STATE ROUTE 37 POLICY COMMITTEE
9:30 a.m., Thursday, June 2nd, 2022

PLEASE NOTE: In light of Governor Newsom’s State of Emergency declaration regarding COVID-19 and in accordance with Assembly Bill 361 allowing remote meetings, this meeting will be accessible via Zoom videoconference and teleconference for all participants.

State Route 37 Policy Committee members will be video-conferencing into the meeting via Zoom. Members of the public who wish to listen to the State Route 37 Policy Committee meeting may do so via the following platform:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87083562720?pwd=V2xvQnJCZ2twTHdnOHoxZ2k2dnRMQT09

Webinar ID: 870 8356 2720
Passcode: 863259
Call in: (669) 900-9128

PUBLIC COMMENT: Public comment on specific agenda items will be allowed during the meeting via Zoom by using the raise hand function. Verbal comments from call-in participants not using the Zoom Video platform may do by pressing *9 (star 9).

Public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes.

MEETING AGENDA

ITEM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair David Rabbitt

2. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment may be submitted in electronic written format. Please submit public comment by email before 5:00PM on 6/1/22. Include “Public Comment” and the meeting name in the subject line of your email and limit written comments to three hundred (300) words. Send comments to Drew.Nichols@scta.ca.gov and they will be shared with all Board members and identified by the Clerk verbally at the meeting. Public comment will be allowed during the meeting via Zoom Meeting by using the raise hand function or for phone-in participants by pressing *9.
Send comments to Drew.Nichols@scta.ca.gov and they will be shared with all Board members and identified by the Clerk verbally at the meeting.

### 3. CONSENT CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Minutes of the March 3rd, 2022 SR 37 Policy Committee Meeting*</td>
<td>Drew Nichols, SCTA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation:</strong> Approve March 3rd, 2022 SR 37 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes</td>
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### 4. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Public Engagement: SR 37 Communications Team*</td>
<td>Bart Ney, CT</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2. Tolling Legislation</td>
<td>Rebecca Long, MTC</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.3. Sears Point to Mare Island Improvement Project (Interim Project)*</td>
<td>Kevin Chen, MTC</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4. Caltrans SHOPP Projects*</td>
<td>Ricky Gao, CT</td>
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<td>4.4.1. Flood Reduction Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.5. Planning &amp; Environmental Linkages Study*</td>
<td>Chris Caputo, CT</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.6. SMART- SR 37 Improvements White Paper*</td>
<td>Bill Gamlen, SMART</td>
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### 5. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS / STAFF UPDATES

All

### 6. FUTURE TOPICS

- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding Opportunities
- Tolling Legislation and Expenditure Plan
- Restoration Projects and Funding Opportunities in San Pablo Bay
- Ultimate Environmental Phase Discussion

### 7. ADJOURNMENT

* Materials included
### Future Meeting Schedule

9:30 AM, September 1, 2022  
9:30 AM, December 1, 2022

### SR 37 Policy Committee Members:

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<tr>
<th>SCTA</th>
<th>NVTA</th>
<th>TAM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Rabbitt, Chair, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors</td>
<td>Alfredo Pedroza, MTC Commissioner</td>
<td>Damon Connolly, MTC Commissioner</td>
<td>Erin Hannigan, Vice Chair, Solano County Board of Supervisors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria Fleming, MTC Commissioner</td>
<td>Belia Ramos, Napa County Board of Supervisors</td>
<td>Judy Arnold, Marin County Board of Supervisors</td>
<td>Robert McConnell, Mayor City of Vallejo</td>
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<td>Susan Gorin, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors</td>
<td>Leon Garcia, Mayor City of American Canyon</td>
<td>Eric Lucan, Councilmember, City of Novato</td>
<td>Jim Spering, MTC Commissioner</td>
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<th>MTC</th>
<th>Caltrans</th>
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<tr>
<td>Therese McMillan, Executive Director</td>
<td>Dina El-Tawansy, District 4 Director – Bay Area</td>
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</table>
PLEASE NOTE: In accordance with Assembly Bill 361, Governor Newsom’s March 4, 2020 State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sonoma County Public Health Officer’s Recommendation for Teleconferenced Meetings, and Sonoma County Transportation Authority/Regional Climate Protection Authority’s Concurrent Resolution 2022-001, this meeting was conducted by teleconference.

State Route (SR) 37 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 3, 2022

The Zoom video recording of this meeting can be viewed by clicking this link.

1. Call to Order/Introductions
Chair David Rabbitt called to order the State Route 37 Policy Committee at 9:38 a.m.

Policy Committee Members Present:
- David Rabbitt, Chair  Supervisor, County of Sonoma
- Erin Hannigan, Vice Chair  Supervisor, County of Solano
- Judy Arnold  Supervisor, County of Marin
- Damon Connolly  MTC Commissioner, Supervisor, County of Marin
- Leon Garcia  Mayor, City of American Canyon
- Susan Gorin  Supervisor, County of Sonoma
- Eric Lucan  Councilmember, City of Novato
- Robert McConnell  Mayor, City of Vallejo
- Belia Ramos  Supervisor, County of Napa
- Alfredo Pedroza  MTC Commissioner, Supervisor, County of Napa
- Jim Spering  MTC Commissioner, Supervisor, County of Solano

Policy Committee Members Absent:
- Victoria Fleming  MTC Commissioner, Councilmember, City of Santa Rosa

Executive Directors Present:
- Daryl Halls, Solano Transportation Authority
- Kate Miller, Napa Valley Transportation Authority
- Anne Richman, Transportation Authority of Marin
- Suzanne Smith, Sonoma County Transportation Authority
2. Opportunities for Public Comment
This item begins at 1:38 on the video recording.
The Policy Committee received a pre-submitted public comment from Ed Schultze, and can be viewed by clicking this link.
There were no additional public comments.

