

Unified Corridor Investment Study – 2022 Supplement

Appendix J – State, Regional, and Local Plan Alignment

Regional/Local Plans

[Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan \(2045\)](#)

As the regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) for Santa Cruz County, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is responsible for developing, implementing, and regularly updating the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Santa Cruz County. The RTP is a state-mandated plan that identifies transportation needs in Santa Cruz County over the next twenty-plus years. It estimates the amount of funding that will be available over this time frame and identifies a financially constrained priority list of projects incorporating the triple bottom line sustainability principles of economy, environment, and social equity. The goals of the RTP include establishing livable communities that improve people's access to jobs, schools, recreation, healthy lifestyles, and other regular needs in ways that improve health, reduce pollution and retain money in the local economy. Another goal is to reduce transportation-related fatalities and injuries for all transportation modes; and to deliver access and safety improvements cost-effectively, within available revenues, equitably and responsive to the needs of all users of the transportation system, and beneficially for the natural environment. The Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) evaluates the benefits of various transportation investments identified in the RTP along major transportation corridors connecting Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Consistent with the RTP, the UCS focuses on developing a sustainable transportation system that advances triple bottom line goals. The goals for the UCS focus on developing a transportation system which seeks to maximize benefits to current and future generations in terms of safety, efficient mobility, environment and health, equity, and economic vitality of the region aligning with the RTP's goals and policies. The Watsonville - Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program is a suite of projects that implements the recommendations of the UCS. Its projects prioritize safety for all transportation modes including active transportation, transit, and roadway users. It will provide safe multimodal connections establishing livable communities by promoting healthy and sustainable transportation options to access daily needs.

[Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy \(MTP/SCS\) \(2045\)](#)

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Monterey Bay Area. AMBAG coordinates the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) with Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (San Benito County Council of Governments, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County), transit providers (San Benito County Local Transit Authority, Monterey-Salinas Transit, and Santa Cruz METRO), the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD), state and federal governments, and organizations having an interest in or responsibility for transportation planning and programming. AMBAG adopted the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) in June 2022. The MTP/SCS framework of goals and policy objectives includes access and mobility, economic vitality, environment, healthy communities, social equity, and system preservation and safety. The Unified Corridor

Investment Study goals align with the MTP/SCS to foster efficient development patterns that optimize travel, housing, and employment choices and encourage active transportation and the MTP/SCS includes projects identified in the UCS Preferred Scenario. Consistent with the MTP/SCS, the UCS also evaluates equitable transportation solutions to make the Watsonville – Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program a safe and accessible corridor for all transportation modes.

[Watsonville Climate Action and Adaptation Plan \(2021\)](#)

Watsonville adopted their 2030 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) in October 2021, and on July 6, 2021, the Watsonville City Council voted unanimously to support the Climate-Safe California Campaign goal of net-negative emissions by 2030, setting an aspirational goal for the community of Watsonville to remove more greenhouse gases than it emits by 2030. In order to meet the City’s climate goals, the CAAP addresses reducing emissions in transportation, natural gas, electricity use, and food waste disposal. Some of the strategies and programs to reduce emissions in transportation include increasing active transportation use that includes incorporating more walking and biking trails, e-bike share program, carpool programs, and promoting the use of mass transit. The Unified Corridor Investment Study and the Watsonville – Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program projects will provide safe bike and pedestrian facilities and will increase transit frequency promoting sustainable transportation options reducing carbon emissions. In order to meet the city’s aggressive carbon emission reduction goals, these projects will be essential increasing reliability and accessibility of alternative transportation options connecting Watsonville to Santa Cruz.

[Santa Cruz County Climate Action Strategy \(2013\)](#)

Santa Cruz County Climate Action Strategy (CAS) was adopted in 2013 and outlines a course of action to reduce GHG emissions produced by governmental operations and community activities within unincorporated Santa Cruz County. Implementation of the CAS will build on the fact that Santa Cruz County has already met the 2020 emissions reduction target recommended by the state and will set the County on a path toward reducing emissions to 59 percent below 2009 levels by 2050. Strategies are included to reduce emissions in the major focus areas of transportation, energy, and solid waste. Transportation strategies to reduce carbon emissions focus on reducing VMT and encouraging active transportation, transit, and carpooling. This includes promoting multimodal transportation improvements, supporting the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Project (i.e. Coastal Rail Trail), and to prioritize safe active transportation amenities and connections between and among neighborhoods, commercial areas, schools and recreation sites. The UCS and the Watsonville – Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program projects will work to reduce VMT in the unincorporated county of Santa Cruz aligning with the goals of the CAS to incentivize and empower individuals to use active transportation and take transit rather than driving alone.

[Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan \(2014\)](#)

The Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan was adopted in 2014. Its study area was the central urban core of the unincorporated County, between Live Oak and Aptos. The plan establishes a community-based vision for a more sustainable future. The plan integrates the County’s land use and transportation policies in a way that protects environmental resources, supports economic growth, and increases access to opportunity for all County residents. The plan includes suggestions for specific amendments to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance and other policies. Its recommendations are intended to reduce VMT and

implement key strategies of the Santa Cruz Climate Action Strategy (above). The routes of the UCS all pass through the plan area and are critical components of a sustainable future. Soquel Drive is the primary local transit corridor of the Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan, with recommendations for walkable infill development along it centered at key commercial/service neighborhood and regional nodes. The UCS recommendations for operational, transit, and bicycle improvements on Soquel Drive are consistent with the complete streets type goals and recommendations of this plan.

[Measure D Expenditure Plan and Strategic Implementation Plan](#)

In November 2016, Santa Cruz County voters approved Measure D, a half-percent (0.5%) transaction and use tax dedicated to transportation projects identified in the Measure D Expenditure Plan. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's (RTC) Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) identifies policies, procedures and financing strategies to expedite the implementation of the Expenditure Plan, including projects identified in the UCS Preferred Scenario. The SIP, which the RTC updates at least every five years, identifies bonding and inter-program loans as potential strategies to accelerate the construction of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network/Coastal Rail Trail, bus-on-shoulder/auxiliary lanes on Highway 1, and priority transit projects. The next SIP update will also focus on long-term maintenance of the rail and trail corridor that is included in the Watsonville – Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program.

[State Plans](#)

[Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure](#) (2021)

In July 2021, the State of California adopted the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI), which prioritizes sustainable transportation projects in funding decisions as part of the new statewide climate action strategy. The CAPTI details how the state recommends investing billions of discretionary transportation funds annually to aggressively combat climate change through prioritization of projects that advance goals towards mode shift, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and providing equitable benefits for all.

Through its multimodal approach towards congestion relief, the UCS and Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program align directly with the following guiding principles of the CAPTI:

- Building toward an integrated, statewide rail and transit network
- Investing in networks of safe and accessible bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- Strengthening our commitment to social and racial equity by reducing public health and economic harms and maximizing community benefits
- Making safety improvements to reduce fatalities and severe injuries of all users towards zero
- Assessing physical climate risk
- Promoting projects that do not significantly increase passenger vehicle travel
- Promoting compact infill development while protecting residents and businesses from displacement by funding projects that address affordability to reduce the housing-transportation cost burden and auto trips
- Protecting natural and working lands
- Meaningful public engagement: Throughout its development and implementation, the UCS and Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program have provided

meaningful public engagement opportunities by intentionally engaging with historically marginalized communities.

