

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR STATE ROUTE 37

CONNECTION



ONE CORRIDOR, ONE TEAM, MANY SOLUTIONS.



BUILDING A MORE RESILIENT NORTH BAY

Regional partnerships, mobility solutions, and environmental resilience shaping the future of SR-37

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SUMMER
2026



IMPROVING TODAY.
CONNECTING TOMORROW.



Learn more and stay informed at
resilient37.com

FROM THE EDITOR

WELCOME TO CONNECTION 37

BY BART NEY - CALTRANS

Welcome to the first issue of our State Route 37 newsletter crafted by the very folks who are working together to keep the route open and safe while we all reimagine and rebuild one of the most important routes in the North Bay. This newsletter is put together by the partner agencies that are responsible for the future of SR-37. We're the ones you see in person in public meetings and town halls and virtually in SR-37 Policy Committee meetings that you can learn more about on our websites. These opportunities are all based on our needs to communicate to you. After listening to feedback from our public meetings our integrated communication team which is made up of all the partner agencies you see in our banner, questioned how we could improve our communication and provide another way for folks to get informed and connect with what is happening on SR-37 at your leisure.

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The answer is the newsletter you are reading now...

— Bart Ney

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The answer is the newsletter you are reading now, “Connection 37”. We will be publishing this newsletter twice a year in the summer and the winter to give you a snapshot of what is currently going on with our efforts. We hope you will join our mailing list to get the latest issue or you can pick them up on our Caltrans SR-37 website or our

sister site resilient37.org. The newsletter is designed to take the reader on a journey across the route and features information happening in all of the counties SR-37 connects. For this first issue we wanted to give a bit of a refresher on where we have been and how we got here. Reading this issue you'll learn about how SR-37 evolved from its early days as part of a trail system created by indigenous tribes to the current east/west corridor that is a necessary route for local economies and a real transportation backbone for tourism and commerce in the region.

We hope you enjoy our efforts to bring this information to you on a regular basis and with a little more journalistic focus on the people and progress of SR-37.

WHAT'S NEXT

The Following Articles highlight the partnerships, challenges, solutions, and investments that are shaping the next chapter of SR-37 ensuring it remains a vital connection for generations to come.



THE EVOLUTION OF STATE ROUTE 37

BY GEOFFREY JOHNSON - CALTRANS

Long before it was a state highway, the 21-mile State Route 37 corridor was formed from a geological berm, and the area was largely wetlands. Trails were created and used by indigenous groups that evolved into pathways used by early settlers for agriculture deliveries.

Growing vehicle popularity and need for North Bay connectivity led a corporation to open a toll road in summer of 1928. In 1938, the State of California purchased the road ending tolling and in 1964, the road officially became State Route 37.

Safety became a decades long dialogue between the state and community stakeholders because of the danger created by the 3-lane undivided highway. Because of frequent accidents between Sears Point to Vallejo the route became known as “Blood Alley.” The installation of a median barrier in the mid – 1990’s improved safety significantly and vastly reduced fatal head-on accidents. Now agencies are partnering to make the route more resilient to flooding and sea level rise while addressing congestion and identifying opportunities for environmental restoration.

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*Safety became a
decades long
dialogue between the
state and community
stakeholders.*

– Geoffrey Johnson

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WHAT'S NEXT

For more information on the history of SR-37 and the projects in development and construction now visit our Caltrans website or resilient37.org

ONE CORRIDOR, MANY SOLUTIONS

BY MATT O'DONNELL - CALTRANS



State Route 37 (SR-37) remains a critical corridor for the North Bay, as it affects the traveling public in Solano, Sonoma, Marin and Napa counties in a 21-mile stretch.

The route, however, is challenged by issues like congestion, flooding, sea-level rise and limited access for bicycles and pedestrians.

Transportation partners in all of those counties are looking for solutions, both in the short- and long-term as the partners are looking at issues like resilience, equity, access and restoration. The overall solutions could take 20 years or more and cost billions of dollars.