3. Consent Calendar
3.1. Minutes of the October 7, 2021 State Route 37 Policy Committee Meeting
This item begins at 2:06 on the video recording.
There was no public comment on this item.
The Consent Calendar was recommended, and approved unanimously, following a motion by Supervisor Judy Arnold, and a second by Vice Chair Erin Hannigan.
The motion was approved by the following vote:
Aye: Arnold; Connolly; Garcia; Gorin; Hannigan; Lucan; McConnell; Pedroza; Spering; Rabbitt; Ramos.
Nay: n/a
Abstain: n/a
Absent: Fleming.

4. Discussion/Information Items
4.1. Tolling Legislation
This item begins at 3:20 on the video recording.
Rebecca Long, MTC, presented to the Policy Committee on Senate Bill 1050 (Dodd) that would establish the SR 37 corridor as a toll facility that would be governed by the Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority (BAIFA).
Staff received additional questions and comments from Supervisor Arnold, Councilmember Lucan, and Supervisor Spering.

4.2. Strategic Funding opportunities
This item begins at 31:06 on the video recording.
Georgia Gann Dohrman, MTC, presented to the Policy Committee on the strategic funding opportunities.
The committee received comments from Suzanne Smith and Anne Richman.

4.3. Public Engagement
This item begins at 40:40 on the video recording.
Vince Jacala, Caltrans, reported to the Policy Committee on public engagement effort, and highlighted the various public meetings held since January.
No comments were received from committee members, nor was there public comment.

4.4. Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Update
This item begins at 45:20 on the video recording.
Chris Caputo, Caltrans, briefly updated the Policy Committee on the SR 37 Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkages work, and described the public meetings that were held in January and February.
Chair Rabbitt opened for Public Comment and heard from Steve Birdlebough, Kate Powes, and Edward Schulze

4.5. Sears Point to Mare Island Improvement Project
This item begins at 54:43 on the video recording.
Kevin Chen, MTC, presented to the Policy Committee an update to the SR37 Sears Point to Mare Island Improvement Project. The presentation was included in the agenda packet.
The draft Environmental Document was completed on January 13, 2022 and Mr. Chen spoke on the outreach and project timeline.
Staff received questions from Supervisor Spering, Vice Chair Hannigan, and there was no public comment.

4.6. Caltrans SHOPP Project Update

This item begins at 1:04:01 on the video recording.

Ricky Gao, Caltrans, presented an update to the committee on SHOPP projects along the SR37 corridor. The presentation was included with the agenda packet.

Staff received questions and comments from Supervisor Spering, Supervisor Arnold, and Councilmember Lucan.

The Policy Committee received public comment from Susan Stompe, Renee Spenst, Barbara Salzman, Rick Fraites, Kate Powers, Edward Schulze, Steve Birdlebough, and Jim Burroughs.

5. Committee Member Comments/Staff Updates

N/A

6. Future Topics
   • Tolling Legislation and Expenditure Plan
   • Restoration Projects and Funding Opportunities in San Pablo Bay
   • Ultimate Environmental Phase Discussion
   • Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (CMCP)
   • Alternative Modes and TDM – Implementation including a rideshare program

Included for the committee’s interest.

7. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 11:09 a.m.
SR-37 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS
An Integrated Approach
INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS TEAM
One Corridor, One Team, Many Solutions
SR-37
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
TOPICS:

Weekly Integrated Coms Team Meeting
Websites and Social Media
Public Meetings
Tours
Visualization Subcommittee
Weekly Integrated Communications Team Meeting

Held every Wednesday at 11AM

- Representatives from all 5 partner agencies and some local governments
- Caltrans PM, PIOs and Legislative Staff Update
- Coms strategy for upcoming public outreach
- Topics, Subcommittee and Round Robin
WEBSITES and SOCIAL MEDIA

- Caltrans District Website
  - Project Info
  - Environmental Info
  - Virtual Tour
- Resilient37.org
  - Outreach reference materials
  - Content not ready for CT Website
- Social Media Outlets
  - Designed by Campaign
PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Planning and Environmental Linkages
- Scoping & Draft Environmental Documents
- Town Halls
- Policy Committee

- Improved tools and public attendance
  - SR-37 Video, External Advertising, Coordinated Contact Lists
  - PEL attendance increase (60-70 to over 300)
# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ALIGNMENT MATRIX

## RESILIENT 37 Coordinated Public Engagement and Outreach - Alignment Matrix

### CONCURRENT EFFORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project/Mtg Name</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Contacts</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SR37 Policy Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td>James</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tammy</td>
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<td>3 US 101 to SR121 PAED Flood Reduction</td>
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<td>Ricky</td>
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<td>4 PAED Petaluma Bridge Preservation</td>
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<td>Ricky</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 SRE37 SR121 PAED intersection and lane drop extension</td>
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<td>Ricky</td>
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<td>Kevin</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ricky/Chris</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 BCDC Commission Mtg</td>
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<td>Tammy/Stefanie</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 City of Vallejo</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kevin</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 SF Bay Trail Commission</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kevin</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 North Bay RCS- TBD, Summer/Fall 2022</td>
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<td>Stefanie</td>
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### Legend

- **X** or **F**: Public Meeting (F = Day of Month)
- **EIR-S**: Environmental Impact Report Public Scoping Meeting
- **DED**: Draft Environmental Document Circulation
- ***:** Potential changes to the schedule
TOURS

Caltrans HQ 2021

Future Legislative
VISUALIZATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Virtual Tours

Visualizations
- Pipeline
- Asset Coordination

Digital Media
- Innovation
SR 37 Sears Point to Mare Island Improvement Project (Interim Project)

Proposed Project:
- Make transit viable and implements bus transit
- Improve traffic flow/reduce travel times and increase vehicle occupancy

