



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, March 05, 2020
9:00 a.m.**

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

1. Roll call.

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 am.

Members present:

Aileen Loe (ex-officio)	Andy Schiffrin (alt)
Jacques Bertrand	Bruce McPherson
Mike Rotkin	Randy Johnson
Donna Lind (alt)	Zach Friend
Trina Coffman-Gomez	Aurelio Gonzalez
Greg Caput	Patrick Mulhearn (alt)
Dave Reid (alt)	Derek Timm (alt)

Staff present:

Luis Mendez	Guy Preston
Yesenia Parra	Rachel Moriconi
Krista Corwin	Shannon Munz
Brianna Goodman	Grace Blakeslee
Sarah Christensen	Steve Mattas
Ginger Dykaar	Tommy Travers

2. Oral communications.

Received Public Comment from:

Sandrine Georges
Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation
Gina Cole, Bike Santa Cruz County
Greg Buzzard
David Date
Brian Peoples, Trail Now

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas: Replacement pages for items 7 and 23, handouts for items 22 and 23.

CONSENT AGENDA

Senior Transportation Engineer and Executive Director Guy Preston responded to Commissioner questions for Items 7 and 8.

Commissioner Friend recused himself from items 8 and 9 due to a financial interest because his primary residence is within 500 feet of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

Received public comment from:

Jessica Evans, Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail and Trail
Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation
Mark Mesiti-Miller
Brian Peoples, Trail Now

In response to a comment from the public and questions from Commissioners on item 7, Executive Director Guy Preston explained that the environmental document will include analysis of the heaviest potential loads on the railroad bridges which would allow flexibility to design for lighter loads, if that is decided later.

In response to a comment from the public on item 7, Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen clarified the scope of the work from a traffic modeling perspective and provided more clarity on the content of the cumulative impact analysis.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin directed staff to look into the potential impacts of projects in the queue under CEQA.

Commissioner Rotkin moved and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Bertrand, Caput, Coffman-Gomez, Friend, Gonzalez, Johnson, McPherson, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Lind, Reid, and Schiffrin voting "aye" with recusal on Items 8 and 9 from Commissioner Friend.

MINUTES

4. Approved draft minutes of the February 06, 2020 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the February 10, 2020 Bicycle Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the February 11, 2020 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC) meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

7. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to award a contract for the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project (State Park Drive to Freedom Boulevard) Programming Action, Caltrans Cooperative Agreement Amendment, Measure D – Five Year Program of Projects Amendment, and RTC Budget and Work Program Amendments (**Resolution 93-19**)
8. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Durden Construction Inc. for drainage culvert maintenance along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Corridor (**Resolution 94-19**)
9. Adopted Plans, Specifications, and Estimate for Sites 1 and 2 of the 2017 Storm Damage Repairs along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Corridor (**Resolution 95-19**)
10. Approved Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-20 Cap and Trade – Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) (**Resolution 96-19**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

11. Approved County of Santa Cruz Article 8 Transportation Development Act Claims (**Resolution 97-19**)
12. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
13. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

14. Approved rejection of claim from Martin and Karen Herman

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

15. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
16. Accepted correspondence log
17. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies - *none*
18. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on RTC projects and transportation issues - *none*
19. Accepted information items - *none*

REGULAR AGENDA

20. Commissioner reports – none.
21. Appointment of Commissioners to the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin motioned and Commissioner Rotkin seconded to approve the appointment of Commissioners Bertrand, Coonerty, Leopold, McPherson, Friend, and Caput to the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Caput, Rotkin, Bertrand, Johnson, Friend, Coffman-Gomez, McPherson, Gonzalez, and Commissioner Alternates Reid, Schiffrin, and Lind voting “aye.”

22. Director’s Report

Executive Director Guy Preston announced the hiring of Krista Corwin to the vacant Administrative Assistant position.

