State Updates

Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force Report
The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) AB2363 Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force recently released its Report of Findings.


The report includes recommendations related to speed limits, engineering, enforcement, and education:

- Safety:
  - Modify and clarify the methodology used to establish speed limits;
  - Revise traffic survey procedures to specifically consider bicyclist and pedestrian safety;
  - Allow state and local agencies to post speed limits below 25 mph when supported by a traffic survey;
  - Increase the reduction allowance for posted speed limits to allow greater deviations from the 85th percentile speed, especially in high injury locations, areas with a high concentration of vulnerable road users (e.g. pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, seniors, children, homeless);
  - Add “business activity district” as an additional class of location eligible for a prima facie speed limit.
  - Revise requirements related to posting prima facie speed limits in school zones to allow an authority to determine and declare a prima facie speed limit as low as 15 mph without requiring justification by a traffic survey.
  - Allow for a traffic survey to retain the existing speed limit (or revert to one determined in a prior traffic survey) unless a registered engineer determines that significant design changes have been made to the roadway since completion of the last traffic survey with the specific intent of increasing the safe operating speed.

- Engineering:
  - Reevaluate engineering countermeasures to improve safety statewide.
  - Evaluate Caltrans encroachment permit process and determine if new methods are needed to expedite safety-related projects.
  - Develop policies related to traffic calming, lane narrowing, reallocation of the roadway cross-section, and “target speed” and incorporate them into the Highway Design Manual.
  - Formalize existing traffic control device uses in the CA MUTCD in order to promote safety and efficiency by providing for the orderly movement of all road users.
  - Minimize using or requesting Level of Service (LOS) analysis as a measurement of safety for local land use projects with potential impacts to the SHS, particularly in low VMT areas.

- Enforcement:
  - Establish automated speed enforcement (ASE) guidelines. ASE should supplement, not supplant, existing law enforcement personnel; ASE should consider impacted communities to ensure equitable outcomes; and should not be turned into a revenue generation technique.
  - Identify best practices and develop recommendations to overcome the lack of prioritization of traffic safety enforcement amongst law enforcement agencies across the State.

- Education:
  - Develop a statewide coordinated traffic safety campaign
RTC staff will continue to support and monitor implementation of the recommendations in this report.

**New State Short Line Rail program**
At its January 29 meeting, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) reported that it will be developing guidelines for a competitive Short Line Rail grant program to allocate $7.2 million from the Trade Corridors Improvement Fund for maintenance, reconstruction, upgrade or replacement infrastructure projects necessary to facilitate short-line railroads becoming more compatible in supporting modern rail freight traffic. Allocations for each project is limited by statute to no more than 25% of the total program funding capacity ($1.8M per project). CTC is expected to release preliminary draft guidelines within the next month.

**Federal Updates**

**Federal Infrastructure Plans**
After failing to come to a bipartisan agreement in the past two years, a national Infrastructure Plan is back in the news this week. During his State of the Union address on February 4, President Trump urged Congress to pass the Senate's $287 billion surface transportation bill (reauthorization of the current surface transportation Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), which expires in September). Two years ago, Trump called on Congress to produce a $1.5 trillion infrastructure bill, but he is no longer pushing for a broad big-vision infrastructure plan.

Last week House Democrats presented a five-year, $760 billion spending plan for a variety of infrastructure areas, which included $434 billion for the FAST Act transportation programs reauthorization. The proposed “Moving Forward Framework” provides a basis for legislation that is currently being drafted or debated in several House committees. The House Democrat's $434 billion surface transportation proposal calls for:
- $329 billion for highway & highway safety (baseline funding is $251 billion),
- $105 billion for transit (baseline funding is $54 billion), and
- $55 billion for intercity passenger rail (baseline funding is $14.9 billion).

The plan emphasizes the following broad principles:
- Fix it first: focus highway investment on state of good repair,
- Safety over speed through Complete Streets,
- Access to jobs and services,
- Local control over investment,
- Set a path toward zero carbon pollution from the transportation sector,
- Resiliency considered in decisions about and designs of transportation investments,
- Green energy and climate change by focusing on clean fuel buses,
- Reforms the Capital Investment Grants Program (which funds new rail transit and bus rapid transit projects) to ensure good projects are approved quickly and that the federal government prioritizes new transit capacity that reduces congestion and mitigates greenhouse gas pollution, and
- Major changes in federal financing mechanisms, such as Build America Bonds.
The proposal also proposes a generational change in the allocation of federal surface transportation funds, with 25 percent of its investments targeted to transit and 75 percent targeted to highways. The modal split in the federal surface transportation program has long been 20 percent transit/80 percent highways.

However, since 2020 is an election year, many Washington insiders believe that the House plan has little chance of enactment this year; and the White House has already derided it as a "Green New Deal 2.0."

For the FAST Act reauthorization (and any White House or House Infrastructure Plan), a major challenge remains how to fund projects and programs. The focal point for a House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means hearing on January 29 was on analyzing the effectiveness of current funding transportation infrastructure investment practices while investigating new funding methods.

The work that Congress does in the coming months on various elements of the next long-term transportation reauthorization bill will lay the groundwork for the final bill when it comes together. Notably, Congress rarely enacts surface transportation authorization bills on time and this election year is unlikely to be an exception, meaning that Congress will probably have to enact a stopgap bill(s) to keep federal highway and transit funds flowing while they debate the framework of a long-term bill.

RTC Staff will continue to monitor and provide input on proposals through its Legislative Program, consistent with California’s Reauthorization Principles developed with transportation agencies statewide and approved by the RTC last year.