Cost
- Up to Approx. $430 Million (incl. transit and public access)
Project Status

Public Scoping
- July to August 2020

Draft ENV Doc - Public Comment
- January 14, 2022, to February 28, 2022

Final ENV Doc
- September 2022

Final Design
- Fall 2022 to Summer 2024

Contract Award
- Fall to Winter 2024

Construction
- 2025 to 2026
Synopsis of Public Comments

- Bus Transit Service
- Public Access Improvements and Bike Access
- Tolay Creek Bridge Lengthening
- Impacts to Resources
- Safety Considerations
- VMT Analysis
- Sea Level Rise and Flooding Considerations
- Comments on Proposed Alternatives
# Interim B Delivers: Equity, Sustainability, and Funding

<table>
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<th><strong>Equity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sustainability</strong></th>
<th><strong>Funding</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Transit &amp; Rideshare</td>
<td>• Reduced Interim Flooding Risk (Subsidence)</td>
<td>• Local Funding Match for Federal and State Dollars</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Travel Reliability between Housing &amp; Jobs</td>
<td>• Reduced VMT with Tolling</td>
<td>• Advance Ultimate SLR Adaptation</td>
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<td>• Means Based Discounts for Tolls &amp; Transit</td>
<td>• Baylands Restoration - Tolay Creek Bridge Replacement</td>
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User Benefits Outweigh the Project Cost
Repairs and Multimodal Transportation

Reduce Congested Travel Times
- Eastbound PM: from 100 minutes to 26 minutes
- Westbound AM: from 60 minutes to 30 minutes

User Benefits from Delay Time Saved
- Opening Year (2026): $85M Annually
- In 5 Years (2026 – 2030): $578M Total *

* Note: User delays- without the project- are projected to increase over time with increased traffic demand. These benefits compare to project costs of approximately $430 million.
Without Interim B: $650M+ in Lost Toll Revenue
Leverage to Secure Billions in Competitive Grants

Source: PFAL, 2022
## Caltrans SHOPPP Projects

### Map Overview
- **Western Portion**
  - Novato Creek
  - Petaluma River
  - Larkspur Road
  - SR 121 Junction
  - Tolay Creek
  - San Pablo Creek
  - Skaggs Island

- **Middle Portion**
  - SR 29 Junction
  - Fairfield I-80
  - Sacramento St. I-80
  - White Slough

- **Eastern Portion**
  - Marin County
  - Sonoma County
  - Napa County
  - Solano County

### Project Details
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<tr>
<th>Project Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Delivery Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. 4Q320</td>
<td>Flood Reduction (US 101 to SR 121)</td>
<td>2026</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. 2Q500</td>
<td>Bridge Preservation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 2Q200</td>
<td>Lane Extension and RR Crossing at Tolay Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. 1Q480</td>
<td>Intersection of SR 37 and SR 121</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. 0F760</td>
<td>Pedestrian Enhancements at Wilson Ave. and Fairgrounds Drive</td>
<td>2024</td>
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LOCATION
SR 37 from US-101 to Atherton Ave. in Marin County.

PROPOSAL
This project would provide interim solutions to address the most vulnerable section of SR 37 from US 101 to Atherton Ave to address flooding until a future long term year 2100 sea level rise improvement project is constructed.
FLOOD REDUCTION PROJECT
Alternatives

• Minimum Phased Improvement:
  • Replace Novato Creek Bridge to projected 2050 sea level raise (SLR) elevation ($40M – $50M*)

• Limited Improvement:
  • Replace Novato Creek Bridge to projected 2050 SLR elevation combined with passive flood barriers to Atherton Ave. UC. Cost estimate ($70M - 80M*)
  • Replace Novato Creek Bridge to projected 2050 SLR elevation, with a combination of causeway and embankment to Atherton Ave. UC. ($250M - $280M*)

• Maximum Improvement:
  • Interim causeway to projected 2050 SLR elevation to Atherton Ave. UC. ($1.5B*)

• Considered but rejected alternatives:
  • Ultimate causeway ($5B*)
  • Raise SR 37 on an embankment to 12’ elevation from US 101 to SR 121. ($400M - $450M*)
  • Strengthen levee

* Capital Cost Estimates. Current year dollars. For planning purpose only.
**Project Schedule**

* pending funding availability.

- **Summer 2021** Begin Environmental Studies
- **Nov 17, 2021** Scoping Meeting
- **We are here** Study Alternatives
- **Fall 2022 (T)** Prepare Draft Environmental Document
- **Circulate Draft Environmental Document**
- **Prepare Final Decision Document**
- **Complete Environmental Phase**
- **Complete Design**
- **2023(T)** Begin Construction
- **2026(T)**
- **2027(T)**

* We are here

* pending funding availability.
RESILIENT SR37

“ONE CORRIDOR, ONE TEAM, MANY SOLUTIONS.”
State Route 37 Corridor Ultimate Project (US 101 – I-80) Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Policy Committee

Level 1 Screening Analysis on Preliminary Alignments Prospective Level 2 Criteria June 2, 2022
PEL STUDY WORK SINCE FALL 2021

- **September/October 2021**
  - Finalize PEL Vision, Goals, and Purpose and Need
  - Identify/refine evaluation criteria
  - Identify Alignments

- **November/December 2021**
  - Finalize/Confirm Evaluation Criteria
  - Level 1 Alignments Screening: Initial Screening results

- **January/February 2022**
  - Level 2 screening: Evaluate and compare alternatives

- **March/April/May 2022**
  - Level 3 screening: Evaluate and compare alternatives
  - Finalize PEL Study Report

