



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

AGENDA

**Thursday, December 4, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

In-Person Meeting

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

Alternative Remote Location

231 Oakes Road, Santa Cruz, CA 95064
50 Higuera St, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

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

Accessibility: See last page for details.

En Español: Para servicios de traducción al español, diríjase a la última página.

Agendas Online: <https://sccrtc.org/meetings/commission/agendas/>

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

City of Capitola

City of Santa Cruz

City of Scotts Valley

City of Watsonville

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Caltrans (ex-officio)

Gerry Jensen

Fred Keeley

Steve Clark

Eduardo Montesino

Felipe Hernandez

Justin Cummings

Kimberly DeSerpa

Manu Koenig

Monica Martinez

Rebecca Downing

Vanessa Quiroz-Carter

Fabian Leonor

Scott Eades

The majority of the Commission constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

1. Roll call
2. Consider AB2449 Just Cause and Emergency Circumstances requests
3. Additions or deletions to consent or regular agendas
4. Oral communications

Any member of the public may address the Commission on any item within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not already on the agenda. The Commission will listen to all communication, but in compliance with State law, it may not take action on items that are not on the agenda.

Speakers are requested to state their name clearly so that it can be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items appearing on the consent agenda are considered to be minor or non-controversial and will be acted upon in one motion if no member of the RTC or public wishes an item be removed and discussed on the regular agenda. Members of the Commission may raise questions, seek clarification or add directions to consent agenda items without removing the item from the consent agenda as long as no other Commissioner objects to the change.

MINUTES

5. Approve draft minutes of the November 6, 2025 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
6. Accept draft committee meeting minutes
 - a. October 15, 2025 Safe on 17 Taskforce

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

7. Accept Release of the Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
8. Adopt the Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan

9. Approve authorizing the Executive Director to amend a Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Mark Thomas for the Highway 1 Freedom Blvd to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder, and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project (**Resolution**)
10. Approve authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with County of Santa Cruz Community Development and Infrastructure Sanitation Division for the Davenport lift station (**Resolution**)
11. Approve authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute amendments to the Cooperative Agreements with Caltrans for the Highway 1 41st/Soquel and Bay-Porter/State Park Final Design and Right of Way Components (**Resolution**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

12. Accept status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
13. Accept status report on Measure D revenues

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

14. Accept Fiscal Years (FY) 2021-2022 to 2023-2024 Triennial Performance Audits
15. Approve authorizing the Executive Director to amend the agreement with Redwood Public Law for legal services (**Resolution**)

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

16. Accept monthly meeting schedule
17. Accept correspondence log
18. Accept letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies - *none*
19. Accept information items - *none*

REGULAR AGENDA

20. Commissioner Reports – oral reports
21. Recommendation for Chair and Vice-Chair 2026 – oral report
(*Eduardo Montesino, Chair*)

22. Director's Report – oral report
(*Sarah Christensen, Executive Director*)
23. Caltrans Report
 - a. Santa Cruz County project updates
24. Amendments to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 RTC Budget & Work Program and Measure D Budget
(*Italo Jimenez, Finance and Budget Officer*)
 - a. Staff Report
 - b. Resolution Amending the RTC and Measure D Budgets and Work Programs
25. Railbanking Overview
(*RTC Staff*)
 - a. Staff Report
 - a. Letter from Progressive Rail dated May 27, 2020
 - b. Letter from Progressive Rail dated November 17, 2020
 - c. Letter from Progressive Rail March 18, 2021
 - d. Letter from Roaring Camp March 18, 2021
26. Accept Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Final Project Concept Report
(*Riley Gerbrandt, Transportation Engineer*)
 - a. Staff Report
 - b. Resolution
 - c. Memorandum – Capital Cost Description and Comparison
 - d. Memorandum – Peer Review Summary and Recommendations
27. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

CLOSED SESSION

28. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2))
Significant Exposure to Litigation: Two cases

OPEN SESSION

29. Report on items discussed in closed session
30. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 6:00p.m. at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main Street, Fourth Floor, Watsonville, CA 95060

HOW TO REACH US

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250 Santa Cruz, CA 95060
phone: (831) 460-3200 / email: info@sccrtc.org

LIVE BROADCASTS

Meetings of the RTC are broadcast live by Community Television of Santa Cruz. More information about channels and schedule can be found online (www.communitytv.org) or by calling (831) 425-8848.

AGENDA PACKETS

Complete agenda packets and all documents relating to items on the open session are posted online at <https://sccrtc.org> at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Sign up for E-News updates at sccrtc.org/about/esubscriptions/

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Items on the agenda: Written comments received by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday before the meeting will be posted to the RTC website by 2:00 p.m. that same afternoon to allow time for Commissioner review. The opportunity to make oral comments is offered prior to the discussion period of each item.

Items not on the agenda: Written comments on topics within the RTC's jurisdiction, but not on the agenda, that are received during the monthly correspondence period will be posted to a public document. The correspondence period cut-off is 12:00 p.m. on the second Monday prior to the RTC meeting. A link to that document is provided in the Correspondence Log of that month's meeting. The opportunity to make oral comments to the Commission on such topics is offered during Oral Communications.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION

The public may participate in the meetings of the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) in person or remotely via the provided Zoom link. If technical difficulties result in the loss of communication for remote participants, the RTC will work to restore the communication; however, the meeting will continue while efforts are being made to restore communication to the remote participants. Members of the public participating by Zoom are instructed to be on mute during the proceedings and to speak only when public comment is allowed, after requesting and receiving recognition from the Chair.

PARTICIPACIÓN REMOTAMENTE

El público puede participar en las juntas de la Comisión Regional de Transporte (RTC) en persona o remotamente a través del enlace Zoom proporcionado. Si problemas técnicos resultan en la pérdida de comunicación con quienes

participan remotamente, la RTC hará lo posible por restaurar la comunicación. Pero, la junta continuara mientras se hace lo posible por restaurar la comunicación con quienes participan remotamente. A los miembros del público que participan por Zoom se les indica que permanezcan en silencio durante los procedimientos y que hablen solo cuando se permitan comentarios públicos, después de solicitar y recibir el reconocimiento del presidente.

ACCESSIBILILTY

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission does not discriminate on the basis of disability and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. This meeting location is an accessible facility. If you wish to attend this meeting and require special assistance in order to participate, please contact RTC staff at 460-3200 (CRS 800/735-2929) at least three working days in advance of this meeting to make arrangements. People with disabilities may request a copy of the agenda in an alternative format. As a courtesy to those persons affected, please attend the meeting smoke and scent-free.

SERVICIOS DE TRADUCCIÓN/ TRANSLATION SERVICES

Si gusta estar presente o participar en esta junta de la Comisión Regional de Transporte del Condado de Santa Cruz y necesita información o servicios de traducción al español por favor llame por lo menos con tres días laborables de anticipo al (831) 460-3200 para hacer los arreglos necesarios. (Spanish language translation is available on an as needed basis. Please call (831) 460-3200 at least three days in advance to make advance arrangements.

TITLE VI NOTICE TO BENEFICIARIES

The RTC operates its programs and services without regard to race, color and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person believing to have been aggrieved by the RTC under Title VI may file a complaint by contacting the RTC at (831) 460-3200 or 1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 or online at www.sccrtc.org. A complaint may also be filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration to the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.

AVISO A BENEFICIARIOS SOBRE EL TITULO VI

La RTC conduce sus programas y otorga sus servicios sin considerar raza, color u origen nacional de acuerdo al Titulo VI del Acta Sobre los Derechos Civiles. Cualquier persona que cree haber sido ofendida por la RTC bajo el Titulo VI puede entregar queja con la RTC comunicándose al (831) 460-3200 o 1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 o en línea al www.sccrtc.org. También se puede quejar directamente con la Administración Federal de Transporte en la Oficina de Derechos Civiles, Atención: Coordinador del Programa Titulo VI, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

FROM: Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

RE: Consider AB 2449 Just Cause and Emergency Circumstances Requests

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the RTC receive information regarding Just Cause and approve Brown Act and Emergency Circumstances requests.

BACKGROUND

Prior to the Governor's Emergency Order related to COVID 19, the Brown Act allowed the use of teleconferencing with strict requirements. These requirements included the following:

- All votes must be taken by roll call vote.
- Each teleconference location must be listed on the agenda, have an agenda posted, be accessible to the public and offer an opportunity for public comment and;
- A quorum of the members must participate from locations within the public entity's boundaries.

On September 13, 2022, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Assembly Bill (AB) 2449 (Rubio), which went into effect on January 1, 2023. The statute incorporates the aforementioned traditional teleconferencing under the Brown Act as well as some new and limited provisions for teleconferencing.

DISCUSSION

Under AB 2449, Commissioners who wish to participate in Commission meetings and vote on items remotely may do so for no more than three consecutive months or 20% of the agency's regular meetings within a calendar year. If the legislative body regularly meets less than 10 times a year, a member may not participate remotely for more than two meetings.

1. Just Cause, defined as:

- Care of a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner.
- A contagious illness that prevents a member from attending in person.
- A need related to a physical or mental disability as defined by statute.
- Travel while on official business of the RTC or another state or local agency.
- The board does not need to vote on a “just cause” exception.

2. Emergency Circumstances

- A physical or family medical emergency that prevents a member from attending in person.
- A member must provide a general description of the circumstances relating to the need to appear remotely at the given meeting (not exceeding 20 words). The medical condition does not need to be disclosed.
- The RTC must take action to approve a request to participate remotely due to an emergency circumstance at the start of the meeting.

AB 2449 also adds the following requirements.

1. Both “just cause” and “emergency circumstances” require a quorum of members to be in a physical location that is within the jurisdiction and is accessible to the public.
2. Teleconference procedures may not be used by a member of the legislative body to teleconference for a period of more than three consecutive months or 20% of the regular meetings within a calendar year.
3. Votes must be taken by Roll Call.
4. Members participating remotely may not turn their camera off.
5. Members must publicly disclose whether any individual over the age of 18 is present with the member and disclose the general nature of the member's relationship with any such individual.

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) receive information on Just Cause and approve Emergency Circumstances and remote participation requests under the Brown Act and AB 2449.

SUMMARY

Commissioners may participate and vote on items via teleconference technology under the Brown Act and AB 2449 only if certain requirements are met.

\\RTCSESV2\Shared\RTC\TC2024\10\AB 2449\AB 2449-SR.docx

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer
RE: Regional Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission approve the meeting minutes ([Attachment 1](#)) for the November 6, 2025, Regional Transportation Commission meeting.

BACKGROUND

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) for the area within its boundaries is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency as established pursuant to Government Code Section 67940 and 67941.

Consistent with Government Code Section 67940 (b), membership of the Commission is composed of all five members of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, one member appointed by each of the cities of the county and three members appointed by the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) meets on the first Thursday of each month at 9:00 am. RTC meetings are held on a rotational schedule at the City of Watsonville, Capitola, Scotts Valley and the County of Santa Cruz. Currently there are no meetings held in the City of Santa Cruz because the City does not allow hybrid meetings from its council chambers.

Agendas and meeting materials are posted on the RTC meetings webpage, <https://sccrtc.org/meetings/regional-transportation-commission/agendas/>, at least seventy- two hours (72) prior to the meeting. Remote participation via Zoom is available for members of the public, non-voting committee members/alternates, or voting Committee members unable to attend in person due to an emergency or for just cause pursuant to Assembly Bill 2449, Brown Act update.

DISCUSSION

The Commission is asked to review and approve the November 6, 2025 meeting minutes (Attachment 1). The purpose of these minutes is to document actions taken during the meeting.

Attachments:

1. Regional Transportation Commission meeting minutes



**Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission**

Draft MINUTES

**Thursday, November 6, 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

City of Santa Cruz

City of Scotts Valley

City of Watsonville

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

County of Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Caltrans (ex-officio)

Gerry Jensen

Fred Keeley

Steve Clark

Eduardo Montesino

Manu Koenig

Kimberly DeSerpa

Andy Schiffrin (Alt.)

Monica Martinez

Felipe Hernandez

Vanessa Quiroz-Carter (Remote)

Fabian Leonor

Rebecca Downing (Remote)

Darron Hill

Staff present:

Sarah Christensen

Amin AbuAmara

Grace Blakeslee

Krista Corwin

Luis Mendez

Nisha Singh

Rachel Moriconi

Riley Gerbrandt (Remote)

Shannon Munz

Yesenia Parra

Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)

2. Considered AB 2449 Just Cause and Emergency Circumstances Requests

Administrative Services Officer Yesenia Parra noted that Commissioner Quiroz-Carter would be participating remotely under the regular Brown Act with the remote location address noted on the agenda. Commissioner Downing communicated that she would be participating remotely with just cause for caregiving responsibilities.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agenda

Administrative Services Officer Yesenia Parra noted that replacement pages for items 6c, 10, and 19, an attachment for item 18, and handouts for items 14, 18, 19, 20, and 21 were posted to the website.

4. Oral Communications

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Jesus Bojorquez, Community Bridges

Lowell Hurst

David Dean

Brett Garrett

Michael Saint

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Commissioner Martinez thanked Caltrans for the planning grant to produce the Rural Highways Safety Plan, RTC staff for their work to produce the plan, and the Technical Advisory Committee and community members for their input on the plan. She encouraged continued feedback by the November 21st deadline and noted an opportunity to comment at the November 13th *State of the Roads* Town Hall. She highlighted safety concerns on Highway 9 in Ben Lomond, Boulder Creek, and near Waterman Gap, and looks forward to the final plan next year.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Matt Farrell, Bicycle Advisory Committee member

MINUTES

5. Approved draft minutes of the October 2 and October 16, 2025 Regional Transportation Commission meeting and special meeting
6. Accepted draft committee meeting minutes
 - a. October 9, 2025 Budget & Administration/Personnel Committee
 - b. October 13, 2025 Bicycle Advisory Committee
 - c. October 14, 2025 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
 - d. October 16, 2025 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS AND PLANNING ITEMS

7. Accepted updated Guide for Specialized Transportation for Seniors and People with Disabilities in Santa Cruz County
8. Accepted Rural Highways Safety Plan Milestone 2: Transportation Strategy Development
9. Accepted bids and authorized the Executive Director to enter into a construction contract for the Capitola Bluff Fencing Project (**Resolution 21-26**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

No consent items

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

No consent items

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

10. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
11. Accepted correspondence log
12. Accepted letters from committees and staff to other agencies
13. Accepted information items - *none*

REGULAR AGENDA

14. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Keeley provided an oral report on the outcome of the meetings between California Transportation Commission (CTC) Chair and senior staff regarding the Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 through 11 projects.

Commissioners discussed: benefits of the CTC Active Transportation grant unrelated to rail; feasibility of the project through major scope change.

Chair Montesino reported on the Board Development Retreat that was held on October 16, 2025.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Jessica Evans
Trink Praxel
Barry Scott
David Van Brink
Saladin Sale

15. Nomination of Committee to Recommend a 2026 Chair and Vice-Chair

Eduardo Montesino requested Commissioners send him an email to communicate their interest in serving on the nominating committee for the 2026 RTC Chair and Vice-Chair.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

16. Director's Report

Executive Director Sarah Christensen delivered updates on the release of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project Final Concept Report; highlighted the Rural Highways Safety Plan Milestone 2; introduced the new Supervising Transportation Planner Marshall Ballard; and provided information on the Mar Vista Pedestrian Overcrossing construction currently underway.

Ms. Christensen responded to a Commissioner's question regarding the completion date of the Capitola Avenue Bridge construction.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now
Jessica Evans

17. Caltrans Report

Caltrans Ex-Officio Darron Hill reminded the Commission about the November 21, 2025, deadline for applications to the Caltrans Sustainable

Planning Grant; update on replacing and repairing the sidewalk on Struve Slough.

Commissioners discussed: appreciation for the work on Struve Slough to benefit the pedestrian community in Watsonville; and trash cleanup on Highway 1 in the active construction zones.

Commissioner Rebecca Downing announced that she will be recusing herself due to a conflict of interest and departed the meeting. Commissioner Jensen recused himself due to a conflict of interest and stepped away from the dais.

18. PUBLIC HEARING: Adoption of the Consolidated Grants Program and Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

Senior Transportation Planner Rachel Morconi delivered the staff report and gave a presentation and responded to Commissioners' questions regarding funding recommendations for the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District's (METRO) HASTUS project; eligibility for State Transit Assistance (STA) funding; scoring criteria; geographic equity & metrics for projects in rural/unincorporated areas; and acceptability of amendments to projects at a later date.

Commissioner Keeley delivered a letter from several Commissioners and provided an overview of their recommendations for project allocations and rationales.

The public hearing opened at 10:35 a.m.

Received public comment from:

Matt Farrell

Lani Faulkner

Jessica Evans

Steve Johnson, Bike Santa Cruz County

Murray Fontes, Watsonville Public Works & Utilities

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Paula Bradley

Gina Cole

Nadia Noriega

Trink Praxel

Antonio Rivas

Lowell Hurst

Brett Garrett, Santa Cruz PRT

Michael Saint, Santa Cruz PRT

David Dean

Bernie Gomez

Jean Brocklebank

Jim Helmer
Piet Canin, Ecology Action
Owner

The public hearing closed at 10:53 a.m.

Commissioners discussed: challenges with funding all projects and the various project needs;; worthy needs and limited resources; and appreciation for staff.

Commissioner Keeley moved and Commissioner Koenig seconded the motion to approve staff and Commissioners' recommendations to adopt **Resolution 22-26**

- a. Adopting the 2025 Consolidated Grants program and 2026 Regional Transportation Improvement Program for Santa Cruz County, approving projects to receive Santa Cruz County's regional shares of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Surface Transportation Block Grant/Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (STBG/RSTPX), SB1 Local Partnership Program (LPP), Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) and State Transit Assistance funds, as shown below and to be included in Exhibit A of Attachment 1;

Applicant	Project	Approved
Capitola	Bay Avenue Corridor – Final Design	\$500,000
Scotts Valley Granite Creek Overcrossing \$500,000 Watsonville	Freedom Blvd Road Rehab & Traffic Calming	\$1,800,000
Watsonville	Clifford Ave Road Rehab and Traffic Calming	\$850,000
Watsonville	Pennsylvania Dr	\$560,000
County	Soquel Dr Multimodal Project	\$3,800,000
County	Interlaken Routes Resurfacing Phase 1	\$436,000
County	Emergency Routes Resurfacing Phase 2	\$2,566,000
Ecology Action	Bike Safe/Walk Safe	\$100,000
SC METRO	90X Operations/BOS Service	\$650,000
SC METRO	ParaCruz Vans	\$288,000
SC METRO	Beach St Parking Lot	\$150,000
SC METRO	HASTUS 2026 Upgrade	\$600,000
SCCRTC	Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8-11 Preconstruction	\$2,000,000
SCCRTC	STIP Planning, Programming, & Monitoring	\$191,000

- b. Designating \$1 million of 2028 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) shares for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project (ZEPRT);
- c. Authorizing staff to work with projects sponsors to determine the most appropriate funding source to designate to approved projects, to submit and execute documents required by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and/or Caltrans which may be necessary to obligate or otherwise secure funds programmed by the RTC and confirming that STIP funding shall not be used to “back-fill” other non-STIP funds previously committed to a project;
- d. Requiring project sponsors to comply with all conditions and requirements set forth by applicable state and/or federal statutes, regulations, procedures, and guidelines;
- e. Amending the RTC Budget and Work Program to include funds programmed that flow through or to the RTC;
- f. Requesting that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) incorporate project funding and amendments into the 2026 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), as applicable;
- g. Stating the RTC's requirements that:
 - a. Any project cost savings shall be made available for programming in future competitive grant cycles;
 - b. Project sponsors shall obtain RTC concurrence in allocation, extension, amendment, or other requests for projects prior to submittal of such requests to Caltrans or the CTC. Concurrences will generally be handled administratively by RTC staff, though major project scope, funding, or other changes shall be subject to RTC board action; and
 - c. Prior to final design, projects with bicycle, pedestrian, and/or transit components shall undergo review by the RTC's Bicycle Committee and/or Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC) and project sponsors shall incorporate Complete Streets components where feasible and/or appropriate

Commissioner Clark moved a friendly amendment to allocate the remaining \$100,000 to the City of Capitola for their Complete Streets Sidewalk Infill project. The maker and seconder of the motion accepted the friendly amendment.

Commissioners discussed: comments by the staff of the City of Watsonville; art and science of grant fund allocations; appreciation for collaboration of

Commissioners; redirection of funds going to the City of Watsonville; significance of Interlaken Routes project; support for rail/trail projects; upcoming decision about rail and trail project delivery; encouragement to work with local jurisdictions to achieve balance.

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas clarified for the record that the motion would revise the numbers in the exhibit to the resolution to reflect Commissioner Keeley's motion and modified by the friendly amendment from Commissioner Clark and that Section 2 of the resolution would reference \$1 million in future STIP funds for the ZEPRT project. Commissioner Keeley confirmed that the motion shall reflect the advice of legal counsel. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Jensen, Keeley, Clark, Montesino, Hernandez, DeSerpa, Koenig, Martinez, Quiroz-Carter, Leonor, and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin voting "aye."

19. PUBLIC HEARING: Measure D: Five-Year Programs of Projects for Regional Projects and Lift Line

Commissioner Jensen rejoined the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

Supervising Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee delivered the staff report, gave a presentation, and responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: preserving future programming for segments 13-19 in Watsonville.

Rob Tidmore, Principal Planner for the County of Santa Cruz responded to Commissioners' questions about the difference in the cost estimates for the final design of the interim trail and the ultimate trail in segments 10 & 11; and escalation of costs provided in the tables for interim and ultimate trail configurations.

Murray Fontes, Assistant Public Works Director for the City of Watsonville responded to a Commissioner's question regarding programming funds for segments of the rail trail in and around Watsonville, and confirmed Watsonville's preparedness to pursue an Active Transportation grant for project development, as informed by the design proposed in the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Concept Report.

Executive Director Christensen responded to the discussion about the City of Watsonville with more information about the Commission's approach to funding construction of the City of Watsonville's rail trail segments.

Commissioners discussed: including additional funding for South County segments in the five-year plan in subsequent years; demonstrating the Commission's commitment to funding projects in South County; finishing preconstruction now so that projects can be shovel-ready to compete for

grants; urgency of the residents of Watsonville's request for trail construction.

The public hearing opened at 11:34 a.m.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Matt Starkey, City of Santa Cruz

Lani Faulkner

Matt Farrell, Friends of the Rail and Trail

Paula Bradley

Jessica Evans

Lowell Hurst

Michael Saint

David Van Brink

Brett Garrett

Owner

Ray Cancino

John Will

Barry Scott

Commissioner Keeley made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrein seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendations to:

1. Adopt Resolution 23-26

- a. Approving the Fiscal Years (FY) 2025/26-2029/30 Measure D five-year programs of projects (5-Year Plans) for regional investment categories and projects: Highway Corridors, Active Transportation, Rail Corridor, the Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing and the San Lorenzo Valley-Highway 9 Corridor Improvements and Community Bridges Lift Line; and
 - b. Amending the RTC budget and work program to incorporate the funds programmed with this resolution and corresponding expenditures; and
2. Receive information regarding cost estimates to complete final design of the Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8-11 in the Ultimate Trail Configuration and in the Interim Trail Configuration;

with the following modifications:

1. Utilize \$679,000 of funds from the Measure D SLV-Highway 9 Corridor 5-year plans to the Felton/San Lorenzo Valley Schools Complete Street Enhancements in the year of construction.
2. Program \$2,730,000 additional funds from Active Transportation/MBSST to Segments 8 & 9 in FY 25/26
3. Advance \$3,600,000 of FY 27/28 funds from Active Transportation/MBSST to Segments 10 & 11 to FY 25/26

4. Commit to fully funding Segments 8 & 9 with state, federal, and local funding sources and direct staff to work with City and County project sponsors on resolving the funding challenges to meet requirements of the Active Transportation Grant

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin made a friendly amendment to the motion to add \$10 million of the remaining Active Transportation Funds for the South County Projects. The maker and seconder of the motion accepted the friendly amendment.

