



## **VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SPBLAC)**

**MONDAY, March 25, 2019  
1:00 PM**

**[www.goventura.org](http://www.goventura.org)**

### **AGENDA\***

***\*Actions may be taken on any item listed on the agenda***

**Ventura County Transportation Commission  
Lobby Conference Room  
950 County Square Drive, Ventura, CA 93003**

*In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in a Commission meeting, please contact the Clerk of the Board at (805) 642-1591 ext 101. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL**

- 3. PUBLIC COMMENTS** (For items not on the agenda)– *Each individual speaker is limited to speak three (3) continuous minutes or less. Any written documents to be distributed or presented to the Commission shall be submitted to VCTC SPBLAC staff. This policy applies to Public Comments and comments on Agenda Items.*

*Under the Brown Act, SPBLAC should not take action on or discuss matters raised during Public Comment portion of the agenda which are not listed on the agenda. SPBLAC members may refer such matters to staff for factual information or to be placed on the subsequent agenda for consideration.*

**4. APPROVE SUMMARY FROM 3/12/2018 SPBLAC MEETING – PG.3**

**5. COMMITTEE MEMBER/STAFF REPORT**

*This item provides the opportunity for the SPBLAC members VCTC staff to report on attended meetings and any other items related to SPBLAC activities.*

6. **ADDITIONS/REVISIONS** – *The SPBLAC may add an item to the Agenda after making a finding that there is a need to take immediate action on the item and that the item came to the attention of the SPBLAC subsequent to the posting of the agenda. An action adding an item to the agenda requires 2/3 vote of the SPBLAC. If there are less than 2/3 of the SPBLAC members present, adding an item to the agenda requires a unanimous vote. Added items will be placed for discussion at the end of the agenda.*
7. **DRAFT FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020 SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE BUDGET– PG. 7**  
**Recommended Action:**  
*Receive and Comment*
8. **SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE RAIL OPERATOR LEASE– PG. 11**  
**Recommended Action:**  
*Receive and File.*
9. **DRAFT PAULA BRANCH LINE 2018 BRIDGE INSPECTION – PG. 13**  
**Recommended Action:**  
*Receive and File*
10. **ADJOURN**



Item #4

## **VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SPBLAC)**

**MONDAY, March 12, 2018  
2:00 PM**

**[www.goventura.org](http://www.goventura.org)**

### **SUMMARY**

**Ventura County Transportation Commission  
Lobby Conference Room  
950 County Square Drive, Ventura, CA 93003**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**4. APPROVE SUMMARY FROM 3/12/2018 SPBLAC MEETING**

Commissioner Gherardi made a motion to approve the Summary. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett and passed unanimously.

**5. COMMITTEE MEMBER/STAFF REPORT - *None***

**6. ADDITIONS/REVISIONS - *None***

**7. DRAFT FISCAL YEAR 2016/2017 SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE BUDGET – *Receive and Comment***

Steve DeGeorge presented the draft budget stating that overall there is a \$270,000 decrease due to a reduction in Consultant Services because VCTC does not have to contemplate maintenance and possible operation as in the previous 3 years. There are no new projects for the Branch Line envisioned at this time. ***No action is required.***

**8. CITY OF SANTA PAULA REQUEST REGARDING LEASE OF SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE RIGHT-OF-WAY – *This item was removed from the agenda as the project has been shelved at this time.***

**9. SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE 2017 BRIDGE INSPECTION – *Receive and File***

As in previous years the report continues to show a slow worsening of the bridge conditions along the entire length of the Branch Line. In November 2017 Wilson and Company inspected all 35 of VCTC's bridges and provided a comprehensive report on the bridge condition on an estimate for repairs. The total estimate for repairs is \$1,239,000. The good news is Fillmore and Western, through the agreement, is responsible for Haun Creek Bridge at Mile Post 416.32, just east of Santa Paula. The estimate for that bridge alone is \$500,000, reducing the total down to \$739,000. Additionally, as the east area 1 project moves forward there will be approximately 430,000 in repairs made at the bridges at that location. ***No action is required.***

**10. SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE ACTIVITY UPDATE – *Receive and File***

Fillmore and Western is responsible for the repairs at Haun Creek Bridge at Mile Post 416.32 just east of Santa Paula. Repairs plans have been submitted and plan check is currently in progress.

Staff, along with general counsel has been negotiating with Hearthstone, developers of the Bridges project in Fillmore for more than a year to develop easements, for an at grade vehicular crossing, utility crossings and storm water crossing.

