



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's
Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
(Also serves as the Social Service Transportation Advisory Council)

FINAL MINUTES

1:30pm - 3:30pm

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

Members present:

Christina Witt, Social Services Provider - Disabled (County)
Jesus Bojorquez, CTSA (Lift Line)
Michael Pisano, Potential Transit User (60+)
Caroline Lamb, Potential Transit User (Disabled)
Veronica Elsea, Chair, Third District
Patricia Fohrman, Fourth District
Rina Solorio Gomez, SCMTD (METRO)

Members Remote, voting under Just Cause or Emergency:

None

Members Remote, Not Voting:

Elyzabeth Byrd, Social Services Provider -County

Unexcused Absences:

Clay Kempf, Social Services Provider -Seniors
Alex Weske, Social Services Provider -Disabled

Excused Absences:

Tara Ireland, Social Services Provider-Persons of Limited Means
Daniel Zaragoza, SCMTD (METRO)
Janet Edwards, Vice Chair, First District
Paul Elerick, Second District (Friend)
Ed Hutton, Fifth District
Patty Talbott, Social Services Provider-Seniors
Nadia Noriega, CTSA (Lift Line)
Alicia Morales, Social Services Provider-Seniors
Phil Kipnis, First District

RTC staff present:

Luis Mendez, Interim Executive Director
Stephanie Britt, Transportation Planning Tech
Amy Naranjo, Transportation Planner
Rachel Moriconi, Sr. Transportation Planner
Sarah Christensen, Sr. Transportation Engineer

Guests present:

Claire Gallogly, City of Santa Cruz
Steve Jesberg, City of Capitola
John Uργο, METRO
Regina Valentine, AMBAG
Jesse Leyva, SCMTD (METRO)
Matt Farrell, Bicycle Advisory Committee

2. Introductions
3. Consider AB2449 request(s) to participate in the meeting remotely due to emergency circumstances (a physical or family medical emergency that prevents a member from attending in person)

4. Oral communications

Ben Vernazza – communicated safety concerns with the designs currently being developed for some segments of the rail trail.

5. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agenda

None

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Approve Minutes from October 10, 2023

A motion (Pisano/Fohrman) was made to approve the minutes from October 10, 2023. The motion passed unanimously with members, Jesus Bojorquez, Michael Pisano, Janet Edwards, Veronica Elsea, Christina Witt, and Patricia Fohrman voting in favor. Caroline abstains.

7. Received RTC Meeting Highlights
8. Received November 2023 E&D TAC Roster

A motion (Pisano/Witt) was made to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with members Tara Ireland, Jesus Bojorquez, Michael Pisano, Janet Edwards, Veronica Elsea, Christina Witt, and Patricia Fohrman voting in favor.

REGULAR AGENDA

9. Receive Program Updates

- a. Volunteer Center
 - None
- b. Community Bridges
 - None
- c. Santa Cruz METRO
 - METRO is improving its process for ADA ride eligibility
- d. SCCRTC
 - None
- e. Pedestrian Ad-Hoc Subcommittee
 - The subcommittee has not had a meeting yet. They continue to keep watch on hazard reports and will meet with Jason to discuss. They will study potholes and how they affect pedestrians.

10. AMBAG Complete Streets Policies

The committee received an update and provided input on the upcoming development of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments Complete Streets Policies. Per the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act/Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (IIJA/BIL) of 2021, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments is required to set aside a portion of the agency's Federal Highway Administration Metropolitan Planning Funds allocation to conduct complete streets planning.

AMBAG will begin developing Complete Streets Policies in coordination with its member agencies, including the Regional Transportation Commission. Although this is a new federal requirement, complete streets planning has been a priority historically for the jurisdictions in the Monterey Bay region. As an example, AMBAG prepared a Monterey Bay Area Complete Streets Guidebook in August 2013. For this reason, these Complete Streets Policies will serve more to memorialize the transportation planning work already being conducted in the region.

Contact: Regina Valentine, rvalentine@ambag.org, 831-264-5096

11. 2023 Consolidated Grants and Regional Transportation Improvement Program Preliminary Recommendations

This summer the RTC issued a consolidated call for projects for \$26.6 million in discretionary funds and \$34.7 in one-time funds available for transit projects.

Applications for the general discretionary funds were evaluated based on how well they advance the measures, goals or targets identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and other plans. These include metrics related to safety, infrastructure condition, system performance and reliability, sustainability, access for all, and/or health and equity. All the projects proposed for funding address at least one of the evaluation criteria and are not required to address all of them.

Staff will consider input from committees when developing final staff recommendations. The RTC board is scheduled to consider final staff recommendations, committee recommendations, and public input at its December 7, 2023, meeting.

The committee inquired whether any projects do not qualify for these grants and RTC Staff clarified that Regular maintenance and operations funding do not qualify for funding. Then, the Committee discussed accessibility to bus stops and benches for elderly and disabled people as a priority and they would like to see more funding go towards transit projects. They expressed concerns for projects that would receive partial funding. RTC staff explained that in these cases, RTC staff will work with the project sponsor to either reduce the scope and seek additional funds through grants.

Some of the project sponsors in attendance provided more information on some of their projects. The Committee discussed that there is an imbalance in where the money is allocated due to insufficient emphasis in funding transit projects from the discretionary funds.

RTC staff shared that during the evaluation process for funding, they focused on putting transit funds into the transit pot and dedicating the discretionary funding for all other projects. There was also a geographical equity aspect included and tried to do the balancing act for all funding pots. They received more money requests than what is available. The commission may decide differently from staff's recommendations. All the projects are worthy projects.

The Committee discussed that they would like to see more funding go towards transit projects. Some committee members recommended shifting funding away from pavement projects and to transit.

A motion was made (Cara/Rhena) that RTC staff revisit their recommendations for funding and increase funding for public transit and reduce funding for road repavement projects. The motion passed unanimously with members Tara Ireland, Jesus Bojorquez, Michael Pisano, Janet Edwards, Veronica Elsea, Christina Witt, and Patricia Fohrman voting in favor.

12. Reimagine METRO Service Changes – John Urgo

The Line 71/ Rapid Corridors Project is underway and will reach its public outreach phase soon. The project will evaluate traffic and travel conditions along the corridor and identify existing needs. The goal will be to improve travel time and reliability along the corridor. In April METRO won a TIRCP grant which will help implement some of the recommendations of this study. They will close and relocate bus stops. At every location they are looking into adding amenities. This will improve efficiency and reduce delays.

There will be various information events throughout the Watsonville-Santa Cruz corridor where METRO will be available to discuss the project. There will be a restructuring of the Watsonville to Santa Cruz corridor and a new route that connects Live Oak to UC Santa Cruz. There will be some minor changes to a portion of Soquel on the east side of Santa Cruz will be temporarily discontinued. METRO will post notices at every route where there's a change. You can find the information on METRO's website when you google reimagine metro or you can e-mail John Urgo at jurgo@scmtd.com

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:17 pm.

The next E&D TAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 1:30 located at the SCCRTC office at 1101 Pacific Ave, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Respectfully submitted, Stephanie Britt, Transportation Planning Tech