



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

<p>(1) DEPARTMENT Public Works</p>	<p>(2) MEETING DATE 1/14/25</p>	<p>(3) CONTACT/PHONE John Diodati, Director of Public Works (805) 781-5252 Tanya Richardson, Director of Parks (805) 781-5930</p>	
<p>(4) SUBJECT Request to: 1) receive an update on the scope change application for the Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project (Project) and direct staff to advocate for project approval at the January 2025 California Transportation Commission (CTC) hearing; 2) adopt a resolution of support for the Project; and 3) authorize a related budget adjustment in the amount of \$5,000,000 from the Capital Projects Fund Facilities Planning Designation to Fund Center (FC) 230 – Capital Projects WBS 320096 - Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project, by 4/5 vote. (Public Works and Parks)</p>			
<p>(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive an update from staff on the status of the Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project (Project) scope change application to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and direct staff to: advocate for project approval at the January 2025 CTC hearing; 2. Adopt the attached resolution in support of the Project; and 3. Approve a budget adjustment in the amount of \$5,000,000 from the Capital Projects Fund Facilities Planning Designation to Fund Center (FC) 230 – Capital Projects WBS 320096 - Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project to WBS 320096, by 4/5 vote. 			
<p>(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) Facilities Planning Designation</p>	<p>(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$5,000,000</p>	<p>(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT N/A</p>	<p>(9) BUDGETED? no</p>
<p>(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. _____) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. 60 min)</p>			
<p>(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>			
<p>(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A</p>		<p>(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: 2425162 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>	
<p>(14) LOCATION MAP Attached</p>	<p>(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No</p>	<p>(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date 10/29/24 #15; 8/20/24 #35; 7/16/24 #16; 5/21/24 #40; 11/7/23 #21;</p>	
<p>(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW: Zachary A. Lute</p>			
<p>(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S)</p>			

Reference: 25.007



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Public Works

John Diodati, Director of Public Works

Tanya Richardson, Director of Parks

DATE: 1/14/2025

SUBJECT: Request to: 1) receive an update on the scope change application for the Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project (Project) and direct staff to advocate for project approval at the January 2025 California Transportation Commission (CTC) hearing; 2) adopt a resolution of support for the Project; and 3) authorize a related budget adjustment in the amount of \$5,000,000 from the Capital Projects Fund Facilities Planning Designation to Fund Center (FC) 230 – Capital Projects WBS 320096 - Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project, by 4/5 vote. (Public Works and Parks)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Receive an update from staff on the status of the Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project (Project) scope change application to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and direct staff to advocate for project approval at the January 2025 CTC hearing;
2. Adopt the attached resolution in support of the Project; and
3. Approve a budget adjustment in the amount of \$5,000,000 from the Capital Projects Fund Facilities Planning Designation to Fund Center (FC) 230 – Capital Projects WBS 320096 - Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project to WBS 320096, by 4/5 vote.

DISCUSSION

The County has been working to complete the Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project (Project) between the Octagon Barn in San Luis Obispo and the County's Ontario Road staging area near Avila Beach for many years. Preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) began in 2010, with the Board approving the

EIR and proposed pathway route along the northbound side of Highway 101 on February 24, 2015. Project design for the 4.5-mile pathway gap closure began with the Board's approval of a design contract on July 10, 2018. In 2021, \$18,248,000 of Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 5 Grant Funding was awarded by the CTC to fund Project development and construction costs.

The County operates and maintains approximately 2.5 miles of existing Bob Jones Pathway extending from the County's Ontario Road staging area westward to Avila Beach. The proposed 4.5-mile gap closure will connect the Land Conservancy Octagon Barn in San Luis Obispo, where the County has constructed a public parking lot and staging area, to the County's Ontario Road staging area completing the linkage from city to sea, which will provide commuting, economic and health benefits to the residents and visitors of San Luis Obispo County.

This multi-modal transportation improvement will provide a separated Class I (off-street) multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway for recreational and alternative transportation use that will connect San Luis Obispo and Avila Beach. The Project will complete a key link in the transportation corridor connection between San Luis Obispo and the Five Cities area with a safe, vehicle free, route for commuting by bicycle. The advancement of battery assisted bicycles now makes this a feasible option for a larger segment of the population.

To date, project development has been delayed due to right-of-way issues, specifically at the Bunnell property. An easement through the Bunnell property was necessary to complete the Project under the proposed alignment, and the Project team attempted to work with the property owner in the hope of reaching an agreement.