Due to previous litigation in the area, all parties are more sensitive to liability issues and Hearthstone has shown some reluctance to provide the liability coverage that VCTC must have to move the easements forward. Staff believes the issues will be resolved but wanted to make SPBLAC aware of the issue. Staff and General Counsel's time are covered through a cost recovery agreement in place with Hearthstone.

***No action is required***

**ADJOURN**



NAME	REPRESENTING	EMAIL	PHONE
Butch Britt	Santa Paula (State)	b.britt@spblac.org	(805) 933-4212
Treena Gonzalez	County of Ventura - Trans.	treena.gonzalez@ventura.org	(805) 654-7252
Dave Fleisch	County of Ventura - Trans.	dave.fleisch@ventura.org	(805) 654-2077
Ginger Gherardi	City of Santa Paula	ggherardi@venturacounty.net	(805) 377-0852
Darren Kettle	VCTC	dkettle@spblac.org	672-1591 x123
STEVE BENNETT	City of Santa Paula		
Manuel Mirajares	City of Fillmore	mmirajares@ci.fillmore.ca.us	805 921-5890
Kelly Long	Ventura County	Kelly.Long@ventura.org	805 206 9858

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**Item # 7**

**March 25, 2019**

**MEMO TO: SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**FROM: STEVE DEGEORGE, PLANNING AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: DRAFT SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020 BUDGET**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- Receive comments

**DISCUSSION:**

Attached is the Draft Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Santa Paula Branch Line (SPBL) Budget which contains funding for ongoing activities on the Branch Line. The Draft Budget continues to be a status quo budget reflecting VCTC's obligations along the thirty-two mile long corridor. The Draft Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Santa Paula Branch Line Budget is approximately \$5,800 higher than the previous year's budget largely due to minor changes in staff hours and costs.

The Draft SPBL Budget contains funding for routine activities such as VCTC's continuing "Good Neighbor" policy of weed abatement, tree trimming, and trash removal within the corridor. VCTC continues to work with the cities of Santa Paula and Fillmore coordinating efforts in dealing with the persistent homeless population along segments of the Branch Line. The Draft Budget also contains funding for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) mandated Bridge Management Plan annual bridge inspections. Each year VCTC must conduct a visual inspection assessing the condition of all thirty-six bridges along the SPBL. A discussion of the annual bridge report is contained later in this agenda. Lastly the Draft Budget contains funding for the rail operator to perform rail maintenance on the line as prescribed in the agreement reached in 2017.

Revenues for the Santa Paula Branch Line come from three primary sources, Local Fees, in the form of lease revenue from the seventy-five paying leases along the SPBL, State Transit Assistance (STA) and Local Transportation Funds (LTF). To minimize the use of STA, Local Fees generated by the Branch Line, approximately \$267,000 are the first funds used for branch Line activities. Staff salaries are funded by LTF.

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**BUDGET TASK: SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE****DIRECTOR:** Steve DeGeorge**BUDGET MANAGER:** Steve DeGeorge**OBJECTIVES:** Manage the Santa Paula Branch Line (SPBL) corridor.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** The Ventura County Transportation Commission purchased the thirty-two-mile-long Santa Paula Branch Line in 1995. With the purchase of the Branch Line came a large number of leases for cultivation, utilities, crossings and pipelines which provide a portion of the revenue needed to support the line. In 2001, VCTC entered into a lease agreement with the Fillmore and Western Railway Company for maintenance and operation of the SPBL. With these agreements comes the need to actively manage the SPBL on a daily basis.

Across Fiscal Year 2018/2019 staff managed the day-to-day business of owning the SPBL, issuing Rights-of-Entry permits, license agreements, performing weed abatement, trash removal and interfacing with other jurisdictions on property management issues. In addition, staff met the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requirement to have all bridges inspected annually under VCTC's Bridge Management Plan and have any bridge requiring it evaluated for its load carrying capacity.

Staff worked closely with Hearthstone Multi-Asset Entity C, L.P. to provide oversight, approve plans and negotiate easement agreements for the construction of storm water drainage infrastructure and a vehicular crossing to serve their development in eastern Fillmore. The staff and legal costs were fully compensated by the developer and the easement was valued by an expert appraiser providing one-time revenue for the line.

Lastly, Haun Creek Bridge as well as the at-grade crossings on State Route 126 at Sycamore Canyon and east of Fillmore have been replaced and/or repaired in accordance with the settlement agreement from previous litigation. Staff's role in these repairs was administrative ensuring that plan checks and inspections were completed.

**DESCRIPTION:** The Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Santa Paula Branch Line Task Budget reflects the return to a more predictable workload for staff with daily asset maintenance including, issuing Rights-of-Entry, weed abatement, debris cleanup and lease management.

