Updated Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

May 16, 2025

Subject

Updated Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the San Diego-Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Realignment (SDLRR) Project (Project) located in the cities of Del Mar and San Diego, California.

Introduction

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is continuing to initiate the preparation of a Draft EIR for the SDLRR Project and is issuing this Updated NOP to reflect outreach conducted to date and solicit additional input on the Project, including alternatives under consideration and environmental effects. SANDAG is preparing an Environmental Impact Report for the Project and decided to forego preparing an Initial Study (*CEQA Guidelines* 15063(a)) and move directly into the preparation of a Draft EIR. In addition to soliciting input from the public, SANDAG is requesting feedback from agencies as to the scope and content of environmental information that is relevant to an agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the SDLRR Project (e.g., if this Draft Environmental Impact Report [EIR] will be relied upon by the agency to satisfy CEQA obligations).

The SDLRR Project may require approvals and/or permits from agencies that would be subject to environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A NEPA Lead Agency has not yet been identified. Once the NEPA Lead Agency is identified, that agency will formally initiate the NEPA process.

Prior Notice of Preparation and Subsequent Public Input

On June 4, 2024, SANDAG initiated formal environmental review of the SDLRR Project under CEQA, with the release of a NOP of a Draft EIR for the Project. The NOP identified three proposed build alternative alignments for consideration in an EIR, in addition to a No Project Alternative. SANDAG's release of the NOP initiated a Draft EIR scoping period under CEQA which lasted through July 19, 2024, and sought to solicit public and stakeholder input on the alternatives identified.

Results of Public and Stakeholder Input – In response to feedback received during the scoping period and feedback from the SANDAG Board of Directors, SANDAG initiated a Value Analysis (VA) Study process comprised of representatives from SANDAG member agencies and other public agency stakeholders to gather additional input on the proposed alternatives included in the NOP and collaboratively brainstorm ideas for other potential project alignments. The VA Study was completed via a series of workshops and meetings between September and December 2024 with representatives from the cities of Carlsbad, Del Mar, Encinitas, San Diego, and Solana Beach; the 22nd District Agricultural Association (Del Mar Fairgrounds); the California Department of Transportation(Caltrans); and the North County Transit District (NCTD). The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System and City of Oceanside were invited but declined to participate. The VA Study was a collaborative and technically driven process, leveraging the knowledge of the multidisciplinary VA team,

including subject matter experts and stakeholders, with the goal of providing a fresh look at alternative concepts that would address the challenges that sea level rise and the eroding Del Mar bluffs pose to the reliability of passenger and freight service on the bluffs.

Throughout this process, the VA team stressed the following themes: desire to minimize risks from sea level rise and negative effects on biological resources and communities. The VA team also stressed the importance of public stewardship, including preserving prior and ongoing investments in the LOSSAN corridor and considerations on the cost of constructing and maintaining the Project. The VA team also provided the following input:

- Interest was noted for alignments to focus on minimizing effects to private property, including subsurface easements.
- Interest in exploring alignments that did not require portals, including an option that would keep the railroad tracks on the bluffs, as well as alignments with slower design speeds.
- Interest, consistent with feedback received during outreach efforts in 2023 and comments on the June 2024 NOP, to continue to study an Interstate 5 (I-5) alignment that is similar to alignments identified in prior studies (e.g., 2007 LOSSAN Programmatic EIR/EIS, 2023 Alternatives Analysis).
- Desire to minimize disruptions to economic generators, such as the Del Mar Fairgrounds and minimize conflicts with prior and ongoing infrastructure investments.

Collectively, these themes and input were incorporated into the updated Project objectives and the alternative concepts developed as part of the VA Study. Upon conclusion of the VA Study, staff applied the themes to the four alternatives described under the "Project Description" heading. The Final VA Study Report is available on the project website.

Background

The San Diego Subdivision is an approximately 60-mile section of the 351-mile LOSSAN Rail Corridor, linking San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Luis Obispo from the Orange County line to the Santa Fe Depot in Downtown San Diego. The LOSSAN Rail Corridor is the second busiest intercity passenger rail corridor in the United States and supports commuter (COASTER), intercity (Pacific Surfliner), and freight (BNSF) rail services. Currently, three quarters of the San Diego Subdivision is double tracked, resulting in a total of approximately 15 miles of single track and 45 miles of double track.

