CHAPTER 1 Introduction

2045 Regional Transportation Plan

In the state of California, responsibility for transportation planning and coordination is assigned to regional transportation planning agencies. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (referred to as the "Commission" or "RTC") is the designated regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) for Santa Cruz County. The RTC is required to periodically undertake long-range planning efforts to set the course for meeting the transportation needs of its respective communities over a 20-plus year timeframe. This long-range planning effort is called the Regional Transportation Plan, or RTP. Planning is an important component to project implementation as it provides a forum for assessing the direction of transportation in our county over the next 20-plus years. It positions our community to receive funding for projects that require a well thought out plan and helps to develop collaboration on projects.

The *2045 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan* covers the period 2020 -2045 and incorporates sustainability principles in all of its elements: transportation goals and policies (policy element – Chapter 4), a financial plan for funding transportation projects (financial element – Chapter 5), and a program of short- and long-range transportation projects (action element – Chapter 6).

The RTC coordinates with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) in developing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) for the tri-county area of Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties. AMBAG also develops the population, housing and employment growth projections for the region. The 2045 RTP is consistent with both of these efforts.

Why Sustainability?

Transportation affects many aspects of our lives both directly and indirectly. The transportation system enables us to get around – to work, to school, to businesses, to recreation, etc. – but it is also interlinked with our health and safety, the quality of the natural environment, and the economic vitality of our region. The *2045 Regional Transportation Plan* reflects a wide spectrum of sustainability objectives for this long-range planning effort. A sustainable transportation system requires a plan that encompasses improvements to access, mobility, the environment, public health, safety, the economy and equity, as well as preservation of our current transportation system, all

within financial constraints—a challenge, no doubt, but a strategy that strives to best serve the residents and visitors of Santa Cruz County.

The California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375) requires the establishment of regional greenhouse gas emission targets, and the 2016 California Senate Bill 32 requires the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. Greater emphasis is being placed on transportation to reduce the number of vehicle miles we travel through coordination of transportation investments and land use planning. Considering these sustainability requirements and all applicable state, federal, and regional priorities, the *2045 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan* identifies infrastructure projects and programs that could be implemented through 2045 based on anticipated transportation revenues.

This chapter discusses several challenges affecting the transportation system in Santa Cruz County now and in the future. The 2045 RTP endeavors to address these challenges and to bring about safer, healthier and more efficient travel choices that provide improved multimodal access to jobs, education, healthcare, and other destinations for our residents and visitors. Addressing many of these challenges will require a significant change in how we choose to travel. One of the few positive benefits of living through the COVID-19 pandemic over the last couple of years was to see how people can change their behaviors and adapt to new ways of living. Many people who had jobs that allowed for working remotely were able to make that shift, reducing the traffic congestion for those who needed to work at their employment location. Online meetings quickly took over as the way to meet with coworkers and other partners in place of in-person meetings and sometimes attendance even increased due to ease in ability to participate. Cities closed local streets to create "slow streets" to allow for more space for people to get outdoors to exercise and follow social distancing protocols. Cities also eliminated parking spots to allow restaurants to set up outdoor seating on the streets to make it safer for restaurant employees and the public and to help to keep the businesses afloat. The RTC and local jurisdictions through development of this 2045 RTP are working to implement multimodal transportation solutions for all but your support is needed. Choosing to ride a bike, walk, take transit, or carpool, choosing to slow down and decrease distractions when driving, choosing to buy or lease an electric vehicle, planning your trips outside of peak periods, chaining your trips to reduce total miles traveled or deciding to not take a trip are all behaviors that will help Santa Cruz County meet the transportation challenges of our times.

