



**Santa Cruz County Regional
Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, September 1, 2016
9:00 a.m.**

**County Board of Supervisors Chambers
701 Ocean St., 5th floor
Santa Cruz, CA**

1. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

Members present:

Don Lane	Zach Friend
Karina Cervantez	Jimmy Dutra
Ryan Coonerty	Cynthia Chase
Ed Bottorff	Virginia Johnson (alt)
Greg Caput	Michael Termini (alt)
Donna Lind (alt)	Dave Reid (alt)
Aileen Loe (ex-officio)	

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Jennifer Rodriguez	Yesenia Parra
Rachel Moriconi	Grace Blakeslee
Kim Shultz	Karena Pushnik

2. Oral communications

Brian Peoples, TrailNow.org, said that it is very important for the Commission to be transparent and communicate with the community the difference between the rail trail and a rail with trail. Mr. Peoples stated that TrailNow.org supports Measure D.

Jack Nelson, Campaign for Sensible Transportation, said that widening Highway 1 will expand the county's greatest producer of green house gases and that Senate Bill 1383 seeks to reduce emissions by 40% by 2030.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

A handout for Item 17 and add-ons for Items 19 and 20 were distributed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Coonerty moved and Commissioner Alternate Termini seconded the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Dutra, Caput, Bottorff, Cervantez, Coonerty, and Commissioner Alternates Lind, Reid, Termini, and Johnson voting "aye".

MINUTES

4. Approved draft minutes of the August 4, 2016 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Approved draft minutes of the August 4, 2016 Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the August 8, 2016 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting
7. Accepted draft minutes of the August 9, 2016 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting
8. Approved draft minutes of the August 18, 2016 Transportation Policy Workshop meeting
9. Accepted draft minutes of the August 18, 2016 Interagency Transportation Advisory Committee meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

No consent items

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

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

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

No consent items

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

1. Article from the August 20, 2016 Sentinel "Getting Santa Cruz moving" by Don Lane and Zach Friend

REGULAR AGENDA

16. Commissioner reports – oral reports

None

17. Director's Report – oral report

George Dondero, Executive Director, reported on: the updated Santa Cruz County bikeways map, produced by the RTC and now available; the Frazier-Beall transportation funding bill still on hold; \$145 million of cap-and-trade revenues allocated to fund the Transit and Intercity Rail Program, and the California Transportation Commission's Active Transportation Program; the Final Schematic Plan for the City of Santa Cruz Rail Trail Project being presented on September 19th and construction scheduled to occur by 2018; and public information activities being planned for Measure D for the upcoming November ballot.

18. Caltrans report and consider action items

Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5 Deputy Director, reported on: applications for the newest round for the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant program due November 4th; the 2017 Environmental Excellence Awards through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); and updates to the projects listed on the comprehensive semiannual list for State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP).

Commissioners discussed: project locations for Highway 152 pedestrian signals; pedestrian crosswalks needed in Watsonville; American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliances for sidewalks; and coordination between Santa Cruz County Public Works and Caltrans for access to traffic light controllers in Capitola on 41st Avenue.

Commissioner Chase arrived to the meeting.

19. 9:15 PUBLIC HEARING: Adoption of the 2016 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Moriconi reported that the proposed list of projects to receive the approximately \$7 million in available STBG funds have been vetted through the RTC advisory committees and all public works representatives. The evaluation criteria included: the number of people served; demonstrated safety needs; preservation of existing programs; and reducing the number of miles needed to drive.

Commissioners discussed: the scope and timeline of projects; the deliverability of projects that are partially funded; the repairs needed on the sinking bridge at Casserly Road in Watsonville; projects that put safety first versus aesthetic projects;

the goal of having Open Streets events throughout the county; Cruz511 and the bikeways map moving forward with technology advances; support for Measure D to bring money to the districts for transportation projects; and Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration being the lead agencies for the Highway 1 Draft Environmental Impact Review/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA).

Chair Lane opened the Public Hearing at 9:49 a.m.

Jack Nelson, said that Open Streets is a visionary process that cannot be measured with statistics and that funds should be redirected from studying Highway 1 to sustainable transportation alternatives.

Janneke Lang, Bike Santa Cruz County, said that she appreciates the support received for the Open Streets events and asked the Commission to approve the request of \$20,000 to support having an Open Streets event in Watsonville in 2017.

Alex Clifford, Santa Cruz Metro, thanked the Commission for their staff's recommendation of STBG funding for a compressed natural gas bus and stated that they are working on acquiring new buses through various grant programs, and so far have received enough funding for 5 out of the 70 buses needing to be replaced.

Brian Peoples, said that it is very important to have clear communication with the community on how tax payers' money will be spent and that a decision needs to be made on whether there will be a train or a trail.

Peter Scott, Campaign for Sensible Transportation, stated that he is particularly interested in pedestrian issues and supports the Pacific Avenue sidewalk project.

Stanley Socolow, resident, said that having funds allocated toward finalizing the Highway 1 Draft EIR/EA will be an obstacle for Measure D and the effects of widening the highway need to be verified.

Raymond Santee, Central Home Supply, stated that there are shortfalls of widening Highways 1 and 9, and the proposed changes will make it difficult to conduct business at the Santa Cruz location. Mr. Santee said that there needs to be more access to Harvey West and to the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC).

Chair Lane closed the Public Hearing at 10:04 a.m.

