

SBCAG STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Santa Ynez Valley Traffic Circulation and Safety Study Grant Application

MEETING DATE: February 15, 2018

AGENDA ITEM: 4B

STAFF CONTACT: Michael Becker

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize staff to submit an application for a Caltrans Transportation Planning Grant requesting \$300,000 to procure consultant services to complete a Santa Ynez Valley Traffic Circulation and Safety Study.

DISCUSSION:

Several members of the SBCAG Board have indicated the need to study traffic circulation and safety issues on the state highways in the Santa Ynez Valley: US 101, CA 154, and CA 246. Caltrans District 5 staff were consulted by the SBCAG Chair and indicated that the best course of action to complete a study would be to seek grant funding through Caltrans' Sustainable Transportation Grant Program. County of Santa Barbara staff were asked to manage the study and noted that it is a better fit for SBCAG being that it is multi-jurisdictional in nature and focuses on state highways. Therefore, SBCAG has been tasked with seeking funding for this project, and ultimately serving as the project manager if the grant application is successful.

The draft application is attached for the Board's review (Attachment A). Staff worked with the SBCAG Chair and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians to develop the scope of work. The Chumash Tribe has agreed to be a fiscal sponsor and sub-applicant for the project and to be involved throughout the study process.

SBCAG is seeking \$300,000 in state funds to supplement the \$25,000 from each SBCAG and the Chumash Tribe to complete this project. If successful, the project is expected to take approximately two years to complete.

The application is due February 23.

COMMITTEE REVIEW:

TTAC reviewed the application during its February 1, 2018 meeting. TTAC voted unanimously to recommend Board authorization. The application will be discussed by the North County Subregional Planning Committee on February 14, 2018.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Draft Application



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PROJECT TITLE	Santa Ynez Valley Traffic Circulation and Safety Study
PROJECT LOCATION (city and county)	Cities of Buellton, Solvang, and the unincorporated County of Santa Barbara

	APPLICANT	SUB-APPLICANT	SUB-APPLICANT
Organization	Santa Barbara County Association of Governments	Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	
Mailing Address	260 North San Antonio Road Suite B	Santa Ynez Tribal Office P.O. Box 517	
City	Santa Barbara	Santa Ynez	
Zip Code	93110	93460	
Executive Director/designee and title	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Marjorie Kirn	Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Kenneth Kahn	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>
E-mail Address	mkirn@sbcag.org	kkeeper@santaynezchumash.org	
Contact Person and title	Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Becker, Planning Division Manager	Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Sam Cohen	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>
Contact E-mail Address	mbecker@sbcag.org	scohen@santaynezchumash.org	
Phone Number	(805) 961-8912	(805) 688-7997	

FUNDING INFORMATION

Use the Match Calculator to complete this section.

[Match Calculator](#)

Grant Funds Requested	Local Match - Cash	Local Match - In-Kind	Total Project Cost
\$ 300,000	\$ 50,000	\$	\$ 350,000

Specific Source of Local Cash Match

(i.e., local transportation funds, local sales tax, special bond measures, etc.)

SBCAG cash match of \$25,000 will come from Transportation Development Act funds.
 Remaining cash match of \$25,000 will come from the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians.

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LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION*			
Please list the legislative members in the project area. Attach additional pages if necessary.			
State Senator(s)		Assembly Member(s)	
Name(s)	District	Name(s)	District
Hannah-Beth Jackson	19	Monique Limón	37
	-		-
	-		-
	-		-
	-		-
	-		-

***Use the following link to determine the legislators.**
<http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/> (search by address)

Please identify the best practices cited in the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Guidelines, Appendices K and L, that would be employed in the proposed transportation planning grant project. Select only those that apply and provide an explanation. For future grant cycles, this section may be considered for points and/or threshold requirements. For now, these items are for tracking and reporting purposes only and are not associated with points, and may not result in a higher score.

