



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, May 06, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

**NOTE: Teleconference
Community TV Zoom**

Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89559435768>

Dial-in: 1 669 900 6833

Webinar ID: 895 5943 5768

1. Roll call.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members present:

Aurelio Gonzalez

Sandy Brown

Kristen Petersen

Patrick Mulhearn (Alt)

Jacques Bertrand

Eduardo Montesino

Manu Koenig

Andy Schiffrin (Alt)

Randy Johnson

Greg Caput

Mike Rotkin

Bruce McPherson

Scott Eades (Caltrans Ex-Officio)

Felipe Hernandez (Alt)

Staff present:

Guy Preston

Luis Mendez

Brianna Goodman

Rachel Moriconi

Krista Corwin

Yesenia Parra

Tommy Travers

Amanda Marino

Ginger Dykaar

Shannon Munz

Sarah Christensen

Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)

2. Oral communications

Received public comment from:

Carey Pico
Graham Freeman
Ryan
Rebecca Downing
Brett Garrett
Jessica Evans
Bud Colligan
Barry Scott
Michael Saint
Faina Segal
Buzz Anderson
Bill Cook
Steven Scheiffer
Michael Wool
Saladin Sale
Judy
Linda Wilshusen
Jessica Evans
Dee Roe

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas.

Handouts for items 25 and 26 and replacement pages for item 26 were uploaded to the RTC website.

Executive Director Guy Preston removed item 26 from the agenda and noted that a different but related item would be on the June agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Rotkin made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Bertrand, Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Koenig, McPherson, Petersen, Gonzalez, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Hernandez, Schiffrin, and Mulhearn voting "aye."

Commissioners thanked staff for pursuing the FLAP grant for the North Coast trail project referenced in item 9.

MINUTES

4. Accepted draft minutes of the March 09, 2021 Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the March 18, 2021 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the March 29, 2021 Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee meeting
7. Approved draft minutes of the April 01, 2021 Regional Transportation Commission meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items.

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

8. Approve resolution authorizing the executive director to enter into an agreement with the County of Santa Cruz for Real Property Management Services for the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project (Bay/Porter to State Park) (**Resolution 40-21, Resolution 41-21**)
9. Approve resolutions authorizing staff to pursue a California Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant with matching funds from other sources to construct a northern segment of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network that improves access to federal lands. (**Resolution 42-21**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

10. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
11. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues
12. Approved amendment to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 Budget and Work Program (**Resolution 43-21**)
13. Approved Fiscal Year 2021-22 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Claims for Volunteer Center, Community Bridges, and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) (**Resolution 44-21, Resolution 45-21, & Resolution 46-21**)

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

No consent items.

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

14. Accepted monthly meeting schedule.
15. Accepted correspondence log.
16. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. April 19, 2021 Letter from Guy Preston, Executive Director to Nathan McBeth, Principal Planner of the Santa Cruz County Planning Department re: Initial Study for Dominican Master Plan
17. Accept information items. – *none*

REGULAR AGENDA

18. Commissioner reports

The Chair delivered comments about rail and trail planning with regards to the County's overall needs and clarified that item 25 is for information only.

In response to Commissioners' questions, RTC Counsel Steven Mattas provided information regarding the Commission's legal options to act or direct action on item 25.

19. Director's Report

Guy Preston, Executive Director, delivered an oral report on the availability of surplus state funds for one-time surface transportation investments; federal infrastructure proposals; federal COVID relief funding for transportation; RTC will be responsible for selecting projects to receive \$1.3 million available through a mid-cycle state transportation improvement program (STIP) and \$1.26 million through a new program; launch of GO Santa Cruz County program; Ecology Action running programs during the month of May in celebration of Bike Month.

In response to a question from a Commissioner, Mr. Preston explained that a permit from Caltrans must be acquired before releasing the request for proposals (RFP) for storm damage repairs to the Highway 1 overpass near Rio del Mar.

Received public comment from:

Jessica Evans

20. Caltrans Report

District 5 Deputy Director Scott Eades reported on the opening of Highway 1 between Monterey and San Luis Obispo following a major washout near Rat Creek. Mr. Eades also reported an increase in highway work zone fatalities due to distracted driving.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples

21. **PUBLIC HEARING:** 2021 Unmet Paratransit and Transit Needs

The public hearing opened at 9:30 a.m. Amanda Marino, Transportation Planner, delivered the staff report.

Received public comment from:

Jessica Evans

Veronica Elsea

Mark Mesiti-Miller

Brian Peoples

Rick Longinotti, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation

Michael Saint

Rebecca Downing

Lowell Hurst, City of Watsonville

Judy Gittleson

Barry Scott

Stephanie Wells

Sylvia Luna

Commissioner Caput introduced Felipe Hernandez as his new appointed alternate on the RTC.