Executive Director Preston noted that he, Chair McPherson and Vice-Chair Gonzalez participated in the Central Coast Coalition Legislative Day on February 19, and reported several highlights of the event: Hwy 1 auxiliary lane/bus-on-shoulder project garnered interest for grant opportunities; Harkins Slough Road bicycle and pedestrian bridge over Highway 1 a strong candidate for the next cycle of Active Transportation Program (ATP); the work of Monterey Bay Community Power; recent installation of the state’s first 100% solar-powered electric vehicle charging station; legislation to change the way speed limits are set for highway segments that function as main streets through communities.

23. Caltrans report

Caltrans Ex-Officio Alternate Aileen Loe reiterated the five priorities outlined by Director Toks Omishakin: safety, modality, innovation, efficiency, and partnerships.

Caltrans has released the VMT-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide for the evaluation of land use projects. A subsequent guide specific to transportation projects is forthcoming. Feedback is requested by March 30, 2020.

Ms. Loe presented the Commission with a follow-up letter to a previous discussion regarding the purchase of electric vehicles through the federal 5310 program.

Work along Highway 1 includes pedestrian improvements at six overcrossings and completion is expected by December 2020. The Pasatiempo 2 project near the Fishhook will go to construction later this spring. In response to questions,

Ms. Loe provided additional details on pedestrian safety improvements and traffic control device regulations, and noted concerns about maintaining a level of safety at pedestrian crossings while construction is in progress.

Received public comment from:

Jessica Evans, Friends of the Rail and Trail
Manu Koenig, Candidate for 1st District Supervisor
Sandrine Georges
Jim Helmer, Ben Lomond

24. Camping Enforcement Challenges – oral report

Lt. Ian Troxell, California Highway Patrol, reported on the challenges of keeping the state's highway systems safe as pedestrians utilize highways and shoulders to gain access to encampments. Injuries and deaths are common in secondary collisions as motorists react to avoid a pedestrian, and many victims are homeless people. CHP and Caltrans will work together to address these concerns.

Lt. Troxell also gave an overview of challenges particular to Santa Cruz County, including the types of populations living or working in the encampments, their legal protections, the lack of vacancy in shelters, and the location of a popular clinic. Education campaigns have targeted these populations and engineering solutions are sought.

Lt. Troxell responded to Commissioner questions, explaining that in terms of CHP's response, "one size does not fit all," because each county has its own policies and procedures. CHP meets on a monthly basis with the County sheriff and has seen success with the mobile mental health teams from County providers. Homeless people need a safe, affordable place to live. He advised seeking grants for pedestrian safety and working with Caltrans on engineering aspects of the roadways.

Commissioner Friend departed the meeting and Commissioner Alternate Mulhearn replaced him at the dais.

25. Transit Corridors Alternatives Analysis - Goals/Screening Criteria/Performance Measures and Initial List of Alternatives

Senior Transportation Planner Ginger Dykaar and the HDR consultant team presented a report to seek input from the commission on Milestone 1 (Goals/Screening Criteria/Performance Measures and Initial List of Alternatives). They covered background information, performance-based planning process, various forms of stakeholder outreach and evaluation framework for Milestone 1, and what can be expected for Milestones 3 and 4. In response to questions, Mr. Decker of HDR noted that transparency is a priority.

The Commission requested the planning team to more clearly address the micro-economic factors and costs and benefits to the individual transit customer.

In response to questions, Senior Transportation Planner Ginger Dykaar clarified how the method of data analysis will inform individual Commissioners' decision-making and the inclusion of bicycle capacity and mobility device accessibility metrics.

Commissioners requested that the RTC's consideration of individual riders' decision-making be made clear early on in the analysis process and carried through every stage of the TCAA especially with how the information was communicated to the public.

