



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, September 5, 2024
9:00 a.m.**

In-Person Meeting

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Chambers
701 Ocean Street, Room 525
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

1. Roll call. The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m.

Members present:

City of Santa Cruz	Sandy Brown
City of Scotts Valley	Randy Johnson
City of Watsonville	Eduardo Montesino
County of Santa Cruz	Felipe Hernandez
County of Santa Cruz	Andy Schiffrin (Alt)
County of Santa Cruz	Robert Quinn (Alt)
County of Santa Cruz	Manu Koenig
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)	Brandy Rider (Alt)

Staff present:

Mitch Weiss	Luis Mendez
Grace Blakeslee	Rachel Moriconi
Sarah Christensen	Shannon Munz
Cindy Convisser	Amy Naranjo
Krista Corwin	Tracy New
Max Friedman	Yesenia Parra
Riley Gerbrandt (Remote)	Jason Thompson
Brianna Goodman (Remote)	Tommy Travers
Rae Hughes	Brian Zamora
Anna Kalthoff	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)
Amanda Marino	

2. Considered AB 2449 Just Cause and Emergency Circumstances Requests
- *none*
3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agenda

Administrative Services Officer Yesenia Parra communicated that add-on pages for item 18, a staff report for item 20, and handouts for items 29 and 30 were posted to the website.

4. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

Chair Brown provided a brief overview of the items to be discussed in closed session.

The commission went into closed session at 9:03 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

5. Conference with Labor Negotiators
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6)
Unrepresented Employee: Executive Director
Agency Designated Representatives: Kristen Brown and Steve Mattas

OPEN SESSION

The Commission reconvened in open session at 10:03 a.m.

7. Report on items discussed in closed session

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

8. Approved employment agreement between the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and Sarah (Christensen) Kim to serve as Executive Director of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (**Resolution 5-25**)

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas delivered the staff report. Commissioner McPherson made a motion and Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion to approve the employment agreement between the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and Sarah (Christensen) Kim to serve as Executive Director of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission. The motion passed with Commissioners McPherson, Johnson, Pageler, Koenig, K. Brown, Rotkin, Montesino, and Commissioner Alternate

Quinn voting “aye,” and Commissioner S. Brown and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin voting “no.”

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Grace Blakeslee
Lani Faulkner, Equity Transit

9. Oral Communications

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples
Barry Scott

Commissioner Hernandez arrived to the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner S. Brown made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners S. Brown, Johnson, Hernandez, Montesino, Koenig, McPherson, K. Brown, Pageler, Rotkin and Commissioner Alternates Quinn and Schiffrin voting “aye.”

Interim Executive Director Mitch Weiss responded to a Commissioner’s question about the funding for item 20.

Received public comment from:

Krista Corwin, Community of RTC Employees
Amy Naranjo, Community of RTC Employees
Jason Thompson, Community of RTC Employees
Brian Zamora, Community of RTC Employees

MINUTES

10. Approved draft minutes of the August 01, 2024 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
11. Accepted draft minutes of the August 12, 2024 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting
12. Accepted draft minutes of the August 15, 2024 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS AND PLANNING ITEMS

13. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to award a contract to Fehr and Peers to prepare the North Coast Transportation Demand Management Plan (**Resolution 6-25**)
14. Approved programming Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 Senate Bill 1 (SB1) Transit State of Good Repair (SGR) funds to Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line (**Resolution 7-25**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

15. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
16. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues
17. Approved (FY) 2024-25 Article 3 and Article 8 Transportation Development Act (TDA) claim for Regional Transportation Commission administration and planning services (**Resolution 8-25**)
18. Approved (FY) 2024-25 Article 3 and Article 8 Transportation Development Act (TDA) claim for the City of Capitola's Upper Pacific Cover Parking Lot Pedestrian Trail project (**Resolution 9-25**)

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

19. Approved first amendment to the employment agreement between the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and Mitch Weiss for labor negotiation services (**Resolution 10-25**)
20. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to establish five additional new job descriptions, and approval of new salary schedules

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

21. Accepted correspondence log
22. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
23. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies -
none

REGULAR AGENDA

24. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Rotkin reported on his recent attendance at the Coast Rail Coordinating Council policy meeting on August 23, 2024.

