

AGENDA: September 2, 2021

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

THIS ITEM FOR INFORMATION ONLY

RTC Operations due to COVID-19:

On March 17, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued [Executive Order N-29-20](#) (amending Executive Order N-25-20 in part) as part of a series of emergency measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. EO N-29-20 allows local or state legislative bodies to hold meetings via teleconference and to make meetings accessible electronically without violating the open meeting laws found in the Bagley-Keene Act or the Brown Act. This order waived certain provisions of the Brown Act, including requirements that meetings be conducted in physical locations; that a majority of teleconferencing board members are physically present within the agency's jurisdictional boundaries; and that the agenda identifies the locations from which board members participate. Since the order was issued, RTC has been holding all public meetings virtually. The EO expires on September 30, 2021.

Unless action is taken to extend the EO, RTC will commence holding public meetings in person, starting in October and all Commissioners will need to attend in person. The October RTC meeting is scheduled at the County Board of Supervisors chambers. This location has been upgraded to accommodate hybrid meetings, which would allow both in-person and remote attendance. Staff is still assessing the technical capabilities of the County's systems and any requirements that they may have for RTC to use their facilities. Staff is also monitoring information from the County Department of Health and is not recommending options for public attendance (virtual, in-person, or both) until we have better information, closer to the meeting date.

If action is taken to extend the EO, RTC will consider both hybrid and virtual options for the October meeting. The meeting attendance options will be included on the October agenda.

Throughout the pandemic, RTC staff has continued to primarily work at remote locations but has been preparing to transition back to the office using a hybrid work model where some staff may continue to work remotely. Our transition was

expected to begin in late September, when staff would report to our new office space at the University Town Center located at 1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250. Due to increases in COVID cases, we are considering options to address health concerns, including slowing or tempering the amount of in-person work, until such time that all safety concerns are adequately assessed and addressed.

Measure D Quarterly Report:

RTC continues to make significant progress on the delivery of the Measure D Expenditure Plan, which includes improvements in transportation investments for all County residents. To highlight this progress, RTC will be issuing quarterly reports. Our first report was posted last week and is attached for your reference.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Measure D Quarterly Report – Summer 2021



Measure D Updates

Summer 2021

In November 2016 Santa Cruz County voters passed Measure D, providing stable, local funds to maintain and improve local roads, highways, bridges, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and transit. Measure D is helping local agencies address some of the significant backlog of transportation needs in Santa Cruz County. The following highlights a few of the projects that Measure D is helping to fund.

Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor

The RTC, in partnership with the County of Santa Cruz and METRO, was awarded a total of \$107.2M state SB1 grants, using Measure D funds as leverage for three projects on the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor:

- Three new sets of auxiliary lanes on Highway 1 between Soquel Drive and State Park Drive
- 5.75-miles of an ultimate 7.5-mile hybrid bus-on-shoulder/auxiliary lane facility
- Two new Highway 1 bicycle/pedestrian overcrossings at Chanticleer Avenue in Live Oak and Mar Vista Drive in Aptos
- Bridge replacement at Capitola Avenue with sidewalks and bike lanes
- Soquel Avenue/Drive multimodal improvements, including buffered/protected bicycle lanes totaling 5 miles, green bike boxes for left turn movements, sidewalk gap closures, ADA ramps, crosswalk upgrades, crosswalk warning devices at 10-mid block locations, and adaptive traffic signal control with transit prioritization at 23 intersections

Highway 1 Projects

- Design work is complete for auxiliary lane and bus-on-shoulder facilities between the 41st Avenue and Soquel Drive interchanges, and a bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue. Construction is expected to begin Summer 2022.
- Environmental review of the Bay/Porter-State Park auxiliary lane and bus-on-shoulder facilities, and a bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing at Mar Vista, was completed in May of 2021. Final design is underway, and construction is scheduled for 2023.
- Environmental review of auxiliary lane and bus-on-shoulder facilities between Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive began in March 2020. The project includes Segment 12 of the Rail Trail between State Park Drive and Rio Del Mar/Sumner. The environmental document is on schedule for circulation in Spring 2022.
- Cruz511, in coordination with the City of Santa Cruz's Go Santa Cruz program, launched its new commute manager program, Go Santa Cruz County, in Spring 2021. The program provides assistance and incentives to commuters to ride the bus, join a carpool, telecommute, ride a bike or walk to work. People who live or work anywhere in Santa Cruz County can learn more and sign up at: <https://my.cruz511.org/s/goscc>.

Soquel Avenue/Drive Multimodal Improvements

- The county started final design work for multimodal improvements on Soquel Drive between La Fonda and State Park Drive. Measure D – Neighborhood funds were used to match State grant funding for this project. Construction is scheduled for 2023.

