



*Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
phone: (831) 460-3200  
email: [info@sccrtc.org](mailto:info@sccrtc.org); website: [www.sccrtc.org](http://www.sccrtc.org)*

*CONTACTS: Shannon Munz, Communications Specialist ([smunz@sccrtc.org](mailto:smunz@sccrtc.org))  
Mitch Weiss, Interim Executive Director  
Luis Pavel Mendez, Deputy Director*

## **Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) June 6, 2024 Meeting Highlights**

### **Go Santa Cruz County Bicycle Incentives Program**

The Commission approved entering into an agreement with Ecology Action to implement the Go Santa Cruz County Bicycle Incentives Program that assists low-income individuals with purchasing regular bicycles, electric bicycles and bike sharing services. The program builds upon the success of the downtown Go Santa Cruz e-bike rebate program (launched in October 2021) and provides point-of-sale vouchers for the purchase of an electric or non-electric bicycle and discounted annual memberships for the regional electric bikeshare service for income-qualified individuals. To implement this countywide bicycle incentive program, the RTC is partnering with Ecology Action due to their successful experience with the Santa Cruz downtown e-bike program and their user-friendly online rebate system. This partnership would leverage Ecology Action's expertise and streamline program execution. The program will launch soon.

### **California Coastal Conservancy Grant Award for Construction of the North Coast Rail Trail - Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Segment 5**

The Commission approved entering into an agreement to receive \$600,000 in funds from the California Coastal Conservancy for construction of the North Coast Rail Trail – Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Segment 5. In February 2024, the California Coastal Conservancy approved the funding contribution for construction of the 7.5 miles of dedicated bicycle and pedestrian trail and associated amenities between Wilder Ranch State Park and Davenport on the north coast of Santa Cruz County. On April 26, 2024, a construction contract was awarded to Joseph J. Albanese Inc. for construction of the North Coast Rail Trail, including parking lots at Davenport and Yellowbank/Panther Beach. Construction will start in June 2024 and is expected to be completed in 2026.

### **Fiscal Year 2024-25 Transportation Development Act Claims for Volunteer Center, Community Bridges, and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District and Article 8 Requests for Vision Zero Program and the Bike to Work Program**

The Commission approved funds claims of approximately \$16 million dollars of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds (nearly \$10 million) and State Transit Assistance (STA) funds (nearly \$6 million) to partner agencies. The RTC allocates TDA funds from the region's ¼ cent share of the state's 7.25 cent sales tax according to state law and

established formulas in the Commission's Rules and Regulations. At the Commission's April meeting, the FY 2024-25 budget was approved including TDA apportionments for Community Bridges, the Volunteer Center, and the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. STA funds are generated from the sales tax on diesel fuel. The Commission's FY 2024-25 STA apportionments approved in the Commission's budget to Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges/Lift Line are consistent with state law. The Commission allocated \$14,423,163 to Santa Cruz METRO and \$1,118,107 to Community Bridges Lift Line. In addition, \$101,767 was allocated to the Santa Cruz County Volunteer Center for specialized transportation, \$156,000 to the Santa Cruz County Vision Zero program, and \$72,000 to Ecology Action's Bike to Work program.

### **Highway 1 41st Avenue to Soquel Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus-on-Shoulder Project Amendment to the Construction Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans, Cooperative Agreement with Soquel Creek Water District, and Amendment to the Professional Engineering Services Agreement**

The RTC is currently constructing the Highway 1 auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder project between the Soquel Avenue/Drive and 41st Avenue interchanges, which includes the bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue. The RTC is the project sponsor and Caltrans is the implementing agency for construction and is responsible for managing the costs of construction support and project staffing. The construction support budget provided to the RTC by Caltrans in 2020 underestimated the cost for the completion of work necessitating additional funds to complete the project. Caltrans estimates that an additional \$3 million in funds is needed to fund the construction support component through the completion of construction. The Commission approved an amendment to the cooperative agreement with Caltrans to add up to \$3 million Measure D-Highway Corridor funds to the construction support component of the agreement. The Commission also approved amending the cooperative agreement with Caltrans to add funds from a repurposed federal earmark in the amount of \$186,525.41 to the construction support component of the project. The repurposed funds were remaining after completion of the Highway 1 Morrissey/Soquel project in 2014. Staff received approval to repurpose the funds to a project within the same scope and program of the original earmark. The Commission also approved an amendment to the cooperative agreement with Caltrans to add Soquel Creek Water District funds to the construction capital component of the project for the modification of the fence and railing along the approach to the Chanticleer bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing to provide a taller fence along the Soquel Creek Water District property. The water district has offered to pay for the change to construct the taller fence.

Additionally, the Commission approved an amendment to the Professional Engineering Services Agreement for continued design support during construction which is needed in case unforeseen issues are encountered that require design changes during construction.