Connecting America’s Active Transportation System Act
Last week Reps. Chris Pappas (D-NH), Dan Lipinski (D-IL) and Jared Huffman (D-CA) introduced a measure to help build connected, active-transportation routes that support community health and economic growth. The Connecting America’s Active Transportation System Act would provide $500 million for a federal grant program to enhance trails, sidewalks, and bikeways.

The authors hope that the program will be included within the FAST Act reauthorization legislation.

RTC Staff will monitor progress on this proposal which appears to be consistent with the RTC’s draft 2020 Federal Legislative Program.
Comments received between Jan. 28, 2020 and Feb. 05, 2020

From: John Hall <jhall5@ucsc.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2020 11:39 AM
To: sandy Brown <sandybrown1972@gmail.com>
Cc: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Stop Climate Destructive Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

Take a look at how other cities and regions around the country are reducing auto traffic on certain routes, even reducing lanes. This is all part of rejigging our transportation system as the climate crisis grows.

Please vote against amending Measure D to further expand Highway 1. Instead of auxiliary lanes, please fund a bus-only lane on the shoulder of Highway 1.

Do the right thing!

Thank you,

John Hall

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From: leeseve <leeseve@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2020 6:21 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Cc: zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us
Subject: Stop Climate Destructive Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

Please vote against amending Measure D to further expand Highway 1. Instead of auxiliary lanes, please fund a bus-only lane on the shoulder of Highway 1.

Thank you,

Eliisa Wagner

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From: Jacquelyn Griffith <jkgriffith2@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2020 2:35 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>; Sandy Brown <sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com>; Ryan Coonerty <ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us>; Bruce McPherson <bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us>
Subject: Stop Climate Destructive Highway Expansion
Dear Commissioners,
Please vote against amending Measure D to further expand Highway 1. Instead of auxiliary lanes, please fund a bus-only lane on the shoulder of Highway 1.
Thank you,

Jacquy Griffith

From: Mitchell lachman <shevat117@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2020 10:39 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Stop Climate Destructive Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

Please vote against amending Measure D to further expand Highway 1. Instead of auxiliary lanes, please fund a bus-only lane on the shoulder of Highway 1.

Thank you,

Mitchell Lachman

From: Michael Pisano <mpisano@ucsc.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2020 8:27 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

As a citizen of Santa Cruz County.

This is long overdue...
Please vote for amending Measure D to further expand Highway 1.

Thank you,

Michael Pisano – Live Oak

From: Andy Carman <rokamon@baymoon.com>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 11:32 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>
Cc: Rick@sustainabletransportationSC.org
Subject: No Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

Now more than ever, expanding highways is not the way to spend our Measure D transportation dollars. Instead of amending Measure D’s Expenditure Plan for auxiliary lanes, add a bus-only lane on Highway 1 that would allow some commuters a viable alternative to sitting in traffic.
Thank you,
Andy Carman

From: Philip McManus <pmcmanus@baymoon.com>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 10:42 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>; Rick@sustainabletransportationSC.org
Cc: ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; BDS030@co.santa-cruz.ca.us
Subject: No Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,
The window to address climate change is narrowing. We must do all we can and lead by example.

Now more than ever, expanding highways is not the way to spend our Measure D transportation dollars. Instead of amending Measure D's Expenditure Plan for auxiliary lanes, add a bus-only lane on Highway 1 that would allow some commuters a viable alternative to sitting in traffic.

Thank you,
Philip McManus

From: Gail Page <gailpage@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 10:06 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>; Rick@sustainabletransportationSC.org
Subject: No Highway Expansion--Stop Government Waste

Dear Commissioners,

Only implementing excellent public transportation can help the climate.

Now more than ever, expanding highways is not the way to spend our Measure D transportation dollars. Instead of amending Measure D's Expenditure Plan for auxiliary lanes, add a bus-only lane on Highway 1 that would allow some commuters a viable alternative to sitting in traffic.

Thank you,

From: cool water <echospring@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 9:44 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>; Rick@sustainabletransportationSC.org; ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; bd5030@co.santa-cruz.us
Subject: No Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

Now more than ever, expanding highways is not the way to spend our Measure D transportation dollars. Instead of amending Measure D's Expenditure Plan for
auxiliary lanes, add a bus-only lane on Highway 1 that would allow some commuters a viable alternative to sitting in traffic.

Also, the city & county & state (CALTRANS) need to provide 1) more electric buses and 2) more bus routes everywhere 3) more trains and 4) more protected, safe bike routes in our traffic-clogged, polluted and fire-prone state. We need to address global warming in every way possible. If the fires in Australia, the floods everywhere, the disappearance of flora and fauna, the two years of devastation in Paradise and the increase in asthma don't convince you to stop this hwy.-widening folly, then you are not paying attention. Stop before we drop. Change NOW, let's turn this around before it's too late. Tele-commuting, not flying/driving to meetings, Trains, not planes. Do not confuse yourself that this is a one-issue situation. All these things fit together, pieces of a puzzle that interlock to complete the total picture.

We need to be caretakers of the earth, not destroyers. And we need to move sideways and inform other people on other commissions (like people trying to build large concrete parking lots) that the day of the car is on the decline, that we are just not on board for this anymore. Please, take a stand, educate, use your courage.