SANDAG Responsibilities

The San Diego Regional Transportation Consolidation Act (Senate Bill 1703, Peace) assigned SANDAG the responsibility for planning, funding allocation, project development, and construction in the San Diego region for all transit projects, including heavy rail. NCTD and San Diego Metropolitan Transit System retained the responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the rail services. As such, SANDAG is the CEQA Lead Agency for rail line projects proposed in San Diego County. As the County's Metropolitan Planning Organization under federal and state law, SANDAG is also responsible for the development of the Regional Transportation Plan and a Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Regional Transportation Plan identifies transportation infrastructure investments and programming of transportation funding over a 30-year timeframe within the San Diego region in consideration of projected economic and population growth. The 2021 Regional Plan combines the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy to achieve the regional

greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board. SANDAG's current plan was adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors in December 2021, with an amendment approved in October 2023.

As described in the 2021 Regional Plan, the regional vision for the San Diego Subdivision would result in an increase in commuter rail service operating at higher speeds in order to reduce travel times and provide a competitive alternative to driving, as well as aiding in continuation of goods movement through the region. The 2021 Regional Plan contemplates double tracking the remaining single-track segments of the LOSSAN Rail Corridor within San Diego County, modifications to the track configuration to accommodate higher speeds, and relocation of rail track into more climate resilient areas.

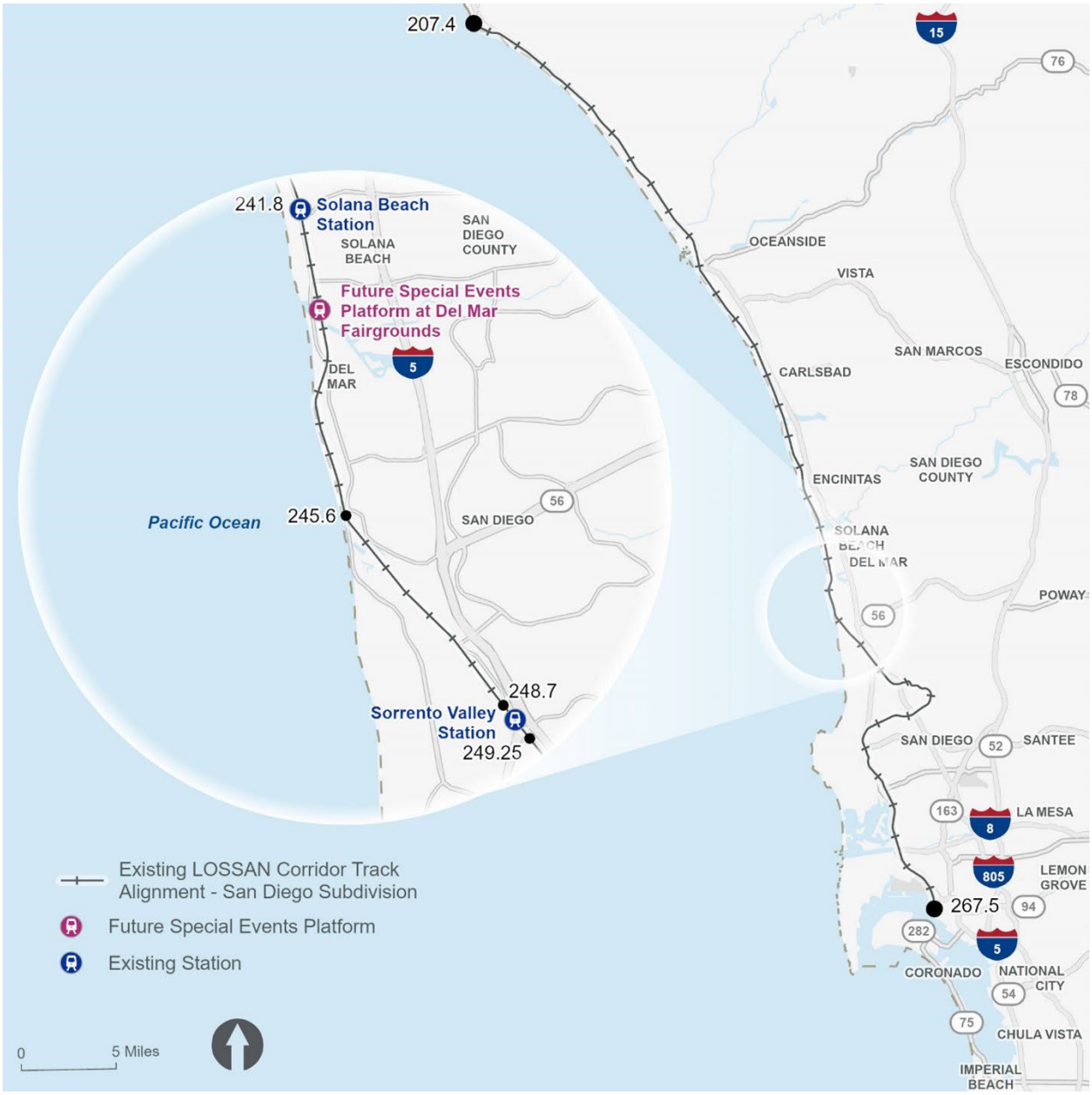
The segment of the San Diego Subdivision within the SDLRR Project area has experienced temporary closures and speed reductions resulting from bluff collapses, erosion, and repair work to stabilize the bluffs and protect the rail corridor from more substantial erosion effects. Four bluff stabilization projects have been completed in Del Mar since 2003, with the construction of Phase 4 recently completed in 2021. A fifth stabilization project (Phase 5) began construction in spring 2024. Phase 5 focuses on addressing additional seismic and stabilization needs, installing additional support columns, and replacing aging drainage structures to support the existing tracks.

