



**Santa Cruz County Regional
Transportation Commission
Transportation Policy Workshop**

AGENDA

**Thursday, October 20, 2011
9:00 a.m.**

**NOTE LOCATION THIS MONTH
SCCRTC Conference Room
1523 Pacific Ave
Santa Cruz Ca**

NOTE

See the last page for details about access for people with disabilities and meeting broadcasts.

En Español

Para información sobre servicios de traducción al español, diríjase a la última página.

AGENDAS ONLINE

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COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Caltrans (ex-officio)	Rich Krumholz
City of Capitola	Kirby Nicol
City of Santa Cruz	Don Lane
City of Scotts Valley	Randy Johnson
City of Watsonville	Eduardo Montesino
County of Santa Cruz	Ellen Pirie
County of Santa Cruz	John Leopold
County of Santa Cruz	Mark Stone
County of Santa Cruz	Neal Coonerty
County of Santa Cruz	Greg Caput
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Dene Bustichi
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Lynn Robinson
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Norm Hagen

The majority of the Commission constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article 8 Transportation Development Act Claims – only City and County representatives vote

Article 4 Transportation Development Act Claims, Policy Issues, and SAFE – all 12 members vote

1. Introductions
2. Oral communications

Any member of the public may address the Commission for a period not to exceed three minutes on any item within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not already on the agenda. The Commission will listen to all communication, but in compliance with State law, may not take action on items that are not on the agenda

Speakers are requested to sign the sign-in sheet so that their names can be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Proposed Caltrans "iDistrict"
4. 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Preliminary Project Proposals

All items appearing on the consent agenda are considered to be minor or non-controversial and will be acted upon in one motion if no member of the RTC or public wishes an item be removed and discussed on the regular agenda. Members of the Commission may raise questions, seek clarification or add directions to Consent Agenda items without removing the item from the Consent Agenda as long as no other Commissioner objects to the change.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. Priority Transportation Projects
(Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner)
 - a. Staff report
 - b. Near term priority projects list
6. Augmentation for local transportation funds
(George Dondero, Executive Director)
 - a. Staff report
 - b. 2007 poll results
7. Next meetings

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 3, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the Scotts Valley City Council Chambers, 1 Civic Center Drive, Scotts Valley, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2011 at 9:00 am at the SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

HOW TO REACH US

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
phone: (831) 460-3200 / fax (831) 460-3215
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HOW TO REQUEST

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TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) – Policy Workshop
FROM: George Dondero, Executive Director
RE: Proposed Caltrans “iDistrict”

RECOMMENDATIONS

This item for information only

BACKGROUND

In late 2010, VTA senior management invited the RTC Executive Director to meetings regarding a new Caltrans iDistrict concept. The RTC Executive Director attended these meetings to stay informed on this VTA proposal. According to VTA the new iDistrict would be designed to improve project delivery and neighboring counties would be welcomed to participate. At the October 6, 2011 RTC meeting Assemblymember Luis Alejo mentioned this proposal for creating a new Caltrans district to include Santa Clara County and possibly other neighboring counties.

DISCUSSION

On October 6, 2011, the RTC Executive Director received a copy of a letter from the General Manager of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to Caltrans Acting Director Malcolm Dougherty regarding the possibility of a new Caltrans “iDistrict – The Innovation District” to focus on improved project delivery. The letter is included as [Attachment 1](#) and explains the proposed iDistrict concept and the basis for the proposal. The letter includes attached issue statements and a draft timeline.

SUMMARY

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) proposes establishing a new Caltrans “iDistrict” to focus on improved project delivery. This was mentioned by Assemblymember Luis Alejo at the October 6th RTC meeting. Attached are a letter and materials from VTA explaining the concept.

Attachment:

1. October 5, 2011 Letter from VTA General Manager Michael Burns to Caltrans Acting Director Malcolm Dougherty on proposed iDistrict concept



October 5, 2011

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty
Acting Director
California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: iDistrict – The Innovation District

Dear Mr. Dougherty:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with VTA on this issue. The new model that we propose consists of a streamlined Caltrans operation in Santa Clara County that would be a more efficient, innovative, responsive, and effective partner for delivering transportation projects and services throughout our area. Accordingly, the Innovation District (iDistrict) would be designed to try new approaches for project delivery, local assistance and transportation operations. It is envisioned that the iDistrict would serve as a test lab or incubator for streamlined management, improved techniques and technologies, with the goal being expedited project delivery and increased transportation system efficiency. With creativity and the implementation of this new model, we can take advantage of the strengths of both of our organizations.

Our desire is to improve coordination with Caltrans resulting in accelerated project delivery and improved delivery of transportation services in our county. We believe that the most effective way of accomplishing this is to localize decision-making authority and project management with a Santa Clara County-based District, as opposed to the current Caltrans District organizational structure for the Bay Area. Of the top five most populous cities in California—Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco, and Fresno—only San Jose does not have a Caltrans District Office located within direct proximity (5 miles) to its main central business district. In fact, San Jose, the capital of Silicon Valley and the state's third largest city, is *more than 40 miles* away from the nearest Caltrans District Office.

Moreover, population, employment centers and travel patterns have altered dramatically since Caltrans first sited its District Offices. The emergence of Silicon Valley has created a new, major metropolitan area where one did not previously exist. Although other Bay Area counties intermingle with regard to commute and work patterns, Santa Clara County and San Jose function as its own region. Approximately 88 percent of Santa Clara County commuters—or 721,000 people—travel within our county. By contrast the number of people commuting to jobs in Santa Clara County from other counties is 185,000. Therefore, our biggest transportation challenge is moving the large number of our own residents to job sites within our county. Given the amount of Caltrans-related work in Santa Clara County—from expansion and rehabilitation projects to operations, maintenance, pavement management, and local assistance—we need the focus that only a Santa Clara County-based District can bring.

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty
October 4, 2011
Page Two

As a follow-up to our previous meeting, I am enclosing three Issues Statements covering project delivery, local assistance and environmental approvals. These documents describe some of the challenges that we face under the current Caltrans structure and explain how the iDistrict will help improve project delivery, as well as provide opportunities for innovation. In addition, I am enclosing a draft implementation timeline as a starting point for discussion, which outlines the phases and activities to get the full iDistrict up and running by July 1, 2014.

As you will note, we are proposing that Caltrans District 4, Caltrans Headquarters and VTA meet at least monthly starting immediately to work through the details for implementing the iDistrict. This initial work would include the preparation of a cost-benefit analysis with financial and performance metrics to ensure that we are moving forward in the right manner. I am requesting that you appoint a point person for this effort for Caltrans. John Ristow, Chief CMA Officer, will be VTA's lead, and he can be reached at (408) 321-5713.

To summarize, our primary objective of the iDistrict is to establish a new partnership whereby Caltrans, VTA and local agencies would create a more effective model to deliver transportation projects and services for Santa Clara County. The iDistrict would provide the focus that Santa Clara County needs but cannot get as part of a large, nine-county Caltrans District, as well as the opportunity for innovation through the development of a new business model. I recognize that the challenge is to set up the new iDistrict in a way that improves delivery of transportation services while at the same time delivers those projects and service in an efficient and cost effective way to avoid the appearance of creating more layers of bureaucracy and administrative costs. I believe our two organizations, working together in partnership, will be able to meet that challenge. I am convinced that the result will be not more government, but rather more efficient, more cost-effective and better government, which would be a win-win for all of us.

I will follow up with you next week and look forward to kicking off this important effort soon. I want to thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,



Michael T. Burns
General Manager

cc: Bijan Sartipi

Issues Statements

1. Project Delivery:

Project Delivery typically includes all of the steps required to prepare a project for construction and involves: route/corridor planning, project initiation document (PID) preparation, environmental clearance, project approval, right of way actions, utility coordination, preliminary engineering, final design, funding and programming, and public outreach. A major factor impacting the ability to effectively navigate a project through the project delivery process working with Caltrans is the physical distance of the District 4 office and staff from Santa Clara County.