Thank you,
Sally Wittman
Santa Cruz

From: Irana Shepherd <ronishepherd@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 9:35 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>; Rick@sustainabletransportationSC.org
Cc: Rick@sustainableTransportationSC.org
Subject: No Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

Now more than ever, expanding highways is not the way to spend our Measure D transportation dollars. Instead of amending Measure D's Expenditure Plan for auxiliary lanes, add a bus-only lane on Highway 1 that would allow some commuters a viable alternative to sitting in traffic.

Thank you,
Irana Shepherd
(SC 95060)
Draft 2020 Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan

Comments received between Jan. 28, 2020 and Feb. 05, 2020

From: Rick Longinotti <Longinotti@baymoon.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2020 10:43 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>
Cc: jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us; ebottorff167@yahoo.com;
aurelio.gonzalez@cityof Watsonville.org; ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us;
BDS030@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; john.leopold@co.santa-cruz.ca.us;
zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us; greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us;
b reuce.mcherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; virginia.johnson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us;
sbrown@cityofscantacruz.com; trina.coffman@cityof Watsonville.org;
rijlz@comcast.net; Michael Rotkin <openup@ucsc.edu>; Alex Clifford
<AClifford@scmtd.com>
Subject: Aux lanes not needed for Bus On Shoulder

Dear Commissioners,

Auxiliary lanes do not need to be built in order to operate bus-on-shoulder on Highway 1.

The Bus On Shoulder Feasibility Study (2018) presented 3 options for running bus-on-shoulder. The first option is to run buses on the shoulder of the highway prior to the planned construction of auxiliary lanes. This option, running southbound from Santa Cruz to Freedom Blvd, excepting segments in which the highway is too narrow, would cost $12 million.

The Study considered options after auxiliary lanes are built. In Option A the buses would use auxiliary lanes, and bus-only lanes that run beneath overpasses. This seems to be the only option that the KC staff has presented to the Commission. The Study notes that a disadvantage of this option is "Traffic spilling back from a congested off-ramp onto an auxiliary lane"

Option B would be a bus-only lane on the shoulder of Highway 1 after auxiliary lanes are built.

There is no example of Bus-on-Shoulder in the USA that I can find in which the buses run primarily in auxiliary lanes. They all have a dedicated bus lane on the shoulder of the highway.

It would be less expensive to do extra paving on Highway 1 for a bus only lane rather than build the auxiliary lanes. That's because the auxiliary lane expansion would pave for the ultimate width of the HOV Lane Project. Please recall that the HOV Lane Project is financially infeasible "before 2035", according to the Unified Corridors Study.
Feb. 6, 2020 RTC Mtg

Given the Caltrans EIR analysis that auxiliary lanes will "slightly" reduce congestion and will not reduce collision rates, they should not be built. Rather, please allocate Measure D highway funds to the bus-on-shoulder project.

Thank you,

Rick

From: Richard Stover, rjs@skyhighway.com
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2020 2:42 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission  <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Adding more auxiliary lanes

Please DO NOT approve adding more auxiliary lanes to Highway 1. The voters did not vote for this. Any funds that might be available for the proposed new lanes should be applied first to the projects approved by the voters. I would be especially in favor of applying the bulk of the funds to help fund the Rail Trail.

From: Debbie Bulger dfbulger@cruzio.com
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2020 2:32 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission  <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Aux lanes south of State Park Drive

Dear Commissioners,
Please do NOT approve auxiliary lanes south of State Park Drive. Such a project would be a huge waste of money. Building bus on the shoulder is a better and less expensive solution.
Thank you.

From: Valerie Morgan  <vigandrcm@cruzio.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2020 9:53 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission  <info@sccrtc.org>
Cc: ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; john.leopold@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; Zach Friend <Zach.Friend@santacruzcounty.us>; greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; bruce.mcperson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; virginia.johnson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us;
Sandy Brown <sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com>; jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us;
ebottom16@yahoo.com; trina.cottman@cityofwatsonville.org; aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org; rlj12@comcast.net; openup@cats.ucsc.edu;
aschiff@ucsc.edu; aschiff@gmail.com
Subject: Measure D Expenditure Plan

Dear RTC Commissioners and Alternates,
Please do not vote to approve expenditures to begin study and construction of auxiliary lanes south of State Park Drive. This area is beyond the voter-approved Measure D Tier II project.

The 2016 Measure D Transportation Improvement Expenditure Plan, and the 2019 Regional Projects 5-year plan, both provided on the RTC website, are clear regarding allowable investments under Measure D (see below), a project area exclusively encompassing the Tier II portion of the larger Tier I long-term vision for Highway 1 improvements. County residents who approved Measure D voted for improvements only for this project area, spanning a length of Highway 1 from Soquel Dr. to State Park Drive.

For your further consideration, constructing auxiliary lanes in the Tier II project in conjunction with ramp metering, documented in the Draft EIR (2015), will not improve commute times on Highway 1 during peak commute hours; in fact, these expensive additions, "would result in a very slight relief in traffic congestion compared to the No Build Alternative."

Please reconsider expenditure allocations within the Tier II project. Our valuable dollars are more prudently spent constructing effective bus-on-shoulder lanes at a much reduced cost and speedier construction. Completing the bus-on-shoulder project would free up valuable revenue to bolster funds for Metro, provide safer routes to schools and better bike infrastructure on surface streets, and speed up improvements on the rail/trail corridor. These improvement enable drivers to make a choice to get off Highway 1.