After a thorough and extensive vetting of how well the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program aligned with CAPTI, Caltrans scored the program very highly based on state screening criteria. Caltrans found that the UCS and Watsonville-Satna Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program represents a transformative solution for reducing vehicle miles traveled and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

[California Transportation Plan 2050](#) (2021)

In February 2021, the State of California adopted the California Transportation Plan 2050 (CTP 2050). CTP 2050 is California's long-range plan for achieving its vision of a safe, resilient, and universally accessible transportation system that supports vibrant communities, advances racial and economic justice, and improves public and environmental health. CTP 2050 was a multi-year effort involving cross-sector coordination with State, regional, and local partners, extensive research, public engagement, technical analysis, and oversight from multiple committees. CTP 2050 builds on concurrent efforts included in Caltrans' six modal plans, regional transportation plans (RTPs), other statewide plans. It also draws from research on demographic shifts, technology trends, and economic growth to help inform what strategies to employ and identify challenges and opportunities. CTP 2050 establishes people-focused policies, strategies, and investments designed to improve the lives of all Californians. CTP 2050 is different from similar corridor management plans in that it is statutorily fiscally unconstrained and does not contain projects, but policies and strategies required to close the gaps identified by partnering RTPs.

The UCS and Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program align with all eight goals identified in the CTP 2050 on the topics of safety, climate, equity, accessibility, quality of life & public health, economy, environment, and infrastructure.

[Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan](#) (2021)

The Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) was adopted by Caltrans in 2021 and an addendum was prepared in August 2022. The ITSP is one of the six California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) statewide plans that implement the California Transportation Plan 2050 (CTP). The ITSP identifies eleven Strategic Interregional Corridors that connect California's major regions and designates priority interregional highways and railways within each corridor. The 2021 ITSP adopts the CTP's eight goals: Safety, Climate, Equity, Quality of Life and Public Health, Accessibility, Economy, Environment, and Infrastructure. The 2021 ITSP identifies 18 strategies to accomplish these eight goals. The 18 strategies are applied in various combinations across the 11 Strategic Interregional Corridors, according to the specific needs of that corridor.

The 11 Strategic Interregional Corridors are: (1) United States/Mexico Border Region - Inland Empire Connections Corridor; (2) South Coast - Central Coast Corridor; (3) Central Coast - San Jose/San Francisco Bay Area Corridor (4) San Jose/San Francisco Bay Area - North Coast Corridor; (5) San Jose/San Francisco Bay Area - Central Valley - Los Angeles Corridor; (6) Sacramento Valley - Oregon Border Corridor; (7) High Desert - Eastern Sierra - Northern Nevada Corridor; (8) Southern California - Southern Nevada/Arizona Corridor; (9) Central Coast - San Joaquin Valley East-West Connections Corridor; (10) San Jose/San Francisco Bay Area - Sacramento - Northern Nevada Corridor; (11) North Coast - Northern Nevada Connections Corridor.

The Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor most closely aligns with the Central Coast – San Jose/San Francisco Bay Area Strategic Interregional Corridor. The [Draft 2022 ITSP Addendum](#) features the Coastal Rail Trail project as a model interregional solution to increasing multimodal connectivity and accessibility to multimodal options.

[California Smart Mobility Framework](#) (2010)

The California Smart Mobility Framework is a planning guide that furthers the integration of smart growth concepts into transportation planning. Goals of the Smart Mobility Framework include moving people and freight more efficiently, while enhancing economic, environmental, and human resources in California. Consistent with the principles of Smart Mobility, the UCS and Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program address climate change impacts, advances social equity and environmental justice, and supports economic and community development. The UCS and Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program align closely with the Smart Mobility Framework's goals to address the reduction in greenhouse gases, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and provide for a safe transportation system.

[California Freight Mobility Plan](#) (2020)

The California Freight Mobility Plan (CFMP) was adopted in March 2020. The CFMP is a statewide plan that governs California's immediate and long-range freight planning activities and capital investments. The CFMP was developed to comply with the freight provisions of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, which requires each state that receives funding under the National Highway Freight Program to develop a freight plan. The CFMP was also developed to comply with California Government Code Section 13978.8 pertaining to the State freight plan. Freight is a critical component of the global, national, and state economies. Californians depend on a goods movement system that provides communities with their most vital necessities including food, medicine, and inputs for manufacturing in a timely, efficient manner. The freight sector is rapidly changing due to technological advancements, economic fluctuations, increasing demand, and environmental concerns. In the face of these changes and challenges, the CFMP articulates a vision of California having "the world's most innovative, economically-competitive multimodal freight network that is efficient, reliable, modern, integrated, resilient, safe, and sustainable, where social and environmental impacts are considered equally." The CFMP reinforces California's leadership role in innovation and sustainability. The CFMP aligns with and supports many of the actions proposed within the UCS and the California Sustainable Freight Action Plan including the State's transition to a zero- and near-zero emission freight fleet, supporting marine highways and short line rail, and proposing alternative modes for last mile deliveries. Caltrans is currently developing the 2023 California Freight Mobility Plan (CFMP) to provide a long-term vision for California's freight future.

[California Sustainable Freight Action Plan](#) (2016)

In July 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-32-15, which provides a vision for California's transition to a more efficient, more economically competitive, and less polluting freight transport system. The Governor's Executive Order directed various State agencies to collaborate in developing a California Sustainable Freight Action Plan (Action Plan). This Action Plan is not intended to replace other planning processes and documents such as the California Freight Mobility Plan or regional goods movement plans, but rather is intended to inform those efforts by providing a new perspective regarding the sustainability of the

freight system and framework for ongoing collaborative processes. The Action Plan establishes guiding principles to inform ongoing and future planning documents as well as freight targets to measure and report progress on meeting said goals. The Action Plan includes recommendations on:

- A long-term 2050 Vision and Guiding Principles for California's future freight transport system.
- Targets for 2030 to guide the State toward meeting the Vision.
- Opportunities to leverage State freight transport system investments.
- Actions to initiate over the next five years to make progress towards the Targets and the Vision.
- Pilot projects to achieve on-the-ground progress in the near-term.
- Additional concepts for further exploration and development, if viable.

The Santa Cruz Branch Line is an active single track freight railroad that is owned by the RTC. It currently is only used for freight along the first three miles, located in Watsonville. The UCS Preferred Scenario recommends preservation of the branch line to accommodate possible future freight needs via temporal separation from planned passenger rail operations. The Coastal Rail Trail project element is being designed to be compatible with rail use on the branch line.

Goods movement by trucks along Highway 1 is relevant and vital to the vision of the UCS. The UCS supports the Action Plans goals through providing freight benefits along Highway 1. Project elements such as bridge widening will upgrade existing bridges to meet a state of good repair and align with Caltrans bridge standards. The UCS supports improved travel time reliability for goods movement on trucks and congestion relief along the corridor, which will help improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions due to the existing conditions on Highway 1.

[Climate Change Scoping Plan](#) (2017)

In September 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. The event marked a critical moment in California's history. By requiring in law, a reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, California set the stage for its transition to a sustainable, clean energy future. This historic step also helped put climate change on the national agenda and has spurred action by many other states. The California Air Resources Board (ARB or Board) is the lead agency for implementing AB 32, which set the major milestones for establishing the Scoping Plan. The Scoping Plan, developed by ARB in coordination with the Climate Action Team (CAT), proposed a comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions in California, improve our environment, reduce our dependence on oil, diversify our energy sources, save energy, create new jobs, and enhance public health. The Scoping Plan has undergone various updates throughout the years. The most recent update of the Scoping Plan, 2022 Scoping Plan Update, is currently still in development with a public draft posted on the ARB website. The 2022 Draft Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (Draft 2022 Scoping Plan or 2022 Scoping Plan) is the most comprehensive and far-reaching Scoping Plan developed to date. It identifies a technologically feasible and cost-effective path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 while also assessing the progress California is making toward reducing its GHG emissions by at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, as called for in SB 32 and laid out in the 2017 Scoping Plan.

