



**Santa Cruz County Regional
Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, March 2, 2017
9:00 a.m.**

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

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

Members present:

Zach Friend	Cynthia Chase
Ryan Coonerty	Bruce McPherson
John Leopold	Greg Caput
Sandy Brown	Jacques Bertrand
Ed Bottorff	Norm Hagen
Randy Johnson	Oscar Rios
Tim Gubbins (ex-officio)	

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Yesenia Parra	Jenn Eames
Grace Blakeslee	Ginger Dykaar
Rachel Moriconi	Amy Naranjo
Tegan Speiser	Cory Caletti
Karena Pushnik	Kim Shultz

2. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

Commissioners adjourned to closed session at 9:03 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

3. 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
4. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-ANTICIPATED LITIGATION. Significant Exposure to Litigation to be considered for one case pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 (d)(2).

OPEN SESSION

5. Report on closed session

Commissioners reconvened to open session at 9:36 a.m. and there was no closed session report.

6. Oral communications

Jack Nelson, stated that carbon emissions are destabilizing the climate and it is possible that humanity has surpassed their carbon budget. He noted that the set goal in Senate Bill (SB) 32 for a 40% statewide reduction of green house gases by 2030 will be a huge challenge.

Nancy Faulstich, Regeneration Pajaro Valley Climate Action, said that there will be environmental films shown at the Watsonville Film Festival that will present opportunities for community discussions about climate change. She noted that climate change is a key issue in transportation and Santa Cruz County is a big contributor of carbon emissions.

Becky Steinbruner, Aptos resident, requested that the expenditures for the 2013 and 2016 State Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds for the Aptos Village traffic improvements be investigated and stated her intent to take legal action if road work for Phase 1 begins. She clarified that her citizens work group contested the final map of the project and noted her concerns about the safety risks, if Phase 2 improvements are left unfunded.

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, stated that there is an illusion that a train is needed and removal of the tracks is inevitable and should not be delayed. He said that the Commission should look for guidance with the proper regulatory agencies. He noted that Trail Now inquired about alternatives for the use of the rail corridor with the California Transportation Commission (CTC).

7. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

A replacement page for the agenda and for Item 23, and handouts for Items 22 and 26 were distributed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Bertrand seconded the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Friend, Chase, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Caput, Brown, Bertrand, Bottorff, Hagen, Johnson, and Rios voting "aye".

Commissioner Leopold expressed his appreciation to Tegan Speiser for the good work she has done and for making a difference in the community.

Becky Steinbruner, requested that the minutes from the last RTC meeting be corrected to clarify her statement from: secondary emergency access should be established on Valencia Road at Trout Gulch, to: emergency secondary access should be established with a bridge over to Soquel Drive.

MINUTES

8. Approved draft minutes of the February 2, 2017 Regional Transportation Commission meeting, with the noted corrections to oral communication from **Becky Steinbruner**
9. Accepted draft minutes of the February 13, 2017 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting
10. Approved draft minutes of the February 16, 2017 Transportation Policy Workshop meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

11. Approved Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/17 Cap and Trade-Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) (**Resolution 20-17**)
12. Approved Pedestrian Safety Work Group's Pedestrian/Bicyclist Brochure

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

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

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

14. Accepted Resolution 24-17 of Appreciation for retiree: Tegan Speiser

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

15. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
16. Accepted correspondence log
17. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. Letter to the City of Santa Cruz Public Works Director, Mark Dettle, regarding a recommendation that a "Port District Multi-Modal Transportation Plan" project be added to the City of Santa Cruz Active Transportation Plan from the RTC Bicycle Advisory Committee
18. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on RTC projects and transportation issues
19. Accepted information items
 - a. Article published in the ITS International November/December 2016 issue magazine "Study reveals unexpected effects of replacing fuel tax" by Eric O'Rear, Wallace Tyner, and Kamal Sarica

REGULAR AGENDA

20. Commissioner reports – oral reports

Commissioner McPherson expressed his appreciation for Public Works departments, utility workers, and emergency personnel for their hard work in responding to the recent storm damages. He also thanked the citizens of Santa Cruz County for being resilient and patient.

21. Appointment of Commissioners to Budget and Administration/Personnel (B&A/P) Committee – oral report

Chair Friend recommended the reappointment of Commissioners Caput, Coonerty, Leopold, McPherson, and himself to the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee. Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Rios seconded the reappointments. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Friend, Chase, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Caput, Brown, Bertrand, Bottorff, Hagen, Johnson, and Rios voting “aye”.

