



City of Del Mar Agenda Report

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Clem Brown, Environmental Sustainability/Special Projects Manager
Kristen M. Crane, Assistant City Manager
Via Ashley Jones, Interim City Manager

DATE: October 4, 2021

SUBJECT: SANDAG Coastal Connections Conceptual Planning Study Update

REQUESTED ACTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an informational presentation and introductory briefing from the SANDAG project team and lead consultant WSP on the Coastal Connections Conceptual Planning Study currently underway.

BACKGROUND

In January 2021, the City Council executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and North County Transit District (NCTD) to implement a feasibility study of potential pedestrian access improvements in the coastal railroad corridor along the Del Mar Bluffs.

The Coastal Connections Conceptual Planning Study began in June 2021, and is being led by SANDAG in close coordination with NCTD and the City of Del Mar. The study is assessing the opportunities and constraints of potential pedestrian trails and crossings of the railroad corridor between Coast Boulevard and Torrey Pines State Beach, a 1.5-mile section situated among the coastal bluffs.

Currently, pedestrians enter railroad property in this area to cross the tracks and/or to walk along the bluffs, which creates safety concerns for pedestrians and risks affecting passenger and freight rail services. Additional safety measures such as corridor fencing are planned for installation by NCTD, which necessitates a study of potential crossings to accommodate coastal access in a safe and legal manner.

The Coastal Connections study is objectively evaluating a range of potential pedestrian access improvements including rail crossings, trails, and beach access points. The project team will not recommend any one solution as a preferred option, but rather present many potential options to the community, including summaries of the expected benefits, costs, and potential tradeoffs of each.

City Council Action:

The study process includes five phases with the following target dates:

- *Summer 2021*: Assessment of existing conditions
- *Fall 2021*: Development of initial draft concepts
- *Winter 2021*: Community review including open house meeting
- *Spring 2022*: Evaluation and refinement of draft concepts, including preliminary cost estimates and implementation plans
- *Summer 2022*: Refined concepts and final presentations

Following the study's completion in mid-2022, the next step will be to continue advancing the most promising improvement concepts through a community-focused planning and design process.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Representatives from the SANDAG project team and lead consultant WSP will provide an introductory briefing on the Coastal Connections study. They will review the study's goals, process, and expected outcomes, and will then listen to and document any input from the City Council or community members.

The presentation slides (Attachment A) summarize the content of the introductory briefing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact from the recommended action.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

The proposed City Council action does not constitute a "project" under the definition set forth in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15378 because it will not have a potential to result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment and is, therefore, not subject to CEQA. No further action under CEQA is required.

NEXUS TO CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This item is a special project on the City Council's list of goals and priorities.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Draft Presentation Slides



Coastal Connections Conceptual Planning Study



Agenda

1. Project goal & study area
2. Schedule overview
3. Project outcomes
4. Community engagement
5. Questions & discussion

Project Goal

Evaluate opportunities and constraints of potential pedestrian access improvements in the Del Mar coastal rail corridor

- *Develop 4-6 concepts*
- *Both east-west and north-south movement*
- *Target for implementation is near/medium term*
- *Account for long-term plans for corridor*

Study Area

- Coast Boulevard to North Torrey Pines Road/Torrey Pines State Beach
- 1.6 miles single-tracked

Southern Boundary
North Torrey Pines Road/
Torrey Pines State Beach
(MP 245.7)

Northern Boundary
Coast Boulevard (MP 244.1)

Schedule Overview

- *Summer 2021* Assessment of existing conditions
- *Fall 2021* Development of initial draft concepts
- *Winter 2021* Community engagement
- *Spring 2022* Evaluation & refinement of draft concepts
- *Summer 2022* Refined concepts & final presentations

Project Outcomes

Conceptual designs and implementation plans for 4-6 potential pedestrian access improvements

- *Conceptual plans/sketches*
- *Informed by engineering feasibility and community outreach*
- *Evaluation of benefits and tradeoffs*
- *Preliminary cost estimates*
- *Implementation plans including potential funding sources*

Community Engagement

- Most activities scheduled for late 2021 to review draft concepts
- Engagement activities (virtual or in-person):
 - **Today:** Introductory briefing to Del Mar City Council
 - **Late 2021:** Community review period, including open house meeting and online component
 - **Late 2021:** Briefings to community stakeholders (up to 8)
 - **Spring/Summer 2022:** Final briefings to Del Mar City Council and SANDAG/NCTD boards

Questions & Discussion



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Community Engagement

- For project information and updates:
 - **keepsandiegomoving.com**
 - Subscribe to the mailing list (check the 'LOSSAN Rail' box)
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An aerial photograph of a coastal town built on a hillside overlooking the ocean. The town features numerous houses and buildings, with a road winding through the landscape. The ocean is visible in the foreground, with waves breaking onto a sandy beach. The overall scene is bright and clear, with a light blue sky and green vegetation on the hills.

Questions & Discussion