In addition to the stabilization projects, multiple emergency repairs have been required since 1996 due to bluff failures that threatened train operations. While the Phase 5 stabilization project addresses safety and operational concerns with a 30-year design life, the stabilization projects and emergency repairs do not provide a long-term solution for sea level rise and the ongoing coastal erosion that pose substantial safety and economic risks to the region. Bluff retreat is estimated to occur at an average rate of 0.4 to 0.6 foot per year; however, large episodic bluff failures can result in more than 20 feet of bluff edge retreat in a single event. The California Coastal Commission (CCC) has required that SANDAG evaluate the removal of stabilization infrastructure prior to the expiration of the term of CCC approvals as part of their conditions of approval for current stabilization work. Further stabilization and emergency repair projects are likely to be required until the rail corridor is relocated from the coastal bluffs, or a more long-term structurally fortified solution is provided.

Study Area

The Project is located within portions of the cities of Del Mar and San Diego, as depicted on Figure 1. The Project study area begins at the future Special Events Platform that will be constructed as part of the San Dieguito Double Track Project in the north and ends at the Sorrento Valley Station in the south. The study area is generally bounded to the west by the Pacific Ocean and to the east by I-5.

Figure 1. Project Location



Note: Within the San Diego Subdivision, right-of-way north of Milepost 245.6 is owned by North County Transit District and right-of-way south of Milepost 245.6 is owned by Metropolitan Transit System. The future Special Events Platform has been approved and fully funded and will be constructed as part of the San Dieguito Double Track Project.

Planning Documents and Prior Studies

The Project is part of a larger program of improvements to be implemented on the LOSSAN Rail Corridor to enhance the reliability of existing services between San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Previous planning and environmental studies have been undertaken to analyze the potential for realigning and double tracking the San Diego Subdivision in the Project study area through the cities of Del Mar and San Diego.

- In **2007**, Caltrans and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) finalized the *Los Angeles—San Diego Final Program EIR/Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS)[1], and on March 18, 2009, a Record of Decision[2] was published which records the decisions the United States Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) made for proposed improvements to the LOSSAN Rail Corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego. The Program EIR/EIS carried forward two alternatives proposing tunnel options that deviated from the existing railroad alignment.
- In **August 2014**, the CCC unanimously approved the *North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan/Transportation and Resource Enhancement Program* (PWP/TREP)[3]. Jointly prepared by SANDAG and Caltrans, the PWP/TREP is a single, integrated document that establishes a framework for comprehensively planning, reviewing, and permitting of multimodal transportation improvements along a 27-mile corridor in North San Diego County that maintains and enhances public access and protects sensitive coastal resources. The scope of improvements discussed within the Project study area includes two conceptual alignments for a "rail tunnel to move the existing rail alignment away from the Del Mar bluffs, which are susceptible to failure and unable to accommodate double tracking due to significant excavation, stabilization and ongoing maintenance needs of such a facility" (Chapter 4).
- In **December 2017**, SANDAG published a report entitled *Conceptual Engineering and Environmental Constraints for Double Track Alignment Alternatives Between Del*

[1] Web Page: https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/los-angeles-san-diego-lossan-corridor-program-final-programmatic-eireis
PDF: https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/2023-10/2.2.11%20LOSSAN%20Programmatic%20EIR-EIS%20%282007%29_PDFa.pdf

[2] Web Page: https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/los-angeles-san-diego-lossan-corridor-program-eireis-record-decision
PDF: https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/fra_net/192/LOSSAN_ROD_FINAL_2009.pdf

[3] Web Page: https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-11/programs/district-11-environmental/i-5pwp-toc/overview#Introduction

Mar Fairgrounds and Sorrento Valley[4] that analyzed the feasibility of five potential options for relocating the existing San Diego Subdivision onto a new alignment with a double track tunnel away from the Del Mar bluffs. The study included conceptual engineering and preliminary construction costs for each alignment option.