One of the long-term goals is to promote carpooling and transit use on the corridor. This will require getting rid of the bottleneck where one lane opens to two on the eastern side in both directions.

It will take both innovation and partnership to overcome the challenges before us. Please stay tuned for more information and let us know your ideas and thoughts as we progress together.

“

*It will take both
innovation and partnership
to overcome the challenges
before us.*

– Matt O'Donnell

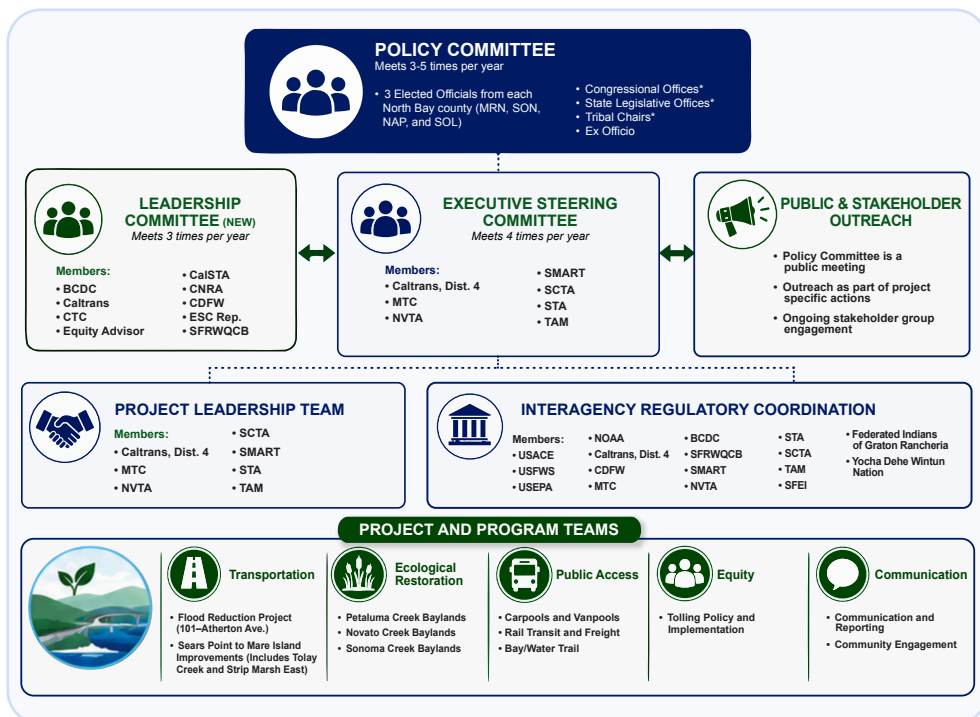
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**STRONGER
TOGETHER**

No single solution will solve every challenge on SR-37. But together, these strategies create a corridor that is safer, more reliable, more sustainable, and better connected.

THE ROAD TO RESILIENCE ON SR-37 IS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

BY ROSS CLENDENEN - SCTCA



The State Route 37 corridor has long played an important role in connecting Marin, Sonoma, Napa, and Solano counties. As a key east-west route in the North Bay, it supports regional travel, goods movement, and daily commutes. At the same time, the corridor runs through environmentally sensitive, low-lying areas along San Pablo Bay, making it especially vulnerable to flooding and the long-term effects of sea level rise. For many years, efforts to address congestion and reliability on SR-37 were pursued independently by different jurisdictions and agencies. While these efforts advanced individual improvements, they often fell short of delivering a coordinated, corridor-wide solution.

That shift began in 2015, when the transportation authorities from Sonoma, Solano, Marin, and Napa counties came together with Caltrans and MTC to form a regional partnership. Around the same time, real-world events underscored the urgency of taking a more coordinated approach. Significant flooding events in 2017 and 2019 led to temporary closures along the corridor. The partnership created a framework for agencies to coordinate more closely on studies, project development, funding opportunities, and long-term planning.