In addition to maintenance of the right-of-way, the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 SPBL Budget includes \$45,000 for consultant support for the federally mandated annual Bridge Inspection Report and Bridge Management Plan update and \$25,000 for additional rail engineering consultant services.

There are no new work efforts forecast for the Santa Paula Branch Line in the upcoming year and the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 SPBL Task Budget is unchanged from the previous fiscal year.

**BUDGET TASK: SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE (continued)****DIRECTOR:** Steve DeGeorge**BUDGET MANAGER:** Steve DeGeorge**WORK ELEMENTS:**

1. Manage the day-to-day operation of the SPBL, consistent with policies of the VCTC and requirements of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and, the Surface Transportation Board (STB).
2. Investigate revenue opportunities for the SPBL.
3. Prepare and administer leases and rights of entry for use of SPBL corridor property.
4. Quickly respond to neighbor complaints; conduct weed abatement activities including application of pre-emergent and weed killer sprays; trim and/or remove brush and trees on the rail ROW; and contract for regular monthly operations and maintenance.
5. Complete annual FRA required rail bridge inspections.
6. Evaluate SPBL leases and establish new rate schedule where applicable.

**PRODUCT:** Continued safe and cost-efficient management of the thirty-two mile-long SPBL corridor.

**FUNDING:**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Funding Dollars</b>
LTF Fund Transfer	\$125,800
STA Fund Transfer	409,200
STA Fund Transfer Carry-over	25,000
Signal Revenue	17,800
Local Fee – Leases	267,000
Local Fee – Permits	2,000
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$846,800</b>

**EXPENDITURE COMPARISON:**

	<b>Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Actual</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Budget</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget</b>
Salaries	\$ 37,096	\$ 54,400	\$ 58,300
Fringe and Tax	15,008	20,900	24,300
Indirect Cost Allocation	33,045	44,700	43,200
Mileage	347	500	500
Office Support	249	500	500
Consultant Services	48,217	70,000	70,000
Legal Services	89,646	50,000	50,000
Non-Rail Maintenance	65,228	100,000	100,000
Signal Repair/Replacement	48,022	50,000	50,000
Track Maintenance	450,000	450,000	450,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$786,858</b>	<b>\$841,000</b>	<b>\$846,800</b>



Item # 8

March 25, 2019

**MEMO TO: SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**FROM: STEVE DEGEORGE, PLANNING AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR**  
**SUBJECT: SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE RAIL OPERATOR LEASE**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- Receive and File

**BACKGROUND:**

VCTC entered into a lease agreement with the Fillmore & Western Railway Company on June 25, 2001 for a twenty-year term for operation and maintenance of the rail line. That agreement has been amended three times to reflect changes in payment and the terms and conditions specified in the settlement agreement resulting from past litigation. The current terms of the lease provide for VCTC to pay Fillmore & Western Railway company \$450,000 per year for maintenance performed on the rail line and VCTC receives approximately \$10,000 per year from Fillmore & Western for use of the rail line along with a small share of film revenue, less than \$10,000 over the past two years.

The overall budget for the Santa Paula Branch Line as discussed in the earlier agenda item is \$846,800, with funding comprised of approximately 68% State Transit Assistance Funds (STA)/Local Transportation Funds (LTF), and 32% Local Fees (revenues generated by the SPBL).

**DISCUSSION:**

The lease agreement with Fillmore & Western Railway Company is set to expire in June of 2021, leaving a little more than two years to contemplate the future of the Branch Line. The Commission will need explore the options available including but not limited to, renewing or replacing the current lease with the current operator, seeking a new operator through a competitive process, or taking the Branch Line out of service. Each of these options has broad impacts that will have to be detailed out so that the commission can make an informed decision.

While there are no funds in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget to address these issues, staff will need to bring discussion items to the Commission during the upcoming year to set the stage for actions in the following year. Staff thought it prudent to advise the SPBLAC at this time, that it is likely staff will request additional SPBLAC meetings in the upcoming year to seek recommendations before taking items to the full Commission for discussion.

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**Item # 9**

**March 25, 2019**

**MEMO TO:     SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**FROM:         STEVE DEGEORGE, PLANNING AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR**  
**SUBJECT:      DRAFT SANTA PAULA BRANCH LINE 2018 BRIDGE INSPECTION**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- Receive and File

**BACKGROUND:**

In July of 2010, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) enacted Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 237, and Bridge Safety Standards which mandates that owners of railroads develop and adopt a Bridge Management Plan (BMP). As part of the BMP, bridges must be inspected annually for safety and engineering deficiencies and by March of 2017, all bridges in service must have had a bridge load capacity ratings performed to determine the weight each bridge can safely carry. As owners of the Santa Paula Branch Line (SPBL) the VCTC must comply with the federally mandated 49 CFR part 237 on the prescribed schedule.