The UCS and the Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program addresses strategies considerate of the transportation sector’s impacts to climate change. They reflect the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the reduction in countywide vehicle miles traveled, as warranted by the WSC-MCP’s travel time savings benefits and mode shift to low carbon modes, while furthering the capital needs around the transition to zero emission transportation infrastructure.

[California State Rail Plan](#) (2018)

The California State Rail Plan establishes a long-term vision for prioritizing state investment in an efficient, effective passenger and freight rail system, which supports the goals and policies of the California Transportation Plan 2040. The Rail Plan identifies service goals, capital costs, and a phased strategy for achieving the vision. This ambitious plan identifies a coordinated, statewide passenger rail network that will get Californians where they want to go, when they want to go, and enhance the movement of goods by rail to support California’s industries and the economy. With this focus, the Rail Plan expects passenger rail trips to increase more than tenfold by 2040 to over 1.3 million rail trips each day. The Rail Plan also describes how California's rail system will improve its ability to move freight cleanly and efficiently by expanding freight rail capacity to handle a more than doubling of intermodal rail freight demand from ports.

The Santa Cruz Branch Line (SCBL) is one of the three paralleling transportation routes of the UCS. The Branch Line is identified in the State Rail Plan for future rail service. The Coastal Rail Trail project, which utilizes the Branch Line corridor, is being developed to accommodate both rail and trail uses, consistent with the UCS, the State Rail Plan, and the RTC’s [Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study](#) (2021).

Broadband and ITS Implementation (2021)

In July 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bill 156 into law to create an open-access middle-mile network to bring high-speed broadband to all Californians. Caltrans is the agency tasked to deliver construction of the middle-mile infrastructure along state highways and in state right of way. The State Route 1 corridor in Santa Cruz County is identified as part of the Caltrans Middle Mile Project, whereby broadband will be delivered through construction of the Caltrans project 05-1Q280.

Caltrans District 5 Plans

[District 5 Active Transportation Plan](#) (2021)

The District 5 Active Transportation Plan advances the Vision, Statement, and Goals in Toward an Active California, the statewide bicycle and pedestrian plan, and is part of a comprehensive planning process to identify locations with walking and bicycling needs in each Caltrans district across California. The Plan identifies challenges and potential solutions for walking and bicycling along and across Caltrans roadways. It recognizes that many people rely on Caltrans roadways to walk, bicycle, and connect to transit, and also acknowledges that people of color and people with lower incomes experience disproportionately higher crash risks than other groups do. The Plan seeks to enhance safety and make it more comfortable and convenient for everyone to walk and bicycle more often by identifying needs and priorities for future investments. The Plan includes a

prioritized list of bicycle and pedestrian needs along and across the SHS to help identify opportunities to incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements into projects.

The Active Transportation Plan identifies needs to improve bicycle and pedestrian crossings at 13 locations on Highway 1 between Freedom Boulevard and Morrissey Boulevard. Addressing an identified need, the UCS recommends auxiliary/bus-on-shoulder and rail trail projects which include construction of four new bicycle and pedestrian crossings of Highway 1. Local roadway overcrossings within the WSC-MCP include new bike lanes and sidewalks as well.

[District 5 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Report](#) (2019)

The District 5 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment identifies segments of the State Highway System vulnerable to climate change impacts including precipitation, temperature, wildfire, storm surge, and sea level rise. These reports include a prioritized list of potentially exposed assets in each Caltrans District. The prioritization methodology in these reports considers, amongst other things, the timing of the climate impacts, their severity and extensiveness, the condition of each asset (a measure of the sensitivity of the asset to damage), the number of system users affected, and the level of network redundancy in the area.

State Route 1 is one of the three routes of the UCS. It is mostly located within half a mile inland from the coast and within an urbanized area. It may be susceptible to climate change impacts primarily due to flooding from increased levels of precipitation as both Trout Creek and Aptos Creek are adjacent or beneath it in Aptos. The UCS's proposed projects, as being implemented via the WSC-MCP, replace the SR 1 structures at Trout and Aptos creeks for long-term climate resiliency, consistent with the Climate Change Vulnerability Report.

State Route 1 Transportation Concept Report (2019)

The Highway 1 Transportation Concept Report (TCR) evaluated current and projected conditions along the route and communicated the vision for the development of each route in each Caltrans District during a 20- to 25-year planning horizon. The TCR is developed with the goals of increasing safety, improving mobility, providing excellent stewardship and meeting community and environmental needs along the corridor through integrated transportation network management, including the highway, transit, pedestrian, bicycle, freight, operational improvements and travel demand management components of the corridor.

The Highway 1 elements of the UCS and Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program, including the Highway 1 auxiliary lanes and reconstruction of the railroad bridges, are reflected in the Highway 1 TCR. The TCR also recognized and recommended coordination between Caltrans and the RTC on development of the Unified Corridor Investment Study with identifying multimodal transportation investments for the Highway 1, Santa Cruz Branch Line and Soquel Drive corridors.

[District System Management Plan](#) (2015)

California's State Highway System needs long-range planning documents to guide the logical development of transportation systems as required by CA Gov. Code §65086 and as necessitated by the public, stakeholders, and system users. The purpose of the District System Management Plan (DSMP) is to develop the District's vision of how the

transportation system will be maintained, managed, and developed over the next 20 years and beyond. It provides a vehicle for the development of multimodal, multijurisdictional system strategies. The DSMP is developed with the goals of increasing safety and health, stewardship and efficiency, sustainability, livability, and economy, system performance, and organizational excellence.

The DSMP was developed in close partnership with the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the District, pulling from each of the Regional Transportation Plans and Corridor Plans developed at the state, district or regional scale. The DSMP includes a project list that identifies priority transportation enhancements. Elements of the UCS recommendations and the Watsonville to Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program, including the Highway 1 auxiliary lanes and paralleling bicycle and pedestrian improvements, are reflected in the final 2015 DSMP.

Congestion Management Process

Congestion Management Programs

One of the original intents of the State Congestion Management Programs implemented by Congestion Management Agencies was to link transportation, land use, air quality, and regional economies. Elements of the programs included monitoring and thresholds for Level of Service, multi-modal performance measures, travel demand element, consideration of land use decisions' impact on the transportation system, and development of a capital improvement program. While the RTC is no longer designated as a CMA and does not prepare a CMP, the UCS considers automobile travel time delay by way of analyzing peak period mean automobile travel time and person trips across screen-line. The UCS also evaluated automobile vehicle miles traveled as a measure for changes in automobile travel. Multi-modal performance was analyzed in the UCS by way of peak period mean transit travel time, transit vehicle miles traveled, and mode share. Travel demand management strategies were included in all of the scenarios evaluated in the UCS and included in the Preferred Scenario. Travel demand modeling considered impact of land use on travel patterns. The UCS also identified a list of transportation projects for implementation.

Appendix K – Public Engagement

The Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) for transportation routes between Watsonville and Santa Cruz was developed based on extensive outreach and input received on transportation priorities for Santa Cruz County. The multimodal scenarios that were analyzed reflect community expectations that the corridor will provide a range of transportation options by 2035 that will advance community identified goals for a safe, efficient, reliable, and equitable transportation system that supports economic vitality and minimizes environmental concerns. Public and stakeholder engagement during the study included input solicited on Highway 1, Coastal Rail Trail and Rail Corridor, and Soquel Avenue/Drive-Freedom Boulevard projects. The [Watsonville – Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor](#) suite of projects is the direct outcome of the UCS.