- Coordination with Other Planning Processes

Please explain how:

Integrates in CTP 2040/Smart Mobility Framework (accessibility, congestion management, multi-modal solutions), SB 743 (mode shift/VMT & GHG), Strategic Highway Safety Plan (safety), & General Plans (buildout evaluation).

- Regional Travel Demand Modeling and Analysis

Please explain how:

The study will leverage SBCAG's enhanced 4-step regional travel demand model, which has been peer-reviewed and satisfies all federal requirements, for the development of a sub-area, multi-modal, microsimulation model.

- RTP Consultation and Coordination

Please explain how:

The study will utilize similar public outreach methods (committees/roundtables) and lists utilized in the development of the RTP in order to ensure Santa Ynez Valley residents/community organizations are active participants.

- Integrating Ecological Considerations into Transportation Planning

Please explain how:

- RTP Financial Overview

Please explain how:

The study would develop implementation cost estimates, and identify available funding to match, so as to resemble a financially constrained RTP. Long-range growth paired with projects would be matched with possible funding.

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RTP Modal Discussion

Please explain how:

The study would emphasize multi-modal solutions, including increases in access to transit, improving pedestrian and bicycle networks, and tying in to the park and ride system to increase car and vanpooling.

Transportation System Management and Operations

Please explain how:

The study would explore Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and coordinated signal timing, optimized for slower speeds, creating low vehicle progression speeds, and uninterrupted, safe flow for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Future of Transportation and New Technology

Please explain how:

Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Contents and Development

Please explain how:

The study will be consistent with the growth assumptions in SBCAG's adopted SCS. The process will also inform the next iteration of SBCAG's SCS.

Land Use and Transportation Strategies to Address Regional GHG Emissions

Please explain how:

The study will prioritize studying the effects of shifting transportation investments towards improving and expanding transit, safer walkability, and bicycling improvements.

Adaptation of the Regional Transportation System to Climate Change

Please explain how:

By encouraging mode shifts away from passenger vehicles, developing implementation cost estimates, and identifying available funding to match, the study would identify reductions in GHG that contribute to climate change.

Performance Measures

Please explain how:

The study will evaluate a variety of potential improvement scenarios, tied to a series of performance measures, to identify short and long-term improvements to accommodate the increasing demands.

Policies and Programs that Promote Health and Health Equity

Please explain how:

Please identify the Grant Program Overarching Objectives (Grant Application Guide, Page 4) that the proposed transportation planning grant project will address. Select all that apply and provide an explanation.

- Sustainability – Promote reliable and efficient mobility for people, goods, and services, while meeting the State’s GHG emission reduction goals, preserving the State’s natural and working lands, and preserving the unique character and livability of California’s communities.

Please explain how:

The study would evaluate strategies to reduce GHGs by encouraging mode shifts away from single occupancy vehicles, developing transit and bike/ped implementation cost estimates, and identifying available funding.

- Preservation – Preserve the transportation system through protecting and/or enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation, improving the quality of life, and/or promoting consistency between transportation improvements and State and Local planning growth and economic development patterns.

Please explain how:

- Mobility – Increase the accessibility of the system and mobility of people and freight.

Please explain how:

The study would emphasize multi-modal solutions, including enhanced regional and local transit service as well as bicycle and pedestrian services, to address low-mobility and disadvantaged populations.

- Safety – Increase the safety and/or security of the transportation system for motorized and active transportation users.

Please explain how:

Using the Strategic Highway Safety Plan as a guide, coordinated signal timing (among other safety transportation improvements) will be tested to create uninterrupted flow for bicyclists and for a pedestrian-friendly corridor.

- Innovation – Promote the use of technology and innovative designs to improve the performance and social equity of our transportation system and provide sustainable transportation options.

Please explain how:

- Economy – Support the economic vitality of the area (i.e. enables global competitiveness, enables increased productivity, improves efficiency, increases economic equity by enabling robust economic opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment and for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, etc.).

Please explain how:

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- Health** – Decrease exposure to local pollution sources, reduce serious injuries and fatalities on the transportation system, and promote physical activity especially through transportation means.