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When we work together across agencies and communities, we build more than roads—we build resilience, opportunity, and a stronger North Bay.

– Ross Clendenen

”

STRONG PARTNERS. STRONGER CORRIDOR.

Collaboration across agencies and communities drives a more resilient SR-37.



Aligned Goals

Working toward shared priorities for the North Bay.



Shared Resources

Leveraging funding, expertise, and innovation.



Smart Solutions

Identifying and delivering projects that make a lasting impact.



Stronger Communities

Building a safer, more reliable corridor for generations to come.

PARTNERS IN ACTION

Collaboration is the foundation of progress on SR-37. By aligning efforts, sharing expertise, and solving challenges together, our partners are helping build a corridor that is more reliable, resilient, and prepared for the future.

REGARDING RESTORATION

BY JEANETTE WEISMAN – MTC/BATA



The Novato Creek Baylands Strategy provides a roadmap to reconnect these lands to the tides, reducing upstream flood risk to infrastructure while restoring natural habitat.

SR-37 cuts through a mosaic of tidal and seasonal wetlands, which are rare and important natural habitat for plants and animals in the region. The proximity of the existing roadway and wetlands are a constraint to both—with the presence of sensitive habitat limiting multimodal improvements along the existing corridor, and the roadway limiting ecological connectivity and the restoration of the historic San Pablo Baylands. However, as a nature-based buffer to sea level rise and extreme weather events for SR-37 and urban areas, agricultural land, and other infrastructure, the wetlands can serve as an interim defense against climate change. The Resilient SR37 – Baylands Restoration and Transportation Partnership has been established to navigate these challenges: to design a corridor that supports quality of life, access, ecology, and climate change resilience.

Ecological enhancements are already shaping both the near- and long-term Resilient SR-37 projects. Highlights include:



Bridge replacement and excavation of roadway fill from the Tolay Creek channel will restore tidal flow and enable time-sensitive restoration of over 288 acres.



Enhancements will improve upwards of 1,500 acres of rapidly degrading wetlands, providing habitat for species and acting as a nature-based buffer to storm surge.



The Novato Creek Baylands Strategy will reconnect 1,751 acres of diked baylands to San Pablo Bay, reducing flood risk and restoring natural habitat.

RESTORATION HIGHLIGHTS



288*
ACRES

Tolay Creek
restoration



1,500*
ACRES

Strip Marsh East
enhancement



1,751*
ACRES

Novato Creek
retoration strategy

Figures represent approximate acreage of restoration impact *

REGARDING RESTORATION

For more information on restoration efforts or Baylands habitat please visit the San Francisco Estuary website at: www.sfestuary.org

THE RISING WATERS OF STATE ROUTE 37

BY SABRINA MARTINEZ - CALTRANS



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*Climate change is no
longer a distant
concern but a present
and accelerating
reality.*

— Sabrina Martinez

”

State Route 37 (SR-37) connects Marin, Sonoma, Napa, and Solano, like a crown wrapped around the top of the Bay.

The Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area offers grand views of the tidal wetlands where you can see herons, seasonal wild flowers and breathtaking sunrises and sunsets. Yet this route is increasingly threatened by rising seas and chronic flooding, clear signs that climate change is no longer a distant concern but a present and accelerating reality.

SR-37 is a critical route that connects the north bay to the rest of the bay area. The effects of Global Warming are visible here along the route. Year after year rains have not let up and when king tides are present the route floods. As the sea level rises it will become more and more difficult to maintain SR-37 and reopen it after seasonal flooding.

To make SR-37 more resilient all of these impacts must be addressed. At the same time congestion has to be dealt with and opportunities to rehabilitate the sensitive lands around the route will be evaluated to improve the local natural habitat.

**NATURE IS
OUR ALLY**

Wetlands absorb floodwaters, reduce wave energy, and support wildlife. Protecting and restoring these natural systems is one of the most effective ways to build resilience along SR-37.

