



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

MINUTES

**Thursday, May 5, 2016
9:00 a.m.**

**Capitola City Council Chambers
420 Capitola Avenue
Capitola, CA**

1. Roll call

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

Members present:

Don Lane	Dennis Norton
Ryan Coonerty	Ed Bottorff
Jimmy Dutra	Zach Friend
Randy Johnson	John Leopold
Greg Caput	Karina Cervantez
Bruce McPherson	Aileen Loe (ex-officio)
Tony Gregorio (alt.)	

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Yesenia Parra	Jennifer Rodriguez
Grace Blakeslee	Cory Caletti
Rachel Moriconi	Ginger Dykaar

Commissioner Norton welcomed everyone to Capitola and noted that when the beachside towns were first built, the railroad provided the means to travel between cities. He stated that we are on our way to providing that connectivity once again.

2. Oral communications

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, said that Trail Now ~~supports the proposed~~ **is generally supportive of the transportation improvement sales tax measure and, however their group does not support the current plan which they see as delaying the Coastal Rail Trail project because of the rail transit analysis. Trail Now also supports the Santa Cruz Metropolitan District, including use of rapid bus transit on Highway 1. utilizing Santa Cruz Metro. Mr. Peoples noted that Trail Now believes that building the trail **could take place faster** ~~would not take years to complete~~ if the tracks were removed. He ~~stated that the project should not be delayed because of the need for more studies.~~**

Bruce Van Allen, Campaign for Sensible Transportation (CFST), said he supports a sales tax measure if widening the highway is not included and is grateful for the RTC's efforts to become a self help county. He urged the Commission to seek a measure that will meet consensus. Petitions said to be signed by over 2,000 Santa Cruz County residents were given to the Commission.

Jack Nelson and Rick Longinotti, CFST, presented a slideshow with information on CFST's proposed allocations for the proposed sales tax measure, the Highway 1 environmental documents, and the Transportation System Management (TSM) alternatives. Mr. Nelson invited the Commission to attend a public meeting on May 16th at 10:30 a.m. at the Loudon Nelson Center. Mr. Longinotti stated that we need to find a community consensus for the proposed tax measure.

Micah Posner, stated that he is very committed to having a train in Santa Cruz County and doesn't believe that widening Highway 1 will work to alleviate congestion. Mr. Posner said there needs to be compromise for a consensus and provided the Commission with an alternative sales tax measure allocation plan.

Paul Elerick, CFST, said that he supports the proposed sales tax measure because he sees the need to become a self help county to make people's lives better. He noted that auxiliary lanes are not the same as widening the highway. Mr. Elerick stated that we shouldn't let the perfect be the enemy of the good, as compromise is needed to get the community together.

Steve Piercy, Soquel resident, said that he often uses alternative transportation to do his part in relieving traffic congestion and wants the proposed sales tax measure to improve transportation modes for all users. Mr. Piercy stated that he supports Vision Zero and encourages alternative transportation for the health of the community.

Dan Stevenson, Santa Cruz Metro bus driver, said the proposed sales tax measure will provide a good opportunity to take local control of environmental risks and more should be allocated toward transit, noting that Santa Cruz Metro's structural deficit and cuts will negatively impact the community. Mr. Stevenson stated that the hallmarks of sustainable transportation include environmental justice.

Robert Morgan, Live Oak resident, stated that although there are many frustrations with the highway, widening Highway 1 will invite more CO₂ emissions, traffic congestion, and green house gases. Mr. Morgan noted that there is a great need for more public transit.

Peter Scott, said widening Highway 1 will not work and invited everyone to the CFST's public event. Mr. Scott provided the Commission with comments received by CFST concerning the proposed sales tax measure allocation plan.

Debby Bulger, said it is important to become a self help county and wants the proposed sales tax measure to pass. She stated that there are some good projects with community consensus; however the controversial issues should be addressed later to give the measure a greater chance of passing.

Pauline Seales, stated that the Santa Cruz Metro system doesn't provide enough services to enough places. Ms. Seales noted that although the RTC is not to blame, the public may perceive the RTC's sales tax measure to be the reason for Santa Cruz Metro's cuts, as bus services are needed more than widening the highway.

Citizen, stated that upgrades to METRO services are needed to attract riders so public transit will no longer be viewed as a last resort option. He said that as an alternative to widening the highway, funds should be invested in a fleet of electric bikes to get cars off of the freeway.

Catherine Steele, said that she relies heavily on public transit. She noted that routes that are not along the Soquel corridor are particularly difficult to navigate. Ms. Steele noted that she would strongly support a measure that would guarantee allocations to the Santa Cruz Metro system.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Item 24 was removed from the regular agenda and a handout for Item 25 was distributed. There will be no closed session.