System Preservation

A well-maintained multimodal transportation system of local roads, highways, bridges, buses, bicycle facilities, pedestrian infrastructure and other transportation components is critical to providing a reliable, seamless, interconnected system. Such a system supports the traveling public and the local economy, reduces wear-and-tear on vehicles, and operates efficiently. Unfortunately, much of the local transportation system is aging and in need of major repair. Due to increased demands on the transportation network and unreliable funding, transportation agencies, cities, counties, Caltrans, and transit providers, were not able to keep up with

Paving at State Park Drive

Santa Cruz County Road Maintenance

as of 2020

- Miles of local roads: 872
- Average Pavement Condition: PCI 55 (out of 100)
- 12th worst PCI rating out of 58 counties in the state
- $636 million backlog for the next 10 years

the increasing backlog of maintenance in the 2000s and 2010s. So, in November 2016, Santa Cruz County voters approved Measure D, and in 2017, the State Legislature approved Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) – the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017; these two programs have begun to enable cities and counties, Caltrans, and transit agencies to make significant progress in addressing deferred maintenance, rehabilitation, and safety needs.

On a scale of zero (failed) to 100 (excellent), the average pavement condition index (PCI) of local streets in our county's five jurisdictions has been between 49 and 50 hovering around the boundary between the categories "poor" and "at risk" for the past 10 years. In 2020, the Pavement Condition Index for Santa Cruz County had increased slightly to 53, still the twelfth worst PCI in the state.[1] Maintenance of rural and often mountainous roadways can be particularly challenging due to their remote location and susceptibility to storm damage and can have a lower priority due to low traffic volumes relative to more urban roadways. The winter storms of 2016/2017 caused severe damage to numerous roadways in the Santa Cruz Mountains, which lowered the 2017 average PCI for roadways in unincorporated areas to 39 and kept the overall county score in the low 50s in 2020 despite the critical money coming from Measure D and SB1. Insufficient gasoline tax funding to cities and counties, as well as low-density development in the Santa Cruz Mountains, has contributed to a backlog of local road maintenance needs in Santa Cruz County that exceeds $350 million. Measure D and SB 1 provide approximately $4.5 million and $7 million, respectively, per year to local cities and the County of Santa Cruz to address the backlog. Figure 1.1 shows there is still a disparity between available funds and funds needed for local road pavement maintenance given the backlog of maintenance that has been accumulating.

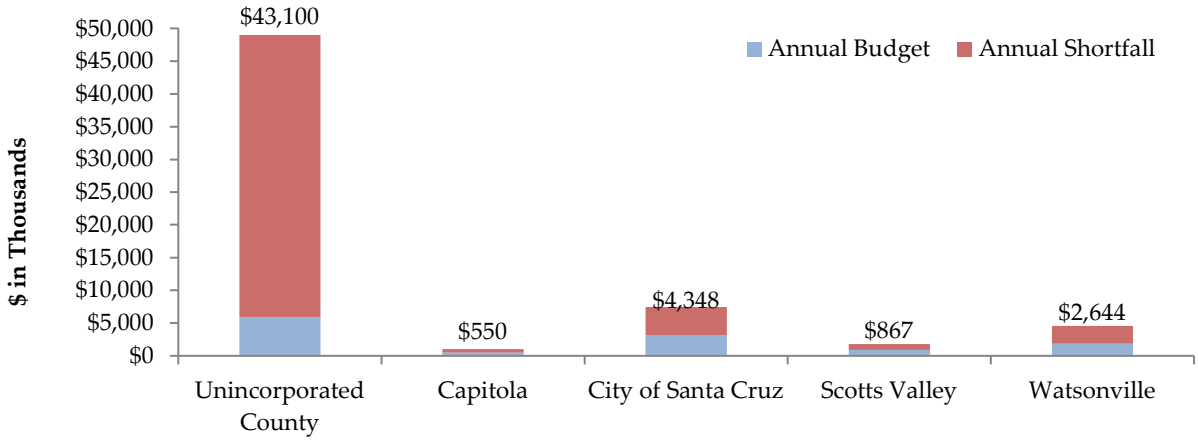

Figure 1.1 – Local Jurisdiction Annual Pavement Maintenance Budget vs. Annual Need

Source: California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment (2020) and public works departments

