

Transportation FOR SANTA CRUZ COUNTY'S FUTURE

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

What Is Our

Think about your vision
for Santa Cruz County's
transportation future.

Vision for

Santa Cruz

Weigh the pros and cons
of the options.

County's

Transportation

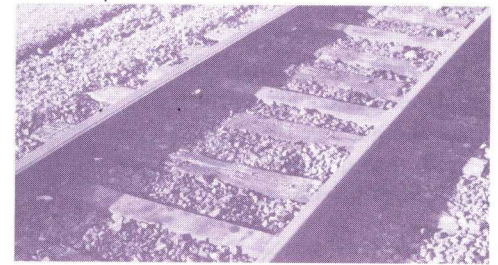
Let us know
what you think.

Future?

Transportation 1990 -
Help Shape Your
Transportation Future

Most of us live in Santa Cruz County because of its special beauty and quality of life. We all share an appreciation for the environment: the Monterey Bay, the redwoods and the mountains. After several years of earthquake-related recession, our region is once again thriving, thanks in large part to economic growth in the Silicon Valley. This prosperity brings with it certain side-effects. We are driving bigger cars, and we're driving more. The result is more traffic congestion, not only on our highways, but also on our local streets. The quality of life we enjoy is threatened by more traffic—both in terms of air pollution and traffic congestion.

What can we do about it? How would we like Santa Cruz County to be in the future? Do we want wider freeways? More bikeways? More bus service? Trains or light rail? To answer these questions, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission conducted a Major Transportation Investment Study (MTIS) of the Santa Cruz to Watsonville corridor (see map below).

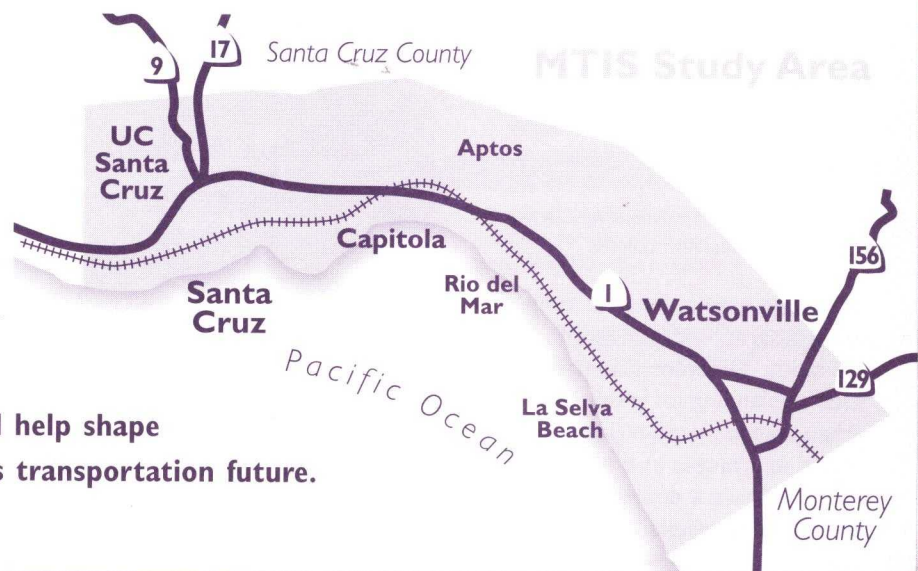


Your Input is
Important

As part of the study process, the Regional Transportation Commission is holding three public open houses to get your ideas on what action to take. There are no easy answers—no one alternative can do it all: reduce traffic, preserve the environment and save money. So, we need your input on which future transportation options make the most sense to you. This brochure gives a brief summary of the study results. You are encouraged to find out more by reviewing the full set of study documents at the library or by attending one of the public open houses. Information on the study will also be broadcast on community television. Then, speak out, send us your comments on the enclosed card, or contact us via e-mail at MTIS@sccrtc.org.

The Santa Cruz
County Regional
Transportation
Commission is
studying different
transportation
options in the high-
lighted corridor. ➔

Your comments will help shape
Santa Cruz County's transportation future.



Study Description

Ideas the consultants explored:

- Widen the Highway
- Run Passenger Rail
- Improve Bus Service
- Build a Busway Along the Rail Line
- Make Minor Improvements
- Mix and Match
- Take No Action

After a series of public meetings in 1995, the Commission agreed to take a look at eight transportation alternatives that could be constructed over the next 20 to 30 years. The study was designed to answer the following questions about each alternative:

- How does it fit with our overall vision of the future?
- How many people will use it?
- Will it reduce congestion?
- How will it affect the environment?
- Will it improve air quality or reduce energy use?
- How much will it cost to build? To operate?
- How can we afford it?
- What happens if we do nothing?