Examples of Challenges under Current Organizational Structure:

- Lack of Organizational Flexibility – In many functional areas, Caltrans is one person deep. This results in lack of back-up staff to keep items moving when a key person is absent and lack of continuity in performing the needed functions when there is staff turnover, when a person retires, or when staff leaves the agency. Also, Caltrans is not moving resources to where they are more needed so the result is certain functional areas that appear to be over-staffed while there are others (e.g., right of way, highway operations and traffic systems) that are severely under-staffed.
- Appropriate Consideration of Risk – The efficient delivery of projects has been hampered by decisions not appropriate to the actual magnitude of the risk. A recent example is the solution that was selected to deal with the issue of lane width on Tully Road in San Jose across US 101. In this situation, VTA and San Jose proposed a design of the new freeway overcrossing which balanced the needs of motorized and non-motorized users through roadway geometrics that employed wider sidewalks and bike lanes, shorter pedestrian crossing distances and narrower traffic lanes. Even though Caltrans has Design Directives relative to this issue and was in the process of updating the Highway Design Manual to allow these types of balanced solutions, Caltrans was ultimately unable to find a way to support the locally proposed design. Only after the City of San Jose agreed to assume responsibility for maintenance did Caltrans approve the design.
- Access to Decision-making Staff – Any significant decision-making that is needed on a project quite often requires meetings to be held in Oakland, or even in Sacramento, requiring the local project team, including consultants, to make the trek to these faraway locales to discuss and to get input on Santa Clara County projects.
- District/Headquarter Reviews – On more than one occasion there have been instances of District and Headquarters differences of opinion lengthening the

Issues Statements

project delivery process. On the SR 237/I-880 Express Connector project, an issue related to design was raised by headquarters staff on an approach to design developed by the VTA/Caltrans project team that caused additional evaluations. Work on environmental documents at certain points requires redundant reviews by district and headquarters staff. With authority at the local level, these types of conflicts can be avoided.

- Program/Project Management Staffing – Santa Clara County is in a geographic grouping with San Francisco and San Mateo counties. This means that the two largest cities in the Bay Area, San Jose and San Francisco, are under the same program management group. It seems that this is a grouping that Caltrans should have adjusted long ago. Staffing to address the needs of these cities and counties is inadequate.
- Lack of Caltrans Representation at Project Meetings – The geographic distance between the district office and Santa Clara County means that we often are not getting acceptable participation by Caltrans staff at project meetings held in our county. Most of the project level coordination is conducted by a few Caltrans staff that are clearly over-extended. When these key Caltrans staff are not able to participate, other staff are assigned to attend the meetings. These staff demonstrate very little knowledge of the project, show very little interest in the project and essentially contribute very little if anything during the meetings.
- Lack of Staffing – All highway traffic operations review for Santa Clara County essentially goes through one person at the district office. This person also has responsibility for reviews of projects in San Mateo County and quite possibly other projects in the district. The work load distribution especially in the area of highway operations is one that is worth re-examining.

How iDistrict Will Help

With the iDistrict approach, it is envisioned that VTA and Caltrans project staff will be able to work together more effectively to reduce project delivery times, which in turn allows for more economical use of available resources. It is expected that this greater efficiency could be benchmarked through a better capital outlay support cost to capital cost ratio.

Potential Opportunities for Innovation

- Project decision-making moved to Project Manager or lowest responsible level
- Utilization of a “project team” versus “functional units”
- Flatten out the organizational chart to improve decision-making process

Issues Statements

- Technical assistance provided through VTA will make it easier for Caltrans to allow innovative solutions to be considered
- Review/reduce required steps in project development process
- Right of way delegated to certified local agencies

2. Local Assistance:

Caltrans District 4 Local Assistance provides ineffective service to Santa Clara County, which results in unnecessary project requirements and delays in approvals and reimbursements. To be more effective, Local Assistance staff should be familiar with local issues and concerns. The mindset of local assistance should be "what can I do to help my local agencies get their projects through the process in a cost-effective manner."

Examples of Challenges under Current Organizational Structure:

- Inconsistent Information, Unnecessary Requirements and Confusing Direction – Local agencies and VTA staff have observed that the Local Assistance process is made unnecessarily difficult due to inconsistent information and direction provided by Caltrans staff and requirements for unnecessary reports or documentation. This frequently leads to project delays and additional costs, as explained below.
 - Higher Project Costs – One the most frequent complaints received from local agencies is that of the requirements for additional technical studies and reports which are questionable or unreasonable given the type and scope of a particular project. The additional report costs more to prepare and usually result in project delays without adding value to the environmental mitigation record or project benefit.
 - Delays in Processing Submittals – Local agencies have voiced concerns about long delays in processing of design, environmental, cultural resources, and/or E-76 packages by Local Assistance.
 - Lack of Communication – Local agencies have documented multiple occasions where after a month or more with no status updates, Caltrans staff will reject paperwork, stopping the review clock and forcing the local agency to redo the submission.

How iDistrict Will Help

Issues Statements

Under this proposal, Local Assistance would be working closely with local agencies to make sure that projects make it through the process. A Santa Clara-based Local Assistance staff would be more familiar with Santa Clara County's projects, and the specific location and political issues associated with them.

An effective Caltrans Local Assistance engineer/staff liaison in Santa Clara County would assist VTA and local agencies in working with Caltrans to expedite the delivery of projects through the federal aid process. Although some tasks would be delegated to a new VTA liaison position and/or to local agencies, Caltrans and FHWA would maintain responsibility for final approval. Benefits to Santa Clara County include fewer project delays, faster project delivery and better coordination and partnering with local cities to deliver projects.

A locally-based engineer/staff liaison would be in a better position to work with Caltrans to resolve issues with design, environmental, cultural resources or E76 request packages. They could work closely with Local Assistance to resolve issues promptly and reduce lengthy delays in processing paperwork.

A locally-based engineer/staff liaison would also be in a better position to conduct and expedite field reviews, reducing time for field reviews significantly.

Another benefit is that invoices would be reviewed faster, allowing for faster reimbursements and fewer invoices being held up for technicalities with projects ending up on the "inactive list."

Having a locally based Caltrans liaison would help in cases where paperwork is sent to Sacramento for payment but "falls through the cracks" between the District and Caltrans headquarters. The liaison would be able to monitor the status of all submissions and resolve problems as they arise. In cases where questions or emails to Caltrans go without response, the liaison would be able to follow up quickly.

Conflicts with Caltrans staff that come up during the environmental/cultural resources approval phase could be resolved in a more expeditious manner.

During times when many projects are going through the approval/reimbursement pipeline, having a staff liaison would help to take some of the workload off of Caltrans Local Assistance staff and allow for faster turnarounds.

A local engineer/staff liaison would be able to monitor the progression of E-76 paperwork and would be in a position to alert member agencies of problems that might interfere with a project getting its E-76 by the funding deadline.

Issues Statements

Finally, co-location will allow Local Assistance to take advantage of and build upon the relationships that exist between VTA and local agencies. Leaning on these relationships will allow Local Assistance to more effectively work with local agencies to navigate them through the sometimes maze-like federal aid process. Local Assistance would become more familiar to local agencies.

Potential Opportunities for Innovation

The iDistrict approach would work to develop delegation of some tasks to a new VTA liaison position and to local agencies while still maintaining the overall federal aid responsibility for final approval with Caltrans and FHWA.

Specific innovations might include:

- NEPA clearance approval delegated to local agencies (addressed on next page)
- Design review and approval delegated to local agencies
- Streamlined approval processes—elimination of Headquarters review

3. Environmental Approvals:

The Caltrans environmental clearance process tends to be focused on procedure and not on the primary objectives of quality analysis of impacts and providing the public with an easy to understand evaluation of impacts of a project. The current Caltrans approach to CEQA and NEPA focuses on process and not on the technical merits of the evaluation. This approach leads to lengthy timeframes, confusion by public and decision makers and higher costs with no benefit to environmental mitigation. Additionally, the Caltrans process appears to be overly cautious and unwilling to manage appropriate levels of risk in the process of getting to approval. The Caltrans process tends to be more focused on whether or not an action is setting a “statewide precedent” instead of focusing on the project design and its mitigation responsibilities.

Examples of Challenges under Current Organizational Structure:

- Inconsistency in Technical Expertise – The current approach includes inconsistent direction on projects from Caltrans staff. On the US 101/SR 25 Interchange project, there were differences of opinion between the District 4 and District 5 staff on what needed to be included in the biological assessment that delayed completion of this technical assessment for months. Another example that stands out is how items are reviewed with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). VTA is routinely involved with SHPO on its transit capital projects. In these instances, VTA is often able to work directly with SHPO. The Caltrans process for working with SHPO is much more cumbersome, lengthy and

Issues Statements

costly. It is estimated that on larger projects, the Caltrans process is about two to three times more lengthy and costly than what is required for FTA on a transit project.

