

Transportation Planning Fact Sheet

State Route (SR) 156 East in San Benito County



Purpose of this Transportation Planning Fact Sheet:

Transportation Planning Fact Sheets provide one comprehensive interactive summary document that captures physical, social, political, and development characteristics along State Routes and provides web links to various planning resources and documents. Fact sheets are to be used as supplemental planning documents to Caltrans Transportation Concept Reports (TCRs).

Route Description:

- SR 156 East begins at US 101 in San Juan Bautista and terminates at SR 152 in Santa Clara County as seen in segments 2 & 3 on the map below (SR 156 West is Segment 1). SR 156 is contiguous with U.S. Route 101 for 8 miles, between Prunedale and San Juan Bautista
- Total Length: 18 miles between US 101 and SR 152
- Type of facility: 2-lane conventional highway and expressway
- Functional Classification: Principle Arterial
- Terrain: Flat to rolling
- Truck Traffic: 10 to 16 % (2005)



- Future concept: four-lane expressway from US 101 to SR 152

Traffic Volumes:

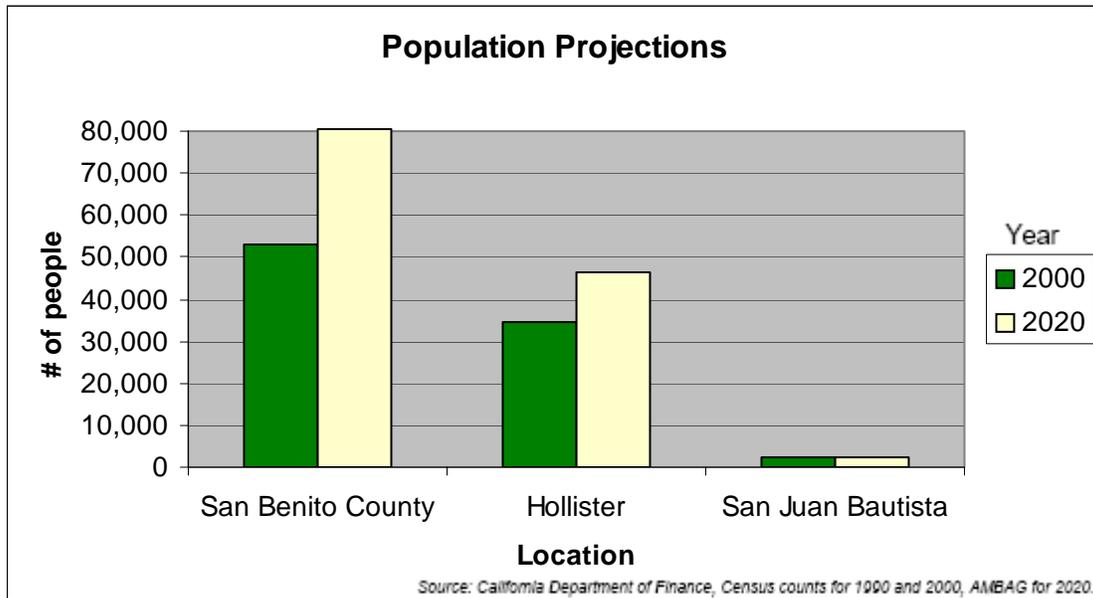
- AADT ranging 23,000 to 26,000 (Highway Segment Inventory - yr. 2005)
- Forecast ADT ranging 15,364 to 40,828 (yr. 2020)
17,981 to 52,134 (yr. 2030)

Route Designations:

- ❖ [Interregional Road System](#)
- ❖ [High Emphasis Route](#)
- ❖ [Focus Route](#)
- ❖ [Scenic Highway System](#) Eligible
- ❖ [National Highway System](#)
- ❖ [Freeway and Expressway System](#)
- ❖ [Bicycle Accessible](#) (PM 0.1/R7.9 and PM R13.6 to San Benito/Santa Clara Co. line)
- ❖ [Terminal Access Route](#) to the National Truck Network

County Profile:

- [San Benito County](#) consists of two incorporated cities: [Hollister](#) and [San Juan Bautista](#) (web links connect to City/County General Plan)
- SBt County: 45% growth between 1990 to 2000, from 36,697 to 53,234 (3.8% per year)
 - 51.5% projected growth between 2000 to 2020, from 53,234 to 80,653



- **35.3%** of San Benito County residents speak Spanish as their first language.
- San Benito is a unique rural county surrounded by the more urban counties of Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey. 1990's growth in Santa Clara County created tremendous pressure for residential growth in San Benito County, where housing costs are significantly lower. This has dramatically increased demands on the regional transportation system.
- Although there are limited facilities for bicyclists in San Benito County, in 2001 the Council of San Benito County Governments adopted a [Bikeway and Master Plan](#).