CONSENT AGENDA

Amelia Conlen, Bike Santa Cruz County, urged the Commission to support Item 9. Ms. Conlen provided information on the Community Traffic Safety Coalition's (CTSC) Vision Zero work plan and encouraged everyone to support that initiative and to participate in Bike to Work Day next week.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commission Norton seconded approval of the items listed under the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Coonerty, McPherson, Caput, Leopold, Norton, Bottorff, Cervantez, Johnson, and Dutra, voting "aye".

MINUTES

4. Approved draft minutes of the April 7, 2016 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the April 12, 2016 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the April 21, 2016 Interagency Technical 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 the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-2015 Fiscal Audit Reports (reports included for Commissioners Only) Reports available online.
9. Approved the Fiscal Year 2016-17 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 8 Claims for the Community Traffic Safety Coalition, the Ride 'n' Stride Program, and the Bike to Work Program (**Resolutions 17-16 and 18-16**)

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

10. Approved appointments of members to the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

11. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
12. Accepted correspondence log
13. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies - *None*
14. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on RTC projects and transportation issues
15. Accepted information items - *None*

REGULAR AGENDA

16. Commissioner reports – oral reports - *None*
17. Director's Report – oral report

George Dondero, Executive Director, reported that the Highway 1 draft environmental documents' original projections from traffic modeling exercises are expected to be redone; and noted that important decisions regarding the Transportation Improvement Plan (TRIP) will be discussed at the June 16th Transportation Policy Workshop (TPW).

18. Caltrans report and consider action items

Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5 Deputy Director, distributed the latest addition of the *Mile Marker*. She reported on: the Mileage Based Road User Fee program seeking rural driver volunteers; the Statewide Bike and Pedestrian Plan's goal to triple bike and double pedestrian and transit trips; the call for projects for cycle 3 of the Active Transportation Program (ATP) for capital improvements; the California Sustainable Freight Action Program's goal for a cleaner and more efficient movement of freight; and public workshops for the Highway 17 Access Management Plan (AMP) being held in June.

Commissioners discussed their appreciation for Caltrans' efforts on long term projects and for waiving the fee for the Veteran's Day parade in Watsonville.

Brian Peoples, said that he supports transportation infrastructure investments because when lanes on the highway are closed, it causes more green house gases from the traffic congestion.

19. 9:30 PUBLIC HEARING 2016 Unmet Paratransit and Transit Needs

Grace Blakeslee, Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Blakeslee noted that the RTC regularly solicits input to assess and prioritize the transportation needs of seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals.

Chair Lane opened the Public Hearing for the 2016 Unmet Paratransit and Transit Needs at 10:02 a.m.

Brian Peoples, stated that Trail Now met with Santa Cruz Metro regarding the importance of attracting more riders to sustain the bus systems. He noted that when cuts are made to the general transit system, it impacts paratransit services as well.

Dan Stevenson, said that bus drivers should be consulted to address the needs of the transit system, as the needs are only partially identified by current users. Mr. Stevenson stated that the current transit needs are the same transit needs in the future, and both must be addressed now because pollution and driving will get worse.

The Public Hearing was closed at 10:07 a.m.

Commissioners discussed: transit friendly lane uses; Commissioners noted that Santa Cruz METRO is an independent body from the RTC; the misconception that the Commission's proposed Transportation Improvement Plan (TRIP) negatively affects the Santa Cruz METRO, when in fact an allocation to METRO's ParaCruz service is included in the TRIP; the importance of public meetings that help to inform local citizens of the issues in the transportation system; understanding that an increase in ridership doesn't

mean that the deficit goes away; the opportunity for bus drivers to utilize their union representatives to communicate ideas or recommendations to boards; looking at the big picture with the lack of incoming monies and dealing with the deficit situation at hand with the resources currently available; and making sure the tax dollars get back into the community so they can be put back into the transportation system.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded the staff recommendations to adopt the *2016 Unmet Paratransit and Transit Needs*, with revisions as appropriate; and to consider unmet paratransit and transit needs as funding becomes available. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Caput, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Norton, Dutra, Bottorff, Cervantez, and Johnson voting "aye".

20. Fiscal Year 2016-17 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Claims for Volunteer Center, Community Bridges and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District.

Grace Blakeslee, Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Blakeslee noted that the annual fiscal year (FY) 2016-17 claims are compliant with the state requirements and the RTC's rules and regulations.

Community Bridges Lift Line, Kirk Ance, reported that the TDA funds provide free, non-medical and emergency rides for around 700 Santa Cruz County individuals enrolled, that are either 200% below the poverty level and/or disabled and elderly. Mr. Ance stated that last fiscal year, over 86,000 rides were provided and that the current claim has been increased by 5% to accommodate dialysis transportation as requested by doctors.

