



City Council Agenda Item

City Council Meeting Date: January 20, 2026

TO: Dean Albro, City Manager

FROM: Craig Dierling, P.E., Public Works Director
c_dierling@ci.lompoc.ca.us

SUBJECT: Update Regarding Lompoc Valley Transportation Needs Study

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the City Council receive an update regarding the Lompoc Valley Transportation Needs Study (Project).

Background/Discussion:

During the fall of 2025 Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) staff coordinated with City staff and other transportation stakeholders surrounding Lompoc to refine and submit a grant application to study long-term needs to improve transportation safety, promote mobility and economic development, and accommodate the diverse transportation demands of the Lompoc Valley and the highways connecting it to Santa Maria, Buellton, and southern Santa Barbara County. The study is intended to analyze and identify viable transportation safety improvements for locations and corridors of concern, address existing and future traffic capacity needs including the growth of operations at Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB), plan for safe and efficient freight movement, address transportation resiliency, and accommodate the wide range of vehicles and travel modes used in the Lompoc Valley.

Stakeholders engaged by SBCAG for project scoping included representatives from the City, Santa Barbara County, VSFB, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Regional Economic Action Coalition (REACH) Central Coast, Lompoc Federal Correctional Complex, California Highway Patrol, Grower-Shipper Association of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, and the City of Buellton.

Critical issue areas planned for study through the Project include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. State Route 1 at Santa Lucia Canyon Road;
- b. State Route 1 at VSFB main gate;
- c. State Route 1 at San Antonio Road;
- d. Ocean Avenue near VSFB gates;

- e. Harris Grade Road;
- f. A roadway across the river on the northeast side of Lompoc;
- g. State Route 1 south of Lompoc to US 101; and
- h. State Route 246 from Lompoc to Buellton.

SBCAG staff submitted the grant funding application to Caltrans in November 2025, with the City serving as the required sub-applicant, through the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program. If the State awards the funding grant, then Project work is anticipated to begin in late 2026 and continue for at least two years. The Project proposes frequent stakeholder engagement, two rounds of public workshops, an online public survey, direct engagement with groups expressing interest in the Project, public review and presentation of the draft study, and approval hearings for the final study.

The Project will produce a study documenting analysis, public process, and conclusions including proposed improvements. Improvement concepts will be prepared for studied critical issue areas with cost-benefit analyses and conceptual cost estimates. The study's documentation of the proposed improvements will support State, regional, and local efforts to fund and implement those improvements, SBCAG's next regional transportation plan, and it will provide candidate projects for use in considering the renewal of Measure A, the current countywide 0.5% sales tax dedicated to transportation.

Fiscal Impact:

SBCAG requested \$400,000 of State funding in the grant application for the Project. SBCAG staff proposed funding the \$100,000 local share of Project costs using \$50,000 of regional Measure A funds pending approval by the SBCAG Board of Directors, and a \$50,000 contribution from VSF. As such, the City's financial obligation should be limited to funding its staff time in participating as a stakeholder for the Project.

Conclusion:

SBCAG staff applied for a funding grant to prepare the Lompoc Valley Transportation Needs Study, which if completed, will analyze and prepare concept-level design solutions for transportation needs surrounding Lompoc.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Dierling, P.E., Public Works Director

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

Dean Albro, City Manager