- **Summer/Fall 2022**
  - SWG Meeting December 2021
  - Public Meeting January 2022
  - SWG Meeting March 2022
  - SWG Meeting May 2022
  - Public Meeting Summer 2022
Results of Initial Screening: Level 1 Evaluation Criteria Applied to Preliminary Alignments and Travel Modes
Preserving a critical regional transportation corridor that is resilient to extreme events while integrating ecological resiliency which facilitates adaptation to sea level rise

Providing reliable travel time and increasing average vehicle occupancy

Providing safe mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians

Maintaining and enhancing public access, including to recreational areas

Providing equitable transit and multimodal transportation solutions that improve access for, and provides meaningful benefits to all users of SR 37, with special consideration of underserved communities
ALIGNMENT 7

- Includes an over the bay crossing + southern extension of SR 121
- Will be carried into Level 2 Evaluation
Alignment 9

- Over the bay crossing
- No extension to SR 121
  - Most direct route between Vallejo/Novato
  - Addresses VMT, Equity, and Transit.
- Concern: Access to Sears Point and SR 121
1. Does the alignment preserve connectivity between existing interchanges on U.S. 101 and Interstate 80? Or would new interchanges be required?

- Alignments 1, 5, 6, 7, and 9 all maintain the existing termini.
- Alignments 2, 3, and 4 have new western termini that would require new interchanges.
- Alignment 8 would require upgraded interchanges to tie in their new western and eastern termini.
2. Would the alignment preserve existing and projected travel patterns for key origin and destination pairs that currently use the SR 37 corridor?

- Alignments 1, 5, 6, 7, and 9 would all likely preserve existing and projected travel patterns for key origin and destination pairs.
- Alignments 2, 3, and 4 have new western termini and routes that would likely alter existing travel patterns.
- Alignment 8 would likely result in substantial changes to travel patterns.
CRITERION 3: LEVEL 1 SCREENING RESULTS

3. Could the alignment improve corridor travel time reliability for high-occupancy vehicles relative to baseline conditions?

- Alignments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 could all be designed to prioritize high-occupancy vehicles, but it is uncertain if travel time reliability would be improved.
- In contrast, Alignments 7 and 9 would likely result in improvements to travel time reliability due to their direct routes with limited access or conflict points.
- Alignment 8 is unlikely to realize any travel time reliability due to the lengthening of the route, and issues with access control and high number of conflict points.
CRITERION 4: LEVEL 1 SCREENING RESULTS

4. Does the alignment reduce the exposure of transportation infrastructure to projected sea level rise as stated in the OPC guidance for 2130?

- Alignments 1, 2, 3, and 4 would all reduce exposure to SLR by moving portions of the corridor to the uplands.
- Alignments 5, 6, 7, and 9 would need to raise the elevation of the roadway to address SLR.
- Alignment 8 is the only alignment that completely addresses SLR, by moving completely to the uplands.
CRITERION 5: LEVEL 1 SCREENING RESULTS

5. Does the alignment integrate ecological resilience which facilitates adaptation to sea level rise? If so, how well?

- Alignments 1, 2, 3, and 4 would lie directly adjacent to, or directly through, the projected 2130 marginal zone which is an environmentally sensitive area, thus making it difficult to integrate ecological resiliency.
- Alignments 5, 6, 7, and 9 could integrate ecological resilience by utilizing combination of embankment and causeways at key locations along existing route or across the bay.
- Alignment 8 fully retreats to the uplands, and therefore offers little opportunity for the project to integrate ecological resiliency into the San Pablo Baylands.

“ONE CORRIDOR, ONE TEAM, MANY SOLUTIONS.”
6. Could the alignment balance VMT regional goals against projected travel demand?

• Alignments 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 would increase mileage which is likely to increase VMT and require mitigation if ultimately selected. The likelihood of obtaining sufficient mitigation for the increased VMT is uncertain.
• Alignments 5 and 6 would maintain the existing termini and mileage.
• Alignment 9 would likely reduce VMT.
7. Could the alignment prioritize other transportation modes that would increase person-throughput, including commuter bus and rail?

- Alignments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 could all be designed to prioritize other transportation modes to increase person throughput, but the increase in mileage traveled, and not directly serving an equity priority community like Vallejo could diminish potential ridership of key users for some alignments.
- Alignments 7 and 9 could be designed to prioritize other transportation modes and would benefit from serving key population centers, including Vallejo, an equity priority community.
8. Could the alignment provide safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities?

- All alignments could be designed to incorporate safe walkways and bike lanes. However, additional length of some alignments compared to the existing SR 37 alignment may be a deterrent to pedestrians/cyclists.
9. Does the alignment provide equitable transit and multimodal transportation solutions?

- Alignments 1, 2, 3, and 4 could incorporate multimodal solutions, but the routes would not tie directly to Vallejo, which is a priority equity population area. In addition, many of the routes would be lengthened and thus increase travel time which may also deter ridership.
- Alignments 5, 6, 7, and 9 would serve both Novato and Vallejo directly, with 7 and 9 also resulting in shorter travel time that may encourage ridership.
- Alignment 8 would not meet the needs of Vallejo due to the increased travel time and out of direction travel for many riders.
CRITERION 10: LEVEL 1 SCREENING RESULTS

10. Does the alignment maintain and enhance public access, including to recreational areas?

- Alignments 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9 would not maintain existing access to areas along existing SR 37. New access points would need to be created or require mitigation for loss of access.
- Alignments 5 and 6 would retain existing SR 37 and thus access to public and recreational areas located along SR 37 could be retained.
- Since Alignment 1 follows the western portion of the existing corridor, it would partially meet this criterion.
SUMMARY OF LEVEL 1 SCREENING ON ALIGNMENTS

- Alignments Evaluated through Level 1 Screening:
  1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9

- Recommendations of Level 1 Screening:
  - Eliminate 2, 3, and 8
  - Consolidate 5 and 6
  - Add 9

- March TWG Feedback
  - Carry Alignment 8 to Level 2 Screening

- Alignments going into Level 2 Screening:
  1 2 3 4 5/6 7 8 9
ADDITIONAL CONCEPTS CONSIDERED IN THE PEL STUDY

• Floating Bridge
  • Requires breaks for navigation channels
  • Challenge with tidal environment and exposure to wave wash
  • Uncertain feasibility for rail operations
  • No strong advantage over causeway or embankment
  • Likely to be Eliminated or Not Recommended

• Ferries
  • Limitations in person throughput and station locations
  • Uncertainty in construction challenges (i.e., dredging needs)
  • Uncertainty in time & cost savings for users
  • Likely to be carried forward only as a Supplemental Element
  • Could be used as mitigation for VMT
Questions?

