



City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,
Oceanside, California 92054

Staff Report

File #: 26-1292

Agenda Date: 4/22/2026

Agenda #: 15.

DATE: April 22, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: Development Services Department

TITLE: APPROVAL OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE OCEANSIDE INLAND RAIL TRAIL FROM THE COASTAL RAIL TRAIL TO THE OCEANSIDE/VISTA CITY BORDER

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the recommendations of the Oceanside Inland Rail Trail Feasibility Study.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Inland Rail Trail (IRT) is a planned continuous 21-mile multi-use path that will connect the communities of Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos, portions of unincorporated San Diego County and Escondido. The IRT concept is based on the 1995 Escondido to Oceanside Rail/Trail Bikeway Project Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which established a framework for a cohesive regional bikeway and trail system supporting non-motorized transportation. This MOU was executed by the cities of Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos, Escondido, the County of San Diego, and the North County Transit District (formerly the North San Diego Transit Development Board).

The Oceanside Inland Rail Trail (OIRT) represents the final 7.6-mile segment needed to complete the 21-mile trail corridor. The OIRT will connect the existing Coastal Rail Trail near the intersection of Myers Street and Oceanside Boulevard to the IRT in Vista at the intersection of Melrose Drive and Oceanside Boulevard. The OIRT is intended to provide continuous access to jobs, housing, medical and community services, and recreational amenities from Escondido to the Oceanside coastline. The purpose of the OIRT Feasibility Study (Study) is to achieve a “grant-ready” project that will be well-positioned to compete for local, regional, state, and federal funding for final design and construction.

The Study was a collaborative effort among the City of Oceanside, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), North County Transit District, and a Community Advisory Board (CAB). The CAB convened four times during the Study and included representatives from the following organizations:

- City of Vista
- County of San Diego
- Friends of El Corazon
- Oceanside Bike & Pedestrian Committee
- Oceanside Parks & Recreation Commission
- Oceanside Arts Commission

- Caltrans
- NCTD
- SANDAG
- San Luis Rey Band of Misson Indians
- Vista Community Clinic

The Study included three phases of extensive community engagement that included the following:

- Four “pop-up” weekend events at Mance Buchanon Park, Wagner Aquatic Center, El Corazon Senior Center, and Oceanside Pier
- One evening in-person workshop
- Distribution of 9,000 postcard mailers
- Three online surveys with a total of approximately 1,700 responses
- Ten sidewalk decals with QR Code installed across the City
- Project website and dedicated email address

Survey responses were received from every ZIP Code in Oceanside. Overall, the OIRT received broad public support. Safety, physical separation from traffic, and connectivity emerged as the highest priorities amongst survey participants. This alignment was chosen for its separation from traffic, directness, and scenic value.

The proposed OIRT alignment generally runs parallel to Oceanside Blvd, the SPRINTER line, and the Loma Alta Creek. It provides direct connectivity to each of the six SPRINTER stations, business, industrial, and medical centers, and nearby neighborhoods. Up to five pre-fabricated steel bridges are proposed along the trail alignment to support crossings over Rancho Del Oro Road and the creek. To facilitate future phases of final engineering design and construction, the Study calls out eight unique segments as a means to assist with the effective delivery of the project.

The Study estimates the average construction costs at approximately \$13 million (in today’s dollars) for each of the eight proposed OIRT segments. Staff will be seeking grant opportunities to fund the design and construction of each segment. Capital Improvement Program funds may be requested to serve as the City’s local match.

FISCAL IMPACT

The OIRT Feasibility Study was prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. and funded through a Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant from Caltrans, in the amount of \$438,471, with a required City match of \$56,809. Funding to implement the project would likely consist of a combination of to-be-determined City and grant funds.

COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

Does not apply.

CITY ATTORNEY’S ANALYSIS

Does not apply.

Prepared by: Luis Cardenas, Associate Engineer

Reviewed by: Brian K. Thomas, Interim Development Services Director

Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Oceanside Inland Rail Trail Feasibility Study
2. Oceanside Inland Rail Trail Conceptual Plans