

AGENDA: October 3, 2022

TO: RTC Advisory Committees - Bicycle Advisory Committee, Elderly/Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), and Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)

FROM: Brianna Goodman, Transportation Planner

RE: Review of Draft Concepts for San Lorenzo Valley Schools Complex Circulation and Access Study

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Bicycle Advisory Committee, Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC), and Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) review and provide input on the draft engineering concepts ([Attachment 1](#)) for the SLV Schools Complex Circulation and Access Study.

BACKGROUND

In 2019 the RTC, in partnership with Caltrans, the County of Santa Cruz, and METRO, completed the Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Complete Streets Corridor Plan (SLV Plan) to help coordinate and prioritize transportation investments for this important corridor. The plan identified the Highway 9 corridor adjacent to and the circulation within the San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District (SLVUSD) elementary, middle, and high schools combined campus (SLV Schools) as a top priority in need of dedicated active transportation facilities, improved access to transit, and optimized vehicle throughput. Projects 9, 10, 11, and 12 of the SLV Plan defined the SLV Schools Complex Circulation and Access Project.

In January 2022, RTC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with SLVUSD, Caltrans, METRO, and the County of Santa Cruz to coordinate delivery of the SLV Schools Circulation and Access Project. RTC staff in conjunction with Caltrans and the SLVUSD identified the need to carry out more thorough analysis for this project as the next step toward implementing the Project.

The SLV Schools Circulation and Access Study began in March of 2022 and includes public input, needs assessment, traffic analysis, preliminary engineering, and feasible recommendations for the SLV Schools Complex and along Highway 9 between Graham Hill Road and the southerly

intersection of Glen Arbor Road. Concurrently, Caltrans is implementing pedestrian safety improvements along Highway 9 south of the school campus (Attachment 2).

DISCUSSION

In March 2022, the SLV Schools Circulation and Access Study (Study) was initiated through coordination with key stakeholders - the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works (DPW), San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District (SLVUSD), Santa Cruz Metro Transit District (METRO), with technical support from professional consultants Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. (MT), and subconsultant Fehr & Peers (F&P). This stakeholder group is jointly referred to as the Circulation Project Management Team (CPMT). The CPMT meets monthly to review existing conditions, data analyses, and discuss potential infrastructure and non-infrastructure solutions.

Four engagement activities were hosted between May 17 and June 30, 2022, with input from elementary, middle, and high school students, school faculty and staff, and the public. A total of 440 individuals provided input during the recent engagement activities. Key findings include the following:

- In response to an open-ended question regarding challenges experienced on Highway 9 near the school campuses, the most common responses included:
 - Access between Highway 9 and SLV school campuses.
 - Lack of walking and bicycling facilities.
 - Congestion during student pick-up and drop-off.
- In response to which solutions from the SLV Plan were most favored or supported, the top selections included:
 - Sidewalks on Highway 9 from the South (Felton).
 - Right-turn pockets on Highway 9 into school entrances.
 - Shoulder improvements for bicycling on Highway 9 from the South (Felton).
- Key themes identified in the engagement activity include:
 - SLV parents support additional bus service and enhancing bus stop amenities.
 - Students are interested in walking and bicycling near campus.
 - Staff is interested in separation between buses and passenger vehicles.
 - Dedicated space for walking and bicycling is highly favored.

Based on findings during public engagement and CPMT monthly meetings, circulation improvements have been categorized in the following areas:

1. Highway 9 between Graham Hill Road and Glen Arbor Road
2. SLV High School Entrance and Parking Areas
3. SLV Middle School Entrance and Parking Areas including access from Hacienda Way, and El Solyo Heights Drive
4. SLV Elementary School Parking Lot and Access Ramp

Concept plans for the circulation and access improvements are included as Attachment 1. **Staff recommends the RTC's Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee, and Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) review and provide input on draft engineering concepts for the SLV Schools Complex Circulation and Access Study.**

Draft recommendations include the following:

1. Pedestrian Improvements - Paved and soft-surface paths, sidewalks, ADA curb ramps, pedestrian fencing, and high visibility crosswalks.
2. Bicycle improvements - Improved on-street bike lanes and shoulders, and bike lane enhancements at intersections.
3. Transit improvements - Formalized curb side pull-out stops, enhanced sidewalk connections to transit stops, potential Bus Only lanes, bus-exclusive loading/unloading areas.
4. Operational improvements - Formalized parking, new parking lot, new left- and right-turn pockets, additional turning lanes onto Highway 9, increased student pick-up/drop-off areas, potential new and modified traffic signals.

NEXT STEPS

The CPMT will continue to refine the draft recommendations based on committee and community input, consideration of constraints and opportunities, and availability of funding. A Schedule and delivery plan will be developed to include a well-defined set of implementation recommendations identified for near term, medium term, or long-term improvements. Next Steps for the Study include the following:

1. Advance Engineering Concepts
2. Refine Concepts with Project Partners
3. Continue Stakeholder Presentations
4. Solicit Input from School/Community Stakeholders
5. Prepare Schedule and delivery plan

6. Finalize Summary Report

Currently, funding for subsequent phases of improvements including environmental, final design, right of way, or construction has not been identified. Staff will continue to work in partnership with SLVUSD, Caltrans, Metro, and County DPW to identify and seek funding opportunities upon completion of the SLV Schools Circulation and Access Study.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no new fiscal impacts associated with RTC committees reviewing and providing input on draft engineering concepts for the SLV Schools Complex Circulation and Access Study.

SUMMARY

The SLV Schools Circulation and Access Study was initiated in collaboration with agency stakeholders as a first step in advancing priority projects from the Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Complete Streets Corridor Plan to address deficiencies at the SLV Schools campus. Staff recommends the RTC Committees provide input on the draft engineering concepts.

Attachments:

1. Draft engineering concepts for the SLV Schools Circulation and Access Study:
 - a. High School Entrance Initial Design Concept
 - b. Middle School Entrance Initial Design Concept
 - c. Elementary School Entrance Initial Design Concept
2. Caltrans 05-1M400 Safety Project Improvements – Graham Hill Road to SLV High School Entrance



SCALE: 1" = 30'

DRAFT-FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

**SLV SCHOOLS CIRCULATION AND ACCESS STUDY
HIGH SCHOOL CONCEPT 1C**