Received public comment from:

Melani Clark, CEO Roaring Camp Railroads & Santa Cruz Big Trees and Pacific Railway

Rosemary Sarka, Roaring Camp Railroads/Big Trees Officer

Manu Koenig, Candidate for 1st District Supervisor

Jessica Evans, Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail and Trail

Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation

Mark Mesiti-Miller

Sandrine Georges

Ryan Sarnataro

Gina Cole, Bike Santa Cruz County

Brian Peoples, Executive Director of Trail Now

Greg Buzzard

Brett Garrett

Commissioner comments: Decision on mass transit along the corridor has been made; add consideration of Big Trees and Pacific Railway and their use of tracks to and from the Boardwalk as well as connection to regional rail network; add safety measures; separate existing from future funding sources; request for staff comment on freight compatibility; add "multimodal" to the integration metric.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin motioned to approve the staff recommendations:

1. Review and approve the goals, screening criteria, and performance measures for the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis (TCAA).
2. Review and approve the initial list of alternatives for the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis of high-capacity public transit for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

And directed staff to include the following revisions to the evaluation framework:

- Revise the "Funding" performance measure to evaluate "% funding likely from existing sources; % of funding likely from future sources"
- Revise the "Freight and other rail businesses" description to "What is the impact on freight rail operators, shippers and other rail businesses including Santa Cruz Big Trees and Pacific Railway" and the performance

measure to add "Big Trees access to boardwalk (A,B,C) and Big Trees access to Pajaro (A,B,C)

- Revise the "Safety" performance measure to "Annual Collisions by mode, Total Annual Collisions, Annual Cost of Collisions"
- Revise the "Integration" description to "Does project integrate into existing multimodal transportation infrastructure?"

Commissioner Rotkin seconded the motion.

Commissioner comments: inclusion of personal rapid transit (PRT) in the analysis; impact of freight on commuters from South County; consideration of rail corridor remaining continuous.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Caput, Rotkin, Bertrand, Coffman-Gomez, McPherson, Gonzalez, and Commissioner Alternates Timm, Mulhearn, Reid, Schiffrin, and Lind.

Commissioner Caput left the dais.

26. Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report for the North Coast Rail Trail Project

Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee gave the staff report. Commissioners discussed: the complexity of the project in terms of various stakeholder interests, regulations, and permitting; plans to address the \$4 million shortfall; importance of pre-construction activities for securing funds.

Received public comment from:

Marty Demare

Brian Peoples, Executive Director of Trail Now

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin motioned and Commissioner Rotkin seconded to approve the staff recommendations to:

1. Adoption a resolution to approve the Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the North Coast Rail Trail as being compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and,
2. Authorize the Executive Director to amend the June 7, 2019 Settlement Agreement to incorporate a revision to Section 1(a) related to the proposed addition of an option that would provide for opening one additional rail crossing with the closure of two rail crossings to reflect a revised request from the agreement's signatories.

Commissioner comments: National Monument project moving forward; PUC and Coastal Commission will make final decisions on crossings, closures, signage, and parking; Commission has done its best to respond to stakeholders including farmers; mass transit not equivalent to public transit; extensive effort from consultants reduced environmental impact; Davenport crossing is a priority safety concern.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Rotkin, Bertrand, Coffman-Gomez, McPherson, Gonzalez, and Commissioner Alternates Timm, Mulhearn, Reid, Schiffrin, and Lind voting "aye."

27. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 02, 2020 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, April 16, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Ave, Santa Cruz, CA.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yesenia Parra
Administrative Services Officer

Attendees:

Jessica Evans, SC County Friends of the Rail and Trail
Sandrine Georges
Mike Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation
Rosemary Sarka, Roaring Camp/Big Trees
Melani Clark, CEO Roaring Camp Railroads & Santa Cruz Big Trees Pacific Railway
Manu Koenig, Candidate for 1st District Supervisor
James Helmer
Kirk Ance, Community Bridges/Lift Line/CTSA
Greg Buzzard
Russell Chen, County/DPW
Gina Cole, Bike Santa Cruz County
Steve Decker, HDR/RTC
Pam Yonkin, HDR/RTC
James Sandoval, SMART Local 0023
Prasanna Muthireddy, Kimley-Horn/RTC
Mark Mesiti-Miller, Future Generations
Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Marty Demare
Ryan Sarnataro
Brett Garrett