Commissioner Rotkin made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to:

1. Adopt the *2021 Unmet Paratransit and Transit Needs*, with revisions as appropriate, following the public hearing; and
2. Consider unmet paratransit and transit needs as funding becomes available.

Commissioners expressed appreciation for the Elderly and Disable Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC), Santa Cruz METRO, Community Bridges and the Volunteer Center for their services to the community and discussed: the impossibility of moving restricted

transportation funds between projects; need for expansion of paratransit services during holidays and in underserved geographic areas; inability of a rail transit system to meet all paratransit needs; the fact that paratransit services are essential, expensive, and heavily subsidized just as all transportation modes are subsidized.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Rotkin, Gonzalez, Petersen, McPherson, Koenig, Caput, Montesino, Johnson, Brown, Bertrand, and Commissioner Alternates Mulhearn and Schiffrin voting "aye."

22. **Public Hearing:** Measure D: Five-Year Program of Projects for Community Bridges Lift Line

The public hearing opened at 10:07 a.m. Rachel Moriconi, Sr. Transportation Planner, delivered the staff report. Kirk Ance delivered an oral report on Lift Line services.

Commissioners discussed: RTC getting its money's worth from Community Bridges; level of service impressive; Community Bridges doing an excellent job with Measure D funding; gratitude to voters and program officials for commendable work in meeting the region's transit needs.

In response to a Commissioner's questions, Mr. Ance explained how Lift Line manages the volume of requests for its service and provided information on funding sources for service outside of Santa Cruz County.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples

Michael Saint

Veronica Elsea, Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee

In response to a question from a member of the public, Mr. Ance stated that Lift Line's 10 gasoline-powered vehicles must run out their useful life before being replaced by electric vehicles in order to comply with grant funding. Mr. Ance is encouraging agencies to include funding for electric paratransit vehicles in future grant applications.

Commissioner Rotkin made a motion and Commissioner Bertrand seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to:

1. Receive an update on the Community Bridges-Lift Line paratransit services;
2. Hold a public hearing on Community Bridges-Lift Line's proposed Measure D Fiscal Years 2021/2022-2025/2026 (FY21/22-25/26) five-year programs of projects
3. Adopt Resolution 47-21 to approve the five-year programs of projects

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Bertrand, Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Koenig, McPherson, Petersen, Gonzalez, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Hernandez, Schiffrin, and Mulhearn voting "aye."

23. Receive update on Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) projects

John Urgo, METRO Planning and Development Director, delivered an oral report on METRO projects; uses of TDA and State Transit Assistance (STA) funds; RTC-funded operations including fixed-route public transit and ADA paratransit; RTC-funded capital projects; and major FY22 initiatives including Pacific Station redevelopment, a ParaCruz facility, Cruz On-Demand, and Mobile Fare Payment.

In response to a question from a Commissioner, Mr. Urgo provided more details about the scope of a proposed bus speed and reliability study.

Commissioner Rotkin provided background information for the Cruz On-Demand pilot program and Mobile Fare Payment system; safety improvements to note when considering a return to METRO service.

In response to a question from a Commissioner, Mr. Urgo provided additional details about the strategies METRO has instituted in their efforts to increase ridership.

Received public comment from:

Veronica Elsea

Brian Peoples

24. Receive Update on Capitola Projects

Kailash Mozumder, Public Works Project Manager, delivered updates on projects in the City of Capitola funded or partially-funded by the RTC.

Commissioners discussed: public input process with Park Avenue, 38th Avenue, and Brommer Street reconstruction projects; appreciation for Capitola DPW staff; encroachment permits needed from Caltrans; improvements to bikeways in Capitola benefit bicyclists throughout the county.

In response to a question from a Commissioner, Caltrans District 5 Deputy Director Scott Eades commented that their permitting department is experiencing a backlog due to understaffing.

In response to questions from a Commissioner, Kailash Mozumder discussed the challenges of acquiring permits for 41st Avenue improvements, the outlook for incorporating roundabouts into the design, funding for re-pavement projects.

Received public comment from:

Jessica Evans
James Weller
Ben Vernazza

25. Report Regarding Grant Requirement Compliance in the Context of the Tie Vote by the Commission in Relation to the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study – Business Plan for Electric Passenger Rail on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Ginger Dykaar, Sr. Transportation Planner, delivered the staff report. Guy Preston, Executive Director, delivered additional comments about potential funding sources for a passenger rail environmental document.

Commissioner Montesino made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Hernandez seconded the motion to direct staff to agendize the business plan for passenger rail and pursue funding for an environmental document.