22. Director’s report – oral report

George Dondero, Executive Director, reported on: the Highway 1 Mar Vista Pedestrian/Bicycle Overcrossing project’s proposed two step process for the environmental phase and a stakeholder meeting to be held in April; the Safe on 17 Task Force’s meeting in San Jose on March 15th where they will discuss storm damage in Santa Cruz County; various transportation bills discussed at the recent California Association of Councils of Government (CalCOG) meeting and a new Bill Tracker tool for tracking bills in the state legislature; housing issues and linking transportation funds to housing production; the California Department of Housing and Community Development releasing their report “California’s Housing Future: Challenges and Opportunities” for public comment; and Measure D items to be discussed at upcoming Transportation Policy Workshop (TPW) meetings and at future public hearings to be held by jurisdictions receiving allocations. Mr. Dondero also reported on information received regarding: federal transportation funding expectations, implications for our region, and various transportation issues, that were discussed at the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Washington DC Conference.

23. Caltrans report

Tim Gubbins, Caltrans District 5 Director, reported on: extensive storm damage to highways in Santa Cruz County and Caltrans’ focus on emergency response to clear and prevent future closures; frequent press releases for storm updates and continued monitoring of slopes, slide outs, and sink holes; a five-day full closure of Bear Creek Road to complete road work; and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) having the final approval for declared Santa Cruz County sites that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds.

Commissioners discussed: road closures on Highway 17 and the impact it has on the communities; consideration of closing off exits when highway road work is being done to keep traffic on the highway and out of the neighborhoods; a letter to Caltrans from the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors requesting prioritization of expedited funds to repair Bear Creek Road, Soquel San Jose Road, Valencia Road, and Glenwood Road; appreciation for Caltrans' work with responding to storm damage emergencies; concern for delayed projects; and moving up projects while awaiting approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

24. Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Amendments

Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Moriconi reported on: amendments needed for the 2016 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) to accommodate updates made to several transportation projects previously programmed; the RTC working with the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to shift funds to maximize Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-18 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds; initiating work on the Highway 1/Harkins Slough Road Project; and programming additional funds to close out the Highway 1 Soquel-Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project.

Commissioners discussed: the acronyms used in the report; prioritizing projects with traffic issues at Pajaro Valley High, Harkins Slough Road, and Highway 1; how the exchanging of funds would not impact projects at different agencies; the safety issues for pedestrians and children around Pajaro Valley High; RTC's commitment to fund the Highway 1/Harkins Slough Road bicycle/pedestrian project even if Watsonville does not secure Active Transportation Program (ATP) funding; closing out the completed Highway 1 Soquel-Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project; the challenges of Assembly Bill (AB)1 and Senate Bill (SB)1 passing and providing additional transportation funding; and forming a subcommittee to discuss prioritization of school related issues.

Jack Nelson, said that he appreciates the Commission's support for funding of the Harkins Slough Road bicycle and pedestrian project and noted his gratification in seeing sustainable transportation projects approved through the City of Santa Cruz's ATP program.

Janneke Strauss, Bike Santa Cruz County, said that she supports the updates for the Harkins Slough Road bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing that will provide safe routes to schools. She noted her appreciation for prioritizing projects that support active transportation.

Becky Steinbruner, said that when lobbying the state to get transportation funding bills passed, to not forget about the power of the grass roots movement. She suggested that the Commission reach out through various media and neighborhood resources to encourage the public to contact their state representatives and urge them to pass the transportation bills.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Hagen seconded staff recommendation to:

1. Direct staff to work with the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and project sponsors to maximize use of FY 2017/18 STIP funds; and
2. Adopt (**Resolution 21-17**) amending the 2016 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) to modify previously programmed projects.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Friend, Chase, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Caput, Brown, Bertrand, Bottorff, Hagen, Johnson, and Rios voting "aye".

25. User Oriented Transit Planning Project/Cruz511 in Your Neighborhood

Grace Blakeslee, Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Blakeslee provided a PowerPoint presentation and reported on: the User Oriented Transit Planning Project now being referred to as Cruz511 In Your Neighborhood; the opportunities to expand Cruz511 resources; the Central Watsonville and Eastside Santa Cruz neighborhoods being identified for the individualized marketing pilot project; the project's focus on encouraging alternative transportation modes to advance Santa Cruz County's regional transportation goals; and outreach efforts utilizing travel advisors and English and Spanish mail solicitation that would go out in April 2017.