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) Rail Trail

- The City of Santa Cruz completed construction of the Rail Trail between Natural Bridges Drive and Bay Street/California Avenue in the City of Santa Cruz (Segment 7-1) in December 2020.
- The City of Santa Cruz received a grant award from the California Active Transportation Program to construct the Rail Trail between California Avenue and Pacific Avenue at the Wharf (Segment 7-2) with matching funds from Measure D. Construction will start in Spring 2022.
- 7.2 miles of Rail Trail, including Segments 8 & 9 (Seabright-Live Oak) and Segments 10 & 11 (Live Oak- State Park), began design and environmental review work in Spring 2021.
- The City of Watsonville completed construction of Segment 18-1 of the Rail Trail between Ohlone Parkway and the City’s Slough Trail in Spring 2021 and held an opening ceremony July 17.
- The North Coast Rail Trail project advanced from 70 percent to 95 percent design in 2021. All preconstruction activities are scheduled to be completed in 2021. Construction of the first phase has been delayed until 2024 due to limitations on federal funding availability. This project will be ready for construction if funds become available sooner.



Coastal Rail Trail Segment 18 – Watsonville

Rail Corridor

- Final design for the Pajaro River Bridge Repair is underway and is on schedule to begin construction in 2021. In December of 2020, the RTC secured a Short Line Railroad Improvement Program grant for this project for \$285,000 using Measure D as a match.
- Final design of a coastal erosion repair project above Manresa State Beach is complete and was fully funded by Measure D. Construction is planned for fall 2021, depending on weather.
- Infrastructure preservation and preventative maintenance, including extensive vegetation and drainage work, continue along the rail corridor. Several storm damage repair projects were completed in Spring 2021. Maintenance requests can be directed to maintenance@sccrtc.org.
- The Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study (TCAA) was completed in Spring 2021. The study identified electric passenger rail as the locally preferred transit alternative for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. This project is not being advanced at this time.

Highway 9/SLV Corridor

- The RTC and Caltrans are collaborating to incorporate complete streets elements such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalk improvements into the Highway 9 Capital Preventative Maintenance paving project in Felton, as well as improving auto operations and traffic flow into their next paving project in Felton.

- Caltrans is nearing completion of a Project Initiation Document (PID) for complete streets improvements throughout the Highway 9 corridor including Ben Lomond, Brookdale, and Boulder Creek. Measure D funds were used to fund the PID and will be used to leverage other funds for projects identified in the plan.

Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing

- Caltrans completed final design of the wildlife crossing under Highway 17 near Laurel Curve; construction, which is funded by a combination of Measure D and Land Trust funds, is scheduled to begin in Fall 2021.

Local Road Projects

City and County public works departments completed several projects over the past year and are gearing up for a busy spring and summer, repairing local roads and improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the county.

- County of Santa Cruz
 - Finished resurfacing 6.26 miles of roads in the Thurber, Seacliff Beach, Lakeview Road, and Downtown Felton areas
 - Currently resurfacing roads in the Soquel (Merlin Way), Corralitos, Lakeview Road, and Boulder Creek areas
- Santa Cruz
 - Design and partial construction of arterial, collector, and residential streets occurred on Delaware, Fairmount, King, and Market, as well as other local streets, and included pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
 - 2020-2021 Overlay Program Underway: Construction is underway on residential cap seal and arterial paving projects citywide.
 - In FY20/21 the city also used Measure D to fund Slow Streets on several roadways in response to increased neighborhood walking and biking during COVID.
 - New sidewalks, a bike lane extension, streetlights, and a storm drain were installed on Pacific Avenue near the wharf this spring.
- Scotts Valley
 - Completed root repair work on several streets including Lockhart Gulch and Whispering Pines
 - Completed trench repair work on Bethany Drive and Janis Way

Measure D-funded road resurfacing – Santa Cruz Avenue, Seacliff Beach - Before & after



- Watsonville
 - Lee Road Trail – Design and permitting for the Lee Road Trail project completed.
 - Pedestrian & Traffic Safety – Implemented interim pedestrian safety and traffic calming measures on Clifford Street, and partnered with the City of Santa Cruz on a traffic safety media campaign using Street Smarts messages developed by Santa Cruz.
 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Programs: Measure D helped support pedestrian and bicycle safety training to elementary school students through Ecology Action’s Bike and Walk Smart program and the Bike Santa Cruz County Earn-A-Bike program at middle schools.



Interim traffic calming measures – Clifford Street in Watsonville

Lift Line – Paratransit Services

- In FY20/21, Lift Line provided 5,047 one-way trips funded through Measure D.
- Lift Line used Measure D funds for new scheduling software and mobile data equipment to be installed into their vehicles.
- Lift Line used Measure D funds for the planning and design of new drainage and paving at its new facility which will allow for additional fleet parking.



Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO)

- Measure D funds were used as a local match for the following capital projects:
 - Three Paracruz Van Replacements
 - Three New Flyer replacements
 - An Electric Bus for Watsonville Service
 - An Electric Bus Watsonville Circulator
- The RTC will assist METRO in their Watsonville - Santa Cruz Intercity Transit Speed and Reliability Study, which will evaluate traffic and travel conditions along the primary transit corridors connecting Watsonville and Santa Cruz to identify opportunities for pedestrian, bus stop, and transit priority improvements aimed at improving the convenience, access, and reliability of METRO’s core service.



Implementation and Oversight

- The Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee reviewed the FY19/20 audits and expenditure reports to ensure that revenues have been spent in accordance with the Measure D Ordinance and produced an [annual report](#) with their findings.