Please explain how:

The study would evaluate roadway geometry diagrams, traffic safety data, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements in order to reduce conflict points and create uninterrupted safe flow for bicyclists and pedestrians.

- Social Equity** – All of these overarching objectives should promote transportation solutions that focus on and prioritize the needs of communities most affected by poverty, air pollution and climate change, and promote solutions that integrate community values with transportation safety and performance while encouraging greater than average public involvement in the transportation decision making process.

Please explain how:

The Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians is a sub-applicant, funding partner, and committee member. A robust public outreach process with translation services will ensure integration of community organizations and values.

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1. Project Description (100 words maximum) (15 points): Briefly summarize project.

This study will comprehensively assess and identify improvements for the multi-modal transportation needs of the Santa Ynez Valley which is primarily served by state highways SR 154, SR 246, and US 101. These highways handle increasing demand from regional, tourist, and local trips, while simultaneously serving as “Main Street” for the cities and communities in the Santa Ynez Valley. As such, there are competing demands on the highway network from passenger vehicles, transit, trucks, cyclists, and pedestrians. The circulation and safety study will identify existing system inefficiencies and solutions to accommodate the changing demographics and diverse needs into the future.

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2. Project Justification (Do not exceed the space provided.) (25 points): Describe the problems or deficiencies the project is attempting to address, as well as how the project will address the identified problems or deficiencies. Additionally, list the ramifications of not funding this project.

The Santa Ynez Valley study area [Attachment 1] includes the incorporated cities of Buellton and Solvang, the small unincorporated communities of Ballard, Los Olivos, and Santa Ynez, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Reservation, a federally recognized sovereign nation. The Valley is primarily accessible by US 101, SR 154 and SR 246, which are stressed by growing numbers of local trips, tourism, regional trips, and commuters. The recently adopted, August, 2017, Fast Forward 2040 Regional Transportation Plan-Sustainable Communities Strategy identifies some of the transportation deficiencies within the Valley, including:

- The reliance on SR 246 as “Main Street” in Solvang and Buellton;
- The need for operational improvements at the Highway 246/Alamo Pintado intersection;
- Heavy volumes of recreational traffic on weekends; and
- Travel speed along SR 246, which is significantly affected by local circulation, through interregional traffic, and signalization in the City of Solvang, as well as the lack of an alternate east/west route.

Highway deficiencies exist in the Valley. SR 246 is the principal arterial in the region and the major route into and out of the Cities of Buellton and Solvang and nearby communities. Caltrans’ November, 2016 SR 246 Transportation Concept Report (TCR) highlight the deficiencies and conflicting uses this corridor experiences, including its use as a main thoroughfare, multi-modal facility shared by transit, passenger vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrian travel, and as a tourism and visitor corridor that serves the Danish-influenced City of Solvang, the Chumash Casino Resort, and wineries. The casino, with its gaming and entertainment venues and 1,677 employees, generates traffic affecting SR 246, SR 154, and US 101.

The concentration of traffic has led to worsening congestion at signalized intersections, particularly at key north/south streets in the Cities. Congestion is partly due to tour buses seeking parking and heavy pedestrian crossings [Attachment 2]. In the past 5 years (2012-2017), conflict points on the highways have resulted in 164 collisions, of which 45 were bicycle and pedestrian collisions, including 7 serious injuries and 3 fatalities [Attachment 3]. Caltrans’ TCR indicates that existing peak hour traffic volumes exceed capacity between US 101 and the City of Solvang at Alamo Pintado Road. The interchanges at US 101, SR 246, and SR 154 also experience heavy turning movement volumes due to visitor and long-distance commuter traffic. SR 246 and 154 serve as an alternative (to US 101 and SR 1) route between the Valley region and the South Coast. The Census 2005-2010 American Community Survey indicates that anywhere between 21 to 27 percent of Valley workers commute 30+ miles to the South Coast of Santa Barbara for higher paying jobs while taking advantage of less costly housing options locally, illustrating a growing jobs-housing imbalance.

