

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	October 30, 2025
SUBJECT:	Receive Update on Regional Railroad Crossing Plan and Direct Staff to Submit Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Application
AGENDA ITEM:	14
STAFF CONTACT:	Michael Kuker, CNU-A, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

It is recommended that the board of directors receive an update on the proposed regional railroad crossing plan, provide input on the draft scope of work, and direct staff to submit an application to the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant program.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Receive an update on efforts to fund and develop a regional railroad crossing plan;
2. Provide input on the draft scope of work; and
3. Direct staff to submit an application to the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant program.

DISCUSSION:

Background – Land use adjacent to the railroad in the Shasta Region has increased and intensified considerably since the railroad was first constructed, particularly in the area along what is now State Route (SR) 273. This has resulted in challenges such as low connectivity overall, lack of route options, unnecessary increases in vehicle miles traveled, and long waits at crossings and increased emergency response times.

Addressing the railroad crossings along SR 273 was one of the goals of the recent Envision 273 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan. Feasibility studies conducted under that effort revealed the *Union Pacific (UP) Railroad Public Projects Manual* imposes significant challenges to creating new crossings or even improving existing crossings, as noted below:

- “UP, other railroads, U.S. Department of Transportation, and most states encourage communities to carefully consider all alternatives, including grade separations, as opposed to the request for a creation of new at-grade crossings.”
- “Every effort must be made to obtain alternative access using grade separations, parallel or other roads leading to existing crossings, and access from other directions.”
- “Union Pacific expects communities to engage in a study to identify crossings for closure. Proposals for establishing a new at-grade crossing shall identify three or more crossings for closure for each proposed new crossing opened.”
- “UP insists that every entity—public or private—exhaust all options before applying for a new grade crossing, including construction of a new grade separated overpass crossings.”

- “A major roadway reconfiguration or change in use will be reviewed as a new crossing by UP.”

At the April 30, 2025, SRTA Board of Directors meeting, the board unanimously approved the staff recommendation to work with Caltrans and regional partners to pursue grant funding for a regional railroad crossing study to address these challenges and others.

After discussion with Caltrans and Shasta County Department of Public Works, it was determined that an approach focusing on the South-Central Urbanized Region (SCUR) between the city of Shasta Lake and Cottonwood, rather than a countywide approach, was most appropriate. All crossings in the SCUR, including at-grade crossings, undercrossings (such as Main Street in Cottonwood) and overcrossings (such as Eureka Way in Redding) will be evaluated as part of this effort.

SRTA staff have worked with Caltrans and have identified the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program as a potential fund source for the proposed railroad crossing plan. Applications are due by November 21, 2025. If the application is successful, work is anticipated to begin November 2026 and finish by February 2029.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may request revisions to the scope of work or direct staff to not submit the grant application.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Caltrans will be a sub-applicant to the grant. Shasta County, the city of Redding, the city of Shasta Lake, and the city of Anderson will partner with SRTA on this effort. */// The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on October 13, 2025, to review and discuss the grant application and to vote on the matter. ///*

FISCAL IMPACT:

A successful grant application will require SRTA to provide a local match of 11.47 percent, or \$xxx,xxx dollars.

Keith Williams, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

Attachments:

A: Scope of Work (*Not Available for TAC*)

B: History of Related SRTA Board of Directors Agenda Items

History of Related SRTA Board of Directors Agenda Items

2025

Board of Directors Meeting on April 30, 2025

Agenda Item 13

- The board unanimously approves staff recommendation to approve the Envision 273 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan and direct staff to work with Caltrans and regional partners to pursue grant funding for a regional railroad crossing study.