



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)

AGENDA

**Thursday, September 20, 2012
1:30 p.m.**

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

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. Oral communications

The Committee will receive oral communications during this time on items not on today's agenda. Presentations must be within the jurisdiction of the Committee, and may be limited in time at the discretion of the Chair. Committee members will not take action or respond immediately to any Oral Communications presented, but may choose to follow up at a later time, either individually, or on a subsequent Committee agenda.

4. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

CONSENT AGENDA

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 Committee or public wishes an item be removed and discussed on the regular agenda. Members of the Committee 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 committee member objects to the change.

5. Approve Minutes of the June 21, 2012 ITAC meeting - Page 3
6. Notice of Preparation for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) - Page 7
Comments on the scope of the Program-EIR are due September 22, 2012
7. Notice: Bike to Work Day October 4, 2012 - Page 9
8. Upcoming Grant Opportunities –
 - i. Environmental Enhancement And Mitigation Program - Guidelines and Application available October 1, 2012 at <http://resources.ca.gov/eem/>
 - ii. Local Assistance Bridge Program - Applications due September 30, 2012

REGULAR AGENDA

9. Status of ongoing transportation projects, programs, studies and planning documents -

Verbal updates from project sponsors

10. Update on the Federal Transportation Act/MAP-21 Implementation and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funding - Page 10
 - a. Staff report
 - b. Comparison of SAFETEA-LU, MAP-21 and Preliminary Proposals for FHWA programs
11. Debrief on Deferred Transportation Funding Ballot Measure - Page 19
 - a. Staff Report
 - b. News Release: RTC votes to defer local road repair funding measure (8/2/12)
12. 2014 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): Financial Element - Page 23
 - a. Staff report
 - b. State Needs Assessment Funding Chart
13. Regional Transportation Plan Map Review
 - a. Presentation of high collision location and transportation disadvantaged population maps
14. On-Board Transit Ridership Study - Page 26
 - a. Copy of September 6, 2012 staff report to RTC

NEXT MEETING: The next ITAC meeting is scheduled for **October 18, 2012 at 1:30 PM** in the SCCRTC Conference Room, 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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**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)**

DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday, June 21, 2012
1:30 p.m.

SCCRTC Conference Room
1523 Pacific Ave, Santa Cruz, CA

ITAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Tove Beatty, Santa Cruz METRO
Russell Chen, County Planning Proxy
Mark Dettle, City of Santa Cruz Planning Proxy
Erich Friedrich, Santa Cruz METRO
Steve Jesberg, City of Capitola Public Works and Planning Proxy
Bhupendra Patel, AMBAG
Maria Esther Rodriguez, City of Watsonville Public Works and Community Development Proxy
Alan Romero, MBUAPCD
Chris Schneider, City of Santa Cruz Public Works
Steve Wiesner, County Public Works
Majid Yamin, City of Scotts Valley Public Works and Planning Proxy

STAFF PRESENT

Ginger Dykaar
Rachel Moriconi

OTHER PRESENT

Mark McCumsey, Caltrans District 5 (*by telephone*)

-
1. Call to Order – Chair Chris Schneider called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.
 2. Introductions – Self introductions were made.
 3. Oral communications – None.
 4. Changes consent and regular agendas – Item 8 was moved after Item 9

CONSENT AGENDA (Wiesner/Beatty) approved unanimously

5. Approved Minutes of the April 12, 2012 ITAC meeting with one modification to list of attendees.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. *Status of ongoing transportation projects, programs, studies and planning documents - Verbal updates from project sponsors*

Watsonville: Maria Rodriguez reported that RSTP-funded construction of the Freedom Boulevard Reconstruction project is complete. The City is finishing two Safe Routes to Schools-funded projects, including improving pedestrian crossings at several locations. TDA-funded curb ramps are also under construction citywide. The City's Trails and Bicycle Master Plan is out for public review and comment.

Phase two of the annual road maintenance program will begin in the next few weeks.

County of Santa Cruz – Russell Chen reported that 2007 storm damage repairs continue, which will include closure of Shultes Road for a few months, and construction on East Zayante and Hames Road. The East Cliff Parkway project is scheduled for completion in July. Upper Porter/Soquel-San Jose Road sidewalk project is underway. The County is starting the RSTP-funded Soquel Drive overlay project from Porter Street to State Park, which includes bicycle lanes; and awarding its seal coat project in August. Construction of the Graham Hill Road project will restart following completion of utility relocation, anticipated in mid-July. Culvert repairs at Old Big Trees Road in Felton are underway.

City of Capitola - Steve Jesberg reported that the City's is gearing up for the ¼ cent sales tax extension ballot measure. A \$100,000 full slurry seal project on residential streets throughout the city is underway.

MBUPCD – Alan Romero reported that AB2766 grant applications are due June 22. \$1.8 million is available. The Air District is seeking applications for projects with direct local emission reductions, encourages agencies to seek funds for signal synchronization and roundabout projects, and creative projects that reduce emissions. Bicycle projects are in moratorium until the bicycle model is completed.

SC Metro –Erich Friedrich reported that the new Smart Card for paying fares were launched June 7, allowing faster passenger boarding on buses. Metro is working on Fall service enhancements in Watsonville, which include some rerouting and possibly one new route. Tove Beatty reported that Metro anticipates awarding the contract for the MetroBase Operations Building in October, using over \$5 million in Proposition 1B State-Local Partnership Program (SLPP) funds. The second CNG tank and new fleet vehicles will be arriving soon. Metro is reviewing options for the downtown Santa Cruz Metro Center, given the loss of Redevelopment Agency funds. The STIP-funded bus stop improvements continue, with cost savings allowing additional improvements to be made over the next few months. She noted that Metro is also tracking federal legislative activities around MAP-21.

UCSC – Teresa Buika reported that costs savings from a federal New Freedom grant are being used to construct additional access ramps this summer.

AMBAG - Bhupendra Patel reported that the model update continues, finalizing input from locals in August. He encouraged attendance at the model training July 9-11. Data from the Origin-Destination Study and cell phone data is coming soon. The Central Coast Commercial Flow Study, which includes recommendations for the corridor through Santa Barbara, is available. The 2012 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) will be released for public review in late July.

City of Santa Cruz – Chris Schneiter reported that the Lower Seabright, East Broadway pavement projects are underway. Construction on the Chestnut Street Extension slope stabilization project will start next month.

Caltrans- Mark McCumsey reported that applications for HSIP and HR3 grants are due July 20. Caltrans Interregional Blueprint document is available online. The Governor has proposed a 4 day/38 hour work week for state employees. The new permanent District 5 Director is expected to be announced this summer. Caltrans has been working with the RTC and AMBAG on approval of the Work Program. Caltrans has also been working with agencies on implementation of various grants, including the on-board transit survey.

