

AGENDA: December 2, 2021

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

THIS ITEM FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Junior Engineer and Associate Engineer Positions Filled

RTC is pleased to announce that we have hired a new Junior Engineer and a new Associate Engineer.

Riley Gerbrandt

Riley joins the RTC as an Associate Transportation Engineer with 15 years of experience with a BS and MS in Civil Engineering from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Riley is a licensed Civil Engineer in CA with expertise in storm damage repairs, transportation design, geotechnical engineering, capital project management, and emergency response. He spent 5 years with the County of Santa Cruz Public Works Department delivering storm damage repair and flood control projects. Riley was born and raised in Santa Cruz County. In his free time, Riley enjoys hiking, the beach, and bike riding with his family.

Brian Zamora

Brian will be the RTC's new Junior Engineer following graduation from San Jose State University with a BS in Civil and Environmental Engineering later this month. Brian was born and raised in Santa Cruz County and has served as the RTC's engineering intern for the past 2-1/2 years, assisting staff with storm damage repairs, preventative maintenance, inspections, and infrastructure repairs along the branch line. Brian lives in Watsonville and enjoys going to the gym in his free time.

Both Riley and Brian will start on Monday December 20, 2021.

Measure D – Quarterly Update

RTC and its partners continue to make significant progress on the delivery of the Measure D Expenditure Plan, which includes improvements and investments on all transportation modes to serve all County residents. To provide an update on the progress made, please reference the attached [Measure D - Fall 2021 Quarterly Update](#).

Highlighting one project, the Highway 1 Auxiliary and Bus on Shoulder project between the Bay/Porter and State Park Drive interchanges has reached the 95% final design milestone. The project includes auxiliary lanes and a bus on shoulder facility in both directions, replacement of the Capitola Avenue overcrossing, and a new bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing at Mar Vista Drive. Early next year, the RTC will be soliciting input from the community on the aesthetic features of the project, including bridges, soundwalls, retaining walls, barriers, and a planting palette.

Coastal Rail Trail Segment 5 – Phase 2 and Highway 1 Cotoni-Coast Dairies Overcrossing Shortlisted for Federal Funding

The RTC's North Coast Rail Trail Project- Phase 2 construction and a new Highway 1 Overcrossing at Yellowbank/Panther Beach to Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument preconstruction and construction funding has been shortlisted for a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant in the amount of \$10.65 million. Being on the shortlist means that the project is no longer completing against other projects for funding, but final award is contingent on the FLAP team's evaluation of the project's feasibility during the scoping process.

The North Coast Rail Trail Project-Phase 2 construction is programmed in 2024, the same year as the previously approved North Coast Rail Trail Phase 1 funding. The Hwy 1 Overcrossing at Yellowbank/Panther Beach preconstruction and construction funding year will be evaluated through the scoping process in 2022. Assuming this grant award is finalized, the full north coast rail trail from Wilder Ranch to Davenport would be fully funded, as well as an active transportation bridge over Highway 1 to the new Cotoni-Coast Dairy Monument and its new trail system.

The Bureau of Land Management, as owner of Cotoni Coast Dairies, is a key partner in the Hwy 1 overcrossing project, and RTC appreciates their support to obtain FLAP funding for this project. RTC also appreciates both the Coastal Conservancy and the Land Trust for their contributions to the North Coast Rail Trail funding plan.

RTC worked strategically to advance this application. Grace Blakeslee serves as RTC's Project Manager on this project and Ginger Dykaar led the effort on the grant application with assistance from Amanda Marino and Shannon Munz.

Passage of Federal Infrastructure Bill and Reauthorization of FAST-ACT

On November 15, 2021, the President signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) into law, that approved \$1.2 trillion in infrastructure investments, of which includes \$550 billion in new infrastructure investments over the five-year period and additionally reauthorizes the surface transportation program for the next five years. The fiscal details contained within the bill continue to be analyzed and pertinent details will be shared at future Commission meetings as further guidance is released at the federal and state level. RTC staff will be actively participating in discussions on how new federal funds are distributed in California and will continue working with local agencies, Caltrans, and Representatives Eshoo and Panetta to

secure competitive grants for major projects, including Scotts Creek, highway, transit, and active transportation projects along the Watsonville-Santa Cruz multimodal corridor, and pedestrian safety projects in San Lorenzo Valley (SLV).