The majority of outreach on the UCS was conducted between December 2012 and January 2019. Outreach was targeted to partner agencies, stakeholders, RTC advisory committees, local business leaders and employers, transit/bicycle/pedestrian advocacy groups, community organizations, neighborhood associations, environmental organizations, low-income/disadvantaged and disabled community advocates, and county citizens. Along with continual outreach through social media, print media, radio, tabling at community events, and the RTC website and email lists of thousands of interested parties, specific engagement opportunities that took place included:

- 14 public meetings
- 6 public workshops
- 15 RTC advisory committee meetings (Bicycle Advisory Committee, Elderly/Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee, Interagency Technical Advisory Committee)
- 5 partner agency meetings (5)
- 3 online surveys
- 7 focus group meetings with community organizations, and
- 6 presentations to city councils and the Santa Cruz METRO board.



Priority transportation projects were selected for different scenarios based on public input from surveys, workshops, email and website solicitations, input from stakeholders and RTC Advisory Committees, and comments received on related RTC planning efforts. Through these outreach efforts, the public identified transportation projects for Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard, and the rail right-of-way between Watsonville and Santa Cruz that would advance their transportation goals. Most of the projects evaluated in the scenarios have been included in the [Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#) for many years. The RTP is also developed based on extensive public, stakeholder and partner agency input. Examples of some of the outreach and public input conducted is included in this appendix below.

Public Input Opportunities

(December 2012 – January 2019)

UCS Adoption	
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	January 17, 2019
Draft Step 2 Analysis	
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	December 6, 2018
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	November 15, 2018
Capitola City Council Presentation	November 8, 2018
METRO Board Presentation	October 26, 2018
Watsonville City Council Presentation	October 23, 2018
Santa Cruz City Council Presentation	October 23, 2018
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee	October 18, 2018
Regional Transportation Commission Transportation Policy Workshop (Public Meeting)	October 18, 2018
Scotts Valley City Council Presentation	October 17, 2018
Community Organization Focus Groups	October 17, 2018
Public Workshop (Watsonville)	October 16, 2018
Public Workshop (Live Oak)	October 15, 2018
Partner Agency Stakeholders	October 9, 2018
Bike Committee, Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee	October 2018
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	October 4, 2018
Regional Transportation Commission Transportation Policy Workshop (Public Meeting)	March 15, 2018

Draft Step 1 Analysis	
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	December 7, 2017
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee	November 2017
Online Survey	October 11, 2017 to November 8, 2017
Public Workshops (Watsonville and Live Oak)	October 2017
Bike Committee, Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee	September 2017
Partner Agency Stakeholders	September 2017
Community Organization Focus Groups	August 2017
Scenarios to be Evaluated in Step 1	
Regional Transportation Commission Transportation Policy Workshop (Public Meeting)	June 15, 2017
Bike Committee, Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee	June 2017
Online Survey	May 16 - May 31, 2017
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee	May 2017
Goals, Criteria, Performance Measures and Project List	
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	May 4, 2017
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	March 2, 2017
Online Survey	January 6, 2017 to March 3, 2017
Public Workshop (Live Oak)	January 12, 2017
Partner Agency Stakeholders	January 5, 2017

Interagency Technical Advisory Committee, Bike Committee, Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee	December 2016
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	December 8, 2017
Development of Modeling Tools	
Partner Agency Stakeholders	September 2015
Partner Agency Stakeholders	June 2015
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	June 4, 2015
Online Survey	April 1 – April 30, 2015
Public Workshop (Capitola)	April 16, 2015
Bike Committee, Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee	April 2015
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	February 5, 2015
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee	January, 2015
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	December 4, 2014
Regional Transportation Commission Public Meeting	December 6, 2012

Public Input Received & Outreach Examples

Thousands of community members helped identify transportation priorities and project groupings for consideration in the UCS through public meetings, online surveys and focus groups. Web links to some of the input received are below and also available on the RTC website: <https://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/unified-corridor-study/>

Step 1 Analysis

- [Public Workshop and Online Survey Input](#) (October – November 2017)
- [Summary of Public Comments from Workshop and Online Survey](#) (October – November 2017)
 - Live Oak Workshop: 102 attendees
 - Watsonville Workshop: 30 attendees
 - Online Survey: 1,596 surveys were submitted
- [Public Workshop & Online Survey Materials](#) (October – November 2017)
- [Comments Received](#) (August – November 2017)
- [Focus Groups Comments](#) (August 2017)
- RTC meeting, Dec. 17, 2017 – 34 people gave public comments

Additional Input

- [Public Input from Surveys and Workshops](#) (January – June 2017)
- [Public Comments on Transit Alternatives Analysis](#) (received through June 26, 2019)



Step 1 Analysis Outreach Material Examples

Newspaper and Online Ads:



The advertisement features the SCCRTC logo on the left, which includes a stylized landscape with mountains, a river, and a green field. To the right of the logo, the text "Unified Corridors Study" is displayed in a large, green, sans-serif font. Below this, the website "www.sccrtc.org/ucs" is listed. The main body of the ad is divided into two horizontal sections. The top section has a light blue background and contains the text: "Provide important input on the Unified Corridors Study: which transportation projects should be analyzed further to maximize community benefit?". The bottom section has a darker blue background and contains the text: "Proporcionar un aporte importante en el Estudio de Corredores Unificados: ¿qué proyectos de transporte deben ser analizados más para maximizar el beneficio de la comunidad?". At the very bottom, a green banner displays the URL "https://sccrtc-ucs.metroquest.com" in white text.

Unified Corridors Study
www.sccrtc.org/ucs

Provide important input on the Unified Corridors Study: which transportation projects should be analyzed further to maximize community benefit?

Proporcionar un aporte importante en el Estudio de Corredores Unificados: ¿qué proyectos de transporte deben ser analizados más para maximizar el beneficio de la comunidad?

<https://sccrtc-ucs.metroquest.com>

Social Media Posts:



The social media post is from the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). It features the RTC logo and a header indicating it was published by Amy Norrjo on May 16, 2017. The main text of the post asks users to share their ideas about sustainable transportation by taking a survey to tell the SCCRTC which projects they think are most important on Highway 1, Soquel & Freedom, and the rail right-of-way. It states that the selected projects will help inform the development of future transportation scenarios for the Unified Corridor Investment Study, with a deadline of May 31. A link to the survey is provided: <https://sccrtc-ucs.metroquest.com/>. Below the text is a map of the study area, showing the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Santa Cruz River, and various locations including Downtown, Santa Cruz, Capitola, Monterey Bay, and Watsonville. The map is titled "Unified Corridor Investment Study Project Limits".

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)
Published by Amy Norrjo · May 16, 2017

Share your ideas about sustainable transportation: Take this survey to tell the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) what projects you think are most important on Highway 1, Soquel & Freedom and the rail right-of-way. The projects you select will help inform development of future transportation scenarios to be evaluated in the Unified Corridor Investment Study. Please provide your input by May 31. <https://sccrtc-ucs.metroquest.com/>

Unified Corridor Investment Study Project Limits

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)
Published by Amy Naranjo • October 3, 2017

Final public workshop for the Step 1 Analysis of the #UCS TONIGHT at Live Oak Elementary from 6-7:30 pm. Be a part of the conversation and share your input. Community engagement is critical to the success of this study.

SCCRTC Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission



Unified Corridor Investment Study Project Limits

The Unified Corridor Investment Study Workshops

Monday, October 2, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm Watsonville Public Library, <u>275 Main Street in Watsonville</u> (Parking in Garage)	Tuesday, October 3, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm Live Oak Elementary School Multipurpose Room <u>1916 Capitola Rd in Live Oak</u>
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Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)
Published by Amy Naranjo • May 18, 2017

Share your ideas about sustainable transportation: Take this survey to tell the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) what projects you think are most important on Highway 1, Siqnel & Freedom and the rail right-of-way. The projects you select will help inform development of future transportation scenarios to be evaluated in the Unified Corridor Investment Study. Please provide your input by May 31. <https://sccrtc-ucs.metroquest.com/>



Unified Corridor Investment Study Project Limits

Flyers:

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
Unified Corridors Investment Study Survey

Tell us your transportation priorities

Highway 1 and Soquel Avenue/Drive are two of the most heavily traveled routes in Santa Cruz County. Acquisition of the rail line provides a third parallel route with unused capacity. The Unified Corridor Investment Study is underway to investigate how these three routes can work together most effectively for people driving cars, taking transit, riding bicycles and walking.



