



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

MINUTES

Thursday
September 15, 2011
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 9:03 am.

Members present:

Dene Bustichi	John Leopold
Greg Caput	Don Lane
Neal Coonerty	Kirby Nicol
Eduardo Montesino	Ellen Pirie
Donald Hagen	Lynn Robinson
Brandy Rider (ex officio)	Mark Stone

Member absent:

Randy Johnson

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Gini Pineda	Yesenia Parra
Karena Pushnik	Rachel Moriconi
Kim Shultz	Grace Blakeslee

2. Oral communications - none

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Executive Director George Dondero noted additional information including a written report for Item 20, two sets of add-on pages for Item 23 and a flier promoting Rideshare month.

CONSENT AGENDA (Pirie/Leopold – unanimous)

MINUTES

4. Approved draft minutes of the regular August 4, 2011 SCCRTC meeting
5. Approved draft minutes of the August 4, 2011 SCCRTC Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) meeting
6. Approved draft minutes of the August 18, 2011 Transportation Policy Workshop meeting
7. Approved draft minutes of the special August 29, 2011 SCCRTC meeting
8. Accepted draft minutes of the August 4, 2011 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) meeting
9. Accepted draft minutes of the August 8, 2011 Bicycle Committee meeting
10. Accepted draft minutes of the August 9, 2011 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting

POLICY ITEMS

11. Accepted legislative update

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

12. Accepted revised adoption date for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

13. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

No consent items

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

14. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
15. Accepted correspondence log
16. Accepted letters from SCCRTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. Letter from RTC to State Senator Kehoe and Assemblymember Alejo regarding support for SB 436

- b. Letter from RTC Bicycle Committee to Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes Management Plan Implementation Team regarding accommodations for cyclists as part of the project
17. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on SCCRTC projects and transportation issues
 18. Accepted information items
 - a. Letter from League of Women Voters to AMBAG regarding support for regional planning

REGULAR AGENDA

19. Commissioner reports-oral reports – none
20. Director's report

Commissioner Nicol arrived at the meeting.

Executive Director George Dondero reported that he attended an AMBAG meeting on September 14th, where Interim Director Les White presented the *Future of AMBAG Report* which recommends modifying the MOUs AMBAG has with its participating agencies. These modifications would reduce RTC revenues. Mr. Dondero distributed the executive summary and encouraged Commissioners to read the report.

Mr. Dondero said that staff responded to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) comments on September 7th. There has been no response from the STB regarding approval of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line purchase.

Mr. Dondero said that a short-term extension of the federal surface transportation bill is being held up in the Senate by Senator Tom Coburn who wants an amendment to eliminate funds that go to Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects. TE makes up about 10% of California's State Transportation Improvement Program funding. He said that President Obama proposed an infrastructure jobs act that included \$50 billion for transportation in a speech before a joint session of Congress on September 8th. If this bill is approved, it is expected that strict deadlines will be set to use the funds.

Mr. Dondero also reported on the August 31st CalCOG meeting. Discussion focused on controversial bills including AB1220 which would expand the statute of limitations to sue a city or county in order to challenge the adoption of a housing element, among other ordinances.

Mr. Dondero said that the RTC will host a free workshop titled "Designing for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety" on November 30th. He said that the Cash for

Carpools promotion is currently underway and that October is Rideshare month.

21. Caltrans report and consider action items

Brandy Rider, Caltrans District 5, said that the micro-surfacing project on Highway 1 is almost complete and that the detour on Salinas Rd has been in place for three weeks. She thanked the RTC for helping Caltrans put over 139 projects into construction over the past six years.

22. Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 8 allocation claim from the City of Watsonville for curb cuts

Senior Planner Karena Pushnik presented the staff report saying that the City of Watsonville, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, adopted a policy that curb cuts must be installed on streets scheduled for repaving.

Commissioner Nicol moved and Commissioner Montesino seconded to approve the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission approve a resolution approving the City of Watsonville's Transportation Development Act Article 8 allocation claim for \$174,800 for curb cuts at 52 locations in the city.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion (Resolution 02-12) passed with Commissioners Caput, Coonerty, Lane, Leopold, Montesino, Nicol, Pirie, and Stone voting "yes". Commissioner Johnson was absent.

23. 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) development

Senior Planner Rachel Moriconi gave an overview of the RTIP process and presented a PowerPoint illustrating the RTC funding sources under discussion, how much funding is available and how the funds can be used. She emphasized that funds were not sufficient for the region's needs and reviewed the staff recommendations before the Commission.

