

State Route Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus-on-Shoulder Improvements— Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive— and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project



Community Impact Assessment

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 5 – SCR – 1 (PM 8.1/10.7)
EA 05-0C734

September 2022



Summary

This study assesses potential land use, community, social, economic, and environmental justice impacts that could result from the proposed State Highway Route 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus-on-Shoulder Improvements—Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive—and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project (project). The project proposes to provide auxiliary lanes on both the northbound and southbound sides of State Route (SR) 1, extending approximately 2.6 miles between the State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard interchanges in Santa Cruz County, California. The project would also provide bus-on-shoulder (BOS) facilities for public transit and would enhance pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the project area. The project also includes the proposed Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, which would extend approximately 1.14 miles along the Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad, between Rio Del Mar Boulevard and State Park Drive. The study was prepared using the guidance provided in Volume 4 (Community Impacts Assessment) of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Environmental Handbook series and the Guidance for Cumulative Impact Analysis and Growth-Related, Indirect Impact Analysis.

Land Use

The proposed improvements to the transportation facility are consistent with planning goals and policies identified in regional and local plans and studies, specifically including the Aptos Village Plan, and the relevant policies from the County of Santa Cruz General Plan and Local Coastal Program (LCP). The proposed project would not require modification of existing land use or zoning designations. However, temporary easements may be required during construction and full or partial property acquisition would be necessary to complete Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 (see *Community Character*, below)

Growth

The proposed improvements would not directly result in new growth within the region. Planned growth in the region is not dependent on the proposed project and is not expected to be substantially influenced by the proposed project. However, the project could indirectly contribute to growth pressure by making certain outlying areas in the vicinity of the City of Santa Cruz more appealing by reducing congestion and improving travel time for commuters traveling to employment centers in Santa Cruz from areas south where development could occur.

In this manner, the proposed project could indirectly contribute to growth pressure in the cities of Watsonville and Marina and the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom, where future growth could occur. Areas identified for potential future development are currently

undeveloped, some of which are entirely disturbed and surrounded by existing development. Within those areas, impacts to resources of concern other than water supply, are not expected. Other areas where development could occur are located adjacent to, and may support, important habitat for special-status species. Potential future development projects in these areas would require independent environmental review, and potential impacts to resources of concern would require evaluation and mitigation, as necessary, to avoid and or minimize potential impacts. The proposed project is not expected to result in growth-related effects that would result in significant impacts to resources of concern within the study area.

Community Character

Construction activities associated with the proposed project have the potential to result in temporary impacts related to the disruption of community cohesion. Potential temporary impacts would occur as a result of temporary on/off-ramp and local road closures, detours, and restricted access to bicycle and pedestrian facilities during temporary road closures. None of the communities or neighborhoods adjacent to SR 1 within the project area would experience a direct, permanent disruption in neighborhood cohesion as a result of the proposed project and no community facilities would be directly impacted. However, the proposed project has the potential to displace three businesses and six dwelling units due to the potential need to acquire four properties to accommodate Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. These impacts would be addressed in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

The proposed project would not divide or introduce a new physical barrier to the community. The communities and neighborhoods along SR 1 are already divided by a multi-lane highway; therefore, the addition of sound walls and retaining walls would not further divide any communities or neighborhoods. The character of existing communities and neighborhoods would not be altered, as sound walls and retaining walls are already present along the SR 1 corridor. Buildout of the proposed project would ultimately result in beneficial effects to community cohesion by reducing congestion, providing efficient bus on shoulder facilities (BOS) facilities, creating and enhancing pedestrian and bicycle facilities (including the construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 and providing Coastal Rail Trail access across SR 1), and improving overall multimodal transportation efficiency and connectivity throughout the project area.

Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Construction activities would result in temporary impacts to transportation facilities as a result of temporary road and ramp closures, replacement of the two Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line bridges over SR 1, and replacement of the SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek and Spreckels Drive.

Temporary road closures and detours could result in short-term increased congestion on SR 1 and the local street network, and temporary access restrictions for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Buildout of the proposed project would result in long-term beneficial effects to the local transportation network by reducing congestion; enhancing public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities; and improving overall multimodal transportation efficiency and connectivity throughout the project area.

Public Involvement

The proposed project has provided and continues to provide opportunities for public input. The forums for public outreach activities include the following:

- **Scoping Meeting:** A public scoping online open house was held for this project, from September 17 through October 19, 2020. The purpose of the Online Open House was to present to the public factors to be considered in the draft environmental document for improvements on this segment of SR 1 and Segment 12 of the Coastal Rail Trail, and to receive comments.
- **Tribal Coordination:** AB 52 consultation was conducted for the proposed project in December 2020.
- **Public Hearing:** Following the release of the draft environmental document for the proposed project, a public hearing will be conducted to receive public comments and answer questions about the project alternatives and environmental impacts. During this public review period, members of the public will be able to submit comments regarding the proposed project.

Potential Impact Summary

The following table includes a summary of the major potential impacts from the Build and No-Build Alternatives.

Summary of Major Potential Impacts From Alternatives

Potential Impact		Build Alternative	No-Build Alternative
Land Use	Consistency with the Aptos Village Plan	No Impact	No Impact
	Consistency with the Santa Cruz County General Plan	No Impact	No Impact
Coastal Zone		Road improvements are proposed along an existing facility that are necessary to protect the public welfare, health, and safety, consistent with policies from the County of Santa Cruz Local Coastal Program.	No Impact
Wild and Scenic Rivers		No Impact	No Impact
Parks and Recreation		Temporary impacts related to access during construction.	No Impact
Farmland/Timberland		No Impact	No Impact
Growth		New development or re-development is expected to occur in the form of planned development within existing undeveloped areas that are zoned or otherwise designated for residential and/or commercial development in the cities of Watsonville and Marina and the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom. Such areas that meet these criteria have been identified to assess the potential for impacts to resources of concern.	No Impact
Community Character and Cohesion		Temporary impacts related to road closures and detours during construction; minor adverse impact through the permanent loss of parking (15 spaces) for residents and businesses in Aptos Village.	Existing traffic network deficiencies remain and worsen, and may adversely affect the quality of life for communities in the study area.

Summary

Potential Impact		Build Alternative	No-Build Alternative
Utilities/Emergency Services		Temporary impacts related to road closures and detours during construction and temporary impacts related to utility relocation in advance of and/or during construction.	No Impact
Relocations	Housing Displacements	Potential displacement of six residences as a result of potential full acquisition of four properties along the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12.	No Impact
	Business Displacements	No Impact	No Impact
	Utility Displacements	Temporary impacts related to utility relocation in advance and/or during construction.	No Impact
Environmental Justice		No Impact	No Impact
Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities		Temporary indirect impacts related to access in advance of and/or during construction and permanent removal of 15 on-street parking spaces on Aptos street.	Existing traffic network deficiencies remain and worsen.
Cumulative Impacts		No impact	Existing traffic network deficiencies remain and worsen.

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Chapter 4 Introduction

This Community Impact Assessment (CIA) was prepared for the State Route Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus-on-Shoulder Improvements—Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive—and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project (project) by Caltrans in accordance with Caltrans policies, procedures, and guidance as defined in the Standard Environmental Reference (SER). The information in this document has been prepared as a “blended” assessment to comply with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other substantive environmental laws applicable to the subjects addressed in this document.

The following topics are not addressed in this document: Wild and Scenic Rivers, Farmlands/Timberlands. No rivers with a Wild and Scenic exist within the project area. There is one agricultural use in the project study area consisting of an orchard/vineyard located just south of the southbound SR-1 Rio Del Mar Boulevard off-ramp. The orchard/vineyard is not identified as prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance by the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (California Department of Conservation, 2016). All improvements associated with the proposed project would be constructed and operated within existing highway right-of-way in the vicinity of this orchard/vineyard and no temporary or permanent effects to the operation of this land would result from the proposed project. Accordingly, no further discussion of Farmlands/Timberlands is required.

4.4 What is a Community Impact Assessment

The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding social, economic, and land use effects of the project so that final transportation decisions will be made in the public interest. The report is intended to clearly describe the relevant existing conditions and the potential socioeconomic impacts of the proposed project.

Both CEQA and NEPA require consideration of social and economic impacts¹ of projects in the preparation of environmental documents.

¹ Under CEQA, however, the economic or social effects of a project in and of themselves shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment. Rather, the economic or social effects of a project may be used to determine the significance or physical changes caused by the project. The focus of the analysis shall be on the physical change, although the economic or social effects may be used to determine the significance of the physical change. For example, if the construction of a new freeway divides a community, the construction would be the physical change, but the social effects on the community would be the basis for determining that the effect would be significant (CEQA Guidelines Section 15131).

4.5 Regulatory Setting

- The following list of existing laws, either directly or indirectly, require investigation to determine potential impacts to communities from the proposed action: CEQA of 1970
- NEPA of 1969
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Executive Order 12898 - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990
- 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 652, Accommodation for Pedestrians and Bicyclists

4.6 Assessment Process and Methodology Used

This CIA was prepared to be consistent with Caltrans policy/statements and guidelines, including the Guidance for Cumulative Impact Analysis and Growth-Related, Indirect Impact Analysis, the Caltrans Environmental Handbook Volume 4, and the CIA Checklist. This CIA is based on research and analysis of existing planning documents, an evaluation of community character based on aerial mapping, an evaluation of the altered circulation network, data from the U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey, and technical documents prepared for the Santa Cruz Route 1 Tier I & Tier II Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA). Public outreach has been conducted since 2004 for the larger Santa Cruz Route 1 Tier I & Tier II project, and most recently through an online scoping open house from September 17 through October 19, 2020, for the proposed project. Assembly Bill (AB) 52 letters were sent to the Native American contacts for this project in December 2020. Three comment letters from Native American contacts were received and included requests for tribal monitoring during ground-disturbing activities. Caltrans provided an opportunity for Native American contacts to review the Draft Extended Phase I and Phase II Testing Work Plan, and tribal monitoring was provided during Extended Phase I and Phase II testing. Independent interviews will not be conducted as part of this technical study.

4.7 Proposed Project

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) and the County of Santa Cruz, proposes to widen State Route (SR) 1 to include auxiliary lanes, accommodate bus-on-shoulder

(BOS) operations between the Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive interchanges, and construct Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12.

One build alternative and the no-build alternative are proposed for further consideration. The project is located in Santa Cruz County on SR 1 from post mile (PM) 8.1, south of Freedom Boulevard, to PM 10.7, north of State Park Drive, with 1.14 miles of trail along the SCCRTC-owned Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) between State Park Drive and Rio Del Mar Boulevard. The total length of the project on SR 1 is 2.6 miles, and on the SCBRL is 1.14 miles. Within the limits of the proposed project, SR 1 is a controlled access freeway with two 12-foot lanes; shoulder width varies within project limits. The average width of the inside shoulders is approximately 5 feet, and the average width of the outside shoulders is approximately 10 feet. Within the project area, the existing railroad right-of-way is generally in the range of 40 to 55 feet wide, with the existing railroad tracks generally in the center of the right-of-way. The existing railroad has at-grade crossings at State Park Drive, Aptos Creek Road, and Trout Gulch Road, with bridges over SR 1 at two locations, Soquel Drive, Aptos Creek and Valencia Creek, and crosses under Rio Del Mar Boulevard. The SCBRL is currently an active freight railroad. The project vicinity and location are shown in Figures 1 and 2, respectively. Figure 3 shows the project components.

Figure 1: Project Vicinity



Figure 2: Project Location

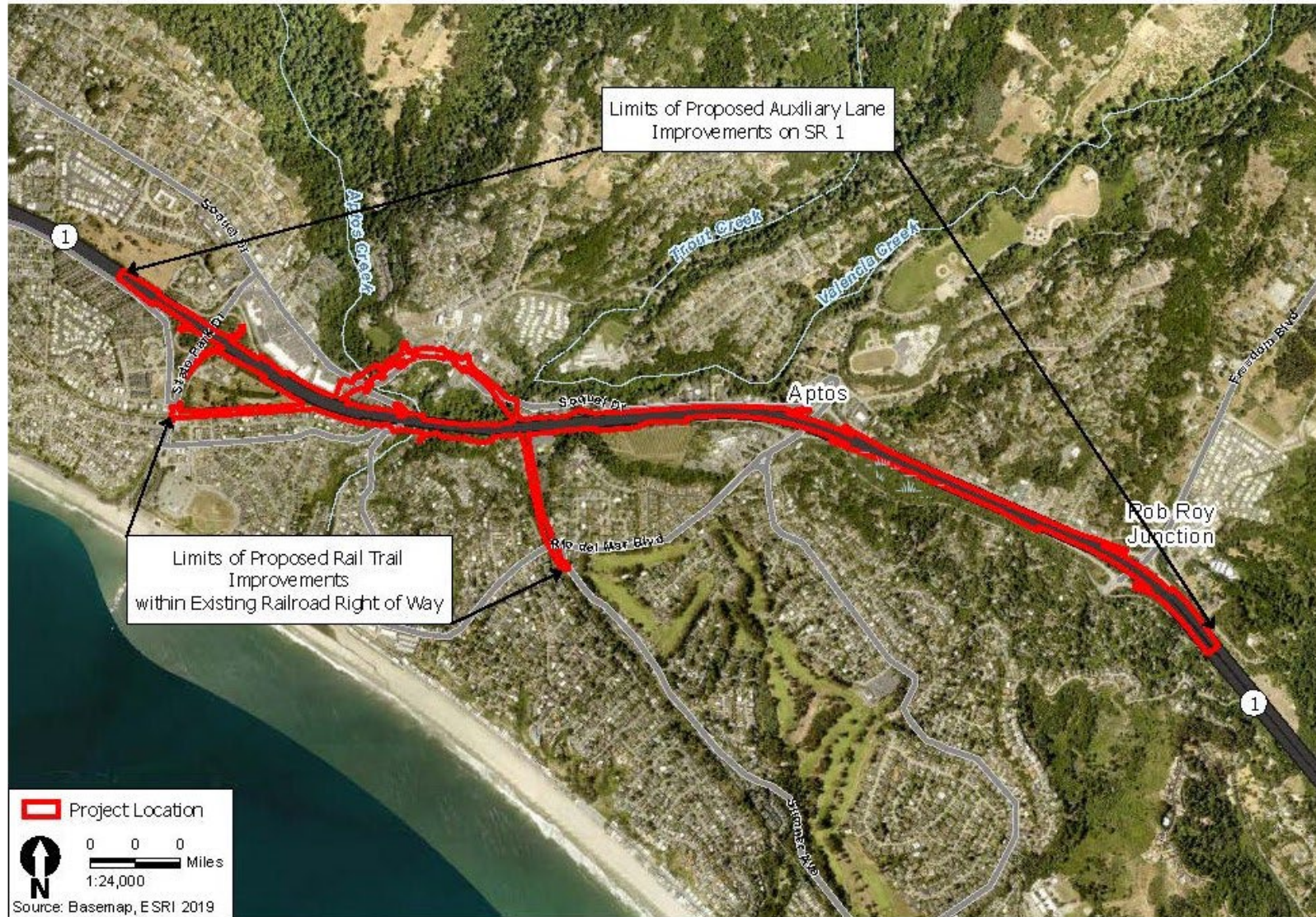


Figure 3: Project Components (page 1 of 3)



Figure 3: Project Components (page 2 of 3)



Figure 3: Project Components (page 3 of 3)



4.7.1 Project Alternatives

4.7.1.1 Build Alternative

Auxiliary Lanes

Auxiliary lanes are designed to improve merging operations and reduce conflicts between traffic entering and exiting SR 1 by connecting the on-ramp of one interchange to the off-ramp of the next; they are not designed to serve through traffic. A southbound auxiliary lane and a northbound auxiliary lane would be added to the following segments of SR 1.

- Between the Freedom Boulevard and Rio Del Mar Boulevard interchanges.
- Between Rio Del Mar Boulevard and State Park Drive interchanges.

The total roadway widening would be approximately 2.6 miles in length. Southbound, the auxiliary lanes would begin at the existing State Park Drive loop on-ramp and end at the existing off-ramp to Freedom Boulevard. Northbound, the auxiliary lanes would begin at the existing Freedom Boulevard on-ramp and end at the existing diagonal off-ramp to State Park Drive.

The new auxiliary lanes would be 12 feet wide. From Freedom Boulevard to Rio Del Mar Boulevard, the width needed for the new lane would be added in the median. The existing median barrier would be reconstructed in its current location. From Rio Del Mar Boulevard to State Park Drive, the width needed for the new lane would be added outside the existing shoulders; the outside shoulders would be standard 10-foot-wide.

Moosehead Drive to the south of SR 1, south of Aptos Creek, would be realigned where it runs parallel to SR 1 due to the outside widening of SR 1. A new retaining wall would be placed along the outside freeway shoulder to support the realignment that would include horizontal and vertical adjustments.

Structures – State Route 1

The Build Alternative would include the replacement of the two Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad bridges over SR 1 and widening of the SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek and Spreckels Drive to accommodate the proposed auxiliary lanes. The existing two-span Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad bridges (underpass structures) are proposed to be replaced with longer spans to accommodate the planned SR 1 ultimate improvements that are a six-through-lane concept plus an auxiliary lane in each direction between interchanges. The ultimate SR 1 configuration was approved in the *Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment with a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Tier I High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes and Tier II 41st Avenue to Soquel Avenue/Drive Auxiliary Lanes Project* (Tier I/Tier II Final EA/EIR/FONSI). In

addition to the railroad bridges, new trail overcrossings would be constructed adjacent to the new railroad bridges for the ultimate trail configuration of the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 for the SR 1 improvements.

The widening of the SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek and Spreckels Drive would occur on the south side of SR 1 only and require abutment walls along the existing embankments along the south side of Aptos Creek and the embankment on the north side of Spreckels Drive. The widened bridge would accommodate six lanes, each 12-foot wide (four through-lanes plus an auxiliary lane in each direction), 10-foot-wide outside shoulders, and a 9-foot-wide median with a 2-foot-wide inside shoulder in the northbound direction and 5-foot-wide inside shoulder in the southbound direction. To accommodate the SR 1 ultimate improvements of six through-lanes plus an auxiliary lane in each direction, the SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek and Spreckels Drive would be widened to the north (inland) side as part of a future project.

Retaining Walls – State Route 1

The build alternative would include retaining walls at the following locations along SR 1 (Figure 3).

Northbound

- “SR 1” Station 258+90 - 261+26; max height = 15 feet
- “SR 1” Station 288+07 - 296+00; max height = 15 feet

Southbound

- “SR 1” Station 258+55 - 263+01; max height = 20 feet
- “SR 1” Station 265+55 - 268+56; max height = 12 feet
- “SR 1” Station 269+71 - 270+70; max height = 12 feet
- “SR 1” Station 273+20 - 277+02; max height = 20 feet
- “SR 1” Station 277+02 - 278+98; max height = 30 feet
- “SR 1” Station 281+56 - 284+41; max height = 35 feet
- “SR 1” Station 284+41 - 296+45; max height = 15 feet

The build alternative would evaluate sound walls at the following locations along SR 1 (Figure 3).

Northbound

- “SR 1” Station 258+57 – 267+49

Southbound

- “SR 1” Station 263+18 – 266+78
- “SR 1” Station 267+31 – 272+50
- “SR 1” Station 284+79 – 291+52

Bus-on-Shoulder Features

BOS features are proposed, which would allow future bus operations on the outside shoulders of SR 1 through the interchanges during peak congestion periods. At the Freedom Boulevard, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, and State Park Drive interchanges, the project would widen and improve SR 1 shoulders, which currently lack the width and pavement structural section to support bus operations.

Cross Section – State Route 1 Bus-on-Shoulder

The added auxiliary lanes coupled with the BOS improvements allow the transit operator to use the auxiliary lane in between interchanges and use the shoulder between the off-ramp and on-ramps through the interchanges. Within the Freedom Boulevard, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, and State Park Drive interchange areas, the highway shoulders would be 12 feet wide.

Other Features – State Route 1 Bus-on-Shoulder

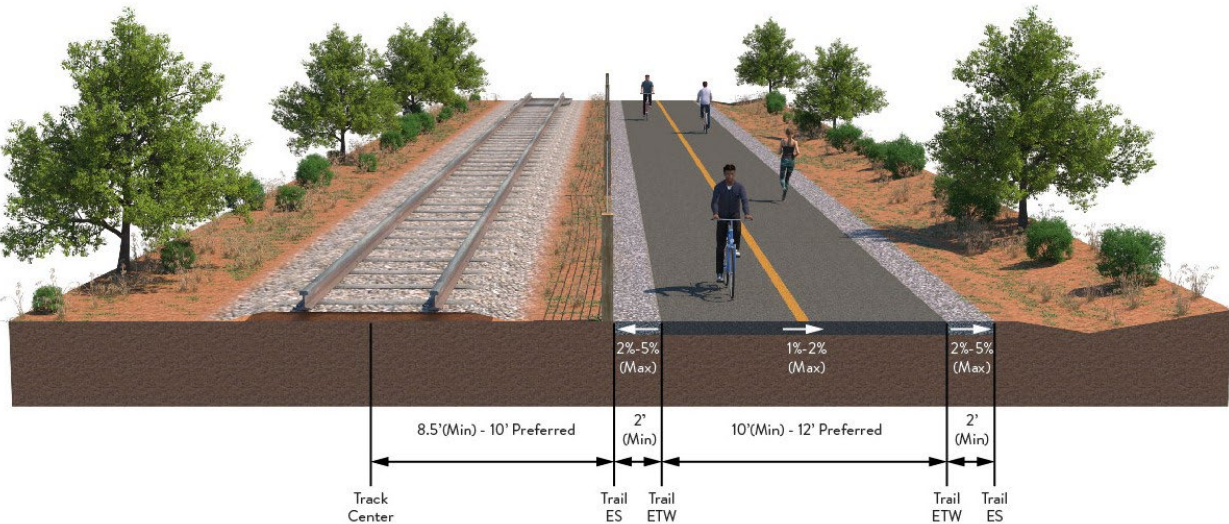
New signs would be installed to advise motorists that only buses are allowed to use the highway shoulders through interchanges during peak traffic hours. Along northbound SR 1, a sign would be provided south of each of the three interchanges in the project area. Along southbound SR 1, a sign would be installed north of each interchange. Shoulders would be painted red to indicate bus-only use.

Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12

The limits of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 extend from the southern terminus of the trail segment at Sumner Avenue, just of the south of the Rio Del Mar Boulevard underpass, to the northern terminus at State Park Drive. The proposed Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 includes the

construction of a paved bicycle and pedestrian shared use trail within the SCBRL right-of-way on the inland side of the tracks, consistent with the approved *Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network Master Plan* (MBSST Network Master Plan) (Figure 4), with an optional first phase. The trail segment would include a new at-grade trail connection to Sumner Avenue just south of the Rio Del Mar Boulevard underpass where the existing railroad tracks pass under Rio Del Mar Boulevard and a new sidewalk on the north side of Sumner Avenue between the terminus of the trail and the existing sidewalk on Rio Del Mar Boulevard.

Figure 4: Coastal Rail Trail Segment – Ultimate Trail Configuration



The SCCRTC wishes to preserve the SCBRL corridor for transportation uses, which includes recreational passenger rail, freight rail, a multiuse trail, and future commuter rail transit. The ultimate configuration to accommodate all proposed transportation uses along the SCBRL is a bicycle and pedestrian shared use trail adjacent to railroad tracks. The SCBRL is currently an active freight railroad with SCCRTC owning the right of way. SCCRTC contracts to serve freight and recreational passenger rail along the freight easement. The SCCRTC's contracted freight operator has indicated that they may file for abandonment of freight along the SCBRL.

As a method of preserving the right of way of a corridor that otherwise could be abandoned, the SCCRTC could consider railbanking the corridor. The Department of Interior defines railbanking as the preservation of a railroad corridor for future rail use. Railbanking is accomplished under the National Trails System Act through provisions that allow a railbanked corridor to be used for interim trail use purposes through a voluntary agreement reached between a railroad and a trail manager. The right of way is preserved for future freight reactivation and could allow the removal of the railroad tracks and construction of a trail in the interim condition.

For this reason, an optional first phase is being considered for Segment 12 of the Coastal Rail Trail, where all or a portion of the trail could be located along the alignment of the existing railroad tracks.

Ultimate Trail Configuration

Trail Alignment

The ultimate trail configuration includes construction of a paved bicycle and pedestrian shared use trail alongside the existing railroad track alignment. New trail bridge crossings of SR 1 at two locations and adjacent to the existing railroad bridges at Soquel Drive, Aptos Creek, and Valencia Creek would be constructed. New at-grade trail crossings will be constructed at Aptos Creek Drive, Parade Street, and Trout Gulch Road. An at-grade trail connection from the new trail to the Aptos Village County Park between Aptos Creek and Aptos Creek Road would be constructed.

Structures

- At the two locations where the existing railroad bridges cross over SR 1, the Rail Trail will be placed adjacent to the reconstructed rail underpasses.
- Where the Rail Trail crosses over Aptos Creek, Valencia Creek and Soquel Drive, the existing structures have been evaluated for their load bearing capacities, and it has been determined there is not enough data to cantilever the Rail Trail. Therefore, the project would include construction of new Rail Trail bridges adjacent to the existing railroad structures.
- For areas where the Rail Trail is on an independent structure from the railroad bridges or grade, the separation between the two structures would be a minimum of 5 feet.

Retaining Walls

Retaining walls would be constructed in the following locations for the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 alignment.

- North of SR 1 (towards State Park Drive) – An approximate 6-foot high, 300-foot long retaining wall on the inland side of the trail.
- SR 1 to Soquel Drive—Retaining wall varying in height between approximately 5-feet and 20-feet, approximately 300-feet long on the inland side of the trail.
- Aptos Creek to Aptos Creek Road—Retaining wall varying in height between approximately 2-feet and 18-feet, approximately 400-feet long on the inland side of the trail.

- Trout Gulch Road to Valencia Creek—Retaining wall varying in height between approximately 2-feet and 18-feet, approximately 450-feet long on the inland side of the trail.
- South of SR 1 (towards Rio Del Mar Boulevard)—An approximate 12-foot-high, 400-foot long retaining wall on the inland side of the trail.
- Under Rio Del Mar Boulevard - Retaining wall varying in height between approximately 4-feet and 16-feet, approximately 1,000-feet long on the inland side of the trail.

Fencing

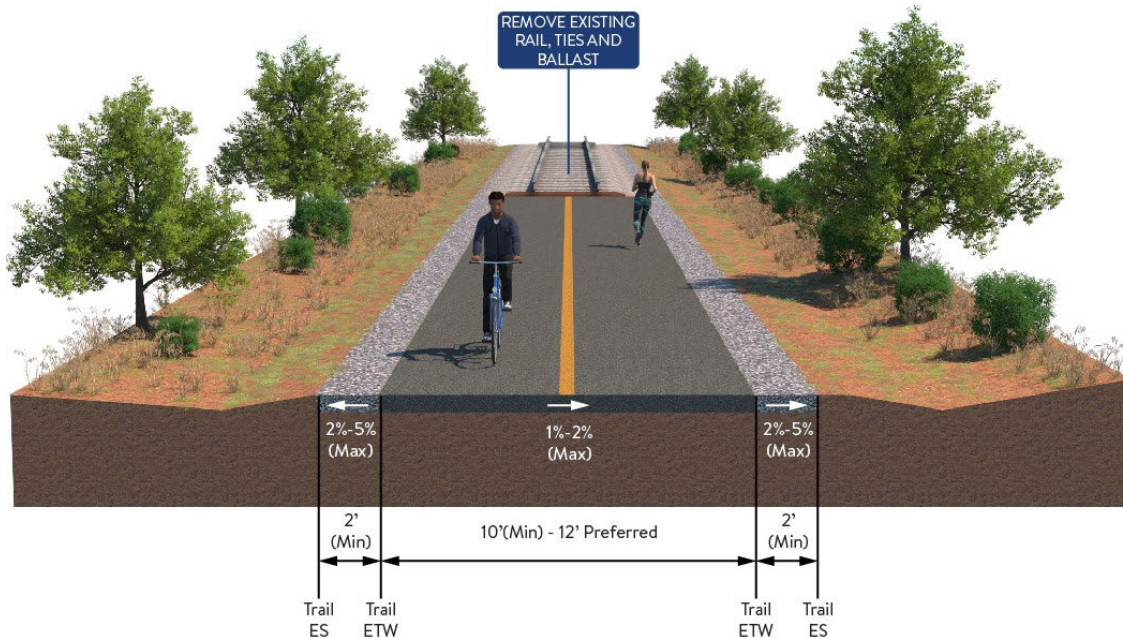
Fencing to separate trail users and the railroad for the ultimate trail improvements is proposed as shown in Figure 4. In accordance with the Federal Railroad Administration guidelines, there would be a 10-foot offset from the centerline of the railroad to the edge of the trail, although an 8-foot-6-inch offset from the centerline of the railroad may be allowed in some circumstances. The fencing would be constructed using concrete posts (4 feet 6 inches in height) etched to resemble wood, and multiple smooth wire strands. Fence post construction is anticipated to require 3-foot-deep excavation. The new trail bridges over Aptos Creek, Valencia Creek, and Soquel Drive would include a railing.

Construction of Optional First Phase for Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12

It is possible that the common carrier could file for abandonment of freight operations with the STB along the SCBRL at any time, in which case all or a portion of the SCBRL would likely be railbanked to preserve the corridor for future freight re-activation but could then be used for a multiuse trail as an interim condition.

All or a portion of the trail would be constructed in approximately the same location of the existing railroad tracks by removal of the rails and ties from just south of Rio Del Mar Boulevard at the southern terminus with Sumner Avenue to the northern terminus at State Park Drive, as shown in Figure 5. The two existing railroad bridges over SR 1 would be removed and two new trail overcrossings over SR 1 would be constructed in their place. The existing railroad bridges at Aptos Creek and Valencia Creek/Soquel Drive (south) would be repurposed for the new trail by removing the railroad decking and replacing with a new trail deck and railing system. The existing single span railroad bridge superstructure over Soquel Drive (north) would be removed and replaced with a new trail deck and railing system.