For any follow-up questions, please email:
Christopher.Caputo@dot.ca.gov
STATE ROUTE 37 POLICY COMMITTEE
SR 37 - FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RAIL OPPORTUNITIES
JUNE 2, 2022
1. Importance of SMART Railroad Line from Novato to Napa

2. Opportunities to integrate the railroad into the State Route 37 Improvements
SMART - BRAZOS BRANCH TO NAPA
The Existing Railroad:

• Connects Marin & Sonoma Counties to the National Rail Network

• Moves freight weekly

• Tremendous resource for the region

• Common Carrier Obligations
SMART FREIGHT SERVICE

• **Interface with:**
  - California Northern Railroad
  - Union Pacific Railroad

• **Freight:**
  - Wine
  - Grain
  - Hops
  - Lumber
  - Water

• **Critical Connection**
  - Emergency connectivity
Novato – Suisun Alignment
STATE ROUTE 37 – PLANNING SEGMENTS

- Segment A: US101 to Hwy121
- Segment B: Hwy121 to Mare Island
- Segment C: Mare Island to Interstate 80
Integrated SR 37 Multi-Modal Facility

- Vehicular
- Railroad
- Non-Motorized (bicycles & pedestrians)
- Environmental enhancement opportunities
SR 37 – MULTI-MODAL FACILITY

ALTERNATIVE A1: TYPICAL CAUSEWAY SECTION

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Type 732

SHLD TRAVELWAY TRAVELWAY SHLD SHLD TRAVELWAY TRAVELWAY SHLD

Barrier

MULTI-USE PATH

Type 732

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MRN - 37
SR 37 – MULTI-MODAL FACILITY
SR 37 – MULTI-MODAL FACILITY
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. At a minimum, ensure that SR 37 improvements maintain and do not negatively impact freight rail service, in order to meet Federal Common Carrier obligations.

2. Include California State Rail Plan recommendations and objectives in advancing freight and passenger rail improvements in the SR 37 Corridor.

3. Take advantage of the proximity of an existing rail line to develop an innovative multi-modal facility that integrates vehicles, freight, passenger rail, bicycles and pedestrians.

4. Leverage the opportunities of a combined SR 37 and SMART Rail Corridor to restore wetlands and preserve critical habitats.
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State Route 37 Corridor—Freight and Passenger Rail Opportunities

By: Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART)

White Paper

04-08-2022

Executive Summary

The State Route 37 (SR 37) highway corridor is undergoing a multijurisdictional corridor planning effort to address traffic congestion and flooding. A portion of this highway corridor between Highway 101 and State Route 121 (Segment “A” in the planning effort) includes the Brazos Junction Branch railroad adjacent to the roadway. The Brazos Junction Branch, which is owned by Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District (SMART), is connected to the SMART mainline north/south railroad in Novato, and to the Union Pacific Railroad Capitol Corridor in Fairfield.

The Brazos Junction Branch is connected to the National Rail Network and therefore must comply with federal common carrier obligations. The common carrier obligation refers to the statutory duty of railroads to provide “transportation or service on reasonable request.” The common carrier obligation requires any changes to SR 37 that affect the railroad must consider the railroad’s duties to provide freight service.

The SR 37 study is an opportunity to include freight and passenger rail as part of the overall transportation corridor improvement. An improved freight and passenger rail system incorporated into the highway reconstruction can improve the highway functionally and environmentally by removing passenger and truck traffic from the roadway, improving air quality through lower train emissions, and removing the railroad embankment that is acting as a wetland barrier.

Possible solutions for the SR 37 Corridor include combining highway and railroad right of ways and constructing elevated railroad and highway structures that would minimize the facilities’ footprint and help restore the natural environment.

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

State Route 37 is undergoing a comprehensive multimodal corridor planning effort, led by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Caltrans, and the transportation authorities of Marin, Sonoma, Napa, and Solano counties (SR 37 Corridor Planning). The purpose of this effort is to determine short-term and long-term design alternatives to address traffic congestion, flooding, and to improve transportation in the corridor while mitigating environmental impacts. The planning effort presents an opportunity to provide freight, passenger rail, transit, vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and carpool options for travelers.

The railroad that runs adjacent to SR 37 between Highway 101 in Marin and Highway 121 in Sonoma County not only provides a vital freight transportation corridor today, it also provides opportunities for passenger rail and even possibilities to restore wetlands and critical habitat as
part of a combined multimodal project. The vision for the SR 37 Corridor must include all modes of transportation including freight and passenger rail. This White Paper provides information regarding the existing active rail right-of-way in the SR 37 Corridor and explores ways to incorporate rail into SR 37 transportation solutions.

The primary focus of this White Paper is Segment A of the current SR 37 planning effort (Highway 101 to Highway 121) with consideration in Segment B of freight and transit service to Mare Island and Vallejo. See Figure 3. The paper discusses:

- Importance and obligations of maintaining the active railroad
- Existing and future freight needs
- Transit, bicycle, and pedestrian opportunities and connectivity
- Conceptual rail configurations
- Environmental considerations and opportunities
- Opportunities to integrate rail into the current planning and environmental efforts.