Respectfully,

Robert Morgan

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From: Gregory Becker <gregort@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2020 5:03 PM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>; Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>; zach.friend@co.santa-cruz.ca.us
Cc: Gregory Becker <gregort@sbcglobal.net>; Campaign for Sustainable Transportation <rick@sustainabletransportationSC.org>
Subject: February 6 Measure D thoughts ("Promises Made, Promises Kept")

Dear Commissioners

The Self Help Counties Coalition (http://selfhelpcounties.org), of which the SCCRTC is a member, has the mantra "Promises Made, Promises Kept". Since the passage of Measure D, our self-help and self-guided transportation policies have made me more disappointed in local governance than I have ever been in my life. I am not alone in this, and this disappointment is not news to you, but it is where your political leadership and guidance come in.
The RTC staff needs to be guided back to a mission other than “grow the program”.

The Measure D campaign’s main graphic shows a paratransit, a pedestrian with stroller, a bicyclist, and a full station wagon above the tagline of “Moving Santa Cruz County Forward”. Would that it were so. There is no graphic showing a widened highway or a slow train, because that is not what people voted for.

Please repair Metro and build the bike/runner/walker highway. Please see that our infrastructure spending is consistent with our local and state greenhouse gas goals. Please help alternatives to the automobile and end the unquestioned privilege of the automobile.

I drive, I walk, and I bike, but I feel unsafe walking and biking along our public roads. Equal rights for walkers and bikers.

Yes, instead of the “Street Smarts” campaign, how about some real action on the local pedestrian and bicyclist death and injury numbers? Those are some numbers the RTC staff should seriously crunch and arrange in their priorities.

Thank you, and let’s move Santa Cruz County forward.

Greg Beckcr

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From: DickZ225@Comcast.net <DickZ225@Comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, February 2, 2020 11:30 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Different Highway 1 Expansion Ideas

Dear Commissioners,

You are now considering ways to improve traffic flow in our area. Instead of continuing the policy of dedicated exit lanes, please find a smarter way to improve traffic flow.

Consider ways to **provide better bus facilities** such as:
- Provide **more frequent busses** along appropriate routes and at appropriate times (rush hours). Every 30 minutes is not adequate to get people out of their cars.
- Provide **bus only lanes** on Highway 1.
- Make **bus rides cheaper**.

These steps will encourage people to not drive themselves everywhere at rush hours. A recent trip to Los Angeles convinced me that its freeways (18 lanes wide in some areas!) are not the solution for the Santa Cruz area. It was cars, cars, cars, and auto dealerships EVERYWHERE.
Thank you for your consideration of these points.

Dick Zscheile
Aptos

From: Jane Yett <janeyett1@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 4:55 PM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Please no highway widening

In the worst of all possible combinations, the widening of auxiliary lanes would increase pollution by an estimated 25% and not help with congestion.

Don’t betray us (and the earth) with such a foolish plan.

Dr. Jane Yett

From: Dell Elliott <dell_elliott@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 11:21 AM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>; Rick@sustainabletransportationSC.org
Subject: No Highway Expansion

Dear Commissioners,

The people who provide our services in Santa Cruz cannot afford to live here. They have to commute for hours from Watsonville or further south. If they take a bus, van or car pool, it still takes the same time; because Highway 1 does not have a high-occupancy vehicle lane. Aside of the emission impact of vehicles sitting or slowly moving in congested traffic, there is a moral obligation to look after our working poor.

Please spend our Measure D transportation dollars for a high-occupancy vehicle lane.

Thank you,

A J Elliott, MSCE, PE

From: mikeal saint <solarevsaint@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 2:00 PM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>; BDS030@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; Gine Johnson <Gine.Johnson@santacruzcounty.us>
Subject: Section 25B of Measure D expenditure plan

Dear Commissioners,

As a concerned citizen, I want to remind you of my opposition to the Aux Lane project. The reason is obvious, it will not relieve congestion for future county
residents, it will continue to increase GHG emissions as our county grows, and not improve safety as your own EIR states.

The worst effect that this project will accomplish is the negative example for our children to think that widening highways and promoting single occupancy vehicles is the answer to congestion. What is sad, is we all know this project will not be sustainable and fail in it’s entirety by 2035.

That being said here is the section of Measure D that is in question;
25 B. The Ordinance and Expenditure Plan may only be amended, if required, by the following process set forth in Section 180207 of the Public Utilities Code: (1) Initiation of amendments by the Authority reciting findings of necessity; (2) Provision of notice and a copy of the amendments provided to the Board of Supervisors and the City Councils in Santa Cruz County; (3) The proposed amendments shall become effective 45 days after notice is given. Amendments shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Authority.

We at CFST see no necessity in moving funds to a project that has not been approved by the citizens nor a part of Measure D. At the very least the RTC should follow the Measure D expenditure plans rules.

As your constituent I urge you to vote NO on moving funds to a project that will not help mitigate our climate crisis and may never be approved by the voters.

Sincerely,

Mike Saint
CFST

From: Nadene Thorne <nadenetd@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 1:46 PM
To: SIP <sip@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Opinion on Rail Corridor and Bike Trail Expenditures

I've read through much of the Strategic Implementation Plan, particularly regarding the rail corridor. Most importantly, did I miss any discussion at all on how this plan helps the county to support or improve our position with regard to climate change? Apparently that isn't a matter of concern to the RTC.

In spite of Greenway's 10,000 signature petition, Measure L, and a considerable amount of other public testimony, both written and oral, there seems to be no change to the path originally set by the RTC with regard to the rail corridor and prospects for a bike and pedestrian trail (having been discussed along similar lines since at least the 1980's).

