



**Santa Cruz County Regional  
Transportation Commission**

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**MINUTES**

**Thursday, November 5, 2015  
9:00 a.m.**

**Watsonville City Council Chambers  
275 Main Street, Suite 400  
Watsonville, CA**

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.:

Members present:

Don Lane

Bruce McPherson

Ryan Coonerty

Zach Friend

Greg Caput

Aileen Loe

Tony Gregorio

Jimmy Dutra

Dennis Norton

Randy Johnson

Ed Bottorff

Cynthia Chase

Mike Rotkin (alt.)

2. Oral communications

**Jack Nelson**, Campaign for Sensible Transportation, said that there is an energy imbalance from burning fossil fuels and said that every month 64 billion pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted from drivers in California.

**Ellen Martinez**, Trail Now, said that transportation funds need to be used to move people more efficiently. She said there are meetings scheduled, and information being shared on social media outlets to discuss converting the rail corridor into a trail only from Watsonville to Santa Cruz.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Handouts for Items 16 and 21 were distributed.

George Dondero noted that there will not be a closed session.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Brian Peoples**, with regards to Item 9 on the Consent Agenda, stated that the train tracks by the new wharf roundabout are parallel to the travel way and a danger to cyclists. He said that the cyclist involved in the accident in the roundabout was a personal friend.

Commissioner Alternate Rotkin responded that the train tracks are not parallel with the road and that there is signage warning of the tracks.

Commissioner Alternate Rotkin moved and Commissioner McPherson seconded the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Dutra, McPherson, Norton, Johnson, Caput, Coonerty, Friend, Chase, Bottorff, and Commissioner Alternate Rotkin voting "aye".

### **MINUTES**

4. Approved draft minutes of the October 1, 2015 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the October 13, 2015 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the October 19, 2015 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting

### **POLICY ITEMS**

No consent items

### **PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS**

No consent items

### **BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS**

7. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
8. Accepted FY14-15 SCCRTC Annual Internal Financial Statements

### **ADMINISTRATION ITEMS**

9. Approved rejection of claim from Brenda Sheriffs

## **INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS**

10. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
11. Accepted correspondence log
12. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies
  - a. Letter to Caltrans regarding Request for Removal of the Highway 1 Rumble Strips from the RTC Bicycle Advisory Committee
  - b. Letter to Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency regarding Support of Santa Cruz County's Safe Routes to School Planning Grant from the RTC Bicycle Advisory Committee
  - c. Letter to the commission regarding Support for Highway 9 – San Lorenzo Valley Corridor Transportation Plan Caltrans Planning Grant Application from the RTC Bicycle Advisory Committee
  - d. Letter to the City of Watsonville Public Works and Utilities Department regarding Support for funding City of Watsonville Complete Streets Plan from the RTC Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
13. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on RTC projects and transportation issues
14. Accepted information items
  - a. Article from the Santa Cruz Sentinel "To save money, states give up on repairing some rural roads" by Scott McFetridge

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

15. Commissioner reports – oral reports

No reports

16. Director's report – oral report

George Dondero, Executive Director, reported that over \$4 million in State Active Transportation Program Grants were awarded to four projects in Santa Cruz County: a segment in Watsonville for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, the Countywide Bicycle Route Signage Project, the Branciforte Creek Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge, and the Citywide Safe Routes for Schools Crossing Improvement Program. He then shared a radio ad, inspired by Public Works Director for the City of Santa Cruz, Mark Dettle, and produced by the California Alliance for Jobs, about reliable funding needed to address poor road

conditions in California. Mr. Dondero also reported on: Caltrans having installed 7 more traffic cameras on Highway 1; the Federal Transportation Act and extensions while Congress continues to work on securing long-term transportation reauthorization; the shortage of funds from the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that will cause 25% of projects to be delayed and making the need for new local revenues even more critical; volunteers needed for the California Road Charge Pilot Program, that is designed as a possible alternative to gas taxes; rail corridor clean-up efforts; and the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County hosting a Rail Trail presentation at the Hotel Paradox on December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

Mr. Dondero noted that the upcoming Transportation Policy Workshop (TPW) on November 19<sup>th</sup> will focus on the proposed expenditure plan for a 2016 sales tax measure.

**Brian Peoples**, said he expects there will be a big turnout for the upcoming TPW meeting.

Commissioners discussed: the need for transparency of the proposed expenditure plan and directed staff to look for a larger venue for the TPW meeting to accommodate members of the public and to have the meeting recorded by Community TV for public viewing.

17. Appoint nominating committee for 2016 RTC Chair and Vice Chair

Vice-Chair Lane appointed Commissioner Leopold, McPherson, and Lane for the 2016 RTC Chair and Vice Chair nominating committee.

Commissioner Norton motioned and Commissioner Coonerty seconded the appointments. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Dutra, Norton, Johnson, McPherson, Caput, Coonerty, Friend, Chase, Bottorff, and Commissioner Alternate Rotkin voting "aye".