Commissioners discussed: how the project provides an interesting and innovative approach to see if people's travel choices can be altered; the importance of having fair representation of the population by including unincorporated areas when identifying neighborhoods; verification of truthful responses on the surveys to accurately measure the outcomes and success of the program; techniques on engaging the community to increase the safety and utilization of alternate transportation; outreach to senior communities to assist with accessing alternative transportation modes; expanding to other neighborhoods once the pilot program has proven successful; bilingual travel advisors and mail solicitation available in Spanish; having specific survey questions to gather input on the community's opinions on bicycle lane safety, having more bike racks on buses, convenience of car driving, and the time commitments for taking the bus; having a volunteer program consisting of groups that encourage alternative transportation to survey the community; and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Metro) coming out of a structural deficit while responding to the needs of the community during the storms.

Jack Nelson, said that he is optimistic that the pilot program will be successful and expanded in the future because sometimes people need the personal contact and encouragement. He noted that Portland's similar pilot project had results that showed successful conversions of transportation modes.

Piet Canin, Ecology Action, said that going door to door is a good way to talk to people about transportation alternatives and using electric vehicles is also a great way for individual drivers to help lower their carbon footprint.

Ron Tidman, said that he would like to see more encouragement from the County for the use of electric vehicles.

Becky Steinbruner, said that she supports trying the pilot program and thinks that the senior population may be the most likely to try taking the bus. She stated that there are location and time constraints with using Metro and suggested that a free day of Metro be explored to encourage people to take the bus.

Commissioner Rios moved and Commissioner Leopold seconded staff recommendations to:

1. Receive an update on the User Oriented Transit Planning Project, now referred to as Cruz511 In Your Neighborhood;
2. Adopt **(Resolution 22-17)** authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract between RTC and Steer Davies Gleave to conduct door to door outreach to households using travel advisors for the Cruz511 In Your Neighborhood/User Oriented Transit Planning Project; and
3. Amend the RTC FY 2016/17 Cruz511 budget to accommodate the contract for the Cruz511 In Your Neighborhood travel advisors outreach up to \$70,000

The motion passed with Commissioners Friend, Chase, Coonerty, McPherson, Leopold, Caput, Brown, Bertrand, Bottorff, Hagen, and Rios voting "aye" and Commissioner Johnson voting "no".

26. Unified Corridor Investment Study – Revised Scope

George Dondero, Executive Director, introduced the item and stated that Measure D specifies a commitment to explore options for use of the rail corridor and the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) is the first step toward collecting data to determine what the best options are. He stated that the emphasis of the UCS is to help the Commission make good decisions for sustainable transportation and with the steady growth of Santa Cruz County, utilization of alternative transportation is needed to alleviate gridlock. Mr. Dondero noted that technology is evolving fast and needs to be considered when looking at the options for use of the rail corridor.

Ginger Dykaar Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Dykaar provided a PowerPoint presentation and reported that expanding the level of analysis and public outreach for the UCS is needed to adequately address the possibilities for future transportation options along three parallel routes: the rail corridor, Highway 1, and Soquel Avenue/Drive, and to advance Santa Cruz County's transportation goals. She noted that additional funding is needed to complete the project with the expanded scope and the estimated project completion date is February 2019.

Commissioners discussed: incorporating an analysis method into the study that would consider existing trends that accommodate changing technology and building for the future; looking into the possibility of having a light rail

system; the community's expectations for delivery of transportation improvements projects that are funded from Measure D allocations; using funds for studies versus using funds for accelerating road repairs and constructing projects; updates needed to the environmental documents to meet Caltrans and legal requirements before moving forward with Highway 1 projects; the importance of expanding the scope to include more communities that could utilize the commute solutions; criteria and analysis differences in Phase 1 and Phase 2; the process for the Request for Proposals (RFP) for choosing a consultant and how the funding increase will be used; passenger rail service that would include Watsonville; and the resources needed to expand the scope to include Watsonville.

Nancy Faulstich, said that climate change is here and is getting worse. She noted her appreciation for the emphasis for a triple bottom line analysis and said that Measure D funds for rail options were promised to voters and equity needs to be considered for South County transportation options.

Stanley Sokolow, said that he is glad that the scope was expanded and suggests that a Freedom Boulevard to Watsonville extension be considered. He noted that the map should also show existing Metro centers as part of the connected network.

Jack Nelson, stated that the public wants sustainability and utilizing the rail corridor merits this expenditure. He said that he supports the scope expansion and hopes the UCS will conduct a wise analysis.

