



**Santa Cruz County Regional
Transportation Commission
Transportation Policy Workshop**

Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 2015

**SCCRTC Conference Room
1523 Pacific Ave
Santa Cruz, CA**

1. Introductions

Chair Lane called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Members present:

Cynthia Chase	John Leopold
Don Lane	Greg Caput
Jimmy Dutra	Bruce McPherson
Andy Schiffrin (alt.)	Patrick Mulhearn (alt.)

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Jennifer Rodriguez	Yesenia Parra
Karena Pushnik	Rachel Moriconi

2. Oral communications

Jack Nelson, Campaign for Sensible Transportation, encouraged Commissioners to believe the science on the carbon problem and consider it in their decision making.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Handouts were distributed for Item 5.

CONSENT AGENDA

No consent items

REGULAR AGENDA

Chair Lane moved Item 5 before Item 4.

4. Independent Polling of Voters for a Potential 2016 Ballot Measure
(*Taken out of order after item 5*)

George Dondero, Executive Director, introduced Bill Tysseling, Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce, who introduced, Rich Pickard, General Counsel for Plantronics, Gary Merrill, and Interim Executive Director for the Santa Cruz County Business Council, and David Metz, partner with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz and Associates.

Mr. Tysseling said that Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz and Associates conducted the polling survey. He said that population growth in Santa Cruz is having serious impacts on transportation. He also said that traffic congestion is a major deterrent to workforce and tourist attraction.

Commissioner Dutra arrived

Mr. Metz reviewed the survey results noting that the results indicate that the community supports a tax measure and that a strong campaign would be needed to ensure success.

Commissioners discussed time commitment, demographic factors of the community, and the impact of current events on survey results, and opposition to the tax increase affecting a campaign. They thanked the Business Council, Santa Cruz Chamber and Plantronics for sponsoring and working on the survey.

Responding to a question, Mr. Dondero stated that \$15-16 million is the estimate for revenue generation with the tax measure. Mr. Tysseling will work closely with commissioners on next steps. Mr. Dondero said that details about the next steps and the plan for the tax measure would be discussed at upcoming TPW meetings.

Bill Malone, asked if there was evidence that widening Highway 1 would alleviate congestion.

Brian Peoples, agreed that widening Highway 1 would help with traffic congestion and supports the tax measure if the rail is not put in Aptos.

Jack Nelson, supports the tax measure. He also said congestion on Highway 1 is a serious problem and passed out information on a traffic study.

Piet Canin, Ecology Action, supports the tax measure and questioned the language of child safety in the poll and stated that the Rail Trail is a priority to the biking business community.

Paul Elerick, said the most important thing the Commission can do is be honest and detailed about plans with funds generated by the sales tax measure.

Bill Malone, said that he believes the business community should pay for their own economic interests in alleviating traffic congestion. He will not vote for the sales tax measure.

Randy Jones, Santa Cruz resident, asked how much time it will take to make improvements once there is funding and if those surveyed are aware of the time frame.

Kate Roberts, asked if there was anything unusual found in the survey results.

5. Golden Gate Railroad Museum (GGRM) presentation
(*taken out of order before item 4*)

Luis Mendez, Deputy Director, gave a brief summary on the proposal from the Golden Gate Railroad Museum (GGRM). Eric Child introduced the GGRM team: David Varley, Vice President, James Swafford, Fiscal Officer, and Garrett Brisbee, President.

The Golden Gate Railroad Museum (GGRM) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the legacy of Northern California railroad history. GGRM has expressed interest in relocating their museum and operations to the City of Santa Cruz and has been in negotiations with RTC staff, Santa Cruz & Monterey Bay Railway, and the City of Santa Cruz.

GGRM's proposal will augment activities already offered by the Seaside Company and Big Trees. It plans to offer train excursions, educational programs and attractions for train enthusiasts. Their proposal also includes improvements to the RTC rail property as well as new construction in the City of Santa Cruz and on the RTC rail property.

Commissioners discussed the experience required to fundraise for this type of proposal, the benefits to the community, and requested that construction plans include the historic depot building.