This project will include a quantitative assessment of travel conditions and assess the potential value of various improvement scenarios, ultimately identifying short and long-term improvements to accommodate the increasing demands and safety issues. A Santa Ynez Valley Bicycle Master Plan will be prepared alongside this project as a separate, yet coordinating project. Comprehensive solutions, including enhanced transit services, ITS implementation, coordinated signal timing, regional bicycle and pedestrian services, and other local street transportation improvements, are among the solutions that will be explored. Making effective use of operational tools in the Valley are paramount to addressing existing issues exacerbated by constrained right-of-way.

This study will offer a nuanced understanding of existing and anticipated future conditions and issues along with the effectiveness of potential improvements. Without this study, existing issues will continue unabated and will be further exacerbated by population, tourism, and employment growth. Based on projections in Fast Forward 2040 RTP-SCS, population in the Santa Ynez Valley will grow from 22,674 in 2010 to 28,787 in 2040, an increase of 27 percent over the 30-year period, while employment is projected to grow from 12,806 in 2010 to 19,185 in 2040, a 50 percent increase. Without this study, The Valley Blueprint, a joint effort by the six communities in the valley which highlighted the need to maintain the rural nature of the existing route while promoting the public awareness of transportation alternatives such as expanded transit, will go unfulfilled.

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3. Grant Specific Objective (Do not exceed the space provided.) (30 points): Explain how the proposed project addresses the grant specific objective of the Sustainable Communities grant program: to encourage local and regional multimodal transportation and land use planning that furthers the region's RTP SCS (where applicable), contributes to the State's GHG reduction targets and other State goals, including but not limited to, the goals and best practices cited in the 2017 RTP Guidelines, addresses the needs of disadvantaged communities, and also assists in achieving the Caltrans Mission and Grant Program Overarching Objectives (Grant Application Guide, Page 4).

The Santa Ynez Valley Circulation and Safety Study would emphasize multi-modal solutions to growing Santa Ynez Valley-wide congestion and safety issues while explicitly addressing both the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Reservation, a federally recognized Native American Tribal Government, and other disadvantaged communities. A comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of enhanced transit services, ITS implementation, coordinated signal timing, regional bicycle and pedestrian services, and other local street transportation improvements, would make effective use of cost-effective operational and safety tools. These tools are paramount to addressing existing issues exacerbated by constrained funding and right-of-ways while assisting in the preservation of the unique character of the Santa Ynez Valley.

The study would further the grant specific objectives by emphasizing the input and needs of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, the federally recognized sovereign nation within the Santa Ynez Valley, along with several other disadvantaged communities, as well as the needs of the regional high school in the area, the Santa Ynez Valley Union High School [Attachment 4]. As a sub-applicant, cash-match funding partner, and a study advisory committee member (along with Caltrans District 5 and local jurisdictions within the study area), the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians' input and experience will be integral to any solutions identified.

Other disadvantaged communities, with their associated social equity concerns, are clustered in the Santa Ynez Valley. These communities include a preponderance of low-mobility populations, as determined by age over 75 years old, as well as low community engagement populations, which contain high concentrations of the existing population without the ability to speak English. The study, through the exploration of multi-modal, transit, and safety solutions, would identify ways to provide adequate mobility and increased safety for these populations. Outreach to these communities would be undertaken through a robust, professionally facilitated public outreach process, and would include professional translation services.

This study would also help further the goals included in the California Transportation Plan (CTP) 2040 and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's Senate Bill 743 guidelines, which emphasize VMT and GHG reduction strategies. This study would tie directly to these reduction strategies by evaluating, among other things:

- Improvements or increases in access to transit,
- Improving pedestrian and bicycle networks,
- Providing traffic calming or bicycle parking, and
- Implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) strategies to improve passenger throughput on existing lanes.