Commissioner Stone suggested asking the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to make a policy exception and program funding for local roads considering the state of emergency in certain parts of the county due to recent flooding.

Commissioner Leopold asked for details regarding any precedents for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) taking money back from an agency due to the 10 year rule. He asked for more information about which projects could become unfunded if the funding is given to the HOV Lanes project.

Commissioner Pirie agreed that the RTC needs to push back on the FHWA demand regarding the ten year rule and asked that a lawyer review what the RTC's past contracts stated. She said that she supported only showing the

intent to program \$4million of STIP funds which would allow the RTC to buy time while investigating options and said she did not support giving up the Mar Vista pedestrian overcrossing.

Commissioners discussed shifting funds within the STIP, the need for local street and road improvements, and effects to projects if the RTC only received the mandated STIP funds instead of the estimated STIP funding.

Executive Director Dondero said that staff can do more research to provide the Commission with additional information, but that it was critical that the RTC makes its proposals to the CTC by December 15, 2011.

John Presleigh, Santa Cruz County Public Works, said the RTC needs to prioritize funding for local roads and that the county is in dire straits. He asked if the RTC requested an extension from the CTC on the entire HOV Lane project, eliminating the need to move forward with the Tier 2 approach. He asked for clarification on the county's ability to apply directly for STIP funds.

Micah Posner said that most people in his neighborhood need the roads used in day to day life to be in good repair. He advocated funding for the Chanticleer and Mar Vista overpasses.

Jeanette Cook said that Nelson Road was in bad condition even before the rock slide and that there is only one lane to get in and out for a part of it posing not only an inconvenience to residents but also a safety hazard in an emergency situation.

Susan Zerwick said that Adams Road in the Santa Cruz mountains is a mess and was paved 25 years ago. She said it deserves funding more than one mile of Highway 1.

Lucy McCullough said that Longview Road is not maintained and that existing problems should be more important than future projects. She added that the cost of the EIR doesn't make sense.

Tom Williams, Nelson Road resident, said that people will begin to resent money spent on a one mile highway widening project when local roads are in such disrepair.

John Mekis said that Highway 1 *is* a local road and is the major connector between north and south counties and is necessary for commuters. He supported moving forward on the Tier 2 project.

Daja Evans, Nelson Road resident, said that emergency vehicles can't get to residents in a timely manner.

Bob Orsera, Nelson Road resident, said that keeping county roads in good shape is more important than moving a traffic jam one mile further south.

Larry Lopp said he doesn't care about Highway 1 and is more concerned about making it through the winter on the already damaged local roads.

Jack Nelson said that adding freeway lanes to congested highways leads to increased usage resulting in increased congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

Debbie Bulger advised being fiscally responsible and not throw good money after bad since there is little chance to fund the HOV lanes project. She supported fixing local roads and building pedestrian bridges across the freeway to help people get out of their cars.

Ron Pomerantz said that Highway 1 is a state highway and not a local road. He opposed tying up ten years of future funding, saying that funding for one mile of highway could fund improvements for 100 miles of local roads.

John Herr said he is appalled at the condition of public roads and that not taking care of them results in more problems in the future.

Michael Becker asked if paying back the \$5 million will come from money to fix roads.

Erin Hackett, Schulties and Redwood Lodge Roads resident, said she gets scared when funding is designated to only one project.

Emilie Holder said that if all the money is spent on Highway 1 then local roads won't get fixed. She objected to tying up STIP funding for the next 10 years.

Commissioner Pirie said that there is a lot of confusion and that it is not true that if the RTC doesn't program funding for Highway 1 that the funding could be used to fix local roads.

Commissioner Pirie moved that staff do further research to see if the RTC has to pay back money already spent on the HOV EIR per the 10 year rule and recommended spending up to \$5,000 for legal advice, directed staff to file an intention to program \$4million of STIP funding to the HOV EIR and to return to the next meeting to consider the rest of the staff recommendations. Commissioner Nicol seconded.

Commissioner Leopold asked the maker to include directing staff to prepare a priority list of projects that could be funded with STIP funds.

Commissioners discussed job creation in south county to cut down on commuting, using advocacy as a tool to change federal intent, issuing a call for projects to more clearly understand what local jurisdictions consider priorities,

the long term prognosis for the Highway 1 project, and recommending that RSTP funds not be spent on Highway 1.

