



JOINT MEETING OF
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY TRAFFIC OPERATIONS SYSTEMS (TOS) OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE
AND
SAFE ON 17 TASK FORCE

DRAFT MINUTES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016
10:00am-12:00pm

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Ave, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Meeting Participants

Captain Ceto Ortiz, San Jose CHP
Lt Ian Troxell, Santa Cruz CHP
Jennifer Wilson, Caltrans D5
Devin Porr, Caltrans D5
Jaime Maldonado, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Giovanni DiFabio, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bernard Walik, Caltrans D4, Public Information
Ramiel Gutierrez, Caltrans D4, Office of Traffic Safety
Ernesto Ramirez, Caltrans D4, Maintenance
Sharon Toline, Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District
David Sears, Member of the Public
Jeff Bates, Redwood Estates Services Association
Susana Cruz, Caltrans D5, Public Information
Officer Thomas Bowen, San Jose CHP
Kelly McClendon, Caltrans D5 Planning
Ray Kwan, Caltrans D4 Maintenance (teleconference)
Tom Barnett, Caltrans D5 Maintenance
Ramin Bolourchian, Caltrans D4 TMC
Ed Orre, CalFire
Erich Friedrich, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
Patty Ciesla, Santa Clara County FireSAFE Council
Gary Richards, San Jose Mercury News, (teleconference)
Jacques van Zeventer, Caltrans D5 (teleconference)
Julie Andersen, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Meredith Manning, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Kirk Lenington, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
John Presleigh, Department of Public Works, Santa Cruz County
Marshall Ballard, Valley Transit Authority
Amy Naranjo, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
Ginger Dykaar, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission



1. **Introductions** – Introductions were made.
2. **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda** –added oral communications item for public to present information on topics not on agenda, added Transportation Improvement Measure discussion under Information Items.
3. **Reviewed and Accepted Minutes of the March 9, 2016 Joint TOS Oversight Committee and Safe on 17 Meeting**
4. **Received Information Items** –
 - Safe on 17 Annual Report - Ginger Dykaar discussed the 2015 Safe on 17 Annual Report that was completed in May. It provides a summary of the collision and citation statistics for Hwy 17 as well as a discussion of the Caltrans projects that have been constructed during the year. Electronic copies of the report were provided with the agenda packet.
 - Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) Update - Amy Naranjo discussed the reductions in allocations from Caltrans and the current instability in the source of matching funds for FSP. Service hour reductions were considered by the Regional Transportation Commission Budget & Administration Committee earlier this month. At this time, no cut in service is recommended. If the Transportation Improvement Measure (Measure D) does not pass at the November election, FSP service reductions would be reconsidered.
 - Articles/Public Feedback – Ginger Dykaar discussed a number of articles that were published related to Hwy 17.
5. **Oral Communications** – David Sears suggested using advances in technology to reduce collisions on Highway 17. Caltrans stated that traffic control standards compiled in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices need to be followed by Caltrans. Suggestions were provided to Mr. Sears to contact the California Traffic Control Devices Committee and Caltrans Office of Traffic Engineering to share his ideas.
6. **Received Update on California Highway Patrol Safe on 17 Program Statistics and Public Information Efforts** - Lt Ian Troxell with Santa Cruz CHP stated that collisions continue to be high in 2016 on the Santa Cruz County side compared to the same number of months in 2015. There used to be 2 officers that patrolled Hwy 17 every day between 6am and 6pm and now there is just one officer during the same time period. Extra enforcement is used to add additional enforcement at locations and times where there are higher numbers of collisions. Tom Barnett from Caltrans suggested increasing education efforts and Jennifer Wilson from Caltrans suggested using changeable message signs for education on reducing speeds. Santa Cruz CHP currently uses twitter, facebook and Start Smart teen classes for education about safe driving practices. Lt Troxell will talk to their Public information Officer to see how education can be increased to help to increase safe driving practices. Other



suggestions for reducing collisions were automated speed enforcement and variable speed limits. Automated speed enforcement is not currently legal in CA but there are efforts to legalize automated enforcement. Ginger Dykaar from RTC will try to find a speaker for the March meeting to present information about automated speed enforcement.

- 7. Received information on Highway 17 Wildlife Passage and Bay Area Ridge Trail Feasibility Study** - Julie Andersen from Midpeninsula Regional Open Space (Midpen) is leading this locally, regionally and nationally important project and will collaborate with many partners (including Caltrans) to complete this work. Midpen is at the initial phase of developing wildlife passage across Hwy 17, between Los Gatos and Bear Creek Road. This project will improve safety for both motorists and wildlife. This passage was identified as a high-priority project by the public and is part of Midpen's adopted Vision Plan which is partially funded by Measure AA, a bond measure approved by voters in 2014.