The RTC apparently plans to continue to spend millions on maintaining the railroad tracks, even though there is no plan for a train or any other public transport for many years - pending the latest of several expensive studies, the Alternatives Analysis. Bike trails, while highly desirable, are being planned in disconnected segments, guaranteeing that this corridor will continue to be recreationally based, not transportation based, and therefore continuing to be a lower priority for funding and scheduling as well as utility for commuters.
Interestingly, NPR recently reported that Duluth, Minnesota built bike paths to encourage tourism at $45,000/mile; our trail, so far, in maintaining the track infrastructure, is presently estimated to cost more in the two-million-dollar-per-mile range. Other commentators on the SIP have intelligently pointed out many inconsistencies in the planning and associated budgeting. I hope you will make modifications in the plan with these in mind.

The energy of the RTC staff and new director in obtaining and connecting to matching funding grants is impressive. In the past the public was told repeatedly that "there is no money for a trail" as the reason why they persisted in promoting a train (i.e., spending for studies and track maintenance). It appears that this previous mantra is not strictly true, as suspected by those of us who have become cynical as we watch money going out and nothing on the rail corridor to show for it.

I can't help but feel that this same document - with regard to the rail corridor - could have been written any time in the past 35 years; nothing actually gets accomplished beyond lots of studies, and only the prospective costs get bigger. It's as if the county RTC is stuck in some kind of permanent quicksand with regard to its vision for the future with the unspoken aim - but possibly comforting to some - of making the future look just like today. Once again, it appears that the RTC requests and reports public comment, but there is no sign that they alter their actions on the basis of it.

Nadene Thorne
Edits to the draft 2020 Measure D - Strategic Implementation Plan done after the 01/31/20 draft.

All new edits are italicized and in orange.
Chapter 3 - Strategic Plan Approach

The Safe on 17 Task Force is a collaborative effort of the RTC Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE), Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to identify conditions and behaviors contributing to collisions on the Highway 17 corridor and to recommend and implement solutions. Increasing CHP presence on Highway 17 has been found to significantly reduce speeding and collisions. Approximately $275 thousand in Measure Revenues have been programmed for Safe on 17, added to the DMV funds used for additional law enforcement, ensuring CHP enforcement through FY23-24, which is added to the DMV funds used for additional law enforcement.

The Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) provides roving tow trucks on segments of Highways 1 and 17 to help stranded motorists, remove debris and other obstructions on the corridors. This work helps address non-recurring congestion and improve safety for motorists. RTC has programmed $937 thousand in Measure D-Highway funds for FSP service through FY 23-24.

The proposed updated five-year program of projects for the Highway Corridors Program is included in Appendix 2. Seven (7) project / program fact sheets are included in Chapter 6. A summary of programming is shown in Table 3-9.

3.5.4 – Active Transportation – 17%

After accounting for RTC administration, implementation and oversight of Measure D, Measure D allocates 17% of revenue for Active Transportation by means of investing in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST), otherwise known as the Coastal Rail Trail, for people walking and bicycling along the coast in Santa Cruz County. Based on the growth projection in Section 3.2.4, Revenue Forecast, of this 2020 Strategic Implementation Plan, Measure D is now estimated to allocate $128.2 million for the Active Transportation category investments over the 30-year life of the program. Measure D Active Transportation funds will be used for trail construction, maintenance, operation, management and drainage of the rail and trail corridor and will leverage other state and federal grants for completion of the trail network.

Work on the Coastal Rail Trail began before the passage of Measure D, including the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) in 2012 and the adoption of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network Master Plan and the certification of the programmatic level Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in 2014 EIR. Work had also begun to deliver four (4) high priority sections, including Segment 5 on the North Coast, Segments 7 and 8 in Santa Cruz, and Segment 18 in Watsonville. RTC is leading the delivery of Segment 5 (North Coast) and the local jurisdictions are leading the delivery of the other segments. As the trail is constructed, maintenance will become the responsibility of the local jurisdiction and RTC will assist in seeking necessary funding, which could include Measure D – Active Transportation funds.

RTC has programmed a total of $15.375 million in Measure D-Active Transportation funds for corridor-wide project development work, not including RTC project management and maintenance programming. Funds have been programmed to prepare environmental documents, complete funding plans and/or leverage additional grants for Segments 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, and a portion of Segment 12. RTC has programmed a total of $15.25 million in Measure D-Active Transportation funds for corridor-wide project development work, including funds to match grants. A total of $11.25 million has been programmed to help complete funding plans and leverage additional grants for the four (4) initial high priority projects, not including RTC project management and maintenance programming. In addition, RTC programmed an additional $4.0 million to complete environmental document(s), design, and right-of-way activities for Segment 10 and portions of Segments 11 and 12, not including RTC project management and future maintenance. Completing environmental pre-construction work will demonstrate project readiness and best position these sections of the trail for potential construction grant funding. RTC is working with the County, City of Santa Cruz, and the City of Capitola on how best to implement the work from the completed section over the
San Lorenzo River in Segment 8 to Aptos Creek Road in Segment 12.

The rail trestle crossing of Soquel Creek in the historic district of Capitola is not included in this programming. Constructing the crossing over Soquel Creek in the City of Capitola will be one of the most challenging sections of the trail to implement, therefore funds are programmed under the Measure D-Rail Corridor Program to conduct a feasibility study for this bridge to take place following the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis (TCAA) for high-capacity public transit on the rail line, so there is a Which will provide better understanding of the future use of the structure. RTC will need to work closely with the local community to find a solution that will allow this important section of the trail to be delivered.

