



**Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)**

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**MINUTES**

Thursday, March 19, 2020, 1:30 p.m.  
Teleconference

RTC Conference Room, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA (*Accessible location for the public*)

*Due to precautions associated with COVID-19 (coronavirus), the meeting was held by teleconference, consistent with Governor Newsom's Executive Order which allows local or state legislative bodies to hold Brown Act meetings via teleconference.*

**ITAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Gus Alfaro, Caltrans District 5 Planning  
Teresa Buika, UCSC  
Piet Canin, Ecology Action  
Murray Fontes, Watsonville Public Works  
Claire Gallogly (Chair), Santa Cruz Public Works and Planning  
Paul Hierling, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)  
Justin Meek, Watsonville Community Development  
Wondimu Mengistu, Santa Cruz METRO  
Kailash Mozumder (Vice Chair), Capitola Public Works  
Pete Rasmussen, Santa Cruz METRO  
Anais Schenk, County Planning  
Steve Wiesner, County Public Works

**RTC Staff Present:** Rachel Moriconi, Sarah Christensen

**Others Present:**

Oxo Slayer, UCSC; John Olejnik, Doug Hessing, and Darron Hill, Caltrans District 5

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- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Gallogly called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.
  - 2. Introductions:** Roll call introductions were made. All attendees participated by teleconference.
  - 3. Oral Communications:** Rachel Moriconi provided reminders on muting and unmuting phones and viewing material on the [www.freeconferencecall.com](http://www.freeconferencecall.com) website.
  - 4. Additions, deletions, or changes to consent and regular agendas:** Item 11 regarding Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Railroad worker safety training was tabled to a future agenda.

## CONSENT AGENDA

*The Committee unanimously approved a motion (Buika/Fontes) approving the consent agenda, with all members present voting "yes" by rollcall vote.*

### 5. **Approved Minutes of the January 16, 2020 ITAC meeting**

### 6. **Received Caltrans Updates**

- a. 5 Caltrans Priorities
- b. Briefing Announcements
- c. US 101 Business Plan Fact Sheet
- d. Project Updates

## REGULAR AGENDA

### 7. **Status of ongoing transportation projects, programs, studies and planning documents**

ITAC members provided updates on Measure D-funded projects, RTC-funded projects, and other major projects and planning efforts. Members also discussed how their agencies were modifying operations and project implementation in response to COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders.

County – Steve Wiesner reported that the County’s Safe Routes to School Plan has been completed and will be going to the Board of Supervisors soon. Several projects are getting ready to start construction, including 30 miles of resurfacing projects funded by a combination of Measure D, RSTPX, STIP, and SB1-RMRA funds; the Soquel Dr/Aptos Creek Dr. intersection signalization project; about a dozen storm damage repair projects; Bear Creek Road repairs, and emergency repairs on Soquel-San Jose Road. The County’s maintenance program is also in full swing. He noted that the County’s operations section is not working remotely and maintenance and other operation work continues on site, whereas transportation professionals are working remotely in response to COVID-19 health mandates.

Anais Schenk reported that the County continues work on the Caltrans’ planning grant-funded Active Transportation Plan, front loading some of the data collection and other planning elements, but may need to modify public outreach in response to COVID-19. Work also continues on the General Plan update. The County is also working on County-level travel model updates. Once completed it will be available to all cities in the county for project-level analysis.

Capitola – Kailash Mozumder reported that the City of Capitola is opening bids for the Brommer St. multimodal project April 1 and has one storm damage project starting soon. He asked committee members for input on if agencies are moving forward with public works projects given COVID-19. Members indicated that agencies are currently planning to move forward with construction and planning projects, though recognizing the dynamic situation.

Watsonville – Murray Fontes reported that the City of Watsonville is working on its Active Transportation Program (ATP) application for the Harkins Slough bicycle/pedestrian crossing over Highway 1. The City is working on providing local street and road information for the statewide report.

