



*Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
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Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) September 3, 2015 Meeting Highlights

Washington Report from Congressman Farr

[Congressman Sam Farr](#) provided a report on federal legislative issues, expressing frustration that a long-term transportation act has not yet been approved in the House. With insufficient federal gas tax revenue, due to the tax not having been increased since 1994 and losing value due to inflation and more fuel efficient vehicles, funding for transportation projects is sparse and projects will need to be "shovel ready" when funding becomes available. The RTC delivered an excellence award from the American Planning Association Award to the Congressman in recognition of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan. Congressman Farr has long championed the trail project for which he has helped secure millions of dollars. He emphasized the importance of the project for providing access to the coastline for transportation and recreation.

Monterey County Rail Project Update

The [Regional Transportation Commission](#) received an update from the [Transportation Agency for Monterey County \(TAMC\)](#) on the [Rail Extension to Monterey County](#) and Coast Daylight projects. TAMC is working on extending the Capitol Corridor train, which currently operates between Sacramento and San Jose south to Salinas, providing an alternative to US 101. The first phase is called the "Salinas Rail Extension Kick-Start project", with an estimated cost of \$70 million. The Coast Daylight project is a planned extension of the Pacific Surfliner trains, from downtown San Francisco to downtown Los Angeles (or San Diego). Both rail services would include a Pajaro/Watsonville station, which could also be used for future passenger service on the Santa Cruz Branch Line.

Public Input on the Draft Passenger Rail Study

The [Regional Transportation Commission](#) received a summary of [public comments](#) on the Passenger Rail Feasibility Study – Draft Report. The study identifies sample rail transit options on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line between Santa Cruz and Watsonville/Pajaro including cost, ridership, and funding information. Extensive public outreach activities

were conducted by the RTC to encourage community engagement and discussion about rail transit including public and stakeholder meetings, a survey, social and other media, presentations to community groups and attendance at local events. The public comment period extended from May 21 to July 31, 2015. Over 2,600 online survey responses and over 430 comments as letters, emails and comment forms were received. Comments ranged from strong support, to voicing concerns and suggestions, to opposition of any activity on the rail line. A summary of topics raised and amendments for the final report was also provided to the RTC Board. The final report is planned to be available later this year.

Highway 1 Project – Status Report

The [Regional Transportation Commission](#) received information on the environmental document for the [Highway 1 Corridor Investment Program](#) (previously referenced as the Hwy 1 HOV Lane Project). The environmental document is now tiered to include a program-level assessment of the corridor between Santa Cruz and Aptos (Tier 1) and a detailed project-level assessment of the 41st Avenue/Soquel Auxiliary Lanes Project including a bicycle/pedestrian bridge at Chanticleer (Tier 2). The environmental document is currently being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), following review by Caltrans for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The public release of this document is anticipated in late October for public review.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Update

The [Regional Transportation Commission](#) received information that due to changes in state law and a drop in the excise tax on gasoline, no new [State Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#) funding will be available for programming to new projects this year and the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is asking regions to delay some projects. Typically \$3-5 million a year in STIP funding is available for a wide range of projects in Santa Cruz County. Unless new state legislation is approved that includes new funding, the Commission will evaluate projects that are currently programmed later this year.

Upcoming RTC and Committee Meetings:

Please check the RTC website [www.sccrtc.org] or call 831-460-3200 to confirm. Most agendas are posted to the website 4 business days before the meeting.

Commissioner's Retreat
Thursday, September 17, 2015,
8:30 a.m.
Pajaro Dunes, 500 Sandpiper Lane,
Watsonville

[Budget and Administration/Personnel
Committee](#)
Thursday, September 17, 2015,
1:30 p.m.
Pajaro Dunes, 500 Sandpiper Lane,
Watsonville

Public input on transportation issues is welcomed and encouraged. For more information, visit the SCCRTC website at www.sccrtc.org or call 460-3200. Some Regional Transportation Commission meetings are televised countywide by Community TV of Santa Cruz. Consult www.communitytv.org or call 831-425-8848 for schedule and station information.

[Interagency Technical Advisory Committee](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2015
1:30 p.m.
RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue,
Santa Cruz

[Commission Meeting](#)

Thursday, October 1, 2015, 9:00 a.m.
County Board of Supervisors
Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, 5th
Floor, Santa Cruz

[Elderly/Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee](#)

Tuesday, October 13, 2015, 1:30 p.m.
RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue,
Santa Cruz

[Bicycle Advisory Committee](#)

Monday, October 19, 2015, 6:00 p.m.
RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue,
Santa Cruz

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