



## Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

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### MINUTES

Thursday  
April 1, 2010  
9:00 a.m.

Board of Supervisors Chambers  
701 Ocean St  
Santa Cruz CA 95060

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 am.

Members present:

Dene Bustichi	John Leopold
Tony Campos	Kirby Nicol
Neal Coonerty	Ellen Pirie
Donald Hagen (Alt)	Antonio Rivas
Randy Johnson	Mark Stone
Don Lane	Marcela Tavantzis
Rich Krumholz (ex officio)	

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Kim Shultz	Yesenia Parra
Gini Pineda	Grace Blakeslee
Daniel Nikuna	Karena Pushnik
Cory Caletti	Ginger Dykar
Rachel Moriconi	

2. Oral communications

Jack Nelson stated that the effect that greenhouse gas emissions will have on this earth is so tremendous that eventually we will not be able to recognize earth. He urged the Commission to keep this in mind when making decisions.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Executive Director George Dondero said that there was a replacement page for Item 12 and a handout for Item 26. He added that the next Transportation

Policy Workshop would be held on Wednesday, April 14, 2010 at 6:00 pm at the Board of Supervisors Chambers and would include a public hearing on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition.

### **CONSENT AGENDA (Pirie/Leopold)**

#### **MINUTES**

4. Approved draft minutes of the March 4, 2010 regular Commission meeting
5. Approved draft minutes of the March 18, 2010 Transportation Policy Workshop
6. Accepted draft minutes of the February 22, 2010 Bicycle Committee meeting

#### **POLICY ITEMS**

*No consent items*

#### **PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS**

*No consent items*

#### **BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS**

7. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
8. Accepted Fiscal Year (FY) 08-09 internal financial statements (enclosed separately for commissioners)

#### **ADMINISTRATION ITEMS**

9. Approved staff recommendation regarding Bicycle Committee membership appointments
10. Approved Special Districts Risk Management Association application and resolution to renew the Workers' Compensation self insured status (Resolution 28-10)
11. Accepted staff recommendation for the reappointment of delegate and representative to the California Association of Councils of Governments (CalCOG) and the Coast Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC)

#### **INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS**

12. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
13. Accepted correspondence log

14. Accepted letters from SCCRTC committees and staff to other agencies - *None*
15. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on SCCRTC projects and transportation issues
16. Accepted information items
  - a. United States Department of Transportation Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations
  - b. Summaries of Final Gas Tax Swap from Santa Cruz Metro and California State Association of Counties (CSAC)

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

17. Commissioner reports- None
18. Director's report – None
19. Caltrans report and consider action items

Rich Krumholz, Caltrans District 5, said that landscaping for the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project will begin in April and some shoulder closures are anticipated. He said that Caltrans Director Randy Iwasaki would be leaving office effective April 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Krumholz noted that the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Worker Memorial service will be held in Sacramento on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Johnson asked if double fines at construction zones have lowered violations. Mr. Krumholz said that it is hard to quantify but thinks the policy has played a role in lowering violations.

Responding to Commissioner Pirie, Mr. Krumholz explained that the transportation management system at Highway 1 and Freedom Boulevard consists of installing detection probes to measure the number and types of vehicles traveling along a section of Highway 1, providing real time traffic conditions.

Item 21 was taken out of order.

21. Highway 1 Projects – Progress Report

Senior Planner Kim Shultz said that work on the final engineering phase of the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project is progressing steadily and that the consultant team anticipates reaching the 65% design level milestone in April. He said that the Project Development Team (PDT) is reviewing the construction schedule in response to environmental and funding constraints.

Mr. Shultz said that technical environmental documents for the Highway 1 HOV Lane project are being updated as necessary in response to agreements on

geometric design details with Caltrans and current regulations. A field trip is scheduled for next week with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to visit the project site.

Responding to Commissioner Leopold, Mr. Shultz said that the draft EIR for the HOV project will be ready in spring or summer 2010.

In answer to a question from Commissioner Johnson about funding for the Auxiliary Lanes project, Rich Krumholz said that most of the project is funded by bonds that are not yet sold. Mr. Shultz added that there is still about a year before it is time for the project to go to bid.

Item 20 was taken following Item 21.

20. **9:30 AM Public hearing** - 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Senior Planner Rachel Moriconi presented the staff report on the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) saying that the RTP provides a long range blueprint of goals, policies, funding projections and project lists to guide transportation decisions for the region. She said that the 2010 RTP is a minor update to the 2005 RTP and that a more extensive update is planned for 2012 which will include forthcoming greenhouse gas emissions targets and land use coordination strategies from SB 375. Released concurrently with the RTP is the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), prepared by PMC consultants, that reviews the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties' Regional Transportation Plans.

Tad Stearn, PMC consultant, said that the purpose of the SEIR is to identify long-term environmental effects of the components of the 2010 transportation plan. He said that the environmental review is programmatic and provides a basis for future project-level environmental review. Potential impacts are identified and mitigation measures in the SEIR are guidelines since detailed plans for projects are not included in the RTP.

Ms. Moriconi said that comments will be taken at the public hearing and can also be sent to the RTC until April 19<sup>th</sup>. The Commission will review comments at the May RTC meeting and adopt the RTP in June.

Chair Johnson opened the floor for the public hearing.

**Peter Scott**, CFST, distributed excerpts from a 1971 *Santa Cruz County Transportation Study Design* which included a statement of goals requiring environmental factors to be considered in developing transportation systems. Mr. Scott also distributed an analysis by the Campaign for Sensible Transportation of polling data gathered by the RTC in October 2007 for the Transportation Funding Task Force stating that the polling data contradicts the assertion that HOV lanes are the highest transportation priority in the county (Policy 5.4). He said that the RTP should mention this polling data and use it in

preparation of the plan. He stated that the RTC should conduct an origin/destination study and that the text and graph on page 2-5 related to annual vehicle miles traveled do not match.

