



## **Broadway Feasibility Study**

### Phase 1 Outreach Summary

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# **Executive Summary**

## ***Introduction***

Caltrans is preparing a feasibility study to evaluate and identify potential safety, operational and mobility improvements along a three-mile stretch of Broadway (also Highway 101) in the City of Eureka. Caltrans has developed a micro-simulation model that will help simulate the results of proposed improvements so decision makers, stakeholders and the public can evaluate them with great flexibility. Caltrans is seeking to inform the business community and the public about the model and how it is used in the feasibility study.

## ***Phase 1 Outreach***

The first phase of the Program involves outreach to area businesses and community groups to provide early input in the process. Caltrans conducted outreach for and hosted one informational meeting in the study area to discuss the Feasibility Study, present the modeling tool, and solicit early input and feedback from stakeholders from the business community. Phase 1 outreach included a project brochure and mailer, door-to door in-person outreach with business community members, and an informational meeting.

## ***Key Findings***

Participants asked questions and provided comments regarding the simulation model, potential improvement scenarios, outreach and project funding.

## ***Simulation Model***

Participants asked questions regarding simulation data origin, gathering data, and the capabilities of the simulation model.

## ***Process***

Meeting participants asked questions related to the Broadway Feasibility Study process including: potential scenario inputs and a conceptual design.

## ***Potential Improvement Scenarios***

Meeting participants asked questions and provided suggestions regarding potential improvement scenarios in the project area. The scale of improvements, traffic signal and road adjustments, and a

bypass were points of interest for participants. Potential improvement suggestions included:

- Signal timing.
- Medians.
- Create a left turn lane from Wabash onto Broadway.
- Address traffic turn safety issues on Clark Street at Broadway.
- Improve pedestrian crossing on Broadway at Hawthorne.
- Extend Waterfront Drive through to Herrick Avenue on the railroad easement.
- Fairfield Avenue between Hawthorne and Wabash. Close the road or reorient traffic to travel one-way.
- Reorient lanes on Henderson at Broadway. 3 lanes traveling south and 1 lane traveling north.
- Cross-use of easements will alleviate congestion and prevent mid-block U-turns between median breaks. Examples of this improvement include the Chevron/coffee shop and the T-Bones/McDonald's easement).

## **Outreach**

Participants provided suggestions regarding Phase 1 and 2 of the Outreach Program including: general public meeting material presentation methods and a follow-up meeting for the business community.

## **Project Funding**

Participants asked questions and provided comments regarding project funding including project costs and funding for improvements. Caltrans staff made it clear the feasibility study had no funding for any of the improvement scenarios being reviewed.

## **I. Introduction**

Caltrans is preparing a feasibility study to evaluate and identify potential safety, operational and mobility improvements along a three-mile stretch of Broadway (also Highway 101) in the City of Eureka. Caltrans has developed a micro-simulation model that will help simulate the results of proposed improvements so decision makers, stakeholders and the public can evaluate them with great flexibility. Caltrans is seeking to inform the business community and the public about the model and how it is used in the feasibility study.