Volunteer Center, Debbie Brooks, reported that volunteer drivers, using their own cars, have been providing one-on-one door-to-door rides for over 40 years in Santa Cruz County. Ms. Brooks stated that this service is a cost effective program and serves those individuals that fall between the cracks of the other alternative transportation options.

Santa Cruz Metro, Alex Clifford, reported that last fiscal year Santa Cruz Metro provided over 750,000 fixed route trips to the elderly and disabled and 98,000 trips through ParaCruz. He stated that an updated balanced budget proposal, based on a service reduction will be presented to the board on May 13th. Following a 30-day public comment period, a final decision to adopt the budget will be made on June 24th. If adopted, the service cuts would be implemented on September 8, 2016. Mr. Clifford noted that Metro acknowledges that the RTC's actions have not negatively impacted the transit system and is thankful for the consideration of the allocation in the proposed Transportation Improvement Plan (TRIP).

Commissioners discussed: the essential services provided by Lift Line, the Volunteer Center, and ParaCruz; and how the public can support Santa Cruz Metro by buying locally and supporting the proposed sales tax measure.

Commissioner McPherson moved and Commissioner Leopold seconded the staff recommendations to:

1. Adopt **(Resolution 19-16)** approving the FY 2016-17 TDA Article 8 funds claim in the amount of \$658,360 from Community Bridges to provide transportation for seniors and people with disabilities, contingent on approval from the City of Santa Cruz to act as the claimant;
2. Adopt **(Resolution 20-16)** approving the FY 2016-17 TDA Article 8 funds claim in the amount of \$78,376 from the Volunteer Center to administer the volunteer driver transportation program primarily serving seniors, contingent on approval from the City of Santa Cruz to act as the claimant;
3. Adopt **(Resolution 21-16)** approving the FY 2016-17 TDA Article 4 funds claim in the amount of \$6,701,163 from the Santa Cruz County Metropolitan Transit District to provide operating assistance for fixed route public transit and American Disability Act complementary paratransit operations; and
4. and to postpone sub-allocation of the State Transit Assistance (STA) funds to the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District until the State clarifies the distribution formula for the remaining 2015-2016 allocation and the 2016-2017 allocation.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Caput, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Norton, Dutra, Bottorff, Cervantez, and Johnson voting "aye".

21. 2016 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Update

Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Moriconi noted that the RTC had approved using other regional funds for projects that were previously budgeted through the STIP funds to avoid project delays. She reminded the Commission that due to a severe drop in revenues from state gasoline taxes, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is having to delay projects previously approved for STIP funds and is deleting \$754 million in projects statewide.

Commissioners discussed: the Harkin Slough project's timeline; fuel taxes impacting the STIP; the need to continue work on already planned projects, so they will be ready to go when funding is available; the disappointment of the underinvestment in South County with the majority of projects needing to be delayed being in the Watsonville area; Capitola and Scotts Valley not having any allocations; the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) working to elevate transportation issues and the need for the Governor to properly address transportation needs; a letter from Commissioner Alternate Lowell concerning necessary infrastructure projects in South County; disappointment in the shifting of priorities and the lack of action on finding additional funding

both at the state and federal level; and the RTC's commitment to use other funds to advance projects that are not on the CTC's list of projects.

George Dondero, noted that the STIP is not an ideal program for funding local projects and acknowledged Ms. Moriconi's efforts to complete grant deadlines. He stated that having delayed projects really underlines the fact that we need to become a self-help county.

Brian Peoples, said that Trail Now supports becoming a self-help county as long as the funds are efficiently utilized.

Maria Rodriguez, City of Watsonville, thanked the RTC for the support on the Highway 1 and Harkins Slough projects. She stated that Watsonville is continuing to work with Caltrans on various projects and will continue to look for additional funding.

Commissioner Dutra moved and directed staff to write a formal letter to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) requesting that funds not be deleted or delayed. Commissioner McPherson seconded the direction and staff recommendation to receive information regarding the CTC staff recommendations for the 2016 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and commit to programming future STIP and/or future Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds to a project at the Highway 1/Harkins Slough Road Interchange, if Watsonville does not secure Active Transportation Program (ATP) funding for the project. The motion passed with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Norton, Dutra, Bottorff, Cervantez, and Johnson voting "aye" and Commissioner Caput voting "no".

Commissioner Friend and Commissioner Cervantez left the meeting.

22. 2016 Regional Transportation Improvement Program Call for Projects

Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Moriconi noted that applications will be due on July 14, 2016 and a public hearing will be held in September to take final actions to program the funds.

Commissioners discussed the opportunity to accelerate projects efficiently with the funding that could be potentially available from becoming a self help county.