Legislative Updates:

Staff is starting to prepare the RTC's 2022 Legislative Program. Key legislative issues in 2022 include implementation of the new federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the state budget. While we welcome the stability and boost in funding opportunities provided by the IIJA, funding available to address all the transportation priorities in the region are still insufficient, as highlighted in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and consolidated grants items on today's agenda. In response, staff is advocating with local and statewide partners that a portion of the state's General Fund projected \$30 billion surplus be made available for active transportation, local street and road, congestion relief, and transit projects.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Measure D – Fall 2021 Quarterly Update



Measure D Updates

Fall 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 County Department of Public Works has started final design work for multimodal improvements on Soquel Drive between La Fonda and State Park Drive, and has been soliciting input from the RTC's Bicycle Committee and Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee on the design. Part of the overall Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor program, the project includes 5 miles of enhanced bicycle lanes, 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. Measure D–Neighborhood funds were used to match state grant funding for this project. Construction is scheduled for 2023.

Highway 1 Projects

- The RTC, in partnership with Caltrans, Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO), and the County of Santa Cruz, continues work on five new sets of auxiliary lanes on Highway 1 between Soquel Drive and Freedom Boulevard. These projects include:
 - Auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder facilities 7.5 miles in length;
 - Replacement of the Capitola Avenue roadway overcrossing;
 - Four new Highway 1 bicycle/pedestrian overcrossings at Chanticleer Avenue in Live Oak, Mar Vista Drive in Aptos, and two rail trail bridges; and
 - Sound walls and retaining walls.
- 41st Avenue-Soquel Drive auxiliary lanes, bus-on-shoulder & Chanticleer Avenue bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing project: Construction is expected to begin in Summer 2022. Construction is funded with an SB1 Solutions for Congested Corridors Program (SCCP) grant that the RTC was able to secure using Measure D as match.
- State Park-Bay/Porter auxiliary lanes, bus-on-shoulder, Mar Vista bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing & Capitola Avenue bridge replacement project: Environmental review was completed in May of 2021. Final design is underway, and construction is scheduled for 2023. Measure D funds were used to leverage state grants.
- Freedom Boulevard-State Park Drive auxiliary lanes, bus-on-shoulder & Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 project: The project includes the 1.25-mile Segment 12 of the Rail Trail between State Park Drive and Rio Del Mar/Sumner. The environmental document is under development and on schedule for public review in mid-2022.

Commuter Assistance Programs

- **Traveler Information and Transportation Demand Management**
 - 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: www.gosantacruzcounty.org. As of November 2021, more than 2,350 participants are enrolled in GO Santa Cruz County, having logged more than 38,000 non-single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips or 164,000 non-SOV miles traveled, and reducing 53 tons of CO₂ greenhouse gas emissions.

Highway Safety and Congestion Reduction Programs

- The Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) roves segments of Highway 1 and Highway 17 looking to help stranded motorists on the highway during weekday commute hours and on a limited schedule on weekends. Summer weekend service ran from Memorial Day (May 2021) to Labor Day (September 2021). Regular weekday morning FSP operates 6 a.m.-9 a.m. on Highway 1 and 6:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. on Highway 17. Weekday PM service operates from 3:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. on both Highway 1 and 17. The RTC entered into a new three-year towing contract to provide towing services on Highway 1 and Highway 17 beginning April 2022. As of October 2021, FSP tow providers have provided nearly 1,500 motorist assists.
- The RTC entered into a new three-year contract with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) for Safe on 17 enforcement beginning July 2021. The CHP receives \$100,000 annually for additional enforcement on the Santa Cruz County portion of Highway 17, with \$50,000 coming from Measure D–Highway funds. The RTC partners with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and CHP San Jose to provide extra enforcement on Highway 17 in Santa Clara County. The Safe on 17 Task Force met virtually in September 2021. Meetings are held twice a year on the 3rd Wednesday in September and March.

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) Rail Trail

- 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.
- Members of the community have been actively using the section of the Rail Trail between Natural Bridges Drive and Bay Street/California Avenue in the City of Santa Cruz (Segment 7-1), which opened in December 2020. A counter of trail usage near Bay Street showed an average of over 800 counts per day from people using the trail since the trail was constructed in December 2020 with a daily peak of over 3,200 trail users.
- The City of Santa Cruz used Measure D funds to leverage grant funding from the California Active Transportation Program to construct the Rail Trail between California Avenue and Pacific Avenue at the Wharf (Segment 7-2). 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. In Fall 2021, the City and County of Santa Cruz released Notice of Preparations for the respective Environmental Impact Reports for Segments 8 & 9 and 10 & 11 and held scoping meetings to gather input on potential environmental issues and project alternatives to be evaluated in the environmental review process.
- The North Coast Rail Trail project completed 95 percent design in Fall 2021. All preconstruction activities are scheduled to be completed in early 2022. Construction of the first phase may be delayed until 2024 depending on federal funding availability.



