

# Santa Paula Branch Line Trail Master Plan Update

Ventura County Transportation Commission

May 1, 2026

Item 14. AMEND AGREEMENT WITH WSP USA, INC. FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES FOR SANTA PAULA  
BRANCH LINE TRAIL MASTER PLAN UPDATE AND EIR



# SBPL Trail Master Plan Update and EIR

- SPBL Trail Master Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Rails WITH Trails
- Updates Master Plan from 2000
  - No construction planned at this time
- Develops new environmental document



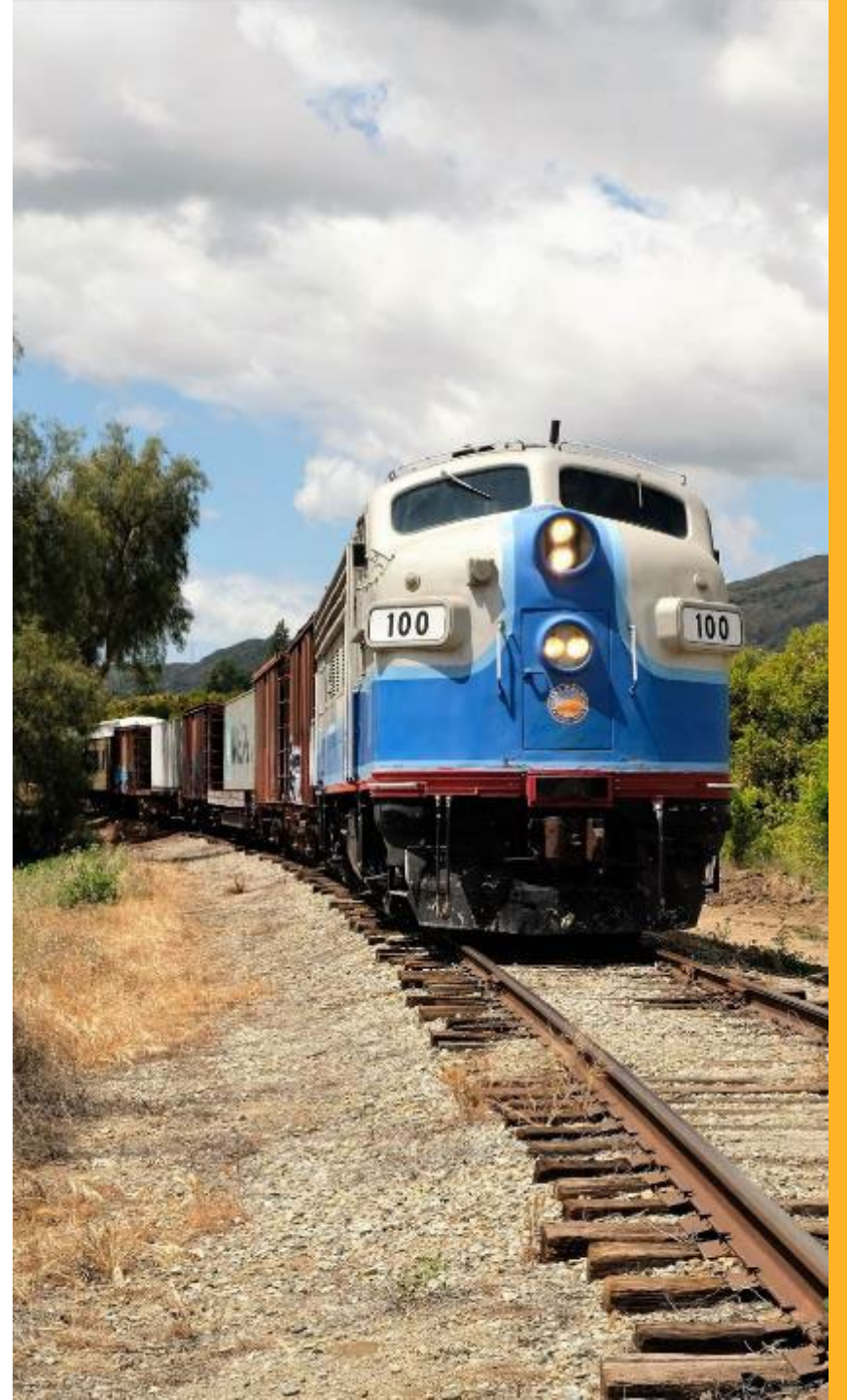
Source: VCTC, 2025



# Key Project Objectives

- Meet commuter and recreational needs
- Connect to existing and planned trails
- Maximize user safety
- Minimize disruption to adjacent agricultural activities
- Continued & expanded tourism
- Integrate cultural, historical, and educational elements
- High-quality linear park experience

Source: *Master Plan EIR 2000*



# Community Engagement To Date

- Project Development Team
- Technical Advisory Committee
- Community Advisory Committee
- Community Workshops in June, October, and December\*
- Community Pop-ups in Saticoy, Fillmore, Santa Paula, and Piru\*
- Ongoing one-on-one and small group listening sessions
- Online Pin Map engagement\*
- Canvassing\*
- Website, social media, newspaper, and radio\*