- NEPA Delegation Has Not Shortened Project Delivery – Caltrans reports that NEPA delegation has been a model program, but VTA's experience demonstrates that NEPA delegation results in longer durations. From a Caltrans perspective, there may be some time savings from the 12.6 years on average pre-NEPA delegation that it took to complete represented EISs as reported in the 2011 Caltrans' report to the State legislature on NEPA delegation. However, with NEPA delegation, VTA's current experience on projects points to durations that are much longer than prior to delegation and substantially longer than working with FTA on transit projects.
- Longer Delivery Time on Environmental Documents for Highway Projects – A side-by-side comparison can be conducted between complex transit projects and complex highway projects to show just how much more time and money is being spent to complete environmental documentation on highway projects. The VTA experience on Final EIS/EIRs on its very large light rail transit projects has ranged from two to just over three years to final publication. VTA, as Lead Agency, prepared an EIR for the I-880/Coleman Interchange, with the entire process taking nine months. At the other end of the spectrum, for the US 101 Improvement project in the Gilroy area, which is a CEQA-only EIR at the moment, the Draft EIR is still incomplete after five years. The traffic analysis has not been approved by Caltrans and the time required to achieve Caltrans approval of the biology study was about 16 months.
- Greater Reliance on Checklists Marginalizing the Abilities of Capable Staff – The strict NEPA checklist that is being used by staff to gain approval mires the environmental review process. This has resulted in the inability to innovatively solve project delivery issues and resulted in the process being put before the needs of projects.
- Lack of Coordination and Adequate Staffing – For the US 101/SR 25 Interchange project, the Natural Environment Study (NES) was submitted in January 2010, but with no Caltrans staff in District 4 to review the document, the review was assigned to staff in District 5 in April 2010. The first Caltrans review was completed in the fall of 2010. After multiple rounds of review, the NES was approved in April 2011.

How iDistrict Will Help

Issues Statements

The iDistrict approach would solve this issue by making the environmental clearance part of the overall project delivery team and using best practices for environmental assessment, documentation, and project-based environmental decision-making. VTA and local agencies would partner with Caltrans developing and in applying best practices and streamlined procedures.

Potential Opportunities for Innovation

- NEPA Environmental clearance approval at iDistrict level versus Caltrans Headquarters
- CEQA delegation to local agency—reduces risk for statewide precedent
- Develop streamlined best practices of project management, risk management technical report preparation, permitting, public involvement and resource management

New Caltrans District (iDistrict)

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- DRAFT -

July 29, 2011

Phase I

IMPLEMENTATION

❖ Form VTA/D-4/HQ Transition team

- Beginning Oct. 2011 - Monthly team meetings

❖ Develop Implementation Plan

- Structure of iDistrict
- Functions and Responsibilities
- Staffing

❖ Office Logistics

START UP

❖ Caltrans Team established in Santa Clara County

- Local Assistance
- Project Delivery Pilot Team

July 1, 2012

Phase II

iDISTRICT PILOT

❖ Additional Teams

- Program Management
- Planning
- Design
- Environmental
- Right-of-Way
- Construction
- Administration Staff
- Maintenance
- Operations

❖ Formal District Organization

❖ Development of Measurement Metrics

❖ Explore possible inclusion of :

- Santa Cruz County
- San Benito County
- Monterey County

July 1, 2014

Phase III

iDISTRICT ESTABLISHED

❖ Fully operational Caltrans District serving Santa Clara County

TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) – Policy Workshop

FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Sr. Transportation Planner

RE: 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) – Preliminary Project Submittals

RECOMMENDATIONS

This item is for information only.

BACKGROUND

The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is responsible for selecting projects to receive a variety of state and federal funds, and programs those projects in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). On September 15, 2011 the RTC issued a call for projects for \$9.25 million in State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds. This is the region's targeted share of funds through FY16/17. The RTC also indicated its intent to program \$4 million of the \$9.25 million to the design and right-of-way phases of the Highway 1 41st Avenue to Soquel Drive Auxiliary Lanes project, Tier 2 of the HOV Lanes project. Approval of STIP funds for projects is subject to concurrence by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). The CTC is only required to program \$5.1 million of the region's \$9.25 million share.

DISCUSSION

In response to the Call for Projects for STIP funds, project sponsors and RTC staff have indicated their intent to submit applications for the attached list of projects. In some cases, these are subject to confirmation by local agency boards. Applications, which will include additional information such as project benefits, are due October 27, 2011. Staff will return at the November 17, 2011 Transportation Policy Workshop with staff recommendations for programming funds in the 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program. The RTC will select projects to receive STIP funds following a public hearing scheduled for the December 1, 2011 meeting.

SUMMARY

A preliminary list of projects for which local agencies plan to request STIP funds is attached. Preliminary staff recommendations will be presented at the RTC Policy Workshop and committee meetings in November.

Attachment: Preliminary STIP Project Proposals

2012 RTIP: Preliminary Proposals Received from Project Sponsors

Initial list of projects to be considered for STIP funds, subject to approval by governing boards for some agencies. Final applications due October 27.

Guaranteed minimum STIP: \$5.1M, though CTC could agree to program to 2012 STIP Target: \$9.25M, plus advance of up to \$12M for large highway projects.

Agency	Project Name	Description	STIP Funds to be Requested	Total Cost	Schedule	Safety?	Storm Damage
SCCRTC	Hwy 1 Soquel-41st Auxiliary Lanes and Chanicleer Bike/Ped Bridge: ROW/Design	Add aux lanes and bike/ped bridge - Design/ROW only	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	FY13/14	Yes- merging	No
SCCRTC	Hwy 1 Soquel-41st Auxiliary Lanes and Chanicleer Bike/Ped Bridge: Construction*	Add aux lanes and bike/ped bridge - CONSTRUCTION		\$23,000,000	FY14/15-15/16	Yes - bike/ped access	No
SCCRTC	Planning, Programming & Monitoring (PPM)	RTC tasks required to meet state and federally mandated planning and programming requirements, monitoring of programmed projects.	\$300,000	\$300,000	FY15/16-16/17	No	No
City of Capitola	Park Ave Sidewalks	Add sidewalks from Cliffwood Heights neighborhood to Capitola Village, add crosswalks at Cabrillo and Washburn.	\$200,000	\$430,000	Const. summer 2013	Yes - Ped	No
City of Capitola	Bay Ave/Capitola Ave Roundabout	Construct roundabout.	\$200,000	\$510,000	Const. fall 2013	Yes-ped/vehicle conflicts	No
City of Santa Cruz	State Routes 1/9 Intersection Improvements	Intersection modifications including new turn lanes, bike lanes/shoulders.	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,000	Const 2013	Yes-bike	No
City of Santa Cruz	State Route 1 San Lorenzo River Bridge Widening: Design	Widen bridge to add travel lanes.	\$1,000,000	\$1,500,000	Design FY13	Yes	No
City of Santa Cruz	Soquel/Park Way Intersection Improvements	Install protected left turn lanes and signal	\$500,000	\$900,000	As soon as \$ available	Yes	No
City of Santa Cruz	Branciforte Bike/Ped Bridge	Build bridge to connect San Lorenzo Park Multi-use trail and levee trail near Soquel Ave.	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	Fall 2013	Yes-bike/ped	No
City of Scotts Valley	Vine Hill School Road and Tabor Drive Transportation Improvement Project	Add sidewalk, curb/gutter, bike lanes, 6' pavement widening, ADA-Accessible Ramps	\$450,000	\$500,000	As soon as \$ available (12/13-16/17)	Yes - children walking in road	No
City of Watsonville	Airport Boulevard Improvements	Includes road widening to accommodate extension of bicycle lane and portion of travel lane, installation of bus pull out, and installation of new sidewalk and curb ramps. East of Freedom Boulevard to County line.	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	Const. summer 2013	Yes-ped access to transit & shopping	No
County of SC	Alba Rd PM 3.48 Storm Damage Repair Project	Repair 50 ft. slipout to reopen roadway to 2-way traffic.	\$485,000	\$485,000	Const. summer 2014	Yes - reopen road	Yes
County of SC	Glenwood Drive PM 2.02 Storm Damage Repair Project	Repair 100 ft. slipout to reopen roadway to 2-way traffic.	\$600,000	\$600,000	Const. summer 2014	Yes - reopen road	Yes

