



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

MINUTES

**Thursday, October 20, 2016
9:00 a.m.**

**SCCRTC Conference Room
1523 Pacific Ave
Santa Cruz, CA**

Chair Friend called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

1. Introductions

Members present:

Zach Friend	Don Lane
Ed Bottorff	Greg Caput
Randy Johnson	Ryan Coonerty
John Leopold	Donald Hagan (alt)
Dennis Norton	Virginia Johnson (alt)

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Yesenia Parra	Jenn Eames
Cory Caletti	Ginger Dykaar
Karena Pushnik	Daniel Nikuna

2. Oral communications

Jack Nelson, said that Senate Bill 32 should be incorporated into the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Additional pages for Items 4 and 5 were distributed.

CONSENT AGENDA

No consent agenda items this month

REGULAR AGENDA

4. Great Santa Cruz Trail Report – oral report for information only

George Dondero, Executive Director, introduced Bud Colligan and Drew VanHangle, consultant from Nelson/Nygaard. Mr. Colligan stated that the purpose of the report was to explore a trail-only option along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line corridor. He noted that it is important that Measure D passes and for a compromise to be made with deciding the best use of the rail corridor. Ms. VanHangel gave a presentation with an overview of the Great Santa Cruz Trail Report.

Commissioners discussed: their appreciation for the information provided in the report; the community recognizing the importance of Measure D passing; pedestrians and cyclists accommodating each other when using the same space; comparison of usage numbers on trails of differing widths; the duality of a rail with trail and experience; how deciding the best use of the rail corridor is a political decision and a rare opportunity; the importance of information to make sound decisions; the importance in stating what both sides have in common; and the expectation of further discussions.

Glen Schaller, Monterey Bay Central Labor Council (MBCLC), stated that the MBCLC is supportive of keeping the rail with trail option to connect the communities along the corridor. Mr. Schaller noted that it is important that Measure D is successful and that it is not practical to connect North and South County by a trail only.

Stanley Sokolow, said that a guided busway is compatible with the current plans for a rail with trail and should be studied as an alternative to a train because there are less space constraints with a guided busway.

Grace Voss, Santa Cruz County Cycling Club, stated that trails with an adjacent rail are growing in popularity and referred to the public comment letter from the Rails to Trails Conservatory.

Benjamin Eckert, Romero Institute, said that approximately 40% of green house gas emissions come from transportation and the Commission should pursue options that would retain the rail line to provide connections to other rail lines outside of the County.

Caroline Lamb, Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Commission, stated that she depends on public transit and is counting on a future with more public transit options. Ms. Lamb noted that it cannot be assumed that everyone is an agile bike rider.

Bruce Sawhill, Friends of the Rail and Trail (FORT), stated that the rail corridor is so valuable, it couldn't be created now if it didn't already exist. Mr. Sawhill noted that the number of cyclists is relatively small and would not justify a trail only option.

Ryan Sarnataro, said that he supports the trail only option because of the quality of life it would bring to the community. Mr. Sarnataro stated that Arana Gulch is already overcrowded and the Commission should look at the future of technology in transportation, which would not include rail.

Jack Nelson, Sierra Club, read a letter from the Sierra Club in support of the Monterey Bay Scenic Sanctuary Trail (MBSST) and rail with trail. Mr. Nelson noted that a multi-modal transportation system is feasible and that he is concerned that removing the tracks will have adverse impacts to the MBSST plans.

Ryan Whitelaw, TrailNow, stated that the County is not a metropolitan area and there is no precedence for a train. Mr. Whitelaw said that a trail would be a phenomenal resource and if it is meant to be used for alternative transportation, the designs would need to take into account the number of possible users.

Mark Mesiti-Miller, stated that the report needs to be fact checked and that he does not see how a trail only option would connect North and South County. Mr. Mesiti-Miller noted that there are lots of examples of successful rails with trails and having both would help to reduce green house gas emissions and deal with climate change.

Commissioner Johnson left the meeting.

5. Transportation Development Act (TDA) Fiscal Years 2013-2015 Triennial Performance Audit

Luis Mendez, Deputy Director, presented the staff report. Mr. Mendez introduced Derek Wong of Michael Baker International to present the 2013-2015 Triennial Performance Audit report.

Commissioners discussed: the findings and recommendations for the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) and the Volunteer Center; prioritization of the recommendations; and placing conditions on operators and requiring detailed reports that show a correlation between funding and transit service numbers.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded staff recommendations to accept the Fiscal Years (FY) 2012-13 to 2014-15 triennial performance audit report of the RTC and direct staff to implement the recommendations of the audit. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Friend, Leopold, Coonerty, Lane, Caput, Norton, Bottorff, and Commissioner Alternates Hagan and V. Johnson voting "aye".

6. Next meetings

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 3, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main St., Ste 450, Watsonville, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA.

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenn Eames, Staff

Attendees:

Bud Colligan

Grace Voss

Stanley Sokolow

Mark Mesiti-Miller

Eduardo Montecino

Glen Schaller

Benjamin Aiker

Neil Waldhaver

Caroline Lamb

Jack Nelson

Bruce Sawhill

Ryan Sarnataro

Will Mayall

Ryan Whitelaw

Drew Vangel

Piet Canin

Paul Schuellhamer

Ben Eckert

Santa Cruz County Cyclists Club

Santa Cruz Metro

Monterey Bay Central Labor Council

Sierra Club, Santa Cruz Group

Friends of the Rail Trail

TrailNow

Nelson Nygaard

Romero Institute