



**Santa Cruz County  
Regional Transportation Commission**

---

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, September 7, 2023  
9:00 a.m.**

**In-Person Meeting**

Scotts Valley City Council Chambers  
1 Civic Center Drive  
Scotts Valley, CA 95066

**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	Bruce McPherson
Randy Johnson	Larry Pageler
Felipe Hernandez	Robert Quinn (Alt)
Eduardo Montesino	Andy Schiffrin (Alt)
Manu Koenig	John Olejnik (Caltrans Ex-Officio)

Staff present:

Guy Preston	Yesenia Parra
Luis Mendez	Sarah Christensen
Shannon Munz	Krista Corwin
Grace Blakeslee	Riley Gerbrandt
Tracy New	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)

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

A staff report for item 24 and handouts for items 16 and 23 were posted to the website.

4. Oral communications

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Carey Pico

Rick Longinotti

Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation

Aurelio Gonzalez

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioners discussed concerns with delays in project delivery that may result from approval of item 8. Executive Director Preston responded to questions and provided more information regarding funding options and repackaging the RFP for better bids.

Received public input from:

Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation

Barry Scott

Sally Arnold, Friends of the Rail and Trail

Responding to questions from Commissioners and the public related to the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project (item 7 on the agenda), Executive Director Preston reiterated that the environmental documents are not tiered off of the Highway 1 HOV-Lanes Project programmatic environmental documents. Executive Director Preston also clarified that a discussion of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is in fact included in the project EIR.

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

**MINUTES**

5. Approved draft minutes of the August 03, 2023 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
6. Approved draft minutes of the August 17, 2023 Regional Transportation Commission meeting

## **POLICY ITEMS**

*No consent items*

## **PROJECTS AND PLANNING ITEMS**

7. Approved the cooperative agreement with Caltrans for the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) and Right of Way components of the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project between State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard Interchanges and approved amendment to a contract with Mark Thomas (**Resolution 5-24**)
8. Approved authorizing the executive director to reject the bid for the Phase 2 Debris Removal and Erosion Repair project along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and execute an emergency contract for removal of debris at the Mile Post 8.32 Bridge
9. Approved authorizing the executive director to amend an agreement with Ecology Action for Countywide Employer Outreach (**Resolution 6-24**)

## **BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS**

10. Accepted status reports on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
11. Accepted status reports on Measure D revenues
12. Approved programming FY23-24 Transit State of Good Repair (SGR) Funding to Community Bridges Lift Line and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO), amending the RTC budget, and authorizing the executive director or their designee to execute documents (**Resolution 7-24**)

## **ADMINISTRATION ITEMS**

13. Approved the FY2023-24 Article 3 and Article 8 Transportation Development Act (TDA) claim for RTC administration and RTC planning services (**Resolution 8-24**)
14. Approved rejecting a claim from Cari McCormick

## **INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS**

15. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
16. Accepted correspondence log
17. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies

18. Accepted information items - *none*

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

19. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Johnson welcomed all to Scotts Valley and delivered comments regarding: the popularity of personal vehicles as a primary mode of transport; and balancing the use of funds between public transit projects and automotive-centric projects.

20. Director's Report

Executive Director Preston announced planning grants awarded to the RTC by Caltrans including: \$285,000 to fund the Rural Highway Safety Plan, \$362,000 to develop the North Coast Transportation Demand Management Plan, and \$1.25 million to develop a plan for coastal resiliency at Waddell Creek and San Vicente Creek. Mr. Preston also announced that Community Bridges' new wheelchair accessible on-demand ride service begins September 18 and is funded through the Transportation Network Company - Access for All program.

Commissioners congratulated staff for grant awards.

In response to a question from a Commissioner, Executive Director Preston provided information on RTC's commitment to working with the Coastal Commission on coastal resiliency throughout construction of the rail trail projects.

21. Caltrans Report

Transportation Planning Manager (D5) John Olejnik delivered the Caltrans report; expressed enthusiasm for the planning grants noted in the Director's report; announced rolling closures on Highway 1 north of Santa Cruz for the Ironman event; upcoming closures on Highways 9, 236, and 35 for slide repair work and on Highway 101 in Mountain View; electric bike safety education campaign implemented by California Highway Patrol; Caltrans social media accounts and QuickMaps postings for traveler information.

Commissioners discussed: a tilted sidewalk on Main Street in Watsonville which needs repair; appreciation for Caltrans crews for continuing storm damage repair; and intentions to follow-up with maintenance crews to make proactive repairs to the hazardous section on highway 152 that runs through the slough.

Received public comment from:  
Aurelio Gonzalez

22. Presentation on Transportation Projects in Scotts Valley

Public Works Director Steve Jesberg delivered updates on Measure D projects in Scotts Valley.