- 8. Highway 17 Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project – Update** – Patty Ciesla from Santa Clara County FireSafe Council started work this summer on their project to reduce wildfire risk along Hwy 17 near Redwood Estates in Santa Clara County. The excessive amounts of dead and diseased vegetation along the highway are a fire hazard for residences near the highway right of way and motorists along Hwy 17. FireSAFE has been funded by Cal Fire to remove vegetation near Redwood Estates residences and Caltrans has been removing dead trees in the right of way in the vicinity of this project. The vehicle fire that ignited the brush along Hwy 17 in June, 2016 was an example of this concern. Three acres were burned but all structures were saved. There was a concern with evacuation routes and Patty will be convening a meeting to discuss the challenges and coordinate evacuation plans. Caltrans D5 maintenance stated that there is not a similar problem of dead and dying vegetation on the Santa Cruz County side of Hwy 17 due to healthier vegetation, slopes less steep and different weather. Patty will investigate installing improved wildfire risk signage along Highway 17.

- 9. Received Caltrans District 5 Highway 17 Project Update**
Kelly McClendon discussed the public comments received from the Hwy 17 Access Management Study. The study was undertaken to improve mobility, access, safety and reduce conflict points along the Hwy 17 corridor in SCC. Public comments included a range of issues that are outside of the scope of the plan but applicable to the discussion at the Safe on 17 Task Force meeting. The Hwy 17 Access Management Plan will be completed in fall 2016.

Kelly McClendon stated that there is a stormwater mitigation project starting in spring 2017 on Highway 17 between Pasatiempo and the Hwy 1/17 interchange. The project scope includes drainage improvements, shoulder widening and removal of invasive acacia plants.



10. Received Caltrans District 4 Highway 17 Project Update

Ramiel Gutierrez from Caltrans D4, presented the project update for the Santa Clara County side of Hwy 17. On Hwy 17 from 0.1 mile north of Hebard Way to 17/280/880 interchange, a project is planned to overlay existing asphalt, install a new guardrail system, crash cushions, curb ramps, rumble strips and striping. The project is planned to begin construction in summer 2020. Another D4 project from the Santa Cruz County line to the Main St overcrossing is planned for construction in 2020 to mitigate roadway departure incidents. The project will install rumble strips, lighting at intersections, striping, dynamic speed warning signs and high friction surface treatments (HFST) at spot locations. John Presleigh from Santa Cruz County requested that the HFST be installed sooner. Ramiel Gutierrez is going to investigate if the HFST can be installed earlier than currently scheduled.

11. Received Traffic Operations Systems Updates

Traffic Management Center (TMC) Update - Ramin Bolourchian stated that if anyone sees any problems with the changeable message signs (CMSs), to please contact the TMC. Concern was raised that the CMS on Hwy 17 north of Hwy 9 causes traffic to slow down and back up. Suggestions were also made to move the CMS in the SB direction on Hwy 17 (currently located south of the intersection of Santa Cruz Ave in Los Gatos) to the north of Hwy 9 so that people have options to get off Hwy 17 onto Hwy 9 if there is a message stating that traffic on Hwy 17 is delayed or stopped. Currently, the only location to exit Hwy 17 after the CMS is Bear Creek Rd. Ramin from Caltrans D5 TMC, stated that the location north of Hwy 9 could be considered when the CMS needs to be replaced.

Jacques van Zeventer discussed a project to replace a number of the traffic detectors on Hwy 1. The detectors should be up and running in the next month or two. Jacques stated that there will be detectors between Soquel and Freedom Blvd that will be replaced as PeMs currently shows this stretch of Hwy 1 to have no detection.

Ginger Dykaar stated that there are 23 CCTVs now on Hwy 1 between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. Caltrans website provides streaming videos of a number of the cameras for viewing. Images from all the cameras that are updated every 5-20 minutes are available on CT quickmap.

Ginger Dykaar discussed the graphs in the agenda packet of speed and flow from the new Hwy 17 traffic detector at Laurel Curve. Data shows a difference in NB and SB traffic on both weekdays and weekends. Data can be useful for determining best times for enforcement activities by CHP.



12. Received Major Incident Review – Lt Troxell discussed a fatal collision that occurred on the Hwy 1/17 interchange. Officer Bowen discussed a truck driver run off the road fatality and a passenger car and motorcycle fatality.

13. Received Additional Items - none

14. Approved Next Meeting Date -

Joint Safe on 17 Task Force & TOS Oversight Committee Meeting – Wednesday, March 15, 2017 10:00 to 12:00 at San Jose California Highway Patrol, 1523 Pacific Ave, San Jose, CA 95060.

Respectively submitted by



Ginger Dykaar