Caltrans has faced a similar challenge maintaining the state highway system (SHS). Deteriorating highway conditions result in lower operational performance, higher user operating costs (additional

vehicle repair costs, increased fuel consumption, increased tire wear, and accelerated vehicle depreciation), and ultimately higher overall long-term costs when needed repairs to the highway are eventually undertaken. In addition, the ever-increasing cost of meeting legal, statutory, and regulatory mandates is a significant contributor to operating and maintenance needs. Approximately 35% of SB1 revenues are invested in maintenance and rehabilitation of state highway infrastructure, including pavement, bridges, and culverts. Caltrans develops a coordinated Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP) with partner agencies to maintain California's highway infrastructure assets. The TAMP is updated every four years to incorporate improvements and re-evaluate conditions, targets, and performance measures.[2]

Maintenance of the transit system is critical to keep existing transit vehicles running and to ensure bus service is reliable. Buses and paratransit vehicles need to be replaced on a regular basis, transit centers require regular upkeep and rehabilitation, bus stops need to be maintained, and operations facilities need to be maintained and upgraded. The Federal Transit Administration defines the useful life of buses as 12 years and 500,000 miles. The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) has over 60 fixed-route buses, with an average age of 16 and over 600,000 miles, that need to be replaced or refurbished (2017); and nearly 40 paratransit vans which need to be replaced every 5-10 years.

2020 Collision Facts

California

- 5,018 Total Fatalities
  - 3,859 in Motor Vehicles
  - 1,015 Pedestrians
  - 144 Bicyclists
- 13,166 Total Severe Injury Collisions
- 4.1 % of injury/fatal crashes involve Pedestrian Fatalities and Severe Injuries
- 3.4 % involve Bicycle Fatalities and Severe Injuries

Santa Cruz County

- 19 Total Fatalities
  - 10 in Motor Vehicles
  - 8 Pedestrians
  - 1 Bicyclist
- 110 Total Severe Injury Collisions
- 7.8% of injury/fatal crashes involve Pedestrian Fatalities and Severe Injuries
- 12.3% involve Bicycle Fatalities and Severe Injuries
  - 7 Pedestrian Fatalities
  - 3 Bicyclist Fatalities

Source: Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) via Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS)

Safety

Safety is a significant concern in operating the transportation network. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA) identifies safety as a national goal area and requires each state to set Safety Performance Management Targets (SPMTs) to achieve significant reductions in motorized and non-motorized traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), sets SPMTS for all public roads in the State of California by August 31 of each year for the following performance measures: number of fatalities, rate of fatalities (per 100M VMT), number of serious injuries, rate of serious injuries (per 100M VMT), and the number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized severe injuries.

The 2021 performance measure targets include a 2.9% annual reduction in the number of fatalities and rate of fatalities (per 100 million VMT), a 1.3% reduction in the number of serious injuries and rate of serious injuries (per 100 million VMT), and a 2.9% reduction in the number of non-motorized fatalities and a 1.3% reduction in the number of non-motorized serious injuries.[3] These targets are consistent with the California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) and California Strategic Management Plan to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on public roads.

The SHSP is a statewide, coordinated traffic safety plan that provides the framework for reducing roadway fatalities and serious injuries on California's public roads and is a collaborative approach between representatives from the 5Es to improve traffic safety where the 5Es represent education, enforcement, engineering, emergency response, and emerging technologies. The 2020-2024 SHSP identifies actions that state and local agencies can perform to reduce collisions including road repair and safety improvement projects on the state highway system funded through the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), added CHP enforcement – especially of vehicle speeds — and local education programs led by a coalition of police departments, health service agencies, and public works departments.

The safety of those traveling via non-motorized or active transportation needs to be emphasized. The number of bicyclist and pedestrian injuries and fatalities in the county from 2009 through 2020 is provided in Figure 1.2. All collisions presented here involve motor vehicles. The number of pedestrian fatalities has been increasing over the last decade and the number of bicycle injuries has been decreasing over the last 5 years. The California Office of Traffic Safety ranked Santa Cruz County as the 3rd worst county in the state for the number of bicyclist collisions in 2018 and 12th worst for the number of pedestrian collisions based on population.[4] Santa Cruz County has a higher percentage of trips by bicycling and walking than the California state average.[5] Without a better understanding of how many miles people are biking and walking, it is difficult to assess whether the collision rankings for Santa Cruz County are high relative to other regions based on use. Regardless of the rankings, reducing the number of fatalities and injuries for the most vulnerable users of the transportation system is critically important, given the multiple benefits of active transportation including public health, environmental sustainability, reduced congestion, and reduced wear and tear on roadways.