Figure 5: Coastal Rail Trail Segment – Optional First Phase



Stair access between the new trail and existing Soquel Drive (north) is proposed. A stair connection from the trail to Soquel Drive would begin on the south side of the trail west of the existing railroad bridge over Soquel Drive with a terminus at the Soquel Drive/Spreckels Drive signalized intersection. A new crosswalk would be provided at the Soquel Drive/Spreckels Drive signalized intersection. All trail users can access Soquel Drive via the at-grade trail crossing with Aptos Creek Road as an alternative to using the stairs. The alternative route would be identified with new signage. An at-grade trail connection from the new trail to the Aptos Village County Park between Aptos Creek and Aptos Creek Road would be constructed.

New at-grade trail crossings will be constructed at Aptos Creek Drive, Parade Street, and Trout Gulch Road in the approximate location of the existing railroad tracks.

Structures

- At the two locations where the existing railroad bridges cross over SR 1, the existing railroad bridges would be removed, and new single-span trail overcrossings would be constructed over SR 1 in the same general location as the existing railroad bridges. The bridge abutments constructed on either side of Highway 1 would be constructed to freight railroad standards and be positioned and sized to account for the ultimate trail configuration.

- Where the trail crosses over Aptos Creek, Valencia Creek, and Soquel Drive (south), the existing bridge structures would remain, the railroad tracks removed, and new trail constructed along the existing rail centerline.
- The existing single span railroad bridge superstructure over Soquel Drive (north) would be removed and replaced with a new trail deck and railing system.
- Slight modifications of the existing railroad bridge abutments are proposed to meet current seismic requirements.

Retaining walls

Retaining walls would be constructed in the following locations:

- Just west of Soquel Drive — An approximate 5-foot high, 60-foot long retaining wall on the south side of the trail.
- Just east of Aptos Creek — An approximate 18-foot high, 140-foot long retaining wall on the south side of the trail and an approximate 6-foot high, 140-foot long retaining wall on the inland side of the trail.

Fencing

The new trail overcrossings over SR 1 would include railings with fencing and the repurposed bridges over Aptos Creek, Valencia Creek, and Soquel Drive would have fencing added. No additional fencing is anticipated due to the railroad tracks being removed.

Removal of Optional First Phase for Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12

If all or a portion of the optional first phase of the trail is implemented, the trail along the existing railroad track alignment would need to be removed, a trail would be constructed adjacent to the tracks as described by the proposed ultimate trail project, and the railroad tracks re-installed in their approximate existing location. At-grade railroad crossings of Aptos Creek Drive, Parade Street, and Trout Gulch Road would need to be reconstructed.

Structures

- At the two locations where new trail overcrossings are constructed over SR 1 as part of the optional first phase improvements, the trail overcrossings would be relocated to be adjacent to the existing railroad alignment, and new railroad bridges would be constructed over SR 1 adjacent to the trail overcrossings, as described by the ultimate trail configuration. Construction of the new two-span railroad bridges over SR 1 would require the construction of support columns in the median of SR 1 to support the new railroad bridges.

- Repurpose bridges over Soquel Drive (south), Aptos Creek, and Valencia Creek from trail use to rail use by removing the trail deck and railing system and reconstructing railroad infrastructure.
- The trail deck and railing system over Soquel Drive (north) would be removed and replaced with a single span railroad bridge with reconstructed railroad infrastructure.

Design Standards

Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would be designed as a multi-use paved path per the guidelines identified in Chapter 5 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Master Plan. The design standards used for this segment of the Coastal Rail Trail follow the MBSST guidelines and are listed under Cross Section Standards. The MBSST Network Master Plan incorporates and refers to design elements from the Class I Bikeways identified in Chapter 1000 of the Highway Design Manual (HDM).

In areas where existing constraints limit the available width for the trail to be adjacent to the railroad tracks, other alternative design standards than those listed in the MBSST Master Plan may be utilized for design.

Cross Section Standards

- The paved traveled way of the Coastal Rail Trail would be a minimum of 12 feet wide but may be reduced to 10 feet in areas with existing constrained conditions.
- Shoulders would be provided on each side of the traveled way and would be 2 feet in width where possible.
- For accessibility and drainage, the cross slope of the traveled way would be between 1% and 2%.
- The shoulder cross slope would be between 2% and 5% and would angle away from the surface of the traveled way.

Horizontal Design

- The design speed for the trail would be established at 20 miles per hour and correlates to a minimum stopping sight distance of 125 feet.
- To meet a minimum stopping sight distance of 125 feet, a radius of no less than 500 feet would be used for the Coastal Rail Trail alignment where possible.
- The minimum horizontal clearance between the railroad centerline and the edge of the Coastal Rail Trail, inclusive of shoulders, is 8 feet, 6 inches.

- Where roadways are adjacent to the trail, such as Soquel Drive through Aptos Village, a minimum horizontal separation of 12 feet on tangents and 10 feet on curves is recommended between edge of pavement of the roadway and edge of the trail. This standard would be modified at constrained locations along the corridor where necessary to maintain the absolute minimum horizontal separation. Such separation variances may include vertical separation, fence, or other barriers.

Vertical Design

- The vertical grade slope for the Coastal Rail Trail would be limited to no more than 5%.
- Vertical obstructions and signs would be 10 feet above the entire Coastal Rail Trail, except in limited situations where the vertical clearance may be reduced to 8 feet over the travel way and 7 feet over the shoulders.
- The Coastal Rail Trail would either be constructed following closely the existing grade or on widened segments and new bridges requiring new cuts/fills and retaining walls. Minor grading of the existing ground surface in segments on existing grade is anticipated and may involve excavation of approximately one-foot depth.

Vegetation Removal and Planting

Construction work for the Build Alternative would require removal of existing mature landscape plantings along SR 1 and along the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 route. Where proper setback requirements allow, plantings would be replaced as per Caltrans' policies, and include an automated irrigation system and a 3-year plant establishment period. The replacement planting effort would include vegetation impacted by the contractor's staging, storage, and construction activities. Vegetation needed for the optional first phase trail improvements is significantly less than for the ultimate trail improvements.

Construction Activities

Construction work for the Build Alternative would be done primarily during daylight hours from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. However, night-time work and temporary closures of lanes and roadways may be necessary to avoid major disruption for tasks that could interfere with traffic or create safety hazards such as demolition of the existing railroad bridges. Construction activities would include excavation, drilling, dewatering, pavement demolition, bridge demolition, mass grading, concrete form work, pavement installation, storm system installation, landscaping and irrigation, sign installation, striping operations, and traffic control. Such activities would require the use of the following types of equipment: drilling rig, forklift, scissor lift, backhoe, track excavator, compactor, concrete pump, crane, bulldozer, grader, front-end loader, dump trucks, jackhammer,

and vibratory roller. These activities may require temporary freeway, ramp, and local street partial lane closures or full closures with possible detours.

A Transportation Management Plan (TMP) would be developed as part of the project construction planning phase. The TMP would address potential impacts to circulation of all modes of travel (i.e., transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles). Roadway and/or pedestrian access to all occupied businesses and respective parking lots would be maintained during project construction. The TMP would include an evaluation of potential detour impacts and would also include measures to minimize, avoid, and/or mitigate impacts to alternate routes. The TMP would address coordination with local agencies for traffic through or near the construction zone. Staging areas would be located within the existing Caltrans right-of-way and within the SCBRL right-of-way along Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12.

Construction Schedule

Construction of the SR 1 and Coastal Rail Trail improvements including the auxiliary lanes and BOS features is anticipated to begin in 2025 subject to availability of funds for construction and is estimated to take approximately 3 years to complete.

Demolition

Demolition work would generally comprise removal of existing bridge structures, abutments, columns, overhead sign foundations, rails and ties, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, pavement removal, and drainage system removal.

Stormwater Drainage and Treatment Facilities

The Build Alternative would include drainage system improvements and permanent stormwater treatment facilities for the SR 1 and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 improvements.

Hydromodification measures would be included, if needed. During construction, the contractor would be required to develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in compliance with the statewide Construction General Permit and consistent with the guidelines and procedures in Caltrans' Statewide Storm Water Management Plan. The SWPPP will provide detailed, site-specific information regarding best management practices to avoid and minimize water quality impacts. The project would be constructed to minimize erosion by disturbing slopes only when necessary, minimizing cut and fill areas to reduce slope lengths, providing cut and fill slopes flat enough to allow revegetation to limit erosion rates, and providing concentrated flow conveyance systems such as storm drains, ditches, and gutters.

Utilities

Existing utilities located in areas subject to construction that conflict with the proposed improvements would be relocated as needed. This is anticipated to include sanitary sewer and electric utility poles adjacent to Moosehead Drive and a gas line along the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 route for the ultimate trail improvements, and other utility appurtenances.

Property Acquisitions

The Build Alternative would require full or partial acquisitions for the construction of the SR 1 and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 ultimate trail improvements, as well as temporary easements for construction activities such as the construction of sound walls and retaining walls along SR 1 and the SCBRL.

Table 1 lists the full and partial property acquisitions that would occur under the Build Alternative, as well as underground and aerial easements. Along the SCBRL corridor, the acquisitions shown below would be needed for the construction of the proposed ultimate trail configuration of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. No new property acquisitions would be needed to construct the optional first phase of the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, however the Surface Transportation Board (STB) would have to approve railbanking the corridor.

Table 1: Property Acquisitions

Assessor's Parcel No.	Street Address	Temporary Construction Easement (square feet)	Partial Acquisition (square feet)	Underground Easement
041-052-03	9016 Soquel Drive	329		
041-052-08	9028 Soquel Drive	723		
041-052-14	9012 Soquel Drive	1757		
041-052-15	9010 Soquel Drive	1154		
041-052-19	9018 Soquel Drive	1185		
041-052-20	9020 Soquel Drive	1212		
044-282-10	421 Robin Drive	522		
044-282-11	414 Robin Drive	838		
041-052-16	9006 Soquel Drive	1219		
042-067-15	326 Moosehead Drive	2135		
042-067-16	Moosehead Drive - Vacant	1519	566	
042-067-17	Moosehead Drive - Vacant	1271	742	

Assessor's Parcel No.	Street Address	Temporary Construction Easement (square feet)	Partial Acquisition (square feet)	Underground Easement
042-067-18	345 Moosehead Drive	1260	641	
042-071-01	345 Moosehead Drive	665	466	
042-071-02	345 Moosehead Drive	874	314	
042-071-03	345 Moosehead Drive	1134	13	
042-073-24	240 Carrera Circle	558		
042-073-25	230 Carrera Circle	241		
042-073-26	220 Carrera Circle	254		
042-073-39	361 Moosehead Drive	259		
042-071-10	351 Moosehead Drive	837		
042-073-40	Carrera Circle - Vacant	1915		
039-233-12	246 Seacliff Drive	3239		
039-233-13	335 Spreckels Drive			291
042-066-21	321 Moosehead Drive	681		
039-231-09	7960 Soquel Drive			3840
039-232-03	7992 Soquel Drive			405
042-041-48	56 Seacliff Drive	2994		402

4.7.1.2 No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no construction of auxiliary lanes or BOS features on SR 1 within the project area, and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would not be constructed. The existing transportation facilities within the project area would remain unchanged. The No-Build Alternative assumes the construction of other planned and programmed projects in the region, including other auxiliary lanes projects on SR 1 and other segments of the Coastal Rail Trail.

4.8 Study Area

The proposed auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder improvements would extend approximately 2.6 miles along SR 1 in unincorporated Santa Cruz County from post mile (PM) 8.1, south of Freedom Boulevard, to PM 10.7, north of State Park Drive. The proposed Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would extend approximately 1.14 miles along the Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad,

between Rio Del Mar Boulevard and State Park Drive. The study area includes all or part of the following census tracts: 1220.02, 1220.03, 1221, 1222.01, and 1222.02.

The geographical area evaluated by this study covers the area that would potentially be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed project. The primary impact area (project boundary) consists of the area immediately adjacent to the SR 1 corridor between the Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive interchanges, the Santa Cruz Branch Line overcrossing locations, and the alignment of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 that would be subject to direct effects from proposed construction activities, including construction areas, staging areas, lane closures, property acquisitions, and temporary construction easements.

The secondary impact area varies among resources analyzed in this CIA. The study area is generally considered to include the SR 1 corridor between the Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive interchanges and a 0.5-mile radius surrounding the project area (see Figures 1 and 2). The 0.5-mile radius was considered to be appropriate for this project because it would conservatively capture secondary impact areas likely to experience increased vehicle movements associated with construction-driven detour traffic.

Chapter 5 Land Use

5.4 Existing and Future Land Use

5.4.1 Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within unincorporated Santa Cruz County in the area of Aptos. The affected environment for potential impacts related to land use lies within the project area and includes properties adjacent to the proposed Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 (between Rio Del Mar Boulevard and State Park Drive), which would be affected by land acquisitions and temporary construction easements.

5.4.1.1 Unincorporated Santa Cruz County

County land use designations within the project study area include Agriculture (AG), Community Commercial (C-C), Parks, Recreation and Open Space (O-R), Service Commercial (C-S), Urban Open Space (O-U), Resource Conservation (O-C), Urban Medium Residential (R-UM), Urban High Residential (R-UH), Neighborhood Commercial (C-N), Public Facility (P), Office (C-O), Urban Low Residential (R-UL), and Urban Very Low Density Residential (R-UVL). Land use designations in the project study area are shown on **Figure 6**.

County zoning designations within the project study area include Agriculture (A) Neighborhood Commercial (C-1), Community Commercial (C-2), Professional Administrative Office (PA), Public and Community Facilities (PF), Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PR); Single-Family Residential (R-1), Multi-Family Residential (RM), and Special Use (SU). County zoning designations within the project study area are shown on **Figure 7**.

The project area is mostly comprised of urban and built-up land with small portions of forested areas on the northern and southern edges of SR 1. These forested areas generally serve as vegetated buffers between SR 1 and adjacent land uses and none of these areas serve as active lumber production or other timberland use. There is one parcel within the study area, south of SR 1 and west of Rio Del Mar Boulevard, that is designated as agricultural land and the County's designation for this land is described as "orchard/land." The project area spans several jurisdictional water features, including Aptos Creek, Valencia Lagoon, and Valencia Channel, and associated undeveloped riparian habitat corridors just north and south of SR 1. The project area is located approximately 0.25 to 1.25 miles north of the Pacific Ocean coastline. The portions of the project area within the SR 1 right of way, and south of SR 1, are located within the Coastal Zone. The portion of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 north of SR 1 is outside of the Coastal Zone. The coastal zone boundary is shown on **Figure 8**.

Figure 6: Land Use

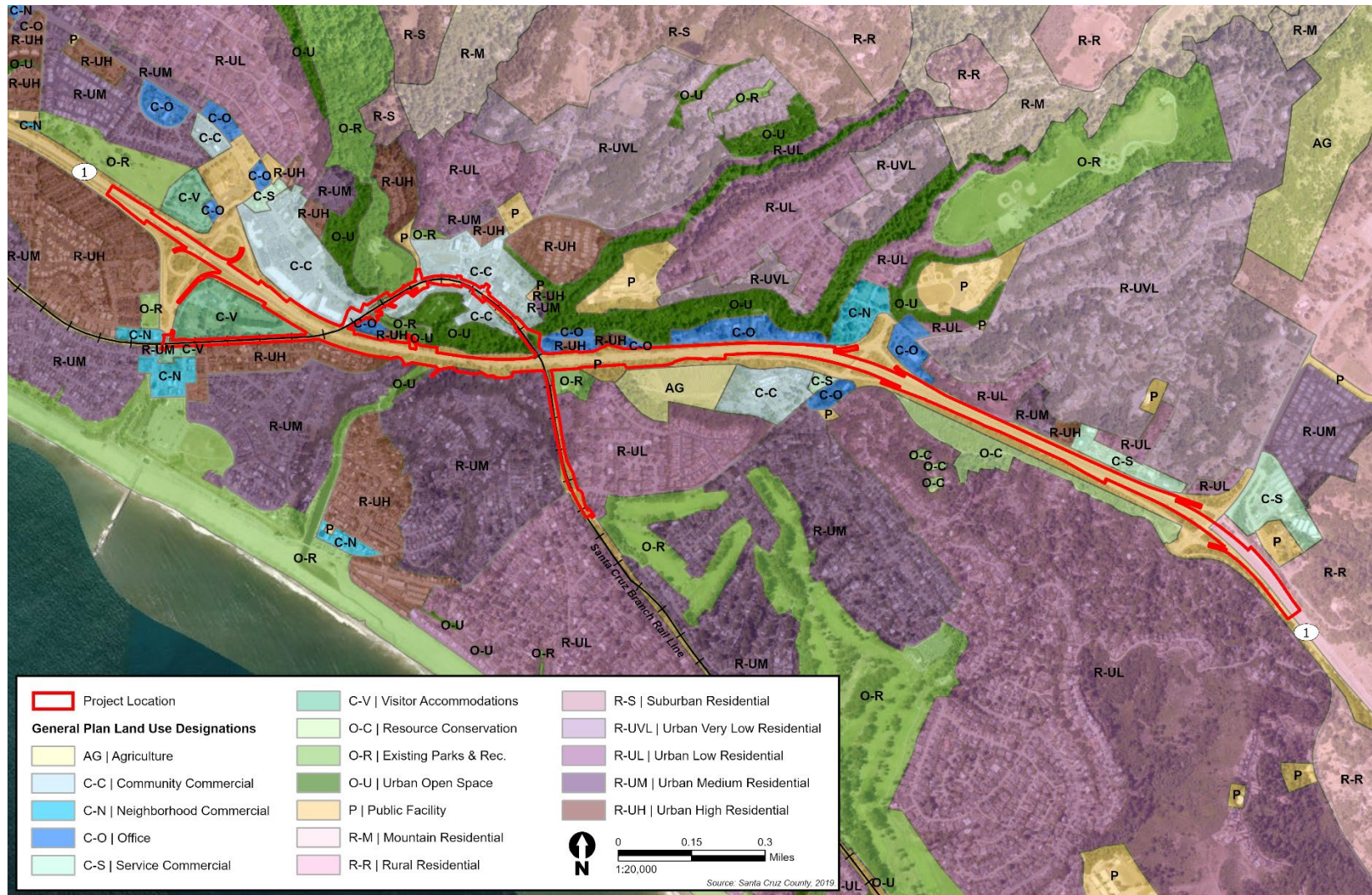


Figure 7: Zoning

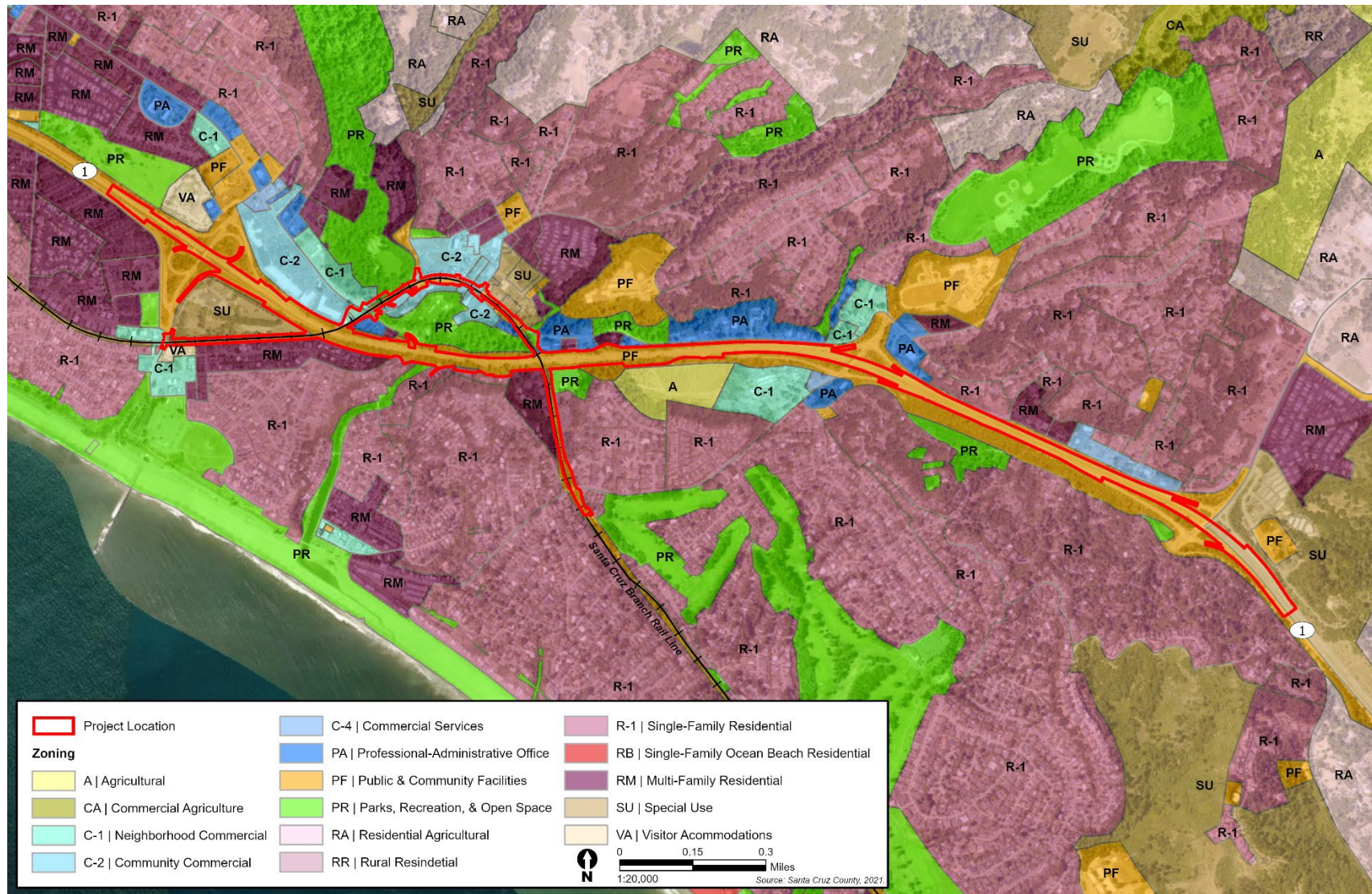


Figure 8: Coastal Zone



Unincorporated Area of Aptos

Aptos is an unincorporated portion of Santa Cruz County located on both the north and south sides of SR 1, bounded by Soquel to the west, San Andreas Road and Freedom Boulevard to the east, open space and the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park to the north, and Monterey Bay to the south. Aptos has a total area of approximately 7 square miles, which consists of commercial retail, office, industrial, and residential uses. Aptos is home to Cabrillo College, Aptos High School, Aptos Village, Aptos Village County Park, Aptos Branch Library, Calvary Cemetery, Polo Grounds Regional Park, Aptos Seascape Golf Course, and several interior and shoreline parks. Aptos Village is located north of SR 1, centering on an eight-acre area that includes pedestrian-oriented commercial retail, office, and residential uses served by a peripheral road system formed by Trout Gulch Road, Soquel Drive, Hopkins Road, and an extended Granite Way. The Santa Cruz Branch Line Railroad passes through Aptos Village along approximately two blocks of Soquel Drive, from Aptos Creek Road to Bernal Street.

Single-family residential and commercial land uses are predominant along SR 1 between State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard. Large institutional and commercial uses within the project area include the Coastlands church (just east of State Park Drive and south of SR 1) and the Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center (just east of State Park Drive and north of SR 1). Land uses along Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 south of SR 1 primarily consist of single-family residential housing, with one recreation facility (i.e., tennis courts), and one institutional use (i.e., Coastlands church). North of SR 1, Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 passes through the southern portion of Aptos Village, which includes Aptos Village County Park and mostly consists of low-density commercial uses, open space, and single-family residential housing. Existing land uses in the study area are shown in Figure 3.

Development Trends

Based on the 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast projections (AMBAG 2020), the region's population is expected to grow by approximately 107,535 people between 2015 and 2045, representing an increase of 14% and a total population of 869,776 in 2045. It should also be noted that the 2022 Regional Growth Forecast does not account for the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on population and employment, and it is anticipated that growth in the region would be even slower than disclosed in the 2022 Regional Growth Forecast, particularly in the first five years of the forecast period (2020 to 2025).

Similar to population projections, the 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast projects a slightly slower rate of employment growth when compared to the 2018 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast but forecasts more jobs overall compared to the 2018 forecast, which projected

an additional 57,400 jobs between 2015 and 2040. Please refer to Section 3.1, Growth Trends, for additional discussion. Major approved and active projects in the vicinity of the unincorporated area of Aptos are listed in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Major Projects within 1 Mile of the Study Area

Name	Jurisdiction	Proposed Land Use	Status
Transportation Projects			
The 41 st Avenue to Soquel Drive Auxiliary Lanes Project	County of Santa Cruz, Soquel	1.4 miles of auxiliary lanes between 41 st Avenue and Soquel Drive	Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) phase.
State Park Drive to Bay Avenue/Porter Street Auxiliary Lanes Project	County of Santa Cruz, Capitola	2.7 miles of auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder improvements between Bay Avenue/Porter Street and State Park Drive, and a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing of SR 1 at Mar Vista Drive	EIR/EA being prepared
Aptos Village Improvements Phase 2B	County of Santa Cruz, Aptos	Improvements on Soquel Drive from Trout Gulch Road to Aptos Creek Bridge; new traffic signal at Soquel Dr and Aptos Creek Rd; new railroad crossing over Aptos Creek Rd; and sidewalk and bike lanes on Soquel Drive	Anticipated Completion: Spring 2021
Coastal Rail Trail Segments 10 and 11	County of Santa Cruz, Capitola	Approximately 4-mile segment of paved pedestrian and bicycle trail within the Santa Cruz Branch Line Railroad right of way, from 17 th Avenue to State Park Drive	CEQA document is being prepared
Other Projects			
Aptos Branch Library	County of Santa Cruz, Aptos	Major renovation and possible expansion to address accessibility, upgrade building systems and enhance the user experience are planned.	Construction planned for summer 2021
Valencia Creek Sewer Relocation Project	County of Santa Cruz, Aptos	Installation of new permanent sewer mains and manholes.	CEQA Notice of Determination filed February 2021
Pure Water Soquel: Groundwater Replenishment and Seawater Intrusion Prevention Project	County of Santa Cruz, Aptos	As part of the Pure Water Soquel project construction, the existing Twin Lakes Church Seawater Intrusion Prevention Well will be redeveloped to meet the needs of the Pure Water Soquel project.	CEQA Notice of Determination filed March 2021

5.4.2 Environmental Consequences

5.4.2.1 Build Alternative

The Build Alternative would require temporary easements for construction activities associated with the SR 1 improvements including the construction of sound walls and retaining walls at various locations along north and southbound SR 1. Additionally, the Build Alternative would require full or partial property acquisitions for the construction of the rail trail segment within the existing right of way of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, between State Park Boulevard and Rio Del Mar Boulevard. The acquisition of property would occur along Soquel Road, north of SR 1, and east of the existing rail segment, south of SR 1, as discussed further in Section 4.4, Relocation and Real Property Acquisition. Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would also require temporary easements for retaining walls that would be constructed in the vicinity of Rio Del Mar Boulevard and Valencia Creek.

The Build Alternative would convert up to approximately 1.42 acres of land to transportation use, including approximately 1.39 acres of commercial uses, 0.03 acre of a private recreation use, and less than 0.01 acre of professional-administrative office uses. Overall, this conversion of land would be minor compared to the total amount of land in the unincorporated area of Aptos (7 square miles). The amount of land converted to transportation use may be reduced if, during final design, it is determined that the full acquisition of one or more parcels may be avoided, as described in Section 4.4, Relocations and Real Property Acquisition. The project is aimed at reducing congestion, improving safety, and encouraging alternative transportation modes to increase transportation system capacity. Thus, changes in land use towards transportation-related uses would be beneficial. The Build Alternative is not expected to alter land use patterns or change land uses beyond the minor land acquisition needed to construct Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, and is consistent with adopted local planning goals and policies for improving the existing SR 1 corridor, as further described in Section 2.2.

5.4.2.2 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not require any property acquisition. Implementation of the No-Build Alternative would have no direct effect on land uses in the project area, and the characteristics of corridor transportation facilities would not change.

5.4.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures apply to the Build Alternative:

- The project alignment has been adjusted to fit within existing right of way where feasible;

- In the vicinity of Valencia Creek and Rio Del Mar Boulevard, retaining walls would be included to minimize property impacts associated with grading;
- Exceptions to design standards would be proposed that would impact the right-of-way. For example, the paved Coastal Rail Trail may be reduced to 10 feet wide in areas with existing constraints, and 2-foot shoulders would be provided on each side where possible. Other design standard exceptions are described in Chapter 1, Project Description.

In addition, the measures identified in Section 4.4.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation measures would also apply.

5.5 Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans

5.5.1 Affected Environment

The proposed project would be subject to the policies and programs set forth in the *Santa Cruz County 1994 General Plan/Local Coastal Program*; *2020 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Improvement Program: State Transportation Improvement Program* (RTC 2019), *2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP) (RTC 2018), *Santa Cruz County Bicycle Plan* (County of Santa Cruz 2011), *Aptos Village Plan* (County of Santa Cruz 2010). The relevant plans are summarized below:

5.5.1.1 Santa Cruz County 1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program

The *1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan* sets forth the guiding principles for development and quality of life within the County, and a set of Specific Plans for local jurisdictions within the County. Together, these documents follow a basic land-use policy of maintaining separation of urban and rural areas, encouraging new development to locate in urban areas, and protecting agricultural land and natural resources in the rural areas. The primary areas of concern as the County approaches build out are to: (1) provide adequate services – particularly water for current and future residents; (2) provide affordable housing; (3) preserve the County’s environmental quality; and (4) prevent conversions of agricultural lands. The Circulation Element of the *1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program* for Santa Cruz County promotes the need to make more efficient use of the existing transportation system through a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) program. This approach supports capacity improvements and alternatives to driving alone during peak periods. Additionally, the Circulation Element places an emphasis on increasing the provision of transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities throughout Santa Cruz. The following goals are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Transportation System:** Provide a convenient, safe, economical transportation system for the movement of people and goods, promoting the wise use of resources, particularly energy and clean air, and the health and comfort of residents.
- **Mode Choice:** Provide the public with choices in transportation modes on a well-integrated system.
- **Limit Increase in Automobile Use:** Limit the increase in automobile usage to minimize adverse impacts. Increase transit ridership, carpooling, vanpooling, walking, bicycling, etc.
- **Efficiency:** Provide for more efficient use of existing transportation facilities.
- **Access:** Provide for the special transportation needs of the elderly and disabled.
- **Bikeway System:** Develop and implement a comprehensive bikeway system that promotes bicycle travel as a viable transportation mode and meets the recreation and travel needs of the citizens of Santa Cruz County.
- **Safety:** Reduce the number and severity of bicycle accidents.