Commissioners discussed allocating funds for a local share makes future South County Active Transportation grants more competitive; balance of funds between North and South County; goals of Measure D; making good on the promises of Measure D; and advocacy for future funding for San Lorenzo Valley projects.

Ms. Blakeslee responded to a Commissioner's question about the difference between the terminology "program" and "utilize."

Commissioner Leonor made a substitute motion to program \$30 million of the remaining Active Transportation Funds for Coastal Rail Trail projects in and around Watsonville. The motion died for lack of a second.

The motion passed with Commissioners Jensen, Keeley, Clark, Montesino, Hernandez, DeSerpa, Koenig, Martinez, Quiroz-Carter, and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin voting "aye" and Commissioner Leonor voting "no."

20. Highway 1 Freedom Blvd to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder, and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project – Construction Administration Strategy Options

Director of Capital Projects Amin AbuAmara delivered the staff report, gave a presentation, and responded to Commissioners' questions regarding: sufficient funding for the options presented; staffing levels at Caltrans and outsourcing work to consultants; impacts of the two strategies on costs and project delivery; and Caltrans' portion of the project includes both the rail bridges and the trail bridges.

Executive Director Sarah Christensen provided more information about scaling up the agency to deliver projects of this size and responded to a Commissioner's questions about replacement of rail bridges and trail bridges included in the project scope.

Commissioners discussed: implications of hybridization of the project; strategic conversation about the Commission's role in delivering and

planning regional transportation projects; and implications of scaling up the Commission's staffing.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Lani Faulkner

Grace Blakeslee, Community of RTC Employees

Matt Farrell, Friends of the Rail and Trail

Michael Saint,

Brett Garrett

Jack Brown

Kevin Maguire

Commissioner Hernandez stepped away from the dais at 12:57 p.m.

Commissioner Montesino made a motion and Commissioner Koenig seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to implement Strategy 1, Caltrans/RTC Hybrid Implementation, with Caltrans being the Implementing Agency for the construction of Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder portion of the Project between Freedom Blvd Ave to State Park Drive (including the two pedestrian overcrossings and the two rail bridges), and the RTC being the implementing agency for the construction of the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 portion of the project.

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

Chair Montesino announced that the Commission would take a 10-minute recess before hearing the next item.

The Commission returned to the meeting at 1:19 p.m.

21. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Right of Entry Agreement with the City of Santa Cruz for the Murray Street Bridge Project and Temporary Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail

Executive Director Sarah Christensen delivered the staff report and gave a presentation on behalf of Real Property Specialist Bella Kressman.

In response to a Commissioner's question, Ms. Christensen elaborated on Progressive Rail's concerns and follow-up regarding insurance coverage and right-of entry agreements; removing the temporary trail after completion of the Murray Street Bridge retrofit project;

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas communicated that the Commission may have liability in case of a claim and explained what actions Progressive Rail may take if the Commission proceeds with its plans to allow the rail bridge to be converted to a temporary bike and pedestrian path; staff's intention to work with Progressive Rail to come to concurrence about use of the bridge.

In response to a Commissioner's question, Nathan Nguyen, Public Works Director for the City of Santa Cruz described design options and the decision-making process.

Received public comment from:

Jessical Evans
Laurie Negro, Betty Burgers
Lani Faulkner
Paula Bradley
Saladin Sale
David Van Brink
Kevin Maguire
Patrice Boyle, La Posta
Brian Peoples, Trail Now
David Dean
Jack Brown

Commissioners discussed: legal commitment to restore rail bridge to its current condition.

Commissioner Keeley made a motion and Commissioner Koenig seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation to approve **Resolution 24-26** authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Right-of-Entry Agreement with the City of Santa Cruz for a temporary pedestrian and bicycle trail between Seabright Avenue and 7th Avenue, and to use adjacent areas of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line corridor for construction staging to support the Murray Street Bridge Seismic Retrofit and Barrier Replacement Project.

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

22. Review of items to be discussed in closed session.

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas provided an overview of the two items to be discussed in closed session, stating that there may be reportable action.

CLOSED SESSION

23. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(4))
Initiation of Litigation: Two Cases
24. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation
(Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2))
Significant Exposure to Litigation: Two Cases

OPEN SESSION

25. Report on items discussed in closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas reported that for the first item Initiation of Litigation there was no reportable action. For the second item Exposure to Litigation, on a unanimous vote, the Commission authorized staff and the Committee to work with the interested parties on potential resolution to avoid litigation.

26. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 4, 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

1831****319

1831****701

Aaron Henkel

alyson

Amer Bata - AECOM

Antonio Rivas

AP

Barry Scott

Bernie Gomez

Bhupendra Patel

BobFi

bradleyps

Brett Garrett

Brian

Brian Peoples

Bud Colligan

C. Blair

Casey Carlson

Cook Construction

Courtney

Courtney Lindberg - Watsonville

David  Public Transit

David Dean

David Morris

David Silberberger - District 5

Don

Doug Underhill

Edward McNamara

Erin Malsbury
 Fernanda D. Pini
 Frank Rimicci Jr.
 Gina Cole
 Gregory Becker
 Guest Guest
 Hollie (Juniper)
 Howard Cohen
 iPhone
 Ivan Messina
 Jack Brown
 James Weller
 James's iPad (4)
 Jason Wilkinson - Caltrans D5
 Jean Brocklebank & Michael Lewis
 Jenz iPhone (3)
 Jessica Kahn - City of Capitola
 Jeanette Guire
 Jillian
 Jillian Ritter - District 1
 Jim Helmer
 Jim MacKenzie
 Joanna Edmonds
 Johanna Lighthill
 John
 John Cutler
 John Urgo, Santa Cruz METRO
 John Will
 Joni Steele
 Justin Blair
 Justin Davilla
 Karina Aragon
 Karina Moreno
 Kate Elliott
 Kayla Szubielski
 Keith Wood
 Kevin Crossley
 Kevin Maguire
 KMSzubielski
 Kris Reyes
 Krista Bjelde
 Lana Martinez Davis
 Larry Pageler
 Marc B. Yellin MD
 Mark McLaren
 Martin - Caltrans

Mary Edmund
 Member
 Michael N. Conneran
 Michael Pisano
 Michael Zeller
 Micheal Saint
 Nadene Thorne
 Name (original name)
 Nancy
 Nancy Yellin
 nasya
 Nathan Nguyen
 Nick Fabbicino
 oriana nolan
 owner
 patri
 Paul Guirguis, Caltrans
 Paul Hierling, AMBAG
 pcanin
 Pete Rasmussen
 Peter Haworth
 prc316
 prc316
 Raymon Cancino
 Rebecca Downing
 Rebecca Hurley
 Rebecca Moore
 Regina Kelbert
 Ricardo Valdes
 Rick H
 Ricky Longinotti
 Ronald L Perrigo Jr
 s112837
 Sakura Cannestra
 Six
 Steve Wiesner
 Teresa Buika
 Teresa's iPhone
 Tiffany Mendoza
 Tim Brattan
 Tim Campbell
 Tim's iPhone
 Tony Nunez
 William Cook
 William Kelley

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: RTC Staff
RE: Committee Meeting Minutes

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission receive the draft meeting minutes for the Budget & Administration/Personnel Committee (BAP), the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC), the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), the Safe on 17 Taskforce, and the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC).

BACKGROUND

The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) has three advisory committees: Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC), Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), and Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC). The RTC also hosts the Safe on 17 Taskforce and has a Budget and Administration/Personnel committee made up of RTC Commissioners. These groups review and provide technical advice and input on projects and programs to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), local public works and planning departments, and other partner agencies; coordinate and provide recommendations to the RTC on the use of funds; and serve as a forum to discuss and improve transportation projects.

Agendas and meeting materials for the committees are posted on the webpage at least seventy-two hours prior to the meeting.

BAP: <https://www.sccrtc.org/meetings/budget-administration-personnel-committee/>

BAC: <https://www.sccrtc.org/meetings/bicycle-advisory-committee/agendas/>

E&DTAC: <https://www.sccrtc.org/meetings/elderly-disabled/agendas/>

ITAC: <https://www.sccrtc.org/meetings/inter-agency/>

Safe on 17: <https://www.sccrtc.org/meetings/traffic-operations-system-safe-on-17/>

Remote participation via Zoom is available for members of the public, non-voting committee members, alternates, and voting committee members

unable to attend in person due to an emergency or for cause per AB 2449. If there are no major items to be brought before a committee, the meetings are cancelled.

DISCUSSION

Draft minutes from the most recent committee and task force meetings are attached for the Commission's review. The RTC's committees review and approve final minutes at their next meetings. The purpose of the minutes is to summarize the discussions that took place during the meeting and clearly document any actions taken.

Attachments:

1. October 15, 2025 Safe on 17 Taskforce minutes



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY TRAFFIC OPERATIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE & SAFE ON 17 TASK FORCE MEETING AGENDA

Date: Wed. October 15, 2025	Dial-In Option: (669) 900-9128
Start Time: 10:00am	Meeting ID: 850 2826 5664
Location: 1101 Pacific Ave, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA and	Passcode: 094804
Online via Zoom	

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Attendees:

• Max Friedman (RTC) • Marshall Ballard (RTC) • Luis Mendez (RTC) • Vanessa Faul (Caltrans D5) • Kathy Kleinschmidt (Caltrans D5) • Kelly McClendon (Caltrans D5) • Eric Carver (Caltrans D5) • Paul Guirguis (Caltrans D5) • Adam Cuellar (Caltrans D5) • Ian Nguyen (Caltrans D5) • Sheridan Nansen (Caltrans D4) • Orlando Ramirez (Caltrans D4) • Kane Wong (Caltrans D4) • Minyoung Kim (Caltrans D4)	• Abul Bashar (Caltrans D4) • Bryce Danenhauer (CHP San Jose) • Jack Louder (CHP San Jose) • Jesse Pidcock (Scotts Valley PD) • Joe Winter (Santa Clara County Fire Department) • Troy Vincent (CHP Santa Cruz) • Katelyn Costa (MTC) • Lisette Jones (Assembly Member Gail Pellerin's Office) • Cliff Barber (American Civil Constructors) • Jeff Bates (Community of Redwood Estates)

1. **Introductions** – Introductions were made.
2. **Oral Communications** – None.
3. **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda** – Items 7 and 8 were consolidated into one item.



4. **Received Information Items** – Max Friedman provided a summary of major incidents on Highway 17 over the past year and an overview of current collision and enforcement trends. The current three-year contract with CHP for enhanced enforcement is in its final year, with RTC contributing \$100,000 annually for enforcement on the Santa Cruz County side and MTC contributing \$50,000 annually for the Santa Clara County side.

Max reported that there were 621 total collisions on Highway 17 in 2025 to date. There have been 5 fatal collisions, compared to zero fatalities in the prior year. CHP Santa Cruz has issued 1,556 regular time citations and 670 overtime citations. CHP San Jose has issued 1,402 regular citations and 216 overtime citations. CHP Santa Cruz logged 490 overtime hours on Highway 17 while CHP San Jose logged 187. Most collisions occurred during the winter months, coinciding with wet-weather conditions.

Max also shared an update on the Freeway Service Patrol program. FSP operates two towing beats in Santa Cruz County, including one along Highway 17. On Highway 17, FSP provided 504 motorist assists in the past year. Most assists were related to flat tires, mechanical issues, and collisions. There are approximately 65 call boxes countywide, with fewer than 20 on Highway 17. Due to declining usage, staff is evaluating options to remove the call box system.

5. **Received Update on California Highway Patrol Safe on 17 Program Statistics and Public Information Efforts** – CHP representatives provided an overview of current enforcement activity and operational challenges on Highway 17. Officers noted that rainy-season conditions continue to limit safe areas to conduct enforcement stops, which affects their ability to respond quickly and maintain a visible presence. To address this, CHP is combining beats from adjacent areas, deploying more officers when feasible, and preparing for increased enforcement as winter storms approach.

CHP also shared upcoming public information activities. Both Santa Cruz and San Jose Areas are hosting Start Smart and Age Well classes to promote driver safety. CHP Santa Cruz operates a countywide program called Before Aggressive Drivers Get Everyone Stopped (BADGES), which brings together allied agencies to assist with traffic enforcement.



CHP clarified that the southern limit of the Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) on Highway 17 remains at Mount Hermon Road. This boundary is based on historic incident data and overall program length considerations.

A member of the public expressed worries about dangerous driving speeds and lack of effective enforcement despite recent improvements. CHP acknowledged these challenges, noting that while fatal collisions have decreased, they still occur frequently and enforcement is limited by road conditions. Kathy Kleinschmidt (Caltrans D5) noted that Caltrans is taking a collaborative approach to safety, which includes high-friction surface treatments and emerging technologies, while acknowledging the need for both engineering solutions and enforcement to address the increasing traffic volumes and speeding issues.

6. **Received Caltrans District 5 Highway 17 Project Updates** – Kelly McClendon (Caltrans D5), presented an update on the Caltrans Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan for State Route 17, emphasizing the need for coordination between Districts 4 and 5. He highlighted demographic data showing population growth in Santa Cruz, high job concentrations in Silicon Valley, and housing affordability challenges, with many residents commuting to Santa Clara County, leading to increased traffic demand on Highway 17. The plan aims to address these challenges by identifying potential project categories and engaging stakeholders, with a completion target by the end of the fiscal year next June.

Caltrans District 5 staff also provided an overview of active and upcoming construction projects on Highway 17. Caltrans is investing in pavement preservation and high friction surface treatment installations, integrating safety countermeasures such as rumble strips through SB 1-funded SHOPP projects at the northbound lanes of Highway 17. Caltrans D5 is also utilizing SHOPP funds to replace and repair drainage systems and culverts along Highway 17. They are also using SHOPP funds to repair damage caused by the overturned truck crash from earlier this year. Caltrans D5 staff also provided an overview of all of the different traffic management systems (TMS) elements being employed along Highway 17 to improve safety and operations. This includes changeable message signs, traffic cameras, vehicle detection stations, and radar feedback curve warning signs. These TMS elements can be viewed through the Caltrans QuickMap app.



7. **Received Caltrans District 4 Highway 17 Project Updates** – Minyoung Kim (Caltrans D4) provided updates on several projects along State Route 17. She reported that the recent Capital Preventive Maintenance (CAPM) project has been completed including repaving, ADA enhancements, and drainage system improvements. She also presented on the SR-17 Bridge Rail Replacement project in which a bridge over the Los Gatos segment of Highway 17 is being upgraded to meet crash and safety standards. She provided updates on the SR-17 Corridor Congestion Relief Project which involves reconfiguring the SR-17/SR-9 interchange in the Town of Los Gatos to improve traffic operations and safety. The construction phase of the project is scheduled to start in Fall 2028, with construction end scheduled for Fall 2030. Caltrans staff also presented on the SR-17 Pedestrian Overcrossing project in Los Gatos to improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility over SR-17 and the SR-17 Wildlife and Trail Crossing in coordination with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MidPen) to construct a new wildlife undercrossing and trail overcrossing near Lexington Reservoir on SR-17.

Caltrans District 4 provided updates on TMS. Like Caltrans D5, D4 staff provided an overview of different TMS elements being utilized on SR-17. Additionally, staff reported on a field visit with the Santa Clara Fire Department which highlighted accident-prone areas, particularly around Big Moody Curve. Caltrans D4 staff also provided an overview of the Caltrans Quickmap app and its utility as a key resource for real-time travel information, including collision data, lane closures, and traffic conditions. Caltrans also provides live video feeds from traffic cameras along Highway 17 to help travelers make informed decisions.

8. **Discussion** – The recent overturned truck crash on Highway 17 was discussed and Kathy Kleinschmidt (Caltrans D5) explained that Caltrans D5 may seek reimbursement for the repairs through the responsible party's insurance. Jeff Bates, a member of the public, raised concerns about Highway 17's traffic congestion due to population growth in Silicon Valley and Santa Cruz.
9. **Approved Next Meeting Date** – The next Safe on 17 Task Force & TOS Oversight Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2026, from 10 AM to 12PM. The meeting will be held in-person at the RTC office with remote option. Meeting details are listed on the [Safe on 17 meetings webpage](#).



Respectively submitted by: Max Friedman, Safe on 17 Program Manager

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Tommy Travers, Transportation Planner

RE: Release of Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission accept this information item on the release of the Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for public review December 15, 2025 through January 31, 2026 (45-day comment period).

BACKGROUND

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is in the process of updating the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is a state-mandated document that identifies transportation needs in Santa Cruz County over the next twenty-five years. It estimates the amount of funding that will be available and identifies planned transportation projects. The plan is an essential first step in securing funding from federal, state and local sources. As required by state law, the RTP includes discussion of highways, local streets and roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit services, specialized transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities, airports, and goods movement.

The 2050 RTP, through its goals and policies, sets forth a framework for expanding options for residents and visitors to access their daily needs in a way that is safe, equitable, efficient, and adapts to a changing climate. The goals and policies are used to define the priority list of projects. Individual projects listed in the RTP must still undergo separate design and environmental processes, and can only be implemented as local, state and federal funds become available.

This RTP, along with those from Monterey and San Benito Counties, has been incorporated into the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

(AMBAG) Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)-Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) covering the tri-county Monterey Bay area.

The RTP is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Recognizing an opportunity to achieve efficiencies, the RTC, TAMC and SBCOG decided to merge their environmental analysis for their respective RTPs and AMBAG's 2050 MTP-SCS. A single environmental document that covers the RTPs for the three counties (Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties) in the AMBAG region and the MTP-SCS has been prepared in lieu of individual environmental documents. AMBAG is the lead agency for the preparation of the MTP-SCS/RTP Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which includes environmental review of the three regional transportation plans and serves as the EIR for the RTPs. The three regional transportation planning agencies, including RTC, serve as the responsible agencies under CEQA.

DISCUSSION

2050 Regional Transportation Plan

The Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) consists of an Executive Summary and eight chapters:

1. Context
2. Transportation Network
3. Vision for 2050 (Policy Element)
4. Travel Patterns & Performance
5. Funding Our Transportation System (Financial Element)
6. Transportation Investments (Action Element)
7. Environmental and Air Quality Review
8. What's Next?

The **Policy Element** identifies the goals, policies, and targets that guide transportation funding decisions and prioritization. The goals, policies and targets in the 2050 RTP were revised from the 2045 RTP based on community input and shift their function from forecasting to monitoring trends in real-time in order to measure progress toward RTP goals.

- Goals & policies approved by RTC in April 2024, targets approved by RTC in November 2024

The **Financial Element** identifies funds available to the region and lists the additional funding needs over the next 25 years. Just over \$6 billion in revenues from local, state and federal sources, including Measure D funds, are reasonably anticipated to be available for transportation in Santa Cruz County in the 25-year RTP timeframe.

- Draft financial element approved by RTC in November 2024

The **Action Element** of the RTP identifies specific projects, programs, and actions necessary to implement the policy element of the RTP. As required by state and federal law, the project list shows which projects could be funded within the projected funds identified in the draft Financial Element (Constrained) and which would require new revenues above and beyond those anticipated over the next twenty-five years (Unconstrained). The complete cost of transportation needs in Santa Cruz County is estimated to be \$15 billion over the 25-year RTP timeframe.

- Draft financially constrained project list approved by RTC in April 2025

By December 15, 2025, RTC staff will post the Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan on the RTC website at <https://sccrtc.org/2050rtp>. The document will be released for a 45-day public review period from December 15, 2025 to January 31, 2026. A public hearing for the document will be included on the agenda for the RTC's January 15, 2026 meeting.

Environmental Impact Report

The CEQA-required environmental review for the RTP is included in the EIR for AMBAG's MTP-SCS. The environmental review evaluates the potential environmental effects of implementing the MTP-SCS, including the RTP for Santa Cruz County. The environmental review also evaluates alternative investment scenarios and identifies mitigation measures for potential impacts. As the lead agency under CEQA for the MTP-SCS/RTP EIR, AMBAG has the primary responsibility for approving the "project" (i.e., MTP-SCS including the RTP for Santa Cruz County). The RTC, as a responsible agency under CEQA, will review and provide comments on the Draft EIR focusing on areas which will require decisions to be carried out by or approved by the RTC in the future. The RTC will consider adoption of the EIR findings in concert with adoption of the RTP after the EIR is certified by AMBAG.

As a programmatic document, the MTP-SCS/RTP EIR presents a region-wide assessment of the impacts of the proposed MTP-SCS, including the three RTPs (Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties). The MTP-SCS/RTP EIR does not analyze impacts of individual projects. Projects will undergo a

separate environmental review process, conducted by their agency sponsors, once they actually receive funding and are ready to proceed.

AMBAG released the Draft EIR, in concert with release of the Draft MTP-SCS, on November 17, 2025. The public comment period on the Draft EIR, which includes environmental review of the RTP, will close on January 31, 2026. The Draft EIR is available online at www.ambag.org. AMBAG will virtually host a public hearing/workshop on the draft EIR focusing on Santa Cruz County on January 27, 2026. The timing of release of the Draft RTP and the Draft EIR was coordinated with San Benito COG, TAMC, and AMBAG staff to meet federal deadlines for approval of the MTP-SCS.

Next Steps

Input from RTC advisory committees on the Draft RTP will be solicited and notices about the availability of the document will be sent to the media and community groups.

A summary of dates related to finalizing the RTP are provided below.

- November 17, 2025 – AMBAG released draft 2050 MTP-SCS and draft 2050 MTP-SCS/RTP EIR for public comment for a 70-day public review period
- December 15, 2025 – Draft 2050 RTP scheduled to be released for public comment for a 45-day public review period
- January 15, 2026 – RTP Public Hearing at RTC meeting
- January 27, 2026 – EIR Public Workshops/Hearings focusing on Santa Cruz County
- January 31, 2026 – End of 45-day public comment period for draft RTP and end of 70-day public review period for draft MTP-SCS and EIR
- March 2026 – Approve changes to Draft RTP for final submission to AMBAG at RTC meeting
- June 2026 – AMBAG scheduled to adopt Final MTP-SCS and certify EIR
- June 2026 – RTC scheduled to adopt Final RTP and Final EIR

SUMMARY

AMBAG released the 2050 MTP-SCS and associated EIR on November 17, 2025. The draft RTP is scheduled for release on December 15, 2025, starting a 45-day review period which will end on January 31, 2026. The draft RTP will be available to review on the RTC website and the EIR is available now on the AMBAG website. Notices will be sent to interested parties. A public hearing on the RTP will be held at the January 15, 2026 RTC meeting.

[https://rtcsc.sharepoint.com/RTC Staff Reports/RTC2025/12/Consent/Draft RTP & EIR/SR-Draft 2050 RTP & EIR.docx](https://rtcsc.sharepoint.com/RTC%20Staff%20Reports/RTC2025/12/Consent/Draft%20RTP%20&%20EIR/SR-Draft%202050%20RTP%20&%20EIR.docx)

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Transportation Planner

RE: Adopt the Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission adopt the Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) received a federal Sustainable Transportation Planning grant from Caltrans to develop a Transportation Equity Action Plan for Santa Cruz County.

DISCUSSION

The work of the RTC can improve the quality of life of Santa Cruz County residents, workers, and visitors. Our work can increase access to jobs, schools, recreation, and other destinations, improve health and reduce emissions. Our multimodal transportation system of streets, roads and highways, buses, bike lanes, sidewalks, and other transportation facilities and services connect us to opportunities, enrichment, and each other.

While transportation facilities and services can open doors, shatter barriers, and foster community growth, a lack of transportation facilities and services can also result in barriers to accessing jobs, health care, food, recreation, families, schools, and our communities and result in inequitable outcomes for people based on race, class, gender, ability, sexuality, immigration status, and other identities or experiences. Equity planning assists RTC employees, board members, committees and partners to consider the potential disproportionate benefits or negative impacts of RTC services, planning, funding decisions, and project implementation activities, and internal agency operations.

