After Study for the Richmond – San Rafael Bridge

A research focuses on assessing the impacts of the improvements on traffic and bicycle use at the Richmond- San Rafael Bridge.

WHAT IS THE NEED?

The Richmond-San Rafael Bridge improvement project is a four-year pilot. Before and after studies are needed to assess the impacts of the improvements on traffic and bicycle use.

This project includes two distinct items:

a. The construction of an auxiliary lane in the eastbound direction to improve traffic flow; and

b. A bicycle/pedestrian barrier project on the westbound direction to provide a bay trail link between Contra Costa and Marin counties; and provide a bicycle/pedestrian connection between the two counties over the bridge.

The after study will assess whether the improvements accomplished the goals, which will be an apple to apple comparison with the before study; and will provide analysis on traffic, accident, and quality of life impacts after these improvements.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The researcher will evaluate following items for both eastbound (lower deck) and westbound (upper deck):

- Traffic congestion
- Incident clearance time
- Rate and severity of incidents
- Impact on bicycles and pedestrians
- Quality of life (impact on business and public daily activities due to new improvements)
WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

The researchers will provide an evaluation that measures the level of success compared to the before study for the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) consideration.

Based on the study results, Caltrans will decide if adjustments are needed and what can be implemented permanently. Besides, this research can provide a standard to applicable projects with similar parameters.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

Caltrans can evaluate the success of each individual improvement and analyze the resulted impacts. The research results can assist Caltrans to determine what changes can be executed permanently, and what changes need to be re-evaluated.

WHAT IS THE PROGRESS TO DATE?

The research team continued the evaluation of traffic conditions in the eastbound direction. While construction activities are still on-going for the implementation of the pedestrian/bike lane on the westbound direction of the bridge (upper deck), the shoulder lane on the eastbound direction (lower deck) has been opened since late-April 2018.

Preliminary evaluation activities conducted this quarter include an assessment of available traffic data, a review of the adequacy data collection plan that was used for the before evaluation, and an analysis of changes in the eastbound traffic volumes during the afternoon peak traffic period.

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