5.5.1.2 2022 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Improvement Program

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), as the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Santa Cruz County, is responsible for selecting projects to receive certain state and federal transportation revenues, including State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds as well as Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX) funds. The RTC directs funds to specific projects and monitors those projects through its Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

Projects in Santa Cruz County that the RTC has proposed to be programmed for STIP funds reflect the region's integrated, multimodal system that considers the wide range of access and mobility needs, with a focus on improving travel between the cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville, one of the most congested corridors on the central coast. In the vicinity of the proposed project, the RTC has programmed a portion of 2022 STIP funds on construction of the proposed project, the Soquel San Jose Road/ Porter Street Road Resurfacing & Multimodal Improvements to the west of the project area, San Andreas Road Resurfacing to the southeast of the project area, and Complete Streets Downtown Watsonville to the east of the project area. Additionally, the RTC has programmed a portion of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) funds for the Chestnut Street St Storm Drain and Paving Rehab and Safety Improvements as well as reserve funds for future programming associated with the 41st Avenue Resurfacing in Capitola (RTC 2021).

5.5.1.3 2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

The RTC periodically completes an RTP to guide short- and long-range transportation planning and project implementation for Santa Cruz County. The 2040 RTP is the RTC's comprehensive planning document that provides guidance for transportation policy and projects through the year 2040. The 2040 RTP is based on a sustainability framework using the Sustainable Transportation Analysis and Rating System (STARS) to identify the goals, policies and thus the projects and programs to achieve a more sustainable transportation system. Individual projects listed in the 2040 RTP must still undergo separate design and environmental processes, and can only be implemented as federal, state, and local funds become available.

The 2040 RTP assigns future transportation funds to a range of projects and programs designed to maintain the current transportation system, and improve access, safety and environmental and public health by broadening transportation options. The addition of auxiliary lanes on SR 1 between Rio Del Mar Boulevard to State Park Drive (ID RTC 24p) as well as from Freedom Boulevard to Rio Del Mar Boulevard (ID RTC 24q), which include the proposed project, are identified as key proposals in the RTP.

5.5.1.4 Santa Cruz County Bicycle Plan

The County of Santa Cruz Department of Public Works, in cooperation with the RTC Bicycle Advisory Committee, prepared the *Santa Cruz County Bicycle Plan* (County of Santa Cruz 2011). The purpose of this plan is to consolidate into one document all bicycle-related County plans and projects that are currently identified in the County of Santa Cruz General Plan/LCP, the 2040 RTP, and other local documents. This incorporates the Santa Cruz County Planning Department's Master Plan of Countywide Bikeways (MPCB).

The MPCB defines goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs involved in the planning, design, and construction of an integrated system of bicycle facilities in the County. Emphasis is on safe and convenient bicycle routes that complement other transportation modes (e.g., transit, carpool) to serve places of employment, commercial districts, schools, beaches, and parks. A secondary purpose of the MPCB is to serve recreational bicycling.

5.5.1.5 Aptos Village Plan

The Aptos Village Plan, adopted in February 2010, identifies specific land use, circulation, and community design issues within the Aptos Village community that focuses on development and maintenance of the Village as a community focal point; encouragement of mixed-use development; achievement of an improved pedestrian environment; roadway and traffic improvements; preservation of architectural resources; and integration of the creek system, open space, and the Forest of Nisene Marks in maintaining Village character.

Of particular relevance to the proposed project are the goals of facilitating access to the Village for the Aptos community, minimizing regional automobile traffic through the Village, and promoting the prosperity of business and residential activities of distinctive “village” nature. Related policies are to support an update of the County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that relieves the Village of regional traffic, encouraging a variety of transit modes serving the Village, and establishing a system of bicycle pathways connecting the Village to surrounding areas and activities.

5.5.2 Environmental Consequences

5.5.2.1 Build Alternative

The proposed project’s consistency with goals and policies contained in applicable regional and local planning documents is presented in **Table 3**, below.

Table 3: Local Planning Documents Consistency Analysis

Local Policies	Consistency Analysis
County of Santa Cruz 1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program	
Provide a convenient, safe, economical transportation system for the movement of people and goods, promoting the wise use of resources, particularly energy and clean air, and the health and comfort of residents.	Build Alternative The proposed project would be consistent with this goal by reducing congestion, providing efficient bus-on-shoulder facilities (BOS) facilities, creating and enhancing pedestrian and bicycle facilities (including the construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 and providing Coastal Rail Trail access across SR 1), and improving overall multimodal transportation efficiency and connectivity throughout the project area.
	No-Build Alternative The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this goal because the project area would continue to exceed capacity and the No-Build alternative would not improve public transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities.
Mode Choice: Provide the public with choices in transportation modes on a well-integrated system.	Build Alternative The proposed project would be consistent with this goal by improving overall multimodal transportation efficiency and connectivity throughout the project area through the provision of auxiliary lanes, improved public transit BOS facilities, and improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the project area.

Local Policies	Consistency Analysis
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this goal by not enhancing or creating alternative modes of transportation. No connectivity would be provided between the project area and the SR 1 auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder improvements proposed in the State Park Drive to Bay Avenue/Porter Street Auxiliary Lanes Project.</p>
<p>Limit Increase in Automobile Use: Limit the increase in automobile usage to minimize adverse impacts. Increase transit ridership, carpooling, vanpooling, walking, bicycling, etc.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this goal by providing new and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including the construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 and providing pedestrian/bicycle access across SR 1 at the Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad overcrossing structures at Aptos Creek and Valencia Creek. The project would also provide BOS facilities that would improve public transit efficiency.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this goal because the project area would continue to exceed capacity without improving alternative modes of transportation.</p>
<p>Efficiency: Provide for more efficient use of existing transportation facilities.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this goal by improving overall multimodal transportation efficiency and connectivity throughout the project area by enhancing existing highway facilities for use by motor vehicles and public transit, and by enhancing existing railroad facilities for use by bicyclists and pedestrians.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>Currently, the project area is reaching the limit for highway capacity and there are limited opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely cross SR 1 in the project area. The No-Build Alternative would not improve pedestrian, bicycle, or public transit facilities. Therefore, the No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this goal.</p>
<p>Bikeway System: Develop and implement a comprehensive bikeway system that promotes bicycle travel as a viable transportation mode and meets the recreation and travel needs of the citizens of Santa Cruz County.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this goal because it would provide new bicycle facilities, including the construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, which provides new pedestrian/bicycle access across SR 1 at the Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad overcrossings of SR 1.</p>

Local Policies	Consistency Analysis
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this goal. The No-Build Alternative would have no impacts to the existing bikeway system; however, it would not improve or enhance the bikeway system. There are limited opportunities for bicyclists to safely navigate SR 1 in the project area (with the only designated bicycle lane on Rio Del Mar Boulevard) even though portions of the project area are designated as regional bicycle routes.</p>
Access: Provide for the special transportation needs of the elderly and disabled.	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this goal by implementing Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, which would be ADA accessible and separated from vehicle traffic, and by improving overall connectivity and safety throughout the project area for all users.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this goal because the project area would not improve pedestrian facilities.</p>
Safety: Reduce the number and severity of bicycle accidents.	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this goal because Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would provide bicycle access on a multiuse trail within the project area and across SR 1. The Build Alternative would also ease congestion, which would contribute to bicycle safety within the project area.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this goal. Under the No-Build Alternative, there would continue to be limited opportunities for bicyclists to safely navigate SR 1 in the project area (with the only designated bicycle lane on Rio Del Mar Boulevard), even though portions of the project area are designated as regional bicycle routes.</p>
Aptos Village Plan	
Safe movement of pedestrians from one end of the Village to the other is a critical ingredient to the success of the Village Plan. Making the Village pedestrian friendly is an important Village Plan goal. New development will be required to create a network of sidewalks that provide for pedestrian connectivity.	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this plan element. The proposed Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, including pedestrian overcrossing structures at Aptos Creek and Valencia Creek, would improve pedestrian connectivity within the project area enabling access to the rail trail within Aptos Village along Soquel Drive.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this plan element by not providing pedestrian facilities or improvements to pedestrian connectivity.</p>

Local Policies	Consistency Analysis
<p>Needed bike improvements include better signage throughout the Village, such as more sharrows and clearer signs about bikes riding in the traffic lane where there are no bicycle lanes.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this plan element because the project includes Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, a multiuse trail that is anticipated to include directional signs for trail users, consistent with the Master Plan for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this plan element because it would not improve bicycle facilities or signage.</p>
<p>Bus stops will be improved with turnouts, shelters and connecting sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would not create new bus stops or result in adverse impacts or improvements to bus stops within the project area.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would not create new bus stops or result in adverse impacts to bus stops within the project area.</p>
<p>Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Improvement Program</p>	
<p>The RTC proposes to use its formula target of 2022 STIP funds on construction of the proposed project, the Soquel San Jose Road/ Porter Street Road Resurfacing & Multimodal Improvements to the west of the project area, San Andreas Road Resurfacing to the southeast of the project area, and Complete Streets Downtown Watsonville to the east of the project area.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project is listed in the RTIP (STIP PPNO 0073D) and would be consistent with the Highway 1 41st Avenue to Soquel Avenue Auxiliary Lanes, BOS, and bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue project by providing the continuation of auxiliary lanes and BOS improvements, along with bicycle and pedestrian improvements, through the SR 1 corridor between the State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard interchanges.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this program because the No-Build Alternative would not allow for the continuation of auxiliary lanes and BOS through the SR 1 corridor, or provide the bicycle/pedestrian access across SR 1 proposed as part of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12.</p>
<p>Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan</p>	
	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this plan because it is identified as a key project intended to receive future transportation funds.</p>

Local Policies	Consistency Analysis
<p>The 2040 RTP assigns future transportation funds to a range of projects and programs designed to maintain the current transportation system, and improve access, safety and environmental and public health by broadening transportation options. Key proposals, based on available funding, include the addition of auxiliary lanes on SR 1 between Rio Del Mar Boulevard and State Park Drive, as well as from Freedom Boulevard to Rio Del Mar Boulevard.</p>	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this plan because the project proposed to receive funding would not be implemented.</p>
<p><i>Santa Cruz County Bicycle Plan</i></p>	
<p>To encourage bicycle travel as a major form of transportation in order to increase bicycle use to 20% of all work trips and to increase general bicycle trips to 5% of all trips by the year 2035.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this objective because it would enhance bicycle facilities and improve bicycle connectivity by constructing Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, including bicycle access across SR 1 at Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad overcrossing structures, thereby encouraging bicycle travel.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this objective because it would not improve bicycle facilities or encourage bicycle travel as a major form of transportation.</p>
<p>To develop a bikeway network maximizing the safety and convenience of users of all levels of experience within that system. The network should be primarily for commuter travel designed to increase the potential of combining bicycle travel with other forms of transportation and also include the opportunity for recreational use. Support promotion and transportation safety programs to encourage safe and frequent use of alternative transportation modes.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this objective because it would enhance bicycle facilities and improve bicycle connectivity by constructing Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, including new bicycle access across SR 1, thereby providing safer and more convenient routes for bicycle travel.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this objective because it would not improve bicycle facilities, or promote safety programs to encourage use of alternative modes.</p>
<p>Reduce bicycle collisions by reducing the potential for bicycle and auto conflicts.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this policy because Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would provide bicycle access on a multiuse trail within the project area and across SR 1. The Build Alternative would also ease automobile congestion along SR 1 and surrounding streets, which would contribute to bicycle safety within the project area.</p>

Local Policies	Consistency Analysis
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this objective because it would not improve bicycle facilities or reduce the potential for bicycle and auto conflicts.</p>
<p>To encourage the design of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle circulation and parking to be safe, convenient, readily understandable, and coordinated with development on surrounding properties; and encourage design which minimizes the visual impact and reduces the scale of paving materials and parking.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this objective because it would enhance bicycle facilities and improve bicycle connectivity by constructing Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, including bicycle access across SR 1 and the Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad overcrossing structures. This new trail segment would be accessible from Aptos Village and elsewhere in the project area. Additionally, the construction of a trail within existing railroad right of way would help minimize visual impacts by repurposing a portion of the railroad right of way.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this objective because it would not improve bicycle facilities and the project area would continue to become more congested.</p>

Because the proposed project aims to reduce congestion along SR 1, enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity along Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, and encourage alternative transportation modes to increase transportation system capacity and reliability, the proposed project would be consistent with the applicable goals and policies in the local and regional plans discussed in Table 3.

5.5.2.2 No-Build Alternative

As discussed in Table 3, under the No-Build Alternative, pedestrian and bicycle facilities would not be enhanced, increased transportation system capacity would not occur as a result of alternative modes of transit, and congestion within the project limits along SR 1 would continue to worsen. Implementation of the No-Build Alternative would not support achievement of the local and regional goals and policies aimed at improving the multimodal transportation system.

5.5.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required.

5.6 Coastal Zone

The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 is the primary Federal law enacted to preserve and protect coastal resources. The Coastal Zone Management Act sets up a program under which coastal states are encouraged to develop coastal management programs. States with an approved

coastal management plan are able to review federal permits and activities to determine if they are consistent with the state's management plan.

California has developed a coastal zone management plan and has enacted its own law, the California Coastal Act of 1976, to protect the coastline. The policies established by the Act are similar to those for the Coastal Zone Management Act; including the protection and expansion of public access and recreation, the protection, enhancement, and restoration of environmentally sensitive areas, the protection of agricultural lands, the protection of scenic beauty, and the protection of property and life from coastal hazards. The California Coastal Commission (CCC) is responsible for implementation and oversight under the California Coastal Act.

Just as the federal Coastal Zone Management Act delegates power to coastal states to develop their own coastal management plans, the California Coastal Act delegates power to local governments (15 coastal counties and 58 cities) to enact their own local coastal programs. Local coastal programs determine the short- and long-term use of coastal resources in their jurisdiction consistent with the California Coastal Act goals.

5.6.1 Affected Environment

As shown in Figure 8, the entire segment of SR 1 between Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive lies within the Coastal Zone (Santa Cruz County Coastal Program). The portion of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 located south of the northern (inland) right of way limits of SR 1 is also within the Coastal Zone. In addition, a small portion of SR 1, adjacent to Valencia Lagoon, is within the Coastal Zone Appeal Jurisdiction which allows members of the public to appeal County approvals to the CCC. Significant coastal resources within this area include Aptos Creek, Valencia Lagoon, Valencia Channel, freshwater marsh/riverine habitat and riparian forest. Valencia Lagoon and Valencia Channel are located on the southern side of SR 1, between Freedom Boulevard and Rio Del Mar Boulevard. Aptos Creek conveys perennial flows, draining an area of approximately 21 square miles to Monterey Bay. Valencia Channel is hydrologically connected to the Valencia Lagoon, and both contain riverine, freshwater marsh, scrub-shrub wetland, and riparian forest habitats. Freshwater marsh/riverine habitat is primarily located within the Valencia Channel and within Aptos Creek. Riparian forest is located between the Union Pacific railroad tracks and Spreckels Drive and in pockets surrounding SR 1 throughout the project area.

5.6.2 Environmental Consequences

5.6.2.1 Build Alternative

Table 4 evaluates whether the proposed project is consistent with relevant policies from the County of Santa Cruz LCP.

Table 4: Local Coastal Program Consistency Analysis

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
County of Santa Cruz 1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program	
<p>Policy 5.10.2: Development within visual resources. Recognize that visual resources of Santa Cruz County possess diverse characteristics and that the resources worthy of protection may include, but are not limited to, ocean views, agricultural fields, wooded forests, open meadows, and mountain hillside views. Require projects to be evaluated against the context of their unique environment and regulate structure height, setbacks and design to protect these resources consistent with the objectives and policies of this section. Require discretionary review for all development within the visual resource area of SR 1, outside of the Urban/Rural boundary, as designated on the General Plan/LCP Visual Resources Map and apply the design criteria of Section 13.20.130 of the County's zoning ordinance to such development.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) (Caltrans 2022a) prepared for the proposed project identified visual resources in the project area, including mature trees adjacent to SR 1 and the Santa Cruz Branch Line Railroad right of way and mountain hillside views. SR 1 is not a state-designated scenic highway but is recognized in the County of Santa Cruz General Plan as a local scenic roadway. The County of Santa Cruz General Plan and Local Coastal Program Policy 5.10.2 require a review of projects for visual impacts. The zoning ordinance states that development, including walls, should be sited and designed so that it does not block or significantly affect significant public views and scenic character adversely. Consistent with Policy 5.10.2, the VIA evaluated the proposed project against the context of its unique environment and incorporates design features to protect the resources described above. The project would not block or substantially affect scenic public views. Visual impacts would result from the removal of mature vegetation for the construction of sound/retaining walls and the widening of the SR 1 and the Aptos Creek Bridge. Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be implemented to protect the identified visual resources, including preserving as much existing vegetation in the corridor as feasible; applying aesthetic treatments to sound walls and retaining walls; and including skyline trees in the planting pallet to reduce the scale of the new highway elements. Therefore, the Build Alternative would be consistent with Policy 5.10.2. The project area is located within the Urban Services Area as designated in the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because it would not result in development within</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
	visual resources or modify views of surrounding visual resources.
<p>Policy 5.10.4: Preserving natural buffers. Preserve the vegetation and landform of natural wooded hillsides which serve as a backdrop for new development. Also comply with policy 8.6.6 regarding protection of ridgetops and natural landforms.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would require the removal of mature trees adjacent to SR 1 and the Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad but would not modify ridgetops. Some slopes immediately adjacent to SR 1 and the Santa Cruz Branch Line would require grading and construction of retaining walls; however, impacts to hillsides would be limited to areas along existing transportation corridors. During final design, the design of the proposed project would develop aesthetic treatments for retaining walls and preserve existing natural vegetation that buffers adjacent development from SR 1 to the extent feasible. Where existing trees would be removed, they would be replaced at various ratios, depending on the species of tree. For example, any coast live oak tree that is removed shall be replaced at a 10:1 ratio and any removal of riparian trees will be offset by a replacement ratio as determined by CDFW in Section 1602 Streambed/Lakebed Alteration Agreement requirements. Additionally, the removal of trees identified as active monarch butterfly winter roost sites shall be offset with the planting of native tree species, such as Monterey pine or Monterey cypress, at a 1:1 ratio. The following additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would also be implemented: survey exact locations for trees and include in the plan set; protect the drip zone of isolated trees and provide temporary fencing; and include skyline trees in the planting pallet to reduce the scale of the new highway elements. With the incorporation of these measures, the project would be consistent with Policy 5.10.4.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because it would not result in adverse impacts to natural buffers, vegetation, or landforms.</p>
<p>Policy 5.10.6: Where public ocean vistas exist, require that these vistas be retained to the maximum extent possible as a condition of approval for any new development.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this policy because it would not obstruct public ocean vistas.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because it would not obstruct public ocean vistas.</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy 5.10.8: Significant tree removal ordinance. Maintain the standards in the County's existing ordinance which regulates the removal of significant trees and other major vegetation in the Coastal Zone, and provide appropriate protection for significant trees and other major vegetation in areas of the County located within the Urban Service Line.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>Within the County of Santa Cruz jurisdiction, “significant” trees are identified as single-trunk trees with 20-inch diameter-at-breast-height (dbh) or greater, clumps with more than four trunks of 12-inch dbh each, and all trees in certain designated biotic areas. The proposed project would maintain the standards in the County's tree removal ordinance. Consistent with Policy 5.10.8, during final design, the design of the project would identify significant trees and other major vegetation in the Coastal Zone to be protected in place, to the extent feasible. Where it is determined necessary to remove significant trees, the tree removal will be consistent with Finding F of the tree removal ordinance, for tree removal in conjunction the project's Coastal Development Permit to allow Caltrans and the SCCRTC the transportation use of their respective rights of way, in accordance with the transportation use designation of the Land Use Plan. Where existing trees would be removed, they would be replaced at various ratios, depending on the species of tree. For example, any coast live oak tree that is removed shall be replaced at a 10:1 ratio and any removal of riparian trees will be offset by a replacement ratio as determined by CDFW in Section 1602 SAA requirements. Additionally, the removal of trees identified as active monarch butterfly winter roost sites shall be offset with the planting of native tree species, such as Monterey pine or Monterey cypress, at a 1:1 ratio.</p> <p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because it would not require trees or other major vegetation removal within the coastal zone.</p>
<p>Policy 5.1.6: Development within sensitive habitats. Sensitive habitats shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values; and any proposed development within or adjacent to these areas must maintain or enhance the functional capacity of the habitat. Reduce in scale, redesign, or, if no other alternative exists, deny any project which cannot sufficiently mitigate significant adverse impacts on sensitive habitats unless approval of a project is legally necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The Natural Environment Study (NES) (2022b) prepared for the project identifies impacts to areas that may be considered sensitive habitat areas under the Local Coastal Program, which are immediately adjacent to the existing transportation infrastructure. These impact areas include: 0.508 acre of temporary and 0.885 acre of permanent impacts to Coastal Zone riparian non-wetlands, 0.091 acre of temporary impacts to Coastal Zone stream, totaling 0.6 acre of temporary impact and 0.885 acre of permanent impact to Coastal Zone riparian non-wetlands. Additional impacts include 0.584 acre of temporary impact and 1.143 acres of</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
	<p>permanent impact to oak woodlands. The Santa Cruz County Code Sensitive Habitat Ordinance (Chapter 16.32) includes various conditions that would be enacted for permit approval; however, Section 16.32.100 provides an exception to the standards in Section 16.32.090—specifically, if a road improvement along an existing facility is necessary to protect the public welfare, health, and safety, an exception can be granted upon approval of the environmental coordinator following a biotic review pursuant to Santa Cruz County Code Section 16.32.070. The proposed project, which would provide auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder facilities on SR 1, a primary route that connects the southern and central areas of Santa Cruz County, is necessary to protect the public welfare, health, and safety along the only continuous commuter route that links Watsonville, Capitola, Aptos, Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz, and the University of California. Because the proposed project has the potential to result in temporary and permanent impacts to sensitive habitats, Caltrans has addressed requirements of the Sensitive Habitat Ordinance in the project's NES, which recommends avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures to address the impacts to sensitive habitat areas, including the restoration and/or compensatory mitigation for any area which is a degraded sensitive habitat or has caused or is causing the degradation of a sensitive habitat commensurate with the scale of the proposed transportation improvements. As described in the NES, the amount of riparian non-wetland amounts to approximately 1.2 acres. Because these small areas of land are immediately adjacent to an existing major highway, it is not anticipated that the project would constitute a significant disruption of habitat values. With the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures identified in the NES, the project is consistent with Policy 5.1.6. During final design, the design of the project would seek to further minimize the impacts to sensitive habitat areas.</p> <p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no impacts to sensitive habitats would occur.</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy 5.2.2: Riparian corridor and wetland protection ordinance. Implement the protection of Riparian Corridors and Wetlands through the Riparian Corridor and Wetland Protection ordinance to ensure no net loss of riparian corridors and riparian wetlands. The ordinance identifies and defines riparian corridors and wetlands, determines the uses which are allowed in and adjacent to these habitats, and specifies required buffer setbacks and performance standards for land in and adjacent to these areas. Any amendments to this ordinance shall require a finding that riparian corridors and wetlands shall be afforded equal or greater protection by the amended language.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The project's NES identifies areas of impact to riparian corridors and wetlands, as defined by the County's Riparian Corridor and Wetland Protection Ordinance. These areas are immediately adjacent to existing transportation infrastructure. As allowed in Section 16.30.050, of the ordinance, the proposed project meets the following criterion for an exemption: H, the continuance of any preexisting nonagricultural use, provided such use has not lapsed for a period of one year or more. The SR 1 and Santa Cruz Branch Line Railroad rights of way are both active transportation corridors, and there has been no lapse in the transportation use of these areas. Riparian corridor and wetland protection would be implemented per the Riparian Corridor and Wetland Protection ordinance to ensure no net loss of riparian corridors and wetlands. The project is therefore consistent with Policy 5.2.2.</p> <p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no impacts to riparian habitat or wetlands would occur.</p>
<p>Policy 5.2.3: Activities within riparian corridors and wetlands. Development activities, land alteration and vegetation disturbance within riparian corridors and wetlands and required buffers shall be prohibited unless an exception is granted per the Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinance. As a condition of riparian exception, require evidence of approval for development from the US Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game, and other federal or state agencies that may have regulatory authority over activities within riparian corridors and wetlands.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>Potentially jurisdictional USACE Waters of the U.S. (other waters), RWQCB Waters of the State (streambed and riparian non-wetlands), CDFW streams and riparian areas, and Coastal Zone/CCC streams and riparian non-wetlands were identified within the project area associated with creeks or drainages. The proposed project has the potential to result in temporary and permanent impacts to riparian and wetland resources. As described with regard to Policy 5.2.2, above, these areas are immediately adjacent to existing transportation infrastructure. As allowed in Section 16.30.050, of the Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinance, the proposed project meets the following criterion for an exemption: H, the continuance of any preexisting nonagricultural use, provided such use has not lapsed for a period of one year or more. During final design of the project, the project would obtain the following permits from agencies with regulatory authority over activities within riparian corridors and wetlands: Section 404 permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers, Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and Section 1602 Streambed Alteration</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
	<p>Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The project is therefore consistent with Policy 5.2.3.</p> <p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no impacts to riparian habitat or wetlands would occur.</p>
<p>Policy 5.2.4: Riparian Corridor Buffer Setback (LCP) Require a buffer setback from riparian corridors in addition to the specified distances found in the definition of riparian corridor. This setback shall be identified in the Riparian Corridor and Wetland Protection ordinance and established based on stream characteristics, vegetation and slope. Allow reductions to the buffer setback only upon approval of a riparian exception. Require a 10-foot separation from the edge of the riparian corridor buffer to any structure</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>Potentially jurisdictional USACE Waters of the U.S. (other waters), RWQCB Waters of the State (streambed and riparian non-wetlands), CDFW streams and riparian areas, and Coastal Zone/CCC streams and riparian non-wetlands were identified within the project area associated with creeks or drainages. The proposed project has the potential to result in temporary and permanent impacts to riparian and wetland resources. As described above, these areas are immediately adjacent to existing transportation infrastructure. As allowed in Section 16.30.050, of the Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinance, the proposed project meets the following criterion for an exemption: H, the continuance of any preexisting nonagricultural use, provided such use has not lapsed for a period of one year or more. During final design of the project, the project would obtain the following permits from agencies with regulatory authority over activities within riparian corridors and wetlands: Section 404 permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers, Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The project is therefore consistent with Policy 5.2.4.</p> <p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no impacts to riparian habitat or wetlands would occur.</p>
<p>Policy 5.2.5: Setbacks from wetlands. Prohibit development within the 100-foot riparian corridor of all wetlands. Allow exceptions to this setback only where consistent with the Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinance, and in all cases, maximize distance between proposed structures and wetlands. Require measures to prevent water quality degradation</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>Potentially jurisdictional USACE Waters of the U.S. (other waters), RWQCB Waters of the State (streambed and riparian non-wetlands), CDFW streams and riparian areas, and Coastal Zone/CCC streams and riparian non-wetlands were identified within the project area associated with creeks or drainages. The proposed project has the potential to result in temporary and</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
<p>from adjacent land uses, as outlined in the Water Resources section.</p>	<p>permanent impacts to riparian and wetland resources. As described above, these areas are immediately adjacent to existing transportation infrastructure. As allowed in Section 16.30.050, of the Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinance, the proposed project meets the following criterion for an exemption: H, the continuance of any preexisting nonagricultural use, provided such use has not lapsed for a period of one year or more. As described in the project's NES and Water Quality Assessment Report (Caltrans 2022c), the project would include avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures, including stormwater treatment facilities, to prevent water quality degradation. Therefore, the project is consistent with Policy 5.2.5.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no impacts to riparian habitat or wetlands would occur.</p>
<p>Policy 5.2.7: Allow compatible uses in and adjacent to riparian corridors that do not impair or degrade the riparian plant and animal systems, or water supply values, such as non-motorized recreation and pedestrian trails, parks, interpretive facilities, and fishing facilities. Allow development in these areas only in conjunction with approval of a riparian exception.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this policy. The portion of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 that would be in or adjacent to riparian corridors would be considered a compatible use, since it would support non-motorized transportation such as walking and bicycling, and these uses would not impair or degrade plant and animal systems.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no impacts to riparian habitat or wetlands would occur.</p>
<p>Policy 5.19.3: Development around archeological resources. Protect archaeological resources from development by restricting improvements and grading activities to portions of the property not containing these resources, where feasible, or by preservation of the site through project design and/or use restrictions, such as covering the site with earthfill to a depth that ensures the site will not be disturbed by development, as determined by a professional archaeologist.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>Although the project area includes portions of two known archaeological sites, Caltrans has conducted Extended Phase I and Phase II Testing of these sites to determine the presence or absence of a subsurface deposit and, if present, define its horizontal and vertical extent, and assess its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Place and California Register of Historic Resources. If a resource is found eligible, and an adverse effect to the resource is anticipated, a Memorandum of Agreement executed by the Federal Highway Administration, the State Historic Preservation Officer, and Caltrans would identify measures to resolve any adverse effects. In addition to any such measures,</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
	provisions regarding the inadvertent discovery of cultural materials or human remains would be implemented pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resource Code 5097.98. The resolution of any adverse effect through a Memorandum of Agreement would provide consistency with Policy 5.19.3.
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no ground disturbance or potential impacts to archaeological resources would occur.</p>
<p>Policy 3.14.2: Priority to recreational improvements. In the development of transportation improvement programs, consider giving priority to road improvements which provide access to recreational resources.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>The proposed project would be consistent with this policy by providing bicycle and pedestrian improvements associated with construction of the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 consistent with the approved <i>Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network Master Plan</i>. These improvements would provide improved access to recreational resources throughout the region.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with this policy by enabling the project area to continue to exceed capacity and result in worsened congestion and access, and would not improve public transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities.</p>
County of Santa Cruz Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection Ordinance	
<p>The purpose of this Ordinance is to minimize and to eliminate any development activities in the riparian corridor, preserve, protect, and restore riparian corridors for: protection of wildlife habitat; protection of water quality; protection of aquatic habitat; protection of open space, cultural, historical, archaeological and paleontological, and aesthetic values; transportation and storage of floodwaters; prevention of erosion; and to implement the policies of the General Plan and the Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.</p>	<p>Build Alternative</p> <p>Potentially jurisdictional USACE Waters of the U.S. (other waters), RWQCB Waters of the State (streambed and riparian non-wetlands), CDFW streams and riparian areas, and Coastal Zone/CCC streams and riparian non-wetlands were identified within the project area associated with creeks or drainages. The proposed project has the potential to result in temporary and permanent impacts to riparian and wetland resources. As described with regard to Policy 5.2.2, above, these areas are immediately adjacent to existing transportation infrastructure. As allowed in Section 16.30.050, of the Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection ordinance, the proposed project meets the following criterion for an exemption: H, the continuance of any preexisting nonagricultural use, provided such use has not lapsed for a period of one year or more.</p>

Local Coastal Program Policies	Consistency Analysis
	<p>The project would implement avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures included in the NES to support the preservation, protection, and restoration of riparian corridors and the protection of wildlife habitat and aquatic habitat. The project would implement avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures included in the Water Quality Assessment Report (Caltrans 2022c) to support the protection of water quality and aquatic habitat and prevent erosion. The project would implement avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures included in the Historic Resources Evaluation Report (Caltrans 2022d) to protect historical and archaeological resources. The project would implement measures included in the VIA to protect aesthetic values. The project is therefore consistent with the Riparian Corridor and Wetland Protection Ordinance.</p>
	<p>No-Build Alternative</p> <p>The No-Build Alternative would be consistent with this policy because no impacts to riparian habitat or wetlands would occur.</p>

As shown in Table 4, the proposed project is consistent with policies from the County of Santa Cruz LCP. Because a substantial portion of the project is located within the coastal zone, a Coastal Development Permit from the County of Santa Cruz would be required.

