



STAFF REPORT
Board Meeting of May 20, 2020

AGENDA ITEM: 4-D

PREPARED BY: Evelyn Espinosa, Associate Regional Planner

SUBJECT:

SB1 Sustainable Communities Grant SR 233/Robertson Blvd Multimodal Corridor Study, Phase I Outreach Summary Report

Enclosure: No

Action: Information and discussion

SUMMARY:

The Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) commissioned a Public Participation and Outreach Plan and a Corridor Planning Study/Downtown Master Plan of SR 233/Robertson Boulevard from SR 152 to Rd 19, with an emphasis area in Downtown Chowchilla. The project has been carried out through a collaboration of stakeholders, including community groups, Caltrans District 6, City of Chowchilla, Consultant Services, and MCTC.

This project is funded by the SB-1 Sustainable Communities Planning Grant administered by Caltrans. The objective of the SB-1 Sustainable Communities Planning Grant program is to encourage local and regional multimodal transportation and land use planning that furthers the region's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy (RTP/SCS), contributes to the State's greenhouse gas (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.

Report Highlights:

- Outreach conducted from October 2019 through February 2020.
- 541 survey participants. Respondents represented all categories of participants with the majority being either daily commuters on the SR2 33 corridor or residents of Madera County that utilize the corridor intermittently. Anecdotally, these are travelers coming to downtown businesses or offices.
- Taken in total, the survey responses indicate that pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in general are the most needed improvements as ranked by survey takers. While we note that the age profile skewed heavily to 26-40 year-olds, likely due to the fact that over half the respondents were parents of school-age children, overall ratings between the two groups (on-line survey takers and paper survey takers) were not dissimilar even though on-line survey takers were on average older. However, it is likely that pedestrian improvements near schools has ranked higher due to the number of parents of school-age children taking the survey.

- Despite the widespread support for biking and walking improvements in the corridor, the majority of respondents travel by automobile. Safety in the corridor is rated as average for both pedestrians and bicyclists, with bicyclists feeling more traffic stress overall than pedestrians.
- In rating the quality of infrastructure in the SR 233/Robertson Blvd corridor, respondents were most likely to rate bicycle area & facilities as poor. In total, nearly 79% of respondents rated bicycle infrastructure as fair or poor. This is followed closely by bus stop amenities, where 70% rated this amenity as fair or poor, and crosswalk availability at 60% fair or poor. Survey takers were neutral on whether they would use bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements if they were more available.
- By a wide margin, respondents rate the need for improved pedestrian facilities at intersections on the corridor as the most needed improvement. Fewer than 10% cited transit facilities.
- When asked to rate issues in general in respondent's neighborhood, pedestrian improvements near schools and pedestrian improvements in general were rated as the biggest issues, followed by bicycle improvements. Only transit facilities and lack of parking ranked lower than a 4 (weighted score).
- While pedestrian improvements have a clear priority, survey takers have expressed support for transit improvements, street lighting improvements, parking improvement/reconfiguration, and traffic calming to address vehicle speeds and cut-through traffic.
- While safety concerns do not appear paramount in survey results, comments received during the workshop and in the stakeholder focus group place a higher emphasis on safety.

Findings:

Survey findings provide context for prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian improvements; however, it is clear that solutions that address multiple areas of concern will have a higher return on investment dollars versus single-mode solutions.

Next Steps:

The project team is currently utilizing the public outreach results to shape the final concepts to be proposed as priorities for the study based on research data, technical analyses completed, and available financing opportunities. Phase two public participation is being reshaped as the result of social distancing measures currently in effect but is expected to be rolled out in May/June 2020. Electronic communication across all social media platforms will be used, as will email blasts and electronic newsletters/forums from the stakeholder group and project team. Anyone that has provided an email address will be contacted directly with regular updates and the website will be updated with the latest information.

To access the [full report](#), submit comments, or be added to the mailing list, please visit the [Project Website](#) or contact the project manager at evelyn@maderactc.org or (559) 675-0721.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact to the approved 2019-20 Overall Work Program and Budget.