7. Project Solicitation and Evaluation for 2014 Transportation Plans

Ginger Dykaar (RTC) reported that the RTC is in the process of updating the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in coordination with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) MTP. She requested project sponsors identify projects from the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that will be completed by Summer 2014 or should not otherwise be included in the 2014 RTP. She also requested input on the draft project application form and input on the project evaluation process. Project sponsors will be asked to identify projects that advance the goals and targets that have been developed for the 2014 RTP, as well as projects that address the SB375-mandated Sustainable Communities Strategy and Complete Streets needs.

Bhupendra Patel (AMBAG) noted that the project evaluation will also consider how well the project list meets state and federal requirements, including consideration of the public participation process, environmental justice for low income and minority groups, and greenhouse gas (GHG) targets for 2020 and 2035. Project timing will be important in meeting state GHG goals.

Regarding the application, Chris Schneider (Santa Cruz) noted that it can be hard to separate out project costs and benefits by mode. All modes benefit from most projects. Members identified some specific projects which have been completed.

8. Legislative Update (discussed after Item 9)

Rachel Moriconi (RTC) reported that Congress was still working on passing a new federal transportation act by the June 30 deadline. Key issues under discussion include reduced environmental review, the Transportation Enhancement program, and the Keystone Pipeline. The House had proposed a short term extension of SAFETEA-LU.

She also reported that the adopted State budget included a 5% reduction to staff, and shifting off-highway fuel taxes to the General Fund, resulting in a loss of funds to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Local Streets and Roads. State Transit Assistance revenues are up slightly. The State is also considering a bill related to cap-and-trade revenues.

9. Local Vehicle Registration Fee Ballot Measure

Rachel Moriconi (RTC) requested input on components of the expenditure plan for the proposed \$10 vehicle registration fee for local streets and roads, safe routes to schools, and accessible pedestrian facilities. She also requested input on potential ballot language, public outreach, and specific provisions of the draft measure.

The Committee suggested changes to the ballot language; identified Mark Dettle, Maria Rodriguez, and John Presleigh as members of a new workgroup to assist in developing public education materials; discussed possible titles for the measure, and provided updates on designating the RTC as the Congestion Management Agency.

10. Status of Roadway Network Updates to the Regional Travel Demand Model Web Portal

Bhupendra Patel reported that Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) staff requested members review updated information in the web portal, focusing on highways and major roads. He reported that bicycle facility data has been inputted, and requested confirmation on speed limit and lane number information. He said that agencies could submit traffic volume information to AMBAG staff, who can input the numbers. He asked agencies to review the maps for any corrections, emphasizing the importance of having accurate base information. He encouraged agencies to utilize

the web portal as a mapping tool.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m. The next ITAC meeting is scheduled for **September 20, 2012** at **1:30 PM** in the SCCRTC Conference Room, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

Minutes prepared by: Rachel Moriconi

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August 23, 2012

NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND SCOPING MEETING

SUBJECT: Notice of preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) Master Plan Project. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an EIR for the project identified below. The RTC would like input on the scope and content of the environmental analysis. Your agency or party may need to use the EIR prepared by RTC when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

PROJECT NAME: Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan

PROJECT LOCATION/ADDRESS: The MBSST corridor stretches the entire length of Santa Cruz County from the Pajaro River in Watsonville to the San Mateo County line north of Davenport. The trail would extend through unincorporated Santa Cruz County and portions of the Cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola, and Watsonville. The MBSST corridor would primarily align with the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way, a 31.7-mile, continuous travel corridor to be owned by the RTC. North of the railroad right-of-way, the trail would align along the west side of Highway 1 for 7.5 miles, for a combined trail length of 39.2 miles. Other proposed new trails outside of the primary MBSST corridor would comprise approximately 10 additional miles of paved and un-paved coastal spur trails. The trail network would span a combined total of approximately 50 miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The railroad generally runs along the coast, parallel to the Pacific Ocean, except where it turns inland near Manresa State Beach. From there, the tracks run inland toward Watsonville and ultimately end at the Watsonville Junction.

DUE DATE FOR COMMENTS: Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than: **September 22, 2012**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project is the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Master Plan. The purpose of the Master Plan is to establish the continuous alignment and set of design standards for a multi-use trail for the length of Santa Cruz County. The proposed trail alignment typically follows the Santa Cruz Branch line right-of-way, and is separated into three reaches: the northern reach; the central reach; and the Watsonville reach.

The northern reach begins at the County's northernmost border on Highway 1, just north of the Waddell Bluffs, and extends south to the northern Santa Cruz city limits near Schaffer Road. This reach generally corresponds to a scenic coastal environment adjacent to Highway 1. The central reach primarily traverses through the existing urban environment of Santa Cruz, Capitola, and the unincorporated Aptos community. Beginning at the City of Santa Cruz northern city boundary near Schaffer Road and extending southeast to Seascapes Park just south of Aptos, this reach of the MBSST corridor traverses through densely populated coastal urban areas. The Watsonville reach begins at the railroad mile marker 10 near Seascapes Village Park and ends at the Santa Cruz and Monterey County border at the Pajaro River. This reach parallels the coastal edge for approximately one mile before it begins following the San Andreas Road alignment inland as it heads south and east. The Watsonville reach is defined by rural agricultural and open space lands.

The majority of the proposed corridor would include construction of a new multi-use recreation trail that provides bicycle, pedestrian, wheelchair, and non-motorized scooter travel on a paved right-of-way completely separated from any vehicular traffic on streets or highways. The multi-use paved path may include a paved

surface of 8 to 12 feet wide, center lane striping in some segments, separation from adjacent roadways by at least 12 feet where feasible, fencing, landscaping, and signage. Through its length, the corridor would cross over 23 existing railroad bridges and trestles, and pass through public roadways in 85 locations.

Implementation of the proposed trail includes land clearing, grading, and construction. Construction of the proposed trail would include laying asphalt for the trail and staging areas, constructing fencing, establishing signage, and landscaping. Administration of the proposed MBSST would involve the RTC, the local jurisdictions including the City of Santa Cruz, City of Capitola, City of Watsonville, and the County of Santa Cruz, and any other implementing entity. The primary role of the RTC is to provide on-going coordination services and funding for implementation of the MBSST. Some of the land underlying the trail network alignment would be owned by the RTC; therefore, the RTC would be responsible for regional policy oversight. The local jurisdictions or implementing entities would be responsible for designing the trail construction documents. Each jurisdiction, implementing entity and/or the RTC would be responsible for overseeing the operations and maintenance of the MBSST within their jurisdiction.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: Pursuant to the public participation goals of CEQA, the RTC will host two EIR Scoping Meetings to gather additional input on the content and focus of the environmental analysis to be conducted and presented in the EIR. The dates, times, and locations of the scoping meetings are listed below.

| | | |
|---|------------|--|
| Wednesday September 5, 2012 6:00 PM | Santa Cruz | Louden Nelson Community Center Room 3 (Senior Lunchroom) 301 Center Street Santa Cruz, CA 95060 |
| Thursday September 6, 2012 6:00 PM | Aptos | Community Foundation Solari Room East and West 7807 Soquel Drive Aptos, CA 95003 |

COMMENTING ON THE SCOPE OF THE EIR: The RTC welcomes all comments regarding the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. All comments will be considered in the preparation of the EIR. **Written comments** must be submitted by **September 22, 2012**.

