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Health impact of CV Link focus of assessment report

The completion of the 50-mile-long CV Link will have long range benefits for the Coachella Valley and its residents by improving the community's health and providing a boost to the local economy, according to a newly released health impact assessment on the project.

The 64-page report was completed by Riverside University Health System – Public Health and provides a glimpse into the health benefits that the multi-use link will have on the region and users and no-users. The report also estimates the economic upside of the completed \$100-million project.

Among the findings, the project would help:

- Reduce air pollution by cutting down on vehicle use and lower the amount of dust in the area.
- Reduce air pollution by 4 million pounds per year by 2021 and 7.5 million pounds by 2035.
- Reduce the number of pedestrian and bicyclist deaths.
- Spark the economy by lowering health care costs with fewer accidents involving pedestrians and bicyclists
- Improve the general health of those who regularly use the link.

"It is not a surprise the CV Link would benefit those who use it, like pedestrians, bicyclists and low-speed electric vehicles riders, but there is a wider benefit to the community as a whole," said Michael Osur, deputy director of the health department. "The economic benefits make the project even more attractive."

Construction of the project is expected to start in 2017. The project is paid for by local, state and federal funds. When completed, it will run along the Whitewater River wash and Palm Springs to the west to

Coachella in the east. In the later phases, the project will stretch north to Desert Hot Springs and southeast to the Salton Sea.

To see the Health Impact Assessment, visit www.rivcoph.org