



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

DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday, June 16, 2022, 1:30 p.m.
Teleconference

Due to precautions associated with COVID-19 (coronavirus), the meeting was held by videoconference, consistent with state laws and orders allowing legislative bodies to hold Brown Act meetings via teleconference.

ITAC Members Present

Capitola Community Development & Public Works Proxy	Katie Herlihy
Santa Cruz Public Works and Planning Proxy	Nathan Nguyen
Scotts Valley Public Works	Chris Lamm
Watsonville Public Works	Murray Fontes
Watsonville Community Development	Justin Meek
County of Santa Cruz Public Works	Steve Wiesner
County of Santa Cruz Planning	Anais Schenk
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments	Paul Hierling
Ecology Action- Transportation Program	Piet Canin
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	John Urgo
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Wondimu Mengistu

RTC Staff Present

Grace Blakeslee, Stephanie Britt, Sarah Christensen, Rachel Moriconi, Amy Naranjo, Guy Preston

Others Present

Commission Alternate Lowell Hurst
Members of Public: Eric Child, Brian Peoples

Excused Absences: Kailash Mozumder, City of Capitola
Orchid Monroy-Ochoa, Caltrans planning

- 1. Call to Order:** Vice Chair Chris Lamm called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.
- 2. Introductions:** Introductions were made. All attendees participated by teleconference.
- 3. Oral Communications:** None.
- 4. Additions, deletions, or changes to consent and regular agendas:** None

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Approved Minutes of the April 21, 2022, ITAC meeting

Committee members present approved a motion (Fontes/Lamm) approving the consent agenda, with Nguyen, Wiesner, Lamm, Fontes, and Canin voting "yes" by roll call vote. Members Herlihy and Mengistu abstained. Members Hierling, Meek, Schenk, and Urgo were not present during the vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. Status of transportation projects, programs, studies, and planning documents

ITAC members provided updates on projects, programs, studies and planning efforts.

Santa Cruz - Nathan Nguyen reported that the Rail Trail Segment 7, phase 2 project contract was awarded, will likely start construction in mid-July and will take approximately one year. The city submitted ATP Cycle 6 applications for Rail Trail Segments 8 & 9 and the Delaware Multiuse trail project. They are still working on permits and fund allocations for the Murray Street Bridge project, with construction expected to start spring 2023.

County of Santa Cruz – Steve Wiesner reported that the County has many projects under construction this summer, including Measure D-funded roadway reconstruction countywide and about two dozen storm damage projects, mostly in mountain regions. The County is on schedule to bid the Soquel Drive rehab and buffered bike lane project this fall, after they finish right-of-way. The County's Emergency Routes Rehab Project is going to bid this month, with construction scheduled for late summer.

Watsonville Public Works - Murray Fontes reported that no projects are currently under construction. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) is expected to allocate funds this month for reconstruction of Freedom Blvd, which is scheduled to start construction in February 2023, after completion of a utility project. The city is finishing design this summer for citywide road maintenance projects, with construction scheduled for the fall.

City of Capitola – Katie Herlihy reported that Capitola Community Development has been working on a Coastal Development permit for RTC's Highway 1 auxiliary project between Bay/Porter, Park Ave and State Park Dr. The city has also been working on the regional bike share program. Agencies are finishing review of the contract, with launch expected this fall.

Chris Lamm shared updates provided by Kailash Mozumder that:

- Clares Street Traffic Calming Improvement Project is out to bid with bid opening scheduled for June 29th. The project includes CIR rehabilitation of the roadway, green bike lanes, updated ADA ped ramps and raised crossings with RRFB's.
- 2022 Measure D Resurfacing Project. Capitola is teaming with the County Public Works to construct on several roadways. The project includes asphalt rubber cape seal, slurry seal and base repairs on a number of city and county streets. Construction is starting this month and is expected to continue through August.
- A 5 Year Pavement Management Plan update was presented to City Council on 6/9.
- Capitola plans to pursue a federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant to prepare a safety plan.

Scotts Valley – Chris Lamm reported that the Bean Creek Road resurfacing project is currently in design and anticipate going to RTC committees for review in August. The city's annual budget and CIP was approved 6/15. The CIP includes Mt. Hermon Road Corridor improvements, which includes signal timing, bike and pedestrian improvements.