The Community Traffic Safety Coalition (CTSC) is working to address the traffic safety issues in Santa Cruz County by promoting a "Vision Zero" target for traffic fatalities and serious injuries with an emphasis on non-motorized transportation. Vision Zero is an internationally successful approach to eliminating deaths and serious injuries by making significant investments in road safety re-engineering and enforcement of dangerous driver behaviors. The goal of the CTSC's efforts is for each jurisdiction in Santa Cruz County to adopt a Vision Zero policy and to develop strategies for preventing serious injuries and deaths among all road users. The 2045 RTP has included a "Vision Zero" target to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2045 for all modes. Data on serious/severe injuries is provided in Chapter 7.

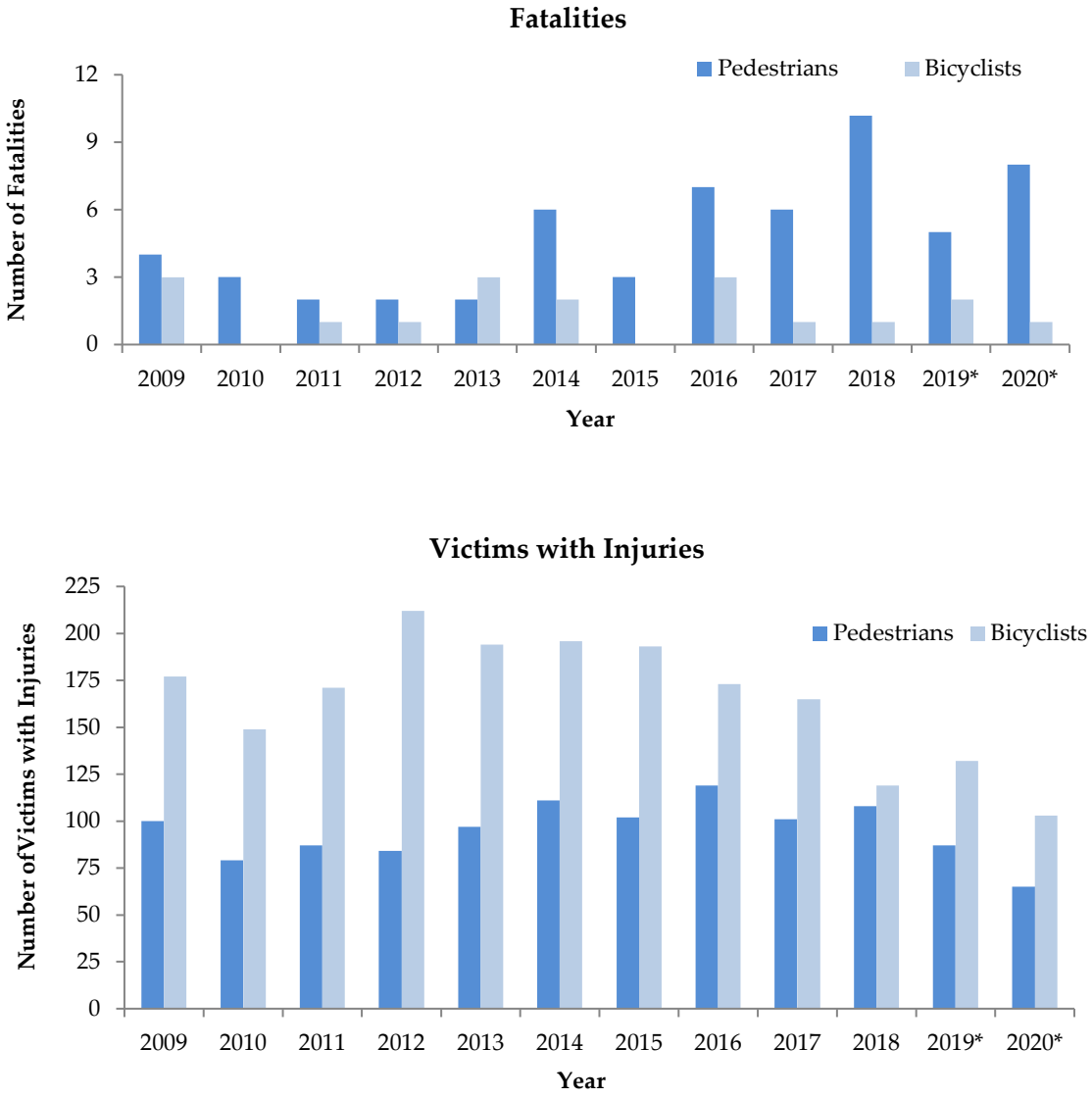

Figure 1.2 – Santa Cruz County Bicycle and Pedestrian Fatalities and Injuries Due to Collisions with Motor Vehicles, 2009-2020

Source: Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) via UC Berkeley Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS)[6]

**Provisional data*

Congestion

Traffic congestion has become considerably more difficult to avoid. Congestion nationwide has increased two to threefold over the last 30 years.[7] In Santa Cruz County, segments of Highway 1 and a number of our local roads are notorious for being congested particularly at peak commute hours. Congestion on highways and arterials can encourage cut-through auto traffic on neighborhood streets which can further degrade the local road system and discourage walking and biking. During the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic, traffic volumes decreased by more than 30% nationwide[8] but since the stay-at-

Highway 1 congestion at peak commute hours

home orders were lifted, traffic volumes have increased again but nationwide the new rush hour is shorter and less severe. The lasting impacts of the pandemic on traffic patterns are yet to be seen as employers decide on whether they will continue to allow employees to work remotely and as people decide whether they are comfortable traveling.

Santa Cruz County residents have suggested many strategies to respond to congestion and reduce how long it takes to get places, but with declining gas tax revenues, an aging system that is already difficult to maintain, and requirements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it is no longer expected that the community can completely eliminate congestion. The region must find ways to operate and utilize our existing highway and transit networks more efficiently and sustainably over the long term.

Environmental and Public Health