5.6.2.2 No-Build Alternative

As shown in Table 4, the No-Build Alternative would be consistent with several coastal zone policies. However, it would be inconsistent with policies that relate to improving access to recreational resources. Under this alternative, traffic conditions and congestion would continue to worsen along SR 1 and on adjacent local streets. Further, it would not improve pedestrian or bicycle facilities, public transit facilities, and or improve access to beaches or recreational facilities.

5.6.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Based on the impacts that have been identified in this section, the following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures apply to the Build Alternative:

- All avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures included in the Natural Environment Study (Caltrans 2022b) prepared for the proposed project shall be implemented

to reduce potential impacts to sensitive habitats, trees, and surface water resources within the project area.

- All avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures included in the Archaeological Survey Report (Caltrans 2022e), Historic Resources Evaluation Report (Caltrans 2022d), and Historic Properties Survey Report (Caltrans 2022f) prepared for the proposed project shall be implemented to minimize potential impacts to sensitive cultural and historic resources within the project area.
- All avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures included in the Visual Impact Assessment (Caltrans 2022a) prepared for the proposed project shall be implemented to reduce potential impacts to visual resources within the project area.
- All avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures included in the Water Quality Assessment Report (Caltrans 2022c) prepared for the proposed project shall be implemented to reduce potential impacts to aquatic resources within the project area.

5.7 Parks and Recreation

5.7.1 Affected Environment

As listed in **Table 5** and shown on **Figure 9**, there are seven parks and recreational facilities within the project study area and one privately owned golf course open to the public. The numbers in the table correspond to locations shown on Figure 6. These facilities are operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation; County of Santa Cruz Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services; or private operators.

Figure 9: Parks and Recreational Facilities



Table 5: Parks and Recreational Facilities Within 0.5 Mile of Project Area

Number	Park Name	Owner	Address/Location
State and Regional Parks			
1	Forest of Nisene Marks State Park	State of California	Aptos Creek Road/Soquel Drive, Aptos
County Parks and Recreational Facilities			
2	Aptos Village County Park	County of Santa Cruz	100 Aptos Creek Road, Aptos
3	Seacliff Village County Park	County of Santa Cruz	McGregor Drive/Canterbury Drive/Sea Ridge Road, Aptos
4	Polo Grounds Park	County of Santa Cruz	2255 Huntington Drive, Aptos
Beaches and Coastal Areas			
5	Seacliff State Beach	County of Santa Cruz	State Park Drive, Aptos
6	Rio Del Mar State Beach	County of Santa Cruz	Rio Del Mar Boulevard, Aptos
7	Hidden Beach Park	County of Santa Cruz	Hidden Beach Way, Aptos
Golf Courses and Private Recreation Facilities			
8	Seascape Golf Club	Privately Owned	Clubhouse Drive, Aptos
9	Tennis Club of Rio Del Mar	Privately Owned	369 Sandalwood Drive, Aptos

5.7.2 Environmental Consequences

5.7.2.1 Build Alternative

The proposed project would require a temporary construction easement in Aptos Village County Park, immediately adjacent to the Santa Cruz Branch Line right of way, for construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. No other use of public park land is proposed. Aptos Village County Park would remain open during construction; however, 15,810 square feet of the park would be temporarily unavailable to the public. This portion of the park in this area includes vegetated open land. No structures or park amenities are located in this area. Caltrans will prepare a De Minimis Finding in accordance with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. While land acquisitions would be required to complete Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 in the vicinity of Aptos Village (see Section 4.4, *Relocations and Real Property Acquisition*), the majority of the proposed project would occur entirely within the existing Caltrans right-of-way or Santa Cruz Branch Line right-of-way, and would result in minor temporary impacts to Aptos Village County Park. No permanent impacts to Aptos Village County Park, or any other public parks or recreational facilities would occur. A small portion

(0.03 acre) of the Tennis Club of Rio Del Mar would be permanently acquired as part of the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 improvements; however, no permanent effect to the tennis club operations would result. Additionally, implementation of the proposed project would require temporary road and ramp closures and detours during construction along SR 1. Temporary road and ramp closures during construction may affect certain routes to nearby parks, beaches, and other recreational facilities in the vicinity of the project; however, detours would be established to ensure access to those facilities is maintained throughout construction.

Specifically, temporary closures may be necessary at on- and off-ramps of the State Park Drive, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, and Freedom Boulevard interchanges. Ramp closures would be staged so that successive off- or on-ramps are not closed at the same time and detours would be provided to minimize impacts on motorists.

5.7.2.2 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not result in direct or indirect impacts to parks, beaches, or other recreational facilities. It would not affect access to parks, beaches, and recreational facilities; however, traffic conditions would continue to worsen along SR 1, which would not ultimately improve access to such facilities.

5.7.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Although no adverse impacts to parks or other recreational facilities are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project, implementation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) will ensure appropriate detours are established such that access to all facilities is maintained throughout construction. The TMP will also require coordination with and notification of all proposed road closures and detours prior to implementation. Please refer to Section 5.3 for additional details regarding the TMP.

Chapter 6 Growth

Transportation networks are one of many factors that influence where, when, and what type of development takes place in an area. Other factors include population and economic growth, desirability of certain locations, the costs and availability of developable land, physical and regulatory constraints, and the costs of sewer and water services.

Although transportation can influence growth, growth can also influence transportation. While transportation projects play a role in land use changes by providing infrastructure that can improve mobility or open access to new locations, the converse may also be true: new land development may generate travel to that location, which, in turn, generates the need for new transportation facilities.

The proposed project, as with Caltrans projects in general, has been developed to accommodate growth already planned in accordance with regional and local plans and policies. Projects that may have growth-related effects are those that create access to an area that was previously inaccessible, remove barriers to future growth, or support unanticipated development within an already developed area (i.e., supporting growth exceeding that projected in local agency general plans or projected in forecasts by regional planning agencies).

Most capacity-increasing highway projects are proposed in response to traffic congestion that results from current or anticipated growth, rather than attracting new growth to an area that otherwise would remain stable or decline in population. However, transportation projects can affect the type, location, amount, or rate of growth in an area, most often indirectly, due to changes in travel time and increased land accessibility in areas that may be ripe for development.

Consistent with *Guidance for Preparers of Growth Related, Indirect Impact Analysis* (Caltrans 2006), this section assesses the likelihood that the proposed project would result in indirect impacts related to growth. The analysis concentrates on the identification of the reasonably foreseeable growth with or without the project; the extent to which the project would influence the overall amount, type, location, or timing of that growth; and whether project-related growth could be expected to put pressure on or cause impacts to environmental resources of concern (Caltrans 2006).

6.4 Affected Environment

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, which establish the steps necessary to comply with NEPA, require evaluation of the potential environmental effects of all proposed federal activities and programs. This provision includes a requirement to examine indirect

Community Impact Assessment

SR 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus-on-Shoulder Improvements—Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive—and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project

effects, which may occur in areas beyond the immediate influence of a proposed action and at some time in the future. The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1508.8) refer to these consequences as indirect impacts. Indirect impacts may include changes in land use, economic vitality, and population density, which are all elements of growth.

CEQA also requires the analysis of a project's potential to induce growth. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that environmental documents "...discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment..."

The study area for this analysis includes the larger region to conservatively capture any indirect growth effects of the proposed project. Specifically, the study area includes Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties; the cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola, Marina, and Watsonville; and the urban service areas of Live Oak, Aptos, and Freedom, which will make up over 70% of the total housing growth in Santa Cruz County between 2000 and 2030.

Certain areas, such as San Benito County and the cities of San Juan Bautista, Hollister, and Salinas, are not included in the study area because growth in these areas is considered unlikely to be affected by the proposed project. Growth in these areas is not anticipated to occur as a result of modifications to the SR 1 corridor because very few residents of these areas work in the City of Santa Cruz due to the difficult commute. Because San Juan Bautista is the gateway to the City of Hollister, a similar statement could be made about Hollister and San Benito County as a whole. Water has also become very expensive in these areas, particularly in San Juan Bautista, which is creating a resource constraint to growth. The inventory of vacant mixed-use-zoned land in Salinas totals 16.5 acres. Although Salinas may be an area of future growth, it is not anticipated that this project would have any effect there given the number of "choke points" on the highways in between Salinas and the project area, and there are no capacity improvements planned for the two-lane segment of SR 1 south of Santa Cruz County. Planned residential developments in Salinas might sell out faster if commuting to Santa Cruz becomes easier, but would not change the amount of planned growth in Salinas. Applicable planning documents were reviewed, and opinions of local planners and officials were sought to identify any new information that could affect growth.

6.4.1 Current Growth Trends

The following discussion uses the 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast to describe projected growth trends, which was adopted on June 15, 2022 (AMBAG, 2022). Information on the 2018 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast has also been provided for reference and to characterize the region's growth planning assumptions and trends.

SR 1 is the major north–south transportation route for the residents of both Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. Traffic on SR 1 is affected by a pronounced commute pattern between housing in southern Santa Cruz County and northern Monterey County and jobs in the City of Santa Cruz and areas farther north in Silicon Valley. Based on the 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast projections, the region’s population is expected to grow by approximately 107,535 people between 2015 and 2045, representing an increase of 14% and a total population of 869,776 in 2045. Compared to the 2018 Regional Growth Forecast, the region is anticipated to grow more slowly as the 2018 Regional Growth Forecast anticipated an increase in population of 16% (approximately 120,600 people) between 2015 and 2040. It should also be noted that the 2022 Regional Growth Forecast does not account for the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on population and employment, and it is anticipated that growth in the region would be even slower than disclosed in the 2022 Regional Growth Forecast, particularly in the first five years of the forecast period (2020 to 2025).

The 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast projects that the region will add 65,489 jobs over 30 years, between 2015 and 2045, for a total of 442,824 jobs by 2045. Of that growth, 58% (approximately 38,169 jobs) is expected to be in Monterey County, 7% (approximately 4,495 jobs) is expected to be in San Benito County, and 35% (approximately 22,825 jobs) is expected to be in Santa Cruz County. Similar to population projections, the 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast projects a slightly slower rate of employment growth when compared to the 2018 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast but forecasts more jobs overall compared to the 2018 forecast, which projected an additional 57,400 jobs between 2015 and 2040.

The regional growth rate is similar to national forecasts, but slightly slower than state-level forecasts. Furthermore, job growth is expected across most employment sectors. The fastest growing industries include site-based skilled trade, financial and professional services, social and health services, and other services. Conversely, the slowest growing industries include agriculture, wholesale trade, and manufacturing. Santa Cruz County is projected to have 140,002 jobs in 2020, 144,316 jobs in 2030, and 153,261 jobs in 2045, representing an increase of 17% between 2015 and 2045. The City of Santa Cruz is projected to have an increase of 22% in jobs and the City of Capitola is projected to have an increase of 15% in jobs between 2015–2045. Unincorporated Santa Cruz County is projected to have an increase of 17% in jobs between 2015 and 2045.

The AMBAG region has a higher population-to-jobs ratio than the nation or state for several reasons; the leading reasons are commuting patterns and “external” population forces (colleges, military, and prisons). AMBAG residents commute to jobs outside the region, primarily to jobs in Santa Clara County. This commuting pattern means there are residents in the region not

connected to AMBAG region job growth. The 2018 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast projected a 28.2% increase in Santa Clara County jobs between 2010 and 2035, which, combined with high housing prices in Santa Clara County, will increase the incentive for people to search for cheaper housing in portions of the AMBAG region. While the 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast did not make the same assumptions regarding employment growth in Santa Clara County, the allocation of housing and population growth was based on historic trends which account for this known commuting pattern.

The region is projected to add approximately 5,000 residents per year between 2020 and 2030 and growth is anticipated to slow to an average of 3,000 added residents per year between 2030 and 2045. Taking average household size and vacancy rates into account, the resulting housing growth is expected to follow a similar trend with faster housing growth between 2020 and 2030 and slower housing growth between 2030 and 2045. Based on AMBAG projections the region is anticipated to add approximately 1,400 housing units per year between 2015 and 2045. To house the region's expected population growth, AMBAG forecasts indicate an increase of 42,240 housing units by 2045, for a total of approximately 304,900 units. It should be noted that the 2018 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast projected a higher degree of housing growth in 2040 (305,300 units) than the 2022 Regional Growth Forecast, suggesting that AMBAG currently anticipates slower overall housing growth than previously projected. Of that growth, 61% (approximately 26,100 housing units) is expected to be in Monterey County, 18% (approximately 7,500 housing units) is expected to be in San Benito County, and 20% (approximately 8,750 housing units) is expected to be in Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz County is projected to have 109,208 housing units in 2025, 112,479 housing units in 2035, and 113,797 housing units in 2045, representing an increase of approximately 8% between 2015 and 2045 (AMBAG 2020). The City of Santa Cruz is projected to have an increase of approximately 13% in housing units and the City of Capitola is projected to have an increase of approximately 9% in housing units between 2015 – 2045. The balance of Santa Cruz County (excluding City of Santa Cruz, Capitola, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville) is anticipated to have a 4% increase in housing units between 2015 and 2045.

These trends indicate that, while jobs in Santa Cruz County are anticipated to increase by approximately 17% between 2015 and 2045, housing units are only expected to increase by approximately 8% during the same time period. Similarly, while jobs in employment centers such as the City of Santa Cruz and areas farther north are expected to increase, housing is expected to increase by approximately 13% in the City of Santa Cruz, 9% in the City of Capitola, 5% in the City of Scotts Valley, 17% in the City of Watsonville, and 4% in the remainder of the County (AMBAG 2022).

As employment demand increases in the Santa Cruz area, areas farther north, and Silicon Valley, demand for housing in more affordable areas in the southern portions of Santa Cruz County is also expected to increase. As population, job, and housing numbers increase, commute trips traveling from areas where future growth is projected to occur north on SR 1 to employment centers are expected to increase peak-period highway delay in the project area. Based on existing and projected conditions, SR 1 northbound during the AM peak period and SR 1 southbound during the PM peak period are the peak directions of travel. Based on the available counts, SR 1 traffic volumes for the peak directions are currently approaching or equal to the capacity of the freeway under existing 2019 (baseline year) conditions. Existing (2019) estimated speeds indicate that traffic congestion in the peak directions is growing in both severity and duration (CDM Smith 2021).

Growth and development in the SR 1 corridor are guided by land use policies and programs set forth in the general plans of the local counties and cities, as well as the village or community design plans for the unincorporated areas surrounding the SR 1 corridor. Most of the jurisdictions in the SR 1 corridor are projected to have somewhat higher job creation rates compared to their residential growth rates. Employment growth rates in Santa Cruz County and its incorporated cities would reinforce the south-to-north commute pattern. Because the relatively job-rich Santa Cruz area would add jobs faster than housing, even more workers would be drawn from the southern part of the county. As indicated by the increase in recurrent congestion on SR 1 in the project area, planned growth in Santa Cruz County exceeds highway capacity. Factors that reinforce the south-to-north pattern include:

- 1) Housing affordability and availability in the City of Watsonville and other areas south of Santa Cruz, such as the City of Marina and unincorporated communities of Live Oak, Aptos, and Freedom. Because many jobs in the Santa Cruz area are service jobs, lower-income service workers and many moderate-income households would likely choose housing south of their employment locations.
- 2) The Silicon Valley job market. Silicon Valley workers have long been attracted by the beauty and amenities of the Santa Cruz area and other coastal communities along SR 1. SR 17 provides access over the Santa Cruz Mountains to job-rich Santa Clara County.

Based on the population, employment, and housing projections identified by AMBAG, and the commute patterns anticipated to correlate with projected growth, congestion on SR 1 is expected to worsen during peak travel times (northbound AM and southbound PM). Therefore, improvements to SR 1 that would reduce congestion and travel times during peak travel periods between employment centers, such as the City of Santa Cruz, and more affordable areas in the southern portion of Santa Cruz County and northern portion of Monterey County, would be expected to increase the attractiveness of those southern county areas for new residential growth.

6.4.2 Local Government Plans and Policies

The following local government land use plans were reviewed to determine the growth-inducing potential of each plan's policies:

- County of Santa Cruz: 1994 General Plan/LCP and 2015 Housing Element
- City of Santa Cruz: 2030 General Plan and LCP and 2015–2023 Housing Element
- City of Capitola: 2014–2023 General Plan
- Village of Aptos: 2010 Aptos Village Plan
- City of Watsonville: 2005 General Plan
- County of Monterey: 2010 General Plan
- Castroville: Castroville Community Plan 2007 and 2008 Growth Study
- City of Marina: 2000 General Plan and 2015–2023 Housing Element
- Fort Ord: Fort Ord Master Plan Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan (from 2010 Monterey County General Plan)
- City of Salinas: 2002 General Plan and 2015–2023 Housing Element
- County of San Benito: 2035 General Plan and 2014–2023 Housing Element
- City of San Juan Bautista: 2035 General Plan and 2015–2019 Housing Element
- City of Hollister: 2005–2023 General Plan and 2009 Housing Element

Review of applicable policies and goals included in planning documents indicates there is opportunity for limited growth in several communities within the project study area. The planned development for these areas is described in each jurisdiction's general plan and generally emphasizes smart growth strategies such as infill, mixed-use, and higher-density development; maintaining compact development; affordable housing; containing urban development; encouraging alternate modes of transportation; slow and balanced growth; and preservation of

the Pacific Ocean, agricultural/grazing lands, publicly owned open space, and natural areas (Caltrans 2008, 2018). These plans do not include goals or policies that would exacerbate growth. Instead, existing land use policies and zoning constraints are considered to limit unplanned residential or related commercial growth and prevent development that could result in impacts to resources of concern within the project study area.

Based on review of applicable planning documents, the following general conclusions were made:

- The overall trend is that Santa Cruz County is one of the most desirable places to live and work in the country. Demand to live and work in the county is high and will exist regardless of traffic or utility issues.
- Santa Cruz continues to be a highly desirable community in which to live. Housing pressure, as a result, is high and prices have risen while supply is limited. Affordable housing for the local community and workforce has become a priority. According to the latest City of Santa Cruz Housing Element Annual Report, the City has issued building permits for an average of 174 units per year.
- Monterey County's limitations to growth generally include opposition by county residents, the presence of visual resources, lack of available water, and restrictions on farmland development.

Resource constraints to growth in the project area are considered to generally include the following:

- Land use policy and zoning constraints;
- LCP constraints;
- Lack of or limited availability of water;
- Lack of developable land in coastal communities or large swaths of parcels with protected riparian habitat;
- Public attitudes toward growth;
- Perceived threat or past practices of litigation;
- Political environment; and
- Market constraints (land costs, construction costs).

Although constraints to growth have been identified in the project area, the following areas were found to be capable of potentially supporting new growth:

- **City of Watsonville:** Given that Watsonville is approaching build out of available vacant and underdeveloped properties, future housing growth is expected to consist of infill within existing neighborhoods and commercial areas, as well as new subdivisions in adjoining areas (subject to Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission [LAFCO] approval) in the Sphere of Influence. For housing development beyond the 2015 to 2023 timeframe of the Housing Element, Watsonville voters passed Measure U (2002), the Watsonville Urban Limit Line and Development Timing Initiative, that will guide the logical expansion of Watsonville through 2025.
- **City of Marina:** Land available for new housing within existing developed residential areas is extremely limited. Within already-developed portions of the city, excluding land west of SR 1, approximately 61 acres of vacant land remain, the majority of which is located in areas currently designated for commercial or industrial uses. There are also approximately 66 acres of land in already-developed areas that are economically under-utilized, where improvements to land have a lower value than the land itself. A portion of this under-utilized land is, however, occupied by mobile homes or low-cost motel units, while other portions are located along major retail frontages and may more logically be used for retail or mixed-use commercial development. Consequently, it is estimated the Community Land Use Element policies would accommodate between 400 and 600 new units in already-developed areas of Marina, most of which would consist of multi-family housing located in mixed-use commercial areas along with secondary dwellings and small lot single-family homes. According to the City of Marina's 2015–2023 Housing Element (City of Marina 2016), the following areas are considered to have the highest potential to support new growth in the city:
 - Areas of Former Fort Ord within the City's Corporate Limits or Sphere of Influence: Potential new/re-development area.
 - Armstrong Ranch Property: Within the 2,000-acre property, approximately 320 acres lie within the City's municipal boundary and urban growth boundary (UGB), and the remaining, greater portion lies outside the UGB but within the City's Sphere of Influence.
- **City of Santa Cruz:** The City of Santa Cruz has a very limited number of vacant properties. Most of the City of Santa Cruz's growth is expected to be infill development. The City of Santa Cruz 2030 General Plan, adopted in 2012, anticipates growth along the major transportation corridors in the city—Ocean Street, Mission Street, Soquel Avenue, and Water Street—as well as in its downtown. In 2018, the CCC certified changes to the City's

Downtown Plan that included increases in allowable height. Those height increases have spurred significant interest in redevelopment of the southern portions of downtown, and multiple projects totaling approximately 550 units have either been approved or are in the entitlement process. Additional redevelopment is anticipated in the area as a result of the increased height allowances, and the City of Santa Cruz will be considering whether to expand the Downtown Plan boundary further south in the coming years, which could spur additional redevelopment in that area.

- **Unincorporated Communities of Live Oak, Aptos, and Freedom:** The unincorporated areas of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom are considered to be areas that could potentially support future growth in Santa Cruz County as employment and housing demands increase. According to the Santa Cruz County Housing Element, those with lower and higher incomes tend to be concentrated in particular areas of the county, with lower income households concentrated in the Live Oak and South County areas, and higher income households concentrated in the Aptos/Corralitos and Scotts Valley areas. These areas are considered to offer more developable land than the already built-out cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola.

6.4.3 Opinions of Local Planners and Officials

A public scoping online open house was held for this project, from September 17 through October 19, 2020; no comments or concerns related to growth were raised by local officials. The RTC formed an expert panel of stakeholders and contacted representatives from the following colleges, local property developers, planners, and planning officials from potentially affected jurisdictions on August 25, 2020, and requested their participation in an expert panel interview to gather their opinions about the growth potential for the region (Caltrans, 2020):

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments: Bhupendra Patel, Director of Modeling;
- Cabrillo College: Jon Salisbury, Director of Facilities Planning and Plant Operations;
- City of Capitola: Katie Herlihy, Community Development Director;
- City of Marina: Christy Hopper, Planning Services Manager;
- City of Salinas: Megan Hunter, Community Development Director;
- City of Santa Cruz: Lee Butler, Planning and Community Development Planning Director;
- City of Seaside: Kurt Overmeyer, Economic Development Director;
- City of Watsonville: Suzi Merriam, Community Development Director;
- County of Santa Cruz: Paja Levine, Planning Department Assistant Director;
- Eadie Consultants: Charlie Eadie, Owner;

- LOMAK Property Group: Doug Kaplan, Principal;
- Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission: Sarah Christensen, Project Manager;
- Swift Consulting Services: John Swift, Owner; and
- University of California, Santa Cruz: Jolie Kerns, Director of Facilities Planning and Plant Operations.

Of those that were contacted, the RTC received responses from the following contacts:

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments: Bhupendra Patel, Director of Modeling;
- County of Santa Cruz: Paja Levine, Planning Department Assistant Director;
- City of Santa Cruz: Lee Butler, Planning and Community Development Planning Director; and
- City of Watsonville: Suzi Merriam, Community Development Director.

Additional responses from a larger group of the expert panelists would have provided a more thorough understanding of growth potential in the study area. The information received from the expert panelists that did respond was limited but indicated that the project may have the potential to affect growth in the study area. Responses from the expert panel representatives confirmed the conclusions identified in Section 3.1.2, above, and provided the following additional opinions:

- AMBAG Response
 - AMBAG anticipates growth will continue to occur at a slow rate in Santa Cruz County. Recent changes to state housing law have begun to put pressure on local jurisdictions to implement their housing element plans; however, housing construction is still dependent on market constraints, resources available, and community support and it is expected to occur independent of improvements to the SR 1 corridor. Generally, local growth in Santa Cruz County is supply driven and is independent of SR 1 improvements. Growth is generally expected to occur as infill development in most of Santa Cruz County.
 - Land costs, water availability, and construction costs are expected to be the greatest constraints on future growth. The amount of growth expected in the Santa Cruz County area is relatively low.
 - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) conditions are not anticipated to significantly affect the type, rate, or location of growth projected for Santa Cruz County.
- County of Santa Cruz Response

- In addition to the conclusions identified in Section 3.1.2, the County of Santa Cruz considers the community of Live Oak to have a high potential housing growth. The County anticipates that the Soquel Avenue/Drive corridor would benefit from SR 1 improvements as they would relieve some congestion on Soquel Avenue. The County is seeing more development proposals for that corridor, which puts more and more pressure on the local roadway system.
- Additional constraints on growth identified by the County include aging infrastructure, such as sewer, stormwater, and roadways; large parcels held by landowners that do not want them developed as housing; and procedural constraints (the amount of time, money, and effort required to get through the County’s process for rezoning and developing a parcel).
- The County is undergoing a substantial policy and code update, called the Sustainability Update, which includes an update to the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the General Plan, to be renamed the Access and Mobility Element and the Built Environment Element. Additionally, the updated code will modernize the County’s approach to design standards, create more tools to incentivize denser housing developments and missing middle housing², and provide for easier to understand, more objective land use standards for a number of zoning districts. A concurrent, though separate, effort to update impact fees and approaches is also underway in order to better fund the transportation network.
- The Economic Development and Housing Departments work with the community to find opportunities for development and locate both employers and housing opportunities within the county. However, there are market forces and construction costs that are beyond the control of local jurisdictions.
- The County’s understanding is that the water agencies in the region are undergoing massive infrastructure planning efforts to address the water shortages.
- Political and community attitudes toward growth are beyond the control of any local agency. The County makes an effort to educate both political representatives and the community at large regarding sustainable development and growth, but as a public agency, the County is also responsible and accountable for representing the vision of the community at large.
- SR 1 is a factor for where in Santa Cruz County people choose to live. If SR 1 improvements lead to less congestion, there might be more development demand for “missing middle” housing in the cities of Aptos and Watsonville. There is also a large

² Missing middle housing refers to multi-unit housing that is of a similar scale to single-family housing such as duplexes and courtyard apartments.

area of land between Aptos and Watsonville that is outside of the urban services boundary; however, the County does not currently consider it appropriate for growth.

- For the most part in Santa Cruz County, there are so many other constraints, such as a limited amount of developable land, environmental factors, zoning, limited resources (water), political backlash, the cost of construction, CEQA review, and other constraints, that incentivizing housing development needs to be tackled from a number of angles. There are also areas that are not considered appropriate for growth, such as outside of the urban and rural services boundaries.
- Most of the areas where growth would be anticipated to occur in the county are already developed areas and the primary resource that would be impacted is water supply.
- While COVID-19 conditions have impacted an already downward-trending retail and commercial development environment in the county, COVID-19 conditions are not considered to impact housing growth. Increasing applications for housing development are anticipated to continue in response to the new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) code and laws despite COVID-19 conditions because housing is considered as important now as ever.
- City of Santa Cruz Response
 - With a number of large projects in the planning phase, the City of Santa Cruz anticipates an increase in the average number of units developed per year compared to the average rate of the past 5 years.
 - Senate Bill (SB) 330, the most recent amendment to the Housing Accountability Act, requires that housing projects that meet the City's objective standards must be approved unless the City makes a finding, based on substantial evidence, that the project will have an adverse public safety impact. If an objective standard precludes a project from meeting the allowable density in the General Plan, then cities cannot apply that objective standard to limit the project's density. In addition to the Downtown Plan changes noted in Section 3.1.2 above, in response to SB 330, the City is embarking on a process to develop objective standards for multi-family housing. This will provide more certainty for developers, the public, staff, and decision makers in understanding what will be allowed and what can/must be approved pursuant to SB 330. This could spur additional redevelopment, but the results of the process and the associated implications for development are both yet to be seen.
 - The City has a high demand for housing, so growth is more constrained by supply than demand. Growth in the city, especially housing growth, is expected to occur mostly independent of SR 1 improvements. The one exception may be that office developers

could consider SR 1 improvements as one factor in deciding whether to proceed, recognizing that the commute to/from Santa Cruz would be affected.

