



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, May 4, 2023
9:00 a.m.**

In-Person Meeting

Capitola City Council Chambers
420 Capitola Avenue
Capitola, CA 95010

Remote Participation

RTC Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85406910971>

Dial-in: +1 564-217-2000

Webinar ID: 854 0691 0971

1. Roll call.

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

Members present:

Sandy Brown	Mike Rotkin
Kristen Brown	Eduardo Montesino
Alexander Pedersen	Larry Pageler (Alt)
Randy Johnson	Andy Schiffrin (Alt)
Manu Koenig	Robert Quinn (Alt)
Felipe Hernandez	Kelly McClendon (Caltrans Ex-Officio)
Bruce McPherson	

Staff present:

Guy Preston	Yesenia Parra
Luis Mendez	Sarah Christensen
Shannon Munz	Krista Corwin
Rachel Moriconi	Tracy New
Grace Blakeslee	Amanda Marino
Cindy Convisser	Matt Schroeder
Stephanie Britt	Brianna Goodman
Tommy Travers	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)
Riley Gerbrandt	

2. Approved AB2449 request(s) – *none*
3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agenda

The following were posted to the website:

- A revised agenda
- The staff report for item 27a
- A handout for item 27a
- A handout for items 27, 28, and 29
- A handout for item 29

4. Oral communications

Due to technical difficulties involving audio in the chambers, oral communications was paused and postponed to a later section of the meeting when the technical issues were resolved.

Received public comment from:

Ed Newman

Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation

Brett Garrett

Jean Brocklebank

Barry Scott

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Chris O'Connell

CONSENT AGENDA

Due to technical difficulties related to audio, the consent agenda was taken out of order after the Director's Report.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin motioned and Commissioner Rotkin seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Pedersen, S. Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Hernandez, Koenig, McPherson, K. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner alternates Schiffrin, Quinn, and Pageler voting "aye."

MINUTES

5. Accepted draft minutes of the March 16, 2023 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee meeting
6. Approved draft minutes of the April 06, 2023 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
7. Accepted draft minutes of the April 10, 2023 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting

8. Accepted draft minutes of the April 11, 2023 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS AND PLANNING ITEMS

9. Adopted a resolution programming Santa Cruz County's population-formula shares of state Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds to Santa Cruz METRO for the YouthCruz program (**Resolution 37-23**)
10. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a cost sharing agreement with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) for the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan Environmental Impact Report (**Resolution 38-23**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

11. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
12. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues
13. Approved FY23/24 TDA claims for Volunteer Center, Community Bridges, and METRO (**Resolution 39-23, Resolution 40-23, Resolution 41-23**)
14. Approved FY23/24 TDA claims for the Community Traffic Safety Coalition, the Ride 'n Stride Program, and the Bike to Work Program (**Resolution 42-23, Resolution 43-23**)
15. Approved amendments to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 RTC Budget & Work Program and Measure D Budget and 5-Year Program (**Resolution 44-23**)

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

16. Accepted FY2021-22 Fiscal Audit for the SCCRTC
17. Accepted FY2021-22 Fiscal Audit for the SCCRTC Measure D Fund
18. Approved appointment to the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC)

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

19. Accepted monthly meeting schedule

20. Accepted correspondence log
21. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies –*none*
22. Accepted information items
 - a. Public meeting requirements under the Brown Act and AB 2449

REGULAR AGENDA

23. Commissioner Reports

Due to the interruption caused by technical difficulties, this item was heard out of order, following Oral Communications.

Commissioner Hernandez expressed support for the projects on Walker and Lee Road and the trails on the river project.

24. Director's Report

Due to technical difficulties, the Directors Report was taken out of order, following a partial hearing of item 4, Oral Communications. Executive Director Preston delivered updates on:

- Staff attendance at the Association for Commuter Transportation 2023, July 30-August 2 in Seattle, Washington
- Release of the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy in coordination with the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
- Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane & Bus on Shoulder Project - 41st-Soquel groundbreaking ceremony at site of the future Chanticleer overcrossing
- Impacts to traffic on Highway 1 due to active construction
- Caltrans opened bids for the next phase of the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane & Bus on Shoulder Project - Bay/Porter to State Park
- Draft Environmental Impact Report released for the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane and Bus on Shoulder Project – Freedom to State Park Drive and Segment 12 of the Coastal Rail Trail and virtual and in-person open houses
- The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) announced funding through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program to Santa Cruz METRO for enhanced bus service and transit center redevelopment and to RTC for the zero-emission passenger rail and trail concept report
- Release of the draft 2023 State Rail Plan

Commissioners discussed: excitement for funding from state agencies in support of transportation projects in Santa Cruz County.