Please direct your comments to:

Cory Caletti, Sr. Transportation Planner
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
ccaletti@scrrtc.org

FREE BREAKFAST FOR CYCLISTS:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4TH
6:30am – 9:30am

DOWNTOWN

- Jamba Juice, Pacific Ave.
(sponsored by the Santa Cruz Seaside Co., Verve Coffee Roasters and Noah's Bagels)
- Samba Rock Acai Café, Water St.

EASTSIDE

- Whole Foods, Soquel Ave.
(Bike Valet by People Power)
- People's Coffee, 17th & Brommer

CAPITOLA

- Verve Coffee, 41st Ave.
(sponsored by the City of Capitola)

WESTSIDE

- New Leaf Community Market,
Fair Street

UC SANTA CRUZ

- UCSC Main Entrance, Bay Dr.
- UCSC "Top the Bike Path"
- UCSC Bike Co-Op, Bay Tree Plaza

APTOS

- Cabrillo College, Soquel Dr.
(in front of the Hawkshop Bookstore)

SOQUEL VILLAGE

- Ugly Mug, Soquel Dr.

SCOTTS VALLEY/FELTON

- Mollie's Country Cafe,
Mt. Hermon Road
- White Raven Tea and Coffee House,
Highway 9

WATSONVILLE

- Second Street Café, Main Street
- Fox Racing Show, Hangar Way

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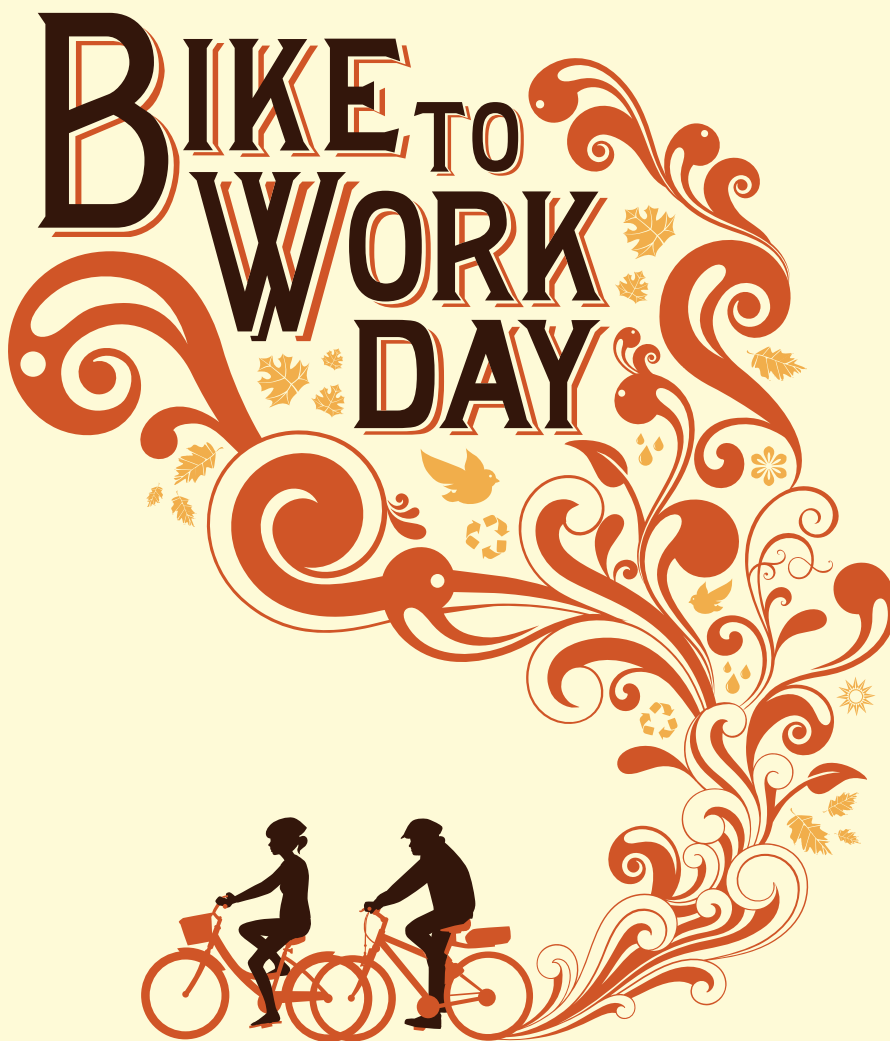


SUPER SPONSORS:



Join **Santa Cruz Open Streets** on **Sunday, October 7** (9 am – 1 pm) on West Cliff Drive. FREE car-free event from Lighthouse Field to Natural Bridges State Park for bicycling, walking, skating, food, fun activities and more!
<http://scopenstreets.org/>

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SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY



THURSDAY
OCTOBER 4TH
2012

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FREE breakfast at over 45 schools across the country.
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AGENDA: September 20, 2012

TO: Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)
FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner
RE: Update on the Federal Transportation Act/MAP-21 Implementation, including Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funding

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC):

1. Receive update and provide input on proposals for implementing the federal transportation act (MAP-21) in California.
-

BACKGROUND

Congress has enacted the new federal transportation act, H.R. 4348, referred to as MAP-21 (*Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century*). MAP-21 is a two-year funding authorization taking effect October 1, 2012, replacing current law (SAFETEA-LU). MAP-21 provides federal highway and transit programs with \$105 billion through federal fiscal year (FFY) 2014 – roughly equivalent to current funding levels. Attachment 1 provides a summary of the bill, including how different issues previously raised by the RTC were addressed in the adopted bill.

In late August, Caltrans established a MAP-21 working group to address near-term funding policy direction and any legislation that may be needed to implement MAP-21 in California. The 17 member workgroup includes representatives from Counties (CSAC), the League of Cities, Self Help Counties, rural, small, mid-sized, and large regional and metropolitan transportation agencies, transit, bicycle/pedestrian groups, various Caltrans divisions, and the California Transportation Commission (CTC). RTC staff represents small and mid-sized Regional Transportation Planning Agencies on the workgroup. Subcommittees will be working on implementation of specific focus areas. The working group has met twice, and the subcommittee leads will be organizing their first meetings shortly.

DISCUSSION

MAP-21 consolidated several funding programs and gives states significantly more discretion on how to distribute funds. As of mid-September, the state MAP-21 workgroup has been focused on proposals for distributing Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) program funds, including Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP), HSIP (safety), the new Transportation Alternative Program (TAP), Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS), and bridge programs. Staff will “walk through” the latest proposals with the ITAC at this meeting. Initial proposals from Caltrans and

CTC staff, as compared to how funds were distributed under SAFETEA-LU, are attached ([Attachment 2](#)).