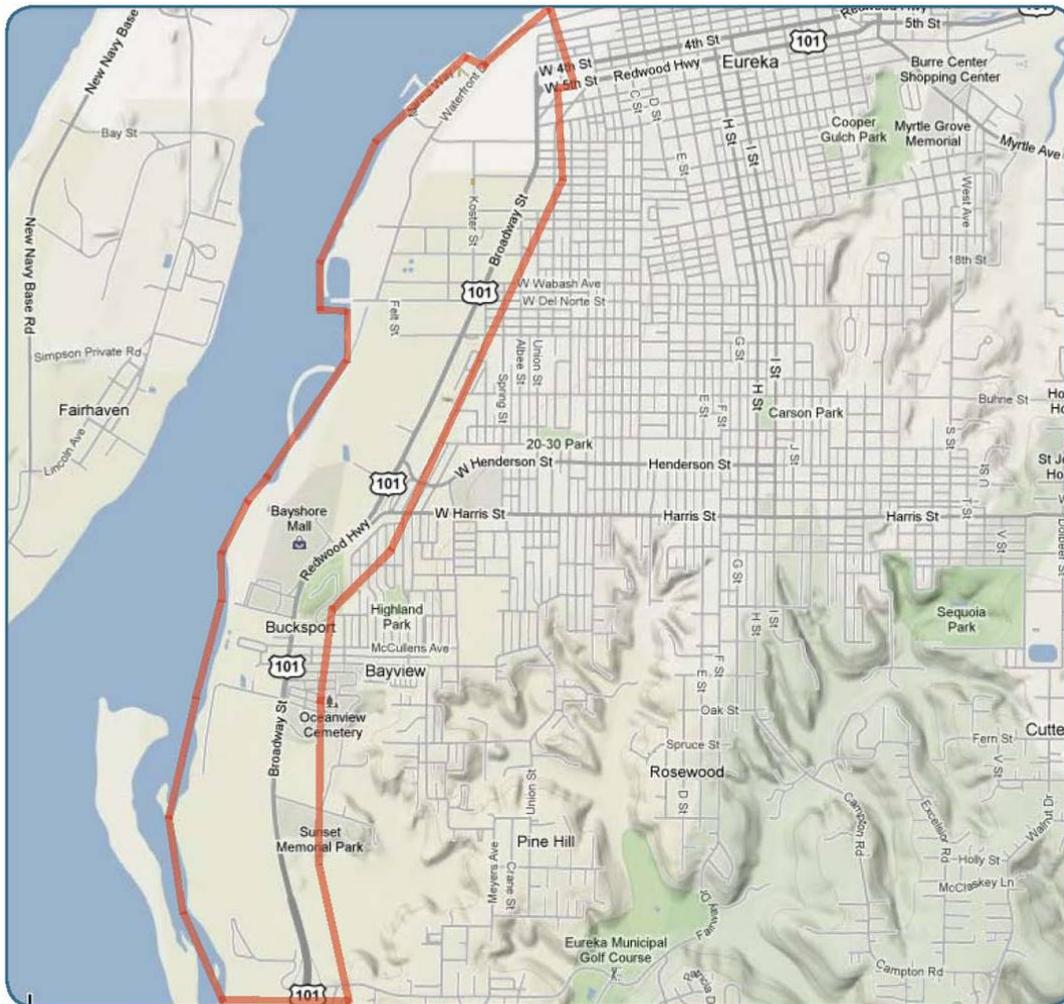
### ***Feasibility Study Overview***

#### **Location**

Route 101 (Broadway) is a four-lane, north-south urban principal arterial highway in a mixed land use area. To the south of the study area, Broadway is a divided freeway. To the north, it splits into W 5<sup>th</sup> Street, which directs 101 southbound traffic east, and W 4<sup>th</sup> Street, which directs northbound traffic west. In addition to vehicular use, there are significant amount of non-motorized uses including bicyclists and pedestrians.

The project study limits are approximately three miles in length on Broadway, beginning at the intersection of the K-Mart entrance and terminate at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets couplet in the City of Eureka.

## Feasibility Study Area



## Background

Caltrans and its local partners (the City of Eureka, Humboldt County and the Humboldt County Association of Governments) have been working together for almost a decade to identify improvements, which will address traffic and safety issues along a three mile stretch of Broadway through the City of Eureka.

A by-pass was proposed and planned several years ago; however, the project did not proceed due to funding limitations. Since then, key properties needed for the bypass have been developed, making this option even more difficult to reconsider. Traffic and safety issues continue to need to be addressed. Safety issues must also consider the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as drivers.

## **Existing Conditions**

This three-mile section of Highway 101 is heavily constrained with little or no room for expansion or modification in many sections. Any changes or improvements made by Caltrans are likely to impact regional and local roads. Likewise, any changes to nearby state and local roads are likely to impact conditions on Highway 101. New development proposed along or at either end of the corridor is also likely to have traffic and safety impacts.

The collision rate at certain locations along Broadway reaches as high as four times the statewide average when compared to similar facilities. The corridor also experiences significant traffic congestion and poor mobility for all modes of transportation. As volumes of motorized and non-motorized traffic increase, collision rates and congestion will also increase. Mobility for all users will become increasingly difficult as volume increases.

## **Feasibility Study Description and Purpose**

Caltrans has developed a modeling tool (a micro-simulation traffic model) to evaluate the feasibility of proposed improvements on Broadway and assess potential and related impacts on local and county roads. Implementing an improvement at a single location will affect the traffic conditions at other locations along the Broadway corridor. Broadway is a linked system and the model analyses traffic impacts accordingly.