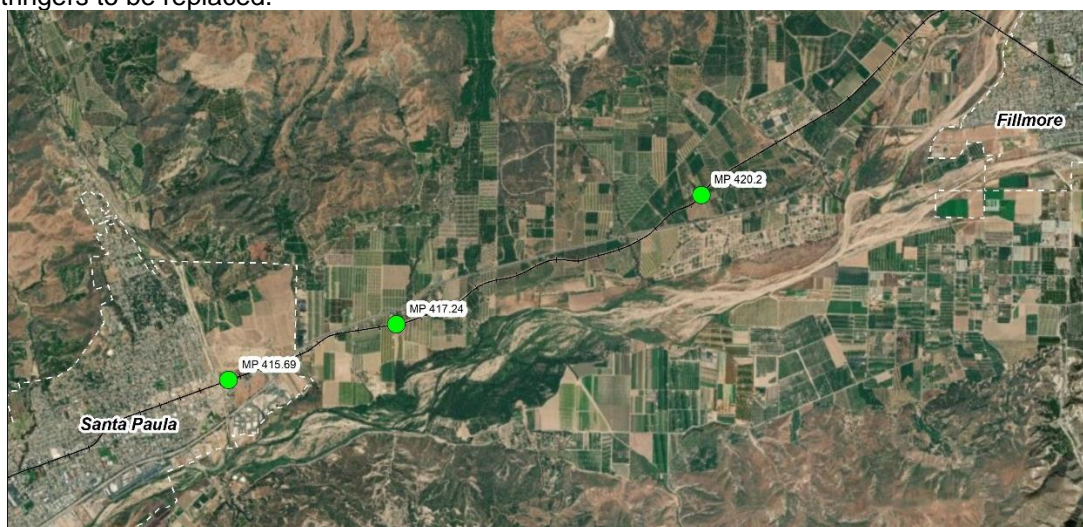
**DISCUSSION:**

In November of 2018, Wilson & Company, VCTC's rail engineering consultant conducted the annual BMP Bridge Inspection. Each of the thirty-six bridge structures was assessed in terms of condition, needed repair, and estimated cost of repairs. Wilson & Company provided a written report in January 2019 well within the required schedule. Overall there is a \$977,000 need in bridge maintenance. While this is down \$262,000 from the previous year, it is significantly more than VCTC is able to fund.

Like the reports in previous years, the inspections reveal a continued worsening of bridge conditions along most of the Branch Line, with some notable exceptions. The Haun Creek bridge, as shown in Attachment 1 to this item, at Mile Post 416.32, was completely rebuilt and reopened in the summer of 2018. Similarly, the bridges at Mile Post 416.02 and 416.21 were removed and replaced as agreed upon as part of the work associated with the Harvest at Limoneira (East Area 1) development in Santa Paula.

Wilson & Company performed both the engineering plan check and inspection of the bridges to ensure their ability to carry the anticipated loads. New load capacity reports were generated where appropriate.

There are three bridges identified in the report as in need of major maintenance within the next year. The bridges, as shown in Figure 1, at Mile Post 415.69, 417.24, and 420.20 each need deck planks and stringers to be replaced.



The estimated cost for those repairs is shown in Table 1 below.

Mile Post	Description of Work	Estimated Cost	Total
415.69	Raise east approach	\$2,000	
415.69	Replace deck planks	\$50,000	
415.69	Replace stringers	\$150,000	
415.69	Repair wingwalls	\$2,000	
			<b>\$204,000</b>
417.24	Remove vegetation	\$5,000	
417.24	Replace ties	\$2,000	
417.24	Clear debris	\$3,000	
417.24	Repair backwalls at both abutments	\$20,000	
417.24	Replace ballast planks with stringer replacement	\$35,000	
417.24	Replace stringers	\$150,000	
417.24	Repair wingwalls	\$3,000	
			<b>\$218,000</b>
420.20	Raise approaches	\$2,000	
420.20	Replace broken stringer	\$3,000	
420.20	Shim temporary bents	\$1,000	
420.20	Add additional steel stringers	\$15,000	
420.20	Add handrail	\$5,000	
420.20	Repair ballast and deck planks	\$10,000	
			<b>\$36,000</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>\$458,000</b>

Under VCTC's lease with the rail operator on the line, for bridges between mile post 414.15 and mile post 437.07, VCTC is under no obligation to make these repairs but the rail operator may elect to assume responsibility for the repairs at their own cost. At this time there are no funds set aside in the Draft Santa Paula Branch Line Fiscal Year 2019/2020 task Budget.



Attachment 1. Haun Creek Bridge