County of SC	Nelson Rd PM 2.02 Storm Damage Repair Project	Build permanent bypass road around 350 ft. debris that has closed road.	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	Construction-2015	Yes - reopen road	Yes
County of SC	North Rodeo Gulch Rd PM 4.75 Storm Damage Repair Project	Repair 75 ft. slipout to reopen roadway to 2-way traffic.	\$650,000	\$650,000	Const. summer 2013	Yes - reopen road	Yes
County of SC	Redwood Lodge Rd PM 1.65 Storm Damage Repair Project	Repair 80 ft. slipout/slump to reopen roadway to traffic.	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	Const. summer 2014	Yes - reopen road	Yes
County of SC	Vienna Dr at Mesa Dr Storm Damage Repair Project	Repair 60 ft. slipout and sidewalk.	\$550,000	\$550,000	Const. summer 2014	Yes- Ped	Yes
TOTAL			\$14,935,000	\$44,425,000			

**Funding construction phase of Soquel-41st Auxiliary Lane in 2012 RTIP would require advance from CTC and redirecting funds from other projects; could also be phased/the RTC could decide to only fund portions of the project (e.g. Southbound lane, northbound lane, and bridge separate, though would increase total cost).*

AGENDA: October 20, 2011

TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) – Policy Workshop
FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner
RE: Priority Transportation Projects

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Review the list of near term priority transportation projects ([Attachment 1](#));
 2. Direct staff to support project sponsors in advancing projects that are not fully funded, including supporting grant applications submitted to other entities for these projects;
 3. Direct staff to continue to advocate with legislative assistants for increased state and federal revenues for transportation; and
 4. Consider options to develop localized revenue sources to supplement existing transportation revenues (see separate agenda item).
-

BACKGROUND

As discussed at the September 15 Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) meeting, there are many important transportation projects in our region, but existing revenues are insufficient to fund most of them. While the long range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) identifies key challenges, general priorities and evaluation measures for the transportation system, the RTP does not prioritize specific projects, with the exception of the Highway 1 HOV Lanes project. With RTC-discretionary funds making up less than 10% of all available transportation funding in the county and funds from other resources also severely constrained, it can be helpful to periodically identify a few of the highest priority projects to focus on advancing in the near future.

At the May 2011 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) meeting and August Bicycle Committee and Elderly/Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meetings, members were asked to identify the highest priority projects in the region. At the September 15, 2011 meeting, the RTC requested additional information on that list of projects.

DISCUSSION

Priority Criteria

Through development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), project sponsors and the public identified nearly 500 projects totaling \$4.5 billion that are needed to address transportation needs over the next twenty-five years. While many of those projects would address current deficiencies, there are insufficient funds to implement most of them in the near term. Therefore, RTC asked local project sponsors and RTC committees to identify a few of the most critical projects that are needed to address key transportation challenges in the region. How well a project addresses one or more of the following criteria is oftentimes considered when identifying priorities:

- Safety (reduce collisions)
- Mobility (reduce congestion, delay, travel times)
- Accessibility (increase travel options, reduce number or distance of trips)
- Reliability (reduce travel time variability, non-recurrent delay)
- Productivity (increase throughput, vehicle occupancy/passengers per vehicle mile)
- System Preservation (fix distressed facilities)
- Environment (air quality and climate change)
- Deliverability (if there are barriers to the schedule)
- Funding (if all other funding is secured)
- Number of people served

Priority Projects

The list of some of the highest priority projects identified by staff of local jurisdictions, RTC committees, and RTC staff is attached ([Attachment 1](#)). The list includes some projects that have already secured funding. For others, as new funding opportunities arise, such as a possible federal Jobs Bill, federal discretionary grants, Safe Routes to Schools, Bicycle Transportation Account, RTC-discretionary programs, and other grant opportunities, project sponsors may utilize this list to identify candidates for those funds. **Staff recommends that the RTC review the list.**

STIP-Eligibility

While project sponsors do not anticipate using State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds for most of these projects, as requested at the September 15, 2011 RTC meeting, staff has noted which priority projects are eligible for State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds. Most categories of transportation projects are eligible for STIP funds. These generally may include, but are not limited to, improving State highways, local roads, public transit (including buses), intercity rail, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, grade separations, transportation system management, transportation demand management, soundwalls, intermodal facilities, and safety. Non-capital costs for planning,

programming and monitoring (PPM), transportation system management or transportation demand management are also eligible where the regional agency finds the project to be a cost-effective substitute for capital expenditures. Other non-capital projects (e.g. road and transit maintenance) are not eligible.

While most categories of transportation projects are eligible for STIP funds, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) has repeatedly rejected programming and allocation requests to use STIP funds on local street and road projects, making it difficult to get CTC approval to use STIP on anything other than highway or TE-eligible (bicycle, pedestrian, landscaping, and other enhancements) projects. As a result of the gas tax swap, approved earlier this year, the STIP now includes almost no state transit funding, thus for transit projects, STIP is currently restricted to fixed guideway (rail) mass transit projects and federalized transit projects.

Next Steps

Given that there are insufficient funds to meet most of the region's needs with STIP and RSTP funds, **staff recommends that the RTC work with project sponsors to seek funds from other sources in order to advance these critical projects and to continue to work with our state and federal legislative assistants to advocate for additional state and federal revenues for transportation. Staff further recommends that the RTC discuss options to develop localized revenue sources to supplement existing transportation revenues (see separate agenda item).**

SUMMARY

Given that transportation funding is insufficient to fund all of the needs in the region, a list of high priority projects that entities will focus on implementing in the near term has been developed.

Attachments:

1. Near Term Priority Projects List

Near Term Priority Projects (not in priority order)

List identifies some of the key projects that local agencies and/or RTC are focused on implementing within the next 5 years. This list includes ongoing programs and priorities identified by project sponsor and RTC committees. Some are fully funded, while others could be candidates for various funding programs, including but not limited to RTC-Discretionary Funds (e.g. RSTP, STIP, TDA), local funds, a potential federal Jobs Bill, Safe Routes to Schools, Bicycle Transportation Account, and other grant programs.

RTP #	Project	Cost	Funds Needed	0-5 year priority	6-10 year priority	Eligible for STIP?
Highway (Non-SHOPP projects)						
RTC 24	Hwy 1 HOV Lane project: Environmental Review - including Tier 2 (Soquel-41st); STARS analysis & legal defense, RTC	\$13,300,000	\$870,000	x		Yes, but no add'l STIP available for PA/ED
RTC 24f	Hwy 1 Aux Lanes: 41st Ave to Soquel Dr construction, RTC	\$27,000,000	\$27,000,000	x		Yes
RTC 24	Hwy 1 HOV Lane project - Construction, RTC	\$503,000,000	\$503,000,000		x	Yes
RTC 24e	Hwy 1 Aux Lanes: Park Ave and Bay/Porter	\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000		x	Yes
SC 25	Hwy 1/Hwy 9 Intersection, City of SC	\$5,000,000	\$2,000,000	x		Yes
SC 38	Hwy 1 San Lorenzo River Bridge, City of SC	\$20,000,000	most	x		Yes
SC-p81	Hwy 1/Mission St/Chestnut/King/Union Intersection Improvements, City of SC	\$2,400,000	Partially funded		x	Yes
tbd	Hwy 1/Mission St/Bay St Intersection Improvements, City of SC	\$2,000,000	Partially funded		x	Yes
WAT 01	Hwy 1/ Harkins Slough Road Interchange, Watsonville	\$9,800,000		x		Yes
WAT 27a	Hwy 152 (Main St)/Freedom Roundabout, Watsonville	\$1,250,000	Some		x	Yes
CO-P69	Hwy 152/Holohan/College Intersection - bike lanes on Holohan, sidewalks, additional turn lanes, County of SC	\$1,600,000	\$400,000	x		Yes
SV-P44	Hwy 17/Mt. Hermon Rd. Ramps: Intersection Operations Project, SV	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		x	Yes
TOTAL		\$616,350,000	\$564,270,000			

Miscellaneous Regional Projects

RTC 03	Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Improvements: Design	750000	\$450,000	x		Yes, but CTC not willing to fund
RTC 03	Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Improvements: Construction	\$5,350,000	\$615,000	x		Yes- Funded
RTC-P34	511 Implementation	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	x		Maybe, but not CTC priority
TOTAL		\$16,100,000	\$11,065,000			

