

**AGENDA:** March 5, 2020

**TO:** Regional Transportation Commission  
**FROM:** Guy Preston, Executive Director  
**RE:** Director's Report

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**THIS ITEM FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

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**Administrative Assistant Appointment**

I am pleased to announce that the RTC has hired Krista Corwin to fill RTC's vacant Administrative Assistant position. Krista earned her Bachelor's degree in History at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, then served two years in the AmeriCorps. She interned at the ACLU of Northern California before attending graduate school, earning a Master's in Sociology from UC Davis. Krista recently retired from a 9-year career in roller derby, and represented Santa Cruz internationally with the local All-Star team, the Boardwalk Bombshells.

Krista is passionate about wellness and active transportation, and expects to complete the AIDS LifeCycle, biking 545 miles from San Francisco to Los Angeles, in June of this year. Krista brings grant writing experience and organizational skills to the RTC and is excited to put her passion for public service to work in the expanding world of regional transit.

**Central Coast Coalition – Legislative Day**

On February 19, 2020, Chair McPherson, Vice Chair Gonzales, and I joined representatives of the Central Coast Coalition in Sacramento for Legislative Day. The Coalition consists of Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) for the counties of Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara, and the Association of Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). By working together, we have found our agency can be more effective at ensuring common goals are met for the Central Coast.

The Coalition met with representatives of the State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), Caltrans, the California Transportation Commission (CTC), the California High-Speed Rail Authority, and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). Although the discussion was focused on the Coalition's Senate Bill 1 (SB1) project nominations for the next cycle of grant opportunities, other topics were also addressed.

Chair McPherson, Vice Chair Gonzalez, and I highlighted the Highway 1 – Auxiliary Lane / Bus on Shoulder project as a multi-modal solution that is expected to reduce congestion, while providing significant benefits for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. RTC's project garnered considerable interest, as being innovative and consistent with statewide goals for multi-modal sustainable solutions to transportation challenges. RTC staff is working on applications for Highway 1 auxiliary lane / bus on shoulders projects from Soquel Drive to State Park Drive for the next cycles of Solutions to Congested Corridor

Program and the Local Partnership Program. Applications for competitive SCCP and LPP (Cycle 2) are due in June 2020 with CTC action expected in December 2020.

Vice Chari Gonzalez also highlighted the City of Watsonville's Harkin's Slough project, which is needed to improve pedestrian access to Pajaro Valley High School. This project is a strong candidate for the next cycle of the Active Transportation Program (ATP). The 2021 ATP (Cycle 5) are under development and the Harkin's Slough project is expected to compete well, having just missed being funded in 2019 (Cycle 4).

Chair McPherson also discussed the good work of Monterey Bay Community Power (MBCP), bringing carbon-free energy to the region. Chair McPherson discussed how MBCP partnered with the California Energy Commission and the Center for Sustainable Energy to offer \$7 million in incentives for EV chargers. Through the California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure – Central Coast Incentive Project, businesses, multi-unit dwellings, nonprofits and local government properties can qualify for rebates to purchase and install eligible EV chargers in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties.

Caltrans District 5 Director Tim Gubbins reminded the Coalition that Caltrans installed the State's first 100% solar-powered electric vehicle charging stations at Camp Roberts rest areas along Highway 101 in San Luis Obispo County. Two direct current fast-charging stations are connected to pivoting solar panels and battery systems.

Both Chair McPherson and Chair Gonzalez also discussed the challenges of State Highways serving as the main street of many communities throughout Santa Cruz County. State officials emphasized a commitment to shift the focus away from traditional solutions that focused only on the automobile. STA Secretary Kim discussed potential legislation to change the way speed limits are determined, known as prima facie speed limits. This topic has considerable interest for Coalition members. RTC staff will continue to monitor, support and provide updates on legislation to allow for changes in how speed limits are set.



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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*Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life.*

February 27, 2020

Mr. Guy Preston  
Executive Director  
1523 Pacific Avenue  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Mr. Preston:

This letter responds to questions raised at the October 3, 2019 meeting of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC). During discussion of applications for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Program, a question was raised from the public regarding purchase of Electric Vehicle (EV) instead of gas-powered vehicles.

RESPONSE: We appreciate your interest in advancing the State's initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the expansion of EV transit options. Section 5310 is subject to federal procurement rules that include both Buy America and Altoona federal program testing. Currently there are no EV options for cutaway buses (the type used by the 5310 Program) that meet all requirements. While there are some vehicles that meet Buy America, none meet the requirements of both. The lack of available options and high costs restrict the purchase of EVs with federal funds at this time.

Please contact Mark Barry, Branch Chief of the FTA 5310 Program, at (916) 651-8243 for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy M. Gubbins".

TIMOTHY M. GUBBINS  
District Director

Handwritten initials in blue ink, possibly "TG".