**Bill Malone** questioned why the highest priority for the RTC is widening Highway 1 (Policy 5.4). He stated that this policy should be changed to make "maintenance of local roads and streets", rather than widening Highway 1, the highest priority saying that constituents would prefer to have roads fixed. He stated that Goal 4 should be to "reduce", not "minimize", greenhouse gas emissions. He supported Policy 4-2 and suggested that CEQA analysis of projects evaluate how much projects will reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Debbie Bulger** noted that the RTP states that most travel is done on local streets. She stated that the RTP should include more funding for pedestrian projects, given pedestrian injury and fatality rates and that 20-25% rush hour traffic is school related. She also stated that multi-use paths are dangerous for pedestrians.

**Jack Nelson** said that there are human consequences to recommendations made in the RTP and that Chapter 6 is largely derived from the *Moving Cooler* study and that it's not entirely transferable to Santa Cruz County. He stated that this chapter should be updated to address information on induced demand. He asked that the RTC make local streets and roads its highest priority, rather than widening Highway 1. He asked that a policy be added to support lowering speed limits and congestion pricing. He stated that the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) forecasts in the RTP and SEIR should be modified and that it is not reasonable for the SEIR to find that the GHG Alternative is not feasible.

**Rick Longinotti** said that vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reported in the document do not match the Caltrans records on VMT. He stated that VMT correlate with gas prices and suggested that the RTC's mission be to develop a diverse transportation system. He said that since gas prices will go up with peak oil gone it is necessary to shift priorities away from driving.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioners discussed Chapter 6 of the RTP on greenhouse gas emissions. Commissioner Leopold suggested Chapter 6 be updated to emphasize and reflect the current local situation and that the transportation strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emission acknowledge existing carshare programs and encourage their expansion; that language regarding induced demand be modified to reflect that this is a complex issue and reflect information from the Louis G. Neudorff paper available on the *Moving Cooler* website. Commissioner Johnson asked whether concerns about induced demand should extend to highway projects such as the proposed Highway 1/Highway 9 intersection and Highway 1/San Lorenzo River Bridge widening projects.

Commissioner Leopold asked that the Board of Supervisors' report from the Committee on the Environment be provided to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Pirie asked that the final RTP incorporate additional information from the induced travel study.

Commissioner Rivas stated that sidewalks in Watsonville are in good condition. He suggested that opposition to Highway 1 widening is discriminatory against Watsonville residents. Commissioners Nicol and Rivas noted that the location of housing to jobs, education, and shopping areas impacts transportation needs. Commissioner Hagen stated that adding carpool lanes on Highway 1 would reduce bus travel time between Watsonville and Santa Cruz.

22. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

The Commission adjourned into closed session at 10:45 am.

Mike Hart, Sierra Northern, noted that maintenance will be needed for the land adjacent to the strip of track that Sierra Northern is leasing and which is within the rail right of way. He proposed using lease income to pay for either the Commission or Sierra Northern to take care of it

**CLOSED SESSION**

23. Conference with Real Property Negotiator Pursuant to Government Code 54956.8 for acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Property: Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line from Watsonville Junction to Davenport

Agency Negotiator: Kirk Trost, Miller Owen & Trost

Negotiation Parties: SCCRTC, Union Pacific

Under Negotiation: Price and Terms

24. Conference with Labor Negotiators Pursuant to Government Code 54957.6

Commission Negotiators: George Dondero and Yesenia Parra

Bargaining Units: Mid-Management Unit and General Representation Unit

**OPEN SESSION**

25. Report on closed session

The Commission reconvened into open session at 12:25 pm. There was nothing to report.

## 26. Rail Line Acquisition

Executive Director George Dondero presented the staff report and the recommendation to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. Mr. Dondero highlighted due diligence performed by the RTC in negotiations with Union Pacific including appraisals, environmental assessments, inspections and the business plan.

**Micah Posner**, People Power, agreed that buying the rail line is a complicated endeavor. He appreciated the staff and said it was unusual to release so many documents regarding the negotiations.

Commissioner Rivas moved and Commissioner Campos seconded to accept the Executive Director's recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Enter into a purchase and sale agreement with Union Pacific (UP) to acquire the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (Branch Line) for a total cost of \$19.2 million, with \$14.2 million to be paid to Union Pacific and at least \$5 million of improvements to be made to the structures and other components of the Branch Line;
2. Enter into an administration and coordination agreement with a short line operator for continued freight operations, and recreational rail service between Santa Cruz and Davenport; and
3. Release the draft agreements and the remainder of the due diligence reports for a 30-day public review period with the exception of the lease analysis report and the agreements still under negotiation with the short line operator.

The motion passed unanimously.

Due diligence documents are available on the RTC website at [www.sccrtc.org](http://www.sccrtc.org), on CD or at the RTC office.

## 27. Adjourn to special meeting of the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

No agenda items this month

## 28. Next Meetings

The meeting adjourned at 12:31pm.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 14, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean St., 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Santa Cruz, CA

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 6, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. at the Capitola City Council Chambers, 420 Capitola Ave., Capitola, CA

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

**ATTENDEES**

David Wright	Friends of the Rail Trail
Jack Nelson	
Mike Hart	Sierra Railroad
Bill Malone	CFST
M Schmidt	
Chris Schneiter	City of Santa Cruz
Peter Scott	CFST
Linda Meckel	AMBAG
Tad Stearn	PMC
Micah Posner	People Power
Debbie Bulger	Mission Pedestrians
Andrew Chapman	KSCO