For this planning effort, using an equity lens, the RTC:

- Established a Transportation Equity Workgroup to provide guidance and expertise during development of the plan.
- Evaluated our multimodal transportation network and services

- Developed an engagement toolkit reflecting best practices for use by RTC staff and partners
- Updated the regional definition of equity priority communities (disadvantaged communities) and metrics to evaluate transportation projects and services
- Conducted an assessment of RTC internal policies, procedures and practices
- Held equity-focused trainings with staff, RTC Commissioners and advisory committee members

The Transportation Equity Action Plan is envisioned as a living document. Near term actions, maps, statistics, priorities, accountability measures, and the outreach and engagement toolkit will be updated periodically. Recommended changes to the RTC's policies and guiding documents that have resulted from this work will be incorporated into the RTC's comprehensive policy and procedure update, scheduled to be complete in 2026.

FISCAL IMPACTS

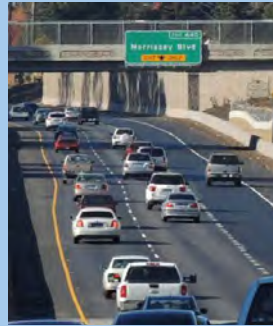
RTC received a \$338,000 Caltrans planning grant to develop a Transportation Equity Action Plan, with RTC providing a 20% local match of \$85,000 from RTC Reserve funds. In December 2024, the RTC approved the consultant contract with The Justice Collective for the assessment of RTC policies, procedures and practices and trainings. Implementation of the Equity Action Plan, including ongoing trainings, project and program evaluations, more robust outreach and engagement, and policy updates will be integrated into the overall RTC budget and work program.

SUMMARY

Staff recommends that the RTC adopt the RTC's Transportation Equity Action Plan for Santa Cruz County. The Transportation Equity Action Plan documents transportation disparities in Santa Cruz County, updates the regional definition of "Disadvantaged Communities" or "Equity Priority Communities" used to identify communities and individuals that have faced greater barriers due to historic or systemic inequities or racism, identifies transportation priorities and engagement strategies that can reduce disparities, and includes an assessment of RTC policies, procedures and practices.

Attachments

1. Transportation Equity Action Plan
 - a. Equitable Outreach and Engagement Toolkit
 - b. Equity Discovery Report & Recommendations, The Justice Collective



Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan

Draft November 2025



SCRTC Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

www.sccrtc.org

1101 Pacific Ave, Suite 250

Santa Cruz, California, 95060

831-460-3200 info@sccrtc.org



Letter from the Executive Director

The Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan (Equity Plan) is our commitment to advancing equity within the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) and for the communities we serve. Every individual in Santa Cruz County deserves access to safe, affordable, reliable, and equitable transportation options that connect them to essential services—jobs, education, healthcare, recreation, and community—regardless of income, race, ethnicity, ability, or age.

In order to advance the RTC's efforts to develop and deliver transportation solutions for a vibrant, sustainable, and equitable community, it is critical that our staff, board of Commissioners, committees, and partners recognize existing disparities and intentionally integrate equity into all aspects of our work—from hiring and procurement to community engagement and project prioritization.

We must constantly ask ourselves: *Who are the impacted groups? How are they affected? How do we evaluate disparities? What outcomes should we consider?*

Through strategic and equity-focused planning, we have evaluated the strengths and challenges of our agency and committed to continuous improvement with empathy, transparency, and conviction. In developing this Transportation Equity Action Plan, we have strengthened relationships with community members, identified key actions to reduce disparities, and implemented equity-centered trainings for our Board, staff, and advisory committees. We have also expanded outreach to historically underrepresented groups and will continue to engage in internal reflection to foster growth—both individually and as an agency.

I am deeply grateful for the dedication of our staff, board, volunteers, and community members who contributed to the development of this plan. While we recognize that there is much more work to do, this plan provides a framework for accountability and will guide our continued efforts to build a more inclusive and equitable transportation system for all.

Sarah Christensen, Executive Director
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)

Table of Contents

Letter from the Executive Director	2
Acknowledgements.....	4
Background	8
What is a Transportation Equity Action Plan?	9
Why We Need a Transportation Equity Action Plan.....	9
Transportation Disparities.....	12
Identifying Equity Priority Communities	19
Goals, Vision and Actions	27
1. Advance Transportation Equity	27
2. Empower Communities in Decision-Making: Outreach and Engagement	30
3. Embed Equity in the RTC's Culture – Equity Discovery Report & Recommendations...34	
4. Embed Equity in Project Development and Resource Allocation	40
Priority Investments	42
Equity Metrics for Evaluating Transportation Projects	42
Access to Opportunity	42
Health and Environment	43
Safety and Emergency Evacuation	45
Affordability	46
Mobility	47
Burdens.....	48
Community Engagement	49
Priority Projects	50
Community-Identified Priorities	51
Glossary of Equity Terms	55
Appendix A: Equity Outreach and Engagement Toolkit	
Appendix B: Equity Discovery Report & Recommendations	

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation or subjected to discrimination in any relation to any RTC activities, services, project development, planning, outreach, or employment. To request this file in another language or alternative format, please contact the RTC at (831) 460-3200 or info@sccrtc.org. Any person who believes that they have been discriminated against by the RTC or the RTC's consultants or affiliates can file a complaint (<https://www.sccrtc.org/about/title-vi-civil-rights-program/>).

Acknowledgements

Funding

The Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan was funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant. Consultant support provided by the [U.S. DOT Thriving Communities Program](#) assisted with data collection, outreach, development of equity metrics, and equity priority communities maps.



Equity Action Plan Team

Several individuals and groups provided invaluable input that resulted in this plan. Primary team members are noted below with an asterisk (*).

Transportation Equity Workgroup*

The RTC formed a Transportation Equity Workgroup to help guide the development of the Transportation Equity Action Plan and support the implementation of quality transportation infrastructure, services, and solutions that more equitably meet the diverse needs of community members. Recruitment focused on including the voices of community members that have been historically marginalized or experience systemic discrimination, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), tribes, low-income, unhoused, youth, rural, queer, people with disabilities, and older adults.

- Chris Davis
- Crystal Gonzalez
- Nicon MacDonal
- Eric Medina
- David Morales
- Chris Nestlerode
- Meilin Obinata
- María Perez
- Antonio Rivas
- Kanyon CoyoteWoman Sayers-Roods
- Colleen Stone
- Daniela Suarez
- Isabelle Tuncer

The Justice Collective, Consultant Team*

The RTC hired The Justice Collective, leaders on equity and justice, to assist with the assessment of RTC policies and procedures and to conduct trainings with staff, board, and committee members.

- Ellie Tumbuan, Owner and Project Advisor
- Jenna Ortiz, Project Manager and Engagement Lead
- Crystal Sanders-Alvarado, Assessment Lead

- Matthew Melendrez, Technical Assistance, MJM Coaching LLC

U.S.DOT Thriving Communities Partners

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Thriving Communities Program provided consultant support technical analysis.

- Ray Cancino, Executive Director, Community Bridges*
- Justin Meek, Ast. Community Development Director, City of Watsonville*
- Sarah Huang, Shared Mobility Center*
- Tony Leonard, Community Design Project Manager, CivicWell*
- Josh Meyer, Program Director, Community Design, CivicWell*
- Meredith Davis, Community Planner, USDOT
- Katarina Hou, Senior Program Associate, Shared-Use Mobility Center
- Peter Huether, Senior Research Associate, Transportation Program, ACEEE
- Jacob Korn, former Senior Associate, RMI
- Christi Nakajima, Sr. Research Analyst, Transportation, ACEEE

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is a public agency overseen by a governing board made up of County Supervisors, city council members, transit representatives, and the Caltrans District 5 Director. The RTC is advised by community members serving on its Bicycle Advisory Committee and Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC). The RTC works in close coordination with the County of Santa Cruz, cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO), the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), and other organizations providing transportation services to people in Santa Cruz County that serve on the RTC's Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) and other committees.

- RTC Commissioners
- Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC)
- RTC Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC)
- Sarah Christensen, Executive Director
- Luis Mendez, Director of Planning and Programming*
- Yesenia Medina, Administrative Services Officer*
- Rachel Moriconi, Sr. Transportation Planner and Project Manager*
- Shannon Munz, Communications Specialist*

- Nisha Singh, Internal Services Director
- Jason Thompson, Transportation Planning Technician
- Sierra Topp, Transportation Planning Technician
- Cindy Convisser, Contract Specialist
- James Falkenroth, Communications Intern
- Johnny Esteban, former Transportation Planner
- Anna Kalthoff, former Planning Intern
- Matthew Schroeder, former Transportation Planner

Other Community Members and Groups

Our community's thoughtful participation in discussions about equity and transportation priorities demonstrates the immense value of public participation in the local transportation planning process. Members of the public, including volunteers that serve on RTC advisory committees and stakeholder groups, provided input at several points during development of this Transportation Equity Action Plan. Input was also received from many community groups and organizations, with staff and volunteers from the Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan Ohlone People, Community Bridges, Regeneración, Pajaro Valley Arts Council, Life on Wheels, Santa Cruz Black, NCAA, Watsonville Seniors Commission, Growing Greatness, Ecology Action, Watsonville Wetlands Watch, the County Administrative Office (CAO) and Health Services Agency-Public Health having spent many hours providing invaluable input to staff and consultants.

Sources

In developing the Santa Cruz County Equity Action Plan, RTC staff consulted documents from dozens of local, state, and federal government agencies, academic institutions, and equity leaders. Sources included information and resources provided by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and its national network of government agencies working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. In addition to GARE resources, some text, concepts and graphics were borrowed from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), U.S.DOT, the California Transportation Commission (CTC), Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission, California Tahoe Conservancy, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, California Council of Governments (CalCOG), City of Austin, City of Watsonville, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, DataShare Santa Cruz County, among others.



Land Acknowledgement

The RTC recognizes that what we refer to as “Santa Cruz County” is the unceded territory of [Indigenous peoples](#), many of whose descendants were taken to missions Santa Cruz and San Juan Bautista during the violent Spanish colonization of the Central Coast of California. The RTC acknowledges the history and presence of Indigenous peoples throughout Santa Cruz County, their enduring relationship to their traditional homelands, and that today Indigenous peoples are working hard to restore traditional stewardship practices on these lands and to heal from historical trauma.

Background

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), as the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Santa Cruz County, is responsible for planning regional transportation projects, selecting projects to receive certain federal, state, and local funds (programming), providing services to assist travelers, and implementing capital infrastructure projects. The work of the RTC can improve the quality of life of Santa Cruz County residents, workers, and visitors. Our work can increase access to jobs, schools, recreation, and other destinations. It can also improve health and reduce emissions. Our multimodal transportation system of streets, roads and highways, buses, bike lanes, sidewalks, and other transportation facilities and services connect us to opportunities, enrichment, and each other.

While transportation facilities and services can open doors, shatter barriers, and foster community growth --- a lack of transportation facilities and services can also serve as barriers to accessing jobs, health care, food, recreation, families, schools, and our communities. Transportation conditions can result in inequitable outcomes for people based on race, class, gender, ability, sexuality, immigration status, and other identities or experiences. Equity planning assists RTC employees, board members, committees and partners to consider the potential disproportionate benefits or negative impacts of RTC services, planning, funding decisions, and project implementation activities, and internal agency operations.

This Transportation Equity Action Plan (Equity Plan) for Santa Cruz County, funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant, with consultant support provided by the U.S.DOT Thriving Communities Program, builds upon the RTC's state and federally mandated anti-discrimination efforts ([Nondiscrimination/Title VI/ADA Plan](#)) and extensive input that members of the community have provided to RTC and other agencies that work in Santa Cruz County about transportation needs, priorities, and the community's vision that the transportation network of roads, bikeways, sidewalks, trails, and transit in Santa Cruz County should serve all users, provide safe access to opportunities, and not disproportionately benefit or negatively impact anyone.

This Equity Plan documents transportation disparities in Santa Cruz County, updates the regional definition of "Disadvantaged Communities" or "Equity Priority Communities" used to identify communities and individuals that have faced greater barriers due to historic or systemic inequities or racism, identifies transportation priorities and engagement strategies that can reduce disparities, and includes an assessment of RTC policies, procedures and practices.

WHAT IS TRANSPORTATION EQUITY?

Transportation equity ensures everyone has fair access to transportation options—regardless of income, race, ethnicity, ability, or background—so they can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Ultimately, it is not just about moving people from point A to point B, but about building a transportation system that ensures everyone can fully engage in social, economic, and civic life.

What is a Transportation Equity Action Plan?

The Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan (Equity Plan) is a strategic guide that can be used to identify and address inequities in multimodal transportation systems, investments, and internal agency operations. Ultimately, transportation equity is about creating a more just and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. It is not just about moving people from point A to point B; it's about building communities where everyone can participate fully in social, economic, and civic life. This Equity Plan guides the RTC's efforts to advance equity by embedding equitable practices into agency policies and operations, as well as transportation planning, project delivery, and project prioritization to reduce disparities and strengthen authentic public engagement and collaboration. The plan describes current challenges and barriers to equity, identifies areas in Santa Cruz County experiencing the greatest disparities, and establishes goals and actions to address these challenges to promote a more equitable transportation system.

Why We Need a Transportation Equity Action Plan

Historical actions by government agencies have created and maintained inequities through laws, policies, funding, programs, and organizational culture. Institutionalized policies and practices continue to perpetuate injustice throughout the nation, the State, and Santa Cruz County. As we reflect on, assess, and improve policies and practices, we can rectify historical discrimination and avoid future inequities.

As noted by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, while local governments like the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) may consider themselves fair and just, people of color, tribal communities, low-income residents and workers, people with disabilities, and seniors fare worse than their counterparts in every area: housing, employment, education, justice, and health. Disparities did not magically disappear with the Civil Rights Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, or local Nondiscrimination and Title VI Plans. However, because local governments have a unique responsibility to all residents, inequities can and must be addressed. The public sector must be for the public good; current inequities are destructive. We must go beyond individual, intentional discrimination or acts of bigotry, and examine the systems in which we all live. We must investigate—honestly—how our longstanding systems, policies, and practices, unintentionally or not, have created and continue to maintain inequities, and we must change them.

Transportation equity can support economic advancement by ensuring access to employment opportunities. Reliable and affordable transportation opens doors to jobs, allowing individuals to participate more fully in the economy. Access to educational opportunities and healthcare are also directly impacted by transportation options. When

people can easily reach schools and training centers, hospitals and clinics, and healthy food they are better able to improve their health and well-being. Furthermore, equitable transportation promotes social inclusion by connecting people to their communities, fostering a sense of belonging, and reducing social isolation.

Beyond the basic understanding of fairness, transportation equity delves into the systemic inequalities embedded within transportation planning and policy. It acknowledges that historical patterns of discrimination and marginalization have shaped our current transportation landscape, resulting in persistent disparities in access and outcomes. Understanding these historical roots is crucial for developing effective strategies to promote equity.

As a county-level agency that serves the entire community, residents, visitors, and workers, it is important for the RTC to embrace our diversity and recognize disparities that exist in our community. By setting policies, taking real actions, and holding ourselves accountable for results, the RTC will contribute to creating a Santa Cruz County where everyone can thrive.

Equity vs. Equality

EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same – regardless if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.



Figure 1. Equality vs Equity (Robert Wood Johnson Foundations, 2022)

Equity is often used interchangeably with equality, though they are not the same. Equality means exactly as it says, giving the same to everyone regardless of context. Equity requires

us to give people what they need, recognizing barriers and conditions such as race, age, and ability that differ. The image above helps demonstrate this distinction.

Living Action Plan

This Transportation Equity Action Plan is meant to be a living document and a companion to the RTC's regularly updated Nondiscrimination Plan, which serves as the RTC's federally-required Title VI Civil Rights Program and Implementation Plan, Language Assistance Plan, and Americans with Disability Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act program to address discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, due to limited English proficiency, due to ability, or on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious creed, veteran or socioeconomic status.

Transportation Disparities

The RTC is dedicated to advancing racial and economic equity by removing barriers to opportunity through enhanced transportation access and mobility options for equity priority communities (also known as disadvantaged communities or DACs). This commitment requires the RTC and our partners to recognize the lasting impacts of racism and systemic oppression of specific communities and actively collaborate with communities to identify transportation solutions that improve access to jobs, goods, nutritious food, healthcare, services, and parks through integrated land-use and transportation planning.

Conditions contributing to transportation disparities in Santa Cruz County include:

- Income inequality, with many households economically vulnerable.
- Extreme housing and cost of living pressures, squeezing household budgets and reducing income available for transportation and mobility.
- Racial/ethnic disparities that interweave with income and place.
- Transportation safety, reliability, access, infrastructure conditions, and services remain uneven and differ in northern and southern, urban and rural areas of Santa Cruz County.

For effective transportation equity work in Santa Cruz County, agencies must explicitly account for how income, race/ethnicity, geography, cost burden, access to jobs/education, infrastructure condition, and access to safe and convenient transit service, bicycle and pedestrian facilities are connected.

Limited access to transportation options such as transit, safe and accessible bicycle and pedestrian facilities, poor road conditions, and greater distances to access services compound socioeconomic inequities. Additional information on some of the underlying conditions impacting transportation equity are described below.

Median Household Income: The 2025 median household income in Santa Cruz County was approximately \$102,000, however income disparities are pronounced. Latino households earn 22% less than white households. (<https://www.datasharescc.org>, 2025)

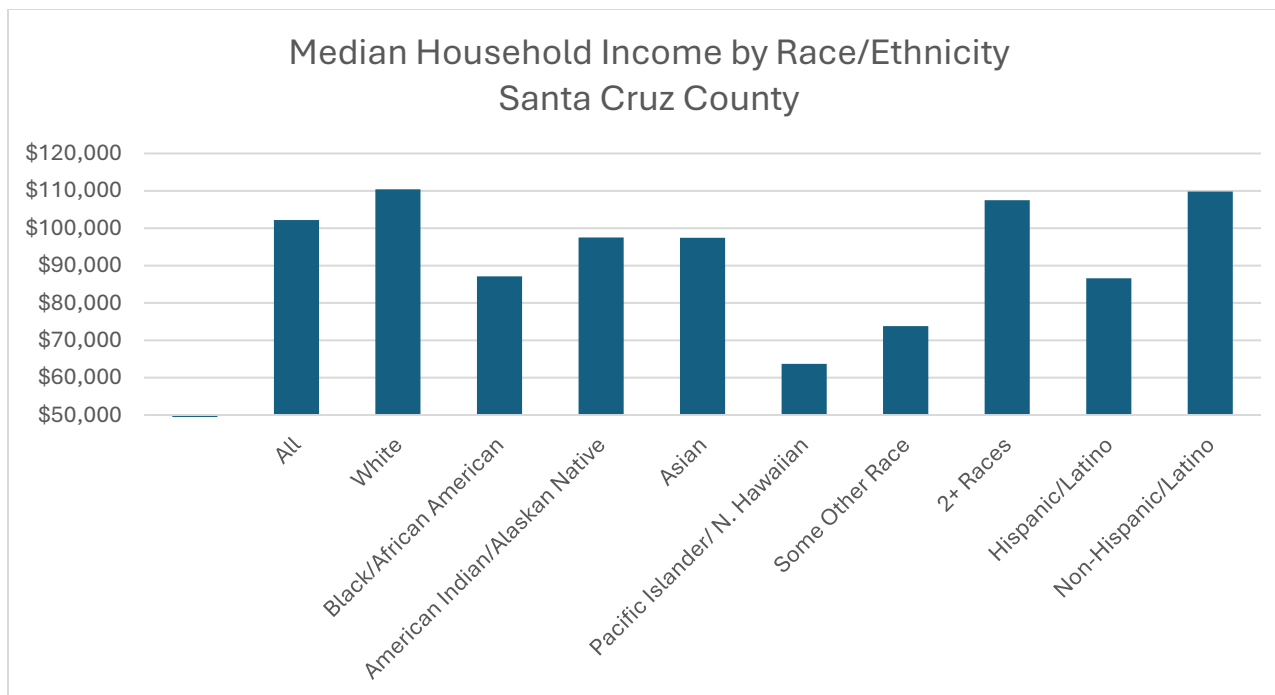


Figure 2. Median Household Incomes by Race/Ethnicity (Datasharessc.org, 2025)

Real Cost Threshold: Approximately one-third of working households in Santa Cruz County (over 30,000 households) have less income than is needed to meet basic needs including the costs of housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and taxes. 63% of Latino households live below the “real cost” threshold compared to 27% of white households in Santa Cruz County. (<https://unitedwaysca.org>, 2025)

Exacerbating income inequality, over 40% of the Watsonville population is unbanked or underbanked, meaning that half of the population is excluded from credible banking institutions and the US financial system. This creates an overreliance on predatory lenders to meet financial needs and gaps. Watsonville has three times as many predatory lending services as compared to its wealthier North County counterparts. (UCSC Blum Center *Mamas con Mas*)

Racial/Ethnic Disparities: Latinos (94,350 people) make up 36.4% of the countywide population and over 75% of South County residents. Across most socioeconomic demographics Latinos face greater barriers.

Language Barriers: Nearly 35% of households in Santa Cruz County primarily speak a language other than English at home. Areas in Santa Cruz County with the highest percentiles of limited English-speaking residents, as compared to the rest of California are shown in the map below, with areas over the 80 percentile (compared to the rest of California) concentrated in and around Watsonville. Throughout its history, Watsonville has

received waves of immigrants from all over the world, including people from Denmark, China, Japan, Croatia, and Latin America. Today, nearly 20% of students in Santa Cruz County are enrolled as English Language Learners (ELLs), learning English as a second language, in public schools. The first language of the majority of these students is Spanish, with Otomian languages, such as Mixtecto the primary language for hundreds of students.