For each Segment under development, RTC plans to work with local jurisdictions to seek grants, in order to fill funding gaps and construct the trail in sections or phases. The City of Santa Cruz has phased Segment 7, fully funding Phase I (from Bay/California to Natural Bridges Drive) with a combination of federal earmarks and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds programmed by the RTC, City of Santa Cruz Measure D direct allocations, Coastal Conservancy grants, and donations from Bike Santa Cruz County and Friends of the Rail & Trail (FORT) non-profits. The City of Santa Cruz is also pursuing grant opportunities for Phase II to connect from Bay/California to the Wharf, using up to $2.1 million of Measure D Active Transportation programming to match grants, and it has committed other funds to commence environmental and design phases of the remainder of Segments 8 and 9. The City of Watsonville has phased implementation of Segment 18, fully funding Phase I from Ohlone Parkway to the Watsonville Slough Trailhead with Active Transportation Program (ATP), Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX), city funds, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County and FORT donations, and $150 thousand in Measure D-Active Transportation funds. City of Watsonville plans to use up to $2.8 million in Measure D-Active Transportation programming to match future grant opportunities to complete Phase II.

The RTC is leading the development of Segment 5 on the North Coast and was awarded $6.1 million from the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant, $4 million from a Land Trust of Santa Cruz County donation, and $840 thousand from a Coastal Conservancy grant. The RTC previously programmed $441 in RSTPX funds and is leveraging over $5.5 million in Measure D-Active Transportation funds programmed to the project. The RTC has also applied for a $4 million Proposition 68 – Recreational Trails and Greenways Grant to get the segment close to being fully funded.

The Active Transportation Program (ATP), SB1 Solutions for Congested Corridors Program (SCCP), the SB1 Local Partnership Program (LPP), parks California State Parks and Land Trust of Santa Cruz County grants as some of the most viable ways to leverage Measure D funds for additional Coastal Rail Trail projects. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) manages the first three funding programs and programs funds in cycles. Although the State’s Active Transportation Program (ATP), with $100 million a year in estimated funding, is the primary target for the Coastal Rail Trail program, RTC also sees opportunities to get two major bridges needed for the trail in Segment 12 constructed as part of the Highway program with a potential SCCP grant. For SCCP, CTC is requiring that projects have environmental clearance within 6 months of project adoption and that grant funding be solely used on the construction phase of the project, so advancing environmental clearance continues to be a good use of Measure D – Active Transportation funds. CTC is also looking for multi-modal and innovative solutions that increase safety and efficiency as part of the criteria used toward SCCP grants, so RTC will continue to include Coastal Rail Trail projects in future grant cycles.

In addition to the funding for the project development work of these initial projects, RTC has programmed over $6.3 million for maintaining and managing the corridor through FY23/24. This funding is used for RTC staff and to procure contractors and consultants for corridor management, preventative maintenance and upkeep, and technical work, while individual projects are developed to build the Rail Trail. Some of the maintenance funding has been programmed to local jurisdic-
Measure Revenue, including any interest or other earnings thereon, may only be used for transportation purposes described in the Expenditure Plan, including: the implementation and administration of all provisions and requirements of this Ordinance; the construction, acquisition, maintenance, and operation of streets, roads, highways, including local roads, state highways and public transit systems; and for related transportation purposes consistent with the Expenditure Plan, including project management and oversight of the projects to be funded using the Transportation Tax, such as coordination with other responsible agencies as well as project delivery and negotiation of project agreements. These purposes include expenditures for planning, environmental reviews, engineering and design costs, and related right-of-way acquisition. Expenditures may also include, but are not limited to, payments to the County of Santa Cruz for any election costs as set forth in the Ordinance, required payments to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTTA), costs of program administration and oversight, defense or prosecution of legal actions related thereto, debt service on bonds or other indebtedness, and expenses and reserves in connection with the issuance of the same. Additional guidance regarding eligible uses of Direct Allocation revenues is included in the Master Agreement for Direct Allocations (Appendix 5).

In order to ensure that the cost of administration, implementation and oversight of this Measure are not borne by other programs and sources, such as Transportation Development Act-funded programs, any funds necessary for administrative, implementation and oversight of the Ordinance and Transportation Tax shall be paid by Measure D Revenues. RTC shall expend only that amount of the Transportation Tax Revenue for staff support, audit, administrative expenses, and contract services that is necessary and reasonable to carry out its responsibilities pursuant to Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code. Pursuant to Section 180109 of the Public Utilities Code, the Authority shall not expend more than one percent of the funds generated pursuant to Division 19 of the Code for administrative salaries and benefits, net of the amount of fees paid CDTFA for collection of the transactions and use tax and prior to the distribution of the Transportation Tax Revenue as provided in the Expenditure Plan.

4.13 – Proper and Timely Invoicing of Regional Programs and Projects

Although RTC is responsible for programming Measure D Regional Programs and Projects (Chapter 3.5) and managing the Cash Flow Model for Measure D (Policy 4.2), RTC can, by cooperative agreement with a local agency (Policies 4.7 & 4.11), agree to have a local agency implement all or part of a Regional Program or Project. Measure D funds programmed to a local agency for implementation of a Regional Program or Project will be on a reimbursement basis.

