

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Preliminary DRAFT 2008 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, local streets and roads, 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. Ensure that transportation planning funds are available to agencies throughout the year and are not withheld due to delays in enacting the federal and state budget.

2.3. Maximize Flexible Transportation Funding.

- a) Support annual allocations at the maximum levels allowed for programs authorized by the 2005 SAFETEA-LU law in order to meet growing transportation needs for local streets and roads, improving transit, relieving traffic congestion, encouraging alternative modes of transportation, and meeting increased paratransit demands.
- b) Oppose any efforts to reduce transportation funding to California or the region and support efforts to increase transit funding, particularly in small urbanized areas.
- c) Support Metro's appropriation request(s) for transit projects.
- d) Support provisions that better integrate state and federal environmental laws.

3.4. 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.

4.5. Monitor the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission

Provide input on the activities of the commission mandated by the 2005 SAFETEA-LU law and formed by former Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, paying particular attention to the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund, as well as any beneficial opportunities that may arise.

5.6. 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.

6.7. 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.

7.8. Support tax incentives for railroad track maintenance and repair

Advocate for the extension of Section 45G Railroad Track Maintenance Credit that provides 50 percent tax credit to entities conducting qualified railroad track maintenance. ~~The provision currently expires on December 31, 2007.~~

8.9. 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.

9.10. 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.

10.11. Assist the County in Efforts to Secure Federal Emergency Management Agency Funds for the Reconstruction of Amesti Road.**11.12. Support Creation of a Federal/State Rail Capital Program.**

Support creation of a combined Federal and State funding program for rail capital projects in which federal funds are used for 80% of the project's cost and state funds for the remaining 20% similar to highway capital projects.

13. Coordinate with Regional Agencies, the State of California and the Federal Government on the Reauthorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Act. Support a bill which ensures a fair share of funding for California and Santa Cruz County.