Commissioners discussed: appreciation for safety improvements; prudent programming of Measure D funds; improved bicyclist safety on Bean Creek Road; and appreciation for Mr. Jesberg's leadership.

Received public comment from:  
Michael Saint

23. Coastal Rail Trail Segment 5 Maintenance Agreements

Item 23 was taken out of order following item 24.

Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered a presentation.

Received public comment from:  
Sally Arnold  
Rob Tidmore, County Parks  
David Van Brink  
Barry Scott  
Aurelio Gonzalez  
Michael Saint

Commissioners discussed: desire for transparency and clarification regarding the ways in which maintenance agreements are made with the partnering jurisdictions; and concerns about availability of funds to construct segments 13-18.

Senior Planner Blakeslee responded to a Commissioner's question regarding how the 5-year maintenance agreement for the North Coast trail may affect construction of the trail south of Rio Del Mar.

Executive Director Preston provided additional context and considerations for funding the full 32-mile trail project over the lifespan of Measure D: lack of grants available for maintenance; an additional voter-approved local revenue source to generate funds to leverage construction grants; the fact that half the trail is funded and could be maintained.

Commissioners discussed: pursuing active transportation grants for South County projects; Strategic Growth Council funds which may be available for trails; and appreciation for the agency exercising prudence in anticipation of the construction of the entire trail.

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

1. Adopt **Resolution 9-24**:
  - a. Authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the County of Santa Cruz to perform trail maintenance for the Monterey Bay Scenic Sanctuary Trail (MBSST) Segment 5 project for a five-year term (Attachment 1: Exhibit A) and commit to programming future Measure D-Active Transportation funds to the Segment 5 project for the five-year agreement term;
  - b. Authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Maintenance Agreement with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) assigning RTC responsibility for maintenance of MBSST Segment 5 parking lots located within Caltrans right-of-way (Attachment 1: Exhibit B);
2. Receive information about projected trail maintenance needs and Measure D- Active Transportation category funding and provide input on options for programming funds for trail maintenance in the Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan update;
3. Continue to prudently program funding for corridor and trail maintenance responsibilities on a yearly basis, as part of the Measure D – Five Year Program of Projects;
4. Seek additional funding sources for Segments 13-20 & 11-Phase 2 construction, which could include combined rail and trail funding, and for trail maintenance.

The motion passed on a 10-1 vote with Commissioners Montesino, Hernandez, McPherson, K. Brown, Koenig, Johnson, S. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin and Pageler voting “aye,” and Commissioner Alternate Quinn voting “no.”

24. Consider and Approve Contract with Recruiting Firm for Executive Director Recruitment Services

Item 24 was taken out of order following item 22. Chair Manu Koenig delivered an oral report on steps taken by the recruitment subcommittee to ensure a transparent recruitment process for placement of the next RTC Executive Director.

RTC Legal Counsel Steve Mattas communicated that public interviews were scheduled with the two top applicant firms.

Heather Renschler of Ralph Anderson and Pam Derby of CPS Consulting represented their firms and responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: past experience recruiting senior leaders at public agencies in California; competencies & qualities of an effective executive director; development of a candidate profile; plans for advertisement; involvement of agency staff in the process; and screening for the ability to build consensus.

Executive Director Guy Preston responded to a Commissioner's question regarding his experience being recruited to his current position by CPS HR consultants.

25. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas communicated that the commission would be discussing selection of a recruitment firm to hire a new executive director.

The Commission adjourned to closed session at 11:51 a.m.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

26. Public Employment (Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957)  
Title: Executive Director

### **OPEN SESSION**

27. Report out of items discussed in closed session-the Commission reconvened in public session at 12:03 pm

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas communicated that there was no reportable action from the closed session.

Commissioner Montesino made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve CPS HR Consulting as the RTC's executive recruiter. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Montesino, Hernandez, McPherson, K. Brown, Koenig, Johnson, S. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin, Quinn, and Pageler voting "aye."

28. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is a special meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 05, 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 Transportation Policy Workshop scheduled for Thursday, September 21, 2023 has been cancelled.

The Commission adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

Attendees

831-\*\*\*-6833

530-\*\*\*-0163

854-\*\*\*-0971

Heather Renschler

Sally Arnold

Rob Tidmore, County of Santa Cruz

Barry Scott

Johanna Lighthill

Schuyler Schwartz

Nyanko

Jacob Wysocki

Matt Farrell

Aurelio Gonzalez

Paul Guirguis, Caltrans Planning

David Morris

Linda Wilshusen

Rebecca Hurley, County Parks

Jesus Bojorquez, Community Bridges

Rick Longinotti

Carey

Nadene Thorne

BobFi

Sean

Heather Adamson, AMBAG

David Van Brink

Brian, Trail Now

Michael Saint

Chris Schneiter

Howard Cohen