### **Measure D- Active Transportation Category Capacity**

The Commission received information about Measure D Active Transportation category capacity. The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) is the RTC's proposed 50-mile bicycle and pedestrian trail network. The spine of the trail network is the 32-mile Coastal Rail Trail from Davenport to Watsonville and Pajaro, to be built along the RTC-owned

rail right-of-way. The MBSST Master Plan organized the trail alignment into 20 segments. The RTC is working closely with partner agencies to develop the Coastal Rail Trail between Davenport and Watsonville. Seventeen percent of Measure D revenues are allocated to the Measure D Active Transportation category (Measure D AT) for the Coastal Rail Trail. Funds can be used for trail construction, trail operations and management, as well as maintenance and drainage of the rail and trail corridor. Over 18-miles of trail (Segments 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12) are advancing through preconstruction or construction and the remaining approximately 13-miles of trail (Segments 13-20 and 11b) are beginning development as part of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project, not including Segment 18, Phase 1 which was constructed in 2021.

At the April 18, 2024 RTC meeting, the Commission considered scenarios for utilizing Measure D AT funds to address currently projected funding gaps for Coastal Rail Trail projects under development as well as to plan for ongoing corridor and trail maintenance over the life of Measure D (through FY 2046-47). In addition, the Commission directed staff to return with information about setting aside \$45 million in Measure D AT for development of Coastal Rail Trail Segments 13-20. Staff reported that Measure D AT will be oversubscribed should the RTC both program additional funding for Segments 8-11 for potential cost increases and set aside \$45 million for Segments 13-20.

The Commission directed staff to complete the Segments 13-20 trail alignment as part of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project; Seek state and federal funding for Segments 13-20 as part of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project or as a stand along project, and consider options for using Measure D AT funds or other local funds to advance Segments 13-20 preconstruction activities; Prioritize RTC discretionary funds to develop priority bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements in the City of Watsonville, which could include development of Segment 18, Phases 2 and 3; Work with local jurisdictions to identify alternative sources of funding for trail maintenance to preserve Measure D AT funds for trail construction; and, seek state and federal funding for Coastal Rail Trail projects.

### **Public Hearing: Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail, Draft Conceptual Alignment and Vehicle Type Assessment**

The Commission received a presentation on the [Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project](#)'s initial conceptual alignment and analysis of conceptual rail transit vehicle types, and received public comments and provided input on the item. The project proposes new high-capacity passenger rail service and stations on approximately 22 miles of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line from the City of Santa Cruz to Pajaro, as well as 12 miles of Coastal Rail Trail from Rio Del Mar Boulevard through the community of La Selva Beach and the City of Watsonville, as well as the Capitola Trestle section. The initial conceptual alignment provides a "first pass" alignment from which the project team will undertake technical analyses and modelling in order to develop a refined conceptual alignment. The intent of the "first pass" alignment is to fit, to the extent feasible, the rail and trail facilities within the existing right-of-way and to incorporate minor adjustments to the alignment to optimize transit operations. Rail transit vehicle types are also being considered for the project at this time. The rail transit vehicle type selected will influence the design of other project elements including platforms, bridges, signaling, power supply, and freight interface. The type of vehicle may also influence how competitive the project will be for future state and federal

grants. Community members are invited to attend upcoming in-person and virtual open houses to learn more about the project and provide input on the initial conceptual alignment and potential rail transit vehicle types. In-person open houses: Monday, June 24, 6-7:30, Civic Plaza Community Room, 275 Main St., Watsonville; and Tuesday, June 25, 6-7:30 p.m., Live Oak Grange, 1900 17th Ave., Santa Cruz. Virtual open house: Available at <http://www.zepurt.com> from June 6 through July 18, 2024.

### **Upcoming RTC and Committee Meetings**

RTC and committee meetings are now being held in person. Non-voting members of the Commission and its committees, as well as members of the public and staff, will have the option to participate in person or remotely, provided equipment is available at the meeting location to allow remote participation. If there are technical difficulties during a meeting that prevent remote participation, the meeting will continue. Please check the RTC website [<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/calendar/>] or call 460-3200 to confirm meeting and video conference information for future meetings. Agendas are posted to the website at least 3 days before the meeting and will also include attendance information. Meetings may be canceled if there are no action items to be considered by the committee.

The RTC is committed to its compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) during this time of national emergency. Please contact the RTC at least 3 days in advance of a meeting if special accommodations are needed. If any document, webpage, meeting, or recording is inaccessible to you, kindly notify us at [info@sccrtc.org](mailto:info@sccrtc.org) or by calling 831-460-3200.

#### **Regional Transportation Commission Meeting**

Thursday, Aug. 1, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

#### **Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee**

Tuesday, June 11, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

#### **Transportation Policy Workshop**

Thursday, June 20, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

#### **Interagency Technical Advisory Committee**

Thursday, June 20, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

#### **Bicycle Advisory Committee**

Monday, July 8, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

*Public input on transportation issues is welcomed and encouraged. For more information, visit the SCCRTC website at [www.sccrtc.org](http://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](http://www.communitytv.org) or call 831-425-8848 for schedule and station information.*