



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, June 6, 2024
9:00 a.m.**

In-Person Meeting

Watsonville City Council Chambers
275 Main Street, Fourth Floor
Watsonville, CA 95076

Remote Location

Santa Monica Hilton Hotel
1797 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA

1. Roll call. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members present:

City of Capitola	Alexander Pedersen
City of Santa Cruz	Sandy Brown
City of Scotts Valley	Randy Johnson
City of Watsonville	Eduardo Montesino
County of Santa Cruz	Judy Gittelsohn (Alt)
County of Santa Cruz	Andy Schiffrin (Alt)
County of Santa Cruz	Manu Koenig
County of Santa Cruz	Shane McKeithen (Alt)
County of Santa Cruz	Bruce McPherson
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Kristen Brown
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Larry Pageler
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Mike Rotkin
Caltrans (ex-officio)	John Silberberger (Alt)

Staff present:

Mitch Weiss	Luis Mendez
Grace Blakeslee	Shannon Munz
Sarah Christensen	Amy Naranjo
Cindy Convisser	Tracy New
Riley Gerbrandt	Tommy Travers
Brianna Goodman	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)
Max Friedman	

2. Considered AB 2449 "Just Cause" requests - *none*
3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agenda

Deputy Director Luis Mendez communicated that a revised agenda was posted to the website. Handouts for items 9, 21, 24, 35D, 36, and 37 were also posted to the website.

4. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas provided a brief overview of the three items to be discussed in closed session. The Commission adjourned to closed session at 9:06 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

5. Conference with Labor Negotiators
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6)
Agency Designated Representatives: Tony Harris and Jesse Lad
Employee Organizations: CORE and RAMM
6. Public Employment
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957)
Title: Executive Director
7. Conference with Real Property Negotiators (Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8)
Property: Davenport Property Acquisition 500 Highway 1, Davenport, CA 95017, APN: 058-081-13
Agency Negotiators: Mitch Weiss, Luis Mendez, Grace Blakeslee
Negotiating Parties: SCCRTC, Davenport Company
Under Negotiation: Price and terms for Purchase of Temporary and Permanent Easements and Fee Simple Acquisitions

OPEN SESSION

The Commission reconvened in open session at 10:25 a.m.

8. Report on items discussed in closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas communicated that there was no action to report from closed session.

9. Oral Communications

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples

Rebecca, Seacliff Improvement Association

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Rotkin made a motion and Commissioner S. Brown seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Pedersen, S. Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Koenig, McPherson, K. Brown, Pageler, Rotkin and Commissioner Alternates Gittelsohn and Schiffrin voting "aye."

MINUTES

10. Accepted draft minutes of the April 18, 2024 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee meeting
11. Approved draft minutes of the May 02, 2024 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
12. Accepted draft minutes of the May 13, 2024 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting
13. Accepted draft minutes of the May 13, 2024 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting
14. Accepted draft minutes of the May 09, 2024 Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS AND PLANNING ITEMS

15. Approved the Regional Transportation Commission Fiscal Year 2024-25 Overall Work Program (**Resolution 36-24**)
16. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to extend the cooperative funding agreement with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies for Safe on 17 extra CHP enforcement in Santa Clara County (**Resolution 37-24**)
17. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to amend the agreement with RideAmigos, LLC. For the GO Santa Cruz County online commute manager (**Resolution 38-24**)

18. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Ecology Action for the GO Santa Cruz County Bicycle Incentives Program (**Resolution 39-24**)
19. Approved Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Amendments (**Resolution 40-24**)
20. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the California Coastal Conservancy for Segment 5 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Project (**Resolution 41-24**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

21. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
22. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues
23. Approved FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 Budget and Work Program Amendments (**Resolution 42-24**)
24. Accepted the FY 2022-23 audited financial statements
25. Approved FY 2024-25 Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds and State Transit Assistance funds claims from Community Bridges, the Volunteer Center Transportation Program, and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (**Resolutions 43-24, 44-24, and 45-24**)
26. Approved Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 8 claims for Bike to Work/School and for Vision Zero Program (**Resolutions 46-24 and 47-24**)

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

27. Approved appointments to the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

28. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
29. Accepted correspondence log
30. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. April 30, 2024 Letter from SCCRTC staff to Zoe Lofgren, Congresswoman, 18th Congressional District
 - b. May 13, 2024 Letter from the Central Coast Coalition to Dawn Addis, Assemblymember District 30 and John Laird, State Senator, Central Coast Legislative Caucus