AMBAG - Paul Hierling reported that the AMBAG board approved the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) on June 15. They will be starting work on the Caltrans planning grant-funded Central Coast Sustainable Freight Study. AMBAG will be soliciting input on REAP 2.0 in the next few weeks on how the grant will be structured. AMBAG's final application is due to the state late 2022. It is still to be determined what types of transportation projects will be eligible. Rachel Moriconi noted that AMBAG is also working on the 2023 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP).

Ecology Action – Piet Canin reported that Ecology Action is working on installing direct-install electric vehicle chargers at low-income apartment complexes. They are also working on a contract with PG&E to do EV consumer education program, including rebates for income-qualified people.

SCMTD – Wondimu Mengistu reported that METRO has submitted applications for FTA grants to replace four diesel and eight CNG buses. METRO is also seeking funds to purchase 20 Zero Emission Buses (ZEB) and a new alternative fuel station, which would replace the current diesel storage tank and for facility upgrades to accommodate new ZEBs. He thanked Watsonville, Ecology Action, RTC and other partners for supporting their applications.

SCCRTC - Rachel Moriconi shared:

- The Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee completed its FY2021 annual report. She appreciated agencies for their work on audits and expenditure reports.
- Caltrans advertised Hwy 1 41st Ave-Soquel Drive hybrid auxiliary lanes/bus-on-shoulder and Chanticleer Bike/Pedestrian bridge project on 6/6, with bid opening scheduled for late July and construction expected to start in late 2022 and take approximately 2 years.
- RTC rejected bids for the Pajaro River Railroad Bridge Rehabilitation; staff is looking at rebidding the project in the future.
- San Lorenzo Valley Schools Complex Circulation and Access Study is underway, with a public meeting held the prior week.
- RTC adopted the 2022 Unmet Paratransit and Transit Needs in May.
- RTC approved updated Measure D 5-year plans for Highway Corridors and Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) to allow for bonding in order to leverage grants and accelerate construction of Segments 8-12.
- Staffing: RTC has a new planner, Matt Schroeder. Amy Naranjo is starting to work on programming.
- Amy Naranjo shared that the RTC adopted the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- Sarah Christensen reported that the Highway 1 Bay/Porter-State Park auxiliary lanes project is scheduled to be advertised in early 2023.

Justin Meek joined the meeting.

Watsonville Planning - Justin Meek shared that the draft Downtown Specific Plan is expected to be released later this month. It reimagines roadways downtown, including a road diet for Main Street. There is a public workshop on June 30.

Comments - Brian Peoples, Trail Now, appreciated work on the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He noted detailed mitigation plans in the RTP Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and urged the mitigation plans be used when developing projects. He also expressed support for the Lift Line Measure D 5-year plan, stating the importance of door-to-door paratransit service and that roadways need to be built up to accommodate that system.

County of Santa Cruz Planning – Anais Schenk reported that the Board of Supervisors is expected to approve a consultant contract to work on the SB743 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) mitigation program soon. The program will affect transportation and land use and provide options to buy into a mitigation program at a regional scale to provide funding towards VMT-reducing projects.

John Urgo joined the meeting.

7. County of Santa Cruz General Plan Sustainability Update

Anais Schenk, County Planning, presented information about the County of Santa Cruz General Plan and code modification updates. She noted significant updates are being made from the 1994 General Plan related to transportation and land use. The plan includes a new chapter on parking and circulation to make it easier to understand what the county requires for projects; includes design guidelines tied to land uses and street types; includes a new “layered network” for roadways, which takes into consideration different Complete Streets elements based on roadway location, width, user experiences, and other factors.

The plan more closely ties land use and transportation together, including an emphasis on 15-minute neighborhoods and improving the grid network. The plan also proposes some new roadways and classifies roads in urban service areas (layered network), with focus on different users (pedestrians, transit, bicycles, and/or automobiles) depending on the roadway. Level of Service (LOS) criteria were also adjusted to be more multimodal focused. The updates also include more Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policies and implementation strategies, exemptions and exceptions for parking reductions, with new parking policies for different land uses, strategies for publicly owned lots, and a new section on bicycle parking. The plan also includes “vision zero”/safety focus and new standards for roadways in new developments.

The plan also includes new standards for the Local Coastal Plan with maps of coastal access points; policies related to place making and context sensitive designs; the Portola Drive Streetscape Concepts plan; and more environmental justice components throughout the document. Study sessions are underway, with public outreach meetings on each major topic. They will be incorporating comments received from the public and updating the document, with hearings planned in the fall and the final EIR to be released later this year.