- Santa Cruz is very environmentally conscious. The City evaluates each project or policy change for potential environmental impacts, for which there is a myriad—biology, tree removals, geology, etc.
- Santa Cruz is a significant employment center and draws commuters from the south, where home prices are generally less expensive than inside City limits. The areas to the south of Santa Cruz could receive additional development pressure if the commute to/from those locations is made easier.
- COVID-19 has impacted attitudes towards office development (i.e., will more people continue to work from home rather than from in the office), and it is yet to be seen whether that will be a long-term or temporary change in demand for existing and new office development. If people's long-term attitudes shift toward more online purchases, as has been the case during the pandemic, then fewer brick-and-mortar retailers may be needed. This could affect the quantity of retail or office space demand, thereby affecting the amount of commercial space incorporated into new projects. If the quantity is not affected, then the eventual tenants could be. For example, COVID-19 could accelerate the shift towards services rather than retail uses. These trends are still to be determined, as the long-term implications are unknown.
- City of Watsonville Response
 - The City is currently developing a Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan that will increase residential density within the downtown area. It is anticipated that the Specific Plan and EIR will be completed in fall of 2022.
 - Growth in the City of Watsonville is demand driven.
 - Improvements to SR 1 and increased alternative modes of travel are expected to greatly improve the commute time for a majority of Watsonville residents that commute north for work but are not considered to directly or indirectly change the rate, location, type, or amount of growth in the city.

6.5 Environmental Consequences

This section assesses the likelihood that the proposed project would result in indirect impacts related to growth in the study area. This assessment examines the type of transportation project, type of project location (e.g., urban, suburban, rural), changes in accessibility, and growth pressure as factors influencing the likelihood of growth inducement and subsequent growth-related impacts.

6.5.1 Build Alternative

6.5.1.1 First-Cut Analysis of Growth Effects of the Proposed Project

Caltrans and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidance indicates the need for an initial analysis of the project to determine the likelihood of growth-related impacts. This analysis should use readily available information to examine a variety of interrelated factors to answer the following questions (Caltrans 2006).

A. How, if at all, does the project potentially change accessibility?

Accessibility refers not just to the physical constraints associated with transportation projects, but rather reflects both the attractiveness of potential destinations and ease of reaching them, which, in turn, are related to land use and circulation issues. According to the Traffic Study prepared for the proposed project (CDM Smith 2021), proposed improvements to bus service as well as interim improvements to congestion from implementation of auxiliary lanes would reduce travel times between Santa Cruz and Watsonville by 13 minutes in the northbound direction and 8 minutes in the southbound direction during the AM peak travel period, and would reduce travel times by 20 minutes in the northbound direction and 8 minutes in the southbound direction during the PM peak travel period in the opening year. The project would reduce travel times between Santa Cruz and Watsonville by 3 minutes in the northbound direction and 8 minutes in the southbound direction during the AM peak travel period, and would reduce travel times by 19 minutes in the northbound direction and 9 minutes in the southbound direction during the PM peak travel period in year 2045 (20 years after construction completion). Improved congestion and reduced travel times on SR 1 between Santa Cruz and Watsonville could improve access between employment centers, such as the City of Santa Cruz, and areas that have the potential to support new growth, such as the cities of Watsonville and Marina, and the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom.

Thus, the Build Alternative would make important areas of the Santa Cruz region more accessible in terms of travel times and travel behavior, especially for commuters and transit riders traveling north in the AM peak travel period and south in the PM peak travel period. In this regard, the proposed project would improve accessibility in the region as travel time savings and transit improvements would appeal to commuters within the study area. Further, it could also increase the appeal of housing in more affordable areas in southern Santa Cruz County and northern Monterey County.

B. How, if at all, do the project type, project location, and growth-pressure potentially influence growth?

Project Type

Certain transportation project types, such as auxiliary lane projects in an urbanized area with low growth rates and little remaining development capacity, are unlikely to cause growth-related impacts. Other types of projects, such as construction of new highways, may have more potential for such impacts. Typically, projects that create a new facility or new access require an analysis of growth-related impacts.

The proposed Build Alternative would provide auxiliary lanes on both the northbound and southbound sides of SR 1, extending approximately 2.6 miles between the State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard interchanges. In addition, the proposed Build Alternative would construct a bicycle and pedestrian trail along an approximately 1.14-mile segment of the Santa Cruz Branch Line railroad right of way, from Rio Del Mar Boulevard to State Park Drive. Other than the proposed trail segment, the Build Alternative would not provide new roads or new access to areas that are currently inaccessible. Rather, it would reduce existing and future freeway traffic congestion and travel times during peak travel hours, adding limited capacity to the constrained existing freeway and providing for alternative modes of travel that do not currently exist along this freeway.

Regarding the proposed Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, bicycle accessibility would be improved; however, the influence on growth would be small since the proposed trail segment is a part of a larger trail program that is intended as a scenic/recreational amenity rather than a transportation facility. Further, bicycle trails have limited utility for commuting and the proposed facility would only provide a parallel means of access to SR 1 rather than opening a new corridor to a previously inaccessible location. Following completion of the project, SR 1 may be more attractive for existing and potential future freeway users compared to the current condition, but proposed improvements would occur along a short section of an existing freeway corridor, addressing projected traffic volumes, and encouraging drivers to use public transit or non-motorized transportation.

As discussed previously, auxiliary lane projects in a highly urbanized area with low growth rates and little remaining development capacity are unlikely to cause growth-related impacts. Based on the project type, the urbanized condition of the project area, and the constraints to growth, such as the limited quantity of developable land and environmental constraints, the proposed project is not expected to result in direct impacts related to growth in the form of providing access to new areas that are currently inaccessible. However, it is possible that the project, including the associated increased capacity and reduced travel times, could make areas

surrounding employment centers where developable land is still available, more appealing for future development if peak travel commute times are reduced. This could result in indirect effects related to growth in the form of growth pressure on surrounding areas that can support future growth.

Project Location

Another important screening factor is project location; that is, whether a project is located in an urban, suburban, urban/suburban fringe, or rural area, and whether the location of the project could influence growth. The project is located in a suburban area with limited developable land. As discussed previously, although it is suburban, the project area is subject to the “missing middle” housing demand and is a highly desirable community in which to live. As a result, housing pressure in the area is high and prices have risen while supply is limited. As confirmed by the expert panel, growth in the local job centers, such as the cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola, is limited to infill development due to the lack of developable land designated for future residential or commercial development. Infill development in these areas is expected to be planned development that would occur independent of improvements along SR 1. The areas that have the potential to support new growth generally include the outlying areas in the southern portion of Santa Cruz County and northern portion of Monterey County, in the cities of Watsonville and Marina, and the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom, where developable land designated for residential and commercial uses is still available. These areas are planned for future growth through gradual development of higher density housing, which will support planned job growth in the nearby employment centers, within and near the City of Santa Cruz.

The proposed Build Alternative would not directly promote additional growth within the region; however, it could indirectly contribute to growth pressure in the region by making certain outlying areas in the vicinity of the City of Santa Cruz more appealing for future growth by reducing congestion and improving travel times for commuters traveling to Santa Cruz from areas south where development could occur. Planned growth in the region is not dependent on the proposed project and is not expected to be substantially influenced by the proposed project.

Therefore, in terms of project location, the proposed project would not be anticipated to result in direct growth-related impacts; however, it could result in indirect impacts in the form of growth pressure for areas in the vicinity of the City of Santa Cruz where additional development could occur.

Growth Pressure

As discussed above, the project is not expected to result in direct impacts related to growth; however, due to the high desirability and demand for housing in the area, it is possible that the

reduced congestion and travel time savings on SR 1 between Santa Cruz and Watsonville achieved by the proposed project could indirectly contribute to growth pressure in areas where additional growth could occur. Growth in the cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola is expected to be limited to planned infill development that would occur independent of SR 1 improvements. Additionally, based on responses from the expert panel, it is evident that recent changes to state housing law have begun to put pressure on local jurisdictions to implement their housing elements and provide affordable housing. The cities of Watsonville and Marina and the unincorporated communities of Live Oak, Aptos, and Freedom have been identified as having developable land remaining that would be suitable for future development. Therefore, the proposed project could indirectly contribute to growth pressure in those areas by reducing commute times during peak travel periods from those areas to employment centers in the City of Santa Cruz and surrounding areas.

C. Whether or not project-related growth is “reasonably foreseeable.”

Based on the aforementioned suburban condition of the project area, availability of some developable land, and the project type, the proposed project is not expected to result in direct impacts related to growth. However, due to the high desirability and demand for housing in the area, it is reasonably foreseeable that the reduced congestion and travel time savings on SR 1 between Santa Cruz and Watsonville achieved by the proposed project could indirectly contribute to growth pressure in areas where additional growth could occur. The proposed project would not remove or change existing obstacles to growth, such as the availability of water or other utilities or service systems, the presence of resource constraints, public attitudes toward growth, land use policy or zoning constraints, or other market constraints; therefore, growth that could occur is expected to be in the form of planned growth, not unplanned growth. This planned growth is expected to occur in areas where developable land that is already zoned or designated for residential and/or commercial land uses is available. Based on review of applicable planning documents and feedback from the expert panel, planned growth is reasonably foreseeable in the cities of Watsonville and Marina and the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom.

D. If there is project-related growth, how, if at all, will that impact resources of concern?

Based on the analysis provided in this section, reasonably foreseeable growth is expected to be limited to planned growth that could occur as a result of growth pressure that could be indirectly influenced by the reduced congestion and travel time savings on SR 1 achieved by the proposed project. Future planned development in the cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola and surrounding developed areas is anticipated to be limited to infill development. Infill development is not expected to result in impacts to resources of concern other than water, if water availability is

constrained at the time of future development. Future infill projects would be subject to environmental review and would be required to identify adequate water supplies prior to development; therefore, impacts related to water supply from infill projects are not expected to be significant.

New development or re-development is expected to occur in the form of planned development within existing undeveloped areas that are zoned or otherwise designated for residential and/or commercial development in the cities of Watsonville and Marina and the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom. Such areas that meet these criteria have been identified to assess the potential for impacts to resources of concern. Areas where potential future planned development could occur are shown on **Figure 10** and described in detail in **Table 6**. The numbered sites shown on **Figure 7** correspond with numbered areas of potential future growth identified in **Table 6**.

Figure 10: Areas of Potential Future Growth

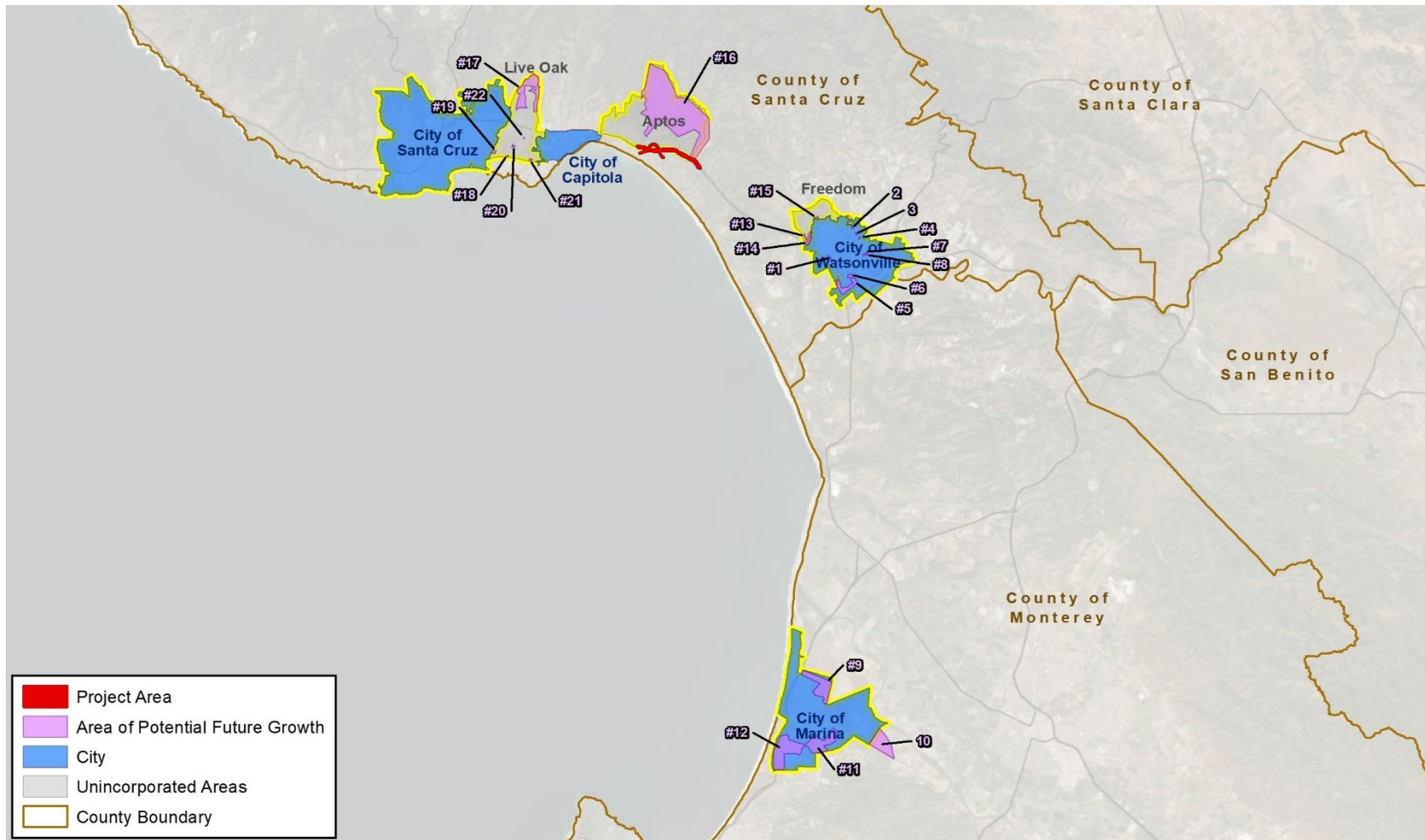


Table 6: Areas of Potential Future Growth

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity)¹
City of Santa Cruz²			
Infill: The City of Santa Cruz 2030 General Plan, adopted in 2012, anticipates growth in the form of infill development along the major transportation corridors in the city—Ocean Street, Mission Street, Soquel Avenue, and Water Street—as well as in its downtown.	Regional Visitor Commercial, Mixed-Use Medium Density, Mixed-Use Visitor Commercial, Community Commercial, Mixed-Use High Density	Central Business District, Community Commercial	Since future development is expected to be limited to infill development within the downtown area and along major transportation corridors, impacts to resources of concern, other than potential impacts related to water supply, are not anticipated.
City of Watsonville³			
Infill: Future housing growth is expected to include infill development within existing neighborhoods and commercial areas, as well as new development in adjoining areas (subject to Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission [LAFCO] approval) in the Sphere of Influence (identified in rows below).	Residential Low Density, Residential Medium Density, Residential High Density	Planned Single Family Residential, Single Family Residential-Low Density, Multiple Residential-Medium Density, Multiple Residential-High Density, Neighborhood Commercial	Future infill development within existing neighborhoods and commercial areas is not expected to result in impacts to resources of concern, other than potential impacts related to water supply.

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity) ¹
Potential Growth Area (#1) Approximate acreage: 5.59 acres Condition: undeveloped	Residential Low Density (w/corridor of Environmental Management)	R-1: Single Family Residential-Low Density (w/corridor of EM-OS: Environmental Management/Open Space -Private Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of developed areas, herbaceous habitat, and a corridor of hardwood woodland (eucalyptus trees). The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.
Potential Growth Area (#2) Approximate acreage: 3.56 acres Condition: undeveloped	General Commercial	CNS: Neighborhood Shopping Center, CT: Thoroughfare Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists entirely of developed/disturbed areas. The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.
Potential Growth Area (#3) Approximate acreage: 2.07 acres Condition: undeveloped	General Commercial	CNS: Neighborhood Shopping Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists entirely of developed/disturbed areas. The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.
Potential Growth Area (#4) Approximate acreage: 1.69 acres Condition: undeveloped	General Commercial	CT: Thoroughfare Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of developed/disturbed areas and barren land. The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.
Potential Growth Area (#5): Manabow Business Park Specific Plan⁴ Approximate acreage: 95 acres Condition: partially developed	Business Park District, Workforce Residential District, Environmental/Open Space, Retail Overlay District, North Business Park Overlay District	Multiple Residential-Medium Density (RM-2), General Industrial (IG), Industrial Park (IP), Exclusive Agriculture (EM-A1), Environmental Mgmt.. Open Space-Private Land (EM-OS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat primarily consists of agriculture, herbaceous habitat, and developed areas. Overlaps documented occurrences of western bumblebee (CNDDDB Occurrence [Occ.] 267) and bank swallow (CNDDDB Occ. 176). Bordering Watsonville Slough and associated freshwater emergent wetland habitat. Watsonville Slough is considered a scenic coastal area in the Santa Cruz County LCP. Partially overlaps Santa Cruz tarplant critical habitat. The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity) ¹
Potential Growth Area (#6) Approximate acreage: 12 acres Condition: undeveloped	Residential High Density	RM-3/PD Multiple Residential-High Density/Planned Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat primarily consists of developed areas and shrub habitat. Overlaps documented occurrences of western bumblebee (CNDDDB Occ. 267) and bank swallow (CNDDDB Occ. 176). Bordering Watsonville Slough and associated freshwater emergent wetland habitat. Watsonville Slough is considered a scenic coastal area in the Santa Cruz County LCP. Located adjacent to Santa Cruz tarplant critical habitat. The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.
Potential Growth Area (#7) Approximate acreage: 5.83 acres Condition: partially developed	Residential Medium Density – corridor of Environmental Management	Multiple Residential-Medium Density (RM-2), Environmental Mgmt. Open Space-Private Land (EM-OS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists entirely of developed/disturbed areas. Corridor of mapped freshwater emergent wetland. The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.
Potential Growth Area (#8) Approximate acreage: 0.93 acre Condition: undeveloped	General Commercial	CN: Neighborhood Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists entirely of developed/disturbed areas. The State Archaeological Inventory has identified at least 19 recorded sites within the Planning Area and indicated a strong likelihood of future discoveries.
City of Marina⁵			

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity) ¹
Potential Growth Area (#9): Armstrong Ranch (Marina Station) Specific Plan⁶ Approximate acreage: 300 acres Condition: undeveloped	Planned: Neighborhood Center, Neighborhood General, Neighborhood Edge, Office, Marina Station, Olson School Expansion, Open Space, Park, Industrial	UGB Open Space, Habitat Preserve & Other Open Space, Parks & Recreation, Single-Family Residential, Multi- Family Residential, Light Industrial/Service Commercial, Office/Research, Public Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat primarily consists of herbaceous habitat with scattered shrubs. Overlaps documented occurrences of western snowy plover (CNDDDB Occ. 114), coast horned lizard (CNDDDB Occ. 632), California horned lark (CNDDDB Occ. 69), burrowing owl (CNDDDB Occ. 513), and ferruginous hawk (CNDDDB Occ. 9). The segment of SR 1 that extends through the city of Marina is an eligible state scenic highway. The City of Marina General Plan requires protection of ocean views.
Potential Growth Area (#10) Approximate acreage: 266.86 acres Condition: undeveloped (within City Sphere of Influence)	Office/Research, Visitor-Serving	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat primarily consists of herbaceous habitat and is bordered to the east and south by hardwood woodland. Overlaps documented occurrences of Monterey spineflower (CNDDDB Occ. 2) and Salinas harvest mouse (CNDDDB Occ. 7). Not designated critical habitat but located adjacent to designated critical habitat for Monterey spineflower.
Potential Growth Area (#11): Marina Heights at Former Fort Ord Approximate acreage: 293.8 acres Condition: partially developed	Single-Family Residential, Marina Heights Residential, Parks & Recreation, Habitat Preserve & Other Open Space	Marina Heights Residential (RMH), Multiple Family Residential District (R- 4), Open Space District (O)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat primarily consists of developed, herbaceous, and shrub habitat, with patches of barren land and hardwood woodland. Overlaps documented occurrences of Monterey spineflower (CNDDDB Occ. 2), sandmat manzanita (CNDDDB Occ. 15), Monterey gilia (CNDDDB Occ. 31), burrowing owl (CNDDDB Occ. 579), Eastwood's goldenbush (CNDDDB Occ. 13), and Salinas harvest mouse (CNDDDB Occ. 6).

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity) ¹
Potential Growth Area (#12): University Villages Residential Specific Plan at Former Fort Ord⁷ Approximate acreage: 443.35 acres Condition: partially developed	Retail/Service, University Villages Residential	Specific Plan – University Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat primarily consists of developed land with patches of shrub habitat, conifer forest, and barren land. Overlaps documented occurrences of Salinas harvest mouse (CNDDDB Occ. 6), burrowing owl (CNDDDB Occ. 579), sand-loving wallflower (CNDDDB Occ. 8), sandmat manzanita (CNDDDB Occ. 15), Kellogg's horkelia (CNDDDB Occ. 19), Monterey spineflower (CNDDDB Occ. 2), and Eastwood's goldenbush (CNDDDB Occ. 13). The former Fort Ord has historical significance.
Unincorporated Community of Freedom⁸			
Potential Growth Area (#13) Approximate acreage: 21.66 acres Condition: partially developed	Urban Very Low Residential	Single-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of developed/disturbed areas, herbaceous habitat, and hardwood woodland habitat. Overlaps documented occurrence of Santa Cruz tarplant (CNDDDB Occ. 46). Overlaps critical habitat for Santa Cruz tarplant.

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity) ¹
Potential Growth Area (#14) Approximate acreage: 14.12 acres Condition: undeveloped	Urban Very Low Residential	Single-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of herbaceous, shrub, and hardwood woodland habitats. Located adjacent to tributary to Harkins Slough. Overlaps critical habitat for Santa Cruz tarplant.
Potential Growth Area (#15) Approximate acreage: 4.42 acres Condition: undeveloped	Urban Low Residential	Single-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of developed/disturbed and herbaceous habitat. Located within documented occurrence of San Francisco popcornflower (CNDDDB Occ. 17).
Unincorporated Community of Aptos^{8, 9}			
Potential Growth Area (#16) Approximate acreage: 2,268 acres Condition: undeveloped	Mountain Residential, Rural Residential, Agriculture	Residential Agricultural, Special Use, Single-Family Residential, Single-Family Ocean Beach Residential, Timber Production,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of conifer woodland, hardwood woodland, agriculture, shrub, and herbaceous habitats. Overlaps documented occurrences of Dudley's lousewort (CNDDDB Occ. 6), Anderson's manzanita (CNDDDB Occ. 19, 69), robust spineflower (CNDDDB Occ. 16, 23), and Monterey spineflower (CNDDDB Occ. 58). Aptos Creek, Trout Creek, and Valencia Creek and associated Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland and riverine habitat. Overlaps designated robust spineflower critical habitat.
Unincorporated Community of Live Oak⁸			
Potential Growth Area (#17) Approximate acreage: 307.31 acres Condition: undeveloped	Mountain Residential, Rural Residential	Residential Agricultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of conifer woodland, hardwood woodland, shrub, and herbaceous habitat. Overlaps documented occurrences of steelhead – Central California Coast Distinct Population Segment (DPS) (CNDDDB Occ. 15), yellow rail (CNDDDB Occ. 42), white-rayed pentachaeta (CNDDDB Occ. 11), and Zayante band-winged grasshopper (CNDDDB Occ. 6). Bordered by potentially jurisdictional drainages to the west and east. Overlaps Santa Cruz tarplant critical habitat.

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity) ¹
Potential Growth Area (#18) Approximate acreage: 2.54 acres Condition: undeveloped	Urban Low Residential	Multi-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of developed/disturbed areas and shrub habitat. Overlaps documented occurrences of pallid bat (CNDDDB Occ. 258), white-rayed pentachaeta (CNDDDB Occ. 11), Townsend's big-eared bat (CNDDDB Occ. 361), yellow rail (CNDDDB Occ. 42), and Zayante band-winged grasshopper (CNDDDB Occ. 6). Located adjacent to Santa Cruz tarplant critical habitat
Potential Growth Area (#19) Approximate acreage: 8.76 acres Condition: undeveloped	Community Commercial, Urban Open Space	Community Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of developed/disturbed areas and a patch of hardwood woodland in the northwest corner of the site. Located adjacent to Santa Cruz tarplant critical habitat Overlaps documented occurrences of white-rayed pentachaeta (CNDDDB Occ. 11), yellow rail (CNDDDB Occ. 42), steelhead – Central California Coast DPS (CNDDDB Occ. 15), and Zayante band-winged grasshopper (CNDDDB Occ. 6). Located adjacent to Santa Cruz Harbor. Located within the Coastal Zone.
Potential Growth Area (#20) Approximate acreage: 3.61 acres Condition: undeveloped	Neighborhood Commercial, Urban Low Residential	Neighborhood Commercial, Sing-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists entirely of developed/disturbed areas. Overlaps documented occurrences of white-rayed pentachaeta (CNDDDB Occ. 11), yellow rail (CNDDDB Occ. 42), steelhead – Central California Coast DPS (CNDDDB Occ. 15), and Zayante band-winged grasshopper (CNDDDB Occ. 6).

Location/Type of Growth (Numbers correspond to Figure 7)	Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation	Resources of Concern (e.g., natural resources, cultural resources, other sensitivity) ¹
Potential Growth Area (#21) Approximate acreage: 3.16 acres Condition: partially developed	Urban Low Residential, Urban Open Space	Single-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists of disturbed/developed areas and hardwood woodland within the western portion of the site. Overlaps documented occurrences of pallid bat (CNDDDB Occ 258), yellow rail (CNDDDB Occ. 42), Townsend's big-eared bat (CNDDDB Occ. 361), Zayante band-winged grasshopper (CNDDDB Occ. 6), tidewater goby (CNDDDB Occ. 32), Santa Cruz tarplant (CNDDDB Occ. 3), and white-rayed pentachaeta (CNDDDB Occ. 11). Located adjacent to riparian corridor (Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland) and unnamed jurisdictional drainage to Corcoran Lagoon.
Potential Growth Area (#22) Approximate acreage: 1 acre Condition: undeveloped	Urban Low Residential	Single-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat consists entirely of developed/disturbed areas. Overlaps documented occurrences of Zayante band-winged grasshopper (CNDDDB Occ. 6), Townsend's big-eared bat (CNDDDB Occ. 361), pallid bat (CNDDDB Occ 258), white-rayed pentachaeta (CNDDDB Occ. 11), and yellow rail (CNDDDB Occ. 42).

Notes: This list was developed using aerial imagery and land use and zoning maps to identify areas for potential future growth. This list is intended to generally identify where potential future growth in the form of new development could occur; however, this is not an exhaustive list of all areas that have future development potential.

Sources:

1 California Natural Diversity Database vegetation and documented species occurrences (CNDDDB 2020).

2 City of Santa Cruz General Plan 2030 and Local Coastal Program (City of Santa Cruz 2012)

3 Watsonville 2005 General Plan (City of Watsonville 2005)

4 Manabe-Ow Business Park Specific Plan (City of Watsonville 2010)

5 City of Marina General Plan and Local Coastal Program Update (2013)

6 Armstrong Ranch (Marina Station) Specific Plan EIR (City of Marina 2008)

7 University Villages Residential Specific Plan at Former Fort Ord (City of Marina 2005)

8 County of Santa Cruz General Plan (County of Santa Cruz 1994)

9 Aptos Village Plan (County of Santa Cruz 2012)

As shown in **Figure 7** and detailed in **Table 6**, areas identified for potential future development are currently undeveloped and some of them are entirely disturbed and surrounded by existing development. Within those areas, impacts to resources of concern other than water supply, are not expected. Other areas where development could occur are located adjacent to, and may support, important habitat for special-status species. Important resources of concern that have the potential to be impacted include riparian and freshwater emergent wetland habitats; grassland and woodland habitats; nesting habitat for migratory birds; burrowing owl habitat; designated critical habitat and documented communities of Monterey spineflower, Santa Cruz tarplant, and robust spineflower; suitable habitat and documented communities of Santa Cruz sand-loving wallflower, sandmat manzanita, Kellogg's horkelia, Monterey spineflower, white-rayed pentachaeta, and Eastwood's goldenbush; and habitat suitable for Townsend's big-eared bat and pallid bat.

Potential future development projects in these areas would be subject to discretionary approval and environmental review and would be required to identify adequate sources of water supply, as well as any other potential impacts to resources of concern, prior to approval and development. Projects would be required to comply with the measures in local regulating plans that are designed to protect resources of concern, which may include, but are not limited to: implementing design guidelines, building height limitations, minimum setback standards, screening measures, landscaping and replanting measures, and review by local design boards to protect the visual character and scenic resources; designating areas of high archaeological sensitivity and requiring reconnaissance by a qualified archaeologist and, where artifacts are identified, and requiring measures that would protect and preserve such resources; and designating habitat reserve or other identified sensitive areas, requiring adequate buffer distances to protect sensitive habitats, minimizing the need for grading, requiring sediment-control best management practices, requiring replanting with a native seed mix, and protecting or providing wildlife corridors or connections between sensitive habitat and other natural open space areas to avoid adverse impacts to biological resources. Additionally, coordination with agencies with regulatory authority over sensitive habitats, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for wetland and water resources, would ensure potential impacts are adequately evaluated and mitigated.