- c. May 13, 2024 Letter from SCCRTC staff to Scott Wiener, State Senator, District 11, Re: Support for SB 960
- d. May 17, 2024 Letter from SCCRTC staff to Anne Baker, NEPA Regional Technical Specialist at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Re: Draft Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Pajaro River at Watsonville, California Reach 6 Flood Risk Management Project

31. Accepted information items - *none*

REGULAR AGENDA

32. Commissioner Reports - *none*

33. Director's Report

Interim Executive Director Mitch Weiss delivered updates on the mobile home encroachments on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way; rail trail segments 10 and 11; the Climate Adaptation Vulnerability Assessment project; upcoming community open houses for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail project; groundbreaking for the North Coast Rail Trail to be held on June 20 at Wilder Ranch State Park; joint budget plan in the state legislature; staffing announcements; appreciation for RTC staff.

In response to a question from a commissioner, Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee provided the information about mobile homes and other structures identified as encroaching on RTC property.

34. Caltrans Report

Office Chief North for Project Management at Caltrans Dave Silberberger delivered the Santa Cruz County projects updates and updates on overnight lane closures on Highway 17 for culvert repair from June 9-July 18, 8am-5pm, Sunday through Thursday; and communicated that Highway 1 at Paul's Slide is expected to open by mid-July.

35. Highway 1 41st Avenue to Soquel Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project Amendment to the Construction Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for Cost Overruns, Cooperative Agreement with Soquel Creek Water District and Amendment to the Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Mark Thomas (TP1938) for Design Services During Construction (DSDC)

Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen delivered the staff report and responded to commissioners' questions regarding: the RTC's responsibility to pay for cost overruns; requests for additional information from Caltrans to substantiate the cost overruns; and the difference between

construction capital costs and construction support costs.

Interim Executive Director Mitch Weiss responded to a commissioner's question about negotiations with Caltrans and the unlikelihood of a special allocation from the California Transportation Commission.

Staff proposed to amend the staff recommendation to include only approving the repurposed earmark and then return in August with additional information.

Caltrans Project Manager Madilyn Jacobs provided more information about budget revisions.

Commissioners discussed: transportation projects are expected to have cost overruns; Caltrans acknowledges three components to the cost overruns, one of which included an error; factors that led to the error; collaboration with RTC staff and efforts to cut costs; and responsibility to make informed decisions.

Commissioner Rotkin made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to:

1. Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute Amendment 3 to the Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans (Attachment 1, Exhibit A) for the construction component of the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project between 41st Avenue to Soquel Drive interchanges which includes a new bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue (Caltrans Coop 05-0391) to address Caltrans cost overruns for the Construction Support component;
2. Authorize repurposing of \$186,525.41 of federal earmark funds to this project for the construction support component;
3. Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a Cooperative Agreement with Soquel Creek Water District (Attachment 1, Exhibit B) to fund a change to the railing and fence on the Chanticleer bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing approach along the Soquel Creek Water District property;
4. Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute Amendment 5 (Attachment 1, Exhibit C) to the Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Mark Thomas & Company Inc (TP1938) for design services during construction for the Project in the amount of \$134,588 for a total not to exceed contract value of \$3,465,921;
5. Program an additional \$2,948,063 of Measure D-Highway Corridors revenues to fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 for the Project as shown in the proposed 5-Year Program of Projects (Attachment 1, Exhibit D);
6. Authorize the use of short-term inter-program loans to the Measure D-

- Highway Corridors program to manage cash flow; and
7. Amend the FY 2024-25 budget accordingly.

With the additional direction to thank former Congressman Sam Farr for the federal earmark and to change the language to "up to \$3 million," for the cooperative agreement amendment with Caltrans to be confirmed by an audit of the cost overruns.

Commissioner Koenig made a substitute motion and Commissioner Pedersen seconded the motion to:

1. Authorize staff's recommended action number 2;
2. To allocate up to \$1 million for the cost overruns;
3. To authorize the Chair to call an emergency meeting if the Commission is at risk of running out of funds before the August meeting; and
4. To approve the remaining actions recommended in the staff report.