Brian Peoples, Aptos Rail Trail, said the GGRM proposal is viable and good for the community. He said that the plan to have a trail along the rail line is not feasible in Aptos and the tracks should be removed to allow for more space for the trail.

Bill Malone, supports GGRM's proposal and thinks it's another attraction for Santa Cruz County. He does not support removal of the train tracks.

Becky Steinbruner, Santa Cruz County resident, supports GGRM's move to Santa Cruz and seconds the motion to keep the tracks, stating rail and trail can coexist.

Kate Roberts, community member, asked GGRM if there are other areas being considered for GGRM's relocation and if they had reviewed the Depot Park plan.

Jack Nelson, questioned if GGRM's proposal would conflict or augment the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail plan and encouraged the RTC to ensure the plans integrate well.

Tom Padula, resident of Ben Lomond, thanked the RTC for the GGRM's presentation and supports their relocation to Santa Cruz. He had been to GGRM's Niles Canyon excursion and the tourism population is surprising. Mr. Padula believes the rail and trail can coexist and supports having rail service.

Paul Elerick, Campaign for Sensible Transportation, stated that he believes the GGRM's Depot Park plan should be expanded further.

James Swofford, supports preservation of the track. He said the Commission is in a better position to seek funding for commuter services. Mr. Swofford pointed out that donated materials and services become the property of the Commission and branch line and qualify as local match towards grants such as the TIGER grant and other federal funding.

6. Amendments to Purchase and Sale Agreement with Union Pacific

Deputy Director, Luis Mendez presented the staff report.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin moved and Commission Dutra seconded to authorize the Executive Director to amend the purchase and sale agreement with Union Pacific to extend the date to resolve a rail line contamination issue with Granite Construction for one year to June 1, 2016.

The motion passed unanimously, with Commissioners Chase, Lane, Leopold, Caput, Mulhearn, McPherson and Dutra and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin voting "aye."

7. Bike Route Signage Grant

Deputy Director Luis Mendez presented the staff report.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin moved and Commissioner Leopold seconded to approve a resolution authorizing the submittal of an application to the Active Transportation Program for implementation of the Santa Cruz County Bicycle Route Signage Program, authorizing the Executive Director or designee to execute and submit necessary agreements for implementation of the Active

Transportation Program project, and authorizing \$50,000 in funds programmed in the FY 14-15 budget as a local match to the grant funding request to increase the competitiveness of the application.

The motion passed (**Resolution 28-15**) unanimously, with Commissioners Chase, Lane, Leopold, Caput, Mulhearn, Dutra and McPherson, Commissioner Alternate Schiffirin voting "aye."

8. Passenger Rail Study Update (Oral Report)

Karena Pushnik, Senior Transportation Planner, distributed the draft Passenger Rail Study report. She noted that the public comment period is open until July 8th. She said that the results of the study would be presented at the June 4th RTC meeting by the consultant and that a public workshop is also scheduled for June 4th starting at 6:30 pm at the Simpkins Swim Center in Live Oak.

9. Meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 4, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main St., Ste. 400, Watsonville, CA.

The next meeting of the Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, June 25, 2015 at 9:00 am at the City of Santa Cruz Council Chambers, 809 Center St., Santa Cruz, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

Yesenia Parra, Staff

Attendees:

Heather Adamson	AMBAG
Nathan Goodman	Roaring Camp Railroad
Cliff Waters	Roaring Camp Railroad
David Varley	Golden Gate Railroad Museum
Eric Child	Golden Gate Railroad Museum
James Swafford	Golden Gate Railroad Museum
Garrett Brisbee	Golden Gate Railroad Museum
Paul Elerick	CFST
Piet Canin	Ecology Action
Tom Padula	Ben Lomond resident
Gary Merrill	Santa Cruz County Business Council
Jack Nelson	Campaign for Sensible Transportation

Brian Peoples
Claire Fliesler
Becky Steinbruner
Howard Cohen
Pam Cox
Kate Roberts
Brian Bastold
Bill Malone
Randy Jones

Aptos Rail Trail
City of Santa Cruz