



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

Draft-AGENDA

**Thursday, February 04, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

**NOTE LOCATION THIS MONTH
Community TV Zoom
Web: [https://us02web.zoom.us/w/82527850112](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82527850112)
Dial-in: +1 669 900 6833
Webinar ID: 825 2785 0112**

NOTE

See the last page for details about access for people with disabilities, translation services, and meeting broadcasts.

En Español

Para información sobre servicios de traducción al español, diríjase a la última página.

AGENDAS ONLINE

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| City of Capitola | Jacques Bertrand |
| City of Santa Cruz | Sandy Brown |
| City of Scotts Valley | Randy Johnson |
| City of Watsonville | Eduardo Montesino |
| County of Santa Cruz | Greg Caput |
| County of Santa Cruz | Ryan Coonerty |
| County of Santa Cruz | Zach Friend |
| County of Santa Cruz | Manu Koenig |
| County of Santa Cruz | Bruce McPherson |
| Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District | TBD |
| Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District | Aurelio Gonzalez |
| Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District | Mike Rotkin |

AGENDA: February 4, 2021

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

THIS ITEM FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Measure D and TDA Revenue Forecasts

Since the beginning of the pandemic, RTC staff has been closely monitoring Measure D and Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds. We were expecting that both revenue sources would be significantly impacted by a drop in tax receipts. Based on initial projections, RTC passed a modified FY20/21 budget in June 2020, which reduced projected revenue of both Measure D and TDA funding to values 20% below actual FY18/19 receipts.

Measure D revenue is currently trending about 4% above actual FY18/19 receipts and 22% above RTC's approved FY20/21 budget. TDA revenue is currently trending about 3% above actual FY18/19 receipts and 29% above RTC's approved FY20/21 budget.

In addition to the effects of various economic stimulus legislation, we suspect that a good portion of this positive trend is due to on-line sales. Due to a court ruling known as the "Wayfair Decision", states are permitted to mandate that business without a physical presence in a state with more than 200 transactions or \$100K in state-sales collect and remit sales taxes on transactions in the state. California enacted AB147, requiring marketplace facilitators collect and remit tax for the sale of personal property for use, consumption or storage in California, effective October 1, 2019.

Actual Measure D revenue will pass directly to recipients for the Neighborhood and Transit program categories. For regional Measure D categories (Highway Corridors, MBSST, and Rail), staff is considering appropriate estimates for this year's 5-Year programming cycle, which is currently under development.

Staff will also be considering whether to replenish the TDA reserve, which was impacted in FY19-20, and how best to ensure that the balance of TDA revenue (above budgeted amounts / reserve requirements) can be expeditiously distributed to eligible recipients. It is likely that TDA claims that were adjusted in June 2020 can be partially or completely restored to pre-pandemic levels.

Short-Line Railroad Improvement Program

On January 28, 2021, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved RTC's grant application request for \$285K from the Short-Line Railroad Improvement Program for the construction of the \$670K Pajaro River Railroad Bridge Rehabilitation Project. RTC expects to request a construction allocation from the CTC this fall, with contract award estimated in March 2022. RTC is matching the grant funding with \$214K in Measure D funds and \$171K in private fee and lease funding generated by RTC's ownership of the branch line.

The 575-foot long Pajaro River Railroad Bridge includes a 300-foot long through steel plate girder section located between two timber trestle sections. RTC is under contract with STV, Inc. to prepare design plans and specifications, which are 30% complete, and include through girder repairs, rehabilitation or replacement of various timber members, as well new wingwalls, a new backwall and a new walkway. Transportation Planner Tommy Travers is managing this project for RTC.

Item 19 - Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study (TCAA/RNIS) – Final Draft Report and Locally Preferred Alternative

Email Comments received for Milestone 3 of the TCAA/RNIS can be viewed on the TCAA webpage:

<https://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/transitcorridora/>.

Comments received between 01/27/21 and 12pm on 02/03/21 will be made available by 5pm on 02/03/21.

ATTACHMENT 2

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of February 4, 2021
on the motion of Commissioner
duly seconded by Commissioner

A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE TRANSIT CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS AND RAIL NETWORK INTEGRATION STUDY REPORT, WHICH SELECTS ELECTRIC PASSENGER RAIL AS THE LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE, AND DETERMINING THIS ACTION TO BE EXEMPT FROM CEQA

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) purchased the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL ROW) using State Proposition 116 funding that was intended for the preservation of the rail line for transportation purposes, including continuation of existing freight and recreational rail service, and a potential bicycle and pedestrian path adjacent to the rail line where feasible;

WHEREAS, the Unified Corridor Investment Study identified the benefits of providing high capacity public transit on the SCBRL ROW to provide equitable transportation options, improve transit travel times and reduce GHG emissions;

WHEREAS the outcome of the Unified Corridor Investment Study directed RTC staff to work jointly with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District to develop a scope of work for additional analysis of high-capacity public transit alternatives on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line including their cost, operations, and funding plans and a plan to protect METRO's current funding sources;