The substitute motion failed on a 4-7 vote with Commissioners Koenig, Pedersen, K. Brown, and Johnson voting "aye," and Commissioners Rotkin, Pageler, McPherson, Montesino, S. Brown, and Commissioner Alternates Gittelsohn and Schiffrin voting "no."

Commissioners resumed discussion on the original motion. RTC Counsel Steve Mattas communicated that the draft of the cooperative agreement would be updated to include the additional allocation of up to \$3 million for construction support costs if the motion were to pass.

The original motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Koenig, Rotkin, Pageler, McPherson, Pedersen, K. Brown, Montesino, S. Brown, Johnson, and Commissioner Alternates Gittelsohn and Schiffrin voting "aye."

Received public comment from:

Jim Helmer
Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Jean Brocklebank

36. Measure D- Active Transportation Category Capacity

The item was taken out of order following Item 37. Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered the staff report.

Ms. Blakeslee responded to commissioners' questions regarding bonding; project timelines under each funding scenario; impacts of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project concept report on Segment 18; funding for corridor maintenance; progress on a Memorandum of Understanding with Roaring Camp; use of Transportation Development Act funds; and a

committee to look at alternative alignment for segment 17.

Mr. Mendez responded to Commissioners' questions regarding funding scenarios and the process for programming funds.

Commissioners discussed: prioritizing South County, desire to take action to move from scenario 2 to scenario 4.

Commissioner Montesino made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation and return with a report about the status of segment 18 at a later meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners McKeithen, Rotkin, Pageler, McPherson, Pedersen, K. Brown, Montesino, S. Brown, Johnson, and Commissioner Alternates Gittelsohn and Schiffrin.

Received public comment from:

Barry Scott

Matt Farrell, Friends of the Rail and Trail

Brian Peoples

Ben Vernazza

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

Associate Transportation Engineer Riley Gerbrandt delivered the staff report. Mark McLaren and Tiffany Mendoza of HDR, Inc. delivered a presentation. The public hearing opened at 11:42 a.m.

Mr. Gerbrandt responded to commissioners' questions regarding the availability of detailed maps, vehicle type analysis and decision-making, clarifying the timeline of the public engagement period, characteristics of vehicle types; funding constraints; Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) compliance; and ramifications of selecting a vehicle that is not compatible with freight.

Commissioner Koenig departed the meeting at 12:37p.m. and Commissioner Alternate Shane McKeithen replaced him at the dais.

Interim Executive Director Mitch Weiss responded to a commissioner's question about the waiver process that was used in Baltimore and San Diego in the past.

Commissioners discussed: setback requirements; framing of the pros and cons around the vehicle type assumptions; level boarding; horizontal clearance; inviting a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) member to

a future commission meeting; including information about the likelihood of grant funding for vehicle types; appreciation for staff and consultants.

Received public comment from:

Matt Farrell, Friends of the Rail and Trail
Tina Andreatta
Barry Scott
Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Jean Brocklebank

The meeting adjourned at 1:44p.m.

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 1, 2024 at 9:00 a.m., at the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Chambers, located at 701 Ocean Street, Room 525, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

Respectfully submitted,

Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

Attendees

Mark McLaren
Tiffany Mendoza
Tony Gura
Carey
Jim Huether
Trink Praxel
Anderson Shepard
Michael Lewis
Jean Brocklebank
Steven Jonsson
Jacob Wysocki
Michael Zeller
Elizabeth Malmborg
Frank
BobFi
Elise Brockett
Heather Adamson, AMBAG
Gregory Becker
Max Chun
Nadene Thorne
Kelly Curlette
Olivia Fely
Jesse Kathan

Barry Scott
Gine Johnson
Ana Luz Acevedo-Cabrera
Nicholas Brown
Johanna Lighthill
Keith Bontrager
Ben Vernazza
Alissa Guther
Brian Peoples, TrailNow.org
Jim Helmer
KC
KCase
Griffin McKenzie
Rebecca Downing
Rosemary Sarka
Joshua Ralls
Lyz Kirk (CRP)
Jburlison
Peter Haworth
Tim Brattan
Jeanette Guire RC RR
Ryan Andrusz – CRP
Paula Bradley
Portia Ramer
David <3 Public Transit
Christina Watson, TAMC
Paul Guirguis, Caltrans
Luis Martin
Forrest Revere
Theresa Rogerson
Linda Wilshusen