

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
AND
SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES

Minutes

Thursday,
June 1, 2006
9:00 a.m.

Board of Supervisors Chambers
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Jan Beautz Emily Reilly
Gustavo Gonzalez (Alt.) Antonio Rivas
Randy Johnson Dale Skillicorn (Alt.)
Mike Keogh Pat Spence
Dennis Norton Mardi Wormhoudt
Ellen Pirie Donna Ziel (Alt.)
Cheryl Willis (ex-officio)

Staff Present: George Dondero Karena Pushnik
Gini Pineda Kim Shultz
Grace Blakeslee Cory Caletti
Luis Mendez Kim Shultz
Daniel Nikuna

2. Oral Communications

3. Additions or Deletions to Consent and Regular Agendas

Executive Director George Dondero referred to replacement pages for Items 13 and 25 and to add-on pages for Items 17 and 27. He also mentioned that Nolte Associates would be providing a handout to accompany a PowerPoint presentation.

Regarding Item 5, Commissioner Spence asked whether the TMAs were completely out of funding. Senior Planner Cory Caletti responded that the evaluations are for the current fiscal year and that the Commission is not providing future funding because our region is no longer eligible to receive Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program funding.

Ms. Spence asked if the Commission could look for grant

funding for these programs. Chair Pirie said that discussion of this suggestion would have to be put on a future agenda and directed staff to bring a report to the next Regional Transportation Commission meeting regarding the financial situation of the Santa Cruz and Pajaro Valley Transportation Management Agencies.

Commissioner Spence noted an error on page 4-1 of the minutes of the RTC meeting of May 4, 2006 and asked that the spelling of the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee's Vice-Chair be corrected to "Tom Crain" and that he represents Potential Disabled Transit Users on the Committee.

CONSENT AGENDA Norton/Wormhoudt (as amended)

4. Approved Minutes of the May 4, 2006 Regular SCCRTC Meeting

POLICY

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING

5. Approved Staff Recommendations Regarding Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Evaluations for FY 05-06 from Previously Funded Programs
6. Accepted Quarterly SCCRTC Work Program Report

COMMISSION BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

7. Approved Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and Staff Recommendation Regarding Legal Review of Post Autonomy Draft Human Resource and Labor Relations Policies (Resolution 44-06)

ADMINISTRATION

8. Accepted Updated RTC Staff Contact Information

COMMITTEE MINUTES

9. Accepted Draft Minutes of the May 8, 2006 Bicycle Committee Meeting

10. Accepted Draft Minutes of the May 22, 2006 Rail Acquisition Committee Meeting
11. Accepted Draft Minutes of the May 11, 2006 Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee Meeting
12. Accepted Draft Minutes of the May 18, 2006 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

INFORMATION/OTHER

13. Accepted Three Month Meeting Schedule
14. Accepted SCCRTC Staff Comment Letters on Draft Environmental Documents and Plans Prepared by Other Agencies - No letters
15. Accepted Correspondence Log
16. Accepted Letters from SCCRTC Committees and Staff to Other Agencies
 - a. Letter from the Bicycle Committee Regarding the Draft San Lorenzo Valley Trail Feasibility Study
17. Accepted Miscellaneous Written Comments from the Public on SCCRTC Projects and Transportation Issues
18. Accepted Handouts from Staff and Commissioners at Previous Regional Transportation Commission Meetings
19. Accepted Information Items
 - a. Letter from Governor Schwarzenegger Regarding Inclusion of Santa Cruz County Projects in Infrastructure Bond

SERVING AS THE SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES (SAFE)

20. No consent items

REGULAR AGENDA

21. Commissioner Reports - None
22. Director's Report - Oral Report

Executive Director George Dondero said he was continuing to meet with staff and Commissioners and has begun meeting with state legislators. He added that he has also met with Les White, General Manager of the SCMTD.

Commissioner Beautz arrived.

Mr. Dondero reported that the bond proposal presented by the Governor was approved by the legislature for inclusion on the November ballot. He said that a piece of the proposal calls for a regional growth plan or "blueprint", which is not clearly defined, and that there will need to be some further legislation for some pieces of the proposal. He added that the proposal to allow for design-build did not pass.

