



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

MINUTES

Thursday, December 17, 2020, 1:30 p.m.
Teleconference

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

ITAC Members Present

Capitola Public Works - Kailash Mozumder (Vice Chair)
Santa Cruz Public Work- Chris Schneiter
Santa Cruz Planning - Claire Gallogly (Chair)
Scotts Valley Public Works – Athena Cheung
Watsonville Public Works - Murray Fontes
Watsonville Community Development - Justin Meek
County of Santa Cruz Public Works – Tim Bailey
County of Santa Cruz Planning – Anais Schenk
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) – Paul Hierling
Caltrans District 5 - Gus Alfaro
Ecology Action Transportation Demand Management Program - Piet Canin
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) - Wondimu Mengistu
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) - John Urgo
University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) – Teresa Buika

RTC Staff Present

Rachel Moriconi, Ginger Dykaar, Fernanda Pini, Amy Naranjo

Others Present

Audrey Ogden, Kelly McClendon, Jackson Ho, Caltrans District 5
Scott Sauer, Frances Dea-Sanchez, Juven Alvarez - Caltrans Headquarters
Ben Vernazza, Aptos resident
Jim Langley
Lowell Hurst, Watsonville City Council
Mark Dettle, Santa Cruz Public Works
Pete Rasmussen, METRO

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- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Gallogly called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
 - 2. Introductions:** Roll call introductions were made. All attendees participated by teleconference.

- 3. Additions, deletions, or changes to consent and regular agendas:**
The presentation for Item 7: Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) was provided on the meeting website.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Committee approved a motion (Fontes/Buika) approving the consent agenda (12-0), with all members present voting "yes" by roll call vote.

4. Approved Minutes of the October 22, 2020 ITAC meeting

Ben Vernazza, Aptos resident, expanded on his October 22, 2020 comments, expressing concerns about Segment 12 of the rail trail and bridges over Highway 1 and the cost of the combined auxiliary lanes, bus on shoulder, and Segment 12 project. *Mr. Vernazza left the meeting following his comments.*

5. Received California Transportation Commission's Interim Timely Use of Funds Policy

6. Received Announcement: Community Members Sought to Serve on RTC Advisory Committees

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Caltrans Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP)

Frances Dea-Sanchez, Caltrans Office of Multimodal System Planning, made a presentation on the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP), which is currently being updated. A key purpose of the plan is to provide guidance for prioritizing projects that improve interregional movement for people and goods on the State's transportation systems (highways and rail). Ms. Dea-Sanchez highlighted highways that are part of the Interregional Road System (IRRS), Strategic Interregional Corridors and Priority Intercity Rail Facilities identified in past plans. She noted that the ITSP is being updated to be consistent with state goals and plans, including the 2050 California Transportation Plan (CTP) and forthcoming Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI), as well as to consider equity, COVID-19 impacts, multimodal integration and connectivity, broadband infrastructure, and zero emission vehicle needs. The plan is also used to prioritize projects for Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) and other funding programs.

ITAC members discussed routes and projects that support interregional travel, including Highways 1, 17, 129, 152, and 9; safety programs; Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST); complete streets on state highways that also serve as Main Streets; intercity passenger rail and Highway 17 Express Bus service; freight rail in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties; carpool and vanpool programs; 511 traveler information services; emergency evacuation routes and safety, especially from San Lorenzo Valley (SLV); zero emission vehicle infrastructure and programs; and planning for climate resiliency on Highway 17 and other roads. Members were invited to submit any additional comments to: frances.dea-sanchez@dot.ca.gov or ITSP@dot.ca.gov.

Justin Meek left the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

8. Highway 1/Mission Street Capital Maintenance Project

Jackson Ho, Caltrans Project Manager, provided an overview of the planned capital maintenance project on Highway 1/Mission St. He noted this is a preventative maintenance project aimed at extending the pavement life ten years. The project will also replace loop detectors at intersections, upgrade curb ramps to current standards, and includes guardrail upgrades. Caltrans is working with the City of Santa Cruz and stakeholders to identify additional bicycle and pedestrian components that might be possible to integrate into the project.

Committee members appreciated Caltrans work to integrate complete streets and public input into projects, but expressed concern that there is limited funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Caltrans staff indicated that while they are working to integrate complete streets elements, the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) does not currently have complete street targets, as it does for collisions and maintenance. Caltrans staff stated they are open to funding partnerships. Santa Cruz staff noted that they have shared information on several possible multimodal improvements and stated that flashers at pedestrian crossings need to be replaced sooner than the current project construction schedule. Members also suggested Caltrans review the recent presentation from Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee members on safe pedestrian intersection design, which identified several locations on Mission Street; look at utilities, signs, poles, hydrants and other barriers in sidewalks; avoid UCSC's June graduation and September/October move-in dates when developing the construction schedule; encourage bikes to use the Rail Trail, rather than Mission St; maintain concrete bus pads in roadway at bus stops.