Local Streets/Roads

Misc	Storm Damage Repair - Countywide (unincorporated)	\$3,500,000	Varies	x	x	Only rehab and reconstruction, not CTC priority
Misc	Storm Damage Repair Lockhart Gulch, City of Scotts Valley	\$180,000	Using gas tax	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
CAP-PO8	Bay Avenue/Capitola Avenue Roundabout	\$510,000	\$200,000	x	x	Yes, but not CTC priority
CAP-PO6	41st Avenue and Park Avenue Pavement Reconstructions	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	x	x	Yes, but not CTC priority
CO-P18	Soquel Drive - Soquel Avenue to Freedom Boulevard - traffic signals, turn lanes, sidewalks, County	\$3,500,000	Partially funded	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
tbd	State Park Dr Improvements (Park Entrance to Hwy 1 Ramp), County. New road sections, curb, gutter, sidewalks and bike lanes.	\$2,000,000	\$250,000	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
SC 37	Murray Street Bridge, City of Santa Cruz	\$11,000,000	Funded	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
SC 43a	Wharf Roundabout, City of Santa Cruz	\$1,000,000	Funded	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
SC-P13	Riverside Avenue Improvements, City of Santa Cruz	\$3,000,000	Partially funded	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
SC 40a	West Cliff Path Rehab - Phase 2, City of Santa Cruz	\$400,000	\$400,000	x		Yes- TE
misc safety	Soquel/Park Way Intersection Safety Project, City of Santa Cruz	\$900,000	\$500,000	x		Yes, but not CTC priority

RTP #	Project	Cost	Funds Needed	0-5 year priority	6-10 year priority	Eligible for STIP?
SV-P43	Mt. Hermon Rd./Scotts Valley Dr. Intersection Operations Improvement Project, City of Scotts Valley	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
tbd	Mount Hermon Rd/Scotts Valley Town Center entrance: Reconfigure intersection and add a new traffic Signal	\$425,000	\$425,000	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
WAT P 28	Airport Blvd Improvements, City of Watsonville	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
WAT P01	Freedom Boulevard Reconstruction (Lincoln to Alta Vista), Watsonville	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
WAT P 33	Freedom Boulevard Reconstruction Ph 3 (Alta Vista to Davis), Watsonville	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
WAT P13	Neighborhood Traffic Plan Implementation, City of Watsonville	\$500,000	Partially funded	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
WAT P31	Ohlone Parkway Improvements (UPRR to W Beach), City of Watsonville	\$500,000	Partially funded	x		Yes, but not CTC priority
TOTAL		\$33,915,000	\$6,775,000			

Transit/Paratransit

tbd	Increased transit/paratransit subsidies for very low income passengers	TBD	TBD	x	x	No
MTD 01b	MetroBase Operations Facility	\$19,000,000	Anticipate using Prop 1B	x		Yes, only Federal \$
MTD-P29/3	MetroBase Final Project: Photovoltaics, parking and water harvesting	\$11,500,000	most	x		Yes, only Federal \$
MTD-P28	ParaCruz Operations Building	\$12,000,000	\$12,000,000		x	Yes, only Federal \$
MTD 13	Pacific Station Renovation	\$12,000,000	most		x	Yes, only Federal \$
TOTAL		\$54,500,000	\$12,000,000			

Bicycle/Pedestrian

misc	Sidewalk/pedestrian improvements that provide access between transit stops and senior/disabled activity centers	TBD	TBD	x	x	Yes, TE
misc	Fill gaps in bicycle network, low cost striping and/or signage projects	TBD	TBD	x	x	Yes, TE
misc	Countywide railroad crossing grade improvements	TBD	TBD	x	x	Yes, TE
misc	Countywide signal modifications to sense bicycles	TBD	TBD	x	x	Yes, TE
RTC 32	Bike Route Signage, countywide	\$500,000	Partially funded	x		Yes, TE
RTC 27	Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) - sections to be prioritized through Master Plan	\$30,000,000	\$23M	x	x	Yes, TE
RTC 24c	Hwy 1 Bike/Ped Xing @ Chanticleer (also included in 41st-Soquel Aux)	\$8,500,000	all	x		Yes, TE
RTC 30	Hwy 1 Bike/Ped Xing @ Mar Vista	\$7,500,000	Funded		x	Yes, TE
CAP-P04	Park Avenue Sidewalks	\$430,000	\$200,000	x		Yes, TE
tbd	Capitola Avenue Bike Lanes, City of Capitola	\$150,000	TBD	x		Yes, TE
CAP-P12	Monterey Avenue Bicycle Lanes and Sidewalks, City of Capitola	\$350,000	TBD	x		Yes, TE
tbd	Wharf Road Bike Lanes, City of Capitola to Soquel	TBD	TBD	x		Yes, TE
SC 07	Arana Gulch-Broadway Brommer Bike/Ped Path, City of Santa Cruz	\$4,800,000	Funded	x		Yes, TE
SC-P34	Branciforte Creek Bike/Ped Crossing, City of Santa Cruz	\$2,500,000	Partially funded	x		Yes, TE
SC-P59	King Street Bicycle Facilities	\$500,000	all	x		Yes, TE
SC-P31	Widen San Lorenzo River Bike/Ped Bridge adjacent to RR bridge	\$3,000,000	all	x		Yes, TE
SV-P35	Bean Creek Road Sidewalks (SVMS to Blue Bonnet), City of Scotts Valley	\$400,000	all	x		Yes, TE
SV-P05	Kings Village Road sidewalk infill at Library and Post office	\$75,000	all	x		Yes, TE
SV 18a	Green Hills Road Bike Lanes, City of Scotts Valley	\$700,000	all	x		Yes, TE
SV-P05	Sidewalks Vine Hill School Road and Tabor Drive, City of Scotts Valley	\$500,000	\$450,000	x		Yes, TE
WAT P 15	Citywide Pedestrian Facilities, City of Watsonville	\$1,900,000	all	x	x	Yes, TE
WAT P19	Beach St Bicycle Facilities (San Andreas Rd through Watsonville)	TBD	TBD		x	Yes, TE
WAT P19	Freedom Boulevard Bike Facilities, City of Watsonville	TBD	TBD	x		Yes, TE
WAT P19	Lincoln St Bicycle Facilities, City of Watsonville	TBD	TBD		x	Yes, TE
WAT P19	Main Street Bicycle Facilities (fill gaps), City of Watsonville	TBD	TBD		x	Yes, TE

RTP #	Project	Cost	Funds Needed	0-5 year priority	6-10 year priority	Eligible for STIP?
CO-P27a	38th Avenue - Portola to UPRR Xing, sidewalks, County	\$250,000	TBD	x		Yes, TE
CO-P26a	41st Avenue - Hwy 1 to Soquel Drive, sidewalks, County	\$500,000	TBD	x		Yes, TE
CO 17B	Calabasas Road Improvements, Bike Lanes, Sidewalks, County	\$2,300,000	Funded	x		Yes-Bike/Ped portions using TE
CO-P50	East Cliff Drive - 5th to 12th Avenue, sidewalks, County	\$1,000,000	Funded		x	Yes, TE
CO-P46	Hwy 9 - Graham Hill to SLV Schools - sidewalks, County	\$1,000,000	all		x	Yes, TE
misc	Graham Hill Road Bicycle Lanes, County to City of Santa Cruz	TBD	all		x	Yes, TE
CO-P60	Lomond St., Laurel St., & Harmon St. - pedestrian safety improvements for BC Elementary	\$800,000	all		x	Yes, TE
CO-p27e	Main Street - Soquel Drive to Sevilla - sidewalks, bike lanes	\$1,200,000	\$200k		x	Yes, TE
CO-P18	Soquel Avenue - City of SC to Gross Road - sidewalks	\$1,500,000	all	x		Yes, TE
CO-P30p	Trout Gulch/Valencia Road Improvements - to Valencia School Road - bike lanes, sidewalks	\$1,000,000	all		x	Yes, TE
CO 16b	Wilder Ranch Bike Path - Phase 2	\$4,000,000	all		x	Yes, TE
TOTAL		\$75,355,000	\$650,000			