Commissioner K. Brown announced that work has begun on the walkway project leading from Capitola's upper parking lot to the Park Avenue and Monterey Avenue intersection.

25. Director's Report

Interim Executive Director Weiss congratulated incoming Executive Director Sarah Christensen and provided updates on: discussions at the Coast Rail Coordinating Council policy meeting and observations of the trail next to the rail line in San Luis Obispo; discussions with Roaring Camp to relocate tracks along segments 9 & 10 with an update anticipated at the October meeting; public input sought for the Rural Highway Safety Plan - a map-based survey will be available on the website starting September 18; consultant team at Michael Baker International seeking commissioners' input for the Transportation Development Act performance audits; appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Interim Executive Director.

Commissioners discussed: appreciation for the work of Interim Executive Director Weiss.

Received public comment from:

Rachel Moriconi

Yesenia Parra

Tracy New

Sarah Christensen

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Faina Segal, Friends of the Rail and Trail

26. Caltrans Report

Brandy Rider, Deputy District Director for Transportation Planning for District 5, delivered announcements on a rolling closure on Highway 1 on Sunday, September 8, 2024, for the bike portion of the Ironman event; single-lane overnight closures on Highway 1 between 41st and Soquel; the release of 2025-26 Sustainable Planning Grant guidance.

Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen responded to a question from a Commissioner regarding the Chanticleer pedestrian overcrossing.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Jim Helmer

27. Highway 1 41st Avenue to Soquel Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project – Caltrans request for additional funding to cover cost overruns on the Construction Capital component of the project

Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen delivered the staff report and Caltrans Project Manager Madilyn Jacobsen and Deputy District Director for Construction and Project Delivery Tim Campbell delivered a presentation.

Caltrans staff responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: the change order approval process; roles and responsibilities of Commission staff; deviations in the design; contingency budget; consultant fees; lessons learned for the next grant application process; and funding of signage packages.

Ms. Christensen responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: design changes; value engineering measures; staff's concurrence with change orders; rationales for how roles and responsibilities are decided during pre-construction; and responded to a concern raised by a member of the public.

Mr. Weiss responded to Commissioners' questions regarding contingencies and funding strategies.

Commissioner Koenig made a motion and Commissioner Rotkin seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to authorize the Executive Director to execute amendments to the construction Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for a total value not to exceed \$2.5 million for the construction capital component of the project, program an additional \$2.5 million of Measure D-Highway Corridor funds in fiscal year (FY) 2024-25, and amend the FY 2024-254 budget accordingly, with the additional direction that at the appropriate time, staff present options for the phase 3 project to control cost overruns including potentially a larger contingency or changes to the cooperative agreement.

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

Jorge Uberhuaga, Senior Construction Engineer for the project provided some background information about a concern raised by a member of the public.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Lani Faulkner, Equity Transit
Becky Steinbruner

28. Climate Adaptation Vulnerabilities Assessment and Priorities Report (CAVA) – Draft Prioritization

Transportation Planner Brianna Goodman and WSP Consultant Timothy Grose delivered the staff report and a presentation.

Ms. Goodman and Mr. Grose responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: data that can be used in the future to update the prioritization model; factoring disability into the prioritization model; data to support climate resiliency grants; critical facility access.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin made a motion and Commissioner Hernandez seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to provide input on and approve the Milestone 2: Draft Asset Prioritization for the Climate Adaptation Vulnerability Assessment and Priorities Report (CAVA). The motion passed unanimously, with Commissioners S. Brown, Johnson, Montesino, Koenig, McPherson, K. Brown, Hernandez, Pageler, Rotkin and Commissioner Alternates Quinn and Schiffrin voting "aye."