23. Caltrans Report

Cheryl Willis, Caltrans District 5, reported on the status of the Caltrans construction projects. She said that the Emeline on-ramp will be closed for about 18 months. She added that Caltrans is working on options for bike and pedestrian access when Market Street is closed.

Commissioner Reilly complimented Caltrans staff for being so cooperative in efforts to address the concerns of residents along Plymouth Street regarding the tree removal.

24. Highway 1 Projects Update & Quarterly Progress Report on the Highway 1 HOV Lane PA/ED - Oral Presentation by Chris Metzger, Nolte & Associates

Chris Metzger, Nolte Associates, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the environmental and engineering analysis for the Highway 1 HOV Lane project and provided the Commission with updated information about cultural and biological resources, traffic analysis, and the development of engineering drawings for four alternatives.

Mr. Metzger added that work on the Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project is proposed to begin this summer, subject to the availability of funds.

In response to a question from Commissioner Rivas, Mr. Metzger said that Nolte is recommending exceptions to the standard geometry alternative when environmental impacts allow, for example when shoulder width can be reduced. Another area for deviation from standard geometry is on-ramps because design standards have changed over the years. He said negotiations with Caltrans are ongoing.

Commissioner Spence suggested that buses stay in the merge

lane, under Morrissey Boulevard all the way to Pasatiempo in order to avoid having to travel across two lanes of traffic to reach the proposed HOV lane.

Mr. Metzger said he had not looked at that specific location, but that the development team is looking at something similar in other places, saying that one idea is a bypass lane on the shoulder or some way that buses don't have to merge over. He added that bus access to on-ramp/off-ramp is an important part of design configuration.

25. 10 a.m. Public Hearing on Proposed Amendments to the 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)- Taken out of order after Item 28

Regional Transportation Commission Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered the staff report, explaining that due to insufficient funding, the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program*, approved by the Commission in January 2006, has to be aligned with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) by programming funds to only 14 of the 26 projects approved in the RTIP. Ms. Blakeslee said that staff worked with project sponsors to consider alternative funding scenarios when possible. She explained that the Struve Slough Bridge project was determined to be a higher priority than the Freedom Boulevard rehabilitation project and outlined a plan to shift funds to the Struve Slough project. She also described how funding programmed for the Highway 1 HOV Lanes Project could be shifted to the environmental phase of the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project. In addition, she provided information regarding amended programming for the MetroBase Project by using Public Transportation Account (PTA) funds. This funding mechanism would have to be approved by the California Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Johnson arrived.

Commissioner Keogh asked for clarification of the third staff recommendation to give non-transit oriented projects priority when new transportation funds, including the \$1.137 million in future STIP funds, become available.

Executive Director George Dondero said that due to the fact that highway funds are not available and PTA funds are abundant, road projects did not receive funds and transit projects will receive over \$13 million. Staff is

recommending that this be considered as future funds become available for non-transit projects for a similar amount.

Commissioner Beautz asked that the language in the staff recommendation be changed from "non-transit projects" to "road and highway projects" to better describe the intention of the recommendation.

Executive Director Dondero said that approval of the staff recommendations did not guarantee approval by the California Transportation Commission.

Members of the public were asked for comment. There was no public input on this Item.

Commissioner Beautz moved and Commission Alternate Gonzales seconded to approve the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Hold a Public Hearing on the proposed amendments to the 2006 RTIP;
2. Approve a resolution amending the 2006 RTIP to:
 - a. Be consistent with the adopted 2006 STIP which includes deleting unrealized STIP funds from projects as shown in Attachment 2;
 - b. Shift Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds between the City of Watsonville's Freedom Boulevard Rehabilitation Project and the Struve Slough Bridge Project and from the Highway 1 Widening/HOV Lane Project to the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lane Project as shown in Attachment 3;
 - c. Program \$1.137 million in STIP funds to the MetroBase Project in FY06/07 and deprogram \$1.137 million in RSTP funds programmed to this project in FY08/09;
 - d. Program three new Public Transit Account (PTA) eligible projects proposed by the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD) as shown in Attachment 8; and,

in addition to approve further recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

3. Make a commitment to give ~~non-transit~~ road and highway projects priority when new transportation funds become available for programming in Santa Cruz County, including

the \$1.137 million in RSTP funds made available by programming new STIP funds to the MetroBase project.