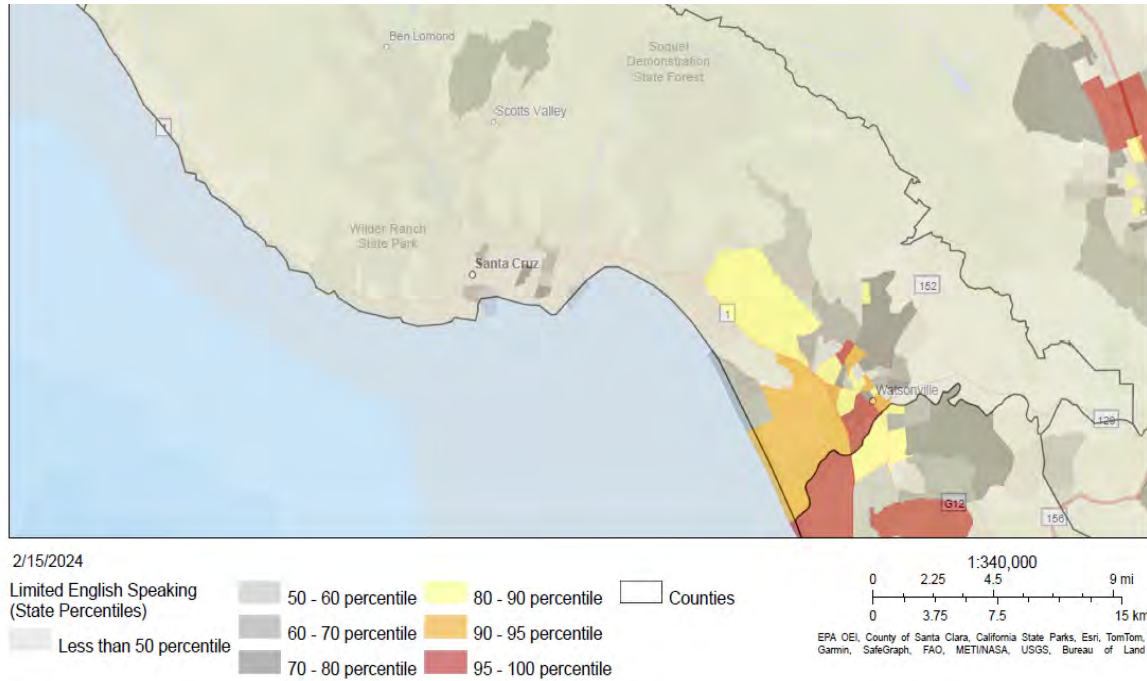


Figure 3. Limited English-Speaker Areas. (US Census, 2024)

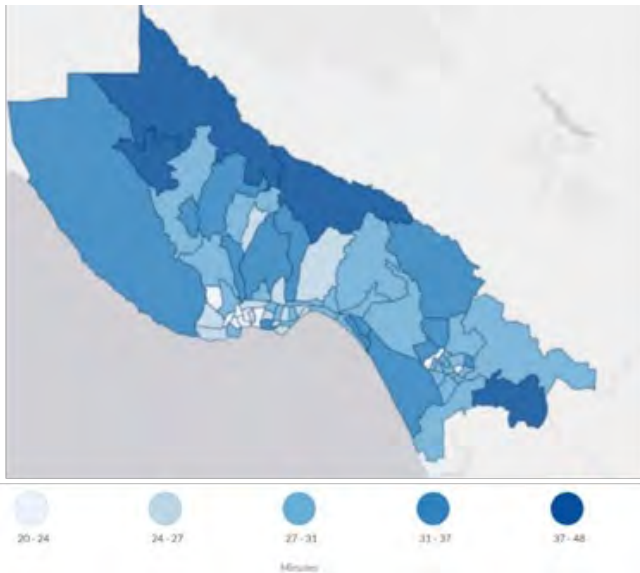


Figure 4. Average Commute Times in Minutes
(Datasharescc.org, US Census, 2024)

Longer Commutes: Communities in rural areas and in southern Santa Cruz County face longer commutes to employment, education, and essential services, experience less frequent bus service, and have higher collision rates. Lower wage workers have less flexibility when it comes to finding housing near where they work, face longer commutes and reduced access to vehicles.

Transportation to Medical Appointments: In the Santa Cruz County (2024 Community Health Assessment, Santa Cruz County HSA), transportation to medical appointments was identified as one of the key barriers to access to healthcare, especially if patients need to go out of county, such as for Veterans Affairs (VA) care.

Roadway Conditions: Over 60% of roads in unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County are in poor or failed condition. This is especially acute in rural areas and along roadways passing over waterways, where maintaining culverts can be more challenging.

Community Spending on Transportation: Household spending on transportation as a percentage of all annual household spending varies from 14.1% to 17.2% in Santa Cruz County, with the zip codes spending the most on transportation located in the North Coast and Southern Santa Cruz County.¹

¹ Includes spending on out-of-town transportation, local transportation, and vehicle expenses.

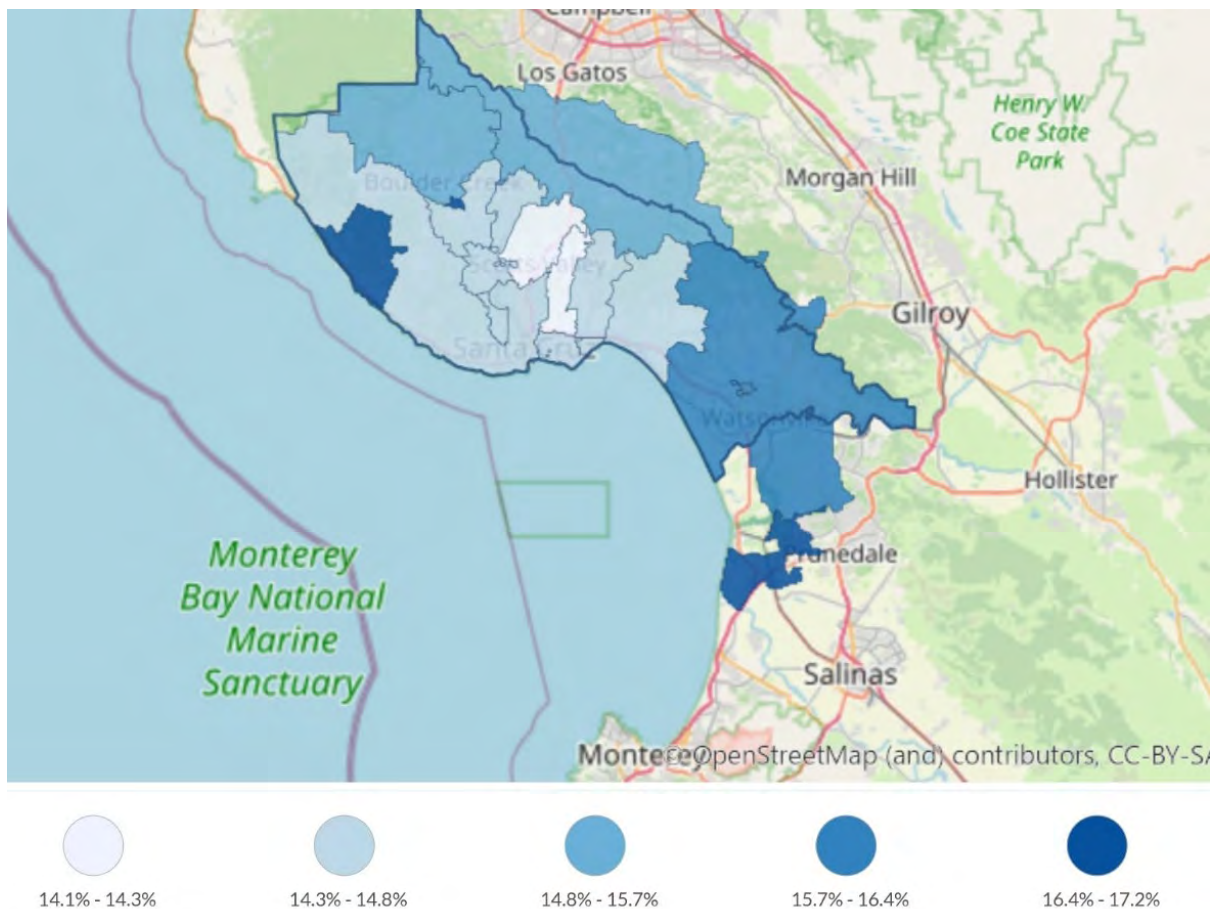


Figure 5. Community Spending on Transportation (Datasharessc.org, 2025)

Fewer Multimodal Choices/Limited Access to Destinations: Fewer bicycle lanes, less frequent transit service, and more gaps in the sidewalk network leave residents in many areas of the county with fewer travel options. These areas may disproportionately suffer from the negative impacts of having poor access, including but not limited to spending large amounts of money on owning and maintaining a vehicle. The Caltrans Transportation Equity Index (EQI) map of areas with poor multimodal access to destinations is shown below. Caltrans compared transit and auto travel times, and travel times by bicycle and walking under varying conditions.

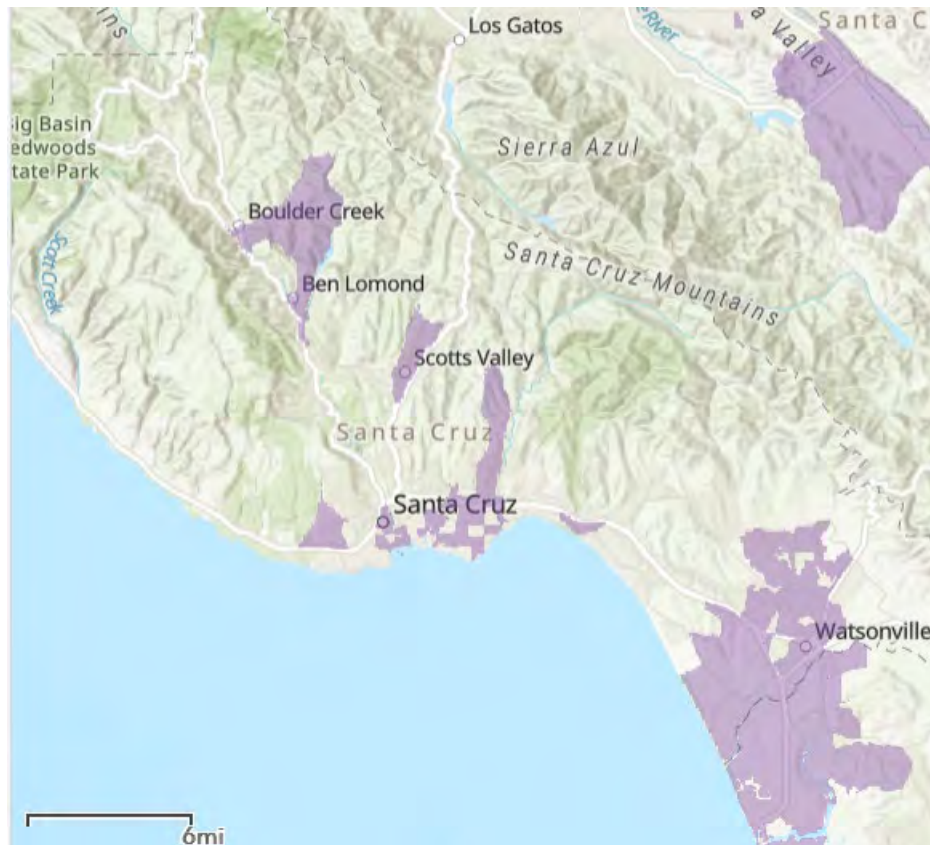


Figure 6. Access to Destinations (Caltrans EQI, 2025)

Traffic Exposure: The Caltrans EQI looks at socioeconomic data, traffic proximity and volume data, and crash data to identify areas that are most impacted by traffic and the negative externalities it produces, such as noise and pollution.

The Digital Divide Index (DDI): The DDI measures the gap between those who have affordable access, skills, and support to effectively engage online and those who do not. This can prevent or limit access to transit trip information, RTC information and engagement efforts. High-speed internet access is increasingly recognized as a “super determinant of health,” playing a key role in health outcomes and impacting social determinants of health such as employment, education and a range of essential services. Areas where the digital divide is high can also limit the ability of people in those areas to telecommute and access often higher paying jobs. Communities most in

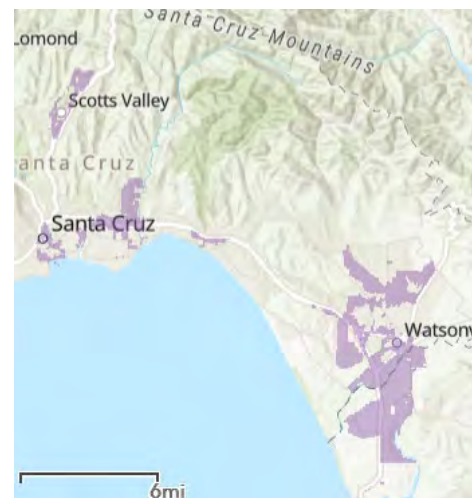


Figure 7. Traffic Exposure Index (Caltrans EQI, 2025)

need of investment include those with a high percentage of persons who are age 60 or over, incarcerated individuals, veterans, persons with disabilities, members of a racial or ethnic minority group, rural residents, individuals with a language barrier and individuals living in households with incomes not exceeding 150 percent of the federal poverty level. These covered populations have experienced lower rates of computer and internet use ([U.S. Census Bureau](#)).



Figure 8. Computer Access - Areas where 7.5% or more of residents do not have access to a computer. (US Census, 2024)

Transportation Investments: Substantial state and regional investments in Santa Cruz County’s transportation network primarily benefited residents in and around the City of Santa Cruz from 1995-2020, including four of the largest capital transportation projects in Santa Cruz County: Mission Street/SR1 Widening, the Highway 1/Highway 17 Interchange (Fishhook), MetroBase Transit Operations facility and Soquel-Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project. In recent years, the RTC and partner agencies have shifted their focus towards improving transportation infrastructure and services that enhance access and mobility for South County residents.

Identifying Equity Priority Communities

A key element of this planning effort was to update the regional definition of “Disadvantaged Communities” that is used to identify communities and individuals that have faced greater barriers, been overburdened or underserved due to historic or systemic inequities or racism. These communities too often experience more crashes, face longer commutes to jobs and school, have fewer choices for how to get where they need to go, and have higher health risks than others due to demographic characteristics. Recognizing and mapping these communities helps agencies address disparities through more targeted transportation planning, outreach, and investments.

Based on extensive input from the RTC's Transportation Equity Workgroup, which included discussions on dozens of possible metrics, review of readily available data, and taking into consideration input from the RTC's advisory committees and members of the community, the RTC has identified "**Transportation Equity Priority Communities**" in Santa Cruz County. These include geographic areas where more than 40% of residents are low income or 50% or more are Latino or people of color, and areas serving higher concentrations of seniors, youth, and people with disabilities.

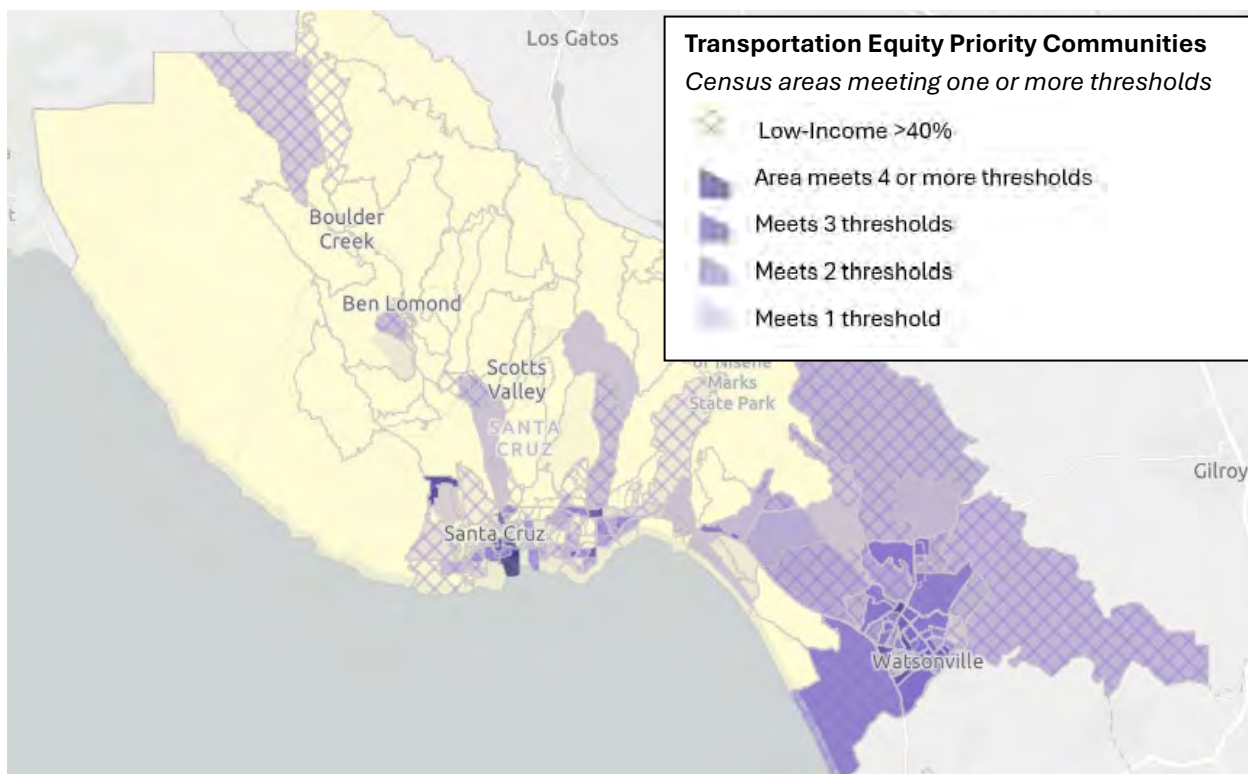


Figure 9. Transportation Equity Priority Communities (RTC, 2025).

The eight indices and thresholds to determine priority communities for this Equity Plan and the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) include:

1. **Low-Income:** An area would be considered low income if 40% or more of residents earn less than 80% of the statewide median income or are at or below the most recent county limit set by the California Housing and Community Development (HCD) or 200% of the federal poverty level.
- 1b. **Poverty-Level:** Even if an area does not meet the Low-Income threshold above, an area would still be considered an equity priority community if greater than 20% of residents earn less than the federal poverty level.
2. **People of Color:** 50% or more of the residents in an area are non-white, mixed-race, or Hispanic, Latino, Latinx or Latine (“minority areas”)
3. **Limited English Proficiency/Linguistic Isolation (purple):** 10% or more of households in an area where English is not spoken “very well.”
4. **People with a Disability:** 15% or more of residents in an area have a disability
5. **Seniors:** 10% or more of residents are over age 75
6. **Youth:** 20% or more of residents are under age 18
7. **Renters:** 50% or more of occupants are renters.

In the map above, areas that meet several thresholds are darker in color, as compared to other areas in Santa Cruz County or California. Areas that meet the low-income threshold are shown with hatch marks. Geographic area sizes vary based on available data. Census blocks are the smallest geographic unit in the census (sometimes covering just a single city block), however most census data is only available for larger areas. A census tract is a geographic area that contains multiple block groups, and a block group is made up of multiple census blocks.

Maps showing the breakdown of each of these individual indices countywide are provided below.

Low-Income: This map reflects the percentage of residents earning less than 80% of the statewide median income or are at or below the most recent county limit set by the California Housing and Community Development (HCD) or 200% of the federal poverty level. Equity Priority Communities are areas where more than 40% of residents are low-income.

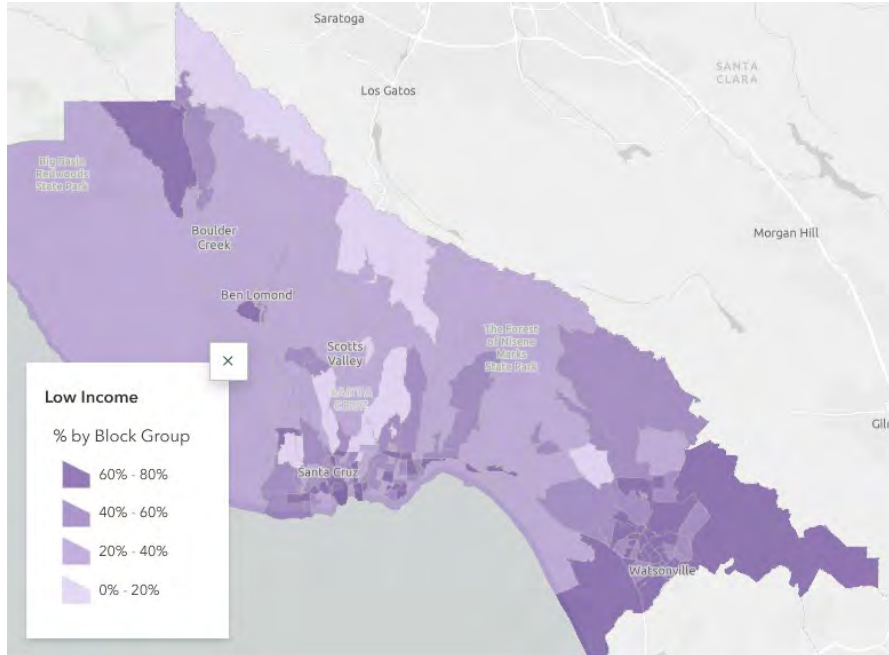


Figure 10. Figure Low-Income (U.S.Census, Block Group Level, 2025)

Poverty Level: Percentage of households in federal poverty level by Census block group. Equity Priority Communities are areas where more than 20% of residents earn less than the federal definition.

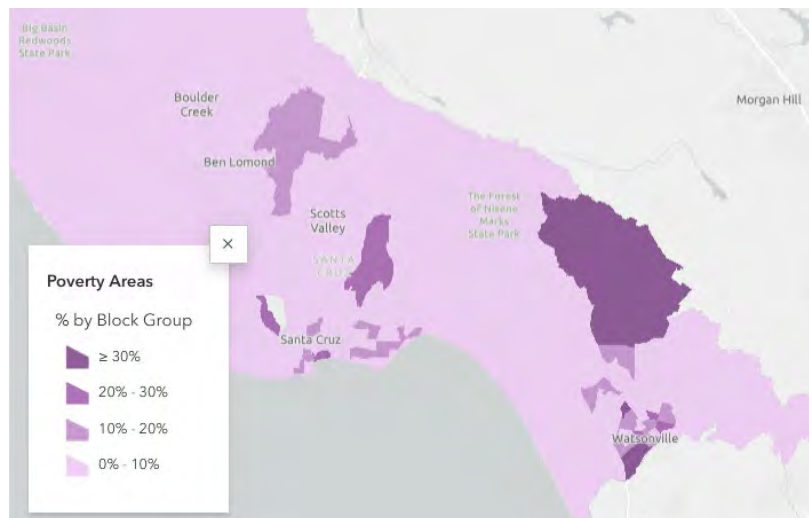


Figure 11. Poverty-Levels (American Community Survey, 2022)

People of Color: Equity Priority Communities are areas where people of color make up more than 50% of households.

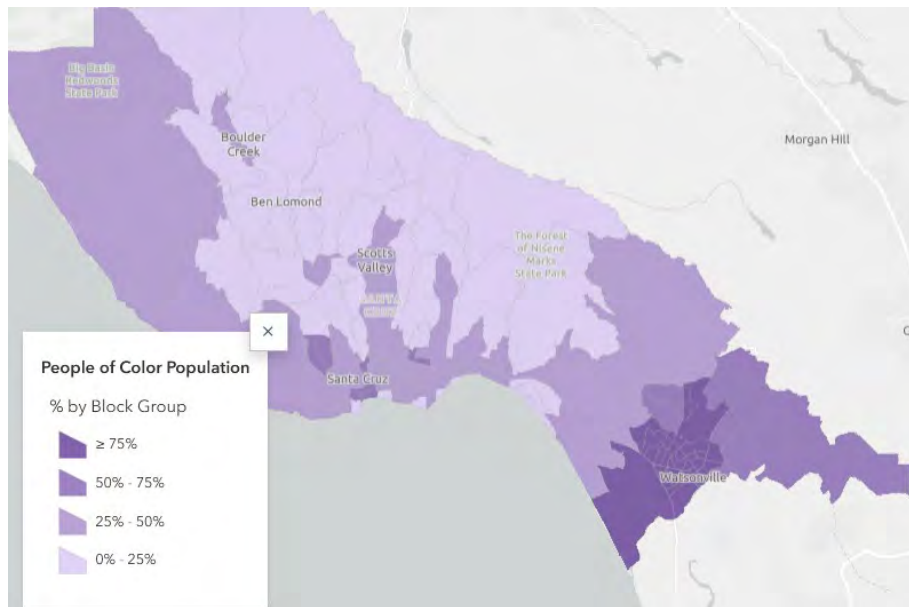


Figure 12. People of Color (U.S. Census, block group level, 2024)

Limited English Proficiency/Linguistic Isolation: Equity Priority Communities are areas where English is not spoken “very well” in 10% or more of households.