Commissioner McPherson moved and Commissioner Leopold seconded the staff recommendation for the RTC to issue a call for projects for new transportation funds anticipated to be available through fiscal year 2017-2018 (FY 17/18) and approve evaluation criteria for this grant cycle as summarized. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Caput, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Norton, Dutra, Bottorff, and Johnson voting "aye".

23. Allocation Formulas to Local Jurisdictions – in the Transportation Improvement Plan for a 2016 Transportation Ballot Measure

George Dondero, Executive Director, presented the staff report. Mr. Dondero noted that the recommended formula is based on 29% population, 39% lane miles of roadway, and 32% site of tax generated to allocate the portion of revenue going to Neighborhood Projects.

Commissioners discussed: projections and allocations to the cities; the difficulty in finding a formula that everyone believes is fair; the need for compromise and concerns on reaching a consensus; the many projects within each bucket of the Transportation Improvement Plan (TRIP); the Ad-Hoc committee's diligence in trying to balance the transportation needs of the county; the importance of uniting as a board and community to move the tax measure forward; how the sales tax is generated in different cities; and the need to become a self-help county because we are all in this together.

Commissioner Caput left the meeting and Commissioner Alternate Tony Gregorio took his place.

Dan Stevenson, said that the allocations should be based on needs and not on population. He noted that the maintenance cost for Metro will increase and transportation experts should be consulted.

Brian Peoples, stated that the allocation strategy would be more appropriate with only 3 buckets.

Commissioner Norton moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded the staff recommendation to approve a distribution formula to allocate funds for local jurisdictions' projects in the Investment Plan for the 2016 proposed ballot measure. The motion passed with Commissioners Lane, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Norton, Dutra, Bottorff, and Johnson voting "aye" and Commissioner Alternate Gregorio voting "no".

24. Empty Car Storage on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line – *Item removed from the agenda*

25. Transportation Funding Poll Consultant Agreement

George Dondero, Executive Director, presented the staff report. Mr. Dondero noted that the poll of likely votes will be conducted in Santa Cruz County on priorities and local funding options for transportation projects to address the significant backlog of transportation system needs.

Commissioners discussed how the effort to have the poll done by the RTC makes sense.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Norton seconded the staff recommendation to:

1. Approve **(Resolution 22-16)** authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a consultant agreement for a countywide poll of likely voters on local funding options for transportation projects with Fairbanks, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates for an amount not to exceed \$33,000; and
2. Direct the Expenditure Plan Ad-Hoc committee to work with staff to oversee development and implementation of the voter survey.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Norton, Dutra, Bottorff, Johnson, and Commissioner Alternate Gregorio voting "aye".

Commissioner Coonerty left the meeting.

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

The Regional Transportation Commission meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Ginger Dykaar, Transportation Planner, presented the staff report and a PowerPoint presentation.

Commissioners discussed: average weekday traffic volumes by the hour; the need for call boxes along the highway; and appreciation for Ms. Dykaar's work on the annual report.

Dan Stevenson, thanked the RTC for their work to increase the safety on Highway 17.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Bottorff seconded the staff recommendation to accept the 2015 Annual Report for the Safe on 17 Safety Corridor Program. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, McPherson, Leopold, Norton, Dutra, Bottorff, Johnson, and Commissioner Alternate Gregorio voting "aye".

The special meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.

27. Reconvene the Regional Transportation Commission meeting

The meeting was reconvened at 10:49 a.m.

28. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

There was no closed session.

CLOSED SESSION

- 29. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-EXISTING LITIGATION. (Paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code) Santa Cruz Superior Court Case No. CV182123
- 30. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-ANTICIPATED LITIGATION. Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government code: one case

OPEN SESSION

- 31. Report on closed session – *None*
- 32. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 2, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main St. Ste 450, Watsonville, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Rodriguez, Staff

Attendees:

Alex Clifford	Santa Cruz Metro
Amelia Conlen	Bike Santa Cruz County
Bob Morgan	Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Brian Peoples	Trail Now
Bruce Van Allen	Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Catherine Steele	
Dan Stevenson	Santa Cruz Metro
Debbie Bulger	
Denn Loijos	Health Services Agency
Heather Adamson	Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
Jack Nelson	Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Jacques Beutuaud	
Joe Jordan	

Kirk Ance
Maria Ester Rodriguez
Paul Elerick
Pauline Seales
Peter Scott
Piet Canin
Rick Longinotti
Sandy Brown
Theresia Rogerson
Thomas Hiltner

Community Bridges Lift Line
City of Watsonville
Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Ecology Action
Campaign for Sensible Transportation

Health Services Agency
Santa Cruz Metropolitan