2.0 History of the Highway 37 Rail Line

The Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP), known as the “Redwood Empire Route,” has been a major contributor to the growth of California’s North Bay region. A contiguous line from the National Rail Network to Eureka, California was established in 1907 by Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railroads through the consolidation of six separate railroad companies.

The line, with its many original railroad companies, has a rich history of providing transportation alternatives for passengers and freight via different rail gauges and modes of propulsion: horse, mules, oxen, steam, electricity, internal combustion engines and recently electric powered locomotives.

Up to 1907 the rail line had consisted of over 42 railroads operating on standard gauge, narrow gauge, ferry steamboats and car floats, electric 3rd rail and overhead trolley interurbans, and connectors such as funiculars and scenic tourist railways. During this phase of the railroad’s history the Southern Pacific (SP) and the Santa Fe (SF) railroads had become the survivors of all the rail lines. In 1907 the SP and SF decided to merge for scale of economy. In 1914 the merged railroads completed the construction of railroad through the Eel River Canyon joining the Northern and Southern Regions. In 1929, SP bought the SF’s equal interest in the line.
After the construction in 1914 that joined the Northern and Southern Regions, the primary business was passenger service and freight focus mainly on timber products. The rail business slowed down during the Great Depression. World War II created freight demand, and the 1950’s brought more freight demand due to the post war housing boom.

The line suffered severe flooding in 1964 on the northern portion of the railroad from Willits to Arcata. The flooding caused extensive track and structure damage that took about 6 months to regain service. In the 1970’s the trucking industry became competitive and was successful in capturing a share of the rail business. The rail line continued to have high maintenance costs and dwindling freight service. In 1969 passenger service was eliminated for a variety of reasons. In 1984, the trackage from Outlet, near Willits, north to Korblex, near Eureka, was sold to a new company, the Eureka Southern RR, later named the North Coast Railroad.

In 1989 the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) was formed by the California Legislation to oversee freight railroad activities between American Canyon and Marin and Sonoma Counties. NCRA eventually became the owner of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad from Healdsburg north and freight rail service obligation from the interchange in American Canyon to Samoa north of Eureka.

In 2004 NCRA received grants to rehabilitate 62 miles of track from American Canyon, where the NCRA has access to the National Rail Network, to Windsor for freight service. On May 5, 2011, the FRA approved the resumption of rail traffic, and freight service was initiated from the interchange to Windsor.

### 3.0 Current Highway 37 Rail Corridor

Today, as the result of the passage of SB 1029 in 2018, the freight rights and obligations have been transferred to SMART. Movement of freight by rail is 3 to 4 times as efficient as movement of freight by trucks. Because of the low friction of steel wheels on steel rails and engine technologies, trains can move one ton more than 480 miles per gallon of fuel. Freight service on SMART-owned tracks has been continuous over the last decade. Currently freight trains operate on a weekly basis through Segment A of the SR 37 Corridor and up the 101 corridor to the historic dairy and poultry industries of the North Bay Area. Grain and hops are major commodities that are delivered by rail taking trucks off Highways 37 and 101. Other commodities shipped have included lumber and other construction materials. As the result of Northern California’s sustained drought, there has been recent interest in the potential of weekly shipping of potable water to municipalities.

### 3.1. Alignment and Ownership

The existing railroad between the Ignacio Wye in Novato and Suisun City is owned partly by SMART, Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), and others. Figure 2 below shows the rail network in and adjacent to the SR 37 Study limits.

In Segment A of the SR 37 Corridor Planning Study, SR 37 closely parallels the Brazos Junction Branch (owned by SMART). From Highway 101 to Black Point the SMART Rail Corridor right of way is south of SR 37. These two corridors share a common right-of-way border through most of this area, are built on embankments, and are subject to the same historic flooding of Novato Creek and its floodplain. Flooding has closed both these modes of transportation at times. East
of the Petaluma River the corridors diverge up to 3/4 of a mile and re-converge at the
intersection of Highway 121, where the rail line crosses SR 37 at grade. Throughout the existing rail right of way from Black Point to Highway 121, the SMART Rail Corridor is adjacent to the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. During past flood events both highway and railroad personnel needed coordinated efforts to address flood damage and mitigation measures. At Black Point the two modes of transportation cross the Petaluma River separately on aging bridges. East of the Petaluma River the corridors diverge up to 3/4 of a mile and re-converge at the intersection of Highway 121 where the rail line crosses SR 37 at grade.

Figure 2. Rail Network Related to the SR 37 Study Limits

Figure 3. SR 37 Highway and Rail Corridors
The existing SR 37 west approach to the railroad crossing at Highway 121 is undesirable. The approach is down grade, in a curve, in a highly congested area during peak hours that is often subject to fog. A grade separation at this location is highly desired.

3.2. Freight Common Carrier Obligations

The SMART Rail Corridor is connected to the National Rail Network. The term National Rail Network, sometimes termed "U.S. rail network", refers to the entire network of interconnected standard gauge rail lines in North America. See Figures 4 and 5 below showing the corridor’s connections to the National Network.

Connection to the national rail network requires compliance with common carrier obligations. The common carrier obligation refers to the statutory duty of railroads to provide "transportation or service on reasonable request." 49 U.S.C. 11101(a). A railroad may not refuse to provide service merely because to do so would be inconvenient or unprofitable.

Since the corridor is connected to the national network, it is jurisdictionally regulated by the Surface Transportation Board (STB). The Surface Transportation Board is an independent federal agency that is charged with the economic regulation of various modes of surface transportation, primarily freight rail. The STB exercises its statutory authority and resolves disputes in support of an efficient, competitive, and economically viable surface transportation network.

Federal law requires SMART, as a Federal Common Carrier, to accommodate freight traffic.