Regional and Local Projects Requiring Annual Funding

RTC 01	Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) per year	\$300,000	\$130,000	x	x	Yes, but not CTC priority
RTC 04	Planning, Programming, and Monitoring (PPM) per year	\$300,000	\$300,000	x	x	Yes
RTC 02	Commute Solutions Rideshare Program per year	\$250,000	\$250,000	x	x	Yes, but not CTC priority
RTC 17	Ecology Action Transp Program per year (PVTMA not funded since 2009)	\$60,000	\$60,000			Maybe, but not CTC priority
RTC 26	Bike to Work/School Program, countywide	\$140,000	\$50,000	x	x	Yes, TE
RTC 16	Bike Secure bike parking program, countywide	\$15,000	\$15,000	x	x	Yes, TE
CO 50	Community Traffic Safety Coalition	\$150,000	\$100,000	x	x	Yes, TE
Misc	Countywide Local Street and Road Pavement Maintenance per year (cost reflects	\$12,000,000	Varies	x	x	Only rehab and reconstruction,
misc	Countywide Bicycle Lane Maintenance, restriping, sweeping, vegetation removal	TBD	TBD	x	x	No
misc	Countywide Sidewalk Maintenance, vegetation removal, sidewalk repairs	TBD	TBD	x	x	No
MTD-P10	Maintain Existing Fixed Route and Specialized Transportation Service	\$37,000,000	partially funded	x	x	No
MTD-P04+	Ongoing bus and paratransit vehicle replacements	\$4,000,000	partially funded	x	x	Yes, only Federal \$
MTD-P14	Increase Transit Service: (at minimum restore to 2009 service levels, provide access to	\$8,000,000	8000000		x	No
TOTAL		\$62,215,000	\$8,905,000			

Misc UCSC projects

UC-P51	Bike Shuttle Vehicle Acquisition	\$500,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P49	Coastal Marine Campus Transportation Improvements	\$5,000,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P37	College Nine/Crown College Pedestrian Bridge	\$5,000,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P46	East Collector Transit Hub	\$5,000,000	Some		x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P52	Electric Bike Program for UCSC	\$250,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P10	Hagar/McLaughlin Intersection Improvements	\$500,000	Some		x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P14	Hagar/Steinhart Intersection Improvements	\$1,000,000	Some		x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P47	Hagar-Coolidge Connector Road/Hagar/East Remote Intersection Improvements	\$3,000,000	Some		x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P56	Kerr/Porter Rd Pedestrian Bridge ADA Upgrades	\$1,000,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P57	Kresge/Core West Pedestrian Bridge: ADA Upgrades	\$1,000,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P38	Pedestrian Directional Map/Wayfinding System	\$500,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking

RTP #	Project	Cost	Funds Needed	0-5 year priority	6-10 year priority	Eligible for STIP?
UC-P50	Sidewalk/pedestrian Improvements	\$2,000,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P19	Transit Pullouts and Shelters Enhancements	\$1,500,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P45	Transit Stop Accessibility Project	\$500,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P23	Transit Vehicles (ongoing)	\$5,000,000	Some	x	x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P23	Transit Vehicles (ongoing)	\$5,000,000	Some	x	x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P55	UCSC Bicycle Facilities	\$1,000,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P33	UCSC Bicycle Parking Improvements	\$500,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
UC-P32	UCSC Bike Showers/Storage Lockers	\$600,000	Some		x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P01	UCSC Main Entrance Improvements	\$1,000,000	Some		x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P44	UCSC Pedestrian/Transit Zone	\$1,000,000	Some		x	Yes, but not seeking
UC-P02	West Gate Improvements	\$500,000	Some	x		Yes, but not seeking
TOTAL		\$41,350,000	\$0			
GRAND TOTAL		\$837,570,000	\$594,760,000			

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TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) – Policy Workshop
FROM: George Dondero, Executive Director
RE: Augmentation for Local Transportation Funds

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

1. Consider new local funding sources, such as a vehicle registration fee (VRF), to provide reliable local for transportation projects, including the maintenance of existing infrastructure,
 2. Receive a presentation on efforts to establish VRF programs in other counties, and
 3. Authorize the Executive Director to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit services of a consultant to conduct polling of Santa Cruz County voters to determine if a VRF could garner the votes needed to succeed in the November 2012 election.
-

BACKGROUND

The 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) identifies a funding gap of almost \$1.8B for local transportation projects spanning a range of modes as shown in the Unconstrained List. If the Highway 1 HOV Lane project is included, the funding gap increases to over \$2B. Recent discussions about the funding shortages and unreliability both at the federal and state levels exacerbate the need to evaluate new funding sources to both maintain the existing infrastructure as well as accommodate future needs.

DISCUSSION

As reported on previous occasions, over 84% of the population of California lives in “self help” counties -- where voters have approved local transportation tax or fee measures. In the past some revenue measures required a simple majority vote and others a super majority (2/3 vote); however, due to the approval of Proposition 26 on the 2010 state ballot most revenue raising measures in the state, including many payments considered to be fees, now require a super majority to pass.

The RTP identifies a number of potential new revenue sources for local transportation needs. The primary sources are an increment in the local sales tax, local gas tax, or vehicle registration fee, or a new regional traffic impact/developer fee. Other potential revenue sources include new grants, property taxes, state bonds, transient occupancy taxes and legislative budget requests.

In 2006-2008, the development of a transportation expenditure plan, including both a package of projects and new revenue sources, was explored through the 70+ member Transportation Funding Task Force (TFTF). As part of this effort, a poll was administered

to likely voters to gauge the potential to secure super majority support of a local transportation funding measure. EMC Research firm administered the poll in 2007. Ruth Bernstein from EMC will attend the Transportation Policy Workshop to talk about the relevance of the 2007-08 poll ([Attachment 1](#)) to future revenue options.

Recent Vehicle License Fee Developments

Senate Bill 83, passed in 2009, allows transportation agencies that are congestion management agencies (CMA) to impose annual fees on the registration of motor vehicles up to \$10, in addition to the basic vehicle registration fee collected by the Department of Motor Vehicles, for "programs or projects bearing a relationship or benefit to the owners of motor vehicles paying the fee and consistent with the regional transportation plan." In addition, SB 83 specifies that the intent of the legislation is to address congestion, mitigate the impacts of motor vehicles and improve the business climate and natural environment.

Since the RTC opted out of being a CMA in 2000, in order to be eligible to pursue these funds, the RTC would need to become a CMA again and secure a super majority of voter support. A \$10 increase in local vehicle registration fees would net approximately \$2.3 million per year. These funds would allow the region to start addressing some of the huge backlog of needs. As a CMA, the RTC would have to develop a congestion management program, monitor congestion on roadways and highways, and measure progress toward addressing the congestion. Staff estimates that the effort involved would require the work of one planner on a half-time basis initially, and possibly less time once the process is established.

If the RTC has interest in pursuing an initiative for the 2012 election, some polling of likely voters should be undertaken. Reaching a supermajority presents a challenge. Therefore, **staff recommends that the RTC authorize the Executive Director to issue an RFP to engage a polling consultant for that purpose.** The poll conducted in 2007 cost \$30,000. There are sufficient funds in the RTC budget under the planning budget to cover the cost of a poll.

After going through the proposal review process, staff would return to the RTC with a recommendation to hire a polling consultant. If the polling shows that approving a \$10 vehicle registration fee for transportation projects is possible, staff would return with a recommendation for the RTC to again be designated the congestion management agency for Santa Cruz County. Such a designation requires approval from the local jurisdictions.

SUMMARY

Given that transportation funding is insufficient to fund all of the needs in the region, new revenues are needed to maintain the existing infrastructure and to meet future needs. A presentation will provide a perspective on efforts in Northern California to establish vehicle registration fees (VRF) to address local transportation needs. Staff recommends that the RTC issue an RFP to conduct a new poll to look at the feasibility of passing an initiative to establish a \$10/vehicle/year VRF.

Attachment 1: 2007 Poll Results



MARKET
& OPINION
RESEARCH
SERVICES

811 First Avenue
Suite 451
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 652-2454 TEL
(206) 652-5022 FAX

436 14th Street
Suite 820
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 844-0680 TEL
(510) 844-0690 FAX

25 Old Kings Highway North
Suite 13, #105
Darien, CT 06820
(203) 662-0483 TEL
(203) 662-0435 FAX

EMCresearch.com

**Telephone Survey of Santa Cruz County voters
Conducted for SCC RTC
September 30 – October 2, 2007
n = 602, MoE ± 4.0
EMC 07-3732**

All numbers in this document represent percentage (%) values, unless otherwise noted. Please note that due to rounding, percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

Sample A n=299
 B n=303

Hello, my name is _____, may I speak with **(NAME ON LIST)**.