Not only in Santa Cruz County, but all over the world, communities are working to balance the movement of people and goods with environmental and public health priorities. Greenhouse gas emissions have global environmental and public health effects, and air pollutants can affect both the environment and public health on a regional and local scale, with those living close to major arterials being exposed to more particulate matter and noise. The link between limited active transportation, such as biking and walking, and adult and childhood obesity is being strengthened as research and strategies for addressing this concern are being discussed at federal, state and local levels. A sustainable transportation system can play a vital role in the environmental health of Santa Cruz County and the health of its residents.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The transportation sector accounts for nearly 27% of the total GHG emissions produced nationally[9] compared to 40% in California[10] and almost 60% in Santa Cruz County.[11] In 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger issued an Executive Order for the state of California to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from all sectors to 1990 levels by 2020 and to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. To support these goals, the California legislature passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32) which established a statewide target to reduce GHG levels to 1990 levels by 2020.[12] In 2016, California Senate Bill 32 was passed expanding upon AB 32 by requiring the reduction of GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by

California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32)

- Reduce GHG emissions from all sectors to 1990 levels by 2020

2030.[13] More recently in 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-79-20 directing the state to require that by 2035, all new cars and passenger trucks sold in California be zero-emission vehicles.[14]

The three primary approaches for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation are through:

1. Improvements in vehicle technology creating greater fuel efficiencies such as zero-emission (ZEV) and partial zero-emission vehicles (PZEV)
2. Improvements in low-carbon fuels
3. Reduction in the number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT)

None of these approaches alone will result in meeting the GHG emission reduction targets. Like other regions, pursuit of all three in combination will be necessary. Zero emission and partial zero emission vehicles have been developed to meet California's strict air quality standards, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from new passenger vehicles. The Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) establishes performance standards for reductions in carbon in transportation fuels that fuel producers and importers must meet each year. These measures are anticipated to result in the greatest reductions statewide.