We want to hear from YOU about:

- Transportation Priorities
- Transportation Preferences
- Goals for this Study
- Performance Measures
- Priority Projects

Your responses will to this survey will have a very real impact on decisions regarding prioritization of transportation projects on these three corridors.

To complete the survey please visit: <http://www.sccrtc.org/ucs> and click on 'Unified Corridors Investment Study Survey'

Survey ends **February 17, 2017**



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1510 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone: (831) 488-2200
Fax: (831) 488-3211
Watsonville Office: (831) 448-3385 ext. 385

Website:

IN ESPAÑOL

SCCRTC Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

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RECENT POSTS
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RTC Invites Public Input on Draft UCS Step 1 Analysis Results

October 11, 2017

Welcome

Tell us which transportation improvements should be considered in Santa Cruz County and analyzed further in the Unified Corridor Study (UCS). The survey provides you with information about the potential benefits and community benefits of each project to inform your selection. The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.



The RTC invites you to [provide input](#) on which transportation projects should be considered as future transportation solutions in Santa Cruz County and analyzed in greater detail in the Unified Corridor Study. The [public survey](#) provides information about the feasibility and potential community benefits of each project to inform your selections. Public input received as part of outreach efforts conducted in spring 2017 helped inform which projects were evaluated in Step 1 of the UCS scenario analysis. Step 2 of the UCS scenario analysis will include a more detailed evaluation of how projects advance sustainable transportation goals. The UCS identifies projects that serve people traveling by auto, transit, bicycle and walking and groups projects into scenarios on Highway 1, Soquel/Freeform and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

Please provide your input by **November 8**. The RTC is scheduled to decide on the transportation scenarios to advance to the Step 2 scenario analysis at the Regional Transportation Commission meeting on **December 7, 2017** at the County Board of Supervisors, 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz.

[Provide Input on Draft Step 1 Analysis - Take the Survey](#)

If you would like to receive email updates on this project directly, sign up at [subscriptions](#). More information about the UCS available at [http://www.sccrtc.org/ucs](#) or [http://www.sccrtc.org/ucs](#).

HOME | MEETINGS & EVENTS | FUNDING & PLANNING | PROJECTS | SERVICES | ABOUT THE RTC | COUNTEIL | CONTACT

SCCRTC Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

MEETINGS & EVENTS **FUNDING & PLANNING** **PROJECTS** **SERVICES** **ABOUT THE RTC** **CONTACT**

Streets & Highways
 Highway 1 Corridor Program
 Highway 1 Environmental Documents
 Buckle Shoulder Project
 Soquel-Monterey Ave Lanes
 41st Ave-Soquel Ave/Dr Ave Lanes, SOE & Chantier Bike/Ped Overcrossing
 Bay/Parker to State Park Dr Ave Lanes, SOE & New Vista Overcrossing
 State Park Dr to Freedom Blvd Ave Lanes

Highway 17
 Highway 9
 Highway 1-17 Interchange Widening
 Other Highways

Bicycles
 Santa Cruz County Bicycle Route Signage Program

Pedestrians

Rail
 Right of Entry Requests
 Preventative Maintenance
 Operating Agreement
 Passenger Rail
 Rail Service Studies
 Rail Line Purchase
 Due Diligence

Trails
 Monterey Bay Scenic Trail
 SBERT Master Plan
 Road Environmental Impact Report
 North Coast Rail Trail

Bus Projects

Unified Corridor Investment Study Project Ideas
 Please provide your input on transportation improvement ideas for the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) Project Area (see map below). Submit one form for each project idea. Projects could include transportation improvements to Soquel Avenue/Drive, Highway 1, the rail corridor and/or connecting routes.

Unified Corridor Investment Study Project Area Map

Unified Corridor Investment Study

SCCRTC

UCS Project Ideas
 Describe the specific project that could improve transportation in the project study area.

Location of the project (check all that apply):
☐ City of Santa Cruz
☐ City of Capitola
☐ Unincorporated County
☐ Countywide
☐ Not sure

If you checked "Not sure", please explain:

Provide beginning and end points of project, cross streets, nearest address, direction of travel as best you can.

Survey:

5/14/2017

MetroQuest Studio

WELCOME

1 Welcome

Tell us your ideas for creating a sustainable transportation system by selecting transportation projects on Highway 1, Soquel & Freedom and the rail right-of-way.

The following three pages allow you to choose among a number of projects specific to each of the routes. The group of projects you select will help inform development of future transportation scenarios to be evaluated in the Unified Corridor Investment Study.

Begin

What group of transportation projects do you think will achieve a sustainable transportation system?

SCCRTC

Step 2 Analysis

- [Comments Received](#) (January 09, 2019 – January 16, 2019)
- [Comments Received](#) (November 2018 – January 2019)
- [Public Workshop Input](#) (November 2018)
 - Live Oak Workshop: 118 attendees
 - Watsonville Workshop: 112 attendees
- [Comments Received](#) (September – November 2018)
- Comments also provided at RTC Meetings:
 - RTC TPW meeting, March 15, 2018 – 7 people gave public comments
 - RTC meeting, Oct. 4, 2018 – 5 people gave public comments
 - RTC TPW meeting, Oct. 18, 2018 – 16 people gave public comments
 - RTC meeting, Nov. 15, 2018 – 37 people gave public comments



Step 2 Analysis Outreach Material Examples

Press Release:



Newspaper Ad:

SCCRTC
Unified Corridor Investment Study
www.sccrtc.org/ucs

Public Workshops

The RTC is hosting public workshops to get input on transportation options for our community based on the results of the draft Step 2 scenario analysis of the Unified Corridor Study (UCS). The UCS is investigating what projects on Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard, and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line will provide the greatest benefit to the community. The workshops will feature an overview of the UCS draft results and seek your input on the draft Step 2 scenario analysis and a preferred scenario for Santa Cruz County's transportation future.

Broad community participation is encouraged to ensure an informed decision-making process.

Monday, October 15, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Live Oak Elementary School
Multi-Purpose Room
1916 Capitola Road, Live Oak


&

Tuesday, October 16, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Civic Plaza Community Room A, 4th floor
275 Main Street, Watsonville
(Parking in garage on Level 6)

Input can also be emailed to ucs@sccrtc.org or mailed to the RTC at
1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz 95060.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is responsible for delivering a full range of convenient, reliable, and efficient transportation choices for the community.
RTC, 1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, 95060
www.sccrtc.org, info@sccrtc.org, (831) 480-3200

Public Hearing Notice:



Notice of Public Hearing
Unified Corridor Investment Study
Draft Step 2 Scenario Analysis Report
Thursday, Nov. 15, 6 p.m.
Watsonville City Council Chambers
275 Main Street, 4th Floor, Watsonville, CA

The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) will hold a public hearing to receive input from members of the public on transportation options for Santa Cruz County based on the results of the draft Step 2 scenario analysis of the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCIS). The UCIS is investigating what projects on Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/ Soquel Drive/Freeway Boulevard, and the Santa Cruz Rerailing Rail Line will provide the greatest benefit to the community.

Prior to the public hearing, RTC staff will present a second draft of the report to the RTC Board.

The Step 2 Scenario Analysis report is available for review at www.sccrtc.org/ucs.