Public Transportation:

[San Benito County Express](#) provides fixed route service in the city of Hollister, and intercity service in the northern portion of the county. Service operates as far north as [Gilroy](#), in [Santa Clara County](#).

Commuter Rail Service:

Commuter rail service to Santa Clara County and points north is available in Gilroy (Santa Clara Co.). A feasibility analysis of commuter rail in San Benito County was completed in 2000 and included cost estimates that were far outside of available and projected funding and low ridership projections. As of 2005, the Council of San Benito County Governments was not actively pursuing a rail project but included the project in its long-term project list.

Airport:

[Hollister Municipal Airport](#), a general aviation airport, is located just north of Hollister.

Transportation Agencies:

- [Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments](#) (AMBAG) – Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- [Council of San Benito County Governments](#) (SBtCOG) – Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA)
 - [San Benito County Rideshare](#)
 - [San Benito County Local Transportation Authority \(LTA\)](#)
 - [San Benito County Express](#)
 - [Measure A Authority \(MEA\)](#)
 - [Service Authority of Freeways and Expressways \(SAFE\)](#)
 - [Airport Land Use Commission \(ALUC\)](#)

TCR General Recommendations:

- *Expand roadway to 4-lane expressway from east of The Alameda in San Juan Bautista to SR 152 (three alternatives)*
- Construct SR 156/SR 152 interchange
- Implement Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) components from Central Coast Deployment Plan
- Reduce demand on highway system by encouraging and improving alternative modes of transportation (BRT, vanpools, ridesharing, park-and-ride lots)
- Enhance intermodal facilities and services to improve interconnectivity
- Bring all bike lane segment profiles up to standard bicycle and pedestrian widths
- Encourage General Plan updates to promote transit-, bicycle-, and pedestrian-friendly development

State Highway Projects:

For an updated list of State Highway projects (including State Transportation Improvement Plan/State Highway Operation and Protection Program) along SR 156 in San Benito County, click the Caltrans District 5 *Status of Projects* web link:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/pdf/d5sop.pdf>

- For more information about Caltrans San Benito County highway projects, visit: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/-sbt>
- Transportation Projects Identified in the SBtCOG Regional Transportation Plan: <http://www.sanbenitocog.org/EIR4RTP/2Projectdescription.pdf>
- Local Agency STIP Projects - Caltrans Local Assistance Website: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/local/stip_index.html

Regional Planning Issues:

- Region is mostly rural, with communities like San Juan Bautista aiming for minimal growth in the future
- Increasing level of commuter traffic between the three counties (San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Clara)

Trucking:

San Benito County experiences a higher than average amount of truck traffic. This activity, while largely confined to state highways, impacts local streets and rural roads not designed to handle large, heavy trucks. Trucking activity around and through San Juan Bautista is a particular problem, with Hollister experiencing the same problem to a lesser degree. Commodity exports from San Benito County are primarily agricultural products and quarry materials. Transport of these products generates a significant amount of truck traffic in and out of the County. Stores import nearly all items that are sold in San Benito County.



Caltrans District 5 - System Analysis Study of Routes 101, 156 and 152: Purpose of the study is to clarify the roles of the State Routes within the regional system, identify east-west capacity needs in the study area, enhance the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's Southern Gateway Study, and help determine sampling and validation for the planned San Benito/Santa Clara Interregional Study.

Southern Gateway Transportation and Land Use Study: Purpose of the study is to identify roadway improvements that meet the transportation needs of the Southern Gateway study area (major corridors leading to and from Santa Clara County and the Silicon Valley) based on projected growth of population, housing and jobs for the area. The roadway improvements in the study area are presented while taking into consideration transportation funding constraints, land use policies and transportation funding priorities for the area.

Caltrans IGR Involvement:

- Rte. 25/156 East, PostMile (PM) Various – Hollister Sprayfield Project/San Benito County Water Facility
- Rte. 156 East, PM 3.83 – Hollister Wastewater System Improvements
- Rte. 156 East, PM 7.25 – San Juan Oaks Subdivision

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