A project or public entity, directly or indirectly, cannot impact the ability to move freight over the line. This means that any direct or indirect impacts on the SMART Rail Corridor from SR 37 improvements must not have adverse impacts to the rail infrastructure nor negatively impact rail service.

Figure 4. National Rail Network
4.0  Freight Usage and Opportunities

Industries along the SMART Rail Corridor are currently shipping and receiving freight weekly to Petaluma and periodically as far north as Windsor. Commodities currently include grains and hops. All freight along the SMART north/south corridor must use the existing SR 37 Rail Corridor track from Novato to American Canyon, where it connects to the National Rail Network.

SMART is planning to improve the north/south trackway to Cloverdale. This will open up additional opportunities for freight. Opportunities along the 101 Corridor include:

- Lumber/trusses
- Forest products in Cloverdale
- Plastic pellets for manufacturing
- Beer products
- Wine products.

Due to the ongoing drought, rail could also transport large quantities of water within the rail network. SMART has had high-level discussions with local water agencies about transporting water during the summer and fall of 2021. There are opportunities to stage water trains in critical areas during periods of high fire danger to protect local communities along the line.

Increased opportunities for efficient rail freight traffic reduces truck traffic on SR 37, lowers fuel consumption and emissions, and provides more reliable shipping by avoiding roadway congestion and closures.
In a larger context, the freight and passenger rail opportunities in the highly congested Northern Bay Area are included in the California Rail Plan. The 2018 California State Rail Plan establishes:

"a long-term vision for prioritizing state investment in an efficient, effective passenger and freight rail system, which supports the goals and policies of the California Transportation Plan 2040. The Rail Plan identifies service goals, capital costs, and a phased strategy for achieving the Vision. This ambitious plan identifies a coordinated, statewide passenger rail network that will get Californians where they want to go, when they want to go, and enhance the movement of goods by rail to support California's industries and the economy."

Chapter 5 of the Rail Plan is a detailed plan of freight rail investment strategies. It includes a focus on the importance of short lines, like SMART, and the economic benefits they provide to operating seamlessly with the Class 1 railroads. Class 1 Railroads are the long-haul carriers moving goods coast to coast (See Figure 4 above). Short lines are smaller railroads that provide rail service to customers located in areas that are not directly served by the larger railroads and are often called the “First Mile” and “Last Mile” shipping solution.

The connection of the SMART north/south system to the Capitol Corridor national rail network via the SR 37 Corridor is essential to California’s overall freight and transit goals.

6.0 Transit

6.1 Existing Transit

101 Corridor

The transit modes along the 101 Corridor from Larkspur to Windsor include:

Passenger Rail: Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART). The SMART system currently operates daily Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) trains from the Larkspur Ferry Terminal to Airport Boulevard in Santa Rosa, with a planned extension to Windsor. Future extensions are planned to Healdsburg and Cloverdale.

Buses: Marin Transit operates a bus system within Marin County with connections and transfers to SMART stations, and transfers to Golden Gate Transit (GGT) buses at San Rafael Transit Center. GGT provides bus and ferry service to Marin, Sonoma, San Francisco, and Contra Costa counties.

Sonoma County Transit operates a bus system with connections and transfers to SMART trains at stations within Sonoma County. Local Sonoma County bus transit providers include Petaluma Transit and Santa Rosa CityBus.

East Bay Corridor

Capitol Corridor Rail: The Capitol Corridor is an intercity passenger train system that provides service along the congested I-80, I-680 and I-880 freeways. It serves 18 stations in 8 Northern California counties: Placer, Sacramento, Yolo, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, San Francisco, and Santa Clara, a 170-mile rail corridor. An extensive, dedicated motorcoach network provides bus connections to serve the second-largest urban service area in the western United States.
6.2 Transit Connectivity

The travel market in the Bay Area is enormous. The California State Rail Plan projects the 2040 movements through the state’s major regions as shown in Figure 6. The SR 37 Corridor improvements provide an opportunity to integrate transit modes into the design to connect the North Bay to the East Bay counties.

The State Rail Plan also envisions higher speed rail corridors (up to 125 MPH) between Marin and Solano counties. See Figure 7. The SR 37 Corridor can be part of this vision.

*Train Connection:* Since freight rail must be included in any SR 37 reconstruction, the same track can be utilized for passenger rail. The SMART station at Novato can be connected to the Capitol Corridor Suisun-Fairfield station. This will provide reliable high-capacity train service across the North Bay area.

*Bus Connection:* The reconfigured highway can also provide more reliable bus service on a dedicated lane between Marin/Sonoma counties and the East Bay.

![Annual Travel Market - Sacramento to North Bay Area](image)

*Figure 6.* Personal Travel Between Regions (From California State Rail Plan)
Figure 7 below shows the passenger rail network in the vicinity of the SR 37 Corridor as outlined in the California State Rail Plan.

**Figure 7. 2040 Vision of Passenger Rail Service from California State Rail Plan**

### 7.0 Potential Joint Highway and Rail Alignments

#### 7.1 Segment A – Combining Existing Highway and Rail Facilities

This section explores the opportunity to combine the highway and railroad transportation corridors into one project within the existing SR 37 Study Segment A right of way. This concept opens the possibility to provide extensive environmental benefits and, from an alignment perspective, great potential for transit opportunities.

In the SR 37 Segment A from Novato to Black Point, flooding in this environmentally sensitive area impacts both the highway and rail facilities. The current footprint of these two facilities from the north drainage ditch of the highway to the south ditch of the rail embankment is roughly 250 feet see Figures 8. In the flood plan area both transportation facilities are built on fill and have low level bridges that restrict flood plain drainage.
There is a tremendous opportunity to minimize the total footprint of these facilities by combining their right of ways. This can be accomplished by eliminating the rail embankment, placing the rail within SR 37 right of way, and elevating both facilities to span the entire floodplain. Combining the facilities could reduce the footprint by 100 feet. This solution has significant environmental and cost benefits. By removing the railroad embankment, the area would restore to its natural state as a wetlands floodplain. And from a project cost perspective, removing the railroad embankment and freeing up space would provide considerable on-site restoration opportunities to mitigate project impacts.

