



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

Draft MINUTES

**Thursday, October 2, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

In-Person Meeting

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

Remote Participation (see page 5 for more information)

RTC Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89597173447>

Dial-in: +1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 895 9717 3447

1. Roll call. The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

Members present:

City of Capitola	Gerry Jensen
City of Santa Cruz	Fred Keeley
City of Scotts Valley	Steve Clark
City of Watsonville	Eduardo Montesino
County of Santa Cruz	Manu Koenig
County of Santa Cruz	Kimberly DeSarpa
County of Santa Cruz	Andy Schiffrin (Alt.)
County of Santa Cruz	Monica Martinez
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Vanessa Quiroz-Carter (Remote)
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Fabian Leonor
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Rebecca Downing
Caltrans (ex-officio)	Scott Eades (Remote)

Staff present:

Sarah Christensen	Luis Mendez
Amin AbuAmara	Nisha Singh
Bella Kressman	Shannon Munz
Grace Blakeslee	Yesenia Parra
Krista Corwin	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)
Riley Gerbrandt (Remote)	

2. Considered AB 2449 Just Cause and Emergency Circumstances Requests

Administrative Services officer Yesenia Parra noted that Commissioner Quiroz-Carter and Commissioner Scott Eades would be remote under the regular Brown Act and the remote location addresses are noted on the agenda.

There were no other requests.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agenda

Administrative Services officer Yesenia Parra noted that staff reports for items 7 and 21, Handouts for item 15 and 21, and a replacement page for item 21 were posted to the website.

4. Oral Communications

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Barry Scott
Lowell Hurst
Ilia Bulaich
Jim Helmer
David Dean
Brett Garrett
Michael Saint
Lani Faulkner

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Keeley made a motion and Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Jensen, Keeley, Clark, Montesino, DeSerpa, Koenig, Martinez, Downing, Quiroz-Carter, Leonor, and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin voting "aye."

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

MINUTES

5. Approved minutes of the September 4, 2025 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
6. Accepted draft committee meeting minutes
 - a. August 11, 2025 Bicycle Advisory Committee

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS AND PLANNING ITEMS

7. Accepted bid and approved authorizing the Executive Director to award a contract for the New Brighton railroad bridge handrail/walkway storm damage repair (**Resolution 17-26**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

8. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
9. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

10. Approved 2026 RTC Meeting Schedule
11. Approved resolutions to continue providing CalPERS Health Benefits to RTC Employees (**Resolution 18-26 and Resolution 19-26**)
12. Approved new classification, job description, and salary schedule of Project Manager (**Resolution 20-26**)

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

13. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
14. Accepted correspondence log
15. Accepted letters from committees and staff to other agencies
 - d. September 1, 2025 Letter to Joe Clarke, City of Capitola Mayor, RE: RTC Response to City of Capitola Questions Regarding Coastal Rail Trail Segments 10-11 (17th Avenue to State Park Drive) and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
16. Accepted information items - *none*

REGULAR AGENDA

17. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Downing expressed appreciation for Commissioners' participation in a Week Without Driving and the Commission's support for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders.

Commissioner Clark reported that Greg Wimp has been selected to fill the vacancy on the Scotts Valley City Council and the vice-mayor role has been filled by Donna Lind.

18. Coast Rail Coordinating Council Appointment

Eduardo Montesino recommended the appointment of Commissioner DeSerpa to serve as the SCCRTC's representative on the Coast Rail Coordinating Council and Commissioner Jensen to serve as the alternate.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin made a motion and Commissioner Koenig seconded the motion to approve the appointments. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Jensen, Keeley, Clark, Montesino, DeSerpa, Koenig, Martinez, Downing, Quiroz-Carter, Leonor, and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin voting "aye."

Commissioner DeSerpa delivered remarks on her learnings from attending meetings of the Coast Rail Coordinating Council and appreciation for the opportunity to serve.

19. Director's Report

Executive Director Sarah Christensen delivered updates on Week Without Driving and upcoming Biketober community engagement activities; staffing updates including the recruitments of Italo Jimenez, Budget and Finance Officer, Daniel Suarez, Transportation Planning Intern, and the promotion of Max Friedman, Transportation Planner II; she also noted the location of the November and December RTC meetings to be held in Watsonville.

Responding to Commissioner questions, Amin AbuAmara provided an update on the design issue identified for the Highway 1 ramps at the Bay Avenue/Porter Street underpass.

Commissioner Martinez thanked Caltrans for joining her for a State of the Roads Town Hall on November 13th.

Commissioner Keeley requested a briefing at a future RTC meeting on Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) and would like to coordinate a meeting with the Chair of the California Transportation Commission.

Received public comment from:
Michael Saint

20. Caltrans Report

Scott Eades, Caltrans District 5 Director, provided an update on the Sustainable Planning Grant funds with applications due on November 21; updates about solutions to timing issues with temporary signals installed on Highway 9 between Prospect and Lorenzo for the emergency drainage repair and retaining wall replacement project; update on a drainage and erosion control project on Highway 9 between Nen Le Mans and the 935 intersection; upcoming town hall in mid-November regarding projects on Highway 9; Highway 1 project to address drainage, lighting, and crash severity; appreciation for RTC staff for posting information on the Cruz511 website.