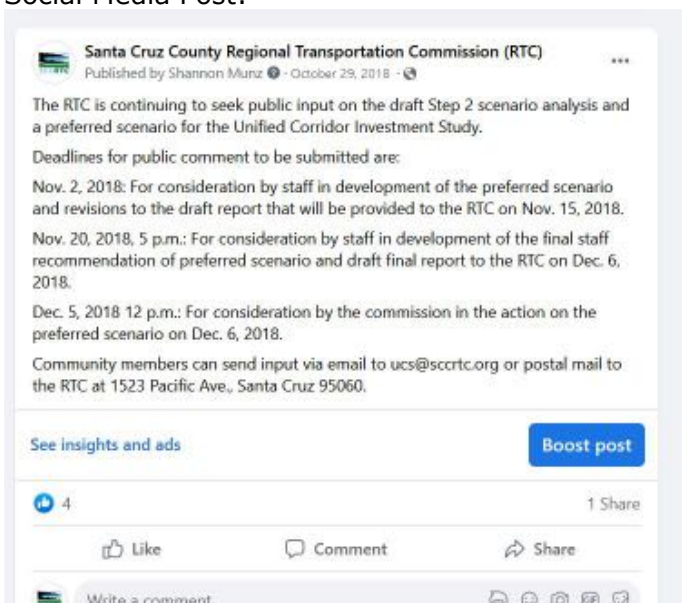
Deadlines for Public Comment:
Nov. 20, 2018, 5 p.m.: For consideration by staff in the development of the final staff recommendation of a preferred scenario and draft final report to the RTC on Dec. 6, 2018.
Dec. 5, 2018 12 p.m.: For consideration by the commission in the action on the preferred scenario on Dec. 6, 2018.

Public comments can also be emailed to ucs@sccrtc.org or mailed to the RTC at 1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz 95060.

Broad community participation is encouraged to ensure an informed decision-making process.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is responsible for delivering a full range of convenient, reliable, and efficient transportation choices for the community.
1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060, www.sccrtc.org (831) 468-8200

Social Media Post:



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)
Published by Shannon Munz · October 29, 2018 ·

The RTC is continuing to seek public input on the draft Step 2 scenario analysis and a preferred scenario for the Unified Corridor Investment Study.

Deadlines for public comment to be submitted are:

- Nov. 2, 2018: For consideration by staff in development of the preferred scenario and revisions to the draft report that will be provided to the RTC on Nov. 15, 2018.
- Nov. 20, 2018, 5 p.m.: For consideration by staff in development of the final staff recommendation of preferred scenario and draft final report to the RTC on Dec. 6, 2018.
- Dec. 5, 2018 12 p.m.: For consideration by the commission in the action on the preferred scenario on Dec. 6, 2018.

Community members can send input via email to ucs@sccrtc.org or postal mail to the RTC at 1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz 95060.

See insights and ads [Boost post](#)

4 Likes 1 Share

Like Comment Share

Write a comment...

Additional Public Outreach Materials

Web links to some of the additional public outreach materials for the UCS are listed below and also available on the RTC website.

- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) November 2018](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) 2017](#)
- [Oct. 4 RTC Meeting \(video\)](#)
- [Step 2 Projects and Scenarios to be Evaluated \(approved by the RTC in December 2017\)](#)
- [Step 1 Scenario Analysis Results \(approved by the RTC in December 2017\)](#)
- [UCS Timeline](#)
- [Project List and Scenarios to Evaluate](#)
- [Goals, Criteria and Performance Measures](#)

Supplemental UCS Outreach Activities (2022)

In 2022, through additional community outreach, Bus Rapid Transit Lite improvements were identified to enhance the adopted UCS Preferred Scenario to improve cross-county transit routes connecting the [Watsonville – Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor](#). Additional outreach activities were conducted in the South Santa Cruz County area (the Watsonville vicinity) to gather input from community members on the potential transit improvements and how they may work to complement the existing improvements in the UCS. The project team tabled at community events and conducted transit ride-alongs to gather input on what improvements would most benefit current transit riders and what improvements would encourage non-transit riders to take transit. Surveys in English and Spanish were conducted in person of community members to solicit input on the types of transit improvements that would be most meaningful for their commutes and other trips. Over 70 surveys were completed. The majority of survey takers stated that they don't take the bus as often because it does not come often enough, takes too long to get to their destination, and/or they don't know when the next bus will arrive. Survey participants also reiterated that real-time arrival information and easier payment options would make it easier and more convenient to take the bus. The graphs below detail the results of the survey.





Transit Survey Example:



Bus Improvement Survey

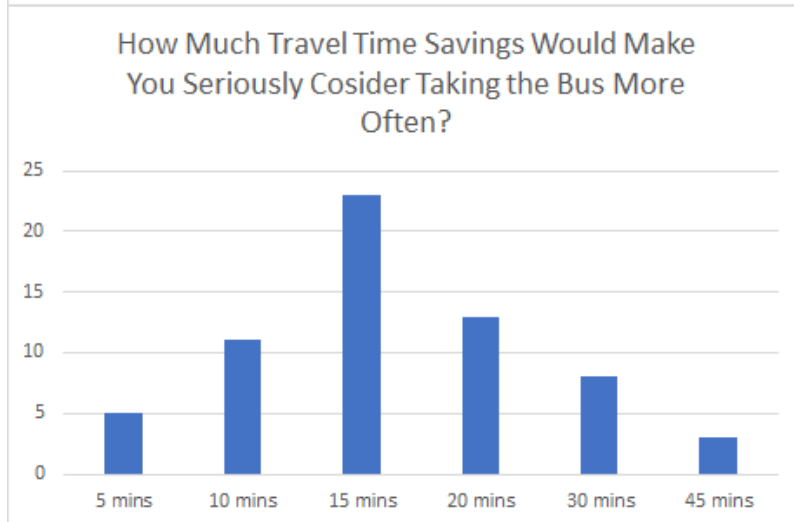
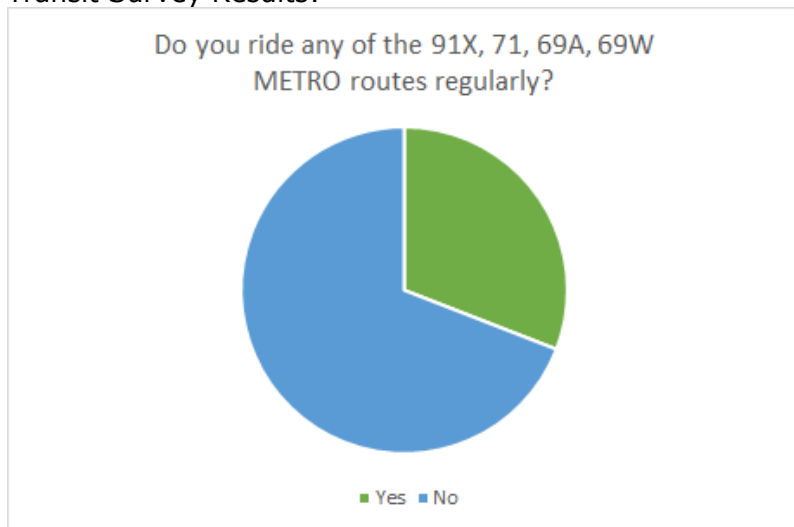
- How often do you usually take a transit? (choose one)
 - ☐ Every day
 - ☐ At least 3 times per week
 - ☐ At least 1 time per week
 - ☐ At least 1 time per month
 - ☐ Less than 1 time per month (rare)
- Do you ride any of these bus routes regularly? (check all that apply)
 - ☐ 744
 - ☐ 600
- What makes it difficult for you to take the bus more often? Please rank 1-5, with 1 being most important and 5 being least.
 - ☐ 1. Takes too long to get to my destination
 - ☐ 2. How often I feel bus routes/lines serve my needs
 - ☐ 3. Not knowing when the bus will arrive
 - ☐ 4. Too many delays/long wait times at bus stops
 - ☐ 5. Cost too expensive
 - ☐ 6. Drop locations not convenient for start and end of my trip
 - ☐ 7. Safety at bus stops
- How much travel time savings would make you seriously consider taking the bus more often? (choose one)
 - ☐ 5 minutes
 - ☐ 10 minutes
 - ☐ 15 minutes
 - ☒ 20 minutes
 - ☐ 30 minutes
 - ☐ 45 minutes or more
- If a bus stop improvement would make it more convenient/easier to take the bus, which of the following would you consider most important and a big benefit?
 - ☒ 1. Closer bus stops
 - ☐ 2. Real-time bus arrival information display (actual time and how long the delay is)
 - ☐ 3. Parking lot
 - ☐ 4. Bike share stations (like BUMP bikes in Santa Cruz)
 - ☐ 5. Bike racks
 - ☐ 6. More
 - ☐ 7. Changing bus stop location/number
 - ☐ 8. Board and alight
 - ☐ 9. Lighting

