FLAP Grant Award
The RTC was recently notified that a 4.6-mile segment of the coastal rail trail project is a finalist for funding by the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP). The north coast rail trail segment will provide access to three federal holdings: California Coast National Monument, the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) Coast Dairies property and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The rail trail segment from Wilder Ranch State Park to Laguna Road is part of a $5 million grant application we submitted earlier this year. The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County and the California Coastal Conservancy are also contributing matching funds in the amount of $3M and $1M, respectively. Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Central Federal Lands Highway Division is scheduled to meet with our staff for an on-site assessment and scoping meeting later this month. Final award notices will go out in early August. Should this grant be successful, close to 25% of the 32 miles of rail trail will be funded through construction. Many thanks to the many people who worked to make the grant application a success.

Caltrans Grant Award – Visualization
On April 24 staff received notice from Caltrans that our proposal to develop a framework of visualization tools that will improve our ability to engage the public and support deeper understanding of potential changes in our neighborhoods and transit corridors if various transportation projects combined with compact development become realized. This outreach work will draw from policies and projects contained in RTC’s 2014 Regional Transportation Plan. The grant award is for $229,735 plus a local match of $29,765 for a project total of $259,500. The project is titled “Sustainable Transportation Prioritization Plan for Santa Cruz County” and is funded through the Federal Transit Administration Section 5304, Sustainable Communities program. The project involves utilizing 3-D visualization tools to help the community experience different scenarios introduced in the RTP and the Sustainable Communities Strategies developed by AMBAG in the 2014 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Section 5310 Grant Award Announcement
Caltrans is recommending an award of funding to several Santa Cruz County specialized transportation projects totaling over $600,000 through the statewide competitive Section 5310 grant program. Funding is recommended for:
• Community Bridges Lift Line to provide accessible transportation services to same day medical appointments, and for two new vehicles to provide paratransit service.

• Camping Unlimited, an outdoor recreation program for people living with disabilities, to provide transportation for disabled individuals to recreational activities; and

• Santa Cruz Metro ParaCruz to purchase one new paratransit vehicle.

RTC staff provides feedback and preliminary application scores to project sponsors prior to submittal to Caltrans. RTC’s role is to ensure competitive applications that support transportation programs serving seniors and people living with disabilities are submitted from Santa Cruz County. The Section 5310 program is one of the few funding sources dedicated to meeting the transportation needs of seniors and individuals living with disabilities. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) will take action to allocate the funds at their June 24 meeting.

**New Emission Reduction Target**
In the midst of a historic drought, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-30-15 which sets a new interim target of reducing emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. This puts the state in line with the emissions targets passed by the European Union last year and builds on the state’s existing goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The Executive Order also strengthens the state’s adaptation goals requiring:

- The Natural Resources Agency to update the state’s adaptation strategy “Safeguarding California” every three years.
- Identifying climate vulnerabilities by sector, including: water, energy, transportation, public health, agriculture, emergency services, forestry, biodiversity and habitat, and ocean and coastal resources.

Planning and investment in state agencies will prioritize actions that:

- Build climate preparedness and reduce emissions.
- Use flexible and adaptive approaches.
- Protect the state’s most vulnerable populations.
- Use natural infrastructure solutions.

**Bike Week and Rail Line Cleanup**
Today is Bike to Work day and activities have been occurring countywide all week. A special thanks to all who rode their bicycles today to work or school. In other Bike Week activities, staff participated in the First Friday event at the Museum of Art and History on May 1 to share information about the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (also known as the Rail Trail) and the rail line clean up between Seabright and Seventeenth Avenue on May 3. The RTC granted a right of entry agreement to Bike to Work and event co-sponsor Save our Shores to be on the rail corridor. Again, the cleanup work of the rail corridor by volunteers is greatly appreciated.
Open Streets Watsonville - May 17th
The first Open Streets event in the City of Watsonville is planned for Sunday, May 17th from 11 AM to 3 PM. Open Streets events promote the use of streets for individual and community health and creative use of public space. The RTC is providing some funding for this event as well as a previous one held in Capitola. Several have also been held in the City of Santa Cruz. Commissioners are invited to attend. SC Metro is partnering and will have an interactive bus for people to tour and practice loading their bicycle in the rack. Event posters have also been placed in all Metro buses to advertise the event and everyone is encouraged to ride the bus to the event.

Bicycle Advisory Committee turns 40
This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Bicycle Advisory Committee. It started in 1975 in the County Parks Department and then moved to County Planning, which performed the transportation planning for the County at the time. When the RTC was formed to assume transportation planning functions, the Committee became advisory to the RTC. The first staff coordinator was Robert Leibold. Other early members include Liz Schilling and Gordon Lion.

MBSST Network Master Plan Adopted – 4 times
Last month, the City of Capitola adopted the MBSST Master Plan following adoption the previous month by the City of Santa Cruz’s. This marks full endorsement of the award-winning Master Plan by the County and three cities containing portions of the trail. We appreciate your support of this project.