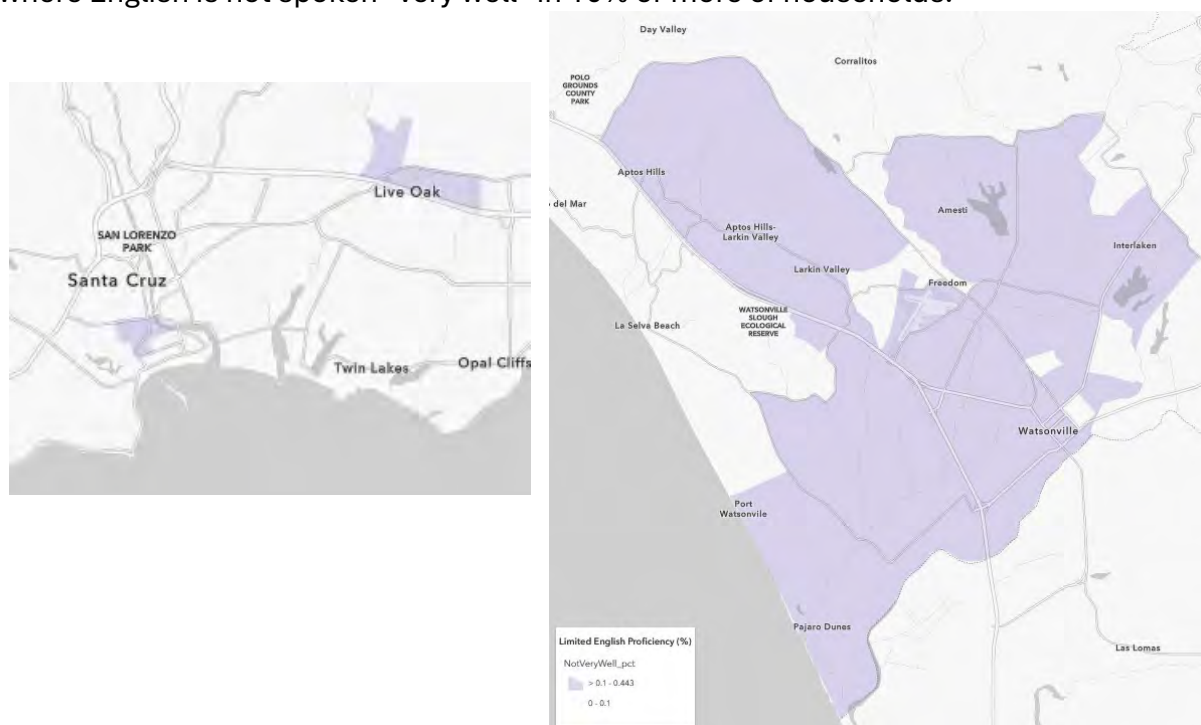


Figure 13. Limited English Proficiency (Census American Community Survey, block group, 2022)

People with a Disability: Areas where more than 15% of the population has a disability.



Figure 14. Disability (Census American Community Survey, census tract level, 2024)

Housing Affordability and Renters: Areas where greater than 50% of occupants are renters.



Figure 15. Renter Occupation Levels (U.S. Census)

Key Destinations serving low-income individuals: This includes areas around senior and community centers, food banks, health and human service departments, Title I schools, and other key destinations serving higher proportion of low-income individuals.



Figure 16. Destinations Serving Low-Income Individuals
(Source: Local agencies, resource centers, County Health Services)

Key Destinations for Seniors: Areas within 300 meters of locations where seniors go more frequently than rest of population, including senior centers, senior housing, and medical facilities.



Figure 17. Key Destinations for Senior (Source: Local senior service providers)

Youth under age 18: Areas where 20% or more of residents are under 18 years old and areas immediately adjacent (300 foot radius) to schools serving a high proportion of low-income youth (Title I schools)

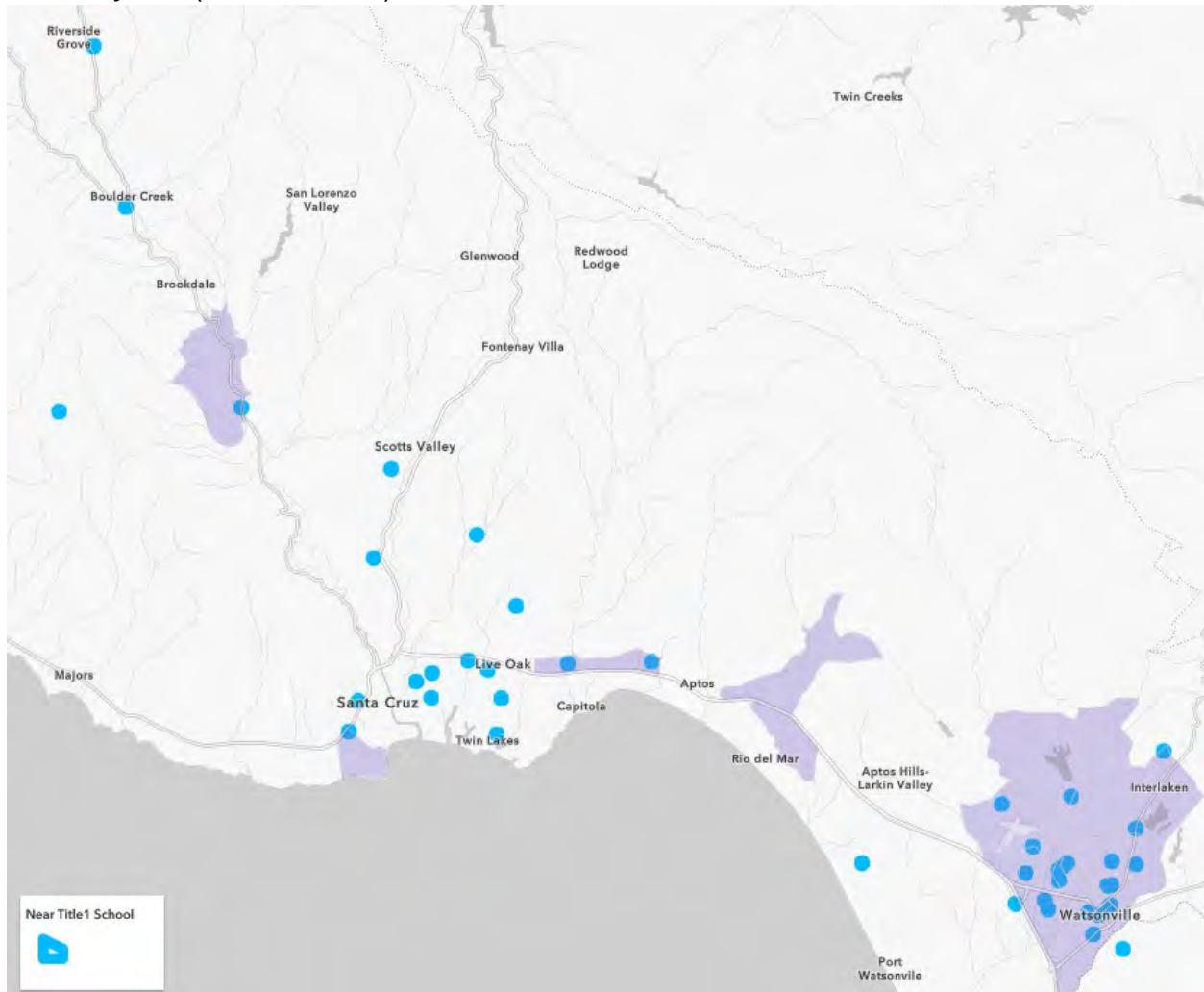


Figure 18. Youth Concentrations and Destinations (Census American Community Survey, census tract level and California Department of Education)

Nomenclature

Terminology and metrics used by government agencies, community-based organizations, and others to identify communities and individuals that are more likely to experience inequities vary at the local, regional, state, and national level. The RTC worked with its Transportation Equity Workgroup, E&DTAC, partner agencies, and other stakeholders to update regional definitions, terminology and metrics used by the RTC.

The RTC previously used the term “disadvantaged community,” reflecting language in state and federal legislation, but many agencies are now shifting toward more positive and objective terminology, rather than pejorative terms. Following thoughtful discussions with

the Transportation Equity Workgroup, input from the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), partner agencies, and other stakeholders, the RTC is increasingly using the term “equity priority communities” across its activities. State and federal agencies continue to use a variety of definitions, such as “disadvantaged communities (DAC),” “priority populations,” “historically marginalized,” “underserved,” and “communities of concern.” Local entities are often required to use metrics and definitions set by the funding agencies, though they are encouraged to adopt locally meaningful definitions or more locally applicable definitions.

It is important to note that language and terms related to equity and representation are continuously evolving and may be modified in the future.

Below are some of the terms used by other entities, drawn from existing sources, including, but not limited to the [Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#), the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), and the [University of Washington Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Style Guide](#). The list of terms is not exhaustive, and the definitions and understandings of the terms may differ depending on agency or stakeholder perspectives.

• Areas of Concentrated Poverty • Communities of Concern • Disadvantaged Communities • Economically Distressed Areas • Environmental Justice Communities • Equity Action Areas • Equity Emphasis Area • Equity Focus Communities • Equity Prioritized Investment Areas	• Equity Priority Communities • Equity Priority Neighborhoods • Historically Marginalized Communities • Opportunity Zones • Priority Populations • Transportation Disadvantaged Areas • Transportation Equity Zones • Underserved Communities

Goals, Vision and Actions

Vision: Every resident of Santa Cruz County has safe, affordable, reliable, and multimodal transportation options — whether walking, biking, rolling (wheelchairs, skateboards, scooter, etc.), taking transit, driving or any intermodal combination — that connect them to jobs, education, health care, recreation and community, regardless of income, race/ethnicity, age, disability, or gender.

Purpose: To reduce transportation disparities tied to income, geography or mobility constraints; to ensure that lower-income and historically underserved communities in the County receive equitable investments, service and opportunities; to align transportation policy with social justice, health and climate goals.

Goals and Strategies: To achieve this vision, goals and strategies have been identified in four key areas.

1. Advance Transportation Equity
2. Empower Communities in Decision-Making
3. Embed Equity in the RTC's Culture
4. Embed Equity in Project Development and Resource Equity

1. Advance Transportation Equity

1.1 Improve Affordable, Reliable Transit Options

- Expand bus frequency on key routes serving workers, including early-morning agricultural shifts and shift workers.
- Create seamless regional connections with Santa Cruz Metro, Monterey-Salinas Transit, and future rail service.
- Establish reduced-fare or zero-fare pilot for low-income riders.
- Expand options for riders who are "unbanked" to pay for transit passes.

1.2. Address Longer-Distance Commutes & Income Burdens

- Launch commute cost-reduction strategies for low-income families living farther from jobs due to affordable housing shortages. This could include carpool incentives and vanpools and microtransit to employment hubs.
- Work with employers to create employer-funded transportation benefits or vanpool programs, especially for lower wage workers.



1.3. Improve Road Safety in High-Injury Areas

- Support implementation of Vision Zero Plans and proven countermeasures that reduce injury and fatal crashes.
- Prioritize safety projects along known high-speed corridors such as Freedom Blvd, Main Street/State Route 152, Riverside Drive.
- Reduce crashes with lighting upgrades and traffic calming.
- Build safe bike and pedestrian networks for students and workers in farmworker communities.

1.4. Fair Share Contributions from Heavy Road Users

- Develop mechanisms for delivery companies (e.g., Amazon, UPS) whose EV fleets cause road wear but pay minimal fuel tax.
- Support state efforts to implement road user charges for commercial fleets with high miles in Santa Cruz County.

1.5. Reduce Travel Distances

- Support local jurisdictions building affordable workforce housing and transit-oriented developments that will reduce vehicle miles traveled.

1.6. Safe Access for Walking, Biking, and Transit

- Prioritize filling sidewalk gaps in neighborhoods and key school corridors.
- Increase low-stress bike networks, such as protected bike infrastructure, connecting housing to jobs and schools.

1.7. Ensure EV Access Is Affordable & Equitable

- Support EV incentive programs for low-income families, including used EV rebate programs.

- Work with partner agencies, including MBARD and housing departments to facilitate public charging stations in apartments, mobile home parks, and downtown corridors.

1.8. Reduce Pollution Burdens in Agricultural & Industrial Zones

- Work with MBARD to target air monitoring and emissions-reduction projects along truck routes and in farmworker neighborhoods.
- Prioritize low-emission freight routes and truck parking to prevent idling near homes and schools.
- Incentivize local freight to electrify their fleet, either with electric trailers or electric trucks and trailers.

1.9. Improve Disaster-Resilient Transportation

- Prioritize funding for road repairs vulnerable to storms, flooding, and slope failures along the Pajaro River and creeks in and around Watsonville.
- Ensure emergency evacuation routes and information are accessible to low-income communities and non-English speaking households.

1.10. Equitable and Transparent Funding

- Use equity metrics to score transportation projects and track how transportation funds are allocated.
- Direct a higher proportion of funding to areas identified as Equity Priority Communities, including neighborhoods in and around Watsonville.
- Create biennial public dashboards showing progress on safety, road repairs, transit reliability, and multimodal improvements.



2. Empower Communities in Decision-Making: Outreach and Engagement

In advancing transportation equity, it is essential that marginalized communities have a meaningful voice in decision-making. The RTC is committed to strengthening engagement and communication with equity priority communities by integrating inclusive public participation strategies into all planning and project development processes. Active involvement of the people we serve leads to better decisions, more responsive projects, stronger public trust, and greater accountability and transparency.

While the RTC has seen strong participation in many outreach efforts, community input has not always reflected the full diversity of Santa Cruz County. Surveys of RTC staff, Board members, and advisory committees consistently identify community engagement as one of the most important tools for addressing inequities. Many residents, particularly those with lower incomes, people of color, and non-English-speakers, have not had equal opportunities to participate in shaping the transportation system. These community members bring valuable knowledge of local needs and strengths, yet their voices often go unheard due to longstanding barriers related to access, trust, language, and communication. As a result, projects may fail to meet their needs or may unintentionally reinforce existing disparities.

Authentic engagement requires sharing power with individuals and community-based organizations and recognizing their expertise. To make participation accessible, the RTC must provide information that is accessible to people with varying abilities and languages, increase cultural awareness, and strengthen coordination across local agencies to streamline communication. By investing in meaningful, inclusive engagement, the RTC can help build a more equitable, effective, and community-driven transportation future for all residents.

Rooted in our agency's mission to *develop and deliver transportation solutions for a vibrant, sustainable, and equitable community*, the RTC has developed an Equitable Outreach and Engagement Toolkit (Appendix A) to ensure that the community engagement strategies we design and carry out are equitable, inclusive, and responsive and foster greater community involvement and awareness of the RTC's work.

Outreach and Engagement Strategies: To enhance community communication and to better meet community members where they are, the RTC will undertake the following actions.

1. **Prioritize Community Engagement and Communications:** Target community members that have historically been underrepresented in RTC engagement and communications.

2. **Language Access:** Continue to offer translation services at RTC meetings, increase the number of staff at all levels that are fluent in Spanish. Hold at least two public workshops or meetings per year in Spanish (with English translation).
3. **Community-Driven Decision Making:** Partner with Community Based Organizations (CBOs), farmworker organizations, youth groups, and neighborhood associations to provide information about transportation projects and identify priorities.
4. **Coordinate Joint Community Meetings:** Work with partner agencies and community leaders to regularly share RTC and partner transportation efforts, updates, and partnership opportunities. This is intended to serve as an opportunity for the community to learn more about the various transportation entities in Santa Cruz County, better understand the RTC's role as it relates to other agencies, and learn about new projects and uplift important community needs in a manner that is more efficient and respectful of the community's time.
5. **Support Community Meetings:** Coordinate or support regular meetings with the local organizations, community partners, and schools to create synergy around equity work, and limit burden on individual agencies and community organizations.
6. **Support Equity Trainings for Multi-Agency Staff:** In collaboration with the CBOs, coordinate multi-agency opportunities for cultural competency training and best engagement practices that will serve communities facing the greatest inequities.
7. **Identify Leaders for Community Outreach:** Designate the PIO and the staff Communication Strategic Planning team to lead staff in community outreach and engagement. The lead will support staff to achieve improved community engagement, such as increasing the RTC's presence with local community-based organizations, schools, and employers.
8. **Include Racial Equity and Community Engagement Requirements in Agreements with Projects Sponsors and Contractors:** This includes developing agreement processes that include racial equity and community engagement in the RTC's application criteria and evaluation process.
9. **Improve Advertisement of Contract or Funding Opportunities:** Improve outreach and advertisement of available funding opportunities to reach equity priority communities.
10. **Increase the number of bicultural and bilingual staff at outreach and engagement events.**
11. **Communication Strategies to Serve Diverse Communities:** Establish and strengthen communication strategies that meet the communities where they are physically, in the appropriate language, and discuss items that are priorities to those communities. Examples of communities to establish relationships with include: school districts, CBOs affiliated with local houses of worship, local businesses, non-local organizations, and underrepresented visitors.

12. **Diversify Outreach Strategies:** Enhance community outreach through tabling at cultural events where communities who face the greatest inequities meet; conducting educational and experiential outreach at local educational programs; coordinating with other governmental or community entities to expand outreach; participate in local schools events; and continue to offer Internships.
13. **Dismantle Language Access Barriers through Translation and Interpretation:** Ensure that public meetings meet the language needs of the public. Aspire to translate all RTC news releases and external communications in Spanish. Continue providing Spanish-language interpretation services for RTC meetings and evaluate other language needs.
14. **Develop Community Ambassador Programs:** Explore partnerships with existing ambassador programs to reach out to the community to provide information and education about various transportation initiatives, and connection to resources and services. Ambassadors can help make RTC meetings and workshops a more welcoming place. Ambassadors should represent the demographics of communities facing the greatest inequities.
15. **Provide Stipends to Encourage participation in RTC advisory committees:** Consistent with civil rights, nondiscrimination guidance and best practices for engaging underrepresented community members, staff has been working to increase participation in RTC programs, planning and project development from community members that represent groups that have faced greater barriers due to historic or systemic inequities or racism. This includes recruiting members to RTC advisory committees that reflect the diversity of Santa Cruz County. In order to help with recruitment and to increase representation on RTC committees and workgroups from individuals that have been historically underserved, underrepresented, and/or discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, due to limited English proficiency, due to ability, age or sex, or on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, religious creed, veteran's or socioeconomic status, the RTC currently provides stipends of \$50 per committee meeting attended to members of the Bicycle Advisory Committee, Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee, and Transportation Equity Workgroup. RTC should annually evaluate stipend amounts and determine if additional financial support is needed to recruit low-income community residents that reflect the diversity of Santa Cruz County.
16. **Build Community Capacity:** Partner with Caltrans or provide funding for other agencies and local organizations to create and support employment pathways for young, diverse, and local community members that are under-resourced. This may include collaboration with partners who use fellowship and student assistant models to diversify the candidate pool to support community engagement efforts.

Transportation Equity Workgroup

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) established a Transportation Equity Workgroup to help guide the RTC's Transportation Equity Action Plan and support implementation of quality transportation infrastructure, services, and solutions that more equitably meet the diverse needs of community members.

The Workgroup provided a forum for the exchange of information on equity concerns regarding transportation, while building and strengthening relationships between the transportation agencies (RTC, METRO, local jurisdictions, Lift Line) and community-based organizations, non-profits, and equity experts and practitioners. RTC staff collaborated with Workgroup members to identify best practices to elevate equity in transportation project planning and delivery; identify community engagement strategies; identify possible criteria for identifying "transportation disadvantaged communities" or "priority populations"; and metrics to evaluate equity benefits and outcomes of transportation investments and policies.

Membership: Equity Workgroup membership (see Acknowledgements) focused on voices in Santa Cruz County that are underrepresented at most RTC meetings and workshops, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), tribes, older adults, youth, low-income, unhoused, rural communities, queer, women and women identifying individuals, people with disabilities and other historically marginalized community members. In addition to individuals, representatives from community-based organizations, housing justice organizations, environmental justice and equity organizations, and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE) were encouraged to participate.

Strategy for Future: The RTC should integrate the Transportation Equity Workgroup into its Bicycle Committee and Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC). The scope of these committees should be updated to emphasize their role in providing information, advice, and recommendations to the RTC and partner agencies on implementation of the Equity Plan and how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, civil rights and environmental justice, especially as related to transportation planning, funding, project prioritization and implementation of highway, road, bike, pedestrian, transit and other transportation projects.

3. Embed Equity in the RTC's Culture – Equity Discovery Report & Recommendations

The RTC enlisted the assistance of The Justice Collective (TJC) to conduct a comprehensive Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) assessment for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC). The assessment included a review of RTC policies, procedures, and internal documents; in-depth interviews and surveys from staff, board, advisory committee members and stakeholders, as well as anecdotal and observational data and insights from a customized series of trainings, group and individual conflict advising strategy sessions.

TJC assisted RTC to:

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of policies, practices, and culture through an equity lens.
- Review and recommendations to remove barriers in hiring and procurement.
- Develop and deliver tailored ADEI trainings for staff, board, and committees.
- Hold conflict resolution and skill-building advising sessions with staff.
- Provide recommendations to inform the SCCRTC's creation of an actionable plan with monitoring and evaluation components to ensure sustained progress.

The TJC's *Equity Discovery Report and Recommendations*, included as Appendix B supports the RTC's mission to advance equity across organizational culture, community engagement, and transportation service delivery, providing actionable strategies to build a more inclusive and accessible transportation system for all Santa Cruz County residents.

While the RTC is making progress in advancing equity work, the agency does not embed equity into all its projects, programs, and internal actions, including employees' day-to-day work. The RTC serves a diverse community and as such, we must continue to improve our understanding of institutional racism and historical regional inequities, and their implications for our transportation network and services, planning, and engagement processes.

We face challenges in ensuring cultural understanding and humility when engaging with the public, including with people who have different travel needs from our employees—or while discussing difficult topics internally. Via this Equity Plan, the RTC commits to providing guidance through policies, trainings, and community leadership to embed equity into the RTC's culture.

Near Term Actions

There are several near-term and easily attainable actions informed by TJC's Equity Discovery Report that the RTC can implement with minimal structural or budgetary impact. The following items are directly quoted from the report for clarity and alignment.

1. **Replace Gendered Language in Policies:** “All instances of ‘his/her’ should be changed to ‘their’ to ensure gender inclusivity...”

Action: The RTC is already in the process of updating its policy and procedure documents to reflect the latest state and federal requirements and will implement this change across HR and administrative documents.

2. **Update Job Descriptions to Include ADEI Responsibilities:** “Update job descriptions to include explicit ADEI responsibilities and expectations.”

Action: HR staff will incorporate ADEI language during routine job description updates or prior to posting job announcements. HR can use a standard equity clause to ensure consistency.

3. **Implement Blind Application Review Process:** “Implement a blind review process for initial application screenings by redacting identifying information...”

Action: This can be piloted manually by HR—removing names, schools, and locations from resumes before review. No software is needed to begin.

4. **Reserve Professional Development Funds for Underrepresented Staff:** “Reserve a portion of professional development funds specifically for staff from underrepresented groups.”

Action: Reallocate a small percentage of existing training funds and establish transparent criteria for access. This can be managed through a simple internal application process.

5. **Clarify and Communicate RTP Goals in Meetings:** “Make the RTP goals a standing fixture of every meeting and a part of every project plan.”

Action: Include a section to staff reports, a standing slide or agenda item to board and Committee meetings describing how items advance RTP goals, which include equity-focused goals. This requires no new resources and reinforces alignment with agency goals.

6. **Implement Structured Mediation Protocols:** “The RTC should implement a structured mediation protocol to ensure accountability in using the agreed upon working norms.”

Action: Adapt existing HR procedures or use a simple flowchart to guide cultural understanding and conflict resolution. This can be introduced during a staff meeting or retreat.