*\*information and/or interpretation provided in Spanish and other languages*



# Trail Compatibility Themes

- Trail alignments
- Operational and economic viability
- Pesticide use, food safety, and liability
- Fencing, trespass, and safety
- Emergency access and maintenance
- Trail amenities and education
- Communication and trust



*Feedback is being incorporated into the Master Plan and Environmental Impact Report*



# Upcoming Engagement in 2026/2027

- TAC / CAC / PDT meetings
- Continued one-on-one and small group engagement
- Additional pop-up events
- New Agricultural Stakeholders Working Group proposed
- Fall/Winter 2026: Draft EIR comment period
- Spring/Summer 2027: Final EIR and Master Plan public hearing



# Proposed Amendment

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- January 2026 – Agricultural Stakeholders raised concerns that potential impacts to agricultural operations were not receiving full consideration
  - Additional engagement needed to address broad spectrum of ag-related concerns and build trust
  - VCTC staff requested cost estimate from consultant team to enhance engagement with agricultural stakeholders
- Proposed Consultant Contract Amendment supports
  - Formation of Agricultural Working Group (AWG)
  - Incorporate outcomes of AWG into technical deliverables
  - Conduct analysis and prepare cost estimates of/for community-proposed alternative
  - Refines Scope of Work to replace EIS with NEPA compliance strategy



# Proposed Amendment - Updated

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- March 2026 Amendment Package required further refinement
- Based on Ag Feedback received, April 2026 Amendment Package proposes revised Agricultural Working Group (AWG) scope and assumptions
  - Includes both in-person and virtual AWG meetings
  - Clarified assumptions about how AWG feedback will be incorporated into Master Plan and/or Draft EIR
  - Reallocates budget to ensure completion of 1:1 meetings with stakeholders
  - Revised assumptions to clarify that whether Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations will be needed is not known until Final EIR stage



# Agricultural Working Group (AWG)

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- Comprised of property owners, lessees, operators, residents and businesses
- Formed through invitations via direct mailing and email communication
- AWG will meet 4 times during Master Plan Update development and Draft EIR
  - Two (2) in-person
  - Two (2) virtual
- Build framework for future collaboration - AWG continue to collaborate beyond completion of Master Plan Update and EIR during future implementation phases
- Scope also includes consultant-supported meetings with VCTC Commissioners as needed



# Incorporating AWG Feedback

- AWG feedback will be incorporated into Master Plan Update and EIR
- Includes research, coordination, and analysis to incorporate feedback and findings into relevant Master Plan and EIR chapters
- Ensure compliance with local ordinances and foster collaboration with agricultural stakeholders

Example of Feedback Analysis Matrix (Draft)

Theme	Feedback Received	Guidelines & Measures in Adopted SPBL Master Plan (1996) and SPBL Trail Master Plan (2000)	Methods for Integrating into Respective Planning Documents	
			Master Plan	EIR
<b>Pesticide Use and Spray Management</b>	"...It may be difficult to close trails exactly when spraying occurs, and having to hold back on spraying near trails could leave crops vulnerable to pests. This could even lead to increased pesticide use in some areas and make certain sections of farmland more difficult to farm..."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational public forum and coordination of parties to address issues, communicate and solve problems in real time, coordinated by a permanent trail manager</li> <li>• Dynamic and static signage communicating trail closures due to ag activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide design features and guiding policies for trail closures associated with spraying operations, such as crossing arms, gates, signage, and long-term maintenance and enforcement.</li> <li>• Use plantings along trail boundary to reduce overspray onto the trail. This could include vines/shrubs and taller trees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze whether trail implementation would create a significant hazard to the public through the routine use of hazardous materials, as required in Ventura County's Thresholds of Significance for Hazardous Materials and Waste.</li> </ul>



# Project Timeline

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- ➔ ① **Existing Conditions:** May – August 2025
- ➔ ② **Conceptual Planning:** July – November 2025
- ➔ ③ **Project Definition:** September – December 2025
- ➔ ④ **Master Plan:** Fall 2025 – Spring 2027
- ⑤ **Technical Studies:** December 2025 – Fall 2026
- ➔ ⑥ **Draft EIR:** Fall / Winter 2026
- ⑦ **Final EIR:** Spring / Summer 2027



➔ = Opportunity for Engagement

# VCTC Santa Paula Branch Line Trail Master Plan Update

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## Project Introduction

Welcome to the website for Ventura County Transportation Commission's (VCTC) Santa Paula Branch Line (SPBL) Trail Master Plan Update project. Here you can find information about the project, resources and materials from the project's outreach and engagement efforts, and project updates.



<https://www.goventura.org/spbl-trail-master-plan/>

# Stay Engaged

- Visit our website for more information
- Submit comments via email to [spbl.trail@goventura.org](mailto:spbl.trail@goventura.org)
- Sign up to be notified about future engagement opportunities



<https://linktr.ee/spbltrail>

# Recommended Action

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Authorize the Executive Director to finalize and execute Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement with WSP USA, Inc. for the Santa Paula Branch Line Trail Master Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report for a total Not to Exceed of \$1,844,107 representing an increase of \$167,646.

Authorize the Executive Director to amend the Memorandum of Understanding with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to reallocate \$150,000 from Project VC01 (Countywide Transit Stops and Stations Assessment and Infrastructure Improvements) to VC02 (Santa Paula Branch Line Trail Master Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report).



**Thank You**

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