The Feasibility Study seeks to identify improvements throughout the corridor that will improve congestion and mobility in the entire project area, rather than transferring an existing issue to a different location. The results of these modeling activities can be used to articulate a framework for decision makers and the public to evaluate proposed improvements. The study is only intended to identify feasible improvements that could be considered for future funding. There are no specific projects under consideration.

## ***Outreach Program Overview***

Caltrans worked with MIG, Inc., a consulting firm, to develop the Outreach Program for the Broadway Feasibility Study. The purpose of the Outreach Program is to identify and engage stakeholders in the feasibility study and the application of the model.

## **Phase 1 and 2**

The first phase of the Program involves outreach to area businesses and community groups to provide early input in the process. The business community has been especially difficult to engage and given their presence and influence in the project area, Caltrans prioritized directing outreach resources to this group. Caltrans seeks to present this modeling tool first to key stakeholders in a manner that allows groups to discuss their concerns, get their questions answered and provide feedback to Caltrans in advance of the public roll-out (Phase 2).

The results of the Phase 1 Outreach Program will be used to develop Phase 2, which will describe the approach for involving the general public. Phase 1 was conducted during January and February 2011. Caltrans will conduct Phase 2 in spring/summer 2011.

## **Outreach Program Purpose**

Both phases of the Outreach Program will be designed to achieve the following goals:

- Ensure that participants understand the potential application of the modeling tool and how it can be used to develop a framework for decision making regarding improvements;
- Frame issues and provide the supporting technical and modeling data so that participants can understand the interrelationship between proposed improvements and changes on Broadway and local and county roads;
- Provide a clear understanding of where and how participants can provide input and influence decision making in the feasibility study; and
- Begin to develop agreement on the guiding principles to evaluate the feasibility of proposed improvements on Highway 101 and nearby local and county roads in the Broadway corridor.

## **Public Engagement**

The Outreach Program emphasizes a phased strategy that encourages involvement and engagement with the following groups:

- Property and business owners with interests on Broadway,
- Representatives from environmental justice populations in the city and county,
- Social service providers,

- External Advisory Committee,
- Established forums,
- Safety officials,
- Bicycle/pedestrian advocacy groups,
- General public, and
- Other interested parties.

The first phase of the Outreach Program focused on engaging property and business owners with interests on Broadway. Additional stakeholder groups listed above will have the opportunity to provide feedback during Phase 2.

## **II. Phase 1 Outreach**

Caltrans conducted outreach for and hosted one informational meeting in the study area to discuss the Feasibility Study, present the modeling tool, and solicit early input and feedback from stakeholders from the business community. Phase 1 outreach included a project brochure and mailer, door-to-door in-person outreach with business community members, and an informational meeting. These materials and activities are described below.

### ***Brochure and Mailer***

Caltrans worked with MIG to design and distribute a project brochure and mailer as a tool for reaching the business community. The brochure was designed to explain the purpose of the Broadway Feasibility Study project and to invite business community members to the informational meeting. Images and a project location map illustrate the location of the project and key issues along the corridor.

A project mailer was sent to properties in the project area inviting business community members to the informational meeting. The brochure and mailer provided project team contact information should business and property owners and staff have project-related questions and comments. The project brochure and mailer are included in Appendix D.

### ***In-Person Outreach***

Property and business owners can be difficult to engage through traditional outreach methods. Since many business owners lease or rent their facilities, additional effort was required to develop a contact list that included contact information for both property owners and business operators. The City of Eureka provided a comprehensive list of properties and property owners within the project area. Publicly owned parcels and residences were removed from the list during this phase to help focus efforts on businesses and commercial properties along Broadway and on adjacent side streets.

Outreach activities were conducted during the week since that is the timeframe most are likely to be reached. Hilary Gould, Public Engagement Specialist with the MIG Team, visited over 150 business properties within a multi-day period. Mr. Gould introduced the Broadway Feasibility Study, invited stakeholders to the informational meeting, and provided business community members with a project

brochure. Through fieldwork and in-person outreach, Mr. Gould developed strong partnerships with business and property owners. The in-person outreach allowed him to revise and confirm the business community contact list. Mr. Gould also followed up with phone calls to some property owners to insure they had received the information.

### ***Informational Meeting***

On February 7, 2011, Caltrans hosted an informational meeting for business community groups within the project area to discuss and build awareness about the Broadway Feasibility Study. The meeting was held between 6:30 and 8:30 PM at the Best Western Bayshore Inn. Refreshments were provided.