The motion (Resolution 47-06) passed unanimously.

26. FY 05-06 Optional Federal Exchange and State Match Program - Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Exchange Program

SCCRTC Planner Grace Blakeslee briefly explained how exchanging federal Regional Surface Transportation Funds (RSTP) for state highway account funds was beneficial to local jurisdictions because the state RSTP Exchange funds have fewer restrictions making them a more flexible funding source for local projects. Ms. Blakeslee referred to a list of local projects eligible for the RSTP Exchange funds and said there was money to fund the eight projects listed. She added that the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program* and the FY06-07 budget would need to be amended to reflect the change.

Commissioner Beautz moved and Commissioner Reilly seconded to approve the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve a resolution to:

1. Exchange \$3,036,000 in federal Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds programmed to eight projects for state RSTP Exchange funds; and
2. Amend the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the RTC's fiscal year (FY) 06-07 budget to reflect the exchange in funding.

The motion (Resolution 48-06) passed unanimously.

27. County of Santa Cruz Transportation Program Project Update

Executive Director George Dondero said that there are three projects funded with regional State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds unable to meet their allocation deadlines, causing the funds to lapse. Mr. Dondero said that the project with the most impact on traffic is the Amesti Road Reconstruction project as the closure of Amesti Road has caused congestion and safety issues for Corralitos residents. He said that the funding will be deprogrammed but that staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission commit to reprogramming

the \$1.48 million of STIP funds for transportation projects in the Corralitos area to mitigate the problems caused by the permanent closure of Amesti Road.

Planner Grace Blakeslee said these funds are expected to come back to Santa Cruz County in the next STIP cycle.

Commissioner Wormhoudt said that she was concerned that the three projects are being treated differently and recommended that the Commission make the same commitment to the other two projects.

John Presleigh, County Public Works, explained that the reason that the Amesti Road Reconstruction is lapsing is because FEMA will not release its promised funding as it cannot approve construction at the site due to severe engineering problems. Mr. Presleigh said that construction cannot take place either above or below the site of the previous section of road and that the landslide is still moving. He said that bridging the section of road would cost \$10 million, which the County cannot afford.

Kevin Larkin, Brown Valley Road Association, said he appreciates that the Commissioners are keeping the issue alive and supports the staff recommendations.

Commissioner Pirie pointed out the only roads leading out of Corralitos are Amesti Road and Corralitos Road and with Amesti Road closed, there is a significant burden on Corralitos Road.

Bret Zischke said that all commuters have to travel on Corralitos Road and supported the staff recommendations.

Kris Smith provided a letter with over 250 signatures asking that Amesti Road continues to be addressed. She said it is not fully understood what is going on and asked the Commission to keep the funds in Corralitos and also to commit to resolving the Amesti Road problems.

Pete Ilse said that he was alarmed about the abandonment of the Amesti Road crisis and said to keep the project alive.

Jackie Sternat said that she lives near the Bradley School and that traffic on Corralitos Road is a nightmare. She noted the increase in enrollment at the school due to the

closure of two schools in Watsonville and asked for safety measures, such as lights, to be put in place.

Jodi Keaschall said that the safety of children is being sacrificed and that the backup on Corralitos Road has created a feeling of lawlessness. She suggested widening Corralitos Road and possibly using Amesti Road for bikes and pedestrians.

Bart Meltzer said that when traffic is backed up some motorists drive on the shoulder and that he has seen cars passing school buses when their red lights are flashing.

Commissioner Spence said that the Transportation Funding Task Force is looking at different funding solutions and asked if people in Corralitos would be willing to start an assessment group.

Commissioner Beautz noted that some of the problems described were law enforcement issues.