Rail Corridor

- Final design of a coastal erosion repair project above Manresa State Beach is complete. The project will be advertised for construction bids this fall, with the contract award expected this winter. Construction will begin in 2022.
- Infrastructure preservation and preventative maintenance, including vegetation and drainage work, continues along the rail corridor. Several storm damage repair projects are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021. Maintenance requests can be directed to maintenance@sccrtc.org.

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. The project is expected to go to construction in 2026 pending availability of funds for construction.
- 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.
- The RTC is negotiating with a five-jurisdiction team, including Caltrans, Santa Cruz County Public Works, Santa Cruz METRO, and the San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District (SLVUSD), to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on walking, bicycling, transit, and auto circulation infrastructure on Highway 9, the SLVUSD elementary, middle, and high school campus north of Felton, and adjacent county roads. This project encompasses projects 9-11 of the [SLV Plan](#) and would allow students to walk and bike to school where there are currently no facilities, as well as improve circulation and traffic flow for transit, school buses, and autos. The RTC will consider programming some of the region's formula shares of state funds for the study at its December 2, 2021 meeting.

Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing

- Caltrans has awarded a contract and expects to start construction of the wildlife crossing under Highway 17 near Laurel Curve in early 2022. The project is funded by a combination of Measure D, State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) and Land Trust funds.

Local Road Projects

City and County public works departments are using Measure D funds on a number of projects to repair local roads and improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the county.

- **County of Santa Cruz**
 - Finished resurfacing 6.44 miles of roads and is continuing road resurfacing projects throughout the county
- **Capitola**
 - Continuing its Pavement Management Program:



- 2021/2022 Road Rehabilitation Project is in the design phase
- 2021 Road Repair Project is being advertised for construction bids

• **Santa Cruz**

- Completed a pilot Slow Streets program on 11 local streets
- Contracted with Ecology Action to provide comprehensive youth bike and pedestrian training to elementary students at Santa Cruz City public schools:
 - Provided Walk Smart education to six second-grade classes
 - Provided Bike Smart education to 11 fifth-grade classes
- Completed an overlay project on Fairmont Avenue
- Completed a surface seal project on Hall Street

• **Scotts Valley**

- Bean Creek Road repair project is in the design phase with construction anticipated to begin in Spring 2022. The project will include subgrade rework, an asphalt overlay, drainage improvements, and restriping from Blue Bonnet Lane to Redwood Way.

• **Watsonville**

- Measure D Local Neighborhood funds were used on the following projects:
 - Design and appraisal services for the Lee Road Trail project
 - Sidewalk repairs in the downtown area
 - Construction of the Lincoln Street Safety Project. Lincoln Street passes through the Watsonville High School campus and the project was done to improve pedestrian safety in this area. Work included curb extensions, landscaping, lighting, enhanced crosswalks, improved sidewalks, pavement markings, and signage.

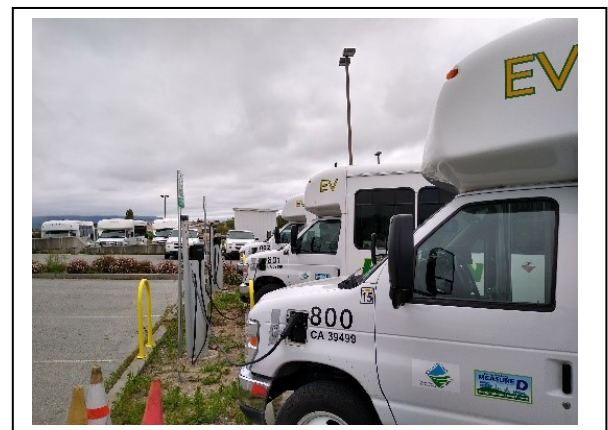
Santa Cruz Overlay Project – Fairmont Avenue, before & after



Lincoln Street Overlay Project – Watsonville

Lift Line – Paratransit Services

- Transition and implementation of Echolane software to improve transportation services and implement a ride on demand model estimated in early 2022.
- Providing continued weekend and expanded hours of paratransit service with the addition of two drivers and dispatchers.
- Measure D matching funds used to accept a Low Carbon Transit Operations Electric Vehicle.
- Purchased a Level III charging station that will be installed at the 545 Ohlone Transit Facility.



- Used Measure D funds for pre-construction development costs of a new parking lot for the 545 Ohlone Transit Facility. Construction anticipated in 2022.

METRO Public Transit Service

- Buses are moving people around the county, with most riders seeing a complete return to pre-COVID levels of service and expanded weekend service on Route 71 funded by Measure D.
- METRO deployed its first four electric buses this fall.
- Check out the touchless and contactless METRO's Splash Pass mobile ticketing app at <http://scmttd.com/en/riders-guide/apps>.