However, the property owner indicated that he would not grant an easement for the Project. In order to move the Project forward in a timely manner to meet ATP grant deadlines, on August 20, 2024, Public Works held a hearing for your Board to consider a Resolution of Necessity to acquire 1.2 acres of the 146-acre Bunnell parcel. Approval of a Resolution of Necessity requires a 4/5 vote, and with only three affirmative votes, approval of the resolution failed. After the vote, your Board approved a motion to direct staff to see if another path forward is feasible and return with any suggestions staff would have to complete the Project.

Staff returned to your Board on October 29, 2024, and discussed the options moving forward, which were limited to 1) returning the ATP grant and delaying the Project indefinitely, or 2) proceeding with one final Project proposal to the CTC in order to phase the Project in collaboration with Caltrans and San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG).

Your Board gave direction to pursue the Project phasing proposal, which included a request for approval from the CTC at their January 30-31, 2025, meeting and to develop a funding plan for a fully funded Project.

After extensive collaboration with SLOCOG and Caltrans (District 5 and ATP) staff, the following phasing plan was developed as the most likely to receive CTC approval. Phase 1, which must be ready for construction in 2025, completes the northern portion from the Octagon Barn to Cloverrick Lane using ATP grant funds. Phase 2 will construct the southern portion in 2027-2028, partially in Caltrans right of way adjacent to U.S. 101, continuing to the Ontario Road staging area.

Staff has submitted the necessary documents to Caltrans and the CTC for placement on the January meeting agenda. At this time, staff believes their response to the recommendation will be positive; however, in discussions with Caltrans and CTC staff, this is dependent on showing a fully funded Project. At the moment, Phase 2 of the Project currently has an approximate \$5 million funding shortfall. Both SLOCOG and Caltrans have increased their contributions to the Project and do not have any other funding available. This means the County will need to allocate the necessary funding for the recommended scope change to feasibly be approved by the CTC at the January hearing.

It is recommended that your Board increase the Project budget by \$5 million by moving funds from the Capital Projects Fund Facilities Planning Designation into the Project budget.

Additionally, Caltrans and CTC staff have requested that your Board adopt a resolution of support for this project. The attached resolution demonstrates your support for the Project, including the additional financial allocation made into the Project to ensure that it is fully funded.

The resolution and information on the additional funding allocation will be provided to Caltrans and the CTC for inclusion in their staff report at the January CTC meeting.

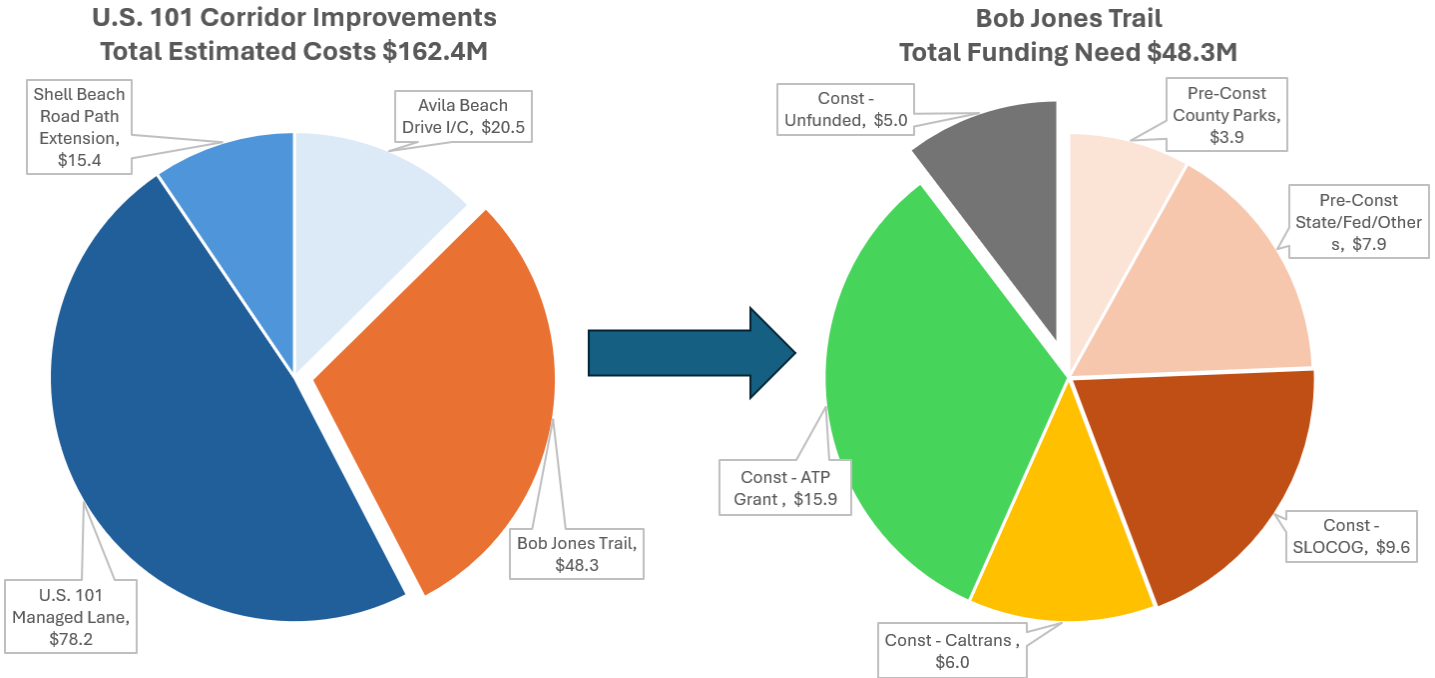
OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