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Barry Scott
Becky Steinbruner

29. Zero-Emission Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) Project Milestone 2 Engagement and California Public Utilities Commission Coordination (CPUC) Efforts Update

Associate Transportation Engineer Riley Gerbrandt delivered the staff report and a presentation and responded to Commissioner questions regarding: CPUC clearance standards and management of clearances in the conceptual design for rail and trail; consultations with the CPUC; quiet zones at crossings; vehicle types and eligibility for federal funding.

Commissioners thanked the consultants for the report and discussed clearance requirements, public engagement, and consideration for the potential formation of a community working group in addition to community outreach.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Becky Steinbruner

Faina Segal, Friends of the Rail and Trail

Barry Scott

Lani Faulkner

David Dean

30. Coastal Rail Trail – Segment 18 Update & City of Watsonville Priority Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered the staff report and gave a presentation and responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: outreach to the City of Watsonville staff and community; Measure D funding; procedures for allocating active transportation funds and discretionary funds.

Interim Executive Director Mitch Weiss responded to questions regarding using both discretionary and active transportation funds to fund the project development and environmental phase of segment 18; providing staff support for the City of Watsonville to submit a competitive grant application; clarifying the Commission's prior commitment to funding segments 8-11 through a combination of federal, state, and local funds.

Commissioners discussed: preferred alternatives for the Watsonville community; funding allocations and strategy; update of the Measure D 5-year plan.

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

1. Receive information about Coastal Rail Trail Segment 18 and priority bicycle and pedestrian projects for Watsonville;
2. Provide input on options for advancing development of the Coastal Rail Trail segments within and around the City of Watsonville;
3. Prioritize future allocations of RTC discretionary funds to the City of Watsonville's priority bicycle and pedestrian projects and/or Coastal Rail Trail segments within and around the City of Watsonville as part of the Fall 2025 Consolidated Grants Program; and
4. Continue to seek state and federal funding for Coastal Rail Trail projects,

With the following alterations: #3, substitute the word "consider" for the word "prioritize," and an added direction to staff to return with an updated

Measure D-Five-year plan with funding for the design and environmental work for segment 18.

Commissioner Koenig proposed a friendly amendment to commit staff resources to provide additional assistance to City of Watsonville to prepare applications for the consolidated call for Active Transportation Projects, and the maker and second of the motion accepted the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Received public comment from:

Gine Johnson, County of Santa Cruz
Murray Fontes, City of Watsonville Public Works
Faina Segal, Friends of the Rail and Trail
Lani Faulkner
Becky Steinbruner
Barry Scott
Rosemary Sarka

31. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

Received public comment from:

Rachel Moriconi, Community of RTC Employees

The Commission entered closed session at 2:21p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

32. Conference with Labor Negotiators
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6)
Agency Designated Representatives: Tony Harris and Jesse Lad
Employee Organizations: CORE and RAMM

The Commission reconvened to open session at 3:05 pm.

OPEN SESSION

33. Report out of items discussed in closed session

Steve Mattas communicated that there was no reportable action from closed session.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05p.m.

34. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 3, 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

Gine Johnson

Murray Fontes

Tiffany Mendoza

Mark McLaren

Timothy Grose

Jim Porter

Darrell Maxey

Fernanda Dias Pini

Nancy Yellin

David Dean

(619)-***-9791

Forrest

Alissa Guther, TAMC

Matt Machado

Barry Scott

Rosemary Sarka

Frankie J

Johanna Lighthill

Tony Harris

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iPhone (8)

Nick

BobFi

David Carlson, County of SC

Matt Starkey, City of SC

Clare Gallogly, City of SC

Hatem Ahmed

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Rebecca Downing

Chris O'Gara

Jim Helmer

Trink Praxel

David <3 Trail & Rail

Matt Farrell

Max Chun

Paul Guirguis, CT Planning

Brileigh and Delilah

Forrest Revere

Linda Wilshusen

Dave Reid

Brian Peoples (TrailNow.org)

Christina Watson, TAMC

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Heather Adamson, AMBAG

Peter Haworth

Tony Gura

Lani Faulkner, Equity Transit

Allyson Violante