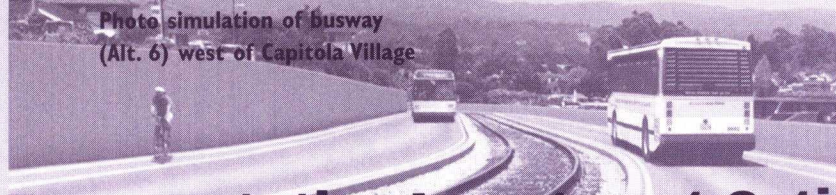
Assumptions

The assumptions used in the study conform with federal requirements and generally assume a continuation of current trends. Assumptions include:

- Each person will make on average the same number of daily trips as they do today
- Future land development will occur according to current City and County general plans
- Gas prices, parking charges, and other daily costs of driving will remain the same as today
- UCSC students will live in roughly the same areas of the county as they do today
- Population projections for the region are reasonably accurate

To a large extent, these assumptions determine the outcome of the study. Different assumptions, such as planning for more compact urban development, higher gas prices, or changes in driving behavior, could have a dramatic impact on the study results.

Photo simulation of busway (Alt. 6) west of Capitola Village



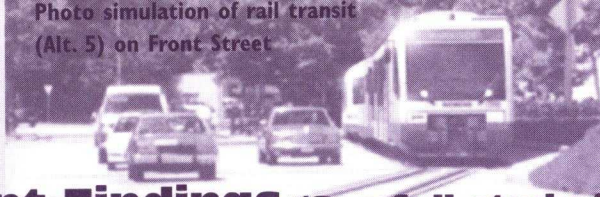
Example of Carpool

Transportation Investment Options—Highli

Alternative	Definition	Transportation Impacts by year 2015 (compared
1. Baseline	Only includes projects already funded, including local road improvements, Hwy 1/17 interchange and Mission St. improvements. Assumes 10% reduction in bus service due to reduced federal funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases avg. travel time • Avg. roadway speed falls • Lower share of people • Buses filled to capacity • 22,400 avg. daily transi
2. Transportation System Management (TSM)	Bus service improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, expanded rideshare center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13% increase in transi • Increases avg. travel tim
3. Widen Highway 1 For Carpool Lanes	Adds a new carpool lane in each direction on Hwy 1 between Hwy 17 and State Park Drive Requires reconstruction of interchanges, including Soquel Drive Interchange. Also includes all TSM improvements, and new express bus service on carpool lanes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces avg. travel time • Reduces traffic on arter • Minor increase in auto • 17% increase in transi
4. Rail Transit: Watsonville to UC Santa Cruz	Initiates light-rail style transit service on existing rail lines between Watsonville and UCSC, via Harvey West Park. Includes Hwy 1 pedestrian bridge to Cabrillo College and bike path along the rail line. Also includes all TSM improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest UCSC ridership • 4,853 daily rail passeng • Less than 40 second d • Best transit travel time • Increases avg. travel tim • 27% increase in transi • Increased parking dem
5. Rail Transit: Watsonville to Santa Cruz (Natural Bridges & Harvey West Park)	Initiates light-rail style transit service on existing rail lines between Watsonville and Harvey West Park via Front St., with connections to Natural Bridges. Includes Hwy 1 pedestrian bridge to Cabrillo College and bike path along the rail line. Also includes all TSM improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest transit mileage • 3,655 daily rail passeng • Less than 40 second d • Increases avg. travel tim • 27% increase in transi • Increased parking dem
6. Busway	Paves the railroad line between Capitola and Natural Bridges for joint use by buses and freight rail. Also includes bike path along the rail line and all TSM improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11% increase in transi • 3,456 daily busway pas • Increases avg. travel tim • Increased parking dem
7. Rail Transit: Watsonville to Santa Cruz (Harvey West Park)	Initiates light-rail style transit service along existing rail lines between Watsonville and Harvey West Park via Chestnut St. Includes bike path along the rail line. Also includes all TSM improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest rail usage: 5,28 • Less than 40 second d • Increases avg. travel tim • 26% increase in transi • Increased parking dem
8. Improved Bus Service	Adds several new routes to existing bus service, doubling Baseline service. Expands rideshare services and adds bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Includes Hwy 1 pedestrian bridge to Cabrillo College. Also includes all TSM improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest total transit u • Highest transit trips to • Increases avg. travel tim • 31% increase in transi
Also considered separately:		
Intercity Rail Service	Studied two trains per day, between San Jose and Santa Cruz via Gilroy and Watsonville, during summer weekends. Includes upgrade of the tracks, but not acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 900 daily one-way rail • Additional traffic at sta • Limited impact on hig

Notes:

1. e.g., Seabright Ave., 17th Ave., 41st Ave., State Park Drive, etc.