Caltrans approved a Categorical Exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) on January 23, 2018. Caltrans will issue an encroachment permit to the County prior to the construction of this Project. The encroachment permit will allow temporary access for the County's future Construction contractor onto state property to construct portions of the project that are within or abut directly against State right of way.

Caltrans is administering the \$18,248,000 of ATP Cycle 5 Grant Funding for the right of way, design engineering, and construction phase of this Project. Portions of the pathway along the southern extent of the Project will be constructed on State land that will be relinquished from the State to the County upon completion of the construction phase. Caltrans has also agreed to participate in the project and has committed \$6 million toward design and construction of portions of the project that are within State right of way.

SLOCOG is providing regional funding for project design development and is an agency partner towards delivery of this Project.

SLOCOG is also managing the U.S. 101 Corridor Plan for southern San Luis Obispo County. The corridor plan is designed to reduce congestion between San Luis Obispo and the Five-Cities areas through implementation of multiple projects along the corridor totaling more than \$160 million. These projects encourage carpooling and active transportation to reduce vehicle trips, in addition to new infrastructure to handle traffic more efficiently. The projects are funded through a combination of Federal, State, regional and local funds. The Bob Jones Project is a key component of the corridor plan, with \$43.3 million invested or committed by multiple agencies toward a total estimated cost of \$48.3 million, as shown on the charts below.



FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Capital Project 320096 has a current appropriation of \$5,084,427, which is for pre-construction work and funded by \$2,295,000 in ATP grants, \$1,250,000 in Regional State Highway Account grants, \$822,999 in California Department of Fish & Wildlife grants, \$334,904 in Parks Public Facility Fees, \$235,582 in the California Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration grants, and \$145,672 in PG&E Mitigation revenue.

For the construction phase, another \$15,953,000 in ATP grant funding has been approved, but not yet appropriated for the construction phase of the project. Approximately \$15.6 million of additional funding is planned to be appropriated by SLOCOG and Caltrans in future fiscal years, leaving a projected \$5,000,000 funding gap for the estimated \$36.5 million cost to construct Phases 1 and 2.

The Board accepted the CTC’s ATP grant funding in the amount of \$18,248,000 on July 13, 2021.

In addition to support from the CTC, the County has spent over \$9 million in County funds, community donations, and State and Federal grants since 2002. The Project has made considerable progress with this significant investment, a feat made possible by local, State, and Federal resources.

In addition to the impact on the General Fund, returning ATP grant funds or failing to deliver this project will adversely affect the County’s ability to successfully secure future ATP grants. ATP grants are competitive awards rather than guaranteed allocations, and the County’s capability to deliver ATP projects is a consideration in future application determinations. The County will have to disclose that funding was returned for the Project on future grant applications and will receive fewer overall points in the scoring system, making the County less competitive comparatively. Potential County projects that rely on the CTC as a funding source will be at a disadvantage for years to come.

RESULTS

Providing the recommended resolution of support and budget adjustment will allow County staff to continue working with funding agencies to keep the Project moving forward. The ultimate result is to improve the pedestrian and bicycle connection between Avila Beach and San Luis Obispo, supporting the County's vision of providing a healthy and livable community while improving regional non-modal transportation linkages.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Vicinity Map
- 2 Resolution of the Board of Supervisors Proclaiming Their Support for the Completion of the Bob Jones Trail Gap Closure, Phasing Proposal and Funding Plan

File: 320096

Reference: 25.007