Passenger Rail Study
Staff and consultants are working hard to deliver the draft of the Passenger Rail Feasibility Study to the Commission before the June 4 RTC meeting in Watsonville, when we expect to have a presentation by the consultants and discussion of the study. Staff is tentatively planning a public workshop later that evening from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Simpkins Swim Center on 17th Avenue in Live Oak. Board attendance to the evening workshop is also encouraged.

Rail Motorcar Excursion
On April 25th and 26th, 66 rail motorcars travelled from Davenport and Felton to Watsonville and back on a special weekend excursion. Of the 66 cars, 15 were owned by local residents, 43 were from other parts of California and 8 were from other states. On the weekend before the excursion, some of the motorcar owners came to Santa Cruz County to clear a sand dune from the track at Bonny Doon Beach, clean up farm crossings, and clear vegetation. On the day of the event there were three safety briefings. The motorcar operators are very concerned with safety and conscientious of roadway traffic. At many crossings the motorcars would go in groups of 5 to allow gaps for vehicles on the roadway to get
through and minimize queues on the roadway. The motorcars stopped at the Boardwalk for hot dogs, drinks, funnel cakes and other traditional food. They also stopped at Manresa Beach to take in the views. The North American Rail Car Operators Association (NARCOA) and Motorcar Operators West (MOW) were the organizers.

May 21 TPW Meeting
At our May 21 Transportation Policy Workshop meeting, consultants will present a summary of the survey of voters in the County regarding a possible 2016 ballot measure to help fund transportation.

Passenger Rail Summit
On April 28-29th I attended the annual Passenger Rail Summit in Sacramento. After a keynote address from Brian Kelly, Secretary of the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), there were five panels presenting on: statewide rail network integration, the High-Speed Rail system, sustainable transportation strategies and tourism and transportation.

Broadband
Staff recently hosted a second meeting with City of Santa Cruz staff to exchange information and sort out details regarding possible placement of conduit and fiber-optic cable on the rail corridor. Both the County and the City of Santa Cruz are exploring ways to provide faster Internet service throughout the County.

Staffing Changes
Filled Position: Jennifer Rodriguez was hired to fill the Administrative Assistant III position, vacated since November 2014. Jennifer lives in Santa Cruz. She attended college in San Jose, and has experience at Apple Inc. and the Girl Scouts of Northern California. Staff is very pleased to have her as a new member of the RTC team.

Maternity Leave: Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee is on maternity leave now through October. The projects on which Grace is working that must continue have been assigned to other staff members temporarily. Some projects will be placed on hold. In addition, staff plans to hire a paid intern for the summer to help cover for Grace’s leave. We wish Grace well during her leave and will anxiously await her return.

Summer Intern: RTC will conduct interviews for a part-time paid internship to assist staff with various projects over the summer months.
PLAY IN STREET WITH NO CARS  ¡JUEGA EN LA CALLE SIN COCHES!

CALLE LIBRE
OPEN STREETS
watsonville

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2015
DOMINGO 17 DE MAYO
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
FREE Event / Evento GRATIS

FEATURING / PRESENTANDO:
Exercise and sports  Ejercicio y deportes
Live music      Música en vivo
Art activities  Arte
Information booths  Recursos comunitarios
FREE RAFFLE  RIFA GRATIS
Teen Day (Plaza)  Día de Jóvenes

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CONTACT US/CONTÁCTENOS EN:
www.scopenstreets.org
info@scopenstreets.org
831.515.1326
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CALLAGHAN PARK @ Freedom Blvd.
CITY PLAZA
Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Highlights

Santa Cruz METRO Service and Capital Improvement Programs

In FY14, Santa Cruz METRO local sales tax revenue increased slightly, continuing the trend of gradually increasing revenue. FY14 marked the first year in which sales tax revenue surpassed the amount collected in 2008, which was the highest pre-recession amount. Transportation Development Act revenue increased moderately over FY13, although the amount has remained flat since then. Santa Cruz METRO added service in Watsonville and Santa Cruz and maintained the Highway 17 Express schedule to meet as many trains as possible at the Diridon Station in San Jose.

Capital projects funded by federal, state and regional grants continued to progress. The Operations Building construction began with demolition of the River Street Operations facility and relocation of operations to a temporary facility in Harvey West Park for the duration. The Pacific Station and Watsonville Transit Center redesign projects became established with completion of initial tasks. The Pacific Station conceptual design project leads the Watsonville Transit Center redesign schedule by about two months.

Highlights from FY14 fixed-route operations follow:

- Ridership dropped by about 35,000 although revenue service hours increased by over 5,000 hours. Gas prices had begun a sharp decline early in the fiscal year, and transit ridership varied proportionately.
- Passengers per hour decreased from 26.63 to 25.74.
- The fixed-route farebox recovery ratio decreased from 22.23% to 20.23%.