Hello, my name is _____, and I'm conducting a survey for EMC Research to find out how people in Santa Cruz County feel about some of the different issues facing them. We are not trying to sell anything, and are collecting this information on a scientific and completely confidential basis.

1. Are you registered to vote at this address?

Yes----->CONTINUE	100%
No-----> (TERMINATE)	--

2. I know it's a long ways off, but what would you say are the chances that you will vote in the November 2008 general election for President and local offices and measures -- are you almost certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50/50, or do you think that you will not vote?

Almost Certain→ Continue	97
Probably→ Continue	2
50/50 Chance→ Continue	1
Will not vote/(Don't Know)→ Terminate	--

3. Do you feel that things in Santa Cruz County are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

Right direction	47
Wrong track	29
(Don't know)	23

4. What is the most important problem facing Santa Cruz County today? **(1 RESPONSE)**

Traffic and Transportation	15
Affordable Housing/Low Income Housing/Cost of Living	15
Growth and Development	8
Education	7
Homeless	6
Jobs and Economy	4
Water Shortage	4
Road Conditions	4
Local Politicians	3
Population	3
Environment	2
Crime	2
Budget	2
Drugs	2
University and College Issues	2
Immigration	2
Health Care/Child Care	1
Gangs	1
Government Tax Base/Income	1
Government Control and Civil Liberties	1
Misuse of Funds	1
Taxes	1
Infrastructure Issues	1
Businesses/Tax Base Businesses	1
Other	4
Don't Know	9

For each of the following items, please tell me how high a priority that item should be for Santa Cruz County. Use a scale of 1 to 9, where 1 means the lowest priority and 9 means the highest priority. **(CODE 1-9; 10=Don't Know) (Randomize Q5-Q12)**

	Very low priority					Highest priority					
SCALE:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	(DK)	Mean
5. Improving public education	1	1	1	2	8	7	14	16	47	3	7.70
6. Improving <u>safety</u> on local roads and highways	2	2	4	6	16	13	18	14	23	1	6.55
7. Reducing <u>traffic congestion</u> on local roads and highways	2	2	4	5	10	6	17	18	36	2	7.11
8. Improving local public transportation	5	3	5	7	16	8	15	16	20	3	6.24

	Very low priority					Highest priority					
SCALE:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	(DK)	Mean
9.	Protecting the environment										
	3	1	3	2	11	6	14	16	43	0	7.32
10.	Limiting growth and development										
	9	6	6	8	20	10	13	9	18	2	5.66
11.	Fighting crime										
	1	2	3	3	14	9	17	15	36	1	7.15
12.	Improving job creation and the economy										
	2	2	2	3	12	10	19	18	32	2	7.12

(END RANDOMIZE)

13. Now, I'd like to read you a measure that could be on the ballot next year. Would you vote yes to approve or no to oppose a measure that reads:

Shall the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission implement a 30-year Transportation Expenditure Plan and a half-cent sales tax with independent oversight and annual audits that will direct funds to:

- Widen Highway One between Santa Cruz and Aptos
- Make safety and access improvements to Highway One merge lanes and ramps
- Build bike and pedestrian crossings over Highway One?

(IF UNDECIDED) Well, do you lean toward voting YES or do you lean toward voting NO?

Yes	52	
(Lean Yes)	5	→57
No	34	
(Lean No)	3	→38*
(DK/Refused)	5	

*note: 34.4 + 3.4 = 38%

14. Now, I'd like to read you a different measure that could be on the ballot next year. Would you vote yes to approve or no to oppose a measure that reads:

Shall the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission implement a 30-year Transportation Expenditure Plan and a half-cent sales tax with independent oversight and annual audits that will direct funds to:

- Widen Highway One
- Maintenance of local streets, roads and sidewalks
- Improve access to carpools and public transit
- Transportation for the elderly and people with disabilities
- Bike and pedestrian routes including school access, a coastal trail and crossings over Highway One?

(IF UNDECIDED) Well, do you lean toward voting YES or do you lean toward voting NO?

Yes	51	
(Lean Yes)	8	→59
No	36	
(Lean No)	2	→38
(DK/Refused)	3	

15. Which of the following is closer to your opinion: (read choices 1-3, rotate 1 & 2)

Instead of putting more money into roads and highways, we need to spend any available transportation money on projects like bike lanes and buses. 15

Instead of spending money on projects like bike lanes and buses, we need to spend any available money to improve our local roads and highways. 21

What we really need is a balanced approach to transportation spending that provides funding for all modes of transportation. 60

(None) 3
(Don't Know) 1

For each of the following statements please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.

(RANDOMIZE Q16-Q27)

SCALE:	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion/ DK
16.	Taxes in Santa Cruz County are already high enough; I'll vote against any tax increase on the ballot.				
	24	14	31	28	4
17.	I just don't think we need to widen Highway One.				
	19	16	19	43	3
18.	A sales tax is a fair way to pay for transportation improvements because everyone pays, even people who are visiting our County.				
	31	39	12	15	3
19.	I would support a ten-cent per gallon gas tax increase instead of a half-cent sales tax to pay for transportation improvements.				
	17	17	18	45	3
20.	We need to drastically reduce our reliance on cars in Santa Cruz County, even if doing so is difficult for us today.				
	29	30	16	21	3
21.	We must accept that people need their cars to get around and should have long term planning in Santa Cruz County that will result in efficient parking and less congested roadways.				
	48	33	11	5	3
22.	We must accept that global warming is a problem and should have long term planning in Santa Cruz County that will result in less individual car use and more efficient transportation choices.				
	51	24	7	16	2
23.	Like it or not, we should just raise taxes and move forward with widening Highway One so we can end the arguing and get on with other local issues.				
	20	23	18	36	4
24.	Adding passenger train service along the coast, improving bus service, improving bike lanes, encouraging carpools and other non-road improvements can solve our transportation problems in the County;				
	27	36	16	19	2
25.	The State has enough money to pay for improvements to our local roads and freeways, we should not tax ourselves locally;				
	25	22	30	15	8

SCALE:	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion/DK
26. To help pay for local street and road projects, I would support user fees such as an annual assessment of \$20 added to vehicle registration costs.	19	34	16	28	3
27. Improving the roads and highways in Santa Cruz County will just bring more growth;	15	25	27	31	3

(END RANDOMIZE)

Now I'm going to read you some projects that could be funded if a half cent transportation sales tax is approved in Santa Cruz County. Think about a scale from 1 to 10 where one is that you **strongly oppose** including this project in the plan and 10 is you **strongly support** including the project. Please use any number from 1 to 10 and tell me how you feel about each project. Code: 1-10, 11=Don't Know)

(RANDOMIZE Q28-Q47)

Scale:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DK	Mean
	Strongly Oppose					Strongly Support						
28. (Sample A) Adding carpool lanes on Highway One from Santa Cruz to Aptos;	25	5	7	2	16	5	10	11	6	11	3	5.04
29. (Sample B) Widening Highway One from Santa Cruz to Aptos;	17	4	5	5	9	8	9	11	12	20	1	6.13
30. (Sample A) Adding one more driving lane in each direction, plus improving merge lanes and ramps, on Highway One between Santa Cruz and Aptos.	17	7	4	4	10	6	8	11	11	20	1	6.03
31. (Sample B) Adding one more lane in each direction on Highway One between Santa Cruz and Aptos that would be designated as a carpool and bus lane during rush hour in the morning and evening;	17	5	4	7	12	6	12	12	9	16	1	5.90
32. Improving merge lanes and on/off ramps on Highway One between Santa Cruz and Aptos to make them safer and also allow traffic to flow more smoothly	10	4	6	4	14	6	13	15	11	17	1	6.39
33. Repairing and maintaining local streets and roads;	4	1	1	2	12	10	15	17	13	24	0	7.38
34. (sample A) Building bike and pedestrian crossings over Highway One.	15	4	6	6	13	7	14	14	5	15	2	5.80
35. (sample B) Building bike and pedestrian bridges over Highway One.	13	7	4	6	18	9	12	10	7	12	1	5.65