Commissioner Rebecca Downing departed the meeting.

21. Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 & 9 and 10 & 11 Project Delivery

Supervising Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered a presentation and responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: RTC's consolidated grant program and the City of Santa Cruz's Safe Streets for All grant application; options for holding the most amount of funds for South County projects; seeking additional funding sources; grant loss proportional to project scope reduction; environmental documents required for phasing; approval process, construction timeline, and grant deadlines; options for closing the funding gap; interim trail construction & grant risk outlook; regulatory steps for building interim trail; operating costs for trail maintenance; locations of easements; funds needed for design work for an interim trail; available local funding.

Executive Director Sarah Christensen responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: Measure D Active Transportation funding category; communications with the California Transportation Commission staff; right-of-way needs for interim trail; environmental impact and encroachments.

Matt Starkey, Transportation Manager for the City of Santa Cruz responded to a Commissioner's questions about the impact of scope reduction on the Safe Streets for All grant and cost estimates for the interim trail

Commissioners discussed: likelihood that the California Transportation Commission would allow the SCCRTC to keep the full grant while delivering less of the project; negotiating directly with the California Transportation Commission members; challenges & consequences of railbanking; feasibility of passenger rail service for Santa Cruz County; trail a good first step; expediting funding for segments 17, 18, and 19; poor conditions of surface roads; the need to compete for local funds to maintain road system; building

a quality trail system for South County as was built for North County; Commission's support for South County and anticipation of the design forthcoming in the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) concept report; upcoming hard decisions; need to see cost estimates.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin made a motion and Commissioner Clark seconded the motion to:

- 1) Establish a subcommittee to meet with CTC member or members to discuss funding options for the grants. The subcommittee to include Chair Montesino, Commissioners Keeley, and Koenig
- 2) Direct staff to return in November with cost estimates for preparing the final design for both the Interim Trail and Ultimate Trail
- 3) Direct staff to return in November with details on the process for constructing segments 13-20.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Jensen, Keeley, Clark, Montesino, DeSerpa, Koenig, Martinez, Quiroz-Carter, Leonor, and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin voting "aye."

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Lani Faulkner
Rosemary Sarka
Matt Farrell
Paula Bradley
Sally Arnold
Ilia Bulaich
Lowell Hurst
Johanna Lighthill
David Dean
Michael Saint
Bernard Gomez
Jean Brocklebank
Barry Scott
Cami Corvin

22. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas provided a brief overview of the item to be discussed in closed session and stated that no reportable action is anticipated from closed session.

The Commission adjourned the regular meeting and entered closed session at 11:40 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

- 23. Conference with Labor Negotiators

(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6)
Agency Designated Representative: Sarah Christensen
Employee Organization: CORE
- 24. Report on items discussed in closed session – *No reportable action*
- 25. Next meetings

The next Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for October 16, 2025 at 9:00a.m. at a location to be determined.

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 6, 2025 at 9:00a.m. at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main Street, Fourth Floor, Watsonville, CA 95076.

Respectfully submitted,

Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

Attendees

Heather Adamson, AMBAG
Zooming@3031
David Date
PK
Paul Guirguis, Caltrans
Micheal Saint
Max Friedman
Joni Steele
Bella Kressman
Larry Pageler
Max Chun
BobFi
Jim Helmer
David Dean
Scott Eades
Brett Garrett
Nadene Thorne
Johanna Lighthill
jguire@aol.com
Rick H
Christina Watson, TAMC

Kelly McClendon, Caltrans
Gina Gallino Cole
Sierra Topp
Jesus Bojorquez
Rachel Moriconi
Jean Brocklebank & Michael Lewis
Humberto Zamora
Lola Quiroga
Sakura Cannestra
James's iPad (4)
Melissa Shick
Brian
David Van Brink
Melissa Shick
Justin Davilla
Rae Hughes
Jillian Ritter - District 1
Ramon Gomez
Gine Johnson
Lana Martinez Davis
Frank Rimicci Jr.

Matt Machado, County of Santa Cruz
Rebecca Hurley
Kelly Eagan, Caltrans
Cami Corvin
Peter Haworth
Janine Ramirez
Chris Schneiter
Joanna Edmonds, City of Santa Cruz
Michael Pisano
PRC001
Peter Haworth
Ricardo Valdes
Christine's iPad
Sakura Cannestra
James Weller
David ❤️ Public Transit
Jim Helmer
Barry Scott
Bernard's iPhone
Antonio Rivas
AP
marie wegrich
Ilia Bulaich
Lowell Hurst
Matt Farrell
Sally Arnold
Lani Faulkner
Brian Peoples
Paula Bradley
Rosemary Sarka