- In **September 2018**, Caltrans released the *2018 California State Rail Plan*[5], which established a statewide vision describing a future integrated rail system that provides comprehensive and coordinated service to passengers through more frequent service, and convenient transfers between rail services and transit. The plan recognized the challenges coastal erosion and sea level rise pose to the railroad tracks atop the eroding bluffs in Del Mar. It noted that about 50 trains on weekdays (mostly passenger) traverse the Del Mar bluffs, and sea level rise will accelerate erosion of the bluffs, threatening stability and the viability of the route. The plan states "erosion by 2100 could eliminate the rail line completely, as well as adjacent homes, absent preventative measures."
- In **December 2021**, SANDAG adopted the *2021 Regional Plan*[6], which envisioned an expanded system of transit services to reduce greenhouse gases from automobiles, while promoting safe, clean, and economically friendly ways to move goods throughout the region and beyond. The 2021 Regional Plan envisioned the relocation, straightening, and double tracking of the rail line through the study area to a more climate resilient location that could reduce travel time and service reliability.
- In **June 2022**, the CCC issued a Federal Consistency Certification (No. 0005-21) for the Del Mar Bluff Stabilization V project, which required SANDAG to evaluate the removal of all shoreline armoring after the expiration of the 30-year authorization period. The 30-year authorization period was to "allow SANDAG to protect the important railway line while planning of the pursuing [its] relocation."
- In **August 2023**, SANDAG released the *San Dieguito to Sorrento Valley Double Track Del Mar Tunnels Alternatives Analysis Report*[7], which refined five potential alignment alternatives based on the previous conceptual engineering study and evaluated them against a set of performance criteria. Two of these alternatives were advanced to 10 percent conceptual engineering and were further analyzed for engineering and environmental considerations. Based on feedback from stakeholders and community groups, four additional potential tunnel portal locations were then also evaluated to further minimize impacts on the community and private properties. Additional

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[4] Web Page: https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/projects-and-programs/featured-projects/lossan-rail-improvements-del-mar-bluffs/del-mar-bluffs-stabilization/alignment-alternatives-and-environmental-constraints-study-2017-2023-09-08.pdf
Appendices: https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/projects-and-programs/featured-projects/lossan-rail-improvements-del-mar-bluffs/del-mar-bluffs-stabilization/alignment-alternatives-and-environmental-constraints-study-2017-appendices-2023-09-08.pdf

[5] Web Page: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail/2018-california-state-rail-plan

[6] Web Page: https://www.sandag.org/regional-plan/2021-regional-plan/final-2021-regional-plan

[7] PDF: https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/projects-and-programs/featured-projects/lossan-rail-improvements-del-mar-bluffs/del-mar-bluffs-stabilization/lossan-sdsvdt-alternatives-analysis-2023-09-01.pdf

conceptual alignments were considered at a high level to demonstrate potential connections between various portal locations.

- In **May 2024** SANDAG released the *Alignments Screening Report*[8], which documented, assessed, and incorporated into the formal environmental review process for the SDLRR Project the alignments developed as a result of previous planning studies, additional design, and public engagement in advance of the commencement of the formal environmental review process. The report recommended a subset of alignments for inclusion in the June 2024 NOP for the SDLRR Project for further input on the Draft EIR scope and the alignments identified in the NOP.
- In **June 2024** SANDAG released the *NOP*[9] which initiated formal environmental review of the SDLRR Project under CEQA. The NOP identified three proposed alternative alignments for consideration in the Draft EIR, and a No Project Alternative.
- In **January 2025** Caltrans released the final *2024 California State Rail Plan*[10], which states "The rail line around San Clemente and the Del Mar bluffs in California is a scenic and crucial segment of the coastal rail corridor, connecting the southern Orange County area to San Diego, and facing ongoing challenges related to erosion and environmental concerns. The State views improving the resiliency in these areas as absolutely critical…" It goes on to recognize relocation of the tracks off the bluffs in Del Mar as a potential way to permanently improve climate resiliency and commits to providing funding and working to streamline the delivery of priority projects in this key corridor.
- In **February 2025** SANDAG released the *Final Value Analysis Study Report*[11], which documented the VA Study that was completed via a series of workshops and meetings with representatives from the cities of Carlsbad, Del Mar, Encinitas, San Diego, and Solana Beach; the Del Mar Fairgrounds; Caltrans; and NCTD from September through December 2024. The VA Study was a collaborative process leveraging the knowledge of the multidisciplinary VA team to brainstorm ideas for potential project alignments and other refinements to the Project. The VA Study Report is a summary of the VA Study and presents the ideas, suggestions, and alternative concepts developed and evaluated collaboratively by the VA team.
- In **May 2025** SANDAG released the *San Diego LOSSAN Rail Realignment Project Post Value Analysis Study Assessment*[12], which documented the steps taken by SANDAG staff following the VA Study. The outcomes of the VA Study Report helped inform SANDAG staff considerations of potential alternative concepts and refinements. This

