeit the analysis for this study has attempted to be conservative and not overstate these potential additional benefits in the ridership forecasts.

It is nevertheless relevant to point out that should interregional connections to the Santa Cruz Branch Line be enhanced to the extent other studies have proposed, ridership benefits would be significantly greater than assumed in this study. This is an area for more study.

The recently adopted California State Rail Plan, 2040, for instance, proposes a major expansion of intercity and regional passenger (and freight) rail services throughout California, including Santa Cruz County. The objective of the plan, prepared by Caltrans, is to expand the capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the state rail network to better accommodate the mobility needs of California's projected population of 47 million by 2040, reducing reliance on the private automobile and mitigating the congestion and emissions problems that follow from increasing auto vehicle miles of travel. The plan proposes a unified statewide rail network that (1) integrates passenger and freight rail, (2) connects passenger rail service to other modes, and (3) supports "smart" mobility goals established by the state legislature and local communities. While there are approximately 115,000 trips per day currently on intercity and regional rail services in the state, the target is 1.3 million by 2040. The required investment is considerable—an estimated \$40.8 billion for upgrading existing and constructing new services. Not just infrastructure improvements for high speed, intercity and regional rail are envisioned; more

frequent and higher speed services in existing rail corridors are planned. The operating improvements are intended to be delivered in the near term wherever practicable, from 2022 to 2027.

The figure below, excerpted from the State Rail Plan, shows intended improvements in northern California. In the vicinity of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, higher frequencies on intercity and regional rail lines and infrastructure investments to support the increased service, faster train speeds, and intermodal connections are important elements of the plan. Continuous passenger rail service between Santa Cruz and Monterey is anticipated. While finding the funds to fully implement the State Rail Plan will be a challenge, the far-reaching vision is established. The service and speed improvements and enhanced intermodal connections are likely to receive priority, which is promising. Individuals in Santa Cruz County will greatly benefit from this interregional rail connection to the Bay Area, the rest of California and beyond.



TO: Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)
FROM: RTC Staff
RE: Meeting RTC's New Executive Director

RECOMMENDATIONS

For information only.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) has hired Guy Preston to serve as the agency's new Executive Director.

Director Preston has over 28 years of experience in project delivery and construction management in the transportation sector. During his tenure as the Director of Projects and Programming at the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), he provided direction and oversight in the development and delivery of over \$1.5 billion in federal, state, regional and local transportation programs. While at SCTA, he also provided day-to-day management of Sonoma County's \$480 million local transportation sales tax measure, similar to Santa Cruz County's Measure D, and delivered the first 10-years of projects for the measure.

As president and owner of consulting firm, GC Preston, Professional Corporation, he provided project, program, and contract management services on over \$1.8 billion in transportation projects. He also continued his work with SCTA and strategically leveraged Measure M funds to secure other funding for SCTA projects, including the highway program at a rate of 5:1.

Preston has a degree in civil engineering from UC Berkeley and is a licensed civil engineer. For the past four years, he has served as Regional Delivery Manager for the California High-Speed Rail Authority where he was responsible for the delivery of high-speed rail infrastructure projects for the \$14 billion Northern California region. He brings experience in engineering, public policy, project/programming/construction management, financing and dispute resolution on multi-modal transportation projects to his new role leading the RTC.

Director Preston entered into a three-year contract with the RTC.

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