Lowell Hurst emphasized the importance of complete streets where the state highway is also a main street, with an emphasis on bike and pedestrian safety; and asked that Caltrans also consider trees and other beautification on these main streets.

Gus Alfaro asked that committee members send any additional comments to him, and copy Claire Gallogly and Rachel Moriconi.

Piet Canin left the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

9. Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis (TCAA) and Rail Network Integration Study – Performance Measure Analysis and Proposed Locally Preferred Alternative

Ginger Dykaar made a presentation on the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis (TCAA) and Rail Network Integration Study of high-capacity public transit for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. She highlighted the results of the performance measure analysis of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), commuter rail transit, light rail transit, and an autonomous road “train”. She reported that the proposed Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is Electric Passenger Rail. Among electric passenger rail options, a decision on electric commuter rail (CRT) or electric light rail (LRT) would be based on preliminary engineering, environmental analysis phase, and rail technology advances.

The ITAC approved a motion (Schneiter/Fontes) 11-0, with 2 abstentions, in support of the proposed Locally-Preferred Alternative [Electric Passenger Rail], with Gallogly (Santa Cruz Planning), Schneiter (SC Public Works), Cheung (Scotts Valley Public Works), Fontes (Watsonville Public Works and Planning proxy), Schenk (County Planning), Bailey (County Public Works), Hierling (AMBAG), Alfaro (Caltrans), Uργο and Mengistu (METRO) voting yes. Mozumder (Capitola) and Buika (UCSC) abstained.

Chair Gallogly had to leave the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and Murray Fontes assumed the role of Chair for the remainder of the meeting due to Vice Chair Mozumder’s microphone issues.

10. 2021 Legislative Program

Rachel Moriconi provided an overview of, and solicited input on, the RTC’s proposed state and federal legislative priorities for 2021.

Committee members expressed support for the draft legislative program, indicated it was a comprehensive list, expressed support for changing rules

regarding speed limits, and suggested possibly adding items related to housing and parking, modifying how high quality transit is defined, and funding for converting college fleets to zero emission vehicles. Several committee members stated they would review and provide any additional input on the draft Legislative Program by December 23, 2020.

11. 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.

UCSC - Teresa Buika reported that the ATP- and RSTPX-funded meadow bike path is open.

AMBAG – Paul Hierling reported that AMBAG is working with RTC on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) financial element and Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

METRO – Wondimu Mengistu reported that METRO is closing out three federal projects.

County - Tim Bailey reported on Valencia Road storm damage, Jamison Creek fire damage, Aptos Village-Aptos Creek/Soquel Drive signal, RRFB/crosswalks, Mount Hermon Road and Measure D pavement construction projects. Anais Schenk reported on the County's Active Transportation Plan, expedited permits for fire recovery, and Caltrans planning grant application for SB743 regional mitigation bank.

Santa Cruz – Chris Schneiter reported that the Highway 1/9 project is scheduled to go out to bid in January. He also reported on the Rail Trail Segment 7 ribbon cutting, pedestrian crossing RRFB installations, and restriping at the Ocean St/Water St intersection.

RTC – Fernanda Pini provided an update on the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) and encouraged agencies to provide input on the draft report and results of the mitigation needs assessment. Rachel Moriconi reminded agencies that FY19/20 Measure D expenditure reports and audits are due 12/31 and reported that sales tax revenues have been higher than prior estimates, largely due to online sales tax revenues. She also reported that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved \$107.2 million in SB1 grants for the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program – which includes auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder facilities on Highway 1 between Soquel Avenue/Drive and State

Park Drive, new bike/pedestrian bridges at Mar Vista & Chanticleer and multimodal improvements along Soquel Avenue and Soquel Drive. Juven Alvarez, commented that Caltrans Headquarters sees the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program as a transformational project that is representative of California's multimodal goals.

Caltrans – Gus Alfaro highlighted some of the updates included in the packet and reminded agencies that Caltrans Planning Grant applications are due February 12, 2021, with a workshop planned for January 8, 2021. He asked agencies to inform him if they plan to apply. He reported that FHWA is seeking input on the MUTCD by March 15, 2021 and reported that Caltrans held an online public meeting on the Highway 9 pedestrian safety project in Felton.

Watsonville – Murray Fontes reported that signal projects at Airport Blvd/Holm Road and West Beach/Ohlone and Segment 18 of the Rail Trail are under construction. Watsonville is also working on its Downtown Specific Plan.

Capitola – Kailash Mozumder reported that the city is working on a Caltrans encroachment permit for the 41st Avenue adaptive signal project. The Capitola Avenue streetscape project near Capitola Village is out to bid.

12. Oral Communications: None.

13. Next meeting. The next meeting of the ITAC is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on January 21, 2021. ITAC meetings will be canceled if there are no action items to be brought before the committee.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Rachel Moriconi, RTC Planner