



City of Salinas

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October 13, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the Mayor of the City of Salinas, I am writing to express strong support for funding of the “Reconnecting Salinas: Feasibility Study of Key Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Barriers” project through the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) discretionary grant program. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is the project lead and the City of Salinas is a partner and co-applicant. The City of Salinas is committed to fund its portion of the local match requirements, if awarded.

Caltrans is seeking RCP grant funding to support a feasibility study of alternative crossings at three major transportation barriers that divide the community: U.S. Route 101, State Route (SR) 183, and Union Pacific Railroad in Salinas, California. The study will explore opportunities to improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility and connect low-income housing to employment, retail destinations, medical providers, rail and bus transit facilities, and other economic opportunities.

Recent community-driven plans (Downtown Vibrancy Plan, 2015 and Chinatown Revitalization Plan, 2019), city studies (Vision Zero Action Plan, 2021), and regional plans (Regional Transportation Plan, 2022) identify infrastructure and safety barriers that divide low-income communities from employment, retail destinations, medical providers, and rail and bus transit facilities. Currently, there are no bicycle or pedestrian facilities that allow the community to cross at along US 101 at Alvin Drive, State Route 183 and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) adjacent to Chinatown, safely and conveniently. The only existing routes require very long, out-of-direction trips that are not ADA (Americans Disabilities Act) compliant and impose high levels of traffic stress for non-automobile modes.

The study will fulfill RCP’s goals of removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highway barriers that inhibit community connectivity, mobility, and access to economic opportunities. This study will be consistent with Caltrans’ priorities of delivering transportation projects that promote multi-modalism and reduce vehicle-miles traveled, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and criteria air pollutants, and increase equity and access to historically disadvantaged and neglected communities.

This feasibility study is an essential step in overcoming the transportation barriers that have burdened generations of communities living in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Salinas. Funding this study will help to achieve our goals of enhancing the multimodal transportation network and advancing equity and livability in the Salinas community. We believe the study is a strong candidate for RCP 2022 funding and urge you to fund the project.

Sincerely,

Kimbley Craig
Mayor
City of Salinas

Date