[8] PDF: https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/projects-and-programs/featured-projects/lossan-rail-improvements-del-mar-bluffs/lossan-realignment/sd-lossan-rail-realignment-screening-2024-06-03.pdf
[9] PDF: https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/projects-and-programs/featured-projects/lossan-rail-improvements-del-mar-bluffs/lossan-realignment/sd-lossan-rail-realignment-nop-2024-06-03.pdf
[10] Web Page: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail/california-state-rail-plan
[11] PDF: https://www.sandag.org/-/media/SANDAG/Documents/PDF/projects-and-programs/featured-projects/lossan-rail-improvements-del-mar-bluffs/lossan-realignment/sandag-lossan-rail-realignment-final-value-analysis-study-report-2025-02-07.pdf
[12] PDF: https://www.sandag.org/sdlrrpostvastudyassessment

document summarizes the SANDAG staff recommendation, based on information gained during the VA Study.

Public Outreach

Leading up to and following the release of the June 2024 NOP, SANDAG conducted public outreach events to inform, engage, and solicit public input to refine the description of the Project and the range of alternatives to be identified in the NOP. The meetings are listed below and videos for many of these meetings are available on the SANDAG website.

- July 24, 2023: SANDAG presentation to Del Mar City Council
- August 30, 2023: SD LOSSAN Rail Realignment Del Mar Community Open House
- October 4, 2023: LOSSAN Tunneling Workshop
- October 19, 2023: LOSSAN Virtual Information Session
- November 6, 2023: LOSSAN Alignments Workshop Del Mar
- November 7, 2023 – December 19, 2023: Weekly Community Field Office Hours
- November 15, 2023: LOSSAN Alignments Workshop Carmel Valley
- February 5, 2024: SANDAG presentation to Del Mar City Council
- March 19, 2024: SANDAG presentation to Torrey Pines Community Planning Board
- April 19, 2024: Oceanside Transit Center
- April 22, 2024: Encinitas Transit Center
- April 26, 2024: Solana Beach Transit Center
- April 30, 2024: Solana Beach Transit Center
- May 3, 2024: Old Town Transit Center
- May 14, 2024: Carlsbad Village Transit Center
- May 17, 2024: 12th and Imperial Transit Center
- June 1, 2024: Del Mar Farmer's Market
- June 5, 2024: Solana Beach Transit Center
- June 7, 2024: Solana Beach Transit Center
- June 11, 2024: Solana Beach Transit Center
- June 18, 2024: Public Scoping Meeting
- June 26, 2024: Solana Beach City Council Meeting
- June 28, 2024: Carlsbad Village Station
- July 10, 2024: Encinitas Transit Center
- July 16, 2024: Oceanside Transit Center
- July 18, 2024: SANDAG presentation to NCTD Board of Directors
- July 26: Solana Beach Transit Center
- February 11, 2025: SANDAG presentation to 22nd District Agricultural Association (i.e., Del Mar Fairgrounds) Board meeting
- February 12, 2025: SANDAG presentation to Solana Beach City Council
- February 13, 2025: Solana Beach Office Hours

- February 18, 2025: SANDAG presentation to Del Mar City Council
- February 19, 2025: Del Mar Public Information Session
- February 20, 2025: SANDAG presentation to Torrey Pines Community Planning Board
- February 28, 2025: SANDAG Board of Directors meeting

Project Goal and Objectives

The Project goal is as follows:

- To maintain and enhance passenger and freight service along the San Diego segment of the LOSSAN rail corridor.

The Project objectives are as follows:

- Improve rail service reliability by minimizing risks from climate change, including consideration of sea level rise, flooding, and the stability of the coastal bluffs.
- Maintain passenger rail service to Solana Beach and Sorrento Valley and accommodate direct rail access to the 22nd District Agricultural Association (Del Mar Fairgrounds) while minimizing disruptions to passenger and freight service during construction.
- Minimize impacts to existing homes, businesses, tourism, and major economic generators, including the Del Mar Fairgrounds, and transportation facilities during and after construction.
- Avoid and/or minimize negative effects, and where possible enhance biological, cultural, and recreational resources of national, state, or local significance, including publicly owned parks, recreational trails, beaches, wetlands, ecological reserves, wildlife or waterfowl refuges, and any publicly or privately owned historic site listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Help meet the goals of the 2021 Regional Plan and the 2024 California State Rail Plan by increasing passenger and freight train capacity, further reducing travel times, improving reliability, and considering existing and planned investments.
- Improve coastal access and safety by eliminating at grade railroad crossings and minimizing points of interaction between rail and all other modes of transportation.
- Demonstrate good public stewardship by delivering the project in a timely way that considers prior and ongoing investments, construction, right-of-way, operations, and maintenance costs.