25. Caltrans Report

Kelly McClendon, Deputy District Director for Transportation Planning, delivered announcements regarding road closures and highway work along Highway 9; new program for regional infrastructure accelerators; California's air resources board has passed the world's first regulation to phase out combustion trucks.

Received public comment from:
Michael Saint

In response to a question, Deputy Director McClendon confirmed information about the construction timeline of the Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project from 41st to Soquel Ave as presented in the project updates table.

26. Received presentation from City of Capitola

Due to technical difficulties, this item was heard out of order following the Director's report. Jessica Kahn, Public Works Director for the City of Capitola, delivered a presentation.

Received public comment from:
Heidy Kellison

Commissioners discussed: appreciation for the outstanding work of public works staff and upcoming road closures.

27. **PUBLIC HEARING:** 2023 Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs List

Transportation Planner Amanda Marino delivered the staff report. The public hearing opened at 10:06 a.m.

Received public comment from:
Brian Peoples
Sally Arnold
Barry Scott
Veronica Elsea
Beverly Descheux

Commissioners discussed: possible changes to the unmet needs document to provide more information such as performance metrics, data and narrative; lack of transportation a major barrier to seniors accessing health care; connecting with the Health Improvement Council of Santa Cruz County.

Commissioner Rotkin motioned and Commissioner Sandy Brown seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to:

1. Adopt the 2023 Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs List with revisions as appropriate, following the public hearing; and,
2. Consider unmet transit and paratransit needs as funding becomes available.

The motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Pedersen, S. Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Hernandez, Koenig, McPherson, K. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin, Quinn, and Pageler voting "aye."

27a. Approve Amendments to Measure D Five Year Program of Projects and Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for Highway 1 State Park to Bay/Porter Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project

Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen delivered the staff report and responded to Commissioner questions regarding the meaning of "pay-as-you-go capacity" within the context of the 5-year program of projects, and the likelihood of borrowing or financing.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Michael Saint

Commissioners discussed: challenges of re-bidding the project in the current fiscal climate; costs of building public infrastructure; rate of project delivery commendable; looking forward to highway 1 improvements making a difference in the lives of South County workers & residents.

Commissioner Montesino motioned and Commissioner Kristen Brown seconded the motion to approve **Resolution 45-23** to:

1. Program an additional \$4,570,000 of Measure D-Highway Corridors revenues for the Project; and,
2. Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute Amendment 1 to the Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the construction component of the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project between State Park and Bay/Porter interchanges which

includes replacement of the Capitola Avenue bridge and a new bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing at Mar Vista Drive (Caltrans Coop 05-0419) to add the additional Measure D – Highway Category funding.

The motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Pedersen, S. Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Hernandez, Koenig, McPherson, K. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin, Quinn, and Pageler voting “aye.”

28. Federal Lands Access Program Grant Award and Funding Agreements to Construct the North Coast Rail Trail (Segment 5) from Wilder Ranch to Davenport and Coastal Rail Trail-Cotoni Coast Dairies Overpass Connection

Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered a presentation and responded to questions regarding location of restrooms along the trail; pedestrian crossing signal at Davenport; decomposed granite maintenance requirements; the project’s construction schedule; the possibility of obtaining funds sooner to start construction.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Barry Scott

Matt Farrell, Friends of the Rail and Trail

Sky Murphy, Bureau of Land Management

Ryan Sarnataro

Jean Brocklebank

Commissioners discussed: North Coast Rail Trail will greatly improve safety for bicyclists; likely availability of federal funds in the future and RTC’s readiness to apply for federal funds; relevance of cost per mile data of rail trail and highway projects; limited availability of funds for all the county’s transportation needs.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin motioned and Commissioner Montesino seconded the motion to approve **Resolution 46-23** to:

1. Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and enter into agreements for Federal Lands Access Program funding and delivery of North Coast Rail Trail (Segment 5) Phases 1 and 2 (trail and parking lots) and Phase 3 (Cotoni Coast Dairies Highway 1 Overpass); and,
2. Amend the Measure D 5-year plan to add \$1.2 million in Measure D-Active Transportation funds to the North Coast Rail Trail (Segment 5) project.

The motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Pedersen, S. Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Hernandez, Koenig, McPherson, K. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin, Quinn, and Pageler voting "aye."

The Commission took a 5-minute recess and reconvened at 11:20 a.m.

29. Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 and 9 (Pacific Avenue to 17th Avenue)
Environmental Review

Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered a presentation and responded to questions regarding the action before the Commission; steps of the environmental process that is underway for this project; responsible agency vs implementing agency; and the maintenance and cooperative agreements for the project.

Public Works Director for the City of Santa Cruz Nathan Nguyen provided more information about the cooperative agreement phase with the County and the RTC; and clarified the intentions of the differences between the City's actions and the RTC's actions.

Commissioners discussed: appreciation for staff's flexibility in the face of uncertainty with respect to the optional interim trail & ultimate trail phases; the project's impacts to the environment; likelihood of freight service ever returning; climate change considerations; regulatory risks, i.e. Coastal Commission approval; the designation of rail ties as a historic resource; removal of 380 trees as communicated in EIR, which provide shade and habitat; whether impacts of climate change overwhelm the environmental impacts of the project; CEQA empowers decision-makers to determine whether the benefits of the project outweigh the impacts; whether transit is the solution to climate change; the optional interim phase leaves room for uncertainty as well as flexibility; findings specific to this document; options for the RTC, if it considers that the EIR is not adequate; adequacy of the EIR for segments 8 and 9 in light of the fact that it was not legally challenged; and separate environmental documents being produced for segments 10 and 11, and 12 of the trail.

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas responded to a question regarding the EIR's exposure to litigation, and whether today's action precludes the RTC from making a determination on the optional phase at a later time.

Received public comment from:

Sally Arnold
Ryan Sarnataro
Jean Brocklebank
David Van Brink
Johanna Lighthill

David Dean
Lani Faulkner
Michael Lewis
Sean

Commissioner Rotkin motioned and Commissioner Alternate Hernandez seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to:

1. Accept the Segments 8 & 9 Final Environmental Impact Report as adequate for decision making; and,
2. Adopt Findings, Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Ultimate Trail Configuration and the Optional First Phase: Interim Trail.

The motion carried with Commissioners Pedersen, K. Brown, S. Brown, Hernandez, Montesino, Rotkin, McPherson, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin and Pageler voting "aye," and Commissioners Koenig, Johnson, and Commissioner Alternate Quinn voting "no."

30. Review of items to be discussed in closed session.

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas reported that there would be no reportable action from the two items discussed during closed session.

CLOSED SESSION

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

Property: 7994 Soquel Drive (APN 039-232-02), 7996 Soquel Drive (APN 039-232-01), Aptos, CA 95003

Agency Negotiators: Guy Preston, Luis Mendez, and Sarah Christensen

Negotiating Parties: SCCRTC and The Oak, LLC Dennis and Julie Ann Jacobsen

Under Negotiations: Price and terms for acquisition of property

32. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation (Pursuant to Government Code 54956.9(d)(1))

Name of case: *Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission v. Terrie Kajihara, et. al.* (Case No. 21CV00211)

33. Report on items discussed in closed session

There was no reportable action from the closed session.

34. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 01, 2023 at 9:00 a.m., at the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Chambers located at 701 Ocean St. Rm. 525, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting has been cancelled.

The RTC meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

Attendees

Heidy Kellison	Nathan Nguyen
Brian Peoples, Trail Now	(831)***-6833
Michael Saint	(831)***-1255
Michael Lewis	Frank Rimicci
Sky Murphy, BLM	Equity Transit
Murray Fontes, Watsonville DPW	Tim Brattan
Jacob Wysocki	Linda Wilshusen
Barry Scott	Brian
Bob Fifield	Aaron
Piet Canin, Ecology Action	Paul Hierling
Brett Garrett	Paul Guirguis, Caltrans
David <3 Car-free Nature	Joni
Christina Witt	PK
Veronica Elsea	Jesus Bojorquez
Kate Elliot	Ryan Sarnataro
Jean Brocklebank	Rob Tidmore
Nadene Thorne	Sean
Johanna Lighthill	Linda Hitchcock
Jeanette Guire RC RR	Dianne D
Ben Vernazza	(831)***-1847
Theresia Rogerson	Matt Machado
David Dean	Jim MacKenzie
Wondimu Mengistu	Petra Mottishaw
John Urgo	