



NEWS

Date: February 27, 2013

For Release: Immediately

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ENCINITAS PEDESTRIAN RAIL UNDERPASS OPENS MAKING IT SAFER AND EASIER TO GET TO SWAMI'S BEACH

Getting across the railroad tracks to reach Swami's Beach in Encinitas is now much safer and easier with the completion of a pedestrian rail undercrossing off Coast Highway 101 near Santa Fe Drive. The crossing officially opened this afternoon after a ribbon cutting ceremony.

The Santa Fe underpass is one of four planned rail crossings in Encinitas, designed to improve pedestrian safety and coastal access along the San Diego portion of the busy Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor. Approximately 50 passenger and freight trains travel on the San Diego segment of the coastal rail line on weekdays. Illegal pedestrian crossings of the rail line and the rail right-of-way have been a frequent occurrence in the area. Before the completion of the project, the nearest legal rail crossings to Santa Fe Drive were half a mile north at E Street or 1.3 miles south at Chesterfield Drive.

The ribbon cutting ceremony was attended by Encinitas Mayor Teresa Arballo Barth; SANDAG Chair and Santee Councilmember Jack Dale; and County Supervisor Dave Roberts, a Board member of the North County Transit District (NCTD).

"This new rail bridge and pedestrian undercrossing provide a convenient and safe way for pedestrians and cyclists to get from one side of the railroad to the other to access coastal recreational areas, cultural resources, historic Downtown Encinitas, and our beautiful Coast Highway 101 corridor," Mayor Barth said.

The project was a successful partnership between SANDAG, NCTD, Encinitas, and Caltrans. SANDAG secured the funding and oversaw the construction. NCTD is the owner of the rail line and facilitated construction. The City of Encinitas contributed \$1.25 million from its capital improvement program for design and construction and will maintain the crossing. The project also was made possible by state and regional transportation funding, including \$2.75 million from *TransNet*, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation administered by SANDAG.

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CALTROP provided construction management services. T.Y. Lin International was the principal design/engineering firm, and FLATIRON was the general contractor. Schmidt Design Group provided landscape architecture and design services.

"NCTD is committed to ensuring safety around the rail corridor," Supervisor Roberts said. "With the completion of this pedestrian undercrossing, community safety will be significantly improved as pedestrians can now safely cross the rail line and avoid train hazards."

In addition to Santa Fe, other crossings are planned in Encinitas at El Portal Street, Montgomery Avenue, and Hillcrest Drive. The total cost of the four crossings is estimated at \$25.7 million. Money still needs to be identified to complete the remaining three crossings.

The Encinitas pedestrian crossing is one of 20 capital improvement projects in development along the 60-mile segment of the LOSSAN rail line in San Diego County. Along with the planned Interstate 5 Express Lanes project, the LOSSAN rail line is critical for moving goods and people through the North Coast Corridor.

"This project is an important part of the North Coast Corridor Program, which is a \$6.5 billion package of coordinated rail, transit, highway, environmental and community improvements for our coastal cities," SANDAG Chair Dale said. "Improving coastal access for our residents and visitors is a major tenet of the North Coast Corridor Program."

For more information, visit KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/EncinitasPedCrossings.

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