SOLANO COUNTY: INNOVATING A BETTER GATEWAY TO VALLEJO

BY SEAN PERSON - STA



First Diverging Diamond Interchange in the Bay Area



Second DDI constructed on a major highway in California



Improves motorist safety and traffic flow



Enhances bicycle and pedestrian access



Connects residents and visitors to the greater Vallejo area and regional attractions, including Six Flags Discovery Kingdom



Scheduled completion: Summer 2026

The Solano Transportation Authority, in close coordination with its transportation partner, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) have just completed construction work on the new State Route 37 (SR-37)/Fairgrounds Drive Interchange Project in Vallejo. The interchange improvement project will enhance motorist safety and improve bicycle and pedestrian access with construction of a new Diverging Diamond Interchange. This is the first-ever Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) constructed in the Bay Area and only the second-ever constructed on a major highway in California.

The Diverging Diamond Interchange will provide a safer, easier entrance to Vallejo while improving accessibility for residents and businesses near the SR 37 and Fairgrounds Drive corridor. The new interchange will improve traffic flow in the area, increasing connectivity to regional transit, the greater Vallejo area, and employment and recreation centers, including Six Flags Discovery Kingdom. The project will allow bicyclists and pedestrians a more direct bike path to Vallejo from surrounding communities, such as American Canyon and Napa, and low-cost transportation options to local attractions. Major construction was completed and the new interchange opened to the public in the Summer of 2026.

“*The first-ever Diverging Diamond Interchange constructed in the Bay Area.*”
– Sean Person

**SMARTER
CONNECTIONS**

The new SR-37/Fairgrounds Drive Interchange improves safety, accessibility, and regional mobility while creating a stronger connection between Vallejo and surrounding communities.

BUILDING BETTER CONNECTIONS IN NAPA COUNTY

BY EMILY CHARRIER - NVTA



The Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTA) is working to address daily bottlenecks at Highway 29/Highway 12/Airport Boulevard in southern Napa County.

This longstanding congestion point is working through potential solutions by studying project alternatives. In 2025, NVTA narrowed the field to three alternatives designed to significantly reduce delays. The project is now moving into refinement, stakeholder engagement, and environmental revalidation.

Improving Highway 29/Airport Intersection will benefit regional connections for commuters and commerce across the North Bay. Reducing congestion on Highway 37 takes a community-wide effort, and Napa County's Vine Transit is part of the solution.

- \$56 MILLION
Regional funding through Measure U.
- 3 ALTERNATIVES
Currently under evaluation by NVTA.
- TRANSIT CONNECTIONS
Expanded Vine Transit pilot service.

“

*Improving Highway
29/Airport Intersection
will benefit regional
connections for
commuters and
commerce across the
North Bay.*

— Emily Charrier

”

TRANSIT IS PART OF THE SOLUTION

Expanded regional transit options help reduce congestion, improve mobility, and create stronger connections throughout the North Bay.

MARIN COUNTY: THE WESTERN ANCHOR FOR SR-37

BY MOLLY GRAHAM - TAM



SR-37 begins in Marin County as a vital east-west connection from US-101, linking Novato and the corridor to Sonoma, Napa, Solano, and the broader North Bay. This junction has long served as a regional gateway: US-101 carries north-south travel through Marin and Sonoma, while SR-37 provides the essential cross-bay link for commuters, goods movement, tourism, and recreation.

With continuous HOV lanes now open through the “Marin-Sonoma Narrows” corridor on US-101, a highlight from Marin is now SR-37 at the Novato Creek Bridge. This section is prioritized because it has been repeatedly affected by flooding, with significant closures in 2017 and 2019 that disrupted travel and commerce, highlighting the need for a resilient, climate-ready crossing. The Marin segment is designed to be the first constructed portion of the overall program built to the elevation of the ultimate long-term resilient project. We are excited that this transformative project along the western section of SR-37 is finalizing design and preparing for construction in 2027. Caltrans and the Resilient 37 team will provide robust information to the public prior to the start of construction.