While Speaker Perez introduced legislation (SB 1027) on implementing MAP-21, Caltrans and the CTC anticipate moving forward without legislation and designating funds to programs on September 27 at levels sufficient to maintain projects currently programmed in FY12/13. Representatives of regional agencies and local jurisdictions have begun discussing modifications to those proposals presented by Caltrans, CTC staff, and Senator Perez.

The amount of funding available for projects in Santa Cruz County will vary depending on which proposal is implemented. Some of the key issues for MAP-21 implementation are summarized in [Attachment 3](#) and include:

- Amount of STP funding available by subvention for the Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP): Proposals range from \$436 million to \$545 million per year
- How the Safe Routes to Schools program will be funded: Out of HSIP or TAP
- How Transportation Alternatives funds will be distributed (options include: through the STIP, by formula to regions, and/or through competitive programs). Could impact bicycle/pedestrian projects currently programmed in the STIP.

Over the past year, CTC and Caltrans staff had indicated a general commitment to keep projects that are programmed in FY13 whole; however, the availability of funding for projects in FY14 and beyond will be subject to forthcoming policy and/or legislative decisions at the state level.

Staff recommends that the ITAC consider and provide feedback on proposals for MAP-21 implementation at this meeting. Staff recommends waiting to program FY13 & FY14 RSTP funds until there is confirmation that bicycle and pedestrian projects in Santa Cruz County, previously programmed for Transportation Enhancement STIP funds, will continue to be funded through the STIP.

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of proposal for implementing MAP-21 in California that could impact transportation planning, programming and projects in Santa Cruz County.

Attachments:

1. [MAP-21 Highlights](#)
2. Proposals for MAP-21 Programmatic Apportionment Distribution
3. Key Issue for MAP-21 Implementation

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**Highlights:
Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP 21)**

Following release of the heavily negotiated conference agreement between the House and Senate, Congress approved MAP-21 ("Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century") on June 29, 2012. The bill was subsequently signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012.

Highlights of the compromise bill:

- A 'true' two year transportation bill (FFY13 & FFY14), rather than an 18-month bill and includes an extension of existing law that will last until the end of the current federal fiscal year (September 30, 2012).
- Makes a number of reforms and changes to the Federal transportation program.
- Maintains funding: Provides funding for federal-aid highway programs close to the current funding levels: \$39.699 billion in FY 2013 and \$40.256 for FY 2014. Transit programs would also receive roughly level funding, a total of \$10.584 billion in FY 2013 and \$10.701 billion in FY 2014.
 - Congressional Appropriation committees must find discretionary funding in order to make the authorization whole. Failure to do so could directly affect transit funding.
- Funding levels for Santa Cruz County transportation projects and programs will be heavily dependent on how the bill is implemented at the State level.

Comparison to RTC Priorities

- In general this bill appears to be a **reasonable compromise** that staff anticipates will at least maintain existing funding levels for most Santa Cruz County transportation projects/programs and provides enough certainty to allow several projects to move forward over the next two years.
- **MPO threshold retained:** The agreement maintains the existing Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) population threshold at 50,000. The initial Senate bill would have eliminated or phased out many MPO regions, including all of the MPOs on the Central Coast. The availability of funds to the region and the regional planning process could have otherwise been severely affected. Rep. Sam Farr strongly advocated for maintaining the current threshold.
- **Funding for Transit:** The bill increases funding for the program that rewards smaller high performing transit agencies, such as Santa Cruz Metro.
- **State Implementation Critical:** The bill gives states discretion on how funds are distributed to many types of projects, including bicycle and pedestrian

projects, off-system bridges, and a higher level of surface transportation program funds, meaning funding levels to Santa Cruz County will be dependent on how the state legislature, Caltrans, and the California Transportation Commission (CTC) implement the federal act.

- It will be critical for our federal and state representatives, as well as the California transportation community to work together to ensure that small and medium sized communities, such as Santa Cruz County, continue to receive an equitable distribution of funds and that those funds are not restricted or otherwise disproportionately directed to large metropolitan regions at the expense of mid-sized, small and rural areas. We are encouraged by prior statements from Caltrans and California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff that they are committed to continue to distribute funds to all regions at levels similar to historic averages. RTC staff will be participating in meetings on implementation.
- **Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects.** The bill includes a new “Transportation Alternatives” program that essentially consolidates and reduces overall funding for the Transportation Enhancement and Safe Routes to Schools programs. Some funds distributed by formula to Metropolitan Planning Organizations. States are directed to distribute a portion of funds through competitive grants, although they are given the option to opt out of the recreational trails component of the program. Given California’s historic commitment to bicycle and pedestrian projects, staff is optimistic that funds will continue to be available to all regions and that projects in Santa Cruz County will do well in competitive programs established for the funds.
- **Streamlines project delivery.** The bill includes some provisions which are expected to reduce project costs and delays. Staff will share additional information on these provisions and changes to the process for delivering projects as they become available.
- **Earmarks:** The bill included no earmarks and also included provisions to rescind earmarks approved in the past. Staff is evaluating how this might impact earmarks previously approved for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST).

Funding Levels Still Insufficient: While we appreciate that the bill maintains the historic levels of funding, existing funding levels provide only a fraction of what is needed to preserve and improve the transportation system. The federal gas tax has not been increased since 1993 and falls far short of meeting demands on the multimodal transportation system. This reemphasizes the importance of establishing stable local funding for transportation projects, such as local sales tax and vehicle registration fees.

Continued Next Page: Short Summary of MAP-21

Short Summary of MAP-21: The New Federal Transportation Bill

Excerpts from Capital Edge's Washington Report and transportationissuesdaily.com

Name: MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century)

Expires: October 1, 2014

Total funding: \$118 billion over 27-months – roughly \$105 billion per year

Highways/Transit funding split: The current 80/20 (roughly) split maintained

Highway funding: about \$40.4B in FY 2013, and about \$41B in FY 2014 (contract authority)

Transit funding: about \$10.5 billion for FY 2013, about \$10.7B for FY 2014

Distribution of highway funding: Formulas eliminated. In FY 2014, the apportionments are adjusted to ensure that each State receives at least 95% of its FY 2012 contributions to the Highway Account of the federal Highway Trust Fund.

Non-transportation funding/offsets to fund bill: about \$18 billion

MPOs: Retains current law. No tiering of MPOs or dissolution of smaller MPOs (the Senate bill had proposed to increase the urban-area population threshold for from 50,000 to 200,000).

Program Consolidation: About 60 programs are eliminated or consolidated into four core programs

Transportation Alternatives (Bike/Ped) funding: Merges Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, Recreational Trails, and Scenic Byways into this new program, "Transportation Alternatives". Initial analysis indicates funding drops 30%. Adds eligible projects such as truck stop electrification, HOV lanes, turning lanes, and diesel retrofits. 50% of funds are directed to MPOs; all funds to be distributed through competitive grants

Local funding: Increases allocation to regions to about 14% of highways funding from current approximate 12.5%

Safety Funding: Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding is doubled; provides for enhanced data collection, requires setting of performance-related goals, restricts some funding if goals not met, and/or if strategic safety plan is not updated.