Commissioner Wormhoudt moved to approve the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve the County of Santa Cruz's request for the RTC to commit to reprogramming the \$1.48 million of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds that will lapse on the Amesti Road Reconstruction Project when those funds are returned to the region, with the addition that the Commission will commit to reprogramming the lapsing funds for the Phase 2 Wilder Ranch Bikeway Project and the East Cliff Drive Bike/Pedestrian Path.

Commissioner Reilly seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

28. FY 06-07 Article 8 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Claims from the City of Santa Cruz on Behalf of the Volunteer Center and the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (Community Bridges) - Taken out of order after Item 24

Deputy Director Luis Mendez introduced Sam Storey to give the annual report on Community Bridges, designated as the region's Consolidated Transportation Services Agency.

Mr. Storey said that Community Bridges operates Lift Line,

a transportation service that focuses on non-emergency services for seniors and disabled persons, and the Taxi Scrip program and introduced Catherine Henderson Valdez, Transportation Director for Community Bridges.

Ms. Valdez gave a PowerPoint presentation on the ride programs including Taxi Scrip and the Medical Voucher program. She said that the application process for taxi Scrip has been revised and that there is no waiting list for Taxi Scrip.

Ms. Valdez also described the Medical Voucher program which helps fill the gap when other transportation resources are unavailable, due to time constraints or because clients are currently ineligible for regular transportation programs.

Community Bridges has also provided funding for Meals on Wheels, a portion of the out-of-county rides provided by the Red Cross and contract services including rides to after school programs and to the homeless shelter

Commissioner Spence asked if past client lists for Taxi Scrip were purged and for the number of unduplicated rides. Ms. Valdez said that past lists were purged and that 115 clients receive Taxi Scrip and 68 use Transportation Development Act (TDA) funded medical credit rides.

Paul Marcelin-Sampson asked why the Commission would use TDA money to subsidize Medic-Cal rides, if Community Bridges had really reviewed the client list for Taxi Scrip and said he did not think that Community Bridges provided sufficient public disclosure.

Sam Storey responded that TDA funds can leverage Medi-Cal funds, that the new application process, with input from the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee, has indeed purged duplicate clients and that there was no longer a waiting list and that Community Bridges is a 501c3 non-profit organization providing public access to its financial transactions. He added that meetings are open to the public and posted on their website.

Commissioner Reilly moved and Commissioner Rivas seconded to approve the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee and staff recommendations that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission:

Approve by resolution the claims for FY 2006-07

Transportation Development Act funds from the City of Santa Cruz on behalf of the Volunteer Center and Community Bridges to provide transportation for seniors and people with disabilities.

The motion (Resolutions 45-06 and 46-06) passed unanimously.

29. Transportation Funding Task Force Update - Taken out of order after Item 27

Transportation Funding Task Force Update Convener Fred Keeley reported that at the meetings held so far, about half of the attendees were Task Force members and half members of the general public. He said that the problems mentioned most often were road maintenance issues and general traffic congestion. He said that solutions were all over the map and that highway widening and rail line purchase were not talked about as much as might be expected. He added that the website has been active.

Mr. Keeley said that the intent is to wrap up the first round of meetings next week and to close online workbook participation on June 18th. After compiling the data, a draft plan will be developed. He suggested that, for the sake of continuity, Task Force members meet once a month during July, August and September during which time experts on funding, transit or congestion could make presentations to help members become more knowledgeable in these areas. Mr. Keeley said if the project is funded to continue, the next round of meetings will be more project specific with negotiations among community members. He estimated that it will take another year before a final plan is ready to present to the Commission and the public.

In response to a question from Commissioner Beautz, Mr. Keeley said that Commissioners will be provided with summaries of the information gathered at the meetings and from the online workbooks, before a draft plan is developed.

Commissioner Beautz asked that the information leading to the summaries be presented to the Commission, since summaries sometimes unintentionally draw conclusions.

30. FY 06-07 Claim for Transportation Development Act (TDA) and Other Funds from the SCCRTC

Executive Director George Dondero said that a claim for funds for Commission administration, planning and operations is presented every year, consistent with the Commission's Rules and Regulations.

