

10/31/2022

Mitch Weiss, Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, MS 42
Sacramento, CA, 95814

RE: Support of Senate Bill 1, Cycle 3 Grant Applications for completion of the Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor

Dear Mr. Weiss:

The Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce, representing businesses from the cities of Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Carpinteria, would like to express our support for SBCAG's and Caltrans' applications to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for Cycle 3 of the Senate Bill 1 (SB1) Competitive Programs for the Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor project (Project).

This Project is in the final phase of a more than 15-year effort to improve mobility in the corridor between Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, which was supported by 80% of Santa Barbara County voters who are investing \$140 million in local sales tax funding. The Project helps to protect the economic viability, quality of life, and environmental sustainability of the region and the state by providing multiple transportation benefits that provide a safe transportation network, reduce congestion on U.S. 101, improve interregional goods movement, increase multimodal access, and create access to jobs.

The U.S. 101 corridor is the only major highway connecting the Central Coast to both northern and southern California. Improvement of the corridor is not just a priority for the region, but also for the State, recognized in multiple regional and state plans and strategies.

Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor project components include:

- **Extensive Public Outreach and Planning.** SBCAG and Caltrans have conducted substantial planning and extensive outreach in the corridor. The 101 In Motion Plan and subsequent U.S. 101 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan identified the Lane and the Train strategy as the appropriate solution to reducing congestion. This strategy was strongly supported by the community and has led to great progress in meeting the multimodal needs of the corridor.
- **Completion of a critical lifeline arterial, U.S. 101 by completing a gap on U.S. 101 with a peak-hour carpool lane with a total of three lanes in each direction.** By completing the 2.5-mile HOV gap on U.S. 101, carpoolers and riders of the interregional transit service known as the Coastal Express will be able to benefit with a lane prioritized for high occupancy users. The project will relieve congestion for all users by encouraging higher occupancy and non-personal automobile trips.
- **Expansion of transit,** including the purchase of six electric buses, installation of contactless card readers on the Coastal Express bus, and improving commuter rail service from Los Angeles to Ventura, will enhance transit services along the corridor and will help achieve a balanced set of transportation, environmental, and community access improvements.

- **Enhancing freight operations.** U.S. 101 is the primary freight route on California's Central Coast, a nationally and internationally significant exporter of agricultural products. The project will enhance safety and operations for trucks through a range of new design elements and improvements.
- **Serves Disadvantaged Communities in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.** The completion of the project will address various needs of the disadvantaged and low-income communities in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. With the carpool lane addition, low-income households who rely on carpooling and bus transit will benefit from the anticipated travel time savings. Additional components of the project include a series of bicycle and pedestrian safety enhancements in Santa Barbara's Eastside disadvantaged community.
- **Meets State Greenhouse Reduction Goals** through carpool / vanpool incentives, reducing idling due to unnecessary congestion, improving travel time reliability, and increasing active transportation options. The project will also install Zero Emission Vehicle charging stations along the corridor to accelerate the adoption of ZEV use and promote sustainability and reduced impacts on the environment.
- **Strong partnerships exist to complete these projects.** Partnering organizations include SBCAG, Caltrans, California Transportation Commission, Cities of Santa Barbara and Carpinteria, County of Santa Barbara, as well as the communities of Montecito and Summerland.

The Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce firmly believes that Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor project has a significant impact on the businesses and residences of Santa Barbara County, the Central Coast region, the State of California, and beyond. Due to all the previously listed benefits and reasons, we strongly support SBCAG's Senate Bill 1, Cycle 3 grant application and urge your full consideration of this application.

Sincerely,



Kristen Miller
President & CEO
Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce