

CAYUCOS PUBLIC ATTITUDE SURVEY PROPOSED HIGHWAY ONE UNDERCROSSINGS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A door-to-door public attitude survey of 181 Cayucos households was conducted in August of 2009. The purpose of the survey was to determine participants' views of two Highway One undercrossings proposed at Chaney and Obispo Avenues.

The survey consisted of four parts. In part one, the survey respondents reported on how they currently cross Highway One in Cayucos. In part two, the respondents discussed the benefits and drawbacks of constructing underpasses at Chaney and Obispo Avenues. Part three addressed preferred locations and types of highway crossings. Part four collected demographic data. A copy of the survey instrument is included in Appendix A. The self-administered survey took about ten minutes to complete and respondents were assured that their responses would remain anonymous.

Survey respondents reported on how they currently cross Highway One in Cayucos. The majority of the survey respondents (80%) agreed that there were not currently enough safe places to cross the highway in Cayucos. Many of the respondents (38%) currently cross the highway at Old Creek Road. Overall about 50 percent feel safe when crossing the highway. One-quarter of the respondents say they never cross Highway One when walking or cycling.

The participants identified benefits and drawbacks of constructing undercrossings at Chaney and Obispo Avenues. For both Chaney and Obispo Avenues the most frequently identified benefit was pedestrian and cyclist safety, while the most frequently identified drawback was cost. Additional benefits listed by respondents included access to the beach, location, and improved driver safety. Additional drawbacks identified by the respondents included potential misuse of the environment, especially by criminals, traffic delays during construction, and flooding and runoff. The estimated frequency of use was higher for Obispo Avenue than for Chaney Avenue, with 44 percent of the respondents expecting to use the Obispo Avenue undercrossing once a week or more, compared to 31 percent for Chaney Avenue. Overall, the number of people who expected to use the Chaney undercrossing, the Obispo undercrossing, or both totaled 50 percent of the respondents.

The Obispo Avenue undercrossing was preferred over the Chaney Avenue undercrossing by respondents from all areas of Cayucos. Over 75 percent of the respondents preferred either the Obispo Avenue undercrossing (53%) or the Chaney Avenue undercrossing (25%), compared to none or an alternative.

Importance ratings were included to estimate the impact of background variables (such as age) on the preferences of the respondents. The only significant predictor of support for the undercrossings was the estimated frequency of use; people who expected to use an undercrossing once a week or more also thought it was more important to provide one. Communitywide, about 75 percent said it was at least somewhat important to build the Chaney Avenue undercrossing, while 80 percent said it was at least somewhat important to build the Obispo Avenue undercrossing. Among those who expected to use the undercrossing once a week or more, the percentage increased significantly to 85 percent for Chaney Avenue and 90 percent for Obispo Avenue. An undercrossing was the preferred design alternative, compared to a traffic signal, overpass, or other alternatives.

Overall, the demographic characteristics of the households who participated in the survey were representative of the population of Cayucos as a whole, based on comparison to Census data. This demonstrates the validity of the sample. Statistical analysis showed that these demographic characteristics did not significantly relate to the opinions expressed on the survey.