Highlights of Consultant Findings (see full study for more information)

	Environmental Screening ⁽²⁾	Cost Analysis ⁽³⁾ \$1998, M = million (above baseline)	Financial Analysis Inflated Dollars
to Baseline)			
es up to 63% vs. 1990 from 33 mph to 22 mph ride the bus	The impact of the Baseline was not analyzed separately but was used to compare with other alternatives.	Capital \$171 M (17-year total) Operating \$22 M (annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing revenues fund capital & operations Surplus over 17-year period
trips			
use es up to 5% vs. Baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only alternative that reduces pollutant emissions Lowest energy consumption 	Capital \$16M (17-year total) Operating \$7 M (annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires new 1/4¢ sales tax Surplus over 17-year period
es up to 11% vs. Baseline ial streets occupancy use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential commercial and residential displacements Increased noise along corridor Visual impacts at Soquel Ave. interchange, soundwalls Emissions above clean air thresholds Loss of adjacent open space Potential vegetation & temporary wildlife impacts Right-of-way acquisitions 	Capital \$263M (17-year total) Operating \$10M (annual) (Private automobile ownership and operating costs are not included)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires new 1/2¢ sales tax Deficit over 17-year period Assumes 10% local contribution for interchanges Examine strategies to cover deficit
o ers lays at rail crossings ⁽¹⁾ es up to 5% vs. Baseline use and at stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise impacts at specific locations, below thresholds Visual impact of Cabrillo - Hwy 1 pedestrian bridge Potential impact on parks: Pogonip & Harvey West Potential wildlife & vegetation impacts Highest energy consumption Right-of-way acquisitions 	Capital \$384M (17-year total) Operating \$26M (annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires new 1/2¢ sales tax Deficit over 17-year period Assumes 10% local contribution for rail stations Examine strategies to cover deficit Able to use federal guideway funds
ers lays at rail crossings ⁽¹⁾ es up to 4% vs. Baseline use and at stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential commercial displacements on Front St. Noise impacts at specific locations, below thresholds Visual impact of Cabrillo - Hwy 1 pedestrian bridge Potential wildlife & vegetation impacts Right-of-way acquisitions 	Capital \$299M (17-year total) Operating \$22M (annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires new 1/2¢ sales tax Deficit over 17-year period Assumes 10% local contribution for rail stations Examine strategies to cover deficit Able to use federal guideway funds
use engers es up to 5% vs. Baseline and at stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightened potential cultural resources impacts Potential wildlife & vegetation impacts Right-of-way acquisitions 	Capital \$101M (17-year total) Operating \$10 M (annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires new 1/4¢ sales tax No deficit over 17-year period Able to use federal guideway funds
7 daily passengers lays at rail crossings ⁽¹⁾ es up to 5% vs. Baseline use and at stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise impacts at specific locations, below thresholds Potential wildlife & vegetation impacts Right-of-way acquisitions 	Capital \$292M (17-year total) Operating \$21 M (annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires new 1/2¢ sales tax Deficit over 17-year period Assumes 10% local contribution for rail stations Could use more federal funds to cover deficit Able to use federal guideway funds
e downtown Santa Cruz es up to 5% vs. Baseline use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual impact of Cabrillo - Hwy 1 pedestrian bridge Minor emissions increase, below clean air thresholds 	Capital \$41M (17-year total) Operating \$23M (annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires new 1/2¢ sales tax No deficit over 17-year period
passengers tions way traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise impacts, below local thresholds Possible toxic clean up sites (UP responsibility) 	Capital \$10.6M (UP estimate) Operating \$1.1 M (annual) Trackage Rights (unknown)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing revenues fund capital & operations Assumes contributions by state & local government & private sector

2. The study found no "fatal flaws" that would prevent any of the proposed alternatives from being constructed, but each alternative has different potential environmental impacts due to its location and level of disruption to the surroundings (see chart for details). Environmental review as required by the California Environmental Quality Act would be required prior to construction of any alternative.

3. All capital cost estimates include large contingency factors which may or may not be applicable.

Revised edition

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is revising the study summary previously sent to you to include the consultant's corrected information about projected traffic congestion impacts and environmental impacts. These corrections are noted in underlined typeface in the interior chart.

Next Steps

Public Open Houses

(See schedule below)

To present the findings from the Major Transportation Investment Study and to receive public input.

Develop Phased Transportation Improvements

To identify what is possible in the near term, what long term transportation alternatives fit in with the community's vision of the future, and how could these improvements be funded.

Develop the Long Term Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy

To define what will be included in the revised Regional Transportation Plan including a specific course of action for the region's transportation future.