Additional Goals and Actions:

3.1 Improve internal procedures, guidelines, and leadership to advance equity efforts

Recommended actions include:

a. Establish an Internal Equity Committee

Establish a committee, comprised of employees from multiple levels of the organization, to meet regularly to lead equity and nondiscrimination efforts and evaluate implementation of the RTC's Equity Action Plan and Nondiscrimination Plan. A fundamental role of the committee is to help plan the operationalization of the actions within these RTC plans. The committee should rotate leadership to ensure various perspectives are represented and to share the workload. Within one year, the RTC should further representation or regular input from Board members and provide stipends to community representatives to help with implementation and accountability.

b. Develop Specific Equity Policies and Procedures

Incorporate equity in policies, guidelines, and procedures; including new policies, guidelines, and procedures needed to advance equity. To help achieve this, the RTC has hired consultants to assist in updating RTC policies and procedures. RTC policies and procedures should be reviewed and evaluated at least biennially by staff.

c. Incorporate Equity Policies and Procedures into RTC Operations

Each RTC program should develop annual operational work plans to guide their work to accomplish the goals of the RTC. Department directors will ensure each operational plan incorporates goals and actions of this Equity Plan and the RTC's Nondiscrimination Plan, including adhering to resulting equity policies and procedures.

3.2 Increase staff understanding of racial equity principles and commit to the following actions:

a. Set and Track Equity Goals

- Develop a protocol for yearly equity-focused goal setting, using the Equity Plan as a guidepost for areas of improvement

- Develop a staff survey that identifies growth in understanding of antiracism, racial and social equity, and community engagement. The survey results will help inform decisions about Equity Plan implementation.

b. Continue Training Staff, Board, and Committee Members

- Provide trainings at least annually to staff to support effective and respectful discussions about racial and social equity issues facing the RTC.
- Each employee shall also attend trainings that build cultural awareness and competency, including trainings that provide best practices for the projects they work on, such as planning, capital project development, budgeting, human resources, and engagement. This may include additional training on how to effectively and respectfully navigate conversations about racial equity in the workplace.
- Train New Employees: The RTC will provide training on equity best practices and cultural awareness and competency for all newly hired employees.
- Seek Training from Community Leaders: Engage with organizations based in and serving the communities facing the greatest need to educate RTC staff on cultural competency and best engagement practices.

c. Increase Team Building Opportunities

Include support for agency-wide team-building sessions and interactive workshops that focus on personal relationships to build an inclusive work environment.

d. Bring Diverse Perspectives to the RTC board

Evaluate mechanisms to bring more diverse perspectives and decision-makers to the Commission that reflect the diversity of Santa Cruz County.

3.3 Enhance the RTC's Capacity to Address Equity

Challenges

The RTC needs support and direction for staff to more readily and easily incorporate equity and community engagement into their full workloads. Many of the goals and actions identified in this Equity Plan are relatively new and are not yet broadly integrated into all the RTC's work. As such, the RTC will need to enhance its capacity to implement the Transportation Equity Action Plan and companion Nondiscrimination Plan.

Actions

To help reduce workload impacts of implementing the RTC's equity work, the RTC commits to the following actions:

a. Dedicate Staff to Lead Equity Efforts

The RTC will dedicate staffing to lead equity efforts, support Commissioners and advisory committees, and help staff implement the Equity Plan strategies. This work will be led by the RTC's new Internal Services Director position, with the support of the Executive Director, Planning Director, staff, and the Commission.

b. Dedicate Sufficient Resources to Address Equity

Dedicate specific funding and staffing resources towards community engagement, relationship-building with community representatives, and Equity Plan implementation. Staff will reevaluate periodically to ensure there is sufficient resources.

c. Provide Project Funding for Equity-Focused Community Engagement

To provide additional support for employees designing and implementing projects, the RTC will ensure that project budgets include funding for equity-focused community outreach. This may include additional funds for language interpretation and translation, and design and distribution of information in ways that will reach communities facing the greatest inequities. Additional engagement recommendations are shown in the RTC's Equity Outreach and Engagement Toolkit (Appendix x) and actions 4 and 5.

d. Overcome Language Access Barriers

While the RTC has several bilingual Spanish-speaking staff available to provide information and discuss projects in Spanish, the RTC must make additional progress to overcome language access barriers.

- Provide interpretation and translation services in Spanish at board meetings and workshops.
- Hold workshops and meetings in Spanish on major projects and policy actions.
- Increase the number of RTC documents available in Spanish, including outreach and agenda materials. Track requests for information in languages other than English and consider additional language services for the community, including American Sign Language.

3.4 Improve Equity in Hiring and Retention

Challenges

As an agency that serves local community members and visitors from around the State and world, the RTC should continue to work to diversify its internal demographics to better reflect the diversity of the Santa Cruz County. This goal and challenge are intimately tied with other goals. The RTC's staff and Board do not reflect the diversity of Santa Cruz County, though it has improved in recent years.

Santa Cruz County has a population of approximately 260,000 people, with 51% identifying as white (not Latino/Hispanic), 36.37% identifying as Latino/Hispanic, 4.88% Asian, 1.36% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1.18% Black/African American, and 20% some other race (<https://www.datasharescc.org>, 2025). 15% identify as two or more races,

Based on a winter 2024/25 survey of 20 RTC staff, 65% identified as white (not Latino or Hispanic), 25% Latino or Hispanic, 15% Asian or Southeast Asian, and 5% declined to state. 10% identified as two or more races.

Of 8 board members that provided responses to a February 2025 survey, 86% identified as white and 14% identified as Latino or Hispanic.

Disparities between the demographics of the RTC and the demographics of the community it serves could result in inequities. One example is that it may lead to cultural insensitivity or micro aggressions towards employees who identify as Black, Brown, Indigenous, people of color, multi-lingual or bicultural, and persons experiencing financial insecurity.

Actions

To improve recruitment and hiring, and to support staff career development and retention, particularly for staff from diverse backgrounds, the RTC commits to the following actions:

a. Improve Recruitment

Create a recruitment strategy to better attract Latino, bilingual, Spanish-speaking, and candidates from communities facing the greatest inequities, including students at the local community colleges and high schools. This could include expanding internship opportunities, presenting information about transportation-related careers at high schools and community colleges, and hosting "Lunch and Learns" or similar casual learning opportunities to connect with and support potential employees.

b. Support Alternative Employee Pathways

Create connections with local community organizations, schools, colleges, nonprofits, or other agencies that have feeder programs or pathways to public service and environmental employment for priority populations, such as Black,

Brown, Indigenous, People of Color, multi-lingual, and persons experiencing financial insecurity.

c. Remove Implicit Bias

Remove implicit bias in hiring practices, including redacting names and other identifying information from applications, and standardizing evaluation scores for applicants.

d. Job Announcements

Within all job announcements and descriptions, require that a minimum of 5% of an employee's duties be dedicated to equity work.

e. Retention

Reevaluate and develop retention strategies that create a culture of inclusivity and address historical racial, cultural, and gender bias. An agency's culture must be welcoming and supportive of all its employees to thrive.

f. Onboarding/Offboarding

Create an onboarding framework that provides a mentorship or buddy system for new hires. Ensure that the offboarding process includes questions about equity at the RTC and any experiences that can inform progress or areas of needed growth. For the Board, include equity training as part of Board onboarding practices.

g. Employee Evaluation

Include equity-related goals in employee performance reviews and individual development plans. Evaluate the impact of cost-of-living increases on staff and to the extent possible, continue to offer creative solutions to retain employees such as flexible work options and bilingual pay differentials.

4. Embed Equity in Project Development and Resource Allocation

There are a variety of ways that an agency can embed equity in transportation project development and resource allocation. Some of the flexible processes and a set of tools that can be practiced by the RTC and other transportation entities include:

- a. **Prioritize investments** that serve low-income residents. These include public transit, pedestrian infrastructure, and bicycle facilities, maintaining rural roads, and reducing travel times between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. Incorporate equity lenses into transportation projects and services countywide by embedding equity

considerations for project development, nomination, and selection processes into funding programs and guidance.

- b. **Community-driven design:** Create designs and solutions that focus on equity priority communities. Tap the experience and expertise of local communities to illuminate all design phases.
- c. **Community engagement – Listen & Learn:** Listen to residents, advisory committees and local governments to identify challenges and deliver solutions. Increase opportunities for people most affected by exclusion and shift decision-making power to the people who are affected by policies. Invest resources and build trust to ensure historically underrepresented communities can meaningfully influence decision-making.
- d. **Communications & marketing:** Set up regular, ongoing, varied and culturally specific communications to reach community members at their convenience.
- e. **Project delivery – Focus & Deliver:** Complete promised projects that reflect community input. Invest in training and education to advance fairness and inclusion.
- f. **Project evaluation – Define & Measure:** Use evidence-based, data-driven research that values both lived experience and technical results. Use success metrics to advance transparency and accountability and measure whether or not policies are succeeding. *Some of the equity metrics used to evaluate local transportation project benefits are described in the next chapter.*

Equitable practices should be considered throughout a project’s lifecycle (planning, development, and delivery). This can include structural strategies that reform planning practices to create inclusive, affordable, and resource-efficient transportation infrastructure, as well as procedural strategies that provide special benefits to disadvantaged groups to create fairness in process. Mindful and meaningful inclusion and engagement are critical to successfully advance equity in transportation planning as well as project development and delivery.

Priority Investments

How transportation projects are funded and where resources are allocated are critical aspects of transportation equity. Transportation funding has traditionally prioritized projects which disproportionately benefited wealthier suburban communities. When developing a project or program, agencies should explain how a project advances transportation equity from identification and inclusion to impacts and outcomes.

Equity Metrics for Evaluating Transportation Projects

The RTC, Caltrans, and local agencies use a variety of methods to identify and prioritize transportation projects and services. The following metrics can be used to evaluate transportation projects based on the extent to which they directly advance the needs of equity priority communities. Equity evaluation metrics can also be used to evaluate the potential effects of transportation projects on equity priority communities, ensuring that they do not exacerbate existing disparities. These are not meant to replace all other metrics used by the RTC and others to evaluate the best use of transportation funding, but should be considered when working to advance more equitable outcomes for our communities.

The following metrics, adapted from the *Transportation Equity Needs Assessment Toolkit* published by the Center for Transportation Equity, Decisions and Dollars, score project based on how well they address categories:

- Access to Opportunity
- Health and Environment
- Safety and Emergency Evacuation
- Affordability
- Mobility
- Burdens
- Community Engagement

Access to Opportunity

Access to opportunity considers the ability of target populations to reach employment locations, educational facilities, and other community services using different forms of transportation and at different times of the day. Transportation equity in this case is also clearly tied to land-use planning decisions and housing affordability. To improve access to opportunity, government agencies can: a) take steps to provide or relocate opportunities and services near underserved populations (such as the new South County Government Center opened in Watsonville in 2024), and b) improve transit service and bicycle and pedestrian connections to activity centers.

Factors that can affect access to opportunity include:

- Modal options – availability of a range of modes (e.g. transit, driving, biking, carpooling), affordability, safety, and convenience.
- Transportation network connectivity - network density and connection between modes.
- Land use proximity - the distance between activity locations, as well as land use density and mix.

Access to opportunity is grouped into three main factors: access to employment, access to education, and access to community services and facilities as shown in Table 1 and 2. The objective is to make access to opportunity for underserved populations a priority in project selection.

Table 1. Access to Opportunity Factors and Criteria

Access to Opportunity	Employment	Project improves access to employment opportunities.
	Education	Project improves access to educational opportunities (e.g., higher education, job training, schools, daycare, after school programs).
	Community Services and Shopping	Project improves access to community services, including parks and recreational areas, and shopping areas.

Table 2. Access to Opportunity Weighted Criteria

Access to Opportunity	Employment	Connects and/or significantly increases availability of safe and affordable travel options to major employers or areas with a high job density; or significantly decreases walking, biking, or transit travel time to a high job density location.
	Education	Connects high percent of students and/or significantly increases availability of safe and affordable travel options to educational facilities; or significantly decreases walking, biking, or transit travel time to large educational facilities.
	Community Services and Shopping	Connects and/or significantly increases availability of safe and affordable travel options to nearby parks, recreational facilities, shopping areas, and other community services. Or significantly decreases walking, biking, or transit travel time to community services and shopping areas.

Health and Environment

Transportation decisions have significant public health and environmental consequences. Transportation choices can impact obesity, heart disease, and blood pressure levels, and

mental health, as well as impact air quality and asthma levels. Active transportation (walking, cycling and riding the bus) support physical activity that can help reduce these negative health factors. Projects that reduce the number of miles driven (VMT) and replace gas and diesel vehicles with alternative fuels and electric vehicles can reduce vehicular emissions that are harmful to public health.

For the scorecard, health and environment are grouped into three main factors: health care, healthy food, and environment, as shown in Table 3 and Table 4. Each factor advances a specific objective, such as improving access to health care services. The criteria aim to improve connectivity and accessibility to health care services and healthy food and improve livability through the built environment.

Table 3. Health and Environment Factors and Criteria

Health and Environment	Health Care	Project improves access to health care services.
	Healthy Food	Project connects to grocery stores or markets that provide healthy and fresh food at affordable prices.
	Environment	Project increases livability (e.g., community cohesion, streetscaping, green infrastructure, etc.) through design and/or mitigation measures.

Table 4. Health and Environment Weighted Criteria

Health and Environment	Health Care	Connects and/or significantly increases availability of safe and affordable travel options to a hospital or other health care facilities; or significantly decreases walking, biking, or transit travel time to a hospital or other health care centers. Or significantly improves public health in areas where residents have health outcome disparities, including asthma, obesity, or diabetes.
	Healthy Food	Connects and/or significantly increases availability of safe and affordable travel options to a fresh produce market or grocery store or community gardens; or significantly decreases walking, biking, or transit travel time to a fresh produce market or grocery store.

	Environment	Significantly reduces noise level, emission rate, or vehicle miles traveled, and/or accomplishes two or more of the following: • Reinforces community cohesion • Improves landscaping and/or includes green infrastructure • Provides street furniture • Provides LED or solar lighting • Incorporates art or cultural amenities

Safety and Emergency Evacuation

Transportation safety and emergency evacuation are fundamental to the health and wellbeing of transportation system users. High crash locations often correspond with locations of equity priority communities. Emergency evacuation (e.g., flood or fire) is especially important in high-hazard areas with vulnerable populations, including communications.

This Transportation Equity Scorecard groups safety into two factors – improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists at high-crash locations, and other safety improvements. The emergency evacuation criterion aims to prioritize emergency preparedness projects for funding in areas with a large concentration of equity priority communities. Table 5 shows the safety and emergency evacuation factors and criteria. Table 6 shows the weighted criteria for this category.

Table 5. Safety and Emergency Evacuation Factors and Criteria

Safety and Emergency Evacuation	Safety	Project improves safety for pedestrians and bicyclists at high-crash locations.
		Project improves safety at other (non-high crash) locations.
	Emergency Evacuation	Project improves emergency evacuation (e.g., transit coordination, connections to shelters, etc.).

Table 6. Safety and Emergency Evacuation Weighted Criteria

		Integrates two or more safety countermeasures, such as protected bicycle lanes, raised median islands, Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) or other signalized midblock crossing treatments, roundabouts, lane reductions, traffic calming, street lighting, etc.; or significantly decreases pedestrian and bicycle crash rates per capita.

Emergency Evacuation	Safety	Integrates two or more safety countermeasures, such as protected bicycle lanes, raised median islands, Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) or other signalized midblock crossing treatments, roundabouts, lane reductions, traffic calming, street lighting, etc.; or significantly decreases crash rates per capita.
	Emergency Evacuation	Connects and/or significantly decreases travel time to safe areas or shelters.

Affordability

Housing and transportation are the two largest categories of average household expenditures. Areas with a rich array of transportation options often lack affordable housing and affordable housing near employment locations and activity centers is particularly scarce in some parts of Santa Cruz County.

The challenge associated with housing and transportation costs is particularly an issue for lower-income households and people of color. Racial and income inequalities exacerbate the already significant mismatch between affordable housing and access to safe and convenient transportation options. Affordability factors and criteria are highlighted in Table 7 and Table 8. For the scorecard, affordability is grouped into three factors: housing and transportation costs, housing, and transportation.

Table 7. Affordability Factors and Criteria

Affordability	Housing and Transportation Costs	Project decreases the share of household income consumed by transportation and housing.
	Housing	Project improves access to and from affordable housing.
	Transportation	Project increases availability of affordable transportation options.

Table 8. Affordability Weighted Criteria

Affordability	Housing and Transportation Costs	Reduces housing and transportation costs as a percentage of income to 30 percent or less.
	Housing	Provides direct connections to affordable housing through premium transit service, a protected bicycle facility, or new/connected sidewalks or shared use paths; or significantly decreases travel time to and from

		affordable housing.
	Transportation	Provides premium and affordable transit or protected and connected bike facility or new/connected sidewalk or increases availability of high quality and affordable transportation options; or significantly decreases travel time to essential destinations and other activity locations.

Mobility

Although mobility overlaps with several other equity categories, it is treated as a separate category in the equity scorecard tool due to its broad impacts. For example, traffic delay and congestion, which are important mobility indicators, are also considered in the evaluation of access to jobs and services.

Quality and level of service (Q/LOS) are other measures to assess mobility impacts of the transportation system for the various modes. Equity and mobility can be improved through projects that reduce travel time for transit and single-occupancy vehicles, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and provide or supplement active transportation options available to underserved populations.

The mobility category includes three factors: active transportation, transit access, and ADA, as shown in Table 9 and Table 10. Active transportation also advances health and the environment; as a result, the evaluation of the active transportation criterion should consider health and environmental factors.

Table 9. Mobility Factors and Criteria

Mobility	Active Transportation	Project improves or expands bicycle or pedestrian facilities.
	Transit Access and Service	Project improves transit service and/or access, including first- and last-mile access.
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Project improves accessibility for persons with disabilities (e.g., transit stops, ADA curb ramps, audio-visual signals, driveway grade, etc.).

Table 10. Mobility Weighted Criteria

Mobility	Active Transportation	Adds new bicycle or pedestrian facilities, fills gaps in existing network, or improves quality of existing facilities, especially those identified as priorities in Active Transportation Plans or other plans.
	Transit Access and Service	Increases transit service , reduces transit travel times, improves access to stops by bike, walk, or park-and ride.

	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Increases the number of transit stops, ADA curb ramps, audio-visual signals, reduces driveway grades, or otherwise improves access for people with disabilities.

Burdens

Although the focus of these metrics is on identifying projects that serve the needs of equity priority communities, an analysis of the equity implications of project proposals would be incomplete without an evaluation of potential burdens. Examples of burdens include cumulative or disproportionate impacts, barriers, safety hazards, and increased noise or emissions.

Cumulative impacts consider the incremental direct and indirect effects of a project or plan, the effects of past and present actions, and effects of reasonably foreseeable future actions. Disproportionate impacts are defined as extensive differences in impacts or risks across population groups.

Barriers include any physical obstacles, such as major multi-lane roadways, that dissect communities and lessen community cohesion. These barriers relate to several of the equity assessment categories, including access to opportunity, health and environment, safety and emergency evacuation, and mobility. Noise pollution and emissions are related to the health and environment category and also warrant inclusion as a burden due to their potential to cause long-term negative impacts on underserved communities.

Transportation agencies weigh the adverse impacts, others take steps to mitigate these impacts. In the scorecard, burdens are given a score of negative ten (-10) or negative twenty (-20), ensuring that projects with significant adverse impacts are not prioritized higher than projects with minimal or no adverse impacts.

The burdens category has one factor, “adverse impacts”. Specific criteria for each agency will vary based on project type, geography, historic trends, public input, and other details unique to the project and the target population. Project information and other data can be used to create a list of projects and community-specific burdens. Table 11 shows the factor and criterion related to burdens. Table 12 shows the weighted criteria for the burdens category.

Table 11. Burdens Factor and Criterion

Burdens	Adverse Impacts	Project causes cumulative, disproportionate, or other major adverse impacts.

Table 12. Burdens Weighted Criteria

Burdens	Adverse Impacts	Leads to one or more of the following: 1. Significant barrier effects (e.g., widen from 4 to 6 lanes, high speed, increases traffic volumes, grade separation, etc.) 2. Significant cumulative/disproportionate impacts 3. Increases displacement of residents, businesses, or public amenities 4. Reduces business revenue and employment (e.g., by relocating businesses) 5. Greatly increases noise or emissions 6. Reduces safety and personal security

Community Engagement

Equitable projects must demonstrate meaningful and effective public participation in decision-making processes, particularly by the communities that will be impacted. Consistent with the California Transportation Commission's *Transportation Equity Supplement* project sponsors should consider and provide responses to the following questions as they plan, develop, and implement projects:

- How did the project sponsor engage communities in the project study area to identify their needs? Did the agency directly engage with communities that may be impacted and marginalized groups, including Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, displaced or unhoused persons, individuals with disabilities, seniors and elders, and low-income individuals or communities? How was community feedback incorporated into the project? How did the agency inform communities about whether their feedback was incorporated into the project?
- How did the agency develop the project scope? Were alternatives developed that include community feedback? Can the agency demonstrate its partnership and collaboration with the equity priority communities in the project area?
- If the project will cause any disparate impacts on the basis of race, color, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, disability status, or national origin, did the agency discuss with the community and consider and incorporate alternate options?

Priority Projects

Throughout development of this plan, the RTC solicited input from community and board members and evaluated the equity benefits projects proposed for the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and 2025 Consolidated Grants program. Some of the projects and types of projects that were identified as priorities to reduce disparities and create a vibrant transportation network that equitably supports the community, economic activity and preservation of the environment are listed below. The RTC is starting to apply the more detailed equity factors and criteria described above. the RTC has started evaluating the potential effects of transportation and decisions: projects, programs, and services. The following are some of the projects that have been identified as priorities through that analysis and/or by equity priority communities. This list is not exhaustive and will be updating as the RTC conducts a more detailed evaluation of projects proposed for RTC discretionary funding, grant applications, and planning work.

Generally, the following types of projects will reduce disparities:

- Projects that reduce emissions, fuel consumption, and congestion
- Projects that reduce exposure to truck traffic through neighborhoods
- Transit Projects that increase:
 - o Transit service
 - o Reduce transit travel times
 - o Reduce "last mile" distances especially to key destinations.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian: Fill gaps in bike/ped network in low-income areas and to key destinations, including access to healthy recreational activities that improve quality of life, especially for "captive" pedestrians and bicyclists who walk or bike because no other options exist.
- Fill Potholes and repair roadways
- EV transition
 - o EV Cars - Charging infrastructure, solar, and used EV rebates
 - o EV buses and shuttles (METRO and Lift Line)
 - o EV carshare
 - o EV trucks and trailers
- Safety:
 - o Prioritize counter measures that address fatal and injury collisions, especially for people walking and biking, youth, and seniors
 - o Reduce DUI incidences
- Reduce climate impacts, especially heat and flooding.
 - o Support resiliency for rivers, creeks, and key transportation corridors to prevent people from being cutoff during extreme weather events.

- o Plant trees to address extreme heat and make it easier and safer for people to walk, bike, and take transit – especially in Watsonville where tree canopy is less than 10%

Community-Identified Priorities

The following is a list of some of the priority projects that were identified during Transportation Equity Action Plan public engagement efforts. Engagement efforts were focused in the Watsonville area and this list is not exhaustive. Local agencies and the RTC should regularly refer to community-based plans, including but not limited to Local Roadway Safety Plans and Vision Zero plans, Active Transportation Plans, Safe Routes to Schools plans, Watsonville Downtown Specific Plan, Highway 9/SLV Complete Streets Plan, Rural Highway Safety Plan, and General Plans.

