

# **Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission**

## **2006 State Legislative Agenda**

- 1. Preserve Existing Transportation Funding Formulas.** Retain and enhance California's funding formulas based on the increased needs on freight movement, agricultural production and growing population. Specifically:
  - a) Support the current SB 45 state formulas and the regional decision-making process for distribution of existing and new transportation funds.
  - b) Support measures that preserve existing transportation funds for transportation uses.
  - c) Support the continuation of recent transportation funding programs dedicated to specific categories of projects such as transit, Safe Routes to Schools, elderly and disabled transportation and Freeway Service Patrol.
  - d) Oppose shifting transportation funds to non-transportation purposes, including loans from transportation accounts and Proposition 42.
  - e) Support creation of a regional revenue sharing program over a 3-year phase-out period to offset the loss of CMAQ funds associated with air quality attainment status for the AMBAG region as part of the State's implementation of SAFETEA-LU.
  
- 2. Support New Transportation Funding.** Support countywide and statewide efforts to raise needed funds for transportation improvements, including:
  - a) Work with local elected officials, local agencies and interest groups to address continuing gaps in funding for local transportation projects and to develop a plan that includes pursuit of new local funding sources.
  - b) Support the development of a steady stream of new transportation funds dedicated to local road rehabilitation and maintenance.
  - c) Support indexing the state gas and fuel tax so that transportation revenues do not lose value due to inflation.
  - d) Support legislative efforts to increase the gas tax and dedicate revenues to transportation projects and programs.
  - e) Support lowering the voter threshold from 2/3 to a majority vote (or 55%) for countywide transportation sales or gas taxes.
  - f) Support legislative efforts to allow counties to increase vehicle registration fees for transportation projects.
  
- 3. Support Creation of a Transportation Bond Measure.** Advocate for a Transportation Bond Measure that distributes funds equitably in a manner that retains the region's authority to decide how to program any new funds. In the event earmarked projects are included in the Bond measure, advocate for direct consultation to ensure our priority projects are included, as identified in the attached list of priority projects.
  
- 4. Maximize Local Area Funding.** Work to assure that state transportation programs provide the maximum amount of revenues for the Santa Cruz County region. If special state funding programs are developed, support funding of projects in the Watsonville to Santa Cruz to UCSC corridor program, with the widening of Highway 1 as the first priority.

5. **Support Project Delivery Options.** Support greater flexibility in contracting methods and public/private partnerships. Support the authority to use design-build construction methods for the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project. Support legislative efforts to enable Caltrans to take advantage of design sequencing to accelerate project completion.
6. **Support Government Restructuring to Improve Efficiency.** Support organizational reform efforts that would improve transportation funding, programming or project delivery.
7. **Specifics**
- g) **Transit:**
- Support legislation to provide commuter choice tax incentives for carpool, vanpool and transit use, including those incentives provided in federal law.
  - Support measures to allow the use of gas taxes for transit capital purposes, including purchases of rolling stock.
  - Seek to maintain current levels and support increased funding for elderly and disabled transportation, such as state matching for the federal Section 5310 program, and maintain the current allocation to Titles III & VII of the Older Americans Act.
  - Support Medicaid funding for transit and oppose reductions in Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for transportation.
  - Support introduction and passage of legislation designed to enact additional sources of transit operating and capital assistance.
  - Monitor negotiations between the State and the FHWA regarding the implementation of AB 2582, which allows paratransit vehicles to use high occupancy vehicle lanes.
  - Support the *Safe, Reliable High-Speed Train Bond Act for the 21st Century*, a ballot initiative to issue a multi-billion bond in order to plan and construct a high-speed rail transportation system that will connect Southern California to the Central Valley, Sacramento and the Bay Area.
- h) **Bicycling & Walking**
- Support legislative initiatives to improve conditions and funding for improvements for cycling and walking at the local level.
  - Support increased funding to the Bicycle Transportation Account available for local agencies.
  - Support legislative initiatives to require that new traffic actuated signals detect lawful bicycle traffic on the roadway.
  - Support measures that would require bicycle and pedestrian facilities as a part of newly constructed roads and streets.
  - Support programs beneficial to accessible pedestrian improvements and communities with limited means.
  - Support the inclusion of bicycle education programs (e.g. helmet laws, etc.) in public and private schools.
- i) **Carpooling:**
- Oppose measures to remove existing or restrict future High Occupancy Vehicle lanes.
  - Support measures to establish car sharing/station car programs.

**j) SAFE Callbox and Freeway Service Patrol**

- Support proposals to increase state funding of Freeway Service Patrol programs.
- Support development of a statewide callbox network that is well coordinated with the existing Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) callbox programs.

**k) Safety**

- Support increased funding for California Highway Patrol enforcement.
- Support legislative initiatives to improve safety for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

**8. Coordinate with Local, Regional and State Agencies and Organizations on Legislative Principles of Mutual Interest**

**Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission**  
**2006 Federal Legislative Agenda**

- 1. Maximize Local Area Funding.** Support increased revenues for the Santa Cruz County region for transportation projects. Work with local legislators to obtain funding for highway improvements, rail corridor improvements, transit improvements, and pedestrian/bicycle trails, including the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail, and the Pacific Station Project. Oppose any efforts to reduce transportation funding to California or the region
- 2. Maximize Transit Funding.**
  - a) Support annual transit capital and operating fund allocations at the maximum levels allowed in SAFETEA-LU to meet growing paratransit and Americans with Disabilities Act service demands, to help relieve transit service overcrowding, and to encourage increased transit use.
  - b) Oppose any efforts to reduce transit funding to California or the region and support efforts to increase transit funding, particularly in small urbanized areas.
  - c) Support Metro's appropriation request for the Pacific Station Project;
  - d) Support provisions that better integrate state and federal environmental laws;
- 3. Support Improved Elderly and Disabled Transportation.**
  - a) Support increased funding to Title III and VII of the Older Americans Act and Section 5310 program.
  - b) Require that all interstate transportation providers comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions, including wheelchair accessibility requirements.
  - c) Advocate for federal rule changes to reimburse non-emergency medical transportation through Medicare as a less costly alternative to ambulances.
- 5. Support the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Scenic Trail** - Support efforts by Congressman Sam Farr to secure federal funds for planning and construction of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Scenic Trail.
- 6. Support Intercity Passenger Rail Services.** Support the reintroduction and passage of measures that will provide ongoing funding for AMTRAK and that will facilitate the shared use of tracks by passenger and freight rail.
- 7. Support Legislative and Administrative Proposals to Streamline the Process for Federally Funded Projects.** Support regulations to streamline the federal project delivery requirements (including cooperative agreements, pre-award audits, new disadvantaged business enterprise regulations and duplicative federal environmental review laws) while maintaining the substance of environmental laws, either through regulatory or statutory changes.
- 8. Support Incentive Programs for Bicycle and Pedestrian Commuters and Funding for Improvements.** Support efforts to extend the transportation fringe benefits in the tax code to bicycle and pedestrian commuters as a strategy to decrease single-occupancy vehicle trips,

similar to the transportation fringe benefit placed into law to reduce congestion, pollution, and wear and tear on roads.

**9. Assist the County in Efforts to Secure Federal Emergency Management Agency Funds for the Reconstruction of Amesti Road.**

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