METRO – Wondimu Mengistu reported that METRO electric charging infrastructure project is underway. Due to the coronavirus, METRO is working to provide essential service in the county, will be reducing some service and looking into free-fare options. State Transit Assistance and other revenues will be impacted.

University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) – Teresa Buika reported that the move to online learning for the spring quarter is a major shift. She noted that the campus is still open and operating, with international students and those without other housing options allowed to stay on campus. With a reduction of students on campus, they may push up the start date for construction of the RSTPX/ATP-funded bike path reconstruction project. Bids were received on 3/10/20. The non-infrastructure bike safety education portion of the project may be modified, with a focus on innovation and online outreach. She reported that on-campus shuttles and buses are still operating. Jump Bikes are suspended. Zip Carshare is still operating.

Oxo Slayer reported that the deadline for input on the Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Notice of Preparation (NOP) will be extended, possibly to April 8. Two scoping meetings were changed to online meetings and another online forum is scheduled for April 1. John Olejnik requested that Caltrans be added to the outreach list for the LRDP. Mr. Slayer noted that the university is also expected to close the coastal science campus to car and other traffic, including Seymour Center. The area will still be open for construction and essential research.

Ecology Action – Piet Canin reported that Ecology Action is assessing the impacts of shelter-in-place mandates on its outreach programs. For Safe Routes to Schools safety education programs they are looking to create online content and lessons, especially focused on students and parents sheltering in place. Ecology Action is conducting health/wellness focused outreach noting outdoor activity, such as biking, is okay if people practice social distancing. Outreach includes messaging with families and schools. They are concerned how non-infrastructure grants could be impacted. He expressed interest in seeing Jump Bikes back in service as a transportation option.

SCCRTC – Rachel Moriconi reported that the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) group is expected to hold a stakeholder meeting in April and RTC staff will be reaching out to project sponsors to discuss projects and mitigation needs this spring. Work continues on the rail corridor transit Alternative Analysis and Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) Segment 5. She reminded members that updates to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) project list are due to Amy Naranjo in April. Sarah Christensen reported that the RTC authorized staff to hire a contractor to make emergency rail bridge repairs near Harkins Slough. RTC is expecting to advertise several storm damage repair projects and bridge railing repairs over Highway 1 in Aptos in the next few weeks. She noted that most consultants assisting with pre-construction stages of the RTC's three Highway 1 projects are able to continue working during the shelter-in-place order. The Highway 1 41<sup>st</sup> Ave-Soquel Drive project is expected to meet the design milestone in April; public circulation of the environmental document for the Bay-Porter to State Park project is expected later this year. Work on the State Park-Freedom Blvd project environmental document is starting this month. In addition to auxiliary and bus on shoulder lanes, the project includes replacement of the two railroad bridges over Highway 1, the Aptos Creek Bridge and Segment 12 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST).

Santa Cruz – Claire Gallogly reported that the Rail Trail Segment 7, phase 1 is under construction. ATP-funded Safe Routes to Schools crosswalks projects at 24 locations are currently under construction. Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 8 un-signalized intersection upgrades at 13 locations is going out to bid soon. River St and Water St roadway rehabilitation projects are under construction. The city is also gearing up to prepare ATP Cycle 5 grant applications for the Rail Trail and several other projects, with non-infrastructure partnerships planned. She also reported that consultant proposals for the city's local roadway safety plan are due April 3. She encouraged agencies to complete the simple application on the HSIP website to prepare their own plans. She reported that city public works and planning staff are transitioning to working remotely in response to COVID-19.

AMBAG – Paul Hierling reported that the AMBAG board approved draft regional lump sum numbers for the Regional Growth Forecast for housing, transportation, and job growth. AMBAG will be meeting with jurisdictions this spring to discuss disaggregation of regional numbers to each jurisdiction.

Caltrans – John Olejnik suggested inviting BLM to provide an update on the Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument at a future ITAC meeting. He noted plans will impact Highway 1. Anais Schenk noted that the County is tracking the project, especially parking and access impacts, and that the deadline to submit comments on the draft Resource Management Plan was extended to April 3 (<https://go.usa.gov/xEJAW>). She requested that Caltrans and others share any comments they submit.