The study would emphasize a safety improvement process that ties into the strategies and goals identified in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), including advancing the four E's of highway safety: engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency services, while studying and recommending new solutions that reduce traffic-related fatalities and severe injuries. The study would evaluate and analyze crash patterns (Black or Hot Spots) with the end goal of recommending mitigation measures identified for high crash locations, including potential signal timing/phasing modifications, parking management plans, system upgrades, etc.

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Grant Specific Objective (Continued - Do not exceed the space provided.)

The derivation of potential mitigation measures would be based on the evaluation and integration of practical design and risk management solutions, using multi-modal performance-based geometric design resources (e.g. the National Cooperative Highway Research Program [NCHRP] reports on "Developing an Improved Highway Geometric Design Process" and "Performance-Based Analysis of Geometric Design of Highways and Streets"). These resources would incorporate performance-based analysis into each step of the study process, allowing for safety issues and solutions to be prioritized at the onset of the study process.

The proposed study would also build on previous SBCAG, Statewide, Caltrans, and Valley community studies. This study would further SBCAG's goals and objectives within its recently adopted Fast Forward 2040 RTP-SCS which follows the Caltrans Smart Mobility Framework. This framework is also reflected in the priorities of the CTP 2040. This study directly implements the goals of Fast Forward 2040 by studying how best to provide the Valley with:

- A high level of accessibility,
- Management of congestion by emphasizing multi-modal options and network management through operational improvements and other strategies,
- Strategies and infrastructure improvements that will help prevent serious injuries and fatalities and promote active living, and
- Mobility for people who are economically, socially, or physically disadvantaged in order to support their full participation in society.

This proposed study would also evaluate strategies to help achieve Fast Forward 2040's preferred scenario performance results, including reductions in per capita vehicle GHG emissions of 13.3 percent in 2020 and 17.7 percent in 2035. By encouraging mode shifts away from single occupancy vehicles, developing implementation cost estimates, and identifying available funding to match, the study would assist in the reduction of the transportation system's emission of GHGs that contribute to global climate change.

This study would leverage several other previous SBCAG studies, including the 2016 North County Regional Transit Plan, 2015 Regional Active Transportation Plan, and 2014 Park and Ride Study. The North County Transit Plan documents ridership in the study area, including on Santa Ynez Valley Transit and the Wine Country Express. The former employs a consistent level of ridership service and the latter has grown nearly 20 percent over the last five years. This sustained level of ridership bodes well for transit improvement strategies that would result from this study.

The Regional Active Transportation Plan identifies planned bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including Class I and Class II improvements that will close gaps within the study area, and the study and integration of these improvements within the analysis will allow for quantification and implementation of their benefits. The Park and Ride Study identifies facilities on SR 246 that serve carpooling through the region, primarily located near intersections with other highways, including US 101 in Buellton and SR 154 in Santa Ynez. The Park and Ride Study also has explicit recommendations regarding signage, ADA accessible parking spaces, transit stops, and enhanced access, all of which would assist the proposed study in more easily quantifying their impacts on regional accessibility within the complete streets and smart mobility framework.

If awarded grant funding, this study would promote solutions that integrate community values with transportation performance while encouraging public involvement in the transportation decision making process. By leveraging both existing working relationships and statewide, regional, and local studies, the study would deliver performance-based, cost-effective, and timely solutions that achieve the grant program objectives.

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4. Project Management (30 points)

- A. Scope of Work in required Microsoft Word format (15 points)
- B. Project Timeline in required Microsoft Excel format (15 points)

See Scope of Work and Project Timeline samples and checklists for requirements (Grant Application Guide, Pages 48-54), also online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.html>

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Application Signature Page

If selected for funding, the information contained in this application will become the foundation of the contract with Caltrans.

To the best of my knowledge, all information contained in this application is true and correct. If awarded a grant with Caltrans, I agree that I will adhere to the program guidelines.

Signature of Authorized Official (Applicant)

Print Name

Title

Date

Signature of Authorized Official (Sub-Applciant)

Print Name

Title

Date

Signature of Authorized Official (Sub-Applciant)

Print Name

Title

Date