- Section 130 Highway Rail Grade Crossing Program is continued at the current funding level of \$220 million per year.
- High Risk Rural Roads: funding set-aside is eliminated, but there are provisions for directing funding if fatalities increase. Includes provision to maintain and expand intercity bus service and vanpooling.

Bridges: Bridges on the National Highway System would be funded under the National Highway Performance Program (new core program); bridges not on the NHS would be funded under STP. The 15 percent set-aside for bridges of the federal-aid highway system on low volume local roads is retained.

CMAQ: Leaves the current Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program largely intact, as opposed to changes in the Senate bill that would have allocated funding directly to MPOs and expanded eligible activities.

Bus Grants: Streamlines and consolidates the number of smaller transit programs and reduces the number of required programmatic set-asides.

- Job Access Reverse Commute Program (JARC) is eliminated and those activities made eligible through the transit urban and rural formula programs
- The New Freedom Program is eliminated and those activities made eligible through the new Elderly and Disable Formula Program
- Bus and Bus Facilities Program, which was discretionary, will be distributed by formula instead of discretionary grants at a level of \$422 million in FY 2013 and \$427 million in FY 2014, a dramatic cut from the \$980 million the program received in FY 2012. The savings will be placed in a new "State of Good Repair" program.
- Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) program: Increases the set-aside for the program, which provides funds to systems in smaller urbanized areas with high levels of service, from 1% of the Section 5307 program to 1.5%
- Transit Oriented Development: creates \$10M pilot program for grants to communities with a New Starts Grant to do station area planning

Transit Safety: Designates the Federal Transit Administration to create national standards for passenger rail safety.

New Starts: \$1.9B in each fiscal year. Enables more bus rapid transit projects to be funded. Also authorizes a new "core capacity" funding criteria that gives existing systems some additional spending flexibility

No Earmarks. The bill contains no earmarks, which is a major departure from SAFETEA-LU; MAP-21 apportions 92.6% by formula, compared to 83% under SAFETEA-LU

Environmental/Project Streamlining: includes a number of provisions, including reductions in USDOT office funding if defined decision deadlines are not met

Performance measures: Included for first time, directs states and MPOs to set some targets and incorporate into planning and programming processes. Establishes national goals in seven areas: Safety; Infrastructure Condition; Congestion Reduction; System Reliability; Freight Movement and Economic Vitality; Environmental Sustainability; Reduced Project Delivery Delays. States are required to establish performance targets in coordination with the MPOs and transit operators for the measures (within the next 2.5 years). Performance measures and targets must be incorporated into long-range planning and short-term programming

processes. Long range plans, TIPs and STIPs must show the progress that is expected to be achieved.

Buy America: current law retained, refinement provisions not accepted

Commuter Benefit: does not restore parity between parking and transit benefit. The Senate version of MAP-21 included a provision that would have equalized the amount of pre-tax employer-provided mass transit benefits with the amount of pre-tax employer-provided parking benefits (\$240 per month), but this provision was dropped in the conference committee report. Pre-tax transit benefits will remain capped at \$125 per month.

Mega-projects program: \$500 million FY 2013 competitive grant program called "Projects of National and Regional Significance". Subject approval through annual appropriations. Designed as a successor to TIGER. Only projects costing \$500 million or 50 percent of a state's annual federal-aid highway apportionment, whichever is less, would be eligible for funding.

TIFIA (America Fast Forward): Modifies the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program, which provides loans to accelerate projects that have the backing of local resources. Increased from current \$122m/year to \$750m in year one and \$1b in year two. TIFIA: The bill increases funding for the program to \$750 million in FY 2013 and to \$1 billion in FY 2014; increases the maximum share of project costs from 33 percent to 49 percent; allows TIFIA to be used to support a related set of projects, and sets aside funding for projects in rural areas at more favorable terms.

Tolling: expands tolling authority if road capacity is increased, though there must be more free lanes than tolled lanes.

Keystone Pipeline: Excluded from final bill

EPA/Coal Ash: Excluded from final bill

The following websites provide helpful links to additional information on MAP-21:

<http://www.transportationissuesdaily.com/map-21-learning-center/>

http://www.pbtransportationupdate.com/legislation/surface_transportation_authorization.aspx

<http://www.apwa.net/Media/2012/7/9/APWA-MAP-21-Resource-Center>

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Proposal for MAP-21 - Programmatic Apportionment Distribution Compared to Current SAFETEA-LU Extension

| SAFETEA-LU FFY 2012 | | \$*M | | State | Local |
|------------------------|--|------|-----|-------|-------|
| Program | | | | | |
| IM | | 575 | 727 | 575 | 727 |
| NH | | | | | |

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| HBP | 550 | 248 | 303 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| STP | 721 | 271 | 451 |
| BIP | 25 | 25 | |

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|-----|
| EB | 182 | 182 | |
| Subtotal | 2,780 | 2,027 | 753 |

| | | | |
|------|-----|--|-----|
| CMAQ | 468 | | 468 |
| MP | 42 | | 42 |

| | | | |
|--------|-----|----|----|
| HSIP | 134 | 67 | 67 |
| RRXing | 15 | 7 | 7 |

| | | | |
|------|----|----|----|
| SRTS | 21 | | 21 |
| RT | 5 | 5 | |
| TE | 78 | 78 | |

| | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| TOTAL | 3,544 | 2,185 | 1,359 |
| | | 62% | 38% |

| MAP-21 FFY 2013 | | \$*M | | State | Local |
|--------------------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Program | | | | | |
| NHP | | 1,897 | (228) | 1,897 | 228 |

| | | | |
|-----|-----|------|-----|
| STP | 873 | 436 | 436 |
| | | (75) | 75 |

| | | | |
|-----|-----|------|-----|
| STP | 873 | 436 | 436 |
| | | (75) | 75 |

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|-----|
| Subtotal | 2,770 | 2,031 | 739 |
|----------|-------|-------|-----|

| | | | |
|------|-----|--|-----|
| CMAQ | 445 | | 445 |
| MP | 48 | | 48 |

| | | | |
|------|-----|------|-----|
| HSIP | 209 | 104 | 104 |
| | | (21) | 21 |

| | | | |
|-----|----|----|----|
| TAP | 72 | 36 | 36 |
|-----|----|----|----|

| | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| TOTAL | 3,544 | 2,151 | 1,393 |
| | | 61% | 39% |

| MAP-21 Rev. FFY 2013 | | \$*M | | State | Local |
|-------------------------|--|-------|--|-------|-------|
| Program | | | | | |
| NHP | | 1,897 | | 1,670 | |
| NHS Bridges | | | | | 228 |

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| STP | 873 | 347 | 451 |
| | | | 75 |