Project Description

SANDAG proposes to improve resiliency and reliability of the segment of the San Diego Subdivision within the cities of Del Mar and San Diego where the rail line runs along a terrace on the eroding coastal bluffs. This includes double tracking the alignment between the future Special Events Platform that will be constructed as part of the San Dieguito Double Track Project in the City of Del Mar and the north end of Sorrento Valley in the City of San Diego. The improved resiliency and double tracking of the alignment would reduce reliability risks caused by bluff erosion and provide greater track capacity for trains that use the corridor, enabling projected increases in service and minimizing conflicts with pedestrians. The Project may include removal of existing stabilization infrastructure, consistent with the CCC's conditions of approval for the Del Mar stabilization projects.

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, the SDLRR Draft EIR will consider a No Project Alternative and a reasonable range of Project alternatives. In accordance with CEQA, SANDAG has identified alternatives to be analyzed in the Draft EIR based on their potential feasibility, ability to attain the Project goal and the majority of the Project objectives, and potential to avoid or substantially lessen the significant effects of the Project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives (California Code of Regulations title 14 § 15126.6).

As a result of prior planning studies, community engagement, comments received during the 2024 NOP scoping period, and the VA Study, in addition to the No Project alternative, four alternative alignments are proposed for analysis in the Draft EIR, as depicted on Figure 3. Of the four alternative alignments, three include a tunnel and have common components including a north and south portal, a bored tunnel connecting the portals, and double tracking of the rail line. These common components are described below under the heading "Tunnel Alternatives". The fourth alternative alignment does not include a tunnel or portals and is described below under the heading "Non-Tunnel Alternative".

The alignment types and infrastructure components defined in the callout box and depicted on Figure 2 are applicable to multiple of the alternative alignments.

Graded: rail tracks constructed on flat ground, earthen berms, or cuts into hillsides.

Floodwalls: a freestanding structure built along a shore or bank to prevent encroachment of floodwaters.

Berm: a segment of track that is on raised ground.

U-structure: a rectangular shaped structure with only three sides that is excavated from the surface and leaves an opening in the surface to allow the track to transition from a tunnel to the surface level.

Cut-and-cover tunnel: a rectangular shaped tunnel that is constructed within a trench which is excavated from the surface and then covered after it is constructed.

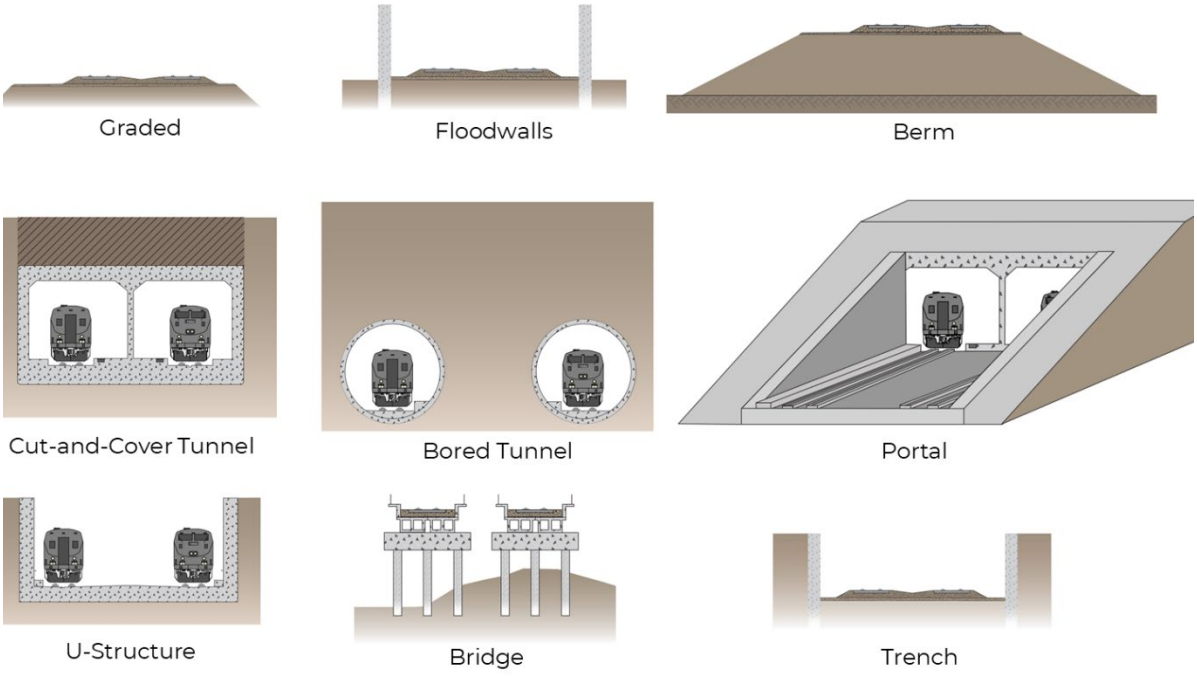
Bored tunnel: a circular shaped tunnel that is constructed using a tunnel boring machine that digs or bores through the earth without removing the ground above.