The third approach, reducing the number of vehicle miles that are traveled (VMT), requires changes to how much we drive. While some reductions in VMT are achievable by changes in individual travel behavior, modifications to land use patterns and the transportation system are also needed to support these changes. Reducing passenger vehicle use is supported through the requirements of the California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375). The emphasis of this bill is to promote compact, mixed-use commercial and residential infill development and the transportation infrastructure to support it to improve people's ability to meet many of their daily needs through walking, biking and taking transit thereby reducing the per capita number of vehicle miles traveled.

California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375)

AMBAG Region Targets (relative to 2005)

- 6% reduction in per capita GHG from passenger vehicle use by 2035

SB 375 requires each of the state's 18 metropolitan areas to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks. The law requires that the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) as the metropolitan planning organization for the region develop the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). This strategy coordinates land use and transportation planning to strive to reach the greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target established for the region by the California Air Resources Board.

In 2018, CARB set updated targets for lowering GHG in the Monterey Bay region. They call for a three percent reduction, in per capita GHG emissions from passenger vehicles by 2020 (compared with 2005); and a six percent per capita reduction by 2035 through land use and transportation planning. SB 375 streamlines the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for housing and mixed-use projects that are consistent with the SCS and meet specified criteria, such as proximity to public transportation. The

Santa Cruz County 2045 Regional Transportation Plan has been developed to be consistent with the SCS planning effort of AMBAG.

Senate Bill 391 required the California Department of Transportation to prepare the 2050 California Transportation Plan (CTP)[15] to demonstrate how GHG emissions can be reduced to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. The CTP provides strategies for GHG reduction and recommendations on how agencies can coordinate planning efforts to achieve critical statewide goals.

Air Pollutants

Much progress has been made in the reduction of air pollutants from transportation nationwide in the past several decades.[16] Since the U.S. Clean Air Act was enacted in 1970, there has been a downward trend in the six criteria air pollutants (ozone, lead, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, and nitrogen oxides). Although substantial improvements have been made, there is still public health concern over the levels of air pollutants from transportation, and many regions in California do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for these pollutants. Respiratory illness, asthma, cardiovascular disease, and lung cancer are all associated with increased levels of air pollutants. Santa Cruz County, as part of the North Central Coast Air Basin, has met the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for all criteria pollutants and thus is not subject to Federal Clean Air Act conformity requirements in this plan. Santa Cruz County received a B grade (out of A-F) for the levels of ozone in the air and a "PASS" for the annual average particle pollution in the air but an F grade for the 24 hour particle pollution for the years 2017-2019 as published by the American Lung Association in their State of the Air 2021 report.[17] Particulate matter is emitted from fuel vehicles although numerous other sources exist such as dust, sea spray and fires.

Obesity

The design of our communities influences the likelihood that people will use active transport for their daily travel.[18] The act of walking or biking to school, work, the store, transit or to other places that are a part of our daily routine affects our health. Multiuse trails, bicycle paths, sidewalks, safe street crossings, and availability of public transit are all examples of transportation infrastructure that promotes greater physical activity. Combined with increased housing density and mixed land use, people more often choose active forms of transportation which have the potential to lower obesity rates. The relationship between active transportation and obesity was examined in a study published in 2008 which showed that countries with the highest levels of active transportation had the lowest obesity rates (Figure 1.3).[19]

Promoting active travel and public transport has both health and environmental benefits due to increased physical activity, reduced air and noise pollution, and decreased greenhouse gas emissions