Watsonville Area

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – target high injury locations, including:
 - Main Street/Highway 152
 - Riverside Drive/Highway 129
 - West Beach Street
 - Airport Boulevard
 - Freedom Boulevard
- Bicycle Facilities:
 - Bike boulevard through downtown Watsonville: temporary slow street parallel to Main Street/SR152 and East Lake/SR129 through downtown Watsonville
 - Green Valley: buffered/protected bike lanes (Airport to Freedom)
 - Lake/East Lake Ave: Protected bike facilities (see SRTS plan)
 - E-bikeshare
 - Bicycle subsidies: expand eligibility to include used and new bicycles
- Pedestrian:
 - Daylighting at intersections, especially any areas with history of pedestrian injuries. May include traffic calming parklets, planters or pilons
 - Tree planting to address heat islands and to make heat less of an issue for walking, biking, and waiting for buses. Partner with Watsonville Wetlands Watch, to also include bioswells, demonstration gardens.
 - Crosswalk painting, lighting, and beacons on Main Street, Freedom Boulevard, and other locations identified as priorities in Vision Zero/Safe Streets for All plans
 - Main Street (Green Valley to Rodriguez): Traffic Calming / Pedestrian safety
 - Freedom Blvd: Reduce the number of driveways from Airport Blvd to Main Street to reduce conflict points.
 - Pennsylvania Dr from Winding Way/Willowcreek St to Clifford Ave: Repair damaged pedestrian path and damaged bike lane.

- Alleyway placemaking – clean up, activities, public art
- Trails:
 - Trails to the Beach: Pajaro River Levee and Beach Street
 - MBSST Network Segments 17-21 connecting downtown Watsonville, Pajaro Station, Beaches and other recreational destinations
- Multimodal/Traffic Calming:
 - Slow down cars near schools, parks, and apartment complexes, including Pinto Lake, Green Valley Road, Buena Vista Drive, Freedom School.
 - Union/Brennan Traffic calming ideas – chicanes (See Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan)
 - Parking removal to improve circulation. Develop a Pilot Project to test locations for removal.
- Transit:
 - Watsonville Transit Center: Transit Oriented Development, including affordable housing
 - Bus stop upgrades/parklets - transform area next to a heavily used bus stops to a parklet in order to create more space for people waiting for the bus, include seating, shade trees, other plants, public art, activities. Add covered bus stops on Airport Boulevard and other locations with limited tree coverage, including at the Hospital. *(See AC Transit parklet study)*
 - Summer Beach Shuttle Pilot: Provide transit access from Watsonville to the Beach (Sunset State Beach, Pajaro Dunes areas)
 - Restore Bus Routes 75, 78 and 91X
 - Shuttle service from downtown Watsonville to Ohlone and to GreyBears, Santa Cruz, 41st Avenue shops, Rio Del Mar, and West Cliff Drive
 - Youth microtransit/shuttles to provide access to educational and cultural opportunities
- Traffic Circulation
 - Freedom/Main Roundabout or extend left turn lanes
 - Extend/lengthen left turn lane, including on Main Street at Ramsey Park and Target shopping centers.
 - Non-Infrastructure: Student education programs focused on bicycle and pedestrian safety, bicycle repair clinics, anti-DUI campaign, community bicycle rides
 - Equity Workgroup members expressed preference for permanent projects over one-time events.
 - Extend bus-on-shoulder facilities (not just at interchanges) and add carpool lanes on Highway 1 for people commuting from Watsonville to Santa Cruz
- Roadway maintenance

- o Target roadways in low income neighborhoods

Santa Cruz Area

- Improve, enhance, or install intersection and segment lighting throughout the City
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – target high injury locations, with an additional focus on unhoused populations:
 - Ocean Street
 - Highway 9/Highway 1 Intersection
 - Soquel Avenue and Soquel Drive
 - Laurel Street
 - Front Street
 - Morrissey/Water/Soquel "triangle"

Capitola

- Bay Avenue in Capitola traffic calming, circulation, bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements

Mid-County

- Soquel Drive Multimodal Improvements: Transit priority signals, buffered bicycle lanes, fill gaps in sidewalks, add more pedestrian crossing safety measures at intersections.
- Rio Del Mar: Seacliff State Beach trail difficult to access on wheelchare

Countywide

- Transit:
 - Extend bus-on-shoulder facilities (not just at interchanges) and add carpool lanes on Highway 1 for people commuting from Watsonville/Aptos to Santa Cruz
 - Buses to SJC Airport from Watsonville and Santa Cruz
 - Bus depots: Make it easier to figure out where to wait for buses, show what bus numbers will be when parked, rather than waiting until driver gets on bus.
 - Improve safety on buses and bus stops.
 - Bus Driver Training: new drivers are not as friendly, need better training on kneeling bus
 - Provide free bus passes to seniors and low-income residents. Free passes for students is great, but extend to others.
- Roadway Maintenance
 - Gutter and curb ramp improvements to prevent flooding at intersections, especially an issue for pedestrians. (Kerney St/Rodriguez in Watsonville and others)

Setting Priorities

- Community-Based Transportation Plans: Create a pilot program with a participatory budgeting component for one or more neighborhoods, in which residents are given

assistance to assess their community transportation needs, develop ideas for meaningful improvements, and given a lump sum of funding to spend on their chosen priorities.

- Micro-Grants: Set aside a portion of consolidated grant funds for a micro-grants program for projects serving equity priority communities and neighborhood

Glossary of Equity Terms

Definitions from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) unless otherwise specified. Don't see the word you're looking for? Check out:

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

Anti-racism: The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic and social life.

Bias: Prejudice toward one group and its members relative to another group.

Co-creation: The collaborative development of new value (concepts, solutions, products and services) together with subject matter experts and community stakeholders working together as peers. Co-creation is a form of collaborative innovation where ideas are shared and improved together through all stages of a process, from ideation to vetting to implementation. Unlike crowdsourcing (a widespread call to contribute focused on quantity vs. quality), co-creation engages a small but representative group of community stakeholders. The process of co-creation generates richer and deeper knowledge while cultivating community buy-in and sense of ownership. Last but not least, co-creation provides an opportunity to deepen the relationships we have with passengers and the community at large.

Community Indicator: The means by which we can measure socioeconomic conditions in the community. All community indicators should be disaggregated by race, if possible.

Contracting Equity: Investments in contracting, consulting, and procurement should benefit the communities a jurisdiction serves, proportionate to the jurisdictions demographics.

Diversity: The range of physical, social, and psychological differences between people and groups, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, tribe, national origin, socioeconomic status, religious or ethical values systems, political beliefs, thinking and communication styles.

Equity: Fairness in process, distribution of resources, opportunity and provision of varying levels of support, based upon need to achieve greater fairness of outcomes. Includes just and fair inclusion in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.

Ethnicity: A social group that shares a common and distinctive culture, religion, language, history and customs.

Explicit bias: Biases that people are aware of and that operate consciously. Individuals express them directly.

Implicit bias: Biases people are usually unaware of and that operate at the subconscious level. Implicit bias is usually expressed indirectly.

Inclusion[†]: Involvement and empowerment, where everyone feels welcomed, respected, supported and valued. Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

Individual racism: Pre-judgement, bias, bigotry or discrimination based on race by an individual.

Institutional racism: Policies or practices that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

Intersectionality[‡]: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups. When it comes to thinking about how inequalities persist, categories like gender, race, and class are best understood as overlapping and mutually constitutive rather than isolated and distinct.

Microaggression[¶]: The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

Performance Measure: Performance measures are at the county, department, or program level. Appropriate performance measures allow monitoring of the success of implementation of actions that have a reasonable chance of influencing indicators and contributing to results. Performance measures respond to three different levels: 1) Quantity—how much did we do?; 2) Quality—how well did we do it?; and 3) Is anyone better off? A mix of these types of performance measures is contained within the recommendations.

Power sharing: A system of governance in which all major segments of society receive a permanent share of power.

Race: A social construct that categorizes people based on physical characteristics and ancestry to justify inequitable distribution of resources and power.

Racial equity: Eliminating race-based outcome gaps so that race cannot be used to predict life outcomes and outcomes for all groups are improved. This approach centers

those who are worse off and moves from a service-based approach toward focusing on policies, institutions and structures.

Racial inequity: Outcome gaps between people of different races based on historical or current factors or structures that benefit white people more than people of color. e.g., disproportionality in education (high school graduation rates), jobs (unemployment rate), criminal justice (arrest and incarceration rates), etc.

Structural racism: A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively affects communities of color.

White privilege: The unearned, mostly unacknowledged social advantage white people have over other racial groups simply because they are white.

White supremacy culture: The dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States. While these standards may appear mainstream, dominant cultural practices, they have evolved from the United States' history of white supremacy.

White supremacy: The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs and actions of white people are superior to people of color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs and action.

Workforce Equity: The workforce of a jurisdiction reflects the diversity of its residents, including across the breadth (functions and departments) and depth (hierarchy) of government.

† *Racial Equity Tools Glossary; Opensource Leadership Strategies*

The Equity Manifesto, PolicyLink

‡ *Merriam-Webster Dictionary; Adia Harvey Wingfield*

¶ *Racial Equity Tools Glossary; Derald Wing Sue, PhD, "Microaggressions: More than Just Race" (Psychology Today, 17 November 2010). Glossary of Terms*

Appendix A: Equitable Outreach and Engagement Toolkit

When we find solutions that work for those most vulnerable in our communities, we find solutions that work better for everyone.

Introduction

Advancing Equitable Public Engagement

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is committed to incorporating meaningful public engagement strategies into all of its planning and project development processes to ensure our decision making is well informed. It is vital that the people we serve have a voice in shaping the transportation projects and programs that affect their daily lives. Meaningful public engagement leads to better decisions, more responsive projects, and stronger public trust. It is how we remain accountable, transparent, and aligned with the real needs of our communities.

Meaningful public engagement must also be equitable. Not all community members have had equal opportunities to participate in the decisions that shape their neighborhoods, especially those in low-income, underserved, or non-English-speaking communities. These community members offer unique perspectives on the needs of their communities, and they have vast knowledge of the community's strengths and weaknesses. However, too often these essential voices go unheard due to longstanding barriers in access, trust, and communication. This often leads to projects that fail to address their specific needs and sometimes exacerbate existing inequities. Investing in meaningful and inclusive engagement fosters a more equitable and thriving future for all residents.

Rooted in our agency's mission to *develop and deliver transportation solutions for a vibrant, sustainable, and equitable community*, the RTC has developed this Equitable Outreach and Engagement Toolkit to ensure the community engagement strategies we design and carry out are equitable, inclusive, and responsive, and are guided by our Principles of Public Participation.

Guiding Principles for Public Participation:

1. **Welcome everyone.** Use ways of reaching out that make all people feel included, especially communities that have had fewer chances or resources in the past.
2. **Value people's voices.** Everyone's ideas matter and support different people with different life experiences to be involved.
3. **Give many chances to share.** Offer different ways for people to share ideas, give feedback, ask questions, and review plans.
4. **Be fair and respectful.** Listen carefully to all comments and concerns.

5. **Work together.** Support open conversations and teamwork between residents, business owners, groups, and government staffs.
6. **Include underserved equity priority communities.** Make sure people and groups who are often less involved are invited and supported.
7. **Invite participation at every step.** Encourage the public to be involved from the beginning to the end of the project.
8. **Share clear and timely information.** Provide easy-to-understand updates and reports to the community on a regular basis.

Using the Toolkit

This comprehensive resource includes practical tips, strategies and best practices that can be used to effectively reach and empower those historically excluded from civic processes. With a focus on equitable outreach, inclusive communication, and meaningful engagement, this toolkit aims to foster stronger connections and collaboration with the diverse communities we serve.

Developed with adaptability in mind, this toolkit can be used by other public agencies and community partners seeking to strengthen their equitable and inclusive outreach efforts. Whether you're planning a single project or building a long-term engagement framework, this toolkit is intended to serve as a roadmap for:

- **Promoting equity** by ensuring all voices—especially those from disadvantaged communities—are heard, respected, and reflected in government decisions.
- **Increasing participation** by removing barriers and providing multiple culturally-relevant ways for people to engage.
- **Improving project outcomes** by designing solutions grounded in the real needs and experiences of diverse community members.
- **Building trust and collaboration** through consistent, transparent, and meaningful dialogue with the public.

We invite you to use it not just as a checklist—but as a commitment to listen more deeply, engage more intentionally, and build lasting relationships to ensure that every resident has the opportunity to shape the decisions that affect their lives.

Chapter 1 - Setting Goals and Objectives

Establishing clear goals and measurable objectives is essential to developing a successful and equitable community engagement plan. Goals will help define the purpose of your outreach, while objectives will provide a roadmap for how success will be measured. When grounded in equity, these goals ensure that engagement efforts prioritize inclusivity, amplify underrepresented voices, and lead to more just and community-informed outcomes.

Define Specific Outreach Goals

Start by defining why you are engaging the community and what your desired end goals are. Goals should reflect both the purpose of the project and the agency's commitment to equity.

Examples of equity-centered outreach goals:

- Increase visibility and presence in underrepresented areas by hosting more outreach events in priority neighborhoods identified by income, race/ethnicity, or access to services.
- Increase meeting attendance of residents from low-income or non-English-speaking communities.
- Work with more community-based organizations in low-income and underserved neighborhoods to co-develop outreach strategies and partner on dissemination of information.
- Build long-term trust with historically excluded communities through transparent, responsive engagement.

Establish Measurable Objectives

Create objectives that are actionable and trackable. This can help ensure your objectives are realistic and clear.

Examples of objectives:

- Host at least three community meetings in underserved neighborhoods within the next six months.
- Table at six community events or pop-up locations during the outreach period.
- Attend and participate in meetings of at least 3-5 existing community-based organizations serving underrepresented communities to share project information and build trust.
- Distribute bilingual project flyers to at least 500 households in targeted areas by the end of the outreach period.
- Increase survey response rates among Spanish-speaking residents by 25% compared to the previous outreach effort.

A checklist that staff and partners can use when developing engagement goals and objectives to ensure they are intentional, actionable, and equity focused is included in Chapter 4-Resources.

Chapter 2 – Equitable Outreach and Engagement Best Practices

Building a truly inclusive and engaged community requires reaching all residents, regardless of background, income level, or ability. This means moving beyond traditional outreach methods and embracing an equitable outreach strategy to ensure every resident has a voice. These best practices will guide your equitable engagement efforts while fostering a more inclusive and engaged community.

A. Developing Outreach Strategies

Tailor Outreach Methods to Target Audiences

Community members from underserved or marginalized communities may not all have access to digital platforms or may rely on other forms of communication (e.g., flyers, radio, word of mouth). Use various methods to reach them effectively.

- **Traditional Media:**
 - Utilize local newspapers (print/online), TV and radio (including multilingual options) for PSAs and targeted ads.
- **Digital Outreach:**
 - Utilize social media platforms relevant to target audiences with clear, concise messages.
 - Send email newsletters with translated content.
 - Maintain a user-friendly, accessible and multilingual website with up-to-date information.
 - Utilize bilingual online surveys and interactive project resources
- **Printed Materials:**
 - Develop brochures, fact sheets, flyers, and posters with clear visuals and translated versions and distribute them in community centers, libraries, local businesses, etc.
- **Community Events and Partnerships:**
 - Participate in local festivals and events to engage residents in familiar settings.
 - Collaborate with community-based organizations on outreach and engagement efforts.

A list of local events and CBOs are included in Chapter 4. These lists will be shared with community-based organizations and regularly updated.

Utilize Culturally Appropriate Messaging and Language

- Understand and respect the diverse cultures within your community. Be mindful of cultural norms and communications styles and tailor outreach materials to resonate with specific communities and that respects cultural norms and values.
- Build relationships with culturally diverse community leaders and organizations. Leverage their expertise to develop culturally appropriate outreach strategies and materials.

- Provide materials and interpretation in the primary languages spoken in the community.

Provide Multiple Avenues for Engagement

- **Meetings:** Host in-person meetings, workshops, town halls at accessible locations and times convenient for working families. Ensure engagement events are not held on any religious or cultural holidays or observances.
- **Surveys:** Offer both online and paper surveys in multiple languages. Make staff available to assist community members in completing the surveys if they need help, especially if tabling or at an outreach event.
- **Community Forums:** Organize community forums, focus groups and listening sessions in diverse neighborhoods.
- **Door-to-Door Outreach:** Utilize trusted community members for in-person outreach.
- **Meet People Where They Are:** Rather than expecting community members to come to a central office or public meeting, hold events in community centers, parks, places of worship, or schools in the communities you are trying to engage with.

B. Partner with Community Organizations and Community Leaders

Developing strong partnerships with community leaders and community-based organizations increases equitable outcomes, public participation, and can foster trust between the community and public agencies. *These partners hold invaluable knowledge about the community's needs and dynamics, and their partnership can be key to successful engagement.*

Identifying Key Stakeholders

- **Community Leaders:** Look beyond elected officials. Consider clergy, educators, cultural leaders, and respected elders who hold influence within specific communities.
- **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs):** These non-profit organizations often work directly with low-income and disadvantaged residents, providing vital services and advocating for their needs. Partner with CBOs that align with your project's focus (e.g., housing, education, healthcare).
- **Local Businesses:** Many businesses, especially those with a long history in the community, have established relationships with residents. Partner with them and the local Chamber of Commerce to reach a wider audience and leverage their communication channels.
- **Religious Institutions:** Places of worship often serve as community hubs and trusted spaces for residents. Partner with them to host outreach events or disseminate information.
- **Community Groups:** Look for resident-led groups focused on specific issues or neighborhoods. These groups can provide valuable insights and help connect you directly with hard-to-reach populations.

Building Relationships

- **Proactive Engagement:** Enlist the assistance early on of trusted CBOs and leaders who are deeply connected to residents to identify community needs and priorities. Their insight

ensures outreach is rooted in the community's lived experience and trust is built from the start.

- **Mutual Respect:** Acknowledge the expertise and experience of community partners. Treat them as collaborators, not simply conduits for information dissemination.
- **Transparency and Open Communication:** Be clear about project goals, potential impacts, and timelines. Attend CBOs meetings regularly to share updates, actively listen, and solicit feedback.
- **Demonstrate Commitment and Appreciation:** Maintain long-term relationships and collaboration. Follow up after projects and keep communication open year-round.

Collaboration Strategies

- **Joint Planning and Development:** Involve community partners in planning meetings and workshops to ensure projects address their priorities.
- **Culturally Appropriate Outreach:** Work with CBOs and community leaders to develop culturally sensitive outreach materials and communication strategies.
- **Utilize Existing Networks:** Leverage CBOs' and community leaders' connections to disseminate information through trusted channels, such as community newsletters or social media groups. Ask small businesses and faith-based organizations if you can post flyers or distribute surveys at these sites, especially in high-traffic areas like corner stores or community churches.
- **Joint Events:** Partner with CBOs and local businesses to host community events and pop-up engagement tables to provide information about a project and to offer a platform for open dialogue.

C. Ensure Accessibility and Inclusivity

Outreach strategies should address known barriers to participation, ensuring that all community members are able to participate fully and meaningfully in the public process.

Addressing Language Barriers with Translation Services

- Ensure language barriers do not impede participation. Offer translated versions of website content, meeting materials and key documents and other materials—flyers, surveys, signage—in the primary languages spoken in the community.
- Hire bilingual staff or interpreters for meetings and events.
- Cultural context matters. Adapt messages so they resonate with the values and priorities of the communities you are engaging with.
- Have translated materials reviewed by native speakers familiar with local dialects and terminology.

Providing Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

- Ensure all information and communication materials are accessible to individuals with disabilities (physical, sensory, cognitive, etc.). This includes providing documents in alternative formats (e.g., Braille, large print, audio, video), and using accessible fonts, alt text for images, and clear and concise language.

- Consider accessibility of physical locations for meetings and events. Choose venues near public transportation and with ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, assistive listening devices, and seating for individuals using mobility aids.
- Offer American Sign Language interpreters and real-time captioning services for public meetings (in-person or virtual).

Offering Assistance and Incentives for Events

- Provide supervised childcare or children’s activities at meetings and events so parents can participate meaningfully.
- Offer stipends or gift cards if applicable to incentivize public participation.
- Offer bus passes, shuttle services, parking vouchers, or gas cards to reduce barriers to in-person engagement.
- Provide light refreshments or meals at meetings and events that occur during mealtimes so that community members can participate without missing a meal.
- Provide options that make attending or participating in meetings easier for community members. For in-person meetings, hold meetings both during the day and in the evening to accommodate a wide range of schedules and availability in the community. Also consider incorporating a concurrent virtual option for in-person events and meetings.

D. Leverage Virtual Engagement Tools

Selecting Appropriate Digital Platforms

- **Assess Community Access and Preferences:** Before selecting digital tools, evaluate the community’s access to technology and preferred communication channels. This ensures that chosen platforms are accessible and user-friendly for all participants.
- **Utilize Diverse Engagement Tools:** Incorporate a mix of platforms to cater to various engagement needs:
 - o **Survey Tools:** Platforms like SurveyMonkey, ArcGIS Hub and MetroQuest facilitate the collection of community feedback on transportation projects.
 - o **Interactive Mapping:** Tools such as Community Remarks allow residents to provide location-specific input, enhancing spatial understanding of community concerns.
 - o **Virtual Meeting Platforms:** Utilize Zoom or GoToMeeting for hosting virtual town halls and workshops, ensuring features like breakout rooms and live polling are available to encourage participation.
- **Ensure Mobile Compatibility:** Given that many residents may access digital content via smartphones, ensure all platforms and materials are mobile-friendly.

Facilitating Inclusive Virtual Meetings

- **Provide Multilingual Support:** Offer real-time interpretation services during virtual meetings to accommodate non-English speaking participants.
- **Implement Accessibility Features:** Ensure platforms support closed captioning and are compatible with screen readers to assist participants with disabilities.

- **Engage Participants Actively:** Incorporate interactive elements such as polls, Q&A sessions, and breakout discussions to maintain engagement and gather diverse perspectives.
- **Offer Technical Assistance:** Provide tutorials or helplines to assist participants unfamiliar with virtual platforms, ensuring equitable access to engagement opportunities.

Equitable Outreach Plan Template and Equitable Outreach Planning Checklist

Use the outreach plan template and planning checklist in the resources chapter when developing your outreach plan to ensure your outreach and engagement efforts are intentional, actionable, and equity focused.

Chapter 3 – Measuring Impact and Success

Measuring the success of community engagement efforts is essential—not only to evaluate what worked and what didn't, but to ensure accountability, promote continuous learning, and demonstrate your agency's commitment to equity. Tracking impact helps build trust with community members, partners, and stakeholders by showing that feedback is taken seriously and results are used to inform decisions. An intentional approach to evaluation allows agencies to refine their strategies over time and improve future outreach—especially for underserved and marginalized communities.

A. Establish What Success Looks Like

Before measuring outcomes, define what success means for your specific engagement effort. Consider:

- Did the engagement reach the intended audiences?
- Were barriers to participation meaningfully addressed?
- Did feedback collected influence decisions or lead to visible action?
- Did participants feel heard, respected, and valued?

Align your success criteria with your goals and objectives (see Chapter 1), and make sure they reflect both quantitative outcomes and qualitative experiences.

B. Use Both Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics

Quantitative Metrics:

These are numeric indicators that help track reach and scope.

- Number of attendees at meetings or events
- Number and demographics of survey respondents
- Website or social media engagement rates
- Volume of materials distributed in multiple languages
- Participation rates by neighborhood, language group, or age group

Qualitative Metrics:

These help assess quality, relevance, and trust.

- Participant feedback and satisfaction levels
- Themes or concerns raised in open-ended responses
- Observations from staff or community partners
- Testimonials or quotes from community members
- Degree to which community input shaped project decisions

C. Disaggregate and Analyze Data Through an Equity Lens

To evaluate whether your engagement was inclusive and equitable:

- Break down data by race/ethnicity, income, zip code, language, age, and disability status when possible.
- Compare turnout or participation levels to your community's demographic profile.
- Ask: Who did we hear from—and who did we miss?

This kind of analysis helps identify gaps, understand the impact on different groups, and inform improvements for future outreach.