Commissioners discussed: nonexistence of “free” \$17 million from the state; staff will continue to seek funding sources for Regional Transportation Plan projects without explicit direction from the RTC; ubiquity of misinformation; request to tone down the rhetoric; grant requirements have been met; clarification of what it means to accept the business plan; need for county-wide vote; recent focus on efficiently meeting the transit needs of the region; appreciation for Caltrans’ flexibility; confusion over staff recommendation; importance of community voices.

In response to commissioners’ comments, Commissioner Montesino withdrew and Commissioner Alternate Hernandez agreed to withdraw the motion under consideration.

Commissioners discussed: public had the opportunity to speak in April; request to keep comments brief; plea for both sides of the debate to find common ground.

Received public comment from:

Lowell Hurst
Trina Coffman-Gomez
Sophia Hage
Matt Ferrell
Michael Wool
Mark Mesiti-Miller

Jessica Evans, Friends of the Rail and Trail
Lani Faulkner
Emily Trexel
Veronica Elsea
Bud Colligan
Gina Cole, Bike Santa Cruz County
Tina A.
David Van Brink
Joseph Haenlein
Brian Peoples
Jack Brown
Barry Scott
Maria Solis Kennedy
Brett Garrett
Sally Arnold
Peter Scott
Keith Otto
Jeremiah Daniels
Ryan
Doug
Ben Vernazza
Stephanie Wells

26. Amendment to Kimley Horn & Associates, Inc. Contract for Highway 1 – State Park to Freedom Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project & Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Including Addition of Interim Trail Alternative

Item 26 was removed from the agenda.

27. Review of items of be discussed in closed session.

RTC Counsel Steven Mattas reported that no reportable action was anticipated from the closed session.

Received public comment from:
Brian Peoples

The open session of the regular meeting ended at 1:36 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

The meeting entered into closed session at 1:37 p.m.

28. Conference with Real Property Negotiators
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8)

Properties: Santa Cruz County Branch Railway (Tracts I and II)
Negotiating Parties: SCCRTC, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, LLC, a subsidiary of Progressive Rail Incorporated and potential interested parties
Agency Negotiators: Guy Preston, Luis Mendez, and Steve Mattas
Under Negotiations: Terms of License Agreement

OPEN SESSION

Closed session concluded at 2:39p.m.

29. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 03, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. by teleconference.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. by teleconference.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yesenia Parra
Administrative Services Officer

Attendees:

Ryan
Rebecca Downing
Jessica Evans
1-408-***1292
Michael Saint
Amy
Jeanette Guire
Carey Pico
Anti-Greenway James Weller
Ben Vernazza
Bill Cook
Brian (Trail Now)
Casey Beyer
Doug Hahn
Doug Huskey
Bud Colligan
Sam Storey
Shannon Simonds
stephen@santacruzlocals.com
Barry Scott
Faina Segal
Buzz Anderson
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831-818-1884
Amy Naranjo
Annkaplan
Bill Phillips
Bob Elledge
Brian
Brian
Brianna Goodman
Carolyn Livingston
Casey Beyer
Christina Watson
Claire Gallogly
Cory Caletti
Elizabeth Schilling
Ellen Davidson
Eric D Bloom
FORT- Sally Arnold
Graham Freeman (YES on RAIL)
Gus Alfaro, Caltrans
Heather Adamson, AMBAG
Isabella Cueto
Jillian Ritter
Johanna Lighthill
Judy Julie Conway
K. Groppi
Keith Otto
Kim Shultz
Kota
Linda Wilshusen
Mark Johannessen
Mark Mesiti-Miller
Mark Stephens
Mary Pat Davey
Matt Farrell
Melissa Hartman
Michael Conneran
Michael Pisano
Michael Wool
Murray Fontes (he/him/his)
N Yellin
Nadene Thorne
Nick Danty
Paula Bradley
Phil
Rebecca Downing
Rebecca Raney
RJ White
Rob Tidmore
Robert Arko
Ron Nance
Rosemary Sarka
RTC
Ryan
Saladin Sale – Rail Supporter
Sam Storey
Shannon Simonds
Stephen@santacruzlocal.org
Susan
Sylvia Luna
Tim Brattan
Tom Walker
Tony Nunez
Trician Comings
Trink Praxel
Veronica Elsea
Virginia Wright
Yes Rail David Van Brink
Yes Resolution – Jeremiah Daniels

Yes Resolution – Tina A
Yes to Rail – Anne Smith Easley
Yes to Rail – Brian
Yes to Rail – Susan Burnett
Yes to Rail Joseph Haenlein
Yes to Rail Stephanie Wells
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Mary Pat Davey
Moshe Vilozny
Patrick Mottram
Neal Woods
Ramon Gomez
Rebecca Raney
Rebecca Rockom (she/her)
Reed
RJ White
Sanjin Mehic