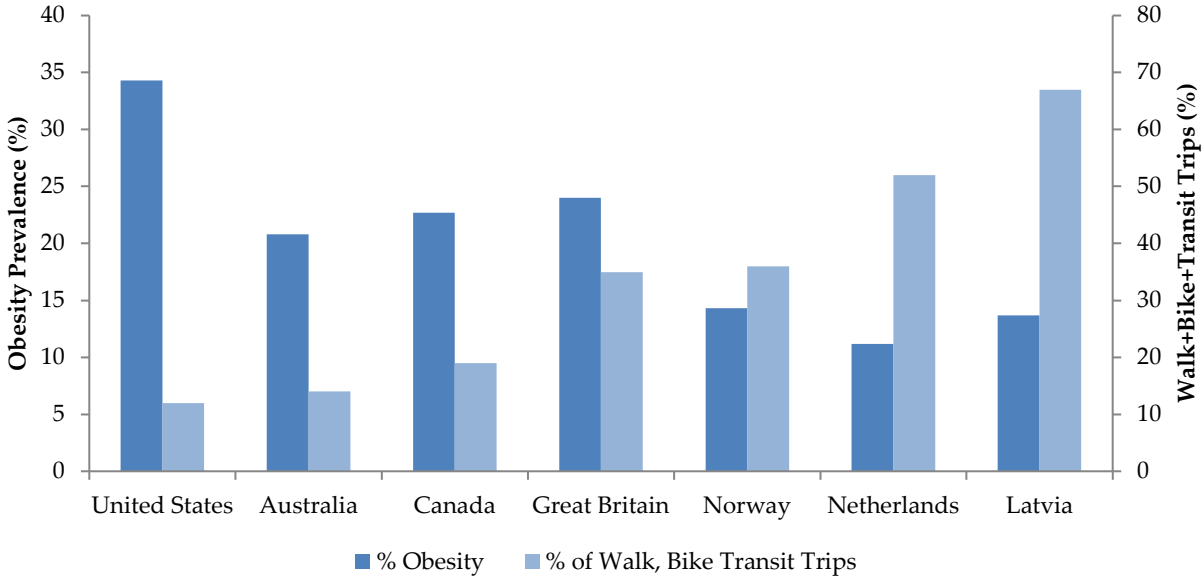

Figure 1.3 – Obesity Prevalence and Rates of Active Transportation in Countries of Europe, North America, and Australia

Source: Journal of Physical Activity and Health[20]

The percentage of people in the United States that are obese has almost doubled over the last three decades. In 2017-2018, 42.4% of adults and 19.3% of children and adolescents in the United States were obese compared to 22.9% adults and 10.0% children and adolescents in 1990.[21] Assembly Bill 441, championed by local Assemblyman Bill Monning and signed by Governor Brown in September, 2012, acknowledges the link between transportation infrastructure and the health of California residents and required the California Transportation Commission to promote health and health equity as part of the updated 2017 Regional Transportation Plan guidelines. The 2050 California Transportation Plan also promotes active transportation through a goal of "fostering livable and healthy communities and promoting social equity."

In Santa Cruz County, the number of adults who are overweight or obese increased from 50% in 2007 to 62% in 2019.[22] In 2003, Santa Cruz County had a higher percentage of overweight children in low-income families than more than half of the counties in California.[23] The Community Assessment Project identified obesity as a key issue of concern. Currently, there are a number of efforts in the county that are working to reduce both adult and childhood obesity through promoting a healthy lifestyle that includes bicycling and walking to school, work or other daily needs.

Economy

Transportation and the economy are linked in a number of ways. Improved access and travel time reliability are likely to positively affect job markets, business delivery markets, freight supply chains, and visitor activity, all allowing businesses in the region to operate more efficiently and maintain their competitiveness. But often signs of a thriving economy include greater use of the transportation system as more people are traveling to work and more goods are being delivered, often resulting in increased levels

of congestion and longer travel times. The COVID-19 pandemic showed dramatic reductions in traffic volumes as the stay-at-home orders were put into place and the economy went into a recession. As lockdown measures were lifted and economy began to rebound, traffic volumes increased. Transportation and the economy are also interlinked as the greater the number of transportation projects implemented, the higher the level of employment there will be for people in this area. Over the next 25 years, this plan proposes to fund $5 billion for transportation that will provide direct economic benefits, such as new construction jobs, as well as the indirect benefits of these investments, such as the demand for services and supplies to support the construction projects. And lastly, the economy can also be affected by the percentage of household income that goes towards transportation costs. The smaller the percentage of household costs needed for transportation, the more money there is available to go into the local economy. By reducing the amount spent on fuel through a reduction in vehicle miles traveled, more dollars are on hand for the local economy. The 2045 RTP strives for a more efficient, desirable, and competitive area where businesses can thrive over the long term.