Portal: entrance to the tunnel.

Bridge: aerial structure carrying the rail tracks over roadways, canyons, or water.

Trench: a depressed section which is excavated from the surface that is typically protected with retaining walls.

Figure 2. Project Alignment Types and Infrastructure Components



Tunnel Alternative Alignments

The three tunnel alternative alignments are (1) San Dieguito Bridge to I-5 Alternative Alignment; (2) Under Crest Canyon Alternative Alignment; and (3) Under Camino Del Mar Alternative Alignment. Each alternative alignment is described below and includes the following components:

- Removal of existing rail infrastructure (e.g. rail track, ties, and ballast) on areas no longer needed after track relocation (timing of removal dependent on coordination with, and approval by, the rail owner and operators)
- Construction of bridge structures
- Construction of U-structures, retaining walls, and floodwalls
- Construction of twin-bored tunnels and cut-and-cover tunnels
- Construction of tunnel portals and associated portal infrastructure
- Installation of a tunnel system power supply
- Installation of tunnel ventilation systems
- Installation of communication systems, including signals, switches, and control points
- Modifications to drainage and roadways, as needed
- Relocation of utilities, as needed
- Potential placement of beach-quality sand excavated from tunnel boring activities onto beach(es) or near shore, in the vicinity of the study area
- Removal of prior bluff stabilization improvements consistent with the CCC's certification of Federal Consistency Certifications

North Portals

Two north portal locations have been identified depending on the track alignment. The portal locations are as follows:

Under Jimmy Durante Boulevard

This proposed portal would be located north of the intersection of Camino Del Mar and Jimmy Durante Boulevard. The portal's infrastructure would cross underneath Jimmy Durante Boulevard, which would be raised. The portal structures would potentially extend into commercial and residential properties.

Racetrack View Drive

This proposed portal would be located east of Crest Canyon Trail and south of Racetrack View Drive. The portal infrastructure would be located within the northern portion of Crest Canyon Open Space Park.

South Portals

Two south portal locations have been identified depending on the track alignment. The portal locations are as follows:

Torrey Pines Road West

This proposed portal would be located near the intersection of Carmel Valley Road and North Torrey Pines Road. The portal infrastructure would be located on the southside of Carmel Valley Road.

Knoll Near I-5

This proposed portal would be located at a knoll south of Carmel Valley Road between I-5 and the segment of Sorrento Valley Road Trail that is closed to public vehicular traffic but open for bikes, pedestrians, and authorized vehicles. The portal infrastructure would be within the undeveloped knoll and extend into the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon.

San Dieguito Bridge to I-5 Alternative Alignment:

As depicted on Figure 4, the San Dieguito Bridge to I-5 Knoll Alternative has two design variations that will be evaluated at the northern extent. One variation would transition from the south end of the future San Dieguito Double Track Project bridge and the other would transition from the south end of the future Special Events Platform. Both options would curve to the east toward the intersection of Jimmy Durante Boulevard and San Dieguito Drive. The alignment would be on a bridge located adjacent to the south side of San Dieguito Lagoon. The alignment would pass over Jimmy Durante Boulevard and continue over Racetrack View Drive on a bridge and then enter the Racetrack View Drive North Portal. The alignment would continue southeast and turn to follow under the I-5 freeway, then continue south and exit at the Knoll Near I-5 South Portal. The alignment would then rise above ground as it transitions back into the existing railroad alignment north of the Sorrento Valley Station.

During the post-VA Study period, SANDAG also conducted outreach in stakeholder communities. During those events, stakeholders described a more northerly variation of this alternative alignment. Staff will explore this design concept during the environmental process.

Under Crest Canyon Alternative Alignment:

As depicted on Figure 5, the Under Crest Canyon Alternative Alignment is approximately 5.1 miles in length and would descend immediately south of the future San Dieguito Double Track Project bridge that spans over the San Dieguito Lagoon and enter the Under Jimmy Durante Boulevard North Portal, then continue south, following under Crest Canyon, and exit at the Knoll Near I-5 South Portal. The tracks would then rise above ground as it transitions back into the existing railroad alignment north of the Sorrento Valley Station.