D. Collect and Analyze Feedback

- **Offer Multiple Feedback Tools:** Use comment cards, follow-up surveys, QR codes linking to feedback forms, and brief “exit interviews” after events.
- **Ensure Anonymity and Safety:** Particularly for marginalized residents, provide anonymous options to encourage honest input without fear of retaliation.
- **Debrief Internally:** After each event or outreach effort, hold a reflection session with staff and partners to discuss what worked, what didn't, and what could improve.

E. Share Outcomes Transparently

Reporting back to the community closes the loop and shows that their input mattered. Best practices include:

- Sharing summary reports in plain language and in multiple languages
- Creating visual summaries (e.g., infographics, videos, maps)
- Posting updates on your website and social media
- Sending thank-you messages and outcome summaries to participants
- Clearly showing how community input influenced decisions or project design

Chapter 4 – Resources

Resources include:

- Equitable Outreach Plan Template
- Equitable Outreach Planning Checklist
- Post Outreach Survey
- Community Events List
- Holiday Calendar
- Meeting Facilities List
- Digital Engagement Tools, Guides and Best Practices
- Media List (RTC mailing lists)
- Stakeholder List (RTC mailing lists)

Project Outreach Plan (Template)

1) Project Overview

Project Name:

Project Description/Purpose:

Project Timeline:

Project Lead/Staff Contact(s):

2) Target Audiences

Primary audiences:

Secondary audiences:

Priority Groups (check all that apply):

- ☐ Low-income communities
- ☐ Spanish-speaking communities
- ☐ Other non-English speakers
- ☐ People with disabilities
- ☐ Youth

- ☐ Seniors/older adults
- ☐ Rural/geographically isolated residents
- ☐ Other:

Neighborhoods/census tracts of focus:

3) Outreach Goals & Objectives

What are your equity-centered outreach goals?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What measurable objectives will you track?

- 1)

2)

3)

4) Barriers to Participation

Potential Barriers (check all that apply):

☐ Language	☐ Disability access
☐ Transportation	☐ Digital access
☐ Childcare	☐ Lack of trust / historical inequities
☐ Meeting time / location	☐ Other:

Strategies to reduce barriers:

5) Outreach Strategy: What methods will you utilize to effectively reach your target audience?

Traditional Media_____

Digital Outreach_____

In-Person Outreach_____

Community Partnerships_____

Other Strategies:_____

6) Key Messages & Language Access

Key messages:_____

Languages to be offered:_____

Interpreter(s) needed? Yes/No

Written translation needed? Yes/No

7) Accessibility & Accommodations (check those that are needed)

☐ ADA accessible venue	☐ Childcare
☐ ASL interpreter	☐ Transportation assistance
☐ Captioning (virtual)	☐ Refreshments
☐ Large-print materials	☐ Virtual participation option

8) Schedule & Outreach Touchpoints (List all meetings, events, etc. taking place)

Method | Date(s) | Location / Channel | Notes

9) Partners (Are there any partners you are working with or could potentially work with?)

Organizations / Leaders:

10) Metrics for Success (Identify the metrics you will use)

Quantitative Metrics:

- ☐ Total participants engaged
- ☐ Number of events held
- ☐ Surveys collected
- ☐ Languages offered
- ☐ Participation by target audience(s)
- ☐ Other:

Qualitative Metrics:

11) Plan for Reporting Back

How will feedback be summarized and shared?

Timeline to report back:

Equitable Outreach Planning Checklist

Project Readiness

- ☐ Project purpose is clearly defined
- ☐ Timeline is set
- ☐ Staff roles established

Target Audience

- ☐ Primary affected audiences identified
- ☐ Underserved / priority groups defined
- ☐ Geographic focus identified

Goals & Objectives

- ☐ Goals reflect equity + engagement purpose

Barriers & Solutions

- ☐ Barriers to participation identified
- ☐ Mitigation strategies defined

Outreach Strategies

- ☐ Methods align with audience needs
- ☐ Mix of in-person + digital
- ☐ Community partners engaged
- ☐ Meeting people where they are

Cultural & Language Access

- ☐ Materials translated
- ☐ Interpreters scheduled
- ☐ Culturally relevant messaging prepared

Accessibility

- ☐ Venue ADA accessible
- ☐ ASL / captions planned
- ☐ Transportation / childcare available

Communications

- ☐ Clear messages drafted
- ☐ Plain language used
- ☐ Multilingual formats planned

Reporting Back

- ☐ Reporting method identified
- ☐ Timeline to report back set
- ☐ Thank-you + follow-up planned

Post Outreach Evaluation

Instructions: Please complete this survey to help us identify gaps in outreach/additional focus areas that will help us develop best practices in future outreach activities

Goal: Proactively engage the community in an ongoing conversation to address their transportation needs while providing courteous, factual, reliable, timely, and helpful information

What were your intended outcomes or engagement goals? _____

Summarize your outreach activities: _____

Quantitative Outcomes

- Total participants engaged:
- Number of events held:
- Surveys collected:
- Languages offered:
- Participation by target audience(s):
- Other:

Qualitative Outcomes

- What feedback did participants provide? _____
- What common themes or concerns were raised? _____
- Did community input influence the outcome or direction of the project? _____
- Other: _____

Equity Analysis

Have we disaggregated our data by race, income, language, and location?

Are there groups we intended to reach but did not? Why?

Did we reduce barriers for participation, and were those efforts effective?

Community Feedback

Did we ask participants how they felt about the engagement process?

Do we have feedback that reflects both satisfaction and areas for improvement?

Sharing Results

Have we summarized and shared the outcomes in accessible, community-friendly formats?

Have we shown how community feedback influenced the final outcome?

Have we thanked participants and invited them to stay involved?

CHECKLIST

Prove 1-2 sentences describing how categories were addressed. What worked what didn't.

Checklist	Category	How Category Was Addressed
	1.Engaging with underrepresented groups (demographics, language accessibility)	
	2. Media (social, traditional, video, etc.)	
	3. Community partnerships (stakeholders)	
	4. Accessibility (geographical, disability, etc.)	
	5. Community Feedback	

Location (Physical/Remote)	Staff Present	Action Items	Community Feedback

How did this activity promote equity?

Was collaborative dialogue achieved?

Did any feedback stand out to you?

Were there any ways this event could be improved/what would you do differently in the future?

Equity-Focused Community Based Organizations

A partial list of Community Based Organizations working with equity priority communities that have partnered with RTC to share information about and engage with community members on transportation projects and programs include:

- Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council
- Bike Santa Cruz County
- Community Bridges
- County Health Services and Community Traffic Safety Coalition
- Diversity Center
- Dominican Hospital Foundation Wellness Center and Life on Wheels
- Ecology Action
- Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Commission (E&D TAC)
- Meals on Wheels - Community Bridges
- Pajaro Valley Arts Council
- Regeneración
- Santa Cruz County Human Services Department - Adult and Long-Term Care
- Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission
- Santa Cruz Metro Advisory Committee (MAC)
- Senior Council of Santa Cruz County
- Shared Adventures
- Volunteer Center
- Watsonville Vision Zero
- Watsonville Wetlands Watch

Groups RTC should meet with in the future include:

- Aging and Disabilities Services Providers Advocacy Group
- Cakes for Care for Seniors
- California Association for Adult Day Services Board of Directors
- Churches
- Schools – youth organizations, principals, teachers
 - PVHS Environmental Committee
- Elderday Adult Day Health Care
- Grey Bears
- Homeless Garden Project
- Housing Advisory Commission
- IHSS Advisory Commission
- Master Plan for Aging Steering Committee
- Mid-County Senior Center
- Mid-County Democratic Club Board of Directors
- Retired Public Employees Association Board of Directors

- San Lorenzo Valley Highlands Senior Center
- SEIU 2015 Caregiver Union
- Seniors Council
- Valley Women's Club
- Watsonville City's Senior Advisory Board
- Watsonville Senior Center

Community Events List

Event	Timing	Location		Contact
Business Fair - Santa Cruz	March	Santa Cruz		
Earth Day - Santa Cruz	April	Santa Cruz		
Earth Day - Watsonville	April	Watsonville	Downtown City Plaza, Watsonville	
Earth Day - Cabrillo College Aptos Campus	April	Aptos	Cabrillo College Aptos Campus	
Earth Day - Cabrillo College Watsonville Campus	April	Watsonville	Cabrillo College Watsonville Campus	
Business Fair - Pajaro	April	Watsonville		
Cinco de Mayo Watsonville	May	Watsonville		
Bike to Work Day - Spring	May	Santa Cruz		
Midtown Fridays	All summer	Santa Cruz	1111 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz	
Santa Cruz Juneteenth	June	Santa Cruz	London Nelson Community Center	
Food Truck Fridays Capitola	Multiple dates May - August	Capitola	Monterey Avenue Park, Capitola	Contact Capitola Community Services
Twilight Concert Series Capitola	Wednesdays June - August	Capitola	Esplanade Park Bandstand, Capitola	Contact kbarreto@ci.capitola.ca.us
Music in the Plaza Watsonville	Every 1st & 3rd Friday in summer starting June 20	Watsonville	Downtown City Plaza, Watsonville	Contact Watsonville Parks & Community Services
Capitola Makers Market	Multiple dates June - August	Capitola	Esplanade Park & Capitola Wharf	Apply at cityofcapitola.org
Spirit of Watsonville 4th of July Parade	4th of July	Watsonville	Main Street, Watsonville	Apply via City of Watsonville website
National Night Out Capitola	August	Capitola	Jade Street Park, Capitola	Contact Capitola Police Dept.
Watsonville Strawberry Festival	August	Watsonville	Downtown Watsonville	Contact festival organizers or apply via city website
Movies at the Beach Capitola	August	Capitola	Esplanade Park Bandstand, Capitola	Contact Capitola Recreation Dept.
National Night Out Watsonville	First Tuesday in August	Watsonville	Pinto Lake County Park	Maria Rodriguez Maria.Rodriguez-Castillo@santacruzcountycalifornia.gov
Watsonville Back to School Barbeque and Resource Fair	August	Watsonville	Marinovich Park Community Center, 120 Second Street	
Comunidad en Movimiento - Semillas de Bienestar, Watsonville	August	Watsonville	Pinto Lake County Park	Kymberly Lacrosse kymberly@growing-greatness.com
Street Smarts Back to School	August	Santa Cruz		
Strawberry Festival Watsonville	August	Watsonville		
County Fair	September	Watsonville	County Fairgrounds	
Downtown Santa Cruz Greek Festival	September	Santa Cruz		
Capitola Art & Wine Festival	September	Capitola		
Capitola Beach Festival	September	Capitola		
Second Harvest Wellness Fair	September	Watsonville		

Week Without Driving	September	Capitola	Capitola Mall Parking Lot	
Open Streets Santa Cruz	October	Santa Cruz		
Bike to Work Day - Fall	October	Santa Cruz		
Senior Resource Fair	October	Watsonville		
WATs UP! Block Party	October	Watsonville	Watsonville High School	
Touch a Truck	October	Capitola	Capitola Mall Parking Lot	
Downtown Santa Cruz Harvest Festival	October	Santa Cruz		
Open Streets/Calles Libres Watsonville	November	Watsonville	Downtown City Plaza, Watsonville	Kymberly Lacrosse kymberly@growing-greatness.com

Ongoing				
Farmers Markets - SC, Live Oak, Cabrillo, Watsonville, Scotts Valley				
Downtown Santa Cruz Farmers' Market	Every Wednesday	Santa Cruz	700-798 Cedar St, Santa Cruz, CA	https://santacruzfarmersmarket.org/contact/
Live Oak Farmers Market	Every Sunday	Santa Cruz	15th St & East Cliff Dr, Santa Cruz, CA	https://santacruzfarmersmarket.org/contact/
Westside Santa Cruz Farmers Market	Every Saturday	Santa Cruz	Mission St. Extension & Western Drive, Santa Cruz, CA	https://santacruzfarmersmarket.org/contact/
Aptos Farmers Market at Cabrillo College	Every Saturday	Aptos	6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA	info@montereybayfarmers.com
Watsonville Flea Market	Sundays 9am-4pm	Watsonville		Contact Patricia Rodriguez to reserve space 831-235-1855
Downtown Santa Cruz Makers Market	Third Sundays	Santa Cruz		
Pajaro Chamber Lunch in the Park				
Farmers Markets - SC, Live Oak, Cabrillo, Watsonville, Scotts Valley				
Downtown Santa Cruz Farmers' Market*	Every Wednesday	Santa Cruz	700-798 Cedar St, Santa Cruz, CA	https://santacruzfarmersmarket.org/contact/
Live Oak Farmers Market*	Every Sunday	Santa Cruz	15th St & East Cliff Dr, Santa Cruz, CA	https://santacruzfarmersmarket.org/contact/
Westside Santa Cruz Farmers Market*	Every Saturday	Santa Cruz	Mission St. Extension & Western Drive, Santa Cruz, CA	https://santacruzfarmersmarket.org/contact/
Aptos Farmers Market at Cabrillo College*	Every Saturday	Aptos	6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA	info@montereybayfarmers.com
Watsonville Flea Market	Sundays 9am-4pm	Watsonville		Contact Patricia Rodriguez to reserve space 831-235-1855
Downtown Santa Cruz Makers Market	Third Sundays	Santa Cruz		
Pajaro Chamber Lunch in the Park				
Chamber Mixers				

*Farmers Markets are first-come, first-served basis (no sales allowed)

Holiday Calendar

(2025, to be updated annually)

	Green Triangle – Diversity Leaders’ Birthdays
	Blue Circle – United States Holidays
	Red Bar – Religious / Cultural Holidays
	Purple Star- International Holidays

January 2025

- 1/6  Feast of Epiphany (Christian)
- 1/6  Guru Gobind Singhi’s Birthday (Sikh)
- 1/7  Orthodox Christmas Day
- 1/10  World Hindi Day
- 1/12  Baptism of Jesus Christ (Christian)
- 1/13  Korean American Day
- 1/13  Lohri (Sikh)
- 1/14  Mahayana New Year (Buddhist)
- 1/14  Makar Sankranti (Hindu festival to Sun God, Surya)
- 1/14  Orthodox New Year
- 1/16  National Religious Freedom Day
- 1/18  Bodhi Day (Lunar)
- 1/19  World Religion Day
- 1/20  Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 1/21  National Day of Racial Healing
- 1/26  International Customs Day (UN)
- 1/27  International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust (UN)

1/29  Lunar New Year

1/30  Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution

February 2025

2/2  Candlemas (Christian)

2/4  Shrove Tuesday (Christian)

2/4  Rosa Parks Day

2/10  Guru Har Rai Jayanti (Sikh)

2/12  Tu B'Shevat (Jewish)

2/12  Magha Puja (Buddhist)

2/12  Lantern Festival

2/15  Nirvana Day (Buddhist)

2/21  International Mother Language Day (UN)

2/25  Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)

2/28  Intercalary Days (Baha'i)

March 2025

3/1  Ramadan starts (Islam)

3/1  St. David's Day (Christian)

3/3  Clean Monday (Christian)

3/4  Shrove Tuesday/ Mardi Gras (Christian)

3/5  Ash Wednesday (Christian)

3/8  International Women's Day

3/13  Palm Sunday (Christian)

3/14  Holi (Hindu)

3/14  Purim (Jewish)

3/15  Hola Mohalla (Sikh)

3/17  St. Patrick's Day

3/19  St. Joseph Day (Christian)

3/21  International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN)

3/21  International Day of Nowruz (Baha'i)

3/25  International Day of Remembrance of Slavery Victims and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (UN)

3/27  Lailat al-Qadr (Islam)

- 3/30  Gudi Padwa (Hindu)
- 3/31  Cesar Chavez Day
- 3/31  Eid al-Fitr (Islam)
- 3/31  International Transgender Day of Visibility

April 2025

- 4/5  Ram Naumi (Hindu)
- 4/11  National Day of Silence (LGBTQ+)
- 4/12  Passover Eve (Jewish)
- 4/12  Dolores Huerta Day
- 4/13  Palm Sunday (Christian)
- 4/13  Passover (Jewish)
- 4/13  Theravada New Year (Buddhist)
- 4/14  Vaisakhi (Sikh)
- 4/17  Maundy Thursday (Christian)
- 4/18  Good Friday (Christian)
- 4/18  World Heritage Day
- 4/19  Holy Saturday (Christian)
- 4/20  Easter (Christian)
- 4/20  Last day of Passover (Jewish)
- 4/20  Chinese Language Day (UN)
- 4/20  Festival of Ridvan (Baha'i)
- 4/21  Easter Monday
- 4/23  Yom HaShoah (Jewish)
- 4/23  St. George Day (Christian)
- 4/30  Eid al Fitr (Islam)
- 4/30  Akshaya Tritiya (Hindu)

May 2025

- 5/1  Yom Ha'atzmaut (Jewish)
- 5/5  Cinco de Mayo
- 5/5  National Day for Awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- 5/5  Orthodox Easter
- 5/9  Native American Day

5/12  Vesak- Buddha Day (Buddhist)
5/16  Lag B'Omer (Jewish)
5/17  International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia
5/19  Malcolm X Day
5/21  World Day for Cultural Diversity (UN)
5/22  Harvey Milk Day (LGBTQ/Civil Rights Activist)
5/23  Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i) Gugu
5/25  African Liberation Day
5/28  Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
5/29  Ascension Day (Christian)

June 2025

6/2  Shavuot (Jewish)
6/2  American Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 (Native American)
6/4  The Hajj (Islam)
6/6  Eid al-Adha begins (Islam)
6/7  Eid al-Adha ends (Islam)
6/8  Pentecost (Christian)
6/8  Race Unity Day
6/8  National Puerto Rican Day Parade
6/9  Whit Monday (Christian)
6/12  Guru Hargobind Singh Jayanti (Sikh)
6/13  Shavuot (Jewish)
6/15  Trinity Sunday (Christian)
6/15  All Saints' Day (Christian)
6/19  Juneteenth (Federal)
6/19  Corpus Christi (Christian)
6/21  Juneteenth (CA)
6/27  Muharram (Islam)
6/27  Helen Keller Day (Disability Rights Activist)
6/29  Ascension Day (Christian)
6/29  Christopher Street Liberation Day (Anniversary of Stonewall Riots/LGBT Civil Rights Movement)

July 2025

- 7/6  Ashura (Islam)
- 7/9  Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)
- 7/10  Dharma Day (Buddhist)
- 7/10  Guru Purnima (Hindu)
- 7/14  International Non-Binary People's Day
- 7/18  Nelson Mandela International Day (Civil Rights Leader)
- 7/24  Pioneer Day (Christian)
- 7/26  ADA Day
- 7/29  Nag Panchami (Hindu)

August 2025

- 8/1  Tisha B'Av (Jewish)
- 8/8  Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)
- 8/9  International Day of the World's Indigenous People (UN)
- 8/15  Assumption of Mary (Christian)
- 8/16  Shree Krishna Janmashtami (Hindu)
- 8/17  Marcus Garvey Day
- 8/20  Ullambana (Buddhist)
- 8/22  International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief (UN)
- 8/23  International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (UN)
- 8/24  Guru Grinath Sahib Jayanti (Sikh)
- 8/26  Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)
- 8/26  Women's Equality Day (Right to vote)
- 8/30  Paryushana (Jain)
- 8/31  International Day for People of African Descent (UN)

September 2025

- 9/5  Prophet's Birthday (Islam)
- 9/14  Holy Cross Day (Christian)
- 9/18  International Equal Pay Day (UN)
- 9/20  HeForShe (UN promoting gender equality)
- 9/22  Navratri begins (Hindu)

9/23  Rosh Hashana (Jewish)
9/23  International Day of Sign Languages (UN)
9/23  Bi Visibility Day
9/26  Native American Day

October 2025

10/1  Maha Navami (Hindu)
10/1  Yom Kippur begins (Jewish)
10/2  Dussehra (Hindu)
10/2  Yom Kippur ends (Jewish)
10/2  Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday
10/4  Feast of St. Francis of Assisi (Christian)
10/5  Onam (Hindu)
10/7  First Day of Sukkot (Jewish)
10/11  National Coming Out Day (LGBTQIAA+)
10/13  Last Day of Sukkot
10/13  Indigenous Peoples' Day
10/14  Shemini Atzeret (Jewish)
10/15  Simchat Torah (Jewish)
10/15  White Cane Safety Day (Blind Awareness)
10/15  International Pronouns Day
10/16  Spirit Day (LGBTQIAA+ anti-bullying)
10/20  Deepavali (Hindu)
10/20  Gur-Gaddi Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh)
10/21  Bandi-Chhor Diwas (Sikh)
10/22  Birth of the Bab (Baha'i)
10/23  Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
10/26  Christ the King (Christian)

November 2025

11/2  All Saints' Day (Christian)
11/2  Day of the Dead (Mexico)

11/5  Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti (Sikh)
11/20  Transgender Day of Remembrance (LGBTQ+)
11/25  International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (UN)
11/25  Day of Covenant (Baha'i)
11/28  Native American Heritage Day
11/29  International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (UN)

11/30  First Sunday of Advent (Christian)
11/30  St. Andrew Day (Christian)

December 2025

12/1  Geeta Jayanti (Hindu)
12/2  International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (UN)
12/3  International Day of Persons with Disabilities (UN)
12/6  St. Nicholas Day (Christian)
12/8  Feast of Immaculate Conception (Christian)
12/8  Bodhi Day (Buddhist)
12/12  Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Christian)
12/15  Chanukah/Hanukkah – First Day (Jewish)
12/22  Last Day of Hanukkah (Jewish)
12/24  Christmas Eve (Christian)
12/25  Christmas
12/26  Kwanzaa- First Day of Seven Day Celebration
12/27  Guru Gobind Singh Jayanti (Sikh)
12/28  Day of Holy Innocents (Christian)
12/30  Asrah B'Tevet (Jewish)
12/31  Watch Night (Christian)

Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/gare/cdcr-cchcs-gare-diversity-and-inclusion-calendar/>

Meeting Facilities List

County Area	Name	Type	Address	Seating Capacity	Notes	Contact	Website
North	Live Oak Grange	Hall	1900 17th Ave, Santa Cruz, CA 95062	100		dfeldman26@yahoo.com (831) 325-3233	https://sites.google.com/site/liveoakgrange/Hall-Rental
North	Live Oak Community Center	Hall	979 17th Avenue Santa Cruz, CA 95062	140 (2 rooms combined)	A/V Speaker	reservations@parks.santacruzcountyca.gov (831) 454-7938	https://parks.santacruzcountyca.gov/Home/PermitsReservations/MeetingRooms.aspx
North	London Nelson Community Center	Multiuse room	301 Center St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060	120	Podium Large HDMI TV (\$10 fee) \$82/hr	(831) 420-6177 (831) 420-6183 (room supervisor, call once booked for setup)	https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/parks-recreation/facilities/london-nelson-community-center/room-rentals
North	Felton Community Hall	Hall, meeting room	6191 Highway 9, Felton, CA 95018	Meeting room: 30		reservations@feltonhall.org (831) 335-5621	https://www.feltonhall.org/
North	Pacific Elementary	Multiuse room, classrooms	50 Ocean St, Davenport, CA 95017	Varies		hredding@pacificesd.org (831) 425-7002	https://www.pacificesd.org/facilities-use.html
North	Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium	Auditorium, meeting rooms	307 Church St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060	Varies		jreiter@santacruzca.gov (831) 420-5242	https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/parks-recreation/civic-auditorium/reserving-the-civic
North	Harvey West Clubhouse & Scouthouse	Hall	326 Evergreen St, Santa Cruz, CA, 95060	Clubhouse : 90 Scouthouse: 62	Projector screen (clubhouse) Clubhouse is \$71/hr, Scouthouse is \$60/hr, \$150 refundable damage deposit	(831) 420-5270	https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/parks-recreation/reservations/indoor-facilities
North	Santa Cruz High School Auditorium	Auditorium	415 Walnut Avenue Santa Cruz, 95060	780		(831) 429-3904	https://sccs.civicpermits.com/Account/Login
North