- What bus stop features would make you more likely to take the bus? (check all that apply)
 - ☐ 1. More lighting
 - ☐ 2. Shelters that don't block visibility
 - ☐ 3. Longer and more stable boarding areas
 - ☐ 4. Dedicated security personnel
- When combined in a corridor, would make you more likely to take the bus? (check all that apply)
 - ☐ 1. With 1 being most important and 5 being least
 - ☐ 2. DORIS (DORIS)
 - ☐ 3. BRT
 - ☐ 4. Changing bus stop location/number
 - ☐ 5. Better boarding options (like the BUMP bike, or a dedicated seating area, etc.)
- In the last 7 days, how many days did you use each type of transportation?
 - ☐ 1. With/without car
 - ☐ 2. Bike
 - ☐ 3. Bus
 - ☐ 4. Transit/ride share
 - ☐ 5. Drive myself
 - ☐ 6. Other
- What is your household model?
 - ☒ 1. Single
 - ☐ 2. Family
- What other city or state are you interested in regarding the bus stop improvements?

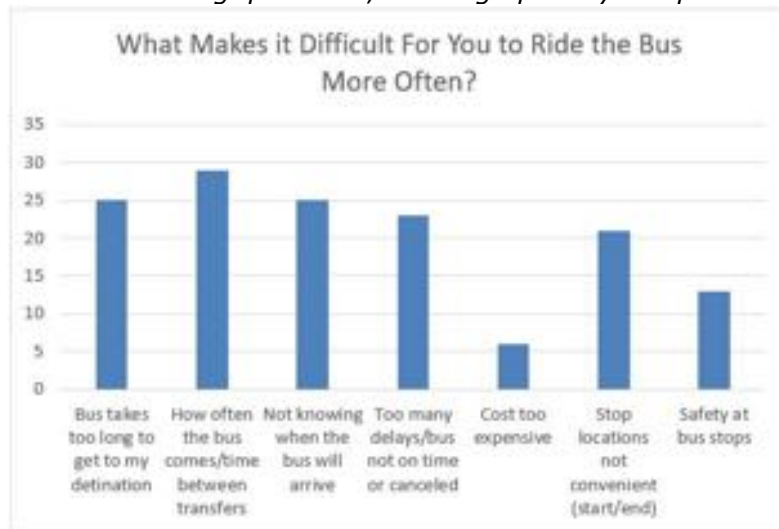
Timing & Stop - Bus thinking better scheduling

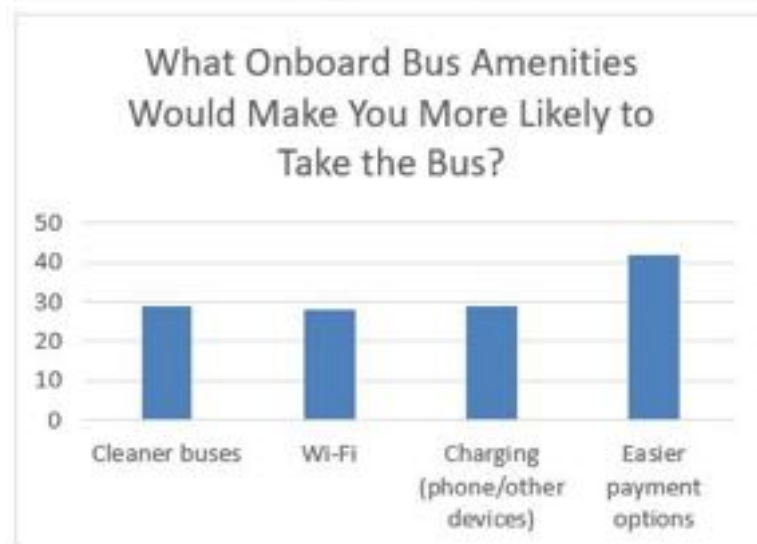
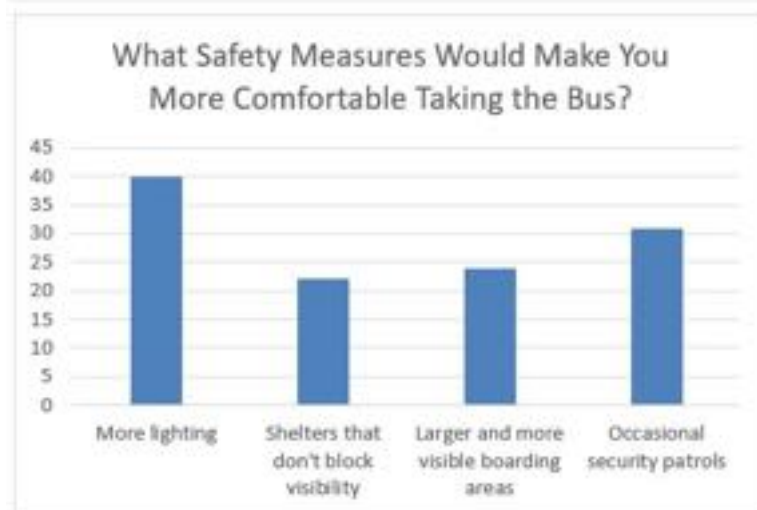
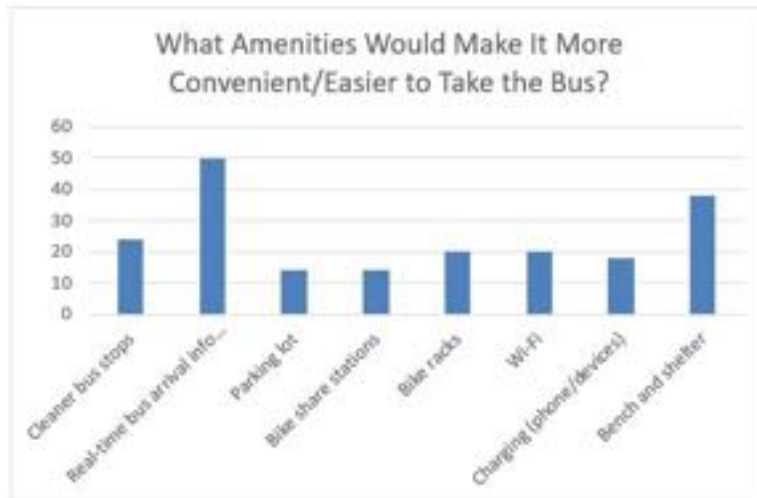
Longer and more stable boarding areas

Transit Survey Results:



For the following questions, the "high priority" response selections are graphed.





