



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

MINUTES

**Thursday, October 3, 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 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	Robert Quinn (Alt)*
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	Vanessa Quiroz-Carter (Alt)*
Caltrans (ex-officio)	Brandy Rider (Alt)*

**Attended by teleconference*

Staff present:

Sarah Christensen	Shannon Munz
Grace Blakeslee	Amy Naranjo
Cindy Convisser	Tracy New
Krista Corwin	Yesenia Parra
Max Friedman	Sierra Topp
Brianna Goodman	Mitch Weiss
Anna Kalthoff	Brian Zamora
Luis Mendez	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)
Rachel Moriconi	

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 a revised agenda and handouts for items 23 and 24 were posted to the website.

4. Oral communications

Received public comment from:

Jean Brocklebank

Michael Saint

Ben Vernazza

5. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas gave a brief overview of the item to be discussed in closed session and communicated that the Commission does not need to discuss the item in closed session unless any Commissioner had a question. Chair Brown asked the Commission if anyone had any questions and, hearing none, removed the closed session item from the agenda.

Item was removed from the agenda.

6. Conference with Labor Negotiators
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6)
Unrepresented Employee: Executive Director
Agency Designated Representatives: Kristen Brown and Steve Mattas
7. Report on items discussed in closed session

Item 7 was skipped because the closed session item was removed from the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

MINUTES

8. Approved draft minutes of the September 5, 2024 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
9. Accepted meeting notes of the September 17, 2024 Transportation Equity Workgroup

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS AND PLANNING ITEMS

No consent items

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

10. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
11. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

12. Approved organizational chart, new positions, salary schedule and Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 budget amendment (**Resolution 11-25**)
13. Approved RAMM MOU side letter
14. Approved CalPERS health benefit contributions pursuant to MOU's with RTC employees (**Resolution 12-25** and **Resolution 13-25**)
15. Approved Regional Transportation Commission meeting schedule for 2025

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

16. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
17. Accepted correspondence log
18. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. August 30, 2024 Letter from Mitch Weiss, Interim Executive Director to Natalie Covill-Fontaine Re: Support for Santa Cruz METRO and BCycle Enhancing Mobility Innovation Project
19. Accepted information items

- a. August 28, 2024 Letters from Sandy A. Seifer-Raffelson, Special District Risk Management Authority

REGULAR AGENDA

20. Commissioner Reports - *none*

21. Director's Report

Executive Director Sarah Christensen delivered updates on the organizational restructuring; newly recruited Transportation Planning Technician Sierra Topp; 2025 labor negotiations; Zero Emission Passenger Rail Project Milestone 3 and anticipated informational workshops; the Rural Highways Safety Plan and upcoming community workshops; Ecology Action's launch of Biketober activities; and development of the Equity Action Plan funded by a Caltrans planning grant.

Commissioner Alternate Quiroz-Carter arrived to the meeting at 9:25 a.m. and Commissioner Johnson arrived to the meeting at 9:28 a.m.

22. Caltrans Report

Brandy Rider, Deputy Director of Planning for District 5, delivered a correction to an earlier announcement on the Sustainable Transportation Planning grant program: the public comment period for the grant guidelines extends to October 10, and workshops will be held on October 16 and 17.

Through the Chair, Ms. Rider and Ms. Christensen responded to a question from a member of the public about an inside-shoulder safety improvement project on Highway 1 funded by the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP).

Received public comment from:

Ben Vernazza

Michael Saint

Commissioner Alternate Quinn departed the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

23. Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 & 9 and Segments 10 & 11 Projects Construction Cost Reduction Strategies: Value Engineering Analysis and Track Relocation Memorandum of Understanding with Roaring Camp Railroads

Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered the staff report.

Ms. Blakeslee and Rob Tidmore, County of Santa Cruz Project Manager for

Coastal Rail Trail Segments 10 and 11, responded to Commissioners' questions regarding cost savings from Roaring Camp's commitment to relocate the tracks and the usability of the tracks following relocation.

Commissioners discussed: increasing cost estimates; future funding allocations; appreciation for staff, Roaring Camp, partner agencies, federal and state representatives, and the community's commitment to the project; concerns about funding the cost overruns and impacts of value engineering on the project.

Commissioner Alternative Schiffrin made a motion and Commissioner S. Brown seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to:

1. Receive an update regarding strategies to reduce Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 & 9 and 10 & 11 Projects construction costs; and,
2. Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Santa Cruz, Big Trees and Pacific Railway, also known as Roaring Camp Railroads, for relocation of railroad tracks along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, as needed, to reduce construction costs for Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 & 9 and 10 & 11 Projects.

The motion passed with Commissioners Pedersen, S. Brown, Montesino, McPherson, K. Brown, Pageler, and Commissioner Alternates Gittelsohn, Schiffrin, Quiroz-Carter, and McKeithen voting "aye" and Commissioner Johnson voting "no."

Received public comment from:

Matt Farrell, Friends of the Rail and Trail
Rob Tidmore, County of Santa Cruz
Michael Saint
Ben Vernazza
Johanna Lighthill
Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Rosemary Sarka, Roaring Camp
Barry Scott

Commissioner Alternate Gittelsohn departed the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

24. Highway 9 Boulder Creek Complete Streets Project Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans and Consultant Contract with HMH Engineers

Assistant Transportation Engineer Brian Zamora delivered a presentation.

Commissioners discussed: appreciation for Congressman Anna Eshoo for

earmarking \$1.5 million in federal funding for preconstruction activities; exemplary project to improve safety in local communities; excitement for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Commissioner McPherson made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to adopt a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to:

1. Negotiate and enter into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the Highway 9 Boulder Creek Complete Streets Project Approval/Environmental Document (PA/ED) component of the project, with the RTC as the implementing agency and Caltrans responsible for oversight;
2. Negotiate and enter into a professional engineering services contract with HMM, Inc. for the PA/ED phase of the Highway 9 Boulder Creek Complete Streets Project; and
3. Amend the FY 2024/25 budget accordingly

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Pedersen, S. Brown, Johnson, Montesino, K. Brown, McPherson, Pageler, and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin, McKeithen, and Quiroz-Carter voting "aye."

Received public comment from:
Jim Helmer

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

25. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 9:00 a.m., at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, located at 275 Main Street, Watsonville, CA 95076.

Respectfully submitted,

Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

Attendees

Paul Guirguis, Caltrans
Rebecca Downing
Chris O'Gara
Warwick & Claudia Boulton

Nate Abrego, SMART Local 0023
FORT Zoom Host
Nadene Thorne
Paula Bradley
Barry Scott
Fernanda Dias Pini
Claire Gallogly, City of Santa Cruz
Paul Hierling, AMBAG
James Falkenroth
Jim Helmer
Mark McLaren
Jean Brocklebank
Michael Lewis
Hai Nguyen
Ben Vernazza
Joni S.
Brian Peoples, Trail Now
BobFi
Tony Harris
Jeanette Guire
Michael Saint
Michael Zeller
Johanna Lighthill
Rosemary Sarka
Rob Tidmore, County of Santa Cruz
Gine Johnson