Gus Alfaro reviewed the Caltrans Priorities included on the consent agenda, emphasizing the work Caltrans is doing related to partnerships, safety, innovation, efficiency, and modality. He encouraged agencies to review the Freight Mobility Plan, which includes information on drones, way-finding, delivery and autonomous vehicles. He reported that Caltrans staff is working, but most are working remotely and that he encouraged agencies to reach out to him for support. He highlighted some of the information included in the announcements on the consent agenda, including information about the comprehensive corridor planning guide and FTA funding opportunities.

## **8. State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) Updates**

Darron Hill provided an overview of the 2020 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), existing project list, planned future candidate projects, and the online webviewer. He noted that Caltrans goal is to keep partner agencies informed about planned projects. Caltrans is working to add complete streets components to SHOPP projects where feasible. Gus Alfaro will reach out to agencies during project development with the goal of understanding needs and opportunities to partner. Doug Hessing noted that he is available to answer questions on specific projects, especially on Highway 9.

## **9. Update on Transportation Impact Analysis (SB 743-Implementation) and Caltrans's Draft Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (Draft TISG)**

Claire Gallogly provided an overview of SB743 requirements and local and state implementation. Her presentation included information about a new local vehicle miles traveled calculator, transportation demand management methods to reduce VMT, and the

Caltrans Draft Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (Draft TISG). She noted countywide efforts have included estimating baseline regional average vehicle miles traveled per household and employee and developing an excel sheet agencies can use to determine project-level VMT impacts and acceptable transportation demand management strategies. Each jurisdiction is developing VMT thresholds and TDM reasonable strategies.

In response to questions, Anais Schenk and Claire Gallogly noted that the consultant team is working on estimating VMT for trips that start and end outside of the county. Anais noted that there is a separate trip generation rate for students. If a project does not fall within the land use categories identified in the spreadsheet, project sponsors may need to run the model.

John Olejnik reported on the Caltrans proposed guidelines which they will be using to comment on land use proposals. He noted that in some instances, especially in rural areas, countywide TDM strategies might be better than site-specific proposals such as a single bike locker. Anais requested clarification on Caltrans's implementation and thresholds, since local jurisdictions are allowed to set different thresholds than those provided by OPR; different interpretations of OPR guidelines; land uses that do not fit typical residential or commercial categories; regional vs county-level thresholds; calculator methodologies; how impacts to state highways will be determined; induced demand; and guidance for rural areas. He noted that Caltrans is discussing these and other issues with CalSTA, CARB and others and urged agencies to participate in the webinar scheduled for March 24 and to submit comments on the draft TISG via the online comment form by the March 30 deadline to submit informal feedback.

## **10. Other Transportation Program Updates**

Rachel Moriconi reviewed some upcoming state and federal grant opportunities. She noted that some grant due dates may change given COVID-19 disruptions to business. She requested that agencies inform her if they plan to apply for competitive Local Partnership Program (LPP) grants, since RTC would have to submit the application on their behalf. Santa Cruz, METRO, and Watsonville staff confirmed that they do not plan to apply.

For Active Transportation Program (ATP) grants, committee members indicated interest in having peers, especially local representatives on the state ATP-Technical Advisory Committee. Some committee members offered to review and provide feedback on project ideas and their benefits, especially in consideration of the proposed scoring rubric for ATP grants. Agencies should plan to submit project information in early April. Claire noted the importance of maintaining a regional definition of a DAC for many local projects and indicated she will put together a template for agencies to use.

## **11. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Railroad Worker Safety Training – TABLED TO FUTURE MEETING**

## **12. The next meeting is scheduled for 1:30pm on April 16, 2020.** The meeting will be canceled if there are no action items to be brought before the committee.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.

*Minutes prepared by: Rachel Moriconi, RTC Planner*