In conclusion, based on the 2022 AMBAG Regional Growth Forecast, review of local planning documents, and input from the expert panel, it is possible that the peak travel time savings and reduced congestion that would result from implementation of the proposed project could make certain areas that still have the potential to support future growth more appealing for residents commuting to local employment in and surrounding the City of Santa Cruz and other

employment centers in Santa Clara County, to the north. In this manner, the proposed project could indirectly contribute to growth pressure in the cities of Watsonville and Marina and the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Live Oak, and Freedom, where future growth could occur. Within those areas, if future growth does occur and is indirectly influenced by the proposed project, it would require independent environmental review, and potential impacts to resources of concern would require evaluation and mitigation, as necessary, to avoid and or minimize potential impacts. The proposed project is not expected to result in growth-related effects that would result in significant impacts to resources of concern; therefore, no further analysis is necessary.

6.5.2 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not result in any improvements to SR 1 and congestion and travel times would continue to worsen over time. Additionally, the No-Build Alternative would not result in any direct or indirect effects related to planned or unplanned growth; thus, there would be no growth impacts under the No-Build Alternative.

6.6 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The proposed project would not result in adverse impacts related to growth within the project study area; therefore, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are not required.

Chapter 7 Community Character

7.4 Population and Housing

7.4.1 Affected Environment

For the proposed project, the study area for community character includes the project corridor and all census tracts overlapping the project corridor. This study area includes portions of the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Rio Del Mar, and Aptos Hills-Larkin Valley. Census tracts within the project corridor include 1220.02, 1220.03, 1221, 1222.01, 1222.02, 1222.03, 1224 as shown on **Figure 11**.

7.4.1.1 Regional Population Characteristics

A description of regional population characteristics within the study area is provided below. The most recent data available at the census tract-level is from the 2019 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau 2019).

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity demographics for Santa Cruz County and the project area census tracts are shown in **Table 7**, below, which shows that racial and ethnic minorities comprise approximately 42.7% of the County's population, and range from 10.2% - 25.6% of the population of project area census tracts.

Figure 11: Study Area Census Tracts

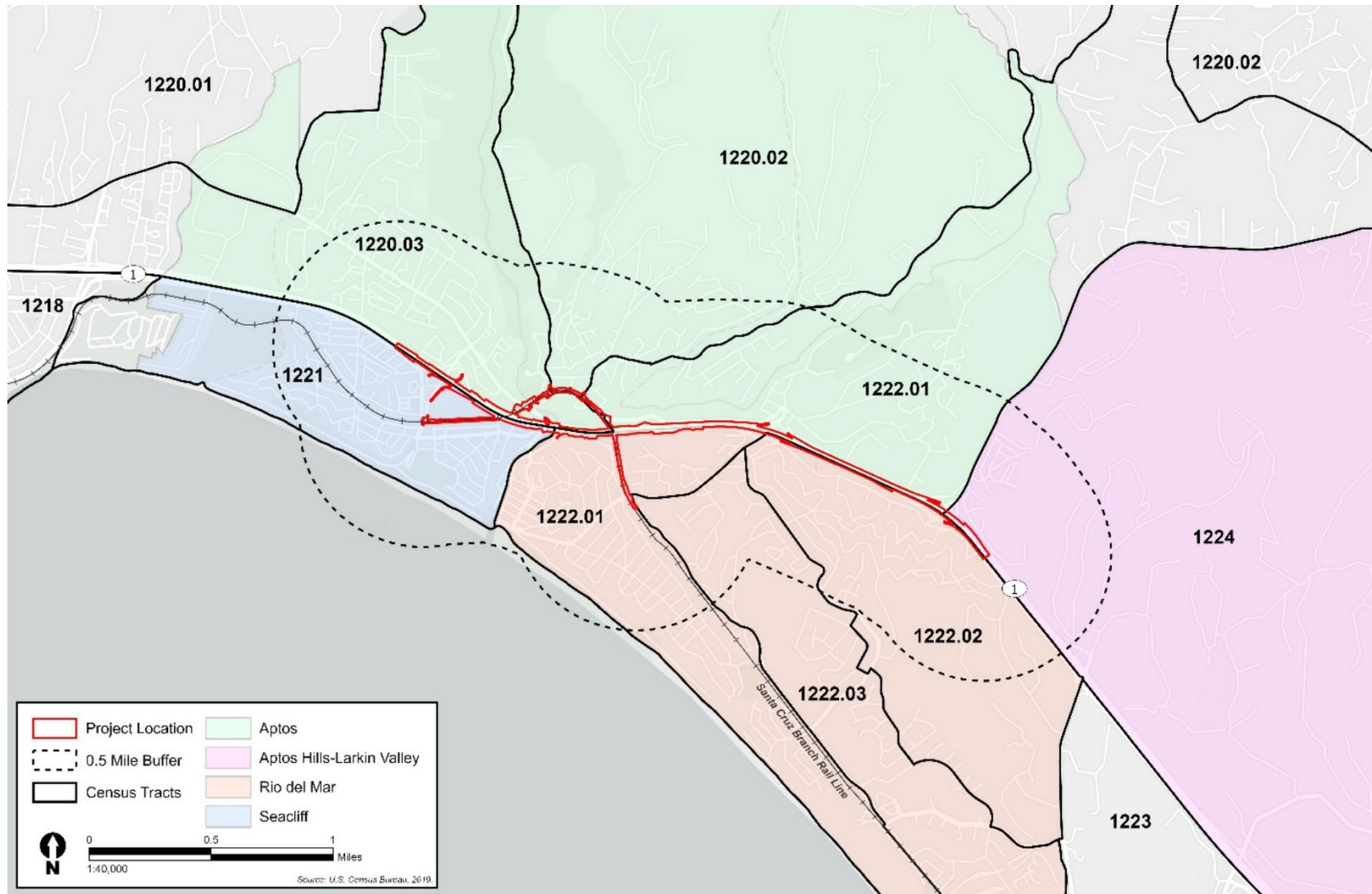


Table 7: Study Area Race and Ethnicity Demographics

Santa Cruz County		Study Area Census Tracts							
		1220.02	1220.03	1221	1222.01	1222.02	1222.03	1224	Total / Average
Total Population	273,962	3,253	7,248	3,286	6,506	2,328	3,971	7,247	33,839
White	57.3%	89.7%	74.5%	76.3%	83.9%	76.1%	81.8%	74.4%	79.5%
Black	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.7%	1.3%	0.4%	0.9%	0.3%	0.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Asian	4.6%	1.8%	3.3%	2.5%	3.6%	3.5%	2.2%	2.1%	2.7%
Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%
Two or More Races	3.2%	1.0%	5.1%	3.0%	1.9%	6.1%	3.8%	3.7%	3.5%
Hispanic	33.6%	6.7%	16.2%	16.7%	9.2%	13.9%	10.7%	19.5%	13.3%
Total Minority Population	42.7%	10.2%	25.5%	23.8%	16.0%	23.9%	18.2%	25.6%	20.5%

Notes: Data is from 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

For purposes of environmental justice, minority is defined as a person or persons belonging to one or more of the following groups:

1. Black: a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
2. Hispanic: a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
3. Asian American: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands.
4. American Indian and Alaskan Native: a person having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or recognition.
5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019.

Income

To evaluate income, this assessment looked at median household income and the percent of the population living below the poverty level. According to the Caltrans Standard Environmental

Reference, “low-income” is defined as a person whose household income (or, in the case a community or group, whose median household income) is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. The DHS’s poverty guidelines are based on the U.S. Census Bureau’s; therefore, the Census Bureau’s poverty threshold statistics are presented in **Table 8**. The 2019 U.S. Census poverty threshold is \$26,172 for a family of four.

Table 8: Study Area Income Data

	Santa Cruz County	Study Area Census Tracts							
		1220.02	1220.03	1221	1222.01	1222.02	1222.03	1224	Total / Average
Total Population	273,962	3,253	7,248	3,286	6,506	2,328	3,971	7,247	33,839
Population 16 years and over	226,982	2,742	6,048	2,776	5,747	1,941	3,244	6,602	29,100
Population in Labor Force	144,847 (63.8%)	1,840 (67.1%)	3,882 (64.2%)	1,798 (64.8%)	3,429 (59.7%)	1,161 (59.8%)	1,933 (59.6%)	3,724 (56.4%)	17,767 (61.7%)
Median Household Income	\$82,234	\$149,545	\$89,438	\$77,896	\$102,500	\$115,919	\$107,132	\$113,352	\$107,969
Percent Below Poverty Level	13.1%	4.2%	12.8%	8.3%	6.5%	6.0%	4.6%	11.3%	7.7%

Notes: Data is from 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019.

As shown in Table 8, Santa Cruz County has an estimated median household income of \$82,234, with 13.1% of the population living below the poverty level. Ranging from \$77,896 to \$149,545, all but one of the study area census tracts have median household incomes above the County average. The percent of the population below the poverty level for the study area census tracts ranges from 4.2% to 13.1%, with an average of 7.7%. Please refer to Section 4.5, Environmental Justice, for additional analysis of low-income populations in the study area.

7.4.1.2 Neighborhoods/Communities/Community Character

Community cohesion is the degree to which residents have a “sense of belonging” to their neighborhood, a level of commitment to the community, or a strong attachment to neighbors, groups, and institutions, generally due to continued associations over time (Caltrans 2015).

- The proposed project would pass through portions of unincorporated Santa Cruz County that include a mix of uses, including single-family residential, multi-family residential, large-scale big box commercial, low-density commercial, professional and office, agriculture, and

open space. Neighborhoods in the study area are within the unincorporated area of Aptos, and include Aptos Village and Seacliff Village.

- Aptos Village centers on an 8-acre area of mixed uses and includes commercial retail, office, and residential, which are pedestrian oriented and served by a peripheral road system formed by Trout Gulch Road, Soquel Drive, Hopkins Road, and an extended Granite Way. The Village's post office and historic Hotel Bayview are important functional and visual nodes in this area. The physical scale of Aptos Village is established by existing one- and two-story developments, represented by the Village Fair and other historic buildings in the Valencia Street block, as well as the shops and offices along the Soquel Drive ridge. The natural setting of the Village formed by the riparian corridors of Aptos, Valencia, and Trout Creek are part of the Aptos community experience. Special use areas adjacent to the Village's 8-acre activity center provide additional commercial and residential areas.
- Seacliff Village, located southwest of Aptos Village, includes a 21.3-acre commercial district situated on either side of State Park Drive, with surrounding residential neighborhoods to the east and west. This area is bounded by SR 1 to the north and Seacliff State Beach and the Monterey Bay to the south. Primary access to Seacliff Village and Seacliff State Beach is provided by State Park Drive and local two-lane roads, which also provide views to Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The Village core is characterized by one-story commercial buildings and some two-story mixed-use buildings with ground floor commercial uses along Searidge Road and Center Street. There is one neighborhood park, Seacliff Village Park, and two churches, the Coastlands and the Episcopal Church of St. John, south and west of the State Park Drive interchange. Primary attractions in the area include Seacliff State Beach Campground and Seacliff State Beach. Currently, State Park Drive provides the only designated bikeway and there are number of informal pedestrian pathways along road rights-of-ways, within or along the edges of public properties, and some dedicated trails leftover from the formation of the Seacliff Park subdivision. (County of Santa Cruz 2003).

7.4.1.3 Housing

Housing estimates for Santa Cruz County, and project area census tracts are provided in **Table 9**. Household size and housing occupancy and vacancy rates vary between the project area tracts, but on average, household size for the tracts is slightly smaller than for the county as a whole and vacancy rates are somewhat higher.

All but one of the study area tracts has a higher percentage of owner-occupied units than the county average. Owner occupied units make up a majority of housing units in the county and each of the study area tracts. This higher percentage of owner-occupied units indicates the

presence of more long-term residents and likely increased community cohesion in the project study area.

Table 9: Study Area Housing Data

	Santa Cruz County	Study Area Census Tracts							
		1220.02	1220.03	1221	1222.01	1222.02	1222.03	1224	Total / Average
Total Housing Units	106,307	1,341	2,916	1,925	3,355	973	1,811	2,744	15,065
Occupied Housing Units	90.1%	88.1%	96.1%	80.2%	78.6%	93.4%	89.7%	95.0%	88.7%
Vacant Housing Units	9.9%	11.9%	3.9%	19.8%	21.4%	6.6%	10.3%	5.0%	11.3%
Owner Occupied	60.1%	86.6%	70.4%	58.8%	79.8%	89.7%	63.9%	80.8%	75.7%
Renter Occupied	39.9%	13.4%	29.6%	41.2%	20.2%	10.3%	36.1%	19.2%	24.3%
Average Household Size (Owner Occupied)	2.68	2.84	2.37	2.17	2.51	2.65	2.43	2.77	2.53
Average Household Size (Renter Occupied)	2.79	2.01	3.10	2.07	2.28	1.81	2.48	2.60	2.34
Total Housing Units	106,307	1,341	2,916	1,925	3,355	973	1,811	2,744	15,065

Notes: Data is from 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019.

Population, Housing, and Employment Projections

Population, housing, and employment growth trends within Santa Cruz County are summarized in **Table 10** and discussed below.

Table 10: 2025–2045 Population, Housing Unit, and Employment Growth

Location	Population			Housing Units			Employment		
	2025	2045	% Change	2025	2045	% Change	2025	2045	% Change
Santa Cruz County	278,641	294,967	6%	109,208	113,797	4%	141,391	153,261	8%

Source: AMBAG 2020.

According to AMBAG's 2022 Regional Growth Forecast, the population of Santa Cruz County is expected to continue growing. The County's average annual growth in population is projected to be 816 persons, resulting in a total population of 294,967 persons by the year 2045. While the County's population is expected to increase by 6%, employment is expected to increase by 8% during the same period, which suggests more employees could commute from other areas for jobs, or it could potentially reduce some commuting from Santa Cruz County to the San Francisco Bay Area. The number of housing units in the county would increase 4% between 2025 and 2045.

7.4.2 Environmental Consequences

The environmental consequences to population and housing that would result from the proposed alternatives are described below.

7.4.2.1 Build Alternative

Impacts During Project Operations

The Build Alternative has potential to enhance neighborhood cohesion by providing new pedestrian and bicycle access within the project corridor. With two new pedestrian and bicycle overcrossings of SR 1, Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would support pedestrian and bicycle connections between Aptos Village and neighborhoods located on the other side of SR 1. Because the rail trail would be located within existing railroad right-of-way, which already divides the neighborhood, the rail trail would not divide or introduce a physical barrier between neighborhoods, nor separate residences from community facilities. Similarly, because the proposed improvements to SR 1, including new sound walls, are located within existing highway right-of-way, which already divides neighborhoods, these improvements would not result in dividing or introducing a physical barrier between neighborhoods, nor separate residences from community facilities. The proposed auxiliary lanes and BOS features would result in reductions in congestion within the SR 1 corridor, which is anticipated to have positive effects on the quality of life for communities in the study area.

As discussed in more detail in Section 4.4, Relocations and Real Property Acquisition, construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would require permanent partial acquisitions from 19 properties, and, during final design, it may be determined that full acquisition may be necessary for up to four of these parcels. A maximum of approximately 19,100 square feet (0.44 acres) would be necessary for permanent partial acquisitions, if no full acquisitions are required. If full acquisitions are required, the total area would comprise approximately 3,360 square feet (0.08 acres). Some impacts to buildings, structures, driveways or backyards may occur on parcels along the following roadways:

- Soquel Drive: Assessor parcel numbers 039-232-03, 039-232-02, 039-232-01, 041-561-11, and 041-052-16
- Parade Street: 041-011-42, 041-011-41
- Sandalwood Drive: 044-282-47, 044-282-48
- Moosehead Drive: 042-071-01, 042-071-02, 042-071-03, and 042-067-18

Additionally, temporary construction easements along the SR 1 right-of-way and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 may be necessary for construction of retaining walls, sound walls, bridge structures, and portions of the rail trail. Approximately 2.07 acres (90,347 square feet) of temporary construction easements would be required. Due to the limited number of parcels affected by permanent or temporary acquisitions, and the dispersal of these impacts along the rail trail corridor, the overall adverse effect on neighborhood cohesion is anticipated to be limited, in view of the benefits to neighborhood cohesion afforded by Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, discussed above. Please refer to Section 4.4 for the list of affected properties and the evaluation of real property acquisition impacts.

Construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 is also anticipated to permanently remove approximately 15 parking spaces on Aptos Street in Aptos Village. This would have a minor adverse impact to neighborhood cohesion due to the minor reduction in the availability of parking for residents and businesses in Aptos Village. Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would, however, improve bicycle and pedestrian access for residents and businesses in Aptos Village. Please refer to Chapter 5, Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities, for the evaluation of permanent parking impacts.

Construction Impacts

During construction, there would be potential for construction activities to temporarily disrupt neighborhood cohesion in the vicinity of construction areas, including rail trail construction activities within Aptos Village. Temporary impacts to neighborhood cohesion are anticipated to include temporary closures of highway ramps at the Freedom Boulevard, Rio Del Mar Drive, and State Park Drive interchanges, and along roadway segments in the vicinity of these interchanges and adjacent to rail trail construction. These temporary closures may temporarily disrupt neighborhood cohesion by temporarily restricting normal traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle movement through the area; however, signage would be posted in advance of closures, and detours would be established to provide alternate routes and maintain access to all residences and businesses throughout construction. Ramp closures would be staged so that successive off- or on-ramps are not closed at the same time to minimize temporary impacts on motorists and adjacent neighborhoods.

Temporary parking restrictions may be implemented along the segments of local roads described above, resulting in temporary loss of parking in these areas – which may temporarily disrupt neighborhood cohesion by temporarily reducing the availability of parking spaces serving local residences and businesses.

Construction activities would generate dust, vehicle and equipment emissions, and noise impacts related to the operation and movement of heavy equipment, and other construction activity within the community of Aptos within the project vicinity. Slow-moving construction vehicles may temporarily contribute to traffic congestion on local roads.

7.4.2.2 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not provide the benefits to community cohesion anticipated to be provided by Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. Congestion within the SR 1 corridor would continue to worsen and may adversely affect the quality of life for communities in the study area. No property acquisitions, temporary construction easements, nor temporary construction impacts would occur.

7.4.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Construction-related dust and air quality impacts are addressed by avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures included in the Air Quality Report (Caltrans 2022g) for the proposed project. Construction-related noise impacts are addressed by avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures included in the Noise Study Report (Caltrans 2022h) for the proposed project. Construction related traffic impacts to neighborhood cohesion would be reduced or minimized by implementing a Traffic Management Plan, as described in Section 5, Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian Bicycle Facilities. As described in Section 4.4, Relocations and Real Property Acquisition, permanent property acquisitions and temporary construction easements shall conform to the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. No additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are needed to address the impacts described above.

7.5 Economic Conditions

7.5.1 Affected Environment

The study area for economic conditions for the proposed project includes the project corridor and all census tracts within 0.5 mile of the project corridor. This study area includes portions of the unincorporated communities of Aptos, Seacliff, Rio Del Mar, and Aptos Hills-Larkin Valley. Census tracts within 0.5 mile of the project corridor include 1220.02, 1220.03, 1221, 1222.01, 1222.02, 1222.03, and 1224, as shown on **Figure 8**.

7.5.1.1 Regional Economy

Data were collected from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey to determine the top industries, employment, income, and poverty characteristics (U.S. Census Bureau 2019). In terms of employment, the top industries in Santa Cruz County and in the study area include educational services, health care, and social assistance; professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services; arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services; and retail trade, as shown in **Table 11**.

According to the County’s 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, the principal employers in the County include the University of California at Santa Cruz, Pajaro Valley Unified School District, the County of Santa Cruz, Dominican Hospital, and Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk (County of Santa Cruz 2019).

Table 11: Top Industry Categories in Santa Cruz County

	Santa Cruz County	Study Area Census Tracts							
		1220.02	1220.03	1221	1222.01	1222.02	1222.03	1224	Total
Employed Population	136,406	1,799	3,783	1,723	3,269	1,097	1,885	3,407	16,963
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	7,442 (5.4%)	37	0	0	21	14	42	201	315 (1.8%)
Construction	8,443 (6.1%)	139	350	151	206	75	71	340	1,332 (7.8%)
Manufacturing	11,346 (8.3%)	171	312	113	220	74	199	342	1,431 (8.4%)
Wholesale Trade	3,585 (2.6%)	80	168	33	193	14	52	86	626 (3.6%)
Retail Trade	14,014 (10.2%)	178	454	178	395	91	190	476	1,962 (11.5%)
Transportation and Warehousing and Utilities	4,430 (3.2%)	68	85	43	96	41	116	112	561 (3.3%)
Information	2,916 (2.1%)	47	74	35	47	39	39	0	281 (1.6%)
Finance Insurance and Real Estate	5,968 (4.3%)	153	145	170	83	65	124	90	830 (4.8%)
Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services	17,136 (12.5%)	276	642	241	319	171	260	525	2,434 (14.3%)
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance	33,760 (24.7%)	311	773	422	884	363	428	514	3,695 (21.7%)
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services	15,905 (11.6%)	241	467	206	371	112	218	246	1,861 (10.9%)

	Santa Cruz County	Study Area Census Tracts							Total
		1220.02	1220.03	1221	1222.01	1222.02	1222.03	1224	
Other Services	6,824 (5.0%)	69	215	84	201	19	62	383	1,033 (6.0%)
Public Administration	4,637 (3.3%)	29	98	47	233	19	84	92	602 (3.5%)

Notes: Data are from 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019.

7.5.1.2 Employment and Income

The median household income and unemployment rate within Santa Cruz County and the study area census tracts are provided in **Table 12** below. As shown in the table, the County had an estimated median household income of \$82,234, with 13.1% of the population living below the poverty level and an unemployment rate of 5.7%. Ranging from \$77,896 to \$149,545, all but one of the study area census tracts have median household incomes above the County average. The percent of the population below the poverty level for the study area census tracts ranges from 4.2% to 13.1%, with an average of 7.7%. The unemployment rate for the study area census tracts ranges from 2.2% to 8.5%, with an average of 4.3%.

Table12: Study Area Employment and Income Data

	Santa Cruz County	Study Area Census Tracts							Total / Average
		1220.02	1220.03	1221	1222.01	1222.02	1222.03	1224	
Total Population	273,962	3,253	7,248	3,286	6,506	2,328	3,971	7,247	33,839
Population 16 years and over	226,982	2,742	6,048	2,776	5,747	1,941	3,244	6,602	29,100
Population in Labor Force	144,847 (63.8%)	1,840 (67.1%)	3,882 (64.2%)	1,798 (64.8%)	3,429 (59.7%)	1,161 (59.8%)	1,933 (59.6%)	3,724 (56.4%)	17,767 (61.7%)
Median Household Income	\$82,234	\$149,545	\$89,438	\$77,896	\$102,500	\$115,919	\$107,132	\$113,352	\$107,969
Percent Below Poverty Level	13.10%	4.20%	12.80%	8.30%	6.50%	6.00%	4.60%	11.30%	7.7%
Unemployment Rate	5.70%	2.20%	2.60%	4.20%	4.70%	5.50%	2.50%	8.50%	4.3%

Notes: Data are from 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019.

7.5.2 Environmental Consequences

The environmental consequences to the regional economy, employment and income that would result from the proposed alternatives are described below.

7.5.2.1 Build Alternative

Impacts During Project Operations

The long-term operation of the Build Alternative is anticipated to enhance access to businesses locally and regionally by reducing congestion and improving public transit travel times within the SR 1 corridor. Access to local businesses would also be enhanced by the construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, which would support pedestrian and bicycle access to Aptos Village from neighborhoods located on the other side of SR 1.

The region is anticipated to realize monetary savings as a result of improvements in operational efficiencies resulting from the proposed transportation improvements. Reductions in corridor congestion are anticipated to benefit public transit and individual motorists through savings in fuel, oil, tire, repair and maintenance, and depreciation. Travel time savings and reduced costs due to property damage and accidents are also anticipated. The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District is anticipated to experience increased transit ridership as a result of time savings for public transit trips, while the availability of recreational facilities such as the proposed Coastal Rail Trail have been linked to public health benefits that may contribute to lower medical costs (Centers for Disease Control 2014).

As described in Section 4.4, Relocations and Real Property Acquisition, construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would require permanent partial acquisitions from 19 properties, and during final design, it may be determined that full acquisition may be necessary for up to four of the nine parcels, including the potential displacement of up to three businesses, on the property at 403 Trout Gulch Road. As described in Section 4.4, there appears to be sufficient availability of real estate to allow the affected businesses to relocate in Santa Cruz County.

Additionally, temporary construction easements along the SR 1 right-of-way may be necessary for construction of retaining walls, sound walls, bridge structures, and portions of the rail trail. The parcels that may require temporary construction easements are listed in Table 1 of Section 1.4, Proposed Project. Approximately 2.07 acres (90,347 square feet) of temporary construction easements would be required. Due to the limited number of parcels affected by permanent or temporary acquisitions, and the dispersal of these impacts along SR 1 and the rail trail corridor, the overall adverse effect on the local and regional economy is anticipated to be limited, in view of the benefits to neighborhood cohesion afforded by Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12, discussed above. With the avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures described in Section 4.4,

the permanent and temporary property acquisitions and relocations are not anticipated to have a substantial permanent impact to tax revenue or property values.

The Build Alternative would also result in the permanent loss of approximately 15 on-street parking spaces on Aptos Street, in Aptos Village. This would adversely affect access to businesses by reducing the availability of parking for businesses in Aptos Village. However, loss of these parking spaces is not anticipated to have a substantial adverse impact on the regional or local economy, given the strong economic base and the economic benefits of the project described above, as well as the availability of additional parking in Aptos Village (see Section 5.1.1.2, Parking).

Construction Impacts

The short-term construction impacts of the Build Alternative would include a beneficial impact on the local economy due to direct construction jobs and off-site employment opportunities created due to the demand for goods and services; however, adverse economic impacts are also anticipated. During construction, there would be potential for construction activities to have temporary adverse impacts on local businesses in the vicinity of construction areas, including rail trail construction activities within Aptos Village. Temporary impacts that may affect access to local businesses include temporary closures of ramps at the Freedom Boulevard, Rio Del Mar Drive, and State Park Drive interchanges; and temporary closures of roadway segments adjacent to rail trail construction, including State Park Drive, Soquel Drive, and Rio Del Mar Boulevard. These temporary closures may have temporary adverse impact to businesses by temporarily restricting normal traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle movement through the area; however, signage would be posted in advance of closures, and detours would be established to provide alternate routes and maintain access to all businesses throughout construction.

Temporary parking restrictions may be implemented along the segments of local roads described above, resulting in temporary loss of parking in these areas – which may have temporary adverse impact to business access by temporarily reducing the availability of parking spaces serving local businesses.

7.5.2.2 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not provide benefits to the local and regional economy anticipated to be provided by the improvements proposed under the Build Alternative. Congestion within the SR 1 corridor would continue to worsen, which could adversely affect access to businesses in the project vicinity and quality of life for communities in the study area. No property acquisitions, temporary construction easements, nor temporary construction impacts would occur.

7.5.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The implementation of avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures described in Section 4.4 would address the economic impacts resulting from the property acquisitions, displacements, and relocations. Economic impacts related to construction period traffic impacts and parking restrictions would be reduced or minimized by implementing a TMP, described in Section 5, Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian Bicycle Facilities. No additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are needed to address the impacts described above.

7.6 Community Facilities and Services

7.6.1 Affected Environment

7.6.1.1 Community Facilities and Emergency Services

The study area for community facilities and services includes the SR 1 corridor between the State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard interchanges, and a 0.5-mile radius surrounding the project area (see **Figures 1 and 2**), within the unincorporated area of Aptos in Santa Cruz County. Only community facilities and emergency services within the project area or in the 0.5-mile radius vicinity are considered to have the potential to be directly and/or indirectly affected by the project. This section describes existing community service facilities, utilities, and circulation within the project study area.

- Community services and facilities in the study area include emergency and protective services, educational facilities, hospital and medical services, cultural amenities, and public infrastructure and services, as listed in **Table 13** and shown in **Figure 12**.