Becky Steinbruner, stated that transportation has to be connected to land use where population density is considered and that it is critical to connect Watsonville to Santa Clara Valley. She noted her suggestions for evening meetings, consideration of monorail down the Highway 1 corridor, and looking at bypass tunnels on Highway 17.

Erica Stanojevic, Sierra Club, said that she appreciates the options being considered and supports keeping the rail option open at the time and expanding the scope.

Pauline Seales, stated that she hopes this winter made people realize that there is a transportation crisis. She said that innovative processes are needed for expediting the use of the rail corridor and noted that a three year study would further delay utilization.

Paul Schoelhamer, stated that the UCS recommendations will fulfill the commitment outlined in Measure D for an analysis of future transit on the rail corridor. He said that as a South County resident he applauds the scope expansion and emphasized the importance of providing the community with all of the facts.

Mark Mesiti-Miller, said that he whole-heartedly supports the expansion of the UCS and good decisions on infrastructure require public participation and good analysis. He stated that he is pleased to see the triple bottom line analysis and the study's approach for keeping with the adopted Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and addressing the core values of the community.

Ron Goodman, said that it is important to understand the differences between the two bicycle path options in the UCS and suggested that the study also look into having light rail on Soquel or Highway 1. He noted the importance of making sure that questions asked in the study drive action.

Bob Morgan, Campaign for Sensible Transportation, said that transportation projects should focus on local actions to slow climate change and the UCS is an important project that is critical for slowing the County's green house gas emissions. He stated that he supports continued funding to bring electrified public transit to the rail corridor.

Commissioner Coonerty left the meeting.

Barry Scott, Coastalrail.org, said that he supports the expansion of the study and hopes options can be narrowed down to make decisions. He noted that he also hopes that the project won't delay plans for trail segments that are already funded.

Janneke Strauss, stated that improvements to transportation corridors are essential and safe and protected bike routes are crucial for cyclists. She said that increasing bike commuters would make a huge difference to the community and noted her support for rail inclusion and expanding the scope of the UCS.

Piet Canin, said that Ecology Action is glad to see that Measure D funds will be used for a project that the community is significantly involved in. He stated that the use of the rail corridor is a complex issue and a comprehensive and thorough study will assist with fact based decision making that will be digestible for the public.

Commissioner Caput moved for an amendment to clarify that Passenger Rail Service will include service from Aptos to Watsonville. Other commissioners communicated that that was included as part of the RTC's acceptance of the final report of the rail transit feasibility study completed in December 2015 and the motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Brown seconded staff recommendations to:

1. Approve an expanded scope for the Unified Corridor Investment Study to include a larger project area, a two step scenario analysis, additional economic equity and environmental analysis, updated project cost estimates, increased public outreach and model development in order to better answer important community questions about possible future uses of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line as defined in Measure D; and
2. Approve \$500,000 from the rail allocation portion of Measure D to be added to the Unified Corridor Investment Study project budget to complete the expanded scope.

The motion passed with Commissioners Friend, Chase, McPherson, Leopold, Caput, Brown, Bertrand, Bottorff, Hagen, and Rios voting "aye" and Commissioner Johnson voting "no"

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

The RTC meeting adjourned to the SAFE meeting at 12:02 a.m.

28. Reconvene to the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission meeting

The RTC meeting reconvened at 12:08 a.m.

29. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 6, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, 5th floor, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 16, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

The meeting adjourned at 12:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenn Eames, Staff

Attendees:

Alex Clifford	Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District
Aria B	Santa Cruz Supported Living
Barry Scott	CoastalRail.org
Becky Steinbruner	Aptos resident
Brian Peoples	Trail Now!
Claire Schueter	City of Santa Cruz
David	Santa Cruz Supported Living
Elijah Waller	
Erica Stanojevic	Sierra Club
Erich Friedrich	Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
Jack Nelson	Campaign for Sensible Transportation
Janneke Strauss	Bike Santa Cruz County
Kara Guzman	Santa Cruz Sentinel
Katelyn Barrow	
Lisa Kleinfeldt	Santa Cruz Supported Living
Mark Mesiti-Miller	
Murray Fontes	City of Watsonville

Nancy Faulstich
Nathaniel James
Paul Schoelhamer
Pauline Seales
Piet Canin
Robert Morgan
Ron Goodman
Ron Tidman
Stanley Sokolow
Susan Cavalieri
Tara Kappes

Regeneration Pajaro Valley Climate Action

Ecology Action
Campaign for Sensible Transportation

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