After the cooperative funding agreement is executed, the project sponsor can initiate expending and invoicing of Measure D funding, if applicable. The implementing agency can submit invoices to the RTC for reimbursement of eligible costs (Policy 4.12) as frequently as monthly. Implementing agencies shall report to the RTC all expected expenditures for a fiscal year, no later than June 15 of each fiscal year, including the current fiscal year (FY 2019/20). If a project sponsor cannot invoice within the fiscal year of programming, the implementing agency shall request an extension, with an explanation of the delay, by the end of the fiscal year, or risk the funding being de-programmed or re-programmed to another fiscal year, as part of the RTC’s Five Year Plan for Regional Programs or Projects (Policy 4.8). RTC will review invoices for quality control and provide reimbursement within 45 days.

4.14 – Maintenance of Effort

Pursuant to California Public Utilities Code Section 180001(e), funds generated by the Transportation Tax shall be used to supplement and not replace existing revenues used for transportation purposes. Existing funds, revenues and other resources being used for transportation purposes
include but are not limited to federal and state funding, the collection of traffic impact mitigation fees, other local impact fees, and dedications of property. The funds generated by the Transportation Tax shall not be used to replace existing transportation funding or to replace requirements for new development to provide for its own transportation needs. The entities receiving Measure D Revenues shall maintain their existing commitment of discretionary local transportation-related expenditures for transportation purposes pursuant to the ordinance, and the RTC shall enforce this requirement by appropriate actions, including fiscal audits of the local agencies.

4.15 – Delivery Management and RTC Oversight for Regional Programs and Projects

Although RTC is responsible for programming Measure D Regional Programs and Projects (Chapter 3.5) and managing the Cash Flow Model for Measure D (Policy 4.2), RTC can, by cooperative agreement with a local agency (Policies 7 & 12), agree to have a local agency sponsor or implement all or part of a Regional Program or Project. The RTC has an obligation to ensure that local agencies are delivering Regional Programs and Projects in accordance with the Measure D Expenditure Plan, as well as any federal, state, regional, or local requirements.

RTC’s Executive Director will assign an RTC representative to each project who will serve as the Project Delivery Manager (PDM). The PDM could be an employee or a consultant to the RTC. The PDM will work with local jurisdictions who have agreed to sponsor or implement all or part of a Regional Program or Project, in order to resolve issues that may arise throughout the various phases of project delivery. The PDM is responsible for reviewing the project at major milestones. It is expected that the PDM will work in partnership with the project sponsors to facilitate communications and speed delivery.

The purpose of the RTC review is four-fold: 1) to review the project to ensure that the objectives and purpose of the project are consistent with the original purpose of the project programmed in the Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan; 2) to ensure consistency with Strategic Implementation Plan policies and guidelines; 3) to monitor and assist with meeting project delivery milestones; and 4) to ensure any project in the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) right-of-way meets any applicable federal, state, and regional requirements for work on this RTC owned and managed property.

The following section summarizes the review and approval process required for Regional Programs or Projects implemented by a local jurisdiction.

RTC REVIEW DURING PROJECT APPROVAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT (PAED) PHASE

The RTC may be designated as either the lead agency, a responsible agency or a cooperating agency according to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). For this reason, in addition to performing project reviews, the RTC’s PDM will be involved in the environmental process for Measure D projects as follows:

1. The implementing agency shall consult with the PDM on the type of document proposed to meet CEQA compliance.

2. The implementing agency shall provide the PDM with a Notice of Preparation if an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is the type of CEQA document.

3. The implementing agency shall provide the PDM with the opportunity to comment on the project.

4. To assist local agencies delivering projects in the SCBRL right of way meet any applica-
ble federal, state, and regional requirements, the implementing agency shall provide the PDM with the opportunity to review proposed mitigation measures.

5. The implementing agency shall provide the PDM with an opportunity to comment on the administrative draft environmental document, and should advise the PDM if there are project delivery risks associated with the results of the environmental analysis.

6. The implementing agency shall provide responses to the PDM’s comments on the environmental document or proposed mitigation measures.

7. The RTC will work with local agencies to develop a schedule for all reviews which commits to a full process based on partnership.

RTC REVIEW DURING DESIGN PLANS SPECIFICATIONS AND ESTIMATES (PS&E) PHASE

RTC has identified four (4) stages of design reviews.

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN REVIEW (35% PS&E)

This review is to occur once the conceptual alternatives have been identified, and prior to the start of final design. The environmental document could be under preparation, but not final, since the intent of this review is to evaluate different alternatives and their impacts.

RTC will review scope of the project, consistency with Measure D policies and the Ordinance, and identify concerns regarding significant cost components of the project. The schedule and budget will be reviewed, and the schedule and phasing of the remaining reviews will be developed.

65% PS&E

The Level I review will be at a stage in design where a project alternative has been adopted, and the details of the project have been initially defined for the following components of the project: right-of-way acquisition, easements, and disposition; utility relocations; drainage; wetlands and other environmental issues; need for permit applications; and value engineering decisions.

95% PS&E

The Level II review will be at a stage when most of the details of the final design have been finalized. In particular, the review will focus on the following components of the project: right-of-way acquisition, easements, and disposition; drainage; utility relocations; draft utility agreements; signing and striping plans; landscaping; preliminary construction staging; environmental permit applications; environmental mitigation needed; and preliminary estimates.

FINAL DESIGN REVIEW (100% PS&E)

When the plans, specifications and estimates (PS&E) are complete, a review by the PDM will be performed to verify that all components from the previous reviews have been addressed and that the project construction cost estimate is compatible with the Strategic Implementation Plan. This review is required prior to advertising the project for construction bids.