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| STP | 873 | 347 | 451 |
| | | | 75 |

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|-----|
| Subtotal | 2,770 | 2,017 | 753 |
|----------|-------|-------|-----|

| | | | |
|------|-----|--|-----|
| CMAQ | 445 | | 445 |
| MP | 48 | | 48 |

| | | | |
|------|-----|----|----|
| HSIP | 209 | 94 | 94 |
| SRTS | | | 21 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|----|----|--|
| TAP | 72 | 67 | |
| Recreational Trails | | 5 | |

| | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| TOTAL | 3,544 | 2,183 | 1,361 |
| | | 62% | 38% |

Key Issues for MAP-21 Implementation

General Principles (under discussion by regions)

1. Maintain “status quo” funding: Define as continuing to distribute funds for each program similar to how split in past regardless of what state law or MAP-21 says
 - a. At a minimum, maintain funding for current programmed projects in FY 2013 (avoid immediate FTIP programming and project allocation issues)
 - b. Includes keeping sufficient funds for programmed FY13 SHOPP and local projects
2. Increase flexibility (increase funding in programs like STP that can be used on a range of projects and offset other program reductions)
3. Increase regional control (more funding that goes by subvention versus state managed programs)
4. Maintain funding in key state managed programs that ensure smaller regions can delivery larger projects (bridge program, etc.)

Issues under discussion for specific programs

1. Bridges: Maintain a statewide bridge program, including 15% for off-system bridges. Fund out of state’s shares of NHP and STP.
 - a. Allow off-system bridges to utilize toll credits
2. STP: Highlight that precedent=62.5% to regions, but regions willing to support Administration’s proposal to at least keep STP to regions at FY12 level (approximately \$451M). Adamantly oppose anything lower than \$451M.
3. SRTS: Support \$21M coming out of HSIP and being administered as competitive program. Oppose funding SRTS out of TAP.
4. HSIP: Support min. of \$67M to existing Local Assistance HSIP programs (as recently programmed); have balance distributed to regions by formula.
 - a. Support 15% to Rural classified roads to replace HRRR
 - b. Some regions want via STP, others want lane mile/population combo formula (similar to STIP, but without the North/South split), but administered similar to STP (aka not through the CTC/STIP), and to allow small regions to exchange the federal HSIP for state cash.
 - c. Include set-aside of HSIP for rural counties
5. TAP: Keep in STIP for at least FY13 in order to keep STIP programmed projects whole; but support having some TAP direct to regions/out of STIP eventually, by a STIP-like formula (lane miles/population), but administer like STP=allow regions with small shares to exchange for state cash or with other regions. If taken out of STIP, need CTC to commit to allocating funds to all currently programmed STIP projects if a region has identified those projects as priorities for its STIP shares, consistent with SB45, especially bike/ped projects.

TO: Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)
FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner
RE: Debrief on Deferred Transportation Funding Ballot Measure

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC):

1. Provide input on the deferred transportation funding ballot measure and discuss future options for addressing transportation funding shortfalls.
-

BACKGROUND

In recognition that existing state, federal, and local revenues are insufficient to operate and maintain the local street and road system at the level necessary to adequately serve the public, including multi-modal transportation components, earlier this year, the RTC developed a ballot measure for the November 2012 ballot: asking voters to authorize a \$10 fee on registered motor vehicles to maintain local streets and roads and build safe and accessible pedestrian and safe routes to school projects. However, following a July poll and indications that a significant private campaign would be needed to achieve the two-third voter threshold, the RTC decided at its August meeting to defer the measure ([Attachment 1](#)). A \$10 increase in Santa Cruz County vehicle registration fees (VRF) would generate approximately \$2 million per year, dedicated to local transportation projects.

DISCUSSION

While staff and the RTC board determined that November 2012 was not the right timing for the measure, especially faced with meeting the two-thirds voter threshold, the RTC was encouraged by poll results that were well over 60% and by the broad cross-section of Santa Cruz County community members that participated in discussions on the VRF.

The RTC is interested in building on the knowledge and support that was garnered during this effort as the community looks to address at least some of the backlog of transportation needs in Santa Cruz County. While there seems to be general recognition that existing revenues are insufficient and new funding sources are needed to address at least some of the backlog of transportation needs in the community, when poll results fell just shy of the 2/3rd requirement, additional work needs to be done to communicate to the public the costs to maintain and improve the transportation system and why existing taxes and fees are insufficient.

Staff recommends that the ITAC provide feedback on the vehicle registration fee effort; funding strategies for addressing the backlog of transportation projects in our

community over the next 10 years, including a possible ballot measure in 2014; and identify strategies for reaching out to the community.

SUMMARY

The Regional Transportation Commission has been investigating local funding strategies to address at least a portion of the significant backlog of transportation system needs in Santa Cruz County. Based on input received from the community, the RTC developed a possible ballot measure asking voters to authorize a \$10 annual fee on registered vehicles dedicated to local street and road maintenance, safe routes to schools infrastructure, and pedestrian projects this spring/summer; however decided not to pursue voter approval of the measure this year. Staff recommends that the ITAC discuss the deferred ballot measure and options to address funding shortfalls in the future.

Attachment:

1. News Release

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Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 2, 2012

CONTACT: George Dondero, Executive Director - (831) 460-3200
Karena Pushnik, Senior Planner/Outreach Coordinator

Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) votes to defer local road repair funding measure

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission voted 6-5 today to not place a local \$10 vehicle registration fee measure dedicated for local road repairs, safe routes to schools, and accessible sidewalk projects on the November 2012 ballot. While recognizing that current resources do not provide adequate funding to maintain the local street and road system at the level necessary to adequately serve the public, given that meeting the two-thirds voter threshold requirement is incredibly challenging without a robust campaign, the RTC voted to defer taking the measure to the voters this year.

The RTC directed staff to continue working with the broad cross-section of the community that has demonstrated strong support for addressing transportation funding shortfalls; to provide information to the public on transportation needs and costs; and to build on the momentum of these efforts to evaluate a range of funding options, including pursuing new local, dedicated funding sources at a future election.

While the RTC voted to defer pursuing new local funding for transportation in this upcoming election, it was acknowledged that:

- There is strong recognition of need for infrastructure improvements and acknowledgement that local streets and roads serve all sectors of our community.
- There is strong recognition that local streets and roads need more maintenance.

- There is a growing understanding that doing nothing results in worsening road conditions leading to even more costly repairs/reconstruction.
- A coalition of broad interests has formed to support the pursuit of self help status in an acknowledgement that state and federal sources for road maintenance are inefficient, shrinking, unreliable, and can be diverted to other uses. For example, fuel taxes have not been increased since 1994, buying power has diminished by over 30% due to inflation, there is less revenue due to increased vehicle mileage and aging roads have increased maintenance needs over time.
- Many community organizations and community leaders are eager to endorse new local transportation funding strategies.
- Polling indicates that approximately 2/3 of likely voters would support the proposed \$10 Vehicle Registration Fee measure. However, to maintain this 2/3rd support will require a significant campaign.
- Local jurisdictions, the RTC, and community groups are working together to increase public awareness of the cost to operate and maintain the existing transportation system, and the inability of existing funding sources, such as fuel taxes, to pay for local road repairs and multimodal improvements.