Highway 17 Express ridership continues to increase:

- Ridership set a new annual record of 368,338, a gain of from 2013 of over 16,000 passenger trips. The growth in ridership could be explained by continually increasing employment in San Jose.
- METRO adjusted the Highway 17 Express as needed to meet the greatest number of Caltrain and Amtrak train departures and arrivals at Diridon Station in San Jose.
- The farebox recovery ratio decreased from 46.12% to 45.98%, likely due to greater utilization of multi-ride passes.

Santa Cruz METRO ParaCruz hours and ridership increased in FY14:

- Ridership jumped by approximately 6,500 trips to 96,868 trips.
- Revenue hours increased by 3,000 to 48,714.
- The farebox recovery ratio increased by one-half point to 6.65%.
Santa Cruz METRO operated extended service on Route 79 to accommodate the Santa Cruz County Fair.

In summer 2014, Santa Cruz METRO restored weekend service to Big Basin State Park and Waddell Creek State Beach to help support recreational activity.

During FY14, Santa Cruz METRO completed major capital improvements and initiated new ones with prior years’ grant awards:

- Lewis C. Nelson & Sons demolished the River Street Operations facility and completed pile driving, grading the operating tarmac and pouring the slab for the Judy K. Souza Operations Building.
- Placed six more New Flyer CNG replacement buses in service.
- Completed the $500,000 Bus Stop Improvement project funded by the California with connection of sidewalks and crosswalks to a renovated stop on Green Valley Road in Watsonville.
- Nelson/Nygaard completed a Short Range Transit Plan through 2018. Increasing service on trunk lines with greater frequency was deemed the best adjustment to increase ridership. No new revenue sources were identified.
- Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning initiated tarmac design established an Ad-hoc Board committee to guide the Pacific Station redesign progress and initiated designs for the first public outreach sessions scheduled for September 2014.
- Closed the FY14 AB2766 project with the purchase of replacement CNG staff cars.

Santa Cruz METRO will continue construction on the Judy K. Souza Operations Building throughout FY15 and FY16 and will continue the Prop 1B Security Grant Program with enhanced lighting at all METRO sites. METRO has begun exploring the possibility of on-board camera recording to be funded from future CTSGP allocations.

In FY14, the Santa Cruz METRO Board hired Alex Clifford, the new CEO/General Manager for Santa Cruz METRO. Mr. Clifford initiated a comprehensive analysis of METRO’s finances and organizational structure. The financial analysis revealed an ongoing, unsustainable structural deficit, and a number of board workshops were scheduled beginning in summer 2014.

Looking ahead, Santa Cruz METRO anticipates making needed fixed-route and ParaCruz service changes to reduce costs and increase efficiency. Construction on the Judy K. Souza Operations Facility will continue well into FY16. Staff will seek grant funds for unfunded capital projects, especially bus replacements as the average fleet age approaches 10 years.
May 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2015

Dear Regional Transportation Commission members,

I am writing to support the staff recommendation for Item 21 on your agenda, the Bicycle Route Signage Program Implementation Plan. Please adopt the plan and authorize staff to apply for Active Transportation Program funding to implement the program.

Bike route signage is a critical step towards encouraging more Santa Cruz County residents to use their bikes for daily trips. The best route to a destination is often very different when traveling by bike vs. driving, and it can be challenging for new cyclists to find the best routes. Santa Cruz County has some excellent bicycle infrastructure, but most facilities are unsigned and can be difficult to discover without prior knowledge. The Bicycle Route Signage Program will allow visitors and new cyclists to easily find the best route to their destination. This will both encourage cycling and make it safer, by helping to ensure that people on bikes stay off higher-stress roads without bike facilities like Mission Street.

By encouraging bicycling for short daily trips, we can take cars off the road. This has multiple benefits including reduced traffic, improved air quality, and providing a low-cost and healthy transportation option for Santa Cruz County residents. Please support the staff recommendation for the Bicycle Route Signage Program and do everything in your power to support an Active Transportation Program grant application.

Best,

Amelia Conlen, Director
Bike Santa Cruz County
May 5, 2015

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
info@sccrtc.org

Dear Regional Transportation Commissioners,

I am writing to request your adoption of the Bicycle Route Signage Program Implementation Plan as recommended by the SCCRTC staff, under Item 21 on the May 7, 2015 SCCRTC meeting agenda. Please adopt the plan, and authorize staff to apply for Active Transportation Program grant funding to implement the program.

Bike route signage encourages Santa Cruz County residents and visitors to ride bikes for everyday trips. Most bike routes in our county have little or no directional signage, making it difficult for people who ride bikes to navigate and arrive at their destination in the safest, most direct, and most convenient way. The Bicycle Route Signage Program will start to fulfill this unmet need.

By encouraging bicycling for everyday use, we provide a more viable transportation choice while reducing the number of trips by motorized vehicle. The benefits include reduced traffic, lower roadway maintenance and repair costs, improved air quality toward attainment of reduced greenhouse gas emission goals, and healthier, happier people.

Please adopt the Bicycle Route Signage Program, and authorize staff to apply for Active Transportation Program grant funding to implement the program.

Sincerely,

Steve Piercy, Sustainable Santa Cruz County Advisory Group Member