Commissioner Friend moved and Commissioner Alternate Termini seconded staff recommendations to:

1. Adopt **Resolution 04-17** to program approximately \$7 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds in the 2016 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) as recommended by staff; and amend the RTC Budget and Work Program to exchange the federal STBG funds for state funds (RSTPX) for those projects that will be implemented within the next twelve months, and apply the funds to the corresponding RTC projects in the RTC budget, as applicable;
2. Request that the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) incorporate these funding actions into the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) as applicable; and

3. Amend allocations to include \$10,000 to the Watsonville Open Streets event, contingent on the event taking place in 2017, by reducing allocations by \$5,000 from both the Water Street project in Santa Cruz and the Freedom Boulevard project in Watsonville.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Chase, Dutra, Caput, Bottorff, Cervantez, Coonerty, and Commissioner Alternates Lind, Reid, Termini, and Johnson voting "aye".

20. Roadmap for Rail Corridor development

George Dondero, Executive Director, presented the staff report. Mr. Dondero reported that the context of relevant work that affects plans for the rail corridor have been reviewed and any decisions made will be consistent with the goals included in the approved Regional Transportation Plan.

Commissioners discussed: the importance of the data provided from the Unified Corridor Study to clarify the three main corridors available for use and to assist with making efficient decisions for the best uses of the corridors; decisions for the corridors dependent on Measure D passing; the need to have an outline and a year-long timeline with the different scenarios for the rail corridor; the importance of building infrastructure that is adaptable to future technology advances; scarce resources and being realistic with what is possible for the rail corridor; forming an ad-hoc working group to assist with transparency efforts; the rail corridor being an underused asset; making a decision to use the rail corridor now versus conducting more studies; legal obstacles with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and a possible change of use for the rail corridor that would include environmental review; providing expectations for the community and Commission to guide discussion towards an outcome; the option of having the rail infrastructure for possible future use; and using a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis (SWOT) for strategic decisions.

Bud Colligan, Live Oak resident, said that there needs to be a fair, timely, and transparent analysis with a strategic solution set by a balanced group of people to determine facts. Mr. Colligan noted that the Great Santa Cruz Trail Study was done by a broad group of community leaders and is supported by many in the county.

Jack Nelson, stated that the RTC has done well with providing public process for public input, and should utilize the input received and consultant analysis to develop the rail corridor as a resource for alternative and sustainable transportation.

Brian Peoples, said that the rail corridor needs to be utilized now to deal with traffic congestion, while a timely analysis that includes vehicle technology and social transit is concurrently conducted. Mr. Peoples noted that the ideology of trains needs to stop and there needs to be an emphasis on building public trust.

Ernestina Saldaña, stated that she is disheartened that Open Streets will not be taking place in Live Oak and doesn't believe a rail with trail will work in the neighborhood. Ms. Saldaña said that the streets are difficult and dangerous to cross because of the heavy traffic and widening the highway will increase cars and green house gas emissions.

Commissioner Friend moved and Commissioner Chase seconded the motion to direct staff to come back to the Commission on their first meeting after the November election with an outline for the possible uses of the rail corridor: a rail with trail, trail only, and bus rapid transit (BRT), with 3 key components:

1. The legal requirements, including whether a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would be required;
2. A cost analysis for each option, based on current studies; and
3. A general timeline for implementation of these projects.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Chase, Dutra, Caput, Bottorff, Cervantez, Coonerty, and Commissioner Alternates Lind, Reid, Termini, and Johnson voting "aye".

21. Amendments to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17 Budget and Work Program

Luis Mendez, Deputy Director, presented the staff report. Mr. Mendez reported that the amended RTC Budget and Work Program includes funding for the Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Plan and the Unified Corridor Investment Study through recent grants awarded to the RTC from the Caltrans' Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program.

Commissioner Chase moved and Commissioner Dutra seconded staff recommendations to approve **Resolution 05-17** to:

1. Amend the FY 2016-17 Budget and Work Program to add newly secured grant funds and the corresponding work program elements; and
2. Authorize the Executive Director to solicit necessary consultant services and enter in necessary agreements with partner agencies to produce the work funded by the newly secured grants.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Norton, Chase, Dutra, Caput, Bottorff, Cervantez, Coonerty, and Commissioner Alternates Lind, Reid, and Johnson voting "aye".

22. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

CLOSED SESSION

23. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-EXISTING LITIGATION. (Paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code) Santa Clara Superior Court Case No. 16CV293441

OPEN SESSION

24. Report on closed session

No closed session

25. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 6, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean St., 5th floor, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA.

The meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Rodriguez, Staff

Attendees:

Alex Clifford	Santa Cruz Metro
Bill	Granite Rock
Brian Peoples	TrailNow.org
Bud Colligan	
Chris Schneider	City of Santa Cruz
Claire Fleisler	City of Santa Cruz
Eric Child	
Ernestina Saldaña	
Heather Adamson	Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
Jack Nelson	Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Jeanne LePage	Ecology Action
Jenneke Lang	Bike Santa Cruz County
John Presleigh	Santa Cruz County Public Works
Kara Guzmen	Santa Cruz Sentinel
Maria Ester Rodriguez	City of Watsonville
Murray Fontes	City of Watsonville
Peter Scott	Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Raymond Santee	Central Home Supply
Scott Hamby	City of Scotts Valley
Steve Sokolow	