18. Caltrans report and consider action items

Aileen Loe reported on: California and Caltrans launching its first ever statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan; 87 projects totaling \$180 million that were awarded by the California Transportation Coalition (CTC); and the need for input for the California Road Charge Pilot Program. Ms. Loe invited the Commission to the Statewide Transportation Conference in Los Angeles on December 2-4, 2015 and distributed the *Mile Marker* report.

Commissioners discussed: the fee for the Veteran's Day parade and thanked Caltrans for their follow through on projects.

19. Highway 17 Access Management Plan (AMP) Update

Aileen Loe introduced Kelly McClendon, Associate Transportation Planner at Caltrans District 5, and Joe Erwin, Transportation Engineer. Mr. McClendon and Mr. Erwin presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Highway 17 Access Management Plan (AMP). Mr. McClendon noted that through the efforts of the Safe on 17 TASK Force, there have been over \$23 million in capital improvements on Highway 17. Mr. Erwin stated the AMP has been identified as the most sustainable tool for Highway 17 and by applying AMP principles, congestion will be reduced and conflict points removed.

Mr. McClendon noted there will be workshops on: November 17<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at Happy Valley Elementary School; November 18<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. at the Downtown Farmers Market; November 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at Loma Prieta School; and on December 2<sup>nd</sup> at San Lorenzo Valley – Valley Views. The final Access Management Plan will be presented in summer 2016. A website will be launched On November 12<sup>th</sup> ([www.ca-hwy17amp.org](http://www.ca-hwy17amp.org)).

Commissioners discussed: mobility benefits and priorities; METRO Highway 17 buses; public outreach and input; funding sources; access points; increased requests for routes across Highway 17; long term feasibility; and engagement with Caltrans District 4.

**Brian Peoples**, asked if advanced vehicle technology was being incorporated into the AMP.

20. Project Updates from City of Watsonville Public Works – oral presentation

Murray Fontes, City of Watsonville Principle Engineer discussed several completed and planned projects in Watsonville, including: reconstruction of roadway, increased safety for pedestrians and bicycle riders, roadway preservation, pedestrian improvements, traffic control, roundabouts and the recently funded segment on the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST).

Commissioners discussed: the Active Transportation Program (ATP) funding and staffing for projects.

21. Highway 1 Project – Tier I and Tier II Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Assessment

Kim Shultz, Senior Transportation Planner, presented his staff report.

Mr. Shultz introduced Parag Mehta, Project Manager, and Laura Prickett, Environmental Lead, who presented a PowerPoint presentation on the overview of the Highway 1 Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (DEIR/EIR).

The Highway 1 Tier I and Tier II Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Assessment was released on November 4<sup>th</sup> for public review and is available on RTC and Caltrans websites. Staff has done several outreach efforts, including: an eNews and informational flyers to residents and businesses within a quarter mile of the projects; ads being placed in newspapers, and there will be an Open House on Thursday, December 3, 2015 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Live Oak Elementary School Multipurpose room. The comment period has been extended until Monday, January 18, 2016.

Commissioner Caput left the meeting at 10:40 a.m. and was replaced by Commissioner alternate Tony Gregorio.

Commissioner Coonerty left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Commissioner Johnson left the meeting at 11:24 a.m.

Commissioners discussed: the need to become a self help county; projected timeline for project completion; the use of shoulders for buses; destination studies; length of validity of the Tier I analysis; Caltrans advocating and exploring other avenues for funds; and public involvement and comprehension of the complexities of the project.

**Jack Nelson** displayed pictures of different transportation modes, while discussing sustainability, and the lack of efficiency in cars. Mr. Nelson stated that we need to work on the current climate situation so it doesn't get worse.

**Lowell Hurst**, Watsonville City Council member, said the congestion is getting worse and progress needs to be made with alternatives and constructive methods to bridge the gap between answers and progress. He also stated that there is a need for housing and job balance and the needs are great, but the resources are slim.

**Candace Brown**, Santa Cruz resident, stated that East Morrissey has become an artery of Highway 1 and at times seems busier than the highway. She also noted that she is uncomfortable with the density.

22. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

None

23. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 3, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 19, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

The meeting adjourned at: 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Rodriguez, Staff

Attendees:

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| Jack Nelson      | Campaign for Sensible Transportation         |
| Brian Peoples    | Trail Now                                    |
| Virginia Johnson | Santa Cruz County                            |
| Ellen Martinez   | Trail Now                                    |
| Kelly McClendon  | Caltrans                                     |
| Joe Erwin        | Caltrans                                     |
| Murray Fontes    | City of Watsonville                          |
| Heather Adamson  | Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments |
| Laura Prickett   |  |
| Parag Mehta      |  |
| Paul Elerick     |  |
| Lowell Hurst     |  |
| Candace Brown    |  |

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