WHY THIS PROJECT MATTERS



Western gateway to the SR-37 corridor



Connects US-101 with Sonoma, Napa and Solano counties



Improves regional mobility and goods movement



First resilient segment planned for construction

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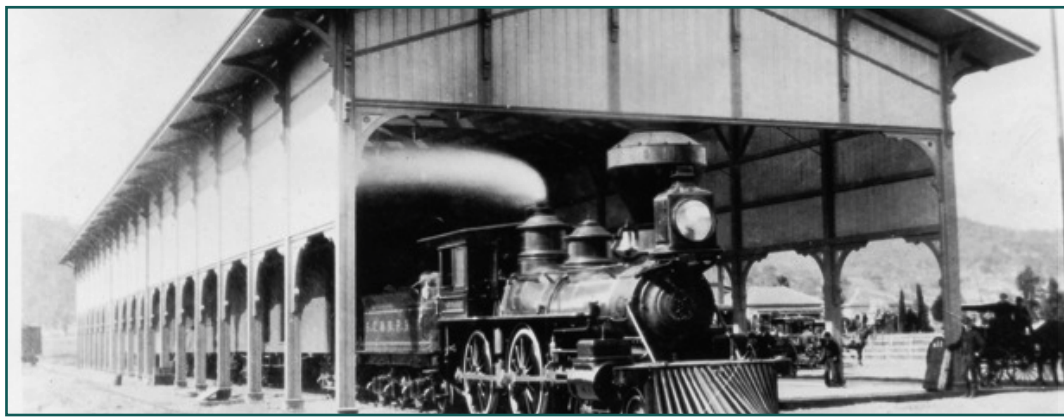
The Marin segment will be the first constructed segment built to the elevation of the ultimate long-term resilient project.

– Molly Graham

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CLIMATE RESILIENCE STARTS HERE

Investments in Marin County mark the first step toward delivering a stronger, more reliable, and climate-ready transportation corridor for communities throughout the North Bay.



THE RAILROAD CONNECTION

BY JULIA GONZALEZ - SMART

Long before Highway 37 became one of the North Bay's most traveled corridors, a network of rail lines carried passengers and freight across the same route—linking Novato and Petaluma to Vallejo, Fairfield, and beyond.

In the late 1800s, competing railroads raced to connect the region's growing agricultural and timber industries to California's broader rail system. Lines like the San Francisco and North Pacific pushed north into Sonoma County, while others built eastward connections. A pivotal moment came in 1888, when the Santa Rosa and Carquinez Railroad completed a link to the national rail network at Napa Junction—effectively creating a continuous rail corridor along what we now know as Highway 37.

At its peak in the early 20th century, the Northwestern Pacific Railroad ran as many as ten trains daily in each direction, carrying commuters and travelers between ferry terminals in San Francisco and inland destinations like Sacramento. Riders could transfer between electric and steam trains, making rail a practical mode for long-distance travel.

Freight, however, was always the backbone of the corridor. Lumber from the North Coast and agricultural products—wine, fruit, and dairy—from Sonoma and Napa counties flowed eastward via rail. That legacy continues today, with freight operators like SMART using the line to serve regional industries.

The corridor features remarkable infrastructure, including the historic Brazos Drawbridge over the Napa River—a bridge that remains a vital link for freight trains navigating the marshlands. Maintaining tracks through the Napa-Sonoma wetlands has always been challenging, with flooding and environmental conditions periodically disrupting service. For many travelers speeding along Highway 37, it's easy to miss that beneath the modern highway lies the footprint of one of Northern California's most important historic rail connections. What was once a bustling rail corridor may yet play a key role in the region's transportation future.

COMING UP:

CONNECTION CALIFORNIA **37**

NEXT ISSUE

THE PROJECTS
BEHIND THE TRANSFORMATION

THE PEL PROCESS
How better projects begin.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS
Inside the corridor's biggest projects.

RESILIENCE IN ACTION
Preparing SR-37 for tomorrow.