



Promoting the bicycle for transportation and recreation

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July 15, 2020

Caltrans District 4
ATTN: Elizabeth Nagle, Associate Environmental Planner
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Dear Ms. Nagle:

The Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition (SCBC) is pleased to offer these comments in support of the Santa Rosa U.S. Highway 101 Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing. We have reviewed the Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and urge you to grant environmental approval and construct the project.

SCBC has advocated for a 101 overcrossing since at least 2003, as part of our vision of a bicycle-friendly county. In fact, we took legal action against Santa Rosa Junior College in 2004 regarding insufficient environmental review of a proposed parking garage; our 2005 settlement required them to contribute \$1 million toward construction of an overcrossing as well as necessary easements.

Highway 101 bifurcates Santa Rosa and makes east-west bicycle and pedestrian travel difficult and unsafe. The two streets in the study area where crossing can be made, Steele Lane/Guerneville Road and College Avenue, are heavily trafficked and do not have bike lanes for their entire length. (Bike lanes that stop and start are often more problematic than no lanes at all.) In addition, crossing under 101 at those locations involves crossing traffic that is turning onto or off of the freeway; heavy commute traffic combined with distracted driving makes crossing those intersections a scary proposition. This is a high-collision corridor.

This overcrossing is a key component of both Sonoma County's and Santa Rosa's Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plans. It will connect Santa Rosa Junior College and Downtown Santa Rosa destinations with Coddington Mall and the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) station.

The study looks at two different crossing locations. From the user perspective, the Elliott/Edwards location has many benefits. The west end

is closer to the train station and shopping areas. It is also safer. The Bear Cub Way location requires navigating the very busy entrance to the main parking garage and crossing the SRJC campus.

Regardless of which alignment is chosen, **the “no build” option is unacceptable.** This overcrossing is long overdue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Eris Weaver
Executive Director

Cc: Steven Grover, Steven Grover & Associates
Nancy Adams, Santa Rosa Transportation Planner
Santa Rosa City Council