Commissioner Coonerty proposed a separate motion to first find out if it is necessary to pay back the funding used for the EIR before filing an intent to program \$4million additional STIP dollars.

Commissioners discussed concerns about spending \$4 million dollars and then deciding that the project is not feasible and not moving forward at all and considering a local sales tax

Commissioner Stone said that the motion had been split and that the three sections would be voted on separately.

It was clarified that:

- 1) Commissioner Pirie moved and Commissioner Nicol seconded to direct staff to investigate and research through legal analysis and through contacts with state and federal agencies whether the RTC is required to pay back the \$5.5 million already spent on the EIR for the HOV Lanes project.

The motion passed unanimously.

- 2) Commissioner Pirie moved and Commissioner Nicol seconded to indicate the RTC's intent to program \$4 million to the 41st Avenue/Soquel Drive Auxiliary Lanes project, Tier 2 of the HOV project.

The motion passed on a 6-5 vote with Commissioners Bustichi, Coonerty, Lane, Leopold and Stone voting "no".

- 3) Commissioner Pirie moved and Commissioner Nicol seconded to direct staff to return to the October Transportation Policy Workshop meeting with information on the impact of programming the \$4 million to the 41st/Soquel Auxiliary Lanes would be on the remaining staff recommendations.

The motion passed unanimously

Commissioners Leopold and Lane put forward two additional motions.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded to direct staff to issue a call for projects to project sponsors, including local jurisdictions, the Metro and the RTC, to determine current priorities for the \$9.25 STIP funds and provide the list at the October Transportation Policy Workshop meeting.

The motion passed with Commissioner Montesino voting "no".

Commissioner Lane moved and Commissioner Caput seconded to develop an updated timeline regarding construction of the HOV lanes project as a whole with milestones, costs and funding sources to see if the project is still viable under the current economic conditions.

The motion passed with Commissioner Bustichi voting "no".

24. Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project – construction support

Senior Planner Kim Shultz gave the staff report saying that the California Transportation Commission released funding for the project on August 10, 2011 and that the state requires a construction contract to be awarded within six months from the fund release date.

Commissioners discussed whether the proposed costs for construction management and design support services were typical and if awarding the contract was premature if the HOV Lanes project did not move forward. It was clarified that funding for the Auxiliary Lanes project was already in place and defaulting on the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) funding would result in the funding being removed from Santa Cruz County.

Commissioner Pirie moved and Commissioner Hagen seconded to approve the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve:

1. A resolution authorizing contracts with Parsons Brinckerhoff Americas, Inc. in the amount of \$1,896,360 for construction management services, and with Nolte Associates Inc. in the amount of \$268,300 for design support services in association with the construction of the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project; and
2. A resolution amending the Highway 1 Construction page of the fiscal year (FY) 2011-12 RTC budget to move funds from the contingency line to the construction management team line.

The motion (Resolutions 03-12 and 04-12) passed unanimously.

25. 2010-2011 Santa Cruz County Grand Jury Report

Deputy Director Luis Mendez gave the staff report and reviewed the Grand Jury findings and the RTC's responses. The RTC agreed that traffic congestion on Highway 1 is problematic. The RTC also stated that insufficient funding is the main reason why the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is not fully implemented by the local jurisdictions and other agencies.

Commissioner Pirie moved and Commissioner Robinson seconded to approve the staff recommendations that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation

Commission (RTC) approve the proposed responses to the 2010-2011 Santa Cruz County Grand Jury Final Report.

The motion passed unanimously.

26. Adjourn to special meeting of the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies
 - a. No agenda items this month
27. Next Meetings

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 pm.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 20, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

Tom Williams	
Daja Evans	
Robert Orser	
Emilie Holder	
Grace Voss	
John Presleigh	SC County Public Works
John Mertz	
Valerie Emery	
Ralph and Susan Zerweck	
Andre and Anne Kobel	
Michael Becker	Take Back Santa Cruz
Tove Beatty	SCMTD
Jim Mekis	
Jack Nelson	
Elizabeth Levy	
Lucy McCullough	

Steve Wiesner
Chris Schneiter
Larry Lapp
Erin Hackett
Debbie Bulger
Dana Juncker
Jeanette Cook
Charlie-Robbie Norman
Amber Sanchez
Ron Pomerantz
Bart Little
Peter Scott
Micah Posner
John Herr

SC County Public Works
City of Santa Cruz Public Works

Parsons Brinckerhoff
CFST