

# ZERO EMISSION PASSENGER RAIL AND TRAIL PROJECT

Project Update and  
Purpose and Need Statement

February 13, 2024



# Background



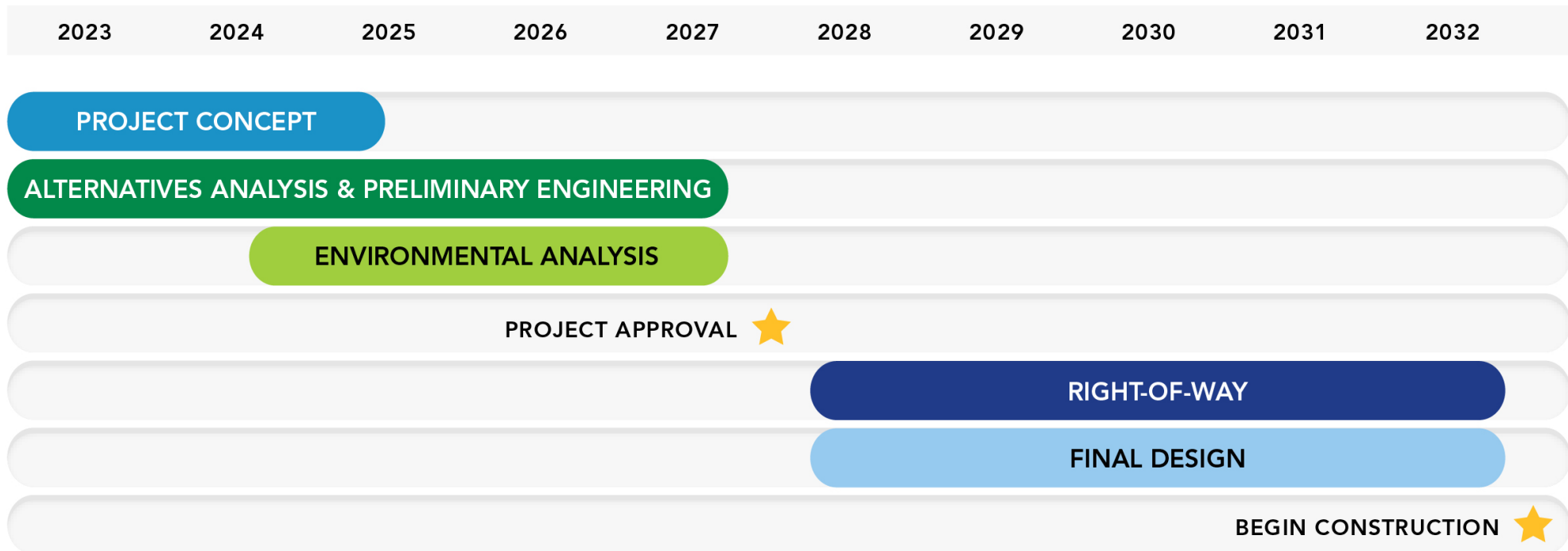
- **2012:** RTC acquired the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL)
- **2021:** Preferred scenario identified high-capacity zero emission passenger rail with a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail along the SCBRL
- **2022:** RTC solicited proposals to develop the project concept and environmental documentation
- **2023:** Contract awarded to HDR team and work began on the Project Concept Report

# Project Overview

- New high-capacity passenger rail service and stations on approximately 22 miles of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL)
- 12 miles of Coastal Rail Trail: Segments 13-20 and the Capitola Trestle reach (Segment 11, Phase 2)



# PROJECT SCHEDULE



# Preliminary Purpose and Need Statement

*Summarizes the needs and constraints that drive the development of the proposed project and the priorities in the development of project alternatives.*



# Preliminary Project Needs

Identifies mobility, accessibility and community concerns, including:

- Diverse transportation needs not fully met
- Slow transit travel times
- Insufficient alternative travel options
- VMT and GHG reduction mandates
- Bicycle and pedestrian linkages

# Preliminary Project Purpose

Identifies opportunities to address the needs and benefit the community, including:

- Provide increased access to accessible and reliable public travel options
- Improve transit connections
- Integrate with plans for future land use
- Reduce transit travel times and improve system reliability
- Enhance bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety
- Promote alternative transportation modes
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated GHG emissions



# Upcoming Public Engagement

- Project Information at [sccrtc.org/zeprt](https://sccrtc.org/zeprt)
- Stakeholder Briefings
- Virtual and In-Person Open House Meetings
- Presentations at Partner Agency Meetings in February/March

## IN-PERSON

**Monday, Feb. 12**

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Ramsay Park Family Center  
1301 Main St., Watsonville

**Tuesday, Feb. 13**

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Live Oak Grange  
1900 17th Ave., Santa Cruz

## VIRTUAL

Beginning **Feb. 5** at  
[sccrtc.org/zeprt](https://sccrtc.org/zeprt)

*Feedback will be used to inform purpose  
and need and ongoing project  
development.*





# Next Steps

## PROJECT CONCEPT REPORT Milestones and Engagement Opportunities

WINTER  
2024

- PRELIMINARY PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT
- PROJECT LOOK AHEAD



**We Are Here**

SUMMER  
2024

- CONCEPTUAL ALIGNMENTS
- ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE TYPES

FALL  
2024

- REFINED CONCEPTUAL ALIGNMENT
- STATION/LAYOVER FACILITY AND MAINTENANCE LOCATIONS

WINTER  
2025

- DRAFT PROJECT CONCEPT REPORT
- PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES
- NEXT STEPS FOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



# Thank you!