Several commissioners that voted against the deferral expressed interest in giving voters the opportunity to do something to fix more roads, stating that waiting will result in worsened conditions that will cost more to repair later.

The RTC will continue seeking assistance and input from the community on strategies to address local transportation needs, especially as part of the development of the long range Regional Transportation Plan over the next year. The RTC will also review implications and potential opportunities for addressing transportation priorities through the recently approved federal transportation act (MAP-21).

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is responsible for delivering a full range of safe, convenient, reliable, and efficient transportation choices for the community. While promoting long-term sustainability, the RTC provides transportation services, planning, and funding for all travel modes. Information about the Regional Transportation Commission's projects and programs can be found at www.sccrtc.org or by calling 831-460-3200.

TO: Interagency Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner

RE: 2014 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): Financial Element

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) members:

1. Provide historic and future funding projections for local funding sources to staff by November 1, 2012; and
 2. Provide input on future funding assumptions.
-

BACKGROUND

As the transportation planning agency for Santa Cruz County, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is responsible for developing, implementing, and regularly updating the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Santa Cruz County. The RTC also works with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and partner agencies in San Benito and Monterey Counties to produce and implement the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the Monterey Bay region. The RTP is the state-mandated long range/25-year transportation plan and the MTP is the federally-mandated long range transportation plan.

The RTP and MTP include goals, targets and policies that are used to prioritize projects for funding (Policy Element); identify the area's transportation needs and plans (Action Element); and estimate the amount of state, federal, and local funds that may be available (Financial Element) over the next 20-25 years. Projects are required to be included in an RTP and/or MTP to receive certain transportation funds.

DISCUSSION

Financial Element

The Financial Element includes a history of revenue expenditures, estimated funding revenues and assumptions, and new funding options. The RTP must be fiscally constrained and realistic. The forecasts included in the Financial Element

provide for this fiscal constraint by outlining the foreseeable funding revenue which may be realized in Santa Cruz County during the planning period.

Since adoption of the 2010 RTP, several funding sources that local agencies had historically relied upon have been eliminated, such as redevelopment funds and the sales tax on gasoline for transportation (Proposition 42). Changes in the economy, state and federal laws, and fuel consumption/gas taxes, can make predicting exactly how much funding will be available through 2035 very challenging.

RTC staff has been working with its partner agencies in the Monterey Bay Area to estimate state and federal funding sources that are anticipated to be available for transportation projects through 2035 based on historic averages and recent state and federal legislative changes. Staff requests that ITAC members provide figures for local revenue sources designated for transportation projects over the past five years which are reasonably anticipated to continue to be available into the future, such as any local sales tax revenue, property taxes, fees, assessment districts, or other local sources used to operate, maintain, and improve the local transportation system. Staff will be emailing a spreadsheet for agencies to use and return by November 1, 2012.

Possible New Revenues

In addition to existing funding sources, some regions assume that new revenue sources will be generated during the RTP planning horizon. This could include a new local sales tax or vehicle registration fee. As part of the California Transportation Commission-led "Statewide Needs Assessment", various other revenue options are being evaluated ([Attachment 1](#)). As part of the analysis, the Needs Assessment group is looking at which sources could be pursued through state or federal legislative actions, and which could be pursued at the local or regional level. As part of the 2014 RTP, the RTC could decide to assume that some or none of these new revenues will come to fruition. Staff recommends that the ITAC discuss these potential future funding sources and identify any additional sources that should be considered for either the statewide Needs Assessment and/or the 2014 RTP.

SUMMARY

RTC staff is in the process of developing the Financial Element of the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan and 2014 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Staff recommends that ITAC members identify local funding sources that should be included in 2014 RTP and MTP and discuss possible new revenues to evaluate for inclusion in the document.

Attachment:

1. Statewide Needs Assessment funding ideas

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| Statewide Transportation System Needs Assessment Revenue Ideas | |
|---|---|
| Possible Revenue Sources | Example |
| PRIORITY REVENUE OPTIONS | |
| <u>Gasoline Sales Tax/Indexing, Diesel Sales Tax and Vehicle Miles Traveled</u> | |
| Gas Tax Increase and/or Indexing Tied to Inflation | 1-cent gas tax increase without inflation index; 65% State & 35% Local |
| Gasoline Sales Tax Reinstatement of Six Percent | Reinstate 6% sales tax on gasoline based on current consumption distributed pre-tax swap |
| Diesel Sales Tax Increase of One Percent | Increase sales tax on diesel by 1% based on current consumption & projected diesel fuel prices |
| Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Fee - Regular & Heavy Duty | Mileage fee of approx. 1-cent/mile replaces fuel based excise tax. |
| <u>Local Sales Tax Measures (Self-Help Counties)</u> | |
| 55% Local Sales Tax Voter Threshold | 1/2-cent sales tax; vehicle license fee; property tax increase |
| <u>Vehicle License Fee</u> | |
| Vehicle License Fee | Fee on vehicle purchases based on vehicle value |
| <u>Toll Roads - High Occupancy Vehicles Lanes</u> | |
| HOT Lanes | System management includes public transit operational subsidies |
| OTHER FEDERAL / STATE REVENUE OPTIONS | |
| Heavy Duty Vehicle Fees | Increase the current fees by 10% |
| OTHER FEDERAL / STATE REVENUE OPTIONS (Continued) | |
| New Bicycle Tax | 1% tax on new bicycles & accessory purchases. |
| Parcel Taxes (for transportation uses) | \$50/parcel assessment locally and/or statewide |
| Parking: Correct Disabled Placard Abuse & Recover Lost Revenue | High based on placard abuse |
| Tire Tax / Oil Change Fee | Midpoint revenue generation. Focus mainly on system preservation |
| Vehicle Registration Fee | New \$50 to \$100 VRF |
| OTHER LOCAL / REGIONAL REVENUE OPTIONS | |
| Benefit Assessment District | Project costs assessed within boundaries of designated benefit area of county or city. Tie financing of project to beneficiaries. |
| Community Facilities Districts | |
| OTHER LOCAL / REGIONAL REVENUE OPTIONS (Continued) | |
| Cordon Pricing | Revenue Projections for SF only based on Northeast Cordon & Treasure Island program estimates. |
| Developer Impact Mitigation Fees | Local road impact average cost of \$6,486; 100,000 housing units projected/yr |
| Parking: Demand Based Pricing & Preferential Parking District Residential Parking market based fees for transportation | Varies with local implementation |
| Real Estate Transfer Taxes (Deed Recordation Taxes) | CA law allows maximum of \$.55 per \$1,000 of the property value conveyed. |

AGENDA: September 6, 2012

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Ginger Dykaar, Transportation Planner

RE: 2012 Santa Cruz County On-board Transit Ridership Study

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) accept the 2012 Santa Cruz County On-board Transit Ridership Survey Final Report.