Piet Canin suggested more information be included about e-scooters and neighborhood routes for active transportation. Anais noted the recently approved Active Transportation Plan is incorporated by reference.

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, commented on the color-coded roads [layered network] and requested that the rail trail also be included in plan. He also asked if active transportation, transit, and vehicle modeling was done to see how traffic flows change with new corridors/roads added.

Anais suggested that **agencies may want to focus review on Appendix J and Figure 3.1**. She noted that Capitola could be most affected by

updates and the County had several meetings with Capitola staff around proposals, especially around the mall. She noted that some modeling was done and that information is available as attachments to the EIR and General Plan.

Lowell Hurst appreciated the additional information on beach access in South County and transportation justice. Others encouraged the County to continue to maintain rail in the general plan and to continue to build the rail trail. Anais noted there had also been a lot of discussions with the Parks Department on beach and open space access in South County, with mapping included to avoid loss of access points.

8. Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

Grace Blakeslee reported that the RTC released the draft Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS). The RCIS is a conservation planning tool for species, natural, and other resources. Key sections of the study include: Environmental setting – existing conditions of natural resources and Conservation Strategy – which identifies conservation elements and actions that would provide the most conservation benefit. The regional conservation strategy and associated conservation actions can inform compensatory mitigation, including advanced environmental mitigation efforts, for transportation and other major infrastructure projects in Santa Cruz County. She encouraged agencies to look at RCIS actions when they have mitigation needs. Once adopted, the RTC is eligible to enter into mitigation credit agreements (MCAs). She invited ITAC members to attend the June 29th public meeting to learn more about the strategy itself.

No questions or comments were raised by ITAC members. Brian Peoples commented that the 2045 RTP EIR identifies mitigations for infrastructure improvements, but that these can be difficult to follow. He stated that it is important for local agencies to implement and follow the mitigation plans. He expressed concerns about the potential environmental impacts of rail transit.

9. Funding and Grant Updates - Verbal updates and discussion

Rachel Moriconi reported on several transportation funding sources including:

- a. [Active Transportation Program Cycle 6](#) – applications were due June 15. Applications were submitted by the County of Santa Cruz, City of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) with Ecology Action.
- b. FY 2022-23 SB1-Local Streets and Roads Proposed Project List Submittals due in [CalSMART](#) by July 1, 2022
- c. [Caltrans FY23/24 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants](#) – draft

- application and guidelines July 2022; applications due October 2022
- d. [Reconnecting Communities Pilot \(RCP\)](#) – call for projects Summer 2022
 - i. [Request to Caltrans for RCP support or co-lead](#) due June 30, 2022
 - e. [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#) – applications due September 15, 2022
 - f. [Highway Safety Improvement Program \(HSIP\) Cycle 11](#) – applications due September 15, 2022
 - g. [Bridge Investment Program \(BIP\)](#) – applications due 8/9 for large projects; 9/8 for bridges under \$100M
 - h. RTC is working on closing out its books for FY21/22. Agencies should inform staff if you plan to invoice the RTC for TDA, RSTPX, Measure D or other funds for FY21/22 expenditures.
 - i. Billing, Project End Dates (PED) and Closeout: Several projects in Santa Cruz County have missed their originally estimated project end dates and have failed to submit invoices to Caltrans to keep their projects active, and/or have not submitted final invoices and closeout paperwork upon completion of their projects. In order to avoid losing (or having to repay) funds, she encouraged agencies to work with their accounting department and project managers to ensure these requirements are met. <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/projects/projects-with-expiring-end-dates>)
 - j. State Budget: The California Legislature met its June 15 constitutional deadline for passing a balanced State Budget. Both the Governor and Legislature have proposed significant increases in funding for transportation infrastructure, including funding for transit, freight, ports, active transportation, climate adaptation and other purposes
 - k. Theresa Rogerson and Arnold Shir at County Health Services/Community Traffic Safety Coalition (CTSC) are available to provide a public health perspective on grant applications.

10. Next meeting. The next meeting of the ITAC is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on August 18, 2022. Meeting location (virtual or in-person) will be determined based on the latest health guidance and state law. There is no meeting in July. ITAC meetings may be cancelled if there are no action items to be considered by the committee.

Vice Chair Lamm adjourned the meeting at 2:56 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Rachel Moriconi