Equity-Focused Engagement

Throughout the initial UCS development (2017-2019), supplemental UCS outreach (2022), and extensive other community outreach efforts focused on the Watsonville-Santa Cruz corridor, the RTC has worked to engage all members of the community in the decision-making and prioritization process through robust public engagement, with many meetings, workshops, and other outreach activities focused on historically disadvantaged, underrepresented, and marginalized groups. This has included outreach through the RTC's social services advisory committee (E&DTAC), outreach to community-based organizations, numerous meetings and outreach events located in Watsonville/Pajaro Valley (over 75% Latino), meetings with schools, local pedestrian and bicycle advocacy groups, and presentations, public information and outreach materials translated into Spanish.

Supplemental Community Input

Since adoption of the UCS in January 2019 and in addition to community outreach in 2022, several additional efforts have been conducted to solicit input on elements of the preferred scenario and transportation services and priorities in the corridor. This has included:

Coastal Rail Trail

The Coastal Rail Trail, a bicycle and pedestrian trail within the 32-mile Santa Cruz Branch Rail right-of-way, is a highly valuable asset to the Santa Cruz County community and visitors for transportation, recreation, education, health, eco-tourism, coastal access, and economic vitality. Given the importance of this trail network, the RTC conducts continual and ongoing community outreach and engagement around specific segments under development. These outreach opportunities include tabling at local events (approx. 10-15 a year) and giving presentations to community groups and organizations (approx. 5-10 a year). Through these events and presentations, staff discusses the trail projects with several hundred people each year while listening to community needs and concerns around the Coastal Rail Trail project.

Outreach around the Coastal Rail Trail that has taken place since the adoption of the UCS also includes:

- Public Meeting, Segment 8/9 (October 2022)
- Open House, Segments 10/11 (April 2022)
- Virtual Open House, Segments 8/9 (March 2022)
- Scoping Meeting, Segments 10/11 (November 2021)
- Scoping Meeting, Segments 8/9 (October 2021)
- Virtual Open House, Segment 12 (September 2020)

Highway 1

As the RTC works to implement the Highway 1 multimodal improvement projects, public outreach is conducted at different stages of each of the projects. These outreach activities were noticed in local newspapers and information was shared via social media, the RTC website and eNews list. Recent Outreach activities include:

- **Highway 1 Multimodal Improvements 41st to Soquel**
 - Aesthetic Treatments Meeting, Chanticleer Bicycle/Pedestrian Overcrossing (October 2019)
- **Highway 1 Multimodal Improvements Bay Avenue/Porter Street to State Park Drive**

- Aesthetic Treatment Workshop (October 2019) - An online survey was also available to the public for the aesthetic theme of the new bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing, which received feedback from over 500 community participants.
 - Scoping Meeting (October 2019)
 - Virtual Public Hearing (December 2020)
 - Online Informational Video & Survey (February 2022)
- **Highway 1 Multimodal Improvements Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive**
 - Online Open House (September 2020)
 - Presentation and public hearing on modifications to the Measure D Expenditure Plan (January-February 2020)

Soquel Drive/Avenue

The County of Santa Cruz hosted two virtual community workshops in January 2022 for community members to provide input on the early designs for the first implementation of buffered and protected bike lanes, sidewalk gap closures, crosswalk upgrades, and adaptive/transit-priority intersections along Soquel Drive/Avenue. The meetings took place on January 12 and January 20, 2022 and were attended by over 110 community members.

The [RTC's Visualizing Sustainable Transportation](#) project also utilized new and innovative tools to improve the public outreach and engagement process. Phase 1 utilized augmented reality technology to demonstrate potential future sustainable transportation and land use options at two locations: Soquel Drive at Chanticleer Avenue and Natural Bridges Drive at the rail crossing. Physical installations, called OWL viewers were placed at the two sites. Looking into the OWL viewers participants saw how existing conditions could transform into multimodal transportation hubs with short- and long-term investments.



Watsonville Downtown Specific Plan

This plan to re-imagine and innovate mobility options and connections in downtown Watsonville identified several areas for improved transit that align with the implementation of the UCS recommendations:

- Design safe pedestrian, bicyclist, and mobility aid facilities that invite all users regardless of age and ability to use and enjoy.

- Connect downtown to the future rail trail and commuter rail improving regional mobility.

Public outreach for this plan's development conducted in 2021 and 2022 included public workshops (3), advisory committee meetings (8), and several email and social media posts about the plan.

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO)

METRO, the transit agency that provides bus services for Santa Cruz County, conducted community outreach on Santa Cruz County Public Transportation Usage and Priorities via a survey. Over 1,000 Santa Cruz County adult residents were surveyed between September 28-October 6, 2022. Surveys were conducted via telephone and online interviews in both English and Spanish. The survey results captured that nearly half of all non-riders/infrequent riders reported that they would be likely to ride METRO regularly if buses came more often and dropped them off in more convenient locations. There is also strong public preference for frequent service (every 15 minutes) over more broad availability (providing service to as many places as possible).

2022 Unmet Needs List Development

Each year, the RTC develops its Unmet Needs List based on community outreach and input to identify a list of needs which are not being met by the current public transit system. Outreach activities included a public hearing, tabling at outreach events, an online survey in both English and Spanish, and working with the RTC's Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC), Santa Cruz METRO Transit District, Lift Line-Community Bridges, the Volunteer Center and other local organizations to identify unmet transit needs of people with disabilities, seniors, low income, and transit-dependent persons. Many of the priority transit projects identified in the Unmet Needs List align with the proposed projects in UCS.

Collaboration and Partnership

The UCS was built on more than two decades of work by the RTC and its state, regional, and local partners. The RTC, Caltrans, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), through the Highway 1 Corridor Investment Program, partnered together to analyze various investments to relieve congestion on Highway 1 in Santa Cruz County. The Bus-on-Shoulder Feasibility Study, completed in 2017 by Monterey-Salinas Transit and METRO and in collaboration with the RTC, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, the California Highway Patrol, and Caltrans, provided information on the technical feasibility of a hybrid bus-on-shoulder/auxiliary lane facility along Highway 1.

The RTC worked closely with Santa Cruz County, METRO, local nonprofit Ecology Action, and local bicycle coalition Bike Santa Cruz County to define potential improvements on Soquel Avenue/Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard. Improvements were identified to develop an active transportation network in Santa Cruz County with the Soquel Avenue/Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard multimodal improvements as well as the separated Class I trail on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line; these two key cross-county facilities are tied together via the two overcrossings of Highway 1 in Aptos.

The purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line in 2012 with voter-approved Proposition 116 funds, released by the California Transportation Commission and supported by regional and local agencies, placed this transportation corridor in public ownership beginning a new era of mobility options and opportunities for Santa Cruz County. Subsequent to the purchase of the rail line and in collaboration with elected officials, local jurisdictions, community organizations and the general public, the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan, completed in 2014, was developed to construct a bicycle and

pedestrian Class I trail along the railroad right-of-way. The Rail Transit Feasibility Study, funded by Caltrans and completed in 2015, was developed in collaboration with the local, regional, and state partners and brought much information together to support the UCS.

The RTC also partnered with a number of additional local agencies and organizations on outreach and public engagement during the development of the UCS including the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, Cabrillo College, City of Capitola, City of Santa Cruz, City of Watsonville, University of California at Santa Cruz, Monterey Bay Air Pollution Control District, Santa Cruz County Office of Education and School District representatives, Iowa Pacific Railroad, Community Leaders representing elderly, youth and disabled individuals, Community Leaders representing agriculture, Community Leaders representing businesses, Community Leaders representing environmental and sustainable transportation interests, and various neighborhood groups and home owners associations.