



The Project

SANDAG is collaborating with the North County Transit District (NCTD), Caltrans, and the City of Encinitas to improve the Chesterfield Drive railroad crossing. This project will improve safety and access at Chesterfield Drive for people walking, riding bikes, and driving. The project will construct sidewalk curb extensions, a multi-use Class I bikeway and pedestrian path, rail crossing signals and gates, and improved signage. To be built concurrently with the San Elijo Lagoon Double Track Project, coordinating the construction schedules for both projects will result in cost, schedule, and operational efficiencies.

The project includes modernizing and enhancing the crossing warning system with the installation of new pedestrian and vehicle warning lights and gates. This will increase awareness when a train is approaching the intersection. The project also will widen the existing medians to prevent motorists from driving around lowered automatic gate arms.

The existing sidewalk on the south side of Chesterfield Drive will be removed and all pedestrians will cross the rail tracks via an improved Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible sidewalk on the north side. A reconfiguration of the right-hand turn from westbound Chesterfield Drive onto northbound Coast Highway 101 will help vehicular traffic avoid people walking and biking at the crossing.

Other improvements include installing electronic directional signs at key locations at the intersections of Coast Highway 101, Chesterfield Drive, and San Elijo Avenue. When a train approaches the intersection these signs will notify drivers when it is safe to turn.

The Need

Chesterfield Drive is the only legal rail crossing for more than a mile in both directions. The existing configuration of the intersection creates barriers to people walking and biking with isolated pedestrian islands, narrow sidewalks, steep inclines, and minimal lighting. Improvements to the Chesterfield Drive crossing will improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility.

The Chesterfield Drive Rail Crossing Improvement Project is one component of the San Elijo Lagoon Double Track Project, which is fully funded for construction. The project will add 1.5 miles of new double track from Cardiff-by-the-Sea to the southern border of the San Elijo Lagoon and replace the wooden trestle San Elijo Lagoon rail bridge with a modern, concrete bridge. The second track through Encinitas will give operators more than four miles of continuous double track. SANDAG and Caltrans are coordinating the construction of the new rail bridge with planned restoration of the San Elijo Lagoon and bridge improvements on Interstate 5 (I-5).

Project Schedule and Funding

Funding:
\$6 million

Status:
Completed

Completion:
2020

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Corridor Strategy

Two-thirds of the county's LOSSAN rail corridor has been double tracked to date. Currently, SANDAG has fifteen LOSSAN rail transportation projects in various stages of planning, design, and construction. According to SANDAG's 2018 Infrastructure Development Plan for the LOSSAN Rail Corridor in San Diego County, the Agency plans to double track 94 percent of the LOSSAN rail corridor by 2035 provided funding is secured by that time. Double tracking allows trains traveling in opposite directions to pass without slowing down or stopping. Other infrastructure improvements include bridge and track replacements, new platforms, pedestrian crossings, and other modernization and operational enhancements. The rail enhancements are part of a strategy to improve all modes of transportation within the congested I-5 North Coast Corridor (NCC). The NCC Program is a balanced set of transportation, environmental, and coastal access projects to improve the quality of life for residents, create a stronger local and regional economy for the future, and enhance the coastal environment.

Project Status

Completed in 2020.

Project Budget

The cost for the Chesterfield Drive Rail Crossing Improvement Project is \$6 million. The Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transportation and SANDAG have received a \$2.2 million grant from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for the project. The remaining funds will come from TransNet, the regional, voter-approved half-cent sales tax for transportation projects administered by SANDAG.

More Information

Visit KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/SELDT, and KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/CoastalRailTrail.



The project includes sidewalk curb extensions, a multi-use Class I bikeway and pedestrian path, rail crossing signals and gates, and improved signage. Crosswalks with high visibility and shorter crossing distances will help improve safety.