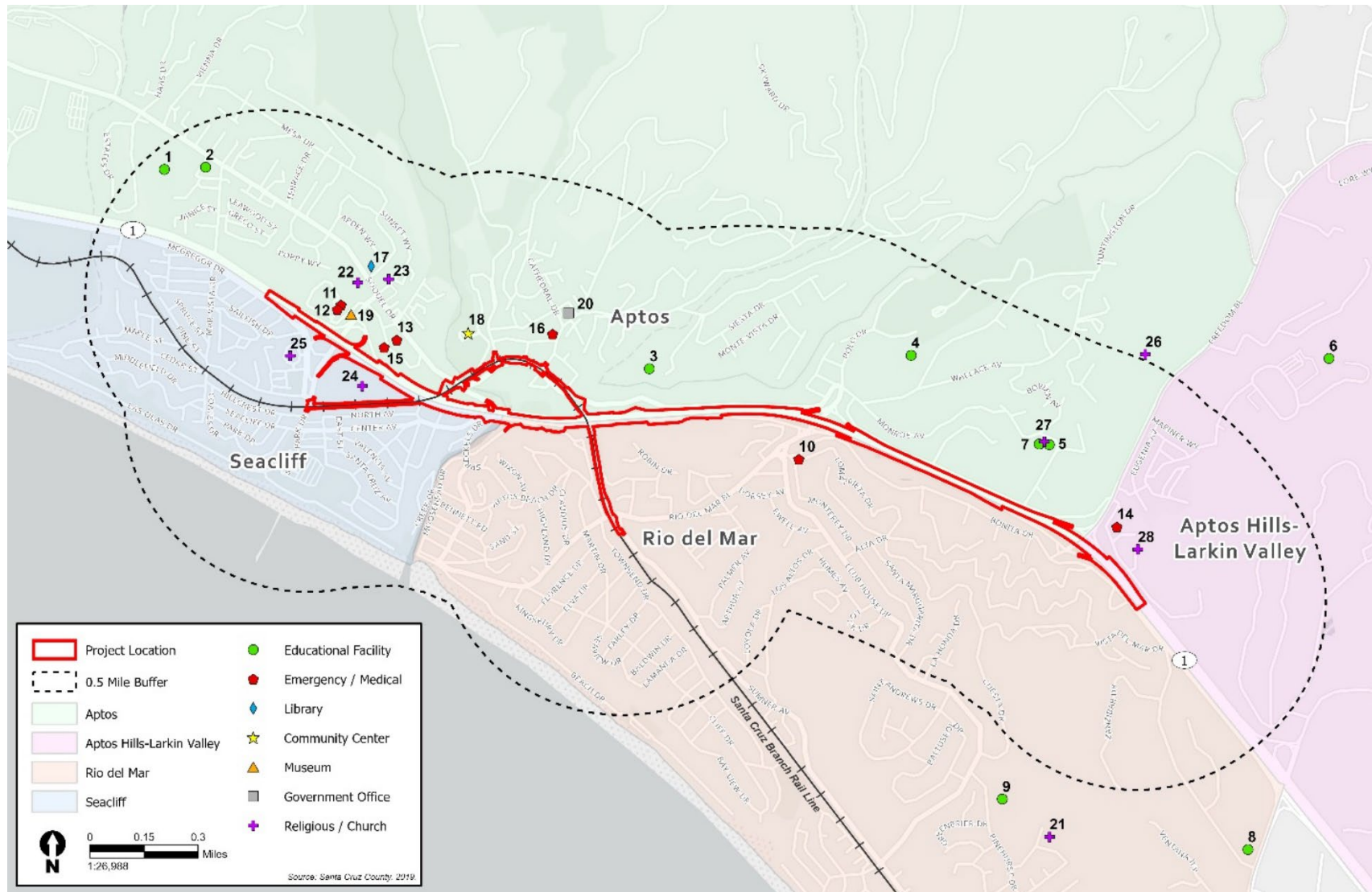
Table 13: Community Services and Facilities

Map #	Service or Facility Name	Jurisdiction	Address
Educational Facilities			
1	Mar Vista Elementary School	County of Santa Cruz	6860 Soquel Drive Aptos, CA 95003
2	Learning Montessori Day Care Center	County of Santa Cruz	106 Madeline Dr Aptos, CA 95003
3	Valencia Elementary School	County of Santa Cruz	250 Aptos School Rd, Aptos, CA 95003
4	Aptos Junior High School	County of Santa Cruz	1001 Huntington Dr, Aptos, CA 95003
5	St. Andrew's Cooperative Pre-School	County of Santa Cruz	9850 Monroe Ave, Aptos, CA 95003

Map #	Service or Facility Name	Jurisdiction	Address
6	Aptos High School	County of Santa Cruz	100 Mariner Way, Aptos, CA 95003
7	Little Learners of Aptos	County of Santa Cruz	9850 Monroe Ave, Aptos, CA 95003
8	St. Abraham's Christian Academy	County of Santa Cruz	1940 Bonita Drive, Aptos, California, 95003
9	Rio Del Mar Elementary School	County of Santa Cruz	819 Pinehurst Dr, Aptos, CA 95003
Emergency, Medical, and Protective Services			
10	Aptos/La Selva Fire Station Number 2	Central Fire District of Santa Cruz County	300 Bonita Dr, Aptos, CA 95003
11	Aptos Center (Sutter Health Palo Alto Medical Foundation)	County of Santa Cruz Private	7600 Old Dominion Court, Aptos, CA 95003
12	Aptos Family Medicine	County of Santa Cruz Private	7600 Old Dominion Court Aptos, CA 95003
13	Aptos Walk-In Care (Sutter Health Palo Alto Medical Foundation)	County of Santa Cruz Private	26 Rancho Del Mar, Aptos, CA, 95003
14	California Highway Patrol Santa Cruz Area	State of California	10395 Soquel Dr, Aptos, CA 95003
15	Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Center	Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department	19 Rancho Del Mar, Aptos, CA 95003
16	Aptos/LaSelva Sheriff's Service Center	Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department	171 Aptos Village Way, Suite T1, Aptos CA 95003
Libraries			
17	Aptos Branch Library	Santa Cruz Public Libraries	7695 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA 95003
Community Centers			
18	Aptos Community Center	County of Santa Cruz	Park Access Rd, Aptos, CA 95003
Museums			
19	Aptos Historical Museum	County of Santa Cruz	7605 Old Dominion Court #B Aptos, CA 95003
Government Offices			
20	United States Postal Service	County of Santa Cruz	500 Cathedral Dr, Aptos, CA 95003

Map #	Service or Facility Name	Jurisdiction	Address
Churches			
21	Aptos Community United Methodist Church	County of Santa Cruz	221 Thunderbird Dr, Aptos, CA 95003
22	Resurrection Catholic Church	County of Santa Cruz	7600 Soquel Drive Aptos, CA 95003
23	Santa Cruz Baptist Church	County of Santa Cruz	7565 Sunset Way, Aptos, CA 95003
24	The Coastlands	County of Santa Cruz	280 State Park Dr., Aptos, CA 95003
25	Episcopal Church of St. John	County of Santa Cruz	125 Canterbury Drive Aptos, CA 95003
26	New Hope Community Church	County of Santa Cruz	7200 Freedom Blvd., Aptos, CA 95003
27	St. Andrew Presbyterian Church	County of Santa Cruz	9850 Monroe Ave, Aptos, CA 95003
28	Christ Lutheran Church	County of Santa Cruz	10707 Soquel Dr., Aptos, CA 95003

Figure 12: Community Facilities



Emergency Services

Police protection and traffic enforcement in the study area are provided by the California Highway Patrol and the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department. Within the study area, there is a County of Santa Cruz Sheriff's Center, located at 19 Rancho Del Mar near the western limits of the study area, a County of Santa Cruz Aptos/LaSelva Sheriff's Service Center located within Aptos Village at 171 Aptos Village Way, and a California Highway Patrol station, located at 10395 Soquel Drive at the eastern limits of the study area. The Aptos-La Selva Fire Protection District and Central Fire Protection District provide fire protection and emergency rescue services to the study area. There is one fire station within the project study area, located at 300 Bonita Drive, just east of Rio Del Mar Boulevard and south of SR 1.

Educational Facilities

There are nine educational facilities (both public and private) located within the project study area. These include day care centers, elementary and high schools.

Health and Medical Services

There are two medical centers and one urgent care facility located within the study area: Aptos Family Medicine, the Aptos Center, and Aptos Walk-in Care, the latter two of which are affiliated with the Sutter Health Palo Alto Medical Foundation. There are also a number of family medicine practices located within the study area.

Other Public Facilities

The Santa Cruz Public Library System has 10 branches serving the residents of Santa Cruz County; the Aptos Branch is located within the study area. Other public facilities within the project study area include a community center in Aptos Village, a museum, a U.S. Postal Service location, and eight places of worship.

7.6.1.2 Utilities

There are numerous utilities within the project area, including overhead electric and transmission lines; underground electrical, gas, sanitary sewer, water, stormwater, television/cable, telephone lines and oil lines; and water and gas line casings on existing bridge structures. Other infrastructure within the right of way includes manholes, catch basins, inlets, culverts, and stormwater outfalls (Santa Cruz County 2021).

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) provides gas and electricity services to the project area. AT&T maintains the local telephone service, and Comcast is the main cable provider. Soquel Creek Water District provides water service to the project area, which includes the unincorporated area of Aptos.

Wastewater collection and treatment within the study area are provided by the Santa Cruz County Sanitation District. Solid waste collection, recycling, and yard waste disposal are provided by GreenWaste Recovery, Inc. through franchise agreements with the County of Santa Cruz. The County of Santa Cruz operates two solid waste facilities: the Buena Vista Landfill west of Watsonville and the Ben Lomond Transfer Station near the town of Ben Lomond.

7.6.2 Environmental Consequences

7.6.2.1 Build Alternative

Community Facilities

The Build Alternative has potential to enhance access to community facilities by providing new pedestrian and bicycle access within the project corridor and across SR 1. Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would support pedestrian and bicycle connections between Aptos Village and neighborhoods located on the other side of SR 1. The proposed auxiliary lanes and BOS features would result in reductions in congestion within the SR 1 corridor, which is anticipated to have positive effects for community facilities in the study area.

As discussed in more detail in Section 4.4, Relocations and Real Property Acquisition, construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would require permanent acquisitions from nine properties, as well as temporary construction easements along the SR 1 right-of-way and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. This would result in direct temporary impacts to one community facility, Coastlands Church. Construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would require a temporary construction easement for the regrading of a drainage ditch on the Coastlands Church property along the railroad right of way. The permanent property acquisitions would not have a direct impact on community facilities. Please refer to Section 4.4 for the list of affected properties and the evaluation of real property acquisition impacts.

Construction of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 is also anticipated to permanently remove approximately 15 parking spaces on Aptos Street in Aptos Village. This would have a minor adverse impact to neighborhood cohesion due to the minor reduction in the availability of parking for residents and businesses in Aptos Village. Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would, however, improve bicycle and pedestrian access for residents and businesses in Aptos Village. Please refer to Chapter 5, Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities, for the evaluation of permanent parking impacts.

During the construction period, temporary daytime closures of off/on-ramps and surrounding surface streets have the potential to affect certain routes to nearby community facilities including: Mar Vista Elementary, Learning Montessori, Valencia Elementary, Aptos Junior High

School, Aptos High School, Little Learners of Aptos, St. Andrew's Co-op Pre-school, St. Abraham's Christian Academy, Rio Del Mar Elementary, Aptos Center (Sutter Health), Aptos Walk-in Care (Sutter Health), Aptos Family Medicine, Aptos Branch Library, Aptos Historical Museum, Aptos Community Center, the U.S. Postal Service Office in Aptos, Aptos Community United Methodist Church, Resurrection Catholic Church, Santa Cruz Baptist Church, The Coastlands, The Episcopal Church of St. John, New Hope Community Church, St Andrew Presbyterian, and Christ Lutheran Church. Potential impacts include road closures that would temporarily disrupt access to these facilities via certain routes and temporarily increased congestion on surrounding streets due to temporary closures. Detours would be provided to ensure access is maintained throughout construction. Temporary parking restrictions may be implemented along the segments of local roads described above, resulting in temporary loss of parking in these areas – which may temporarily affect access to community facilities by temporarily reducing the availability of parking spaces serving local residences and businesses.

Construction activities would generate dust, vehicle and equipment emissions, and noise impacts related to the operation and movement of heavy equipment, and other construction activity within the community of Aptos within the project vicinity. Slow-moving construction vehicles may temporarily contribute to traffic congestion on local roads.

Emergency Services

During the construction period, temporary closures of off/on-ramps and surrounding surface streets have the potential to affect the response times of emergency service providers. Temporary road closures may temporarily affect certain routes and temporarily increase congestion on surrounding streets. Additionally, temporary closures have the potential to adversely affect access to and from Aptos/La Selva Fire Station Number 2, the California Highway Patrol Santa Cruz Area office, and the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Center. Detours and coordination with emergency service providers would be provided to ensure access is maintained throughout construction and that emergency service providers receive advance notice of detours and changes to access routes.

The long-term effect of the Build Alternative would be to reduce congestion and thereby enhance accessibility to the greater SR 1 project area, which would benefit the response times for emergency service providers. The Build Alternative would improve merging operations, reduce conflicts between traffic entering and exiting SR 1, and would provide BOS facilities, which would also allow emergency service providers to better respond to emergencies while using SR 1 in this area.

Utilities

Preliminary design information indicates that relocations of utilities would be required, including the relocation of an electric utility pole at Aptos Street along the rail trail alignment, as well as the overhead electric line. Construction of the new SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek and Spreckels Drive is anticipated to require the relocation of an electric utility pole near Moosehead Drive, and the overhead electric line, as well as a sanitary sewer line near Moosehead Drive. Rail trail construction may potentially require the relocation of a water line near Aptos Creek Road and telephone line on Soquel Drive in the vicinity of Parade Street.

These temporary impacts could potentially result in a temporary interruption of service of the aforementioned utilities. However, construction activities would not cause a substantial increase in the existing demand for electricity or require the development of new sources. No impacts to local solid waste facilities are anticipated.

7.6.2.2 No Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, no direct, permanent, or temporary impacts to community facilities or emergency services would occur; however, congestion within the project area would continue to worsen, resulting in indirect adverse impacts related to access to community facilities and service provider response times. No utilities would be relocated, interrupted, or displaced and no impacts would be anticipated to occur.

7.6.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would reduce potential short-term impacts during construction. No long-term impacts would occur; therefore, no additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required for operation.

- At least 30 days prior to construction activities that would require relocation of existing utilities, affected utility service providers shall notify and coordinate with all affected utility service providers to ensure affected customers will be notified by their service providers of potential service interruptions and to ensure that all utilities are relocated appropriately.
- Implementation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) would ensure appropriate detours are established such that access to all facilities is maintained throughout construction. The TMP would also require coordination with and notification of all proposed road closures and detours prior to implementation, including coordination with emergency service providers. Please refer to Section 5.3 for additional details regarding the TMP.

7.7 Relocations and Real Property Acquisition

7.7.1 Affected Environment

The federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Uniform Relocation Act), and California Government Code, Chapter 16, Section 7260, et seq., require that relocation assistance be provided to any person, business, farm, or nonprofit operation displaced because of the acquisition of real property by a public entity for public use. Compliance with the Uniform Relocation Act is required by any public agency if federal funds are to be used in the acquisition or construction of a proposed project.

Owners of private property have federal and state constitutional guarantees that their property will not be taken or damaged for public use unless they first receive just compensation. Just compensation is measured by the “fair market value” of the property to be taken. Where acquisition and relocation are proposed, the provisions of the Uniform Act, as amended, and all applicable regulations would be followed. All real property to be acquired would be appraised to determine its fair market value. An offer of just compensation, not less than the approved appraisal, would be made to each property owner.

Each homeowner, renter or business displaced as a result of the project would be given advance written notice and would be informed of eligibility requirements for relocation assistance and payments.

Please refer to Section 4.1.1, Affected Environment (Population and Housing) for a discussion of housing in the project study area and Santa Cruz County.

7.7.2 Environmental Consequences

7.7.2.1 Build Alternative

Property Acquisitions

Construction of the SR 1 improvements and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 may require the permanent partial acquisition of the 19 properties identified in **Table 1**, and, during final design, it may be determined that full acquisition may be necessary for up to four of these parcels. A maximum of approximately 19,100 square feet (0.44 acres) would be necessary for permanent partial acquisitions, if no full acquisitions are required. If full acquisitions are required, the total area would comprise approximately 3,362 square feet (0.08 acres). Some impacts to homes, driveways, buildings, or backyards may occur on parcels along the following roadways:

- Soquel Drive: Assessor parcel numbers 039-232-03, 039-232-02, 039-232-01, 041-561-11, and 041-052-16

- Parade Street: 041-011-42, 041-011-41
- Sandalwood Drive: 044-282-47, 044-282-48
- Moosehead Drive: 042-071-01, 042-071-02, 042-071-03, and 042-067-18

Additionally, temporary construction easements along the SR 1 right-of-way may be necessary for construction of retaining walls and sound walls. The parcels that may require temporary construction easements are listed in Table 1. Approximately 2.07 acres (90,347 square feet) of temporary construction easements would be required for construction of the build alternative.

Residential and Business Displacements

The information presented in this section is from the project's Relocation Impact Memorandum (Monument 2022). Residential and business displacements that would result from potential full acquisition of the properties at 7992, 7994, and 7996 Soquel Drive, which are zoned for and designated in the county's General Plan as commercial.

The buildings at 7992, 7994, and 7996 Soquel Drive are located on three parcels under title to two owners. There are two older residences based on the observed construction material. One was constructed in 1916 and the second is of similar vintage. Neither has been determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Sites or the National Register of Historic Places. There are numerous other shed style structures, some stand-alone and others are abutting one of the older residences. The property has zoning and a General Plan designation of commercial.

The 7992 Soquel Drive property has a residence containing 1,205 square feet which was built in 1916 and does not appear to be updated. On the same property is a large irregular shaped shed with a rollup door and entry door. It does not appear to have adequate facilities for habitability.

The second property comprised of 7994 and 7996 Soquel Drive contains a mixture of improvements constructed for residential and commercial uses. There is a dated residence (7996 Soquel Drive) with a large rectangular structure that appears to be used for housing (Apartments A and B). South of these residential units, a portion of the former commercial structure has been converted to a residential unit (Apartment C). These 4 units appear to be occupied. The remaining portion of this structure appears to be unoccupied, and it is not clear whether it is used commercially or being converted to a residential use. It historically served as a glass replacement and repair business. The legal habitability status of the structures is unknown.

The property at 7994 Soquel Drive is an occupied bungalow. A total of 5 residential units appear to be occupied. The remaining unit does not appear to be occupied.

Table 14 provides a summary of the displacements associated with 7992, 7994, and 7996 Soquel Drive, including the Assessor's parcel number, address, the type of residence, and the number of tenant households that would be displaced. A total of six tenant households would be displaced. Based on currently available information, no businesses would be displaced. All residential units are occupied by renters; there are no owner-occupied units.

Table 14: Displacements Associated with 7992, 7994 and 7996 Soquel Drive

Assessor's Parcel No.	Street Address	Type of Residence	Number of Tenant Households Displaced
039-232-03	7992 Soquel Drive	House	1
		Storage shed	Storage of personal property
Not available	7994 Soquel Drive	Bungalow	1
Not available	7996 Soquel Drive	House	1
		Apartments A, B, C	3
		Unknown former Commercial unit	No known tenant

Source: Bender and Rosenthal 2021

Summary of Relocations

Relocations that may occur as a result of the project are summarized in **Table 15**, below. A total of six residential units would be relocated. As described in Section 4.1.1.3, Housing, the average household size for renter-occupied housing in the study area is 2.34. Therefore, it is estimated that 14 residents would be relocated. As described in Section 4.1.1.3, there are 106,307 housing units in the study area, with an occupancy rate of 90.1 percent, which translates into approximately 95,783 occupied housing units in the study area. The six residential relocations therefore represent less than 0.01 percent of the occupied housing units in the study area.

Table 15: Residential and Nonresidential Relocations

	Single-Family Units	Mobile Homes	Multi-Family		Estimated Total Residential Units (Units / Residents) ¹	Estimated Total Nonresidential Units (Businesses/ Employees)
			Buildings	Units		
Build Alternative	3	0	1	3	6 / 14	0 / 0

¹ Estimate of residents based on an average of 2.34 residents per renter-occupied unit (U.S. Census Bureau 2019)

7.7.2.2 No-Build Alternative

No property acquisitions or relocations would occur under the No-Build Alternative.

7.7.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The housing market analysis conducted for the proposed project's Relocation Impact Memorandum included sampling from 55 apartment rentals and 18 house rentals listed on Craig's List and 120 rentals on Realtor.com for available houses, apartments, mobile homes, and condominiums. The analysis found that, in general, there is sufficient decent, safe, and sanitary housing available to meet the needs of the potential displacees. The following measures would be implemented to address relocation impacts:

- Caltrans' Relocation Assistance Program would be applied to ensure that persons displaced as a result of a transportation project are treated fairly, consistently, and equitably so that such persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole (see Appendix B for a summary of the Relocation Assistance Program).
- Relocation services and benefits would be administered without regard to race, color, national origin, or sex in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (42 United States Code 2000d, et seq.). (See Appendix C, Caltrans' Title VI Policy Statement.)

The conceptual measures anticipated to be implemented under the Tier I Corridor HOV Lane Alternative include the following related to partial acquisitions:

- Modifications to the design of future Tier II projects to avoid or further minimize partial acquisitions.
- Adjustments of the project profile to reduce the right-of-way requirements.

7.8 Environmental Justice

This project has been developed in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations." Title VI states that "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Executive Order 12898 requires each federal agency (or its designee) to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address "disproportionately high and adverse" effects of federal or federally funded projects on minority and low-income populations.

7.8.1 Affected Environment

The FHWA requires a determination be made as to whether communities of concern may be affected by a project. A community of concern is a minority or low-income population, as described in Section 4.1, Population and Housing. The primary source for population data is the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 data.

Table 16 contains information on low-income and minority populations within the project study area.

Table 16: Study Area Poverty Rates and Race and Ethnicity Demographics

	Santa Cruz County	Study Area Census Tracts							Total / Average
		1220.02	1220.03	1221	1222.01	1222.02	1222.03	1224	
Total Population	273,962	3,253	7,248	3,286	6,506	2,328	3,971	7,247	33,839
White	57.3%	89.7%	74.5%	76.3%	83.9%	76.1%	81.8%	74.4%	79.5%
Black	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.7%	1.3%	0.4%	0.9%	0.3%	0.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Asian	4.6%	1.8%	3.3%	2.5%	3.6%	3.5%	2.2%	2.1%	2.7%
Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%
Two or More Races	3.2%	1.0%	5.1%	3.0%	1.9%	6.1%	3.8%	3.7%	3.5%
Hispanic	33.6%	6.7%	16.2%	16.7%	9.2%	13.9%	10.7%	19.5%	13.3%
Total Minority Population	42.7%	10.2%	25.5%	23.8%	16.0%	23.9%	18.2%	25.6%	20.5%
Percent Below Poverty Level	13.1%	4.2%	12.8%	8.3%	6.5%	6.0%	4.6%	11.3%	7.7%

Notes: Data is from 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

For purposes of environmental justice, minority is defined as a person or persons belonging to one or more of the following groups:

1. Black: a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
2. Hispanic: a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
3. Asian American: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands.
4. American Indian and Alaskan Native: a person having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or recognition.

5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019.

For this analysis, a census tract was considered to contain communities of concern if:

- The total minority population of the census tract is more than 50% of the total population or the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis.
- The proportion of the census tract population that is below the federal poverty level exceeds that of the Santa Cruz County.

As shown in Table 17, the portion of the population living below the poverty level in each of the study area census tracts (4.2% - 12.8%) is lower than it is for the county as a whole (13.1%). Minority populations in the study area census tracts are generally lower than for the county as a whole and are therefore not disproportionately high within the project study area. Therefore, there are no communities of concern within the project study area.

7.8.2 Environmental Consequences

Adverse environmental justice impacts would occur if the project were found to have disproportionate and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations.

The population of the project study area does not include minority or low-income populations greater than the minority or low-income population percentages in the general population of Santa Cruz County. Since the populations of concern were not identified in the project study area, there would not be disproportionate and adverse impacts on these populations, for either the Build or No-Build alternatives.

7.8.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No minority or low-income populations have been identified that would be adversely affected by the proposed project as determined above. Therefore, this project is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12898.

Chapter 8 Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

8.4 Affected Environment

Results of a Traffic Operations Analysis Report (TOAR) (CDM Smith 2021) prepared for the Project demonstrate that SR 1 traffic volumes for the peak directions (northbound AM and southbound PM) are approaching or equal to the capacity of the freeway (AM peak period: 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; PM peak period: 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; AM peak hour: 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.; PM peak hour: 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Additionally, the presence of queuing on the corridor along the peak directions indicates that the peak direction traffic demand exceeds the capacity. Incidents in the peak directions blocking a lane on the two-lane (each way) SR 1 freeway have a compound effect on an already congested roadway. Finally, 10-year historical collisions data on the SR 1 mainline and ramps indicate that most mainline segments and a few ramps experience overall collision rates higher than the statewide average collision rates (CDM Smith 2021).

8.4.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

The FHWA directs that full consideration should be given to the safe accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists during the development of federal-aid highway projects (see 23 CFR 652). It further directs that the special needs of the elderly and the disabled must be considered in all federal-aid projects that include pedestrian facilities. When current or anticipated pedestrian and/or bicycle traffic presents a potential conflict with motor vehicle traffic, every effort must be made to minimize the detrimental effects on all highway users who share the facility.

Caltrans and the FHWA are committed to carrying out the 1990 ADA by building transportation facilities that provide equal access for all persons. The same degree of convenience, accessibility, and safety available to the general public will be provided to persons with disabilities.

This section describes the existing and planned transportation system within the study area, including the roadway network, transit services, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as discussed below.

8.4.1.1 Roadway Network and Circulation

The roadway network and circulation in the project area are shown on **Figure 13** and discussed below.

SR 1

SR 1 is the state route connecting the coastal communities on the northern and central California coast. It varies between a two-lane highway in rural areas of the coast to multiple lanes in urban areas. In the project area, it is a four-lane freeway (two lanes in each direction) with average annual daily traffic (AADT) from approximately 66,000 at the southern project limit near Freedom Boulevard to approximately 80,200 at the northern limit near State Park Drive (Caltrans 2019). North and west of the project area, it connects with Highway 17 and Route 9 and traverses the city of Santa Cruz on city streets before becoming a two-lane highway along the coast north of Santa Cruz. South of the project area, SR 1 is a six-lane freeway through Watsonville, returning to a two-lane highway in northern Monterey County to SR 156.

Soquel Drive

Soquel Drive is the main parallel route to SR 1 in the study area. It runs for about 2.35 miles, starting in the west at its intersection with State Park Drive and ending at Freedom Boulevard at the eastern end of the study area. East of State Park Drive, Soquel Drive is primarily an access road for SR 1.

Figure 13: Roadway Network



Rio Del Mar Boulevard

Rio Del Mar Boulevard provides the primary access route from SR 1 to the community of Rio Del Mar. It runs north–south for 1.4 miles as a two-lane road from Beach Drive (private road) to Soquel Drive.

State Park Drive

State Park Drive, less than 1 mile long, is a short two-lane road providing access from SR 1 to Seacliff Beach State Park to the south and Soquel Drive to the north. Its heavy volumes are a function of its connection with Soquel Drive and the Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center.

8.4.1.2 Parking

On-street and off-street parking is available throughout the project area, including on-street parking on various commercial and residential streets. The Initial Study for the Aptos Village Plan (County of Santa Cruz 2009) identified approximately 140 on-street spaces and about 375 spaces in parking lots for a total of about 515 spaces in the 35-acre Aptos Village Plan area. The Aptos Village Square shopping center at 7960 Soquel Drive, located just north of SR 1 outside of the Aptos Village Plan area, has approximately 350 off-street spaces; the park-and-ride lots at Resurrection Church on Soquel Drive near State Park Drive have a combined 73 spots; and Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center, just east of the State Park Drive interchange, has approximately 500 spaces (Caltrans 2015).

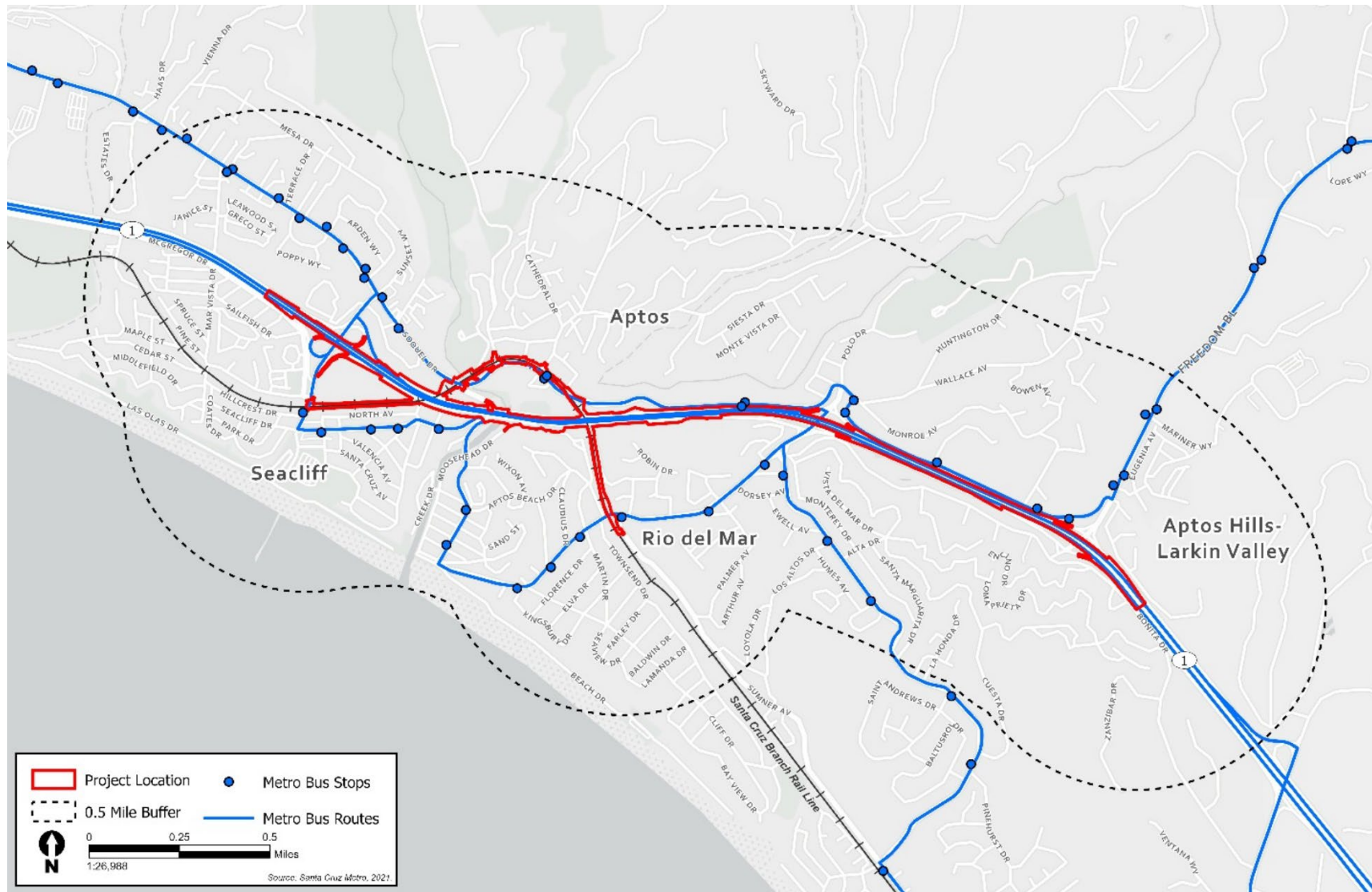
8.4.2 Public Transportation

The transit network in the project area is shown on **Figure 14**, and available public transportation is discussed below.