WHEREAS, the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study (TCAA/RNIS) was prepared to evaluate high-capacity transit investment options and identify a locally preferred transit alternative that utilizes all or part of the length of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Rail Right-of-Way;

WHEREAS, a dedicated transit facility on SCBRL ROW complemented by local transit and bike and pedestrian facilities will provide an end-to-end service that will allow for a reduction in vehicle miles traveled to reduce GHG emissions, combat climate change, and improve air quality and public health;

WHEREAS, transit, operating on a dedicated guideway, provides improved travel times and greater reliability to help travelers accurately plan their trips;

WHEREAS, improved transit can increase transportation opportunities for all segments of the population at all income levels, strengthening communities, creating pathways to education/jobs, and improving quality of life for individuals and communities;

WHEREAS, fixed guideway transit provides development opportunities that will reduce the number of trips taken by auto, increase transit use, decrease sprawl, and promote healthier lifestyles and compact, sustainable communities;

WHEREAS, goals were developed to address key desired outcomes and were based on a vision of the future that is informed by public and stakeholder input as well as the need to meet legislative requirements;

WHEREAS, the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study used a performance-based planning approach to identify investments that help to meet the transportation needs of current and future generations;

WHEREAS, the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study analyzed future transportation use options for the rail right-of-way consistent with the Measure D Expenditure Plan through evaluation of high-capacity transit options next to a bicycle and pedestrian trail;

WHEREAS, the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study also considered the integration of the locally preferred alternative with future intercounty and interregional rail connections to Monterey, Gilroy, the Bay Area and beyond;

WHEREAS, the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study referenced project specific studies completed by the RTC and partner agencies including the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan approved in 2018, the Monterey Bay Scenic Sanctuary Trail Master Plan adopted in 2013, the Santa Cruz Rail Transit Feasibility Study accepted in 2015;

WHEREAS, input from the public, local and regional stakeholders, RTC advisory committees, Santa Cruz METRO, and RTC has been solicited at key milestones throughout the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study development;

WHEREAS, the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study identifies electric passenger rail as the locally preferred alternative that provides the greatest benefit to Santa Cruz County residents, businesses and visitors in terms of the triple bottom line goals of improving economy, equity, and the environment;

WHEREAS, electric passenger rail as the locally preferred alternative for the SCBRL positions Santa Cruz County to be included in the 2022 California State Rail Plan to leverage State and Federal funding and adapt to the evolving state of mass transit technologies;

WHEREAS, the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study determines electric passenger rail as the locally preferred alternative, an acceptance of the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study does not approve a project or commit to a definite course of action for project implementation;

WHEREAS, the TCAA/RNIS Business Plan will be presented to the RTC in April 2021 which will provide a potential path for funding the implementation of electric passenger rail on the SCBRL;

WHEREAS, the project selected as the Locally Preferred Alternative of the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study would need to satisfy state and federal requirements for will undergo environmental review as required by federal and state requirements prior to implementation;

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO:

1. Find and determine this action to be exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guideline 15262, approve the Notice of Exemption (Exhibit A) presented on this date and direct staff to file the Notice of Exemption in accordance with law, and accept the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study which selects electric passenger rail as the locally preferred alternative.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

Aurelio Gonzalez, Chair

ATTEST:

Guy Preston, Secretary

Distribution: RTC Project Manager

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Guy Preston, Executive Director, RTC
TCAA/RNIS Final Draft Report/Preferred Alternative
February 3, 2021

We welcome the opportunity to discuss more with you as the improvements to the rail and trail corridor move forward.

Sincerely,



Tami Grove
Statewide Transportation Program Manager
California Coastal Commission

Copy: John Ainsworth, CCC Executive Director
Kyle Gradinger, Chief, Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transportation
Scott Williams, Office Chief, Caltrans GNEIS/DEA
Debra Hale, TAMC Executive Director



February 3, 2021

Members of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission:

Roaring Camp Railroads is a valued and important local business, serving the community not only by contributing substantial tourist revenue, but also by developing and sustaining loyalty and patronage in community activities and contributions. In that context, we are hopeful that our comments regarding the branch line will be given commensurate weight.

We applaud the efforts of the RTC staff in conducting the Transportation Alternatives Study and in recommending passenger rail as the preferred alternative. This recommendation is consistent with national and statewide trends valuing efficiency, reliability and accessibility in transportation alternatives. We strongly support moving forward with a business plan for the recommended commuter rail alternative so that the community might access realistic data in assessing the value of passenger rail.

The rail corridor is essential to the continued viability of Roaring Camp Railroads. We are unwilling to compromise our existing trackage rights and our ability to connect with the main line. Our essential traffic to the Boardwalk can be coordinated with passenger rail which benefits relevant business interests and the community at large. Our trains not only bond the community through annual events such as our Holiday Lights Train, but alleviate thousands of cars off Ocean and Beach streets each year. When you support rail you support all of the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide Roaring Camp's perspective on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Melani Clark

CEO, Roaring Camp Railroads