Commissioner Wormhoudt moved and Commissioner Reilly seconded to approve staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission approve resolutions for Planning grant funds, SAFE funds, Rail/Trail Authority funds, Highway 1 PA/ED, and Transportation Development Act funds for FY 06-07 Commission Administration, Planning and Operations.

The motion (Resolutions 49-06 and 50-06) was approved unanimously.

Commission Alternate Skillicorn departed from the meeting.

The Commission adjourned to Closed Session at 11:50 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

31. Conference with Labor Negotiators Pursuant to Government Code 54957.6

Commission Negotiators: Ellen Aldridge and George Dondero

Bargaining Units: Mid-Management Unit and General Representation Unit

32. Conference with Real Property Negotiator for Acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Property: Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line from Watsonville Junction to Davenport

Agency Negotiator: Kirk Trost, Miller, Owen & Trost

Negotiation Parties: SCCRTC, Union Pacific

Under Negotiation: Price and Terms

Commissioners Rivas and Beautz departed from the meeting.

OPEN SESSION

The Commission reconvened in Open Session at 12:25 p.m.

33. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition - Coastal Conservancy Reimbursable Grant Agreement

Deputy Director Luis Mendez said there were significant language improvements to the revised draft Coastal Conservancy reimbursable grant agreement. He said that the detailed structures assessment is proceeding according to schedule and that a report from HNTB will be completed in mid June. Mr. Mendez said that the Rail Acquisition Committee (RAC) asked to receive the report at its June 21st meeting and that since the recently established RAC has noticed public meetings in accordance with the Brown Act, the Commission could approve that the RAC receive the report at that time. If the Commission does approve the release of the report, it would be distributed to all Commissioners and posted on the website at the same time.

Mr. Mendez asked to add to the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission authorize the Executive Director to enter into the agreement with the Coastal Conservancy on behalf of the Commission.

Deputy Director Mendez also discussed the scope of a general inspection of the entire line, the costs of the inspection and the need to renegotiate the right of entry agreement with Union Pacific to perform this inspection.

Paul Marcelin-Sampson said that a reimbursable grant is not a grant but is a loan and that in return for this loan the Commission is pledging forever that it will build a trail. He also said that some of the easements do not give the Commission the right to build a trail and that some easements are temporary and depend on the continued operation of rail service. He asked for an out in the agreement or to only include in the agreement parcels that are safe from being removed from the Commission's jurisdiction. He said the Commission should reserve the right for a double track rail line or tell the public that it will never be used for passenger service.

Bob Yount urged the Commission to change the language as suggested.

Commissioner Norton said that the restrictive covenants in the agreement only go into effect if the Commission purchases the line.

Kirk Trost, Miller, Owen & Trost, said that under California law, a railroad easement is treated like a transportation easement and did not anticipate the problems raised by Mr. Marcelin-Sampson. He added that the transaction would be governed by federal law, which in any case would trump state law.

Commissioner Wormhoudt moved and Commissioner Reilly seconded to approve the Rail Acquisition Committee (RAC) and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Approve the revised draft Coastal Conservancy reimbursable grant agreement for a \$10 million reimbursable grant for acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line;
2. Approve inclusion of the detailed structures assessment report as an open session item in the June 21st RAC meeting agenda, provided that the report is finalized in time for inclusion.

with the added staff recommendation that the Executive Director is authorized to sign, on behalf of the Commission, the Coastal Conservancy reimbursable grant agreement included with the written staff report.

The motion passed with Commissioner Spence voting "no".

34. Next Meetings/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for **the special date of Thursday, June 29, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.** at the SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

No meetings are scheduled for July.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 3, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. at the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, 5th Floor, Santa Cruz, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

Catherine Patterson Valdez	Lift Line
Sam Storey	Community Bridges
Sandra Coley	Pajaro Valley Transportation
Management Association	
Bill Comfort	
Bob Yount	
Les White	SCMTD
Piet Canin	SCTMA
Paul Marcelin-Sampson	
Gene Burk	
Maria Esther Rodriguez	City of Watsonville
Lisa Hochstein	
Kristin Smith	
Pete Ilse	
Bret Zischke	
Bart Meltzer	
Jodi Keaschall	
Jacqueline Sternat	