Transportation Funding

Transportation funding in Santa Cruz County comes from a combination of local, regional, state and federal sources. These include sales taxes, taxes and fees collected at the gasoline pump, vehicle registration fees, and bus rider fares, as described in Chapter 5 and Appendix D.

Measure D, approved by Santa Cruz County voters in 2016, currently provides over $20 million in revenues per year from sales taxes that are dedicated for use on the transportation categories approved by voters and cannot be taken away by the state.

SB1 raised the gas tax 12 cents per gallon in 2017.

In 2017, the California legislature provided more stable funding for transportation for the first time in nearly 25 years with passage of Senate Bill 1. SB 1 returned the state gas tax's purchasing power to 1994 levels and adjusted annually for inflation starting in 2020. SB1 was needed because revenues from state gasoline taxes had been declining over the last many years for several reasons.

- The state gas tax had not been indexed to keep up with inflation and lowered the fuel tax's purchasing power over time;
- Cars and trucks overall have become more efficient and use less gasoline than before, thus per gallon gasoline taxes and fees have not matched use of the transportation system;
- State and federal transportation funding distribution formulas favor major metropolitan areas over smaller areas such as Santa Cruz County; and
- As other parts of the state and nation grow at a faster rate than Santa Cruz County, the county's proportional share of limited transportation funds decreases.

Similarly, the federal gas tax has not increased since 1993 and has lost 45% of its buying power.[24] This has made it impossible for the federal highway trust fund to keep up with the demands placed on it to maintain and improve the current transportation system.

Equity

Transportation planning decisions can have significant equity impacts where equity refers to the fairness with which impacts (benefits and costs) are distributed. Transportation expenditures require significant public resources which can favor some people over others especially given the cost of transportation represents a major share of most household expenditures. The quality of available transportation affects people's economic and social opportunities. Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 11135 of the California Government Code, and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice require planning agencies to be sensitive to how all residents, particularly disadvantaged communities, may be impacted by possible transportation changes identified in the RTP. The various "costs" associated with transportation include congestion delay, risk of injury, pollution, and undesirable land use impacts. The 2045 RTP has been developed to address the transportation needs of the entire community and attempts to ensure that no one community enjoys more of the benefits or bears more of the burdens of transportation investments than any other.

Public Input is a Critical Component

Community engagement during public event for Highway 1

One of the RTC's primary objectives is to foster broad public discussion about transportation issues in the community. This serves to deepen public understanding about the complexity of transportation issues and assists the public in providing informed input to the 2045 RTP. Public input is also important to ensure that the RTP accurately reflects the transportation issues that are of highest concern to the residents of Santa Cruz County. The RTC works to engage the public in an informed dialogue and to solicit input from a broad cross-section of the population with an interest in regional planning efforts, including low-income households, minority populations, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, persons with disabilities, representatives from community and service organizations, tribal organizations, and other public agencies. Public input is solicited at key stages of the plan development through email, newspaper, social media, RTC website and RTC meetings. Notifications about public hearings are provided through similar means. RTC Advisory Committees are kept informed of the development of the RTP and their input is sought at project milestones. Consistent with federal requirements (23 CFR 450.316 and 23 CFR 450.322) and the 2019 Public Participation Plan for the Monterey Bay region, input from the public and various state, federal and local entities is solicited. Figure 1.4 outlines the required procedures and methods for public participation based on state and federal laws. Refer to Appendix A for details on the

public participation process including the timeline when input was solicited. See Appendix B for the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Transportation Commission and its partner agencies.

Public Participation Procedures

- Define Purpose & Identify Stakeholders
- Consultation & Coordination with other Agencies
- Consultation with Interested Parties (Policy Bodies and Advisory Committees)
- Public Notice, Public Hearings, Comment Periods (utilizes the Brown Act)
- Use of Media & Informational Materials, and Visualization Techniques
- Encourage Bilingual Participation
- Respond to Public Comments/Input
- Web Posting/Distribution of Draft and Final Documents

Figure 1.4 – Public Participation Procedures Based on State and Federal Laws
Source: AMBAG and SCCRTC 2019 Public Participation Plan[25]

Notes for Chapter 1

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