Under Camino Del Mar Alternative Alignment:

As depicted on Figure 6, the Under Camino Del Mar Alternative Alignment is approximately 4.9 miles in length and would descend immediately south of the future San Dieguito Double Track Project bridge that spans over the San Dieguito Lagoon and enter the Under Jimmy Durante Boulevard North Portal. This alternative would continue south, following mostly under Camino Del Mar, and exit at the Torrey Pines Road West South Portal, on a bridge over the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon, and then transition back to the existing railroad alignment. The existing railroad alignment within Los Peñasquitos Lagoon would be double tracked, which would require raising and widening the existing berm in the lagoon to address flooding and sea level rise projections.

Non-Tunnel Alternative Alignment

Del Mar Bluffs Double Track Reinforced Alternative Alignment

The non-tunnel alternative alignment, referred to as the Del Mar Bluffs Double Track Reinforced Alternative Alignment, includes the following components:

- Construction of a second railroad track adjacent to the existing line on the Del Mar bluffs
- Construction of a trench and retaining walls
- Construction of bluff stabilization elements, including new and expanded seawalls
- Construction of new and/or retrofit of existing bridge structures
- Installation of communication systems, including signals, switches, and control points
- Modifications to drainage and roadways, as needed
- Relocation of utilities, as needed
- Potential placement of beach-quality sand excavated from the trench excavation activities onto beach(es) or near shore, in the vicinity of the study area
- Grade separation of the rail line under Coast Boulevard

As depicted on Figure 7, the Del Mar Bluffs Double Track Reinforced Alternative Alignment would begin south of the Camino Del Mar roadway bridge and descend into a trench along the existing railroad alignment to the south and pass under Coast Boulevard removing the existing at-grade roadway crossing (i.e., railroad grade separation). The grade separation would also require raising Coast Boulevard to provide the necessary clearance. This alternative would continue south ascending to grade along the existing railroad alignment with grading and drainage improvements. This segment would require retaining walls along the eastern boundary. On the western side, adjacent to the beach, this alternative would include slope stabilization, including approximately 1.5 miles of sea walls up to approximately 20 feet in height. This alternative alignment would expand and increase the size of the existing stabilization infrastructure. The existing North Torrey Pines Road Overhead Bridge at the southern end of the bluffs may require modifications to accommodate the additional track. South of this bridge, the alternative would continue south on bridge and widened berm over Los Peñasquitos Lagoon, and then transition back to the existing railroad alignment. The existing railroad alignment within Los Peñasquitos Lagoon would be double tracked, which would require raising and widening the existing berm in the lagoon to address flooding and sea level rise projections.

No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative would consist of the continuation of an existing single-track alignment along the bluffs that would require the continuation of major stabilization efforts to protect the tracks. The stabilization efforts would require the continued use and possible expansion of the existing stabilization infrastructure.

Potential Environmental Effects

The EIR will address impacts to the following resource categories listed in Appendix G:

1. Aesthetics
2. Air Quality
3. Biological Resources
4. Cultural Resources
5. Energy
6. Geology and Soils
7. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
8. Hazards and Hazardous Materials
9. Hydrology and Water Quality
10. Land Use and Planning
11. Mineral Resources
12. Noise and Vibration
13. Population and Housing
14. Public Services
15. Recreation
16. Transportation
17. Tribal Cultural Resources
18. Utilities and Service Systems
19. Wildfire
20. Mandatory Findings of Significance

In addition, the EIR will address cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, and other mandatory CEQA topics.

Comments Requested

Comments in response to this NOP should be provided to SANDAG at the earliest possible date but not later than 45 days after receipt of this notice (May 16, 2025). Your comments may be submitted in writing to SANDAG no later than **June 30, 2025**.

SANDAG is seeking input on the Draft EIR scope, including the alternative alignments under consideration and potential environmental effects. A public scoping meeting is scheduled on May 29, 2025, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., as noted below. Written comments should be sent to SANDAG, 1011 Union Street, Suite 400, San Diego, CA 92101, ATTN: LOSSAN Comments; via email with subject line "SDLRR Project NOP" to: LOSSANcomments@sandag.org; or online at sandag.org/railrealignment. Comments may also be provided orally or in writing via the public scoping meeting.

Public Scoping Meetings

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083.9, a public scoping meeting is scheduled for May 29, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at The Sound at the Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard, Del Mar, CA 92014.

Additional Information

For additional information regarding the SDLRR Project, the scoping period, or the environmental process, please contact LOSSANcomments@sandag.org or visit sandag.org/railrealignment.

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Figure 3. Four Project Alternative Alignments

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Figure 4. San Dieguito to I-5 Alternative Alignment

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Figure 5. Under Crest Canyon Alternative Alignment

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Figure 6. Under Camino Del Mar Alternative Alignment

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Figure 7. Del Mar Bluffs Double Track Reinforced Alternative Alignment

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