



*Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
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Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) March 2, 2023 Meeting Highlights

RTC Committee Appointments

The Commission approved appointments of Commissioners to the RTC's Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee, the California Association of Councils of Government (CALCOG), and the Coast Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC). The Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee is the RTC's only standing committee and it serves to review and monitor issues relating to the budget, work program, and other administrative and personnel functions of the RTC and makes recommendations to the Commission regarding such items. The RTC is a member of CALCOG, which provides public policy advocacy and intergovernmental coordination with the state legislature, state agencies, the League of California Cities, California State Association of Counties, California's Congressional Delegation, and federal officials. The RTC also has a representative on the CRCC, which advocates for increased passenger rail service between Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area, which would serve Pajaro, and has been successful in securing regular intercity passenger rail service between Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo.

Public Assistance for Storm Damages to the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

The Commission approved a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to submit claims and execute all necessary agreements for federal and other storm damage financial assistance for storm damages to the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. Due to the recent severe winter storms, President Biden approved a disaster declaration that included Santa Cruz County making it possible for the RTC to apply to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) for public assistance to address damages caused by the storms. Staff is currently working with professional consultants and contractors on assessing the damage, cleaning up storm debris, and conducting the repairs.

Amendments to Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)

The Commission receives a variety of state and local funds that it programs to projects in the Santa Cruz County region. The RTP adopts and maintains a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) to program those funds, update the status and funding of projects, and ensure that projects received the state and federal funds programmed to them. The Commission approved amendments to RTIP as requested by the following local jurisdictions:

Capitola: Modify the title and scope of a project for improvements to the 41st Ave/Capitola Road intersection and rehabilitate a portion of the pavement on Capitola Road.

Santa Cruz County: Shift funds not needed for the Pioneer-Varni Road resurfacing project to the Airport Boulevard and Green Valley Road resurfacing project. Shift funds to an earlier fiscal year for the Soquel-San Jose Rd/Porter St resurfacing and multimodal improvements project as the project will be constructed earlier than originally anticipated.

Watsonville: Combine the Complete Streets Downtown projects with the more comprehensive Safe Routes to Downtown Watsonville project to make the most of the state Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds recently awarded to the later project. Update to show locations for the Watsonville road rehabilitation and reconstruction project.

With these RTIP amendments the Commission also programmed an additional small amount of Local Partnership Program (LPP) funds that became available to Santa Cruz METRO and added the recently awarded state ATP funds to the Coastal Rail Trail segments 8-9 and 10-11. These amendments keep the projects updated, help to minimize delays, and maximize available funding.

Caltrans Update

The Commission congratulated the new Caltrans District 5 Director Scott Eades, who was recently promoted to the position. Mr. Eades has a bachelor's degree in city and regional planning and a master's degree in civil and environmental engineering from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Mr. Eades has nearly 30 years of experience and expertise in transportation planning, engineering, and project/program management. Most of that time with Caltrans but Mr. Eades also has experience as a transportation planner with the San Luis Obispo Council of Government (SLOCOG). Most recently Mr. Eades was serving as the Caltrans District 5 Deputy Director for Transportation Planning, Local Assistance and Sustainability. The RTC has worked with Mr. Eades since he was a transportation planner with SLOCOG. Mr. Eades was commended for his great professionalism, partnership, and dedication.

Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program Update

The Commission received an update on the [Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program](#) (WSC-MCP) of innovative transportation projects on the three main north to south routes through Santa Cruz County – Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard, and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. Staff is currently implementing or facilitating the implementation of a number of projects within the program. On Highway 1, the auxiliary lanes and bus on shoulder facility [Phase 1](#) (41st Ave. to Soquel Ave.) will begin construction in April. [Phase 2](#) (Bay/Porter to State Park Dr.) is scheduled to begin construction in late summer 2023. For [Phase 3](#) (State Park Dr. to Freedom Blvd.), the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) is expected to be released and available for public review and comment starting in March. On Soquel Drive, the County is implementing the 5.6-mile-long [Soquel Drive Multimodal project](#). Construction is scheduled to begin later this year. On the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, 1.5 miles of [Coastal Rail Trail](#) have completed construction (Segments 7 Phase 1 and 18 Phase 1), 0.75 miles are under construction (Segment 7 Phase 2), and the remaining segments of the 32-mile Coastal Rail Trail are under various stages of development, with over half of the trail fully funded for construction. Staff

is continuing to pursue competitive grant opportunities to fund multi-modal projects within the WSC-MCP, providing options for a broad range of transportation options that will serve the broad needs of a diverse community.

[Upcoming RTC and Committee Meetings](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency was lifted as of February 28, 2023. Beginning in March, RTC and committee meetings will be held under regular Brown Act requirements, which require voting members to participate at a designated location, unless they meet the qualifications for one of the very limited reasons for remote participation established by AB 2449 (2022). Non-voting members of the Commission and its committees, as well as members of the public and staff, will have the option to participate in person or remotely, provided equipment is available at the meeting location to allow remote participation. If there are technical difficulties during a meeting that prevent remote participation, the meeting will continue. Please check the RTC website [<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/calendar/>] or call 460-3200 to confirm meeting location and video conference information for future meetings. Agendas are posted to the website at least 3 days before the meeting and will also include participation information. Meetings may be canceled if there are no action items to be considered by the committee.

The RTC is committed to its compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please contact the RTC at least 3 days in advance of a meeting if special accommodations are needed. If any document, webpage, meeting, or recording is inaccessible to you, kindly notify us at info@sccrtc.org or by calling 831-460-3200.

[Regional Transportation Commission Meeting](#)

Thursday, April 6, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

[Budget & Admin/Personnel Committee](#)

Thursday, March 9, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

[Interagency Technical Advisory Committee](#)

Thursday, March 16, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

[Bicycle Advisory Committee](#)

Monday, April 10, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

[Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee](#)

Tuesday, April 11, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

Public input on transportation issues is welcomed and encouraged. For more information, visit the SCCRTC website at www.sccrtc.org or call 460-3200. Some Regional Transportation Commission meetings are televised countywide by Community TV of Santa Cruz. Consult www.communitytv.org or call 831-425-8848 for schedule and station information.