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE PROJECT SPONSOR’S PM PRIOR TO ANY DESIGN REVIEW

To provide for an adequate review, it is important to have materials available prior to the review. The following materials are requested by the project sponsor at least one week prior to any of the design reviews:
Chapter 4 - Policies

1) Project Schedule – Beginning and completion dates for the following activities:
   - Conceptual Engineering studies;
   - Environmental Document;
   - Design stages and RTC design review times (35%, 65%, 95%, Final);
   - Right-of-Way Engineering and Acquisition;
   - Permits;
   - Utility Relocations;
   - Advertisement; and
   - Construction.

2) Project Estimate - A detailed breakdown of the project cost estimate, escalated to the year of construction.

3) Financial Plan – Proposed revenue sources and amounts (by development phase and fiscal year), including shortfalls and proposed revenue sources. Any required match of Measure D funds must be clearly identified.

4) Plans, Reports, and Specifications – any applicable plans, reports and specifications appropriate for the type of review.

5) Summary response to issues raised by the PDM in previous reviews.

6) Summary of compliance with applicable mitigation measures.

The material should offer enough detail to provide the PDM with an adequate perspective to aid them in their review. The implementing agency should provide the PDM at least four (4) weeks to perform their review.

The project sponsor’s staff or consultant will meet with the RTC’s PDM to describe the current status of design and any issues that are critical to understanding the project.

CALTRANS REVIEWS

Project Sponsors are responsible for working with Caltrans to assure preparation and submittal of all documents that may be required by Caltrans, such as the Project Study Report (PSR)/Initial Project Report (IPR), the Project Report (PR), environmental documentation, right-of-way certification, and PS&E. Wherever possible, the Sponsor should attempt to combine these reports, such as the combined PSR/PR.

RTC REVIEW DURING RIGHT OF WAY PHASE

The project sponsor is responsible for identifying real property needs, such as property acquisitions, clearance and demolition, property easements, rights to enter, and relocations of affected parties and businesses as part of the right-of-way process. Real Property acquisition and associated relocation of affected parties must be conducted consistent with the requirements of state law, and the federal “Uniform Acquisition and Relocation Assistance Act.” In addition, the project sponsor will identify utility relocations needed for the project, including a determination of the liability for cost. The project sponsor will enter into utility agreements necessary to ensure the timely relocation of affected utilities as part of the right-of-way phase of project development. Finally, the right-of-way process will include entering into agreements for the acquisition of off-site environmental mitigation needed for the project.

The project sponsor should communicate with the PDM throughout the right of way process. Once the project design is at least 65% complete, the project sponsor shall provide a detailed estimate of the right-of-way cost of the project. At that point, the sponsor shall also provide a detailed
schedule for completion of all right-of-way activities for the project. Proposed right of way acquisition and the potential for parcels to be excess to the Measure D project will be evaluated as part of the design review process described above. If issues regarding excess land extend beyond the design stage of the project, the project sponsor will meet with the PDM, as necessary to resolve such issues. The PDM will work to shorten review times whenever possible and can combine or eliminate a review based on the complexity of the project.

Any special circumstances regarding ownership of property excess to the Measure D project, or acquisition of property that will not be used for the Measure D project should be resolved early. With respect to disposal of property excess to the Measure D project, the proponent should consult with the PDM in order to determine the most cost effective and efficient time for the disposal, in order to get the highest possible return on the investment for the Measure D program. Unless the RTC makes an exception, the project sponsor shall dispose of any property excess to the Measure D project within five years following completion of the project, or prior to sunset of the Measure D program. In some cases, this may mean that the sponsor accepts a less than optimal price, with the agreement of the RTC. In any case, the project sponsor shall advise the PDM of its plans for disposition at the completion of the project.

RTC REVIEW DURING CONSTRUCTION PHASE

After bidding the construction contract, the PDM will be provided a summary of the funding used for the award of the construction contract. The PDM will be invited to attend the initial pre-construction meeting and any standing progress meetings with the Contractor. Attendance at construction meetings with the Resident Engineer and Contractor will be at the discretion of the PDM and based upon the complexity of the project. Regardless of attendance at meetings, the PDM will be permitted to review any design changes and be available as a resource to address issues and problems that arise during the construction phase. The PDM shall be provided copies of contract change orders (CCOs) and associated tracking logs, as requested. The project sponsor shall get the PDM’s written concurrence on any CCOs that increase the scope of the project, beyond the project description set forth in the Measure D Expenditure Plan. At least 30-days before completion of the construction project, the implementing agency shall notify the RTC to perform a field review. The implementing agency shall resolve all comments provided by the PDM, prior to acceptance of the Construction contract.

4.16 - Amendments to Measure D Ordinance and Projects

The Measure D Ordinance and Expenditure Plan may be amended to provide for the use of additional federal, state, and local revenues, to account for unexpected revenues, or to take into consideration unforeseen circumstances. Should a project implementing agency determine that a planned project has become undeliverable, infeasible or unable to secure adequate funding or financing due to circumstances unforeseen at the time this Ordinance and Expenditure Plan were created, or should a project not require all funds programmed for that project or have excess funding, funding set forth at project termination will be reallocated to another project or program of the same type or otherwise serving the same objectives.

The Ordinance and Expenditure Plan may only be amended, if required, by the following process set forth in Section 180207 of the Public Utilities Code: (1) Initiation of amendments by the Commission reciting findings of necessity; (2) Provision of notice and a copy of the amendments provided to the Board of Supervisors and the City Councils in Santa Cruz County; (3) The proposed amendments shall become effective 45 days after notice is given. Amendments shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Commission.