At the meeting, participants were asked to sign in and were provided an agenda, comment card, and a nametag. Joan Chaplick, Facilitator with MIG, Inc., opened the meeting with welcoming remarks and introduced the Caltrans and MIG project team members. Ms. Chaplick briefly reviewed the agenda and meeting purpose, followed by a presentation about the Broadway Feasibility Study project.

Cheryl Willis, Caltrans District 1 Deputy District Director for Planning and Local Assistance, presented the project background, purpose and need. Ms. Willis turned the presentation to Jeffrey Pimentel, Caltrans District 1 Project Engineer, to review congestion, mobility, and accident trends along the corridor. Mr. Pimentel introduced Rick Mayberry to review modeling practices and the modeling tool. Mr. Mayberry offered to provide detailed explanation of the model after the group discussion for interested participants.

Following the presentation, Ms. Chaplick opened the meeting for Broadway Feasibility Study questions and comments. Andi Nelson, Graphic Recorder with MIG, took notes and recorded comments and questions on large-scale wallgraphic paper. The informational meeting concluded at 8:15 PM. Several participants remained to ask questions and provide additional feedback to Caltrans staff.

In Chapter III Key Findings, is a summary of the key questions and comments received at the meeting, organized by topic.

### III. Key Findings

Participants asked questions and provided comments regarding the simulation model, potential improvement scenarios, outreach and project funding. These questions and answers are summarized below.

#### ***Simulation Model***

Participants asked questions regarding simulation data, gathering data, and the capabilities of the simulation model. Questions and answers are summarized below.

- Where does the data originate?
  - *Caltrans gathers land use data from the County General Plan, street network information from maps, travel behavior from State numbers and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, projected growth from the Regional Transportation Plan, additional data sets from the City of Eureka, and bases car behavior simulation on GIS data.*
- Does Caltrans use rubber hose counters to gather traffic-related data?
  - *Yes, Caltrans uses hoses, cameras, and car counts from the Marina Center to gather traffic-related data.*
- How does Caltrans include future developments in the model?
  - *The City of Eureka and Humboldt County General Plans project potential developments.*
- Will the model assess alternative roads and the waterfront extension?
  - *The project is staying within the Broadway corridor.*
- Does the model take biking trail plans and studies and Marina traffic studies into account? I request to include these in future modeling efforts.
  - *Caltrans is working with the City and County, who will have the opportunity to implement this pilot project. Caltrans is including bicycle traffic along Broadway in modeling scenarios. The model does not account for impacts on bike trails; it only assesses the impacts on city streets.*
- What is the capability of the simulation model?

- *Caltrans has the ability to measure impacts and improvements on a driveway-by-driveway basis.*

## **Process**

Meeting participants asked questions related to the Broadway Feasibility Study process. Questions and answers are summarized below.

- What scenarios will Caltrans input into the model?
  - *Caltrans is building scenarios and the model will test these ideas for the first iteration of the Feasibility Study. A second iteration of scenarios will follow based on community input.*
- Does Caltrans have a conceptual design?
  - *Caltrans has a base case scenario. Caltrans will assess the traffic impacts of a few scenarios and will initially look at a wide range of potential improvements.*

## **Potential Improvement Scenarios**

Meeting participants asked questions and provided suggestions regarding potential improvement scenarios in the project area. Questions and answers are summarized below.

- What will be the scale of improvements to Broadway?
  - *The first iteration of improvements will address big issues and changes.*
- Why is Caltrans considering closing off Fairfield?
  - *There are safety concerns and signal timing issues along Fairfield.*
- Will Caltrans remove traffic signals as part of the improvement project?
  - *The model will evaluate different iterations.*
- Is the bypass a potential scenario in the study?
  - *No, a new road is not a potential scenario.*
- Would Caltrans like all potential improvement ideas?
  - *Yes. Caltrans is interested in short and long-term improvements that will keep congestion down.*

- Consider that Harris is an alternative route to Broadway when assessing potential improvement scenarios.
- General study area improvement suggestions:
  - Signal timing.
  - Medians.
  - Create a left turn lane from Wabash onto Broadway.
  - Address traffic turn safety issues on Clark Street at Broadway.
  - Improve pedestrian crossing on Broadway at Hawthorne.
  - Extend Waterfront Drive through to Herrick Avenue on the railroad easement.
  - Fairfield Avenue between Hawthorne and Wabash. Close the road or reorient traffic to travel one-way.
  - Reorient lanes on Henderson at Broadway. 3 lanes traveling south and 1 lane traveling north.
  - Cross-use of easements will alleviate congestion and prevent mid-block U-turns between median breaks. Examples of this improvement include the Chevron/coffee shop and the T-Bones/McDonald's easement).