Scale:	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Mean</u>
	Strongly Oppose					Strongly Support						
36.	Pedestrian access projects around the county such as new sidewalks, curb improvements, pavement reflectors and sidewalk widening;											
	9	5	5	10	16	11	11	12	7	13	2	5.94
37.	Bike access projects around the county such as adding bike lanes, new bike parking and maintenance of bike paths;											
	11	4	6	6	14	8	14	12	8	17	1	6.15
38.	School traffic safety projects such as crossing guards, sidewalk upgrades and better signage;											
	6	3	2	6	15	10	11	17	9	19	1	6.70
39.	Neighborhood traffic projects to reduce traffic speed and increase safety on local roads;											
	11	5	6	8	19	10	10	12	7	13	1	5.81
40.	Meeting the increasing need for transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities;											
	6	2	3	3	14	7	16	19	10	20	1	6.99
41.	Expanding and maintaining bus service in the county.											
	7	2	2	4	17	9	12	15	11	18	2	6.72
42.	Constructing a bike and pedestrian continuous trail on or near the coast through Santa Cruz County that would connect with the Monterey Bay Scenic Trail in the south;											
	15	6	3	7	12	8	8	10	10	18	1	5.91
43.	Developing a train station near Watsonville that would have AMTRAK and CalTrain connections to the San Francisco Bay Area and the rest of California;											
	8	3	2	3	8	7	10	13	11	34	1	7.36
44.	(Sample A) Developing passenger train service between Santa Cruz and Watsonville;											
	17	6	6	5	11	5	8	13	6	19	1	5.80
45.	(Sample B) Developing passenger train service from Santa Cruz that would connect to Amtrak and CalTrain service at a station near Watsonville;											
	11	5	5	4	11	7	7	11	11	27	1	6.60
46.	Expanding programs to encourage carpooling and vanpooling;											
	7	3	4	4	14	9	15	17	11	16	1	6.63
47.	Renovating the rail line to continue freight service which keeps approximately twenty-five thousand (25,000) trucks per year off the roads and highways;											
	9	2	2	3	10	7	13	18	12	21	3	6.96

Now, I'd like to tell you a little more about the Highway One project.

(rotate paragraphs 1 & 2)

Some people say that widening Highway One is crucial for our local transportation network. They believe a long term transportation plan should include one new lane in each direction, plus improvements to make the on and off ramps faster and safer. These new lanes would be designated for carpools and express buses during peak commute hours, would make it easier for emergency vehicles to get through and would be available for all drivers during non-peak hours.

Some people say that widening Highway One is unnecessary for our transportation network. They believe that the new freeway lanes would just encourage more people to drive so the freeway would be just as congested as it is now. They want a long term transportation plan that is more focused on improving public transportation, bike access and possibly having train service that connects to Amtrak and Cal-Train.

Given what you've heard

(rotate Q48-Q49)

48. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a transportation sales tax measure that **includes** widening Highway One?

Strongly support	29
Somewhat support	30
Somewhat oppose	13
Strongly oppose	24
(Don't Know)	3
(No difference/doesn't matter)	1

49. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a transportation sales tax measure that does not include widening Highway One?

Strongly support	15
Somewhat support	26
Somewhat oppose	19
Strongly oppose	36
(Don't Know)	4
(No difference/doesn't matter)	0

I'd like to tell you a little more about the rail project.

(rotate paragraph 1 & 2)

Some people say that we should be investing now so we have real and efficient transportation options in the future. They say that upgrading the existing rail line along the coast will allow us to continue to have freight train service and also begin passenger train service. If we start now, within ten years we could take a train from Santa Cruz to San Francisco, Los Angeles or simply use it to travel up and down the County getting traffic off our roads.

Some people say that while it would be great to have train service in the county, it is simply too expensive and just not a priority right now. They say that too few people will actually use the train so it doesn't justify the investment.

Given what you've heard...

(rotate Q50-Q51)

50. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a transportation sales tax measure that **includes** funding for investment in rail?
- | | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Strongly support | 31 |
| Somewhat support | 31 |
| Somewhat oppose | 14 |
| Strongly oppose | 22 |
| (Don't Know) | 2 |
| (No difference/doesn't matter) | 0 |
51. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a transportation sales tax measure that **does not include** funding for investment in rail?
- | | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Strongly support | 14 |
| Somewhat support | 26 |
| Somewhat oppose | 26 |
| Strongly oppose | 29 |
| (Don't Know) | 4 |
| (No difference/doesn't matter) | 1 |

(rotate paragraph 1 & 2)

Some people say that Santa Cruz County should have a 30-year, half cent transportation sales tax so we can make the long term investments we need in big, new transportation projects and also keep up with ongoing maintenance and improvements that will keep transportation flowing and safe for many years to come.

Some people say that Santa Cruz County does not need big new projects and we should have a short term, half cent transportation sales tax so we can keep up with maintenance and minor improvements to existing infrastructure to make sure our existing roads, sidewalks and public transit continue to work.

Given what you've heard...

52. Which do you think is better for the County: (read choices 1 & 2)
- | | |
|--|----|
| A sales tax for major transportation projects and on-going | 49 |
| A sales tax for on-going maintenance of existing systems | 27 |
| (Neither) | 14 |
| (Both) | 4 |
| (Don't Know) | 5 |

I'd like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only.

53. Are you a student at UCSC or Cabrillo College? **If yes:** Which one?
- | | |
|---|----|
| Yes, UCSC or "Santa Cruz" → skip to Q55 | 7 |
| Yes, Cabrillo College → skip to Q55 | 8 |
| No | 85 |
| (Refused/Don't know) | 1 |
54. In terms of your job status, are you employed, unemployed but looking for work, retired, a homemaker or a student?
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>(n=515)</u> |
| Employed | 61 |
| Unemployed → skip to Q56 | 3 |
| Retired → skip to Q56 | 25 |
| Student | 2 |
| Homemaker → skip to Q56 | 5 |
| Other → skip to Q56 | 3 |
| (Don't Know) → skip to Q56 | 0 |

55. On the average day, about how long does it take you to get to work or school? (**read scale if needed**)

	<u>(n=412)</u>
Under 10 minutes	28
10 to 30 minutes	40
30 to 60 minutes	22
Over 60 minutes	7
(Varies a lot)	2
(DK/Refused)	1

(Resume asking everyone)

Do you regularly, that is, at least 2 to 3 times per week, use each of the following modes of transportation:

**... do you do this at least 2 to 3 times per week?
(Randomize Q56-Q60)**

56. Ride a bicycle to school or work	
Yes, use this	13
No, don't	86
(Don't know)	1
57. Ride the bus	
Yes, use this	12
No, don't	88
(Don't know)	1
58. ride in a carpool or van pool	
Yes, use this	13
No, don't	86
(Don't know)	1
59. walk to school or work	
Yes, use this	15
No, don't	84
(Don't know)	1
60. telecommuting, that is, working from home	
Yes, use this	26
No, don't	73
(Don't know)	1

61.	To get regularly to work or school, does any member of your household travel outside of Santa Cruz County? (If Yes): Do they travel to: (read 1-4)	
	Monterey, Salinas or some other part of Monterey County;	8
	San Jose or some other part of Santa Clara County;	22
	someplace else in the San Francisco Bay Area, or	3
	somewhere else altogether	2
	(No, do not commute out of county)	62
	(Refused/Don't Know)	1
62.	Do you regularly, that is, at least 2 or 3 times a week, use Highway One to get to or from work or school, or take someone else to work or school?	
	Yes	42
	No	57
	(Don't Know/Refused)	1
63.	Do you use Highway One at least 2 or 3 times a week for other purposes?	
	Yes	72
	No	27
	(Don't Know/Refused)	0
64.	What is your age? (READ CODES IF NECESSARY)	
	18-24	10
	25-29	5
	30-34	6
	35-39	8
	40-44	8
	45-49	9
	50-54	14
	55-59	12
	60-64	9
	65+	18
	(Refused)	2
65.	Do you identify as African-American, White, Hispanic, Asian or something else:	
	African-American/Black	1
	White/Caucasian	79
	Hispanic/Latin-Am	9
	Asian/Asian-Am	1
	(Other)	7
	(Refused)	3
66.	SEX (Record from observation)	
	Male	48
	Female	52

THANK YOU!

Party	
Democrat	54
Republican	21
DTS/Other	25
Supervisor District	
District 1	21
District 2	23
District 3	23
District 4	11
District 5	22
Survey Language	
English	98
Spanish	2