8.4.2.1 Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) is the primary transit provider in Santa Cruz County. METRO operates one urban collector, one express, and two urban local bus feeder routes in the study area. These routes primarily serve local travel with the express route providing service to the cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville.

Figure 14: Transit Network



METRO routes serving the SR 1 corridor are briefly described below.

Route 91 – Cabrillo Express

This limited-stop bus line originates at the METRO Center in downtown Santa Cruz and terminates at the Watsonville Center near downtown Watsonville. Within the study area, this line serves the two park-and-ride lots at Resurrection Church and commercial shopping areas (e.g., Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center) along Soquel Drive. Route 91 uses SR 1 northbound and southbound between Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Route 91 runs northbound on SR 1 approximately every hour beginning at 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Runs heading southbound on SR 1 depart approximately every hour from about 7:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The one stop within the project area is located near Aptos Branch Library on Soquel Drive.

Route 55 – Mid-County Service

Route 55 serves the areas of Capitola, Aptos, and Rio Del Mar. The bus line originates in the Capitola Mall and terminates in the Rio Del Mar area. Route 55 provides weekend and weekly services every two hours from 8:30am - 4:30pm. The 10:30pm and 2:30pm trips serve Via Pacifica (i.e., Rio Del Mar area). This route includes numerous stops along Center Avenue, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, Clubhouse Drive, and Sumner Drive.

Route 69W– Capitola/Cabrillo

Route 69W originates at the METRO Center in the city of Santa Cruz and terminates at the Watsonville Center. Within the study area, Route 69W serves the two park-and-ride lots at Resurrection Church and commercial shopping areas (e.g., Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center) along Soquel Drive. On weekdays, Route 69W runs hourly from approximately 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., while on weekends, this route runs hourly between approximately 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. The one stop within the project area is located near Aptos Branch Library on Soquel Drive.

Route 71 – Soquel/Freedom

Route 71 originates at the METRO Center in the city of Santa Cruz and terminates at the Watsonville Transit Center. Within the study area, Route 71 serves areas throughout the area of Aptos, including two park-and-ride lots at Resurrection Church and commercial shopping areas (e.g., Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center) along Soquel Drive, and commercial areas throughout the corridor within Aptos. On weekdays, Route 71 runs southbound every half hour from 6:45 a.m. to 8:45 p.m. and hourly from 8:45 p.m. to 10:45 p.m. Northbound runs occur every half hour from approximately 5:30am to 8:40pm with two additional runs at 9:40 p.m. and 11:15 p.m. On weekends, Route 71 runs southbound every half hour between approximately 7:15 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. and hourly from 3:45 p.m. to 11:45 p.m. Northbound runs occur every half hour from 6:10 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. and hourly from 3:10 p.m. to 8:10 p.m. Stops include Aptos Branch Library on Soquel Drive, Soquel Dr & Trout Gulch Rd, Soquel Dr (Creekside Offices), Soquel

Dr & Monroe Ave, Soquel Dr & Jaunell Rd, Soquel Dr & Monroe Ave (Auto Center), and Freedom Blvd (Aptos High School).

METRO ParaCruz

METRO also offers shared ride, door-to-door paratransit service as a complement to its regular fixed-route bus service. METRO ParaCruz service is available to anyone certified as unable to use regular fixed-route service as a result of a disability. Service is available from 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. 7 days a week, except Memorial Day. In addition, there are extended hours in certain areas of the county to coincide with fixed route service. METRO ParaCruz service is offered to any location within 0.75 mile of any regular METRO bus route, other than Highway 17 express commuter service.

8.4.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The Santa Cruz County Planning Department's Master Plan of Countywide Bikeways (MPCB) defines a countywide network of bikeways that complements the bikeway systems of local cities and adjacent counties. The bikeway network is made up of three types of facilities:

- 1) Class I bikeways (bike paths), which provide a separated right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians;
- 2) Class II bikeways (bike lanes), which provide a striped lane for one-way travel on a street or highway; and
- 3) Class III bikeways (bike routes), which provide for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.

There are currently limited opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely cross SR 1 in the project area, even though portions of the project area are designated as regional bicycle routes. The proposed Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 improvements include the construction of a paved bicycle and pedestrian shared use trail, a fence separating the new trail from the rail line, addition of new trail overcrossings over SR 1, and the construction of new trail bridges at Aptos Creek and Valencia Creek, to accommodate the new trail.

8.4.3.1 Bicycle Facilities

Many of the County's major collector and arterial roadways have, over the years, been established as Class II bikeways (bike lanes) with a focus on developing bicycle facilities in the higher density urban areas and urban corridors of the county. There are few Class I bikeways (bike paths) in the county. Currently, Santa Cruz County has approximately 92 miles of bike

lanes and 8 miles of bike paths. Bicycle facilities present within the project area are shown on **Figure 15**.

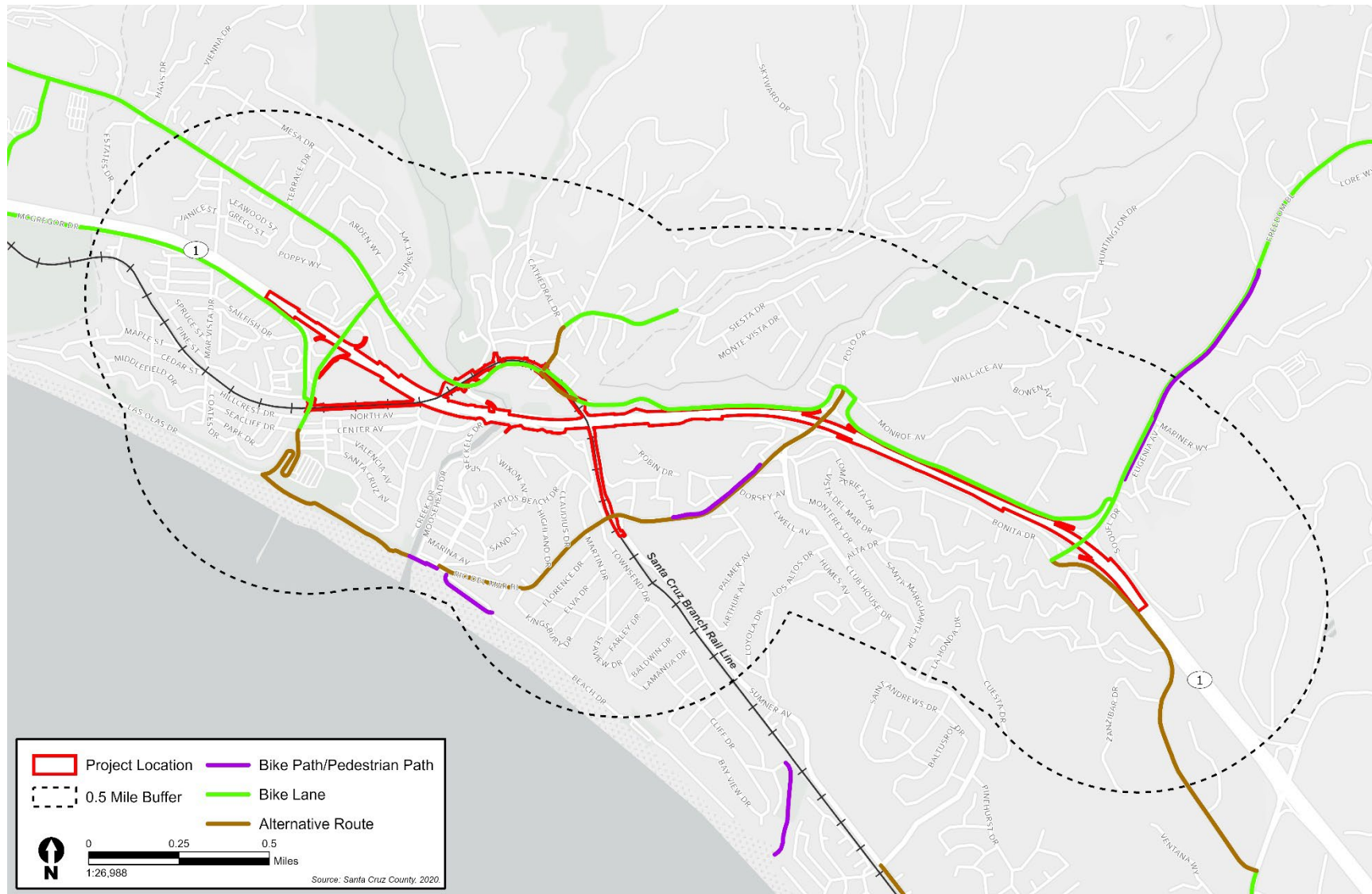
A number of the streets within the project area are equipped with Class II bicycle lanes including State Park Drive between Soquel Drive and Center Avenue, Soquel Drive from State Park Drive to Freedom Boulevard, and Trout Gulch Road beginning at Soquel Drive. Class III bicycle lanes are also provided primarily south of SR 1 on portions of State Park Drive, Las Olas Drive, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, Clubhouse Drive, Sumner Avenue, and Freedom Boulevard, allowing bicyclists to share the road with traffic. Existing options for crossing SR 1 include a dedicated lane on State Park Drive and shared lanes on Rio Del Mar Boulevard and Freedom Boulevard.

8.4.3.2 Pedestrian Facilities

The existing pedestrian network includes sidewalks and foot paths throughout Aptos Village (e.g., Soquel Drive, Aptos Street, Trout Gulch Road) north of SR 1, in Seacliff Village (e.g., State Park Drive and Center Avenue) south of SR 1, and at the terminus of Rio Del Mar Boulevard, Venetian Road, and Aptos Beach Road near Rio Del Mar Beach. Foot paths also exist along the continuous stretch of Seascapes State Beach and Rio Del Mar State Beach. The State Park Drive overcrossing has a sidewalk with protective railings to enable pedestrian access across SR 1; however, the Rio Del Mar Boulevard and Freedom Boulevard overcrossings have narrower sidewalks without any protective railings for safe pedestrian passage.

Residents of Aptos value maintaining and enhancing a pedestrian-friendly environment. Central to the design concept for Aptos Village is the creation and development of a pedestrian zone in the Village core that would connect residents with recreational opportunities in the region. Included in the *Aptos Village Plan* were proposals to construct a sea/mountain trail to run between the Forest of Nisene Marks and Seacliff State Beach along the Aptos Creek corridor, as part of the Santa Cruz Mountain Trail System, and to require a pedestrian orientation for development and revitalization within the Village. Existing pedestrian facilities are shown on **Figure 15**.

Figure 15: Bicycle/Pedestrian Centers



8.5 Environmental Consequences

8.5.1 Build Alternative

8.5.1.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

Construction activities are anticipated to require temporary closures at on- and off-ramps of the State Park Drive, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, and Freedom Boulevard interchanges; however, ramp closures would be staged so that successive off- or on-ramps are not closed at the same time and detours would be provided to minimize temporary impacts on motorists and adjacent neighborhoods.

The Build Alternative would include the replacement of the two Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line bridges over SR 1 and replacing the SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek and Spreckels Drive to accommodate the proposed auxiliary lanes. Replacing the SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek and Spreckels Drive would require demolition of the existing bridge and construction of a new bridge. Construction of the new SR 1 bridge over Aptos Creek would precede demolition of the existing bridge, and traffic would be routed to the new bridge before demolition of the existing bridge. Temporary lane closures may be needed on affected road segments adjacent to ramp and bridge construction, with temporary flagging during construction hours. Temporary overnight closures of either direction of SR 1 for falsework erection/removal of the existing railroad overcrossings may also occur.

Improvements to Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would temporarily restrict vehicle travel along Soquel Drive in Aptos Village, although access to surrounding residences and businesses would be maintained during construction activities. Temporary closures and detours could result in increased congestion on nearby local streets during construction. These impacts would be short-term during construction activities and would be reduced through implementation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) (see Section 5.3).

Once constructed, the Build Alternative would increase capacity within the project limits on the SR 1 mainline segments with the addition of auxiliary lanes from a range of 3,950-4,400 vehicles per hour to a range of 5,600-6,100 vehicles per hour (CDM Smith 2021). The additional capacity from auxiliary lanes is expected to induce additional demand up to 400 vehicles/day by 2045 in each direction, which is approximately 0.70 percent of the mainline average traffic volume under the No-Build Alternative. However, when accounting for bus serve changes and related projected increases in transit ridership, the project would result in a reduction of 240 vehicles/day by 2045 in each direction, which is approximately 0.43 percent of the mainline average traffic volume under the No-Build Alternative.

According to the TOAR, this project would improve congestion and reduce travel times between Santa Cruz and Watsonville by 15 minutes in the northbound direction during the AM peak travel period, and would reduce travel times by 18 minutes in the southbound direction during the PM peak travel period in the opening year.

Based on a comparison of the Build and No-Build Alternatives in the TOAR, the Build Alternative would result in an increase in average speed in the southbound PM peak direction in 2025 and for all directions/time periods in 2045 except the northbound AM peak direction. For the northbound AM peak direction, the potential speed improvement within the study area is largely offset by a downstream bottleneck north of the Soquel Avenue interchange. Compared to the No-Build Alternative, the level of service (LOS) for the Build Alternative improves for the southbound PM peak direction in the opening year but no improvements were seen in the year 2045. (CDM Smith 2021)

Buses would operate on the new auxiliary lanes between freeway on- and off-ramps and on BOS facilities through the interchange areas. The increase in bus services would improve operations on the freeway mainline segments by shifting traffic from a low-occupancy vehicle mode to a high occupancy bus mode, thereby reducing traffic. It is expected that the reduction in total collisions comparing the Build scenario to the No-Build scenario in 2019, 2025, and 2045 ranges between 17 percent and 20 percent. Finally, improved travel conditions on SR 1 would shift vehicles from local roads back to SR 1, reducing neighborhood cut through traffic. (CDM Smith 2021)

The Build Alternative would result in the loss of 15 on-street parking spaces that serve residential and commercial uses along Aptos Street near Aptos Village in order to accommodate Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. These spaces would not be replaced; however, given the availability of existing parking spaces in Aptos Village described in Section 5.1.1.2, Parking, the parking loss is anticipated to be minor. Overall, the Build Alternative would benefit access and circulation. Although Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would have minor impacts to parking, it would provide new access to Aptos Village and across SR 1 for bicycle and pedestrian modes of travel; therefore, parking avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would not be required for this permanent parking impact.

8.5.1.2 Public Transportation

As discussed in section 5.2.3, construction activities are anticipated to require temporary closures of the State Park Drive, Rio Del Mar Boulevard and Freedom Boulevard interchange off/on-ramps; however, ramp closures would be staged so that successive off- or on-ramps are not closed at the same time to minimize impacts to bus service. Additionally, construction in the

vicinity of all bridge work would require lane closures with temporary flagging on affected roadways, and detours would be established. Improvements to Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would temporarily restrict vehicle and bus travel along Soquel Drive in Aptos Village, including the bus stop at Trout Gulch Road. However, these impacts would be short-term during construction activities and would be reduced through implementation of a TMP (see Section 5.3).

Overall, the Build Alternative would not reduce transit service or permanently impact transit stops. Rather, this alternative would improve public transit by adding auxiliary lanes to accommodate BOS operations between the Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive interchanges, which would reduce travel times on the SR 1 corridor.

8.5.1.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Temporary closures during construction activities would limit access for pedestrian and bicycle travel in certain areas, such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes along Soquel Drive in Aptos Village, and sidewalks over the State Park Drive, Rio Del Mar Boulevard and Freedom Boulevard interchanges. However, implementation of the Build Alternative would result in long-term beneficial effects to bicycle and pedestrian facilities by enhancing existing facilities, improving connectivity, creating new bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and reducing congestion throughout the project area. Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 would include the construction of a paved bicycle and pedestrian shared use trail, a fence separating the new trail from the rail line, addition of new trail overcrossings of SR 1, and the construction of new trail bridges at Aptos Creek and Valencia Creek, to accommodate the new trail. The new trail overcrossings of SR 1 would provide high-visibility pedestrian and bicycle crossing facilities and improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between the areas on the north and south sides of the SR 1 corridor.

Overall, the Build Alternative would improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities and connectivity within the study area; therefore, no additional avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be required for operation.

8.5.2 No-Build Alternative

8.5.2.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

Based on the results of the TOAR, average weekday daily mainline traffic in the SR 1 northbound and southbound directions under No-Build conditions within the project limits is expected to grow between the existing year (2019) and the opening year by 4.2 percent and 5.7 percent in the southbound direction, and between the existing year (2019) and the horizon year (2045) by 17.4 percent in the northbound direction and 20.9 percent in the southbound direction.

Additionally, average weekday daily on ramp traffic in the SR 1 northbound and southbound directions under No-Build Conditions is expected to grow between the existing year (2019) and the opening year by approximately 3.4 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively. Off ramp traffic would grow by 3.9 percent in the northbound direction and 3.3 percent in the southbound direction. Between the existing year (2019) and the horizon year (2045), on ramp traffic in the SR 1 northbound and southbound directions under No-Build Conditions is expected to grow by 10.7 percent and 11 percent, respectively, while off ramp traffic would grow by 15.0 percent in the northbound direction and 11.1 percent in the southbound direction.

Existing circulation and access deficiencies would persist or worsen under this alternative. Under No-Build conditions, by year 2045, access to various facilities within the study intersections would be adversely affected during both the morning and evening peak periods. No private or public parking spaces would be removed under the No-Build Alternative.

8.5.2.2 Public Transportation

The No-Build Alternative would not result in any direct impacts to transit facilities or result in any short-term impacts to bus service; however, this alternative would continue to make transit service inefficient and would not induce a mode shift from automobiles to buses. As traffic volumes and congestion would continue to increase, the existing roadway would not be able to accommodate BOS services since no auxiliary lanes would be constructed, and travel times between destinations would increase.

8.5.2.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The No-Build Alternative would not result in any direct impacts to existing bicycle or pedestrian facilities; however, it also would not enhance existing limited bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the project area, and no bicycle or pedestrian facilities would be added as part of Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12.

8.6 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Temporary lane and street closures during construction could affect local access and circulation within the project area. However, a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) that addresses circulation for public transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and private vehicles shall be prepared and implemented for the proposed project. The TMP shall include traffic rerouting measures, a detour plan, and public information procedures, which shall be developed during the design phase with participation from local agencies, transit and shuttle services, local school administrations, local communities, business associations, and affected drivers. Early and well-publicized announcements and other public information measures shall be implemented prior to and during construction to minimize confusion, inconvenience, and traffic congestion. As part of

the TMP, construction planning shall minimize nighttime construction in residential areas and minimize daytime construction impacts on commercial areas. Staging areas would be located within the existing Caltrans right-of-way and, as feasible, within the Santa Cruz Branch Line right-of-way along Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. The TMP will identify staging areas on parcels for which temporary construction easements will be obtained, including an area of Aptos Village County Park adjacent to the railroad ROW. Additionally, the following measures shall be incorporated and implemented, if applicable, based on final construction design plans:

- a) During the construction phase of the proposed project, some parking restrictions may be required on a temporary basis. A public outreach program shall be implemented throughout the construction period to keep the public informed of the construction schedule and scheduled parking and roadway closures, including detour routes and, if available, alternative parking.
- b) In the event of temporary obstruction of any pedestrian walkways or bicycle paths, the Transportation Management Plan shall identify nearby alternate routes, including pedestrian routes that meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, as appropriate.
- c) The Traffic Management Plan shall include measures to minimize, avoid, and/or mitigate impacts to alternate routes, such as agreements with the County of Santa Cruz to provide enhanced infrastructure (any necessary signage, flagging, cones, etc.) on arterial roads or intersections to deal with detoured traffic.
- d) Coordination with transit and private shuttle services shall occur to plan for any rerouting, and any necessary avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures shall be incorporated in the Transportation Management Plan.
- e) To minimize disruption to the traveling public during construction of the proposed project, a comprehensive strategy shall be developed to minimize disruption and assure the safe movement of vehicles through and around the construction site.

Chapter 9 Public Involvement

The project provides a number of opportunities for public input. The forums for public outreach activities include the following:

9.4 Scoping Meetings

A public scoping online open house was held for this project, from September 17 through October 19, 2020. The purpose of the public scoping Online Open House was to present to the public factors to be considered in the draft environmental document for improvements on this segment of SR 1 and Segment 12 of the Coastal Rail Trail, and to receive comments.

9.5 Tribal Coordination

AB 52 consultation was initiated for the proposed project in December 2020. Three tribal representatives responded to the letters sent to Native American contacts, and tribal monitoring was included during Extended Phase I and Phase II testing for potential subsurface cultural resources in February 2021. Further consultation is anticipated regarding the results of the subsurface testing.

9.6 Public Hearing

Following the release of the draft environmental document for the proposed project, a public hearing will be conducted to receive public comments and answer questions about the project alternatives and environmental impacts. During this public review period, members of the public will be able to submit comments regarding the proposed project.

9.7 Media

Information about the project has been made available through the project website <https://sccrtc.org/projects/streets-highways/hwy1corridor/highway-1-state-park-dr-to-freedom-blvd-aux-lanes/>. SCCRTC has provided information about the project to subscribers of its eNews Alerts and through social media, including its Facebook page and Twitter feed.

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Appendix B Relocations

B1 - INTRODUCTION

This appendix is general in nature and is not intended to be a complete statement of federal and state relocation laws and regulations. This section provides some general descriptive information on Public Law (PL) 91-646, the [Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended in 1987](#). This federal law is often referred to simply as the "Uniform Act." Please see the following Caltrans brochures for information regarding relocation assistance for businesses and farms, mobile homes, and residences:

- Business Relocation Brochure (pdf)
- Mobile Home Relocation Assistance Program (pdf)
- Relocation Assistance for Residential Relocation (English) (pdf)

B2 - DECLARATION OF POLICY

The Uniform Act states, "The purpose of this title is to establish a *uniform policy for fair and equitable treatment* of persons displaced as a result of federal and federally assisted programs in order that such persons *shall not suffer disproportionate injuries* as a result of programs designed for the benefit of the public as a whole."

The Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states, "No Person shall...be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation." The Uniform Act sets forth in statute the due process that must be followed in real property acquisitions involving federal funds. Supplementing the Uniform Act is the government-wide single rule for all agencies to follow, set forth in 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 24. Displaced individuals, families, businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations may be eligible for relocation advisory services and payments, as discussed below.

B3 - FAIR HOUSING

The Fair Housing Law (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968) sets forth the policy of the United States to provide, within constitutional limitations, for fair housing. This Act, as amended, makes discriminatory practices in the purchase and rental of most residential units illegal. Whenever possible, minority persons shall be given reasonable opportunities to relocate to any available housing regardless of neighborhood, as long as the replacement dwellings are decent, safe, and sanitary and are within their financial means. This policy, however, does not require Caltrans to provide a person a larger payment than is necessary to enable a person to relocate to a comparable replacement dwelling.

Any persons to be displaced will be assigned to a relocation advisor, who will work closely with each displacee in order to see that all payments and benefits are fully utilized, and that all regulations are observed, thereby avoiding the possibility of displacees jeopardizing or forfeiting any of their benefits or payments. At the time of the first written offer to purchase, owner-occupants are given a detailed explanation of the state's relocation services. Tenant occupants of properties to be acquired are contacted soon after the first written offer to purchase, and also are given a detailed explanation of the Caltrans Relocation Program. To avoid loss of possible benefits, no individual, family, business, farm, or nonprofit organization should commit to purchase or rent a replacement property without first contacting a Caltrans relocation advisor.

B4 - RELOCATION ASSISTANCE ADVISORY SERVICES

In accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, Caltrans will provide relocation advisory assistance to any person, business, farm, or nonprofit organization displaced as a result of the acquisition of real property for public use. Caltrans will assist displacees in obtaining comparable replacement housing by providing current and continuing information on the availability and prices of both houses for sale and rental units that are "decent, safe, and sanitary." Nonresidential displacees will receive information on comparable properties for lease or purchase (see below for business, farm, and nonprofit organization relocation services).

Residential replacement dwellings will be in equal or better neighborhoods at rents or prices within the financial ability of the individuals and families displaced, and reasonably accessible to their places of employment. Before any displacement occurs, comparable replacement dwellings will be offered to displacees that are open to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, and consistent with the requirements of Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. This assistance will also include the supplying of information concerning federal and state assisted housing programs, and any other known services being offered by public and private agencies in the area.

Persons who are eligible for relocation payments and who are legally occupying the property required for the project will not be asked to move without first being given at least 90 days written notice. Occupants eligible for relocation payment(s) will not be required to move unless at least one comparable "decent, safe, and sanitary" replacement residence, available on the market, is offered to them by Caltrans.

B5 - RESIDENTIAL RELOCATION PAYMENT PROGRAM

The Relocation Payment Program will help eligible residential occupants by paying certain costs and expenses. These costs are limited to those necessary for, or incidental to, the purchase or

rental of the replacement dwellings and actual reasonable moving expenses to a new location within 50 miles of the displacement property. Any actual moving costs in excess of the 50 miles are the responsibility of the displacee. The Residential Relocation Program can be summarized as follows:

Moving Costs

Any displaced person, who lawfully occupied the acquired property, regardless of the length of occupancy in the property acquired, will be eligible for reimbursement of moving costs.

Displacees will receive either the actual reasonable costs involved in moving themselves and personal property up to a maximum of 50 miles, or a fixed payment based on a fixed moving cost schedule.

Purchase Supplement

In addition to moving and related expense payments, fully eligible homeowners may be entitled to payments for increased costs of replacement housing.

Homeowners who have owned and occupied their property for 180 days or more prior to the date of the first written offer to purchase the property, may qualify to receive a price differential payment and may qualify to receive reimbursement for certain nonrecurring costs incidental to the purchase of the replacement property. An interest differential payment is also available if the interest rate for the loan on the replacement dwelling is higher than the loan rate on the displacement dwelling, subject to certain limitations on reimbursement based upon the replacement property interest rate. Rental Supplement

Tenants who have occupied the property to be acquired by Caltrans for 90-179 days prior to the date of the first written offer to purchase may qualify to receive a rental differential payment.

This payment is made when Caltrans determines that the cost to rent a comparable “decent, safe, and sanitary” replacement dwelling will be more than the present rent of the displacement dwelling. As an alternative, the tenant may qualify for a down payment benefit designed to assist in the purchase of a replacement property and the payment of certain costs incidental to the purchase, subject to certain limitations noted under the “Down Payment” section below. In addition to the occupancy requirements, in order to receive any relocation benefits the displaced person must buy or rent and occupy a “decent, safe, and sanitary” replacement dwelling within one year from the date the Department takes legal possession of the property, or from the date the displacee vacates the displacement property, whichever is later.

Down Payment

The down payment option has been designed to aid owner occupants of 90-179 days and tenants with no less than 90 days of continuous occupancy prior to Caltrans first written offer. The down payment and incidental expenses cannot exceed the maximum payment of \$5,250. The one year eligibility period in which to purchase and occupy a “decent, safe, and sanitary” replacement dwelling will apply.

Last Resort Housing

Federal regulations (49 CFR 24) contain the policy and procedure for implementing the Last Resort Housing Program on federal-aid projects. Last Resort Housing benefits are, except for the amounts of payments and the methods in making them, the same as those benefits for standard residential relocation as explained above. Last Resort Housing has been designed primarily to cover situations where a displacee cannot be relocated because of lack of available comparable replacement housing, or when the anticipated replacement housing payments exceed the \$5,250 and \$22,500 limits of the standard relocation procedure, because either the displacee lacks the financial ability or other valid circumstances. In certain exceptional situations, Last Resort Housing may also be used for tenants of less than 90 days.

After the first written offer to acquire the property has been made, Caltrans will, within a reasonable length of time, personally contact the displacees to gather important information, including the following:

- Preferences in area of relocation;
- Number of people to be displaced and the distribution of adults and children according to age and sex;
- Location of school and employment;
- Specific arrangements needed to accommodate the special needs of any family member(s); and
- Financial ability to relocate into comparable replacement dwelling which will adequately house all members of the family.

B6 - NONRESIDENTIAL RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Nonresidential Relocation assistance Program provides assistance to businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations in locating suitable replacement property, and reimbursement for certain costs involved in relocation. The Relocation Advisory Assistance Program will provide current lists of properties offered for sale or rent, suitable for a particular business’s specific relocation needs. The types of payments available to eligible businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations

are searching and moving expenses, and possibly reestablishment expenses or a fixed in lieu payment instead of any moving, searching and reestablishment expenses. The payments types can be summarized as follows:

Moving Expenses

Moving expenses may include the following actual, reasonable costs:

- The moving of inventory, machinery, equipment and similar business-related property; dismantling; disconnecting; crating; packing; loading; insuring; transporting; unloading; unpacking; and reconnecting of personal property.
- Loss of tangible personal property provides payment for actual, direct loss of personal property that the owner is permitted not to move.
- Expenses related to searching for a new business site, up to \$1,000 for reasonable expenses actually incurred.

Reestablishment Expenses

Reestablishment expenses related to the operation of the business at the new location, up to \$10,000 for reasonable expenses actually incurred.

Fixed In Lieu Payment

A fixed payment in lieu of moving, searching, and reestablishment payments, may be available to businesses which meet certain eligibility requirements. This payment is an amount equal to the average annual net earnings for the last two taxable years prior to the relocation and may not be less than \$1,000 or more than \$20,000.

B7 - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Reimbursement for moving costs and replacement housing payments are not considered income for the purpose of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or resources for the purpose of determining the extent of eligibility of a displacee for assistance under the Social Security Act, local “Section 8” Housing Programs, or other federal assistance programs.

Any person, business, farm, or nonprofit organization which has been refused a relocation payment by the Caltrans relocation advisor or believes that the payment(s) offered by the agency are inadequate, may appeal for a special hearing of the complaint. No legal assistance is required. Information about the appeal procedure is available from the relocation advisor.

California law allows for the payment for lost goodwill that arises from the displacement for a public project. A list of ineligible expenses can be obtained from Caltrans right-of-way staff.

California's law and the federal regulations covering relocation assistance provide that no payment shall be duplicated by other payments being made by the displacing agency.

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