As SR 37 and the SMART Rail Corridor continue east of the Novato and Simmons Slough flood plain area, they diverge and separately span the Petaluma River. These bridges are within approximately 1,500 feet of each other with the highway bridge located upstream of the rail bridge. Due to the river morphology and alignment of each of their respective navigation channels, barge traffic maneuvering upriver is difficult. Both these bridges will likely need replacement to accommodate future needs and to meet current standards. Combining the highway and rail right of ways in this section, would allow the rail to align with the highway and cross the Petaluma River at the same location, allowing a joint navigation channel.

The existing rail track, rail embankment and river bridge could be removed. This would have significant environment benefits, project mitigation opportunities, and greatly improve the present navigation through this 1,500-foot segment of the Petaluma River. See Figure 9 below.
For the remainder of Segment A from the Petaluma River to Highway 121, the highway and rail would continue to share the same right of way. As the rail approaches Highway 121, the rail profile would descend and cross under SR 37 and resume the existing Brazos Junction Branch alignment to connect to the Capitol Corridor through American Canyon. This would provide the opportunity to remove the rail line from the Sears Point Tailhead leading into the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge area. See Figure 10 showing both facilities jointly elevated in a minimized right of way.
There is a tremendous opportunity to develop Hwy 37 as a fully integrated multi-modal corridor that encompasses vehicular, freight, passenger rail, bicycles and pedestrians. Passenger integration could be achieved through a combined highway and rail solution that would allow a connection between SMART and the Vallejo Ferry Terminal. Figure 13 depicts the vision of a fully multi-modal SR 37 facility in Segment B.
8.0 Environmental Considerations

The 2018 California State Rail Plan says the following under Section 1.2, State Rail Plan Purpose:

“The planned rail system envisioned in the Rail Plan will improve Californians’ quality of life by mitigating roadway congestion; reducing vehicle emissions; supporting compact land use; and offering convenient, reliable, and automobile-competitive alternative travel and goods movement.”

The SR 37 Corridor is an opportunity to advance the State Rail Plan’s vision.

8.1 Roadway Congestion

Freight railroad capabilities in the SR 37 Corridor can reduce roadway congestion by shifting freight from trucks to trains and provides shippers with a freight transportation alternative as shown in Figure 14 which is Exhibit 1.1 Spatial Efficiency Across Modes from the California State Rail Plan.

A single freight car carries the equivalent of four highway trucks. Depending on train length, a single freight train can replace several hundred trucks from the roadway.

Passenger trains have the capacity to remove many cars from the roadway network. Each 2-car train in the SMART fleet can carry 300 passengers that would otherwise travel by automobile or bus.
SMART is engaged with Caltrans in future planning for the Highway 37 Corridor improvements and the possibility of combining projects to maximize a reduction on roadway congestion along this existing transportation corridor.

8.2. Fuel-efficiency, Vehicle Emissions and Climate Change

Freight railroads account for roughly 40% of U.S. long-distance freight volume (measured by ton-miles) — more than any other mode of transportation. However, they account for just 0.5% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions according to EPA data, and just 1.9% of transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions (from Association of American Railroads, https://www.aar.org/facts-figures).

Freight railroads are three to four times more fuel-efficient than trucks. Greenhouse gas emissions are directly related to fuel consumption. That means moving freight by rail instead of truck lowers greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75%, on average.

Additionally, public transit by commuter rail train has reduced emissions compared to bus and passenger vehicles. See Figure 15 below from the USDOT/FTA.

![Figure 14](image)

**Figure 14.** Exhibit 1.1 Spatial Efficiency Across Modes (from California State Rail Plan)

**Figure 15.** Estimated CO2 Emissions: Auto versus Public Transit, Public Transportation’s Role in Responding to Climate Change, January 2010
8.3. Sensitive habitats

The County of Marin Highway 37 Adaption Study (Policy Committee Meeting December 5, 2019) finds that Segment A-1 has the lowest roadway elevations in the entire corridor. It also finds that Caltrans High Risk Design standards require raising the roadway in Segment A by 18 to 22 feet to mitigate future sea level rise. See Figure 16.

Figure 16. Future Sea Level Rise Inundation – Extent of Flooding if Improvements to Levees are not made (Figure 1.B from County of Marin, Highway 37 Corridor Adaption Study, Policy Committee Meeting December 5, 2019)
The Baylands in this segment are a priority for restoration and expanded watershed connectivity. Raising the railroad in concert with the highway will allow bay waters unimpeded access. The railroad corridor is approximately 30-feet wide for a distance of 16,000 feet between Highway 101 and Highway 121. Removing the railroad embankment in this segment will provide approximately 11 acres of land to be restored as wetlands.

Figure 17. Track and Embankment Removal Area to Allow Bay Restoration
9.0 Recommendations

This paper shows the need to include and integrate passenger and freight rail transportation infrastructure into the planning efforts currently underway by Caltrans, MTC and other agencies.

Recommendations include:

1. At a minimum, ensure that SR 37 improvements maintain and do not negatively impact freight rail service, in order to meet Federal Common Carrier obligations.

2. Include California State Rail Plan recommendations and objectives in advancing freight and passenger rail improvements in the SR 37 Corridor.

3. Take advantage of the proximity of an existing rail line to develop an innovative multi-modal facility that integrates vehicles, freight, passenger rail, bicycles and pedestrians.

4. Leverage the opportunities of a combined SR 37 and SMART Rail Corridor to restore wetlands and preserve critical habitats.