BACKGROUND

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Santa Cruz METRO) received a Rural or Small Urban Transit Planning Studies grant from the California Department of Transportation to conduct an on-board transit ridership study. RTC and Santa Cruz METRO are also coordinating with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) on this project. AMBAG is the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MPO) for Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties.

DISCUSSION

The on-board transit ridership study was performed by Moore & Associates and consisted of an on-board survey, an assessment of on-time performance and boarding/alighting counts for the fixed route bus service in Santa Cruz County. The primary purpose of the project was to collect data needed to support the transit component of the regional travel demand model (RTDM) managed by AMBAG. In addition, the study will support future transit planning efforts and will enable Santa Cruz METRO to quantify the population of its service area that speaks a primary language other than English in order to ensure Title VI compliance.

Up-to-date transit ridership data is essential to support planning efforts that achieve statewide and regional goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and achieve greenhouse gas (GhG) reduction targets. Santa Cruz County, like many regions, will refer to the RTDM and associated transportation modeling efforts for evaluating the impacts of new transportation investments on meeting regional goals. Transit ridership can be an important strategy for reducing VMT and GhG emissions. The transit data included in the RTDM will now better reflect current transit usage in Santa Cruz County and enable a more accurate transit ridership forecast.

Key Findings

The on-board survey revealed the characteristics of typical Santa Cruz County transit customers to be people who use the bus 5 or more times per week, to have an income of less than \$15,000 per year and to be 16-24 years old. The majority of respondents traveled between home, school and work and walked to and from the bus stop. The majority of respondents (82%) indicated that they did not have a personal vehicle available to make the trip. The three most requested service improvements were "increase service frequency", "real-time bus information", and "shorter travel time". The primary methods for getting service information are from the METRO website and the printed bus schedule.

The 2012 Santa Cruz County On-Board Transit Ridership Survey Report can be found online at <http://www.sccrtc.org/projects/bus>. The Executive Summary is included as Attachment 1. **Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission accept the 2012 Santa Cruz County On-Board Transit Ridership Survey Final Report.**

SUMMARY

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Santa Cruz METRO) received a Rural or Small Urban Transit Planning Studies grant from the California Department of Transportation to conduct an on-board transit ridership study. The study was performed by Moore & Associates and the results are presented in the Santa Cruz County On-Board Transit Ridership Survey Report. RTC staff recommends acceptance of this report.

Attachment

- 1: Executive Summary of Santa Cruz County On-Board Transit Ridership Study

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Santa Cruz METRO) received a Rural or Small Urban Transit Planning Studies Grant from the California Department of Transportation to conduct an on-board transit ridership study.

The three main goals of this project were to:

1. Collect current ridership data for input into the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) regional travel demand model to more accurately reflect current transit use as well as forecast future transit ridership.
2. Assess the limited English proficiency population in order to comply with Title VI requirements.
3. Collect transit service and performance data to assist in future service planning.

Moore & Associates was selected to complete the Transit Ridership Study which consisted of an onboard fixed-route customer survey and on-time performance and boarding/alighting. Data collection efforts were completed on April 17-19, 2012 and April 24-26, 2012 (Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays). A total of 1,972 valid surveys were collected; 1,016 of which were 100 percent complete (all questions had 100 percent responses except for demographic questions), a statistically-valid sampling.

Key Findings

Respondent trip origin-destination and boarding-alighting location data are presented in Appendix A. These exhibits present the general flow of travel throughout the service area and identify significant “magnets” for trip generation. The origin-destination map shows travel with a minimum of at least one leg of travel being transit within the Santa Cruz/Capitola area, between Santa Cruz and UCSC, Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and Santa Cruz/Capitola and Scotts Valley.

The onboard survey revealed the profile of Santa Cruz customers to be people who use the bus 5 or more times per week, to have an income of less than \$15,000 per year and to be 16-24 years old. Home, school, and work were the three most common purposes. The majority of respondents were coming from home (44.9 percent), school (24.7 percent), and work (11.5 percent); and going to school (32.7 percent), home (30.7 percent), and work (14.3 percent). The trip purpose varied based on education level, income, and age. The majority of respondents walk to and from the bus stop (75.8 percent walking to and 79.3 percent walking from) with 48.6 percent walking less than five minutes to their stop and 49.7 percent walking less than five minutes from their stop to their destination. The majority of respondents cited using METRO five or more times a week (67.7 percent). Ninety-four percent of respondents cited using METRO fixed-route services at least once weekly.

Total travel time cited varied from one minute to 400 minutes with an average trip duration of 35 minutes. Approximately 47 percent of respondents indicated a trip duration of 25 minutes or less. The majority (81.9 percent) indicated not having a personal vehicle available to make the trip. Therefore, the majority of respondents are “captive riders” rather than “choice riders”.

When asked what the most prevalent barrier is to using METRO, the most common response was “nothing” (34.7 percent). Other common barriers were “does not travel when I need it” and “costs too much/lack of financial resources” (20.2 and 10.9 percent, respectively). The three most requested service improvements were “increase service frequency” (25.7 percent), “real-time bus arrival information” (14 percent), and “shorter travel time” (13.3 percent).

The primary method of obtaining information regarding METRO service varied by respondent demographic (i.e., age, income, and education level). However, the most-frequently cited forms of obtaining information (in hierarchical order) were:

- METRO’s website (46.8 percent),
- Paper bus schedule (36.4 percent),
- Google Transit (11.4 percent),
- Other (3.2 percent), and
- Call METRO customer service (2.2 percent).

Limited-English Proficiency Assessment

Several data cross-tabulations were produced so as to extract information with respect to Spanish-speaking respondents. A total of 108 surveys were collected in which the respondent chose to complete the survey in Spanish. A number of interesting patterns and trends became evident. More than 25 percent of Spanish-speaking respondents indicated there were no barriers to their use of METRO. The most-frequently cited barrier was “does not travel when I need it” (nearly 20 percent). The most common trip purposes were “home” and “work,” which contrasts with English-language respondents who indicated “home” and “school.” Spanish-speaking METRO customers heavily favor the printed bus schedule (Headways) (more than 70 percent).

On-Time Performance and Boarding/Alighting Information

Route-by-route on-time performance and boarding/alighting information was collected along with the transit rider survey. Total trips reported as either late or missed amount to 24 percent of all surveyed trips. Routes 4, 12, 20, and 91X to Watsonville (outbound) in particular experienced many early departures. Routes 8, 54, 69W (outbound), and Route 74 reported 100 percent on-time performance during the ride check. Detailed boarding and alighting exhibits for each route/direction are presented in the Appendix C. These exhibits identify the activity on a stop-by-stop basis. As seen in the charts, local stops serving UCSC typically experience the greatest boarding and alighting activity.