## ***Outreach***

Participants provided suggestions regarding Phase 1 and 2 of the Outreach Program. A summary of future outreach suggestions is included below.

- At the general public meeting, show a visual representation of improvement scenario options. Community members will understand and react better to visual tools.
  - *During Phase 2, Caltrans will present different improvement scenarios and impacts as brainstorming occurs during Phase 1.*
- Host a follow-up meeting for the business community.
  - *Caltrans supported this recommendation and requested participants leave their contact information and share location suggestions.*

## ***Project Funding***

Participants asked questions and provided comments regarding project funding. Questions and answers are summarized below.

- What is the cost of these special assessments and studies to the taxpayer?
  - *Constraints will be disclosed to the public and the Feasibility Study will determine the cost of recommended improvements.*
- Is there funding for potential improvements? How feasible is improvement implementation if resources are limited?
  - *There is currently no funding for improvements along Broadway. Caltrans is assessing the feasibility now, so that projects can be funded in the future.*

## **IV. Phase 2 Recommendations**

During Phase 2 of the Broadway Feasibility Project, Caltrans will continue to involve and engage property and business owners with interests on Broadway while reaching the following groups:

- Representatives from environmental justice populations in the city and county,
- Social service providers,
- External Advisory Committee,
- Established forums,
- Safety officials,
- Bicycle/pedestrian advocacy groups,
- General public, and
- Other interested parties.

Recommended Phase 2 outreach activities are provided below.

### ***Business Community***

#### **Business Advisory Group**

Caltrans may invite business community members in the project area to participate in a Business Advisory Group for the duration of the feasibility study project. The advisory group would include interested key business community members identified in Phase 1 and City of Eureka representatives. Advisory group members would provide outreach and engagement guidance, represent business interests along the corridor, and review potential improvement scenarios.

The group's operating charter would include rules of conduct and agreements. Appendix F includes an exemplary advisory group operating charter. Project area business and property owners are listed in Appendix A.

#### **Follow-up Meeting with Business Community**

Informational meeting participants requested a follow-up meeting prior to the scheduled community meeting in summer 2011. Participants expressed interest in reviewing and discussing potential improvement scenarios. A follow-up meeting could take place prior to the general community meeting in spring 2011.

## ***Additional Stakeholder Groups***

### **Convene External Advisory Committee**

Caltrans and local partners will work to re-convene the external advisory committee to seek their input on this project. The group last met in 2009 and was provided introductory information about the project. If agreed to by the local partners, it would be beneficial to host a meeting of this group in early spring 2011 to discuss the progress made since their last meeting and to solicit feedback on the current project.

### **Refine Outreach Program**

The Outreach Program (Appendix E) suggests methods to reach additional stakeholder groups. For Phase 2 stakeholder outreach, it is recommended that Caltrans schedule outreach activities that include, at a minimum:

- Partnering with community-based organizations to engage environmental justice stakeholders;
- Meeting with the City of Eureka Safety Committee and the HCOG Technical Advisory Committee during scheduled forums; and,
- Contacting and conducting small group interviews with social service providers, safety officials, bicycle and pedestrian advisory groups.

### **Community Meeting**

The general community meeting provides an opportunity for different stakeholder groups to learn about the project and discuss potential improvement scenarios. The meeting could be hosted in a central, clearly signed location that is accessible by transit, automobile, and for people of all abilities. The meeting should be informative and interactive. Potential improvement scenarios could be presented and discussed. A poster-sized menu of improvements and strategies would enable Caltrans to clearly communicate potential implementation methods (e.g. medians), issues addressed (e.g. jay walkers), and trade-offs (e.g. maintenance).

### ***Next Steps***

Caltrans staff will initiate Phase 2 and develop improvement scenarios. These scenarios will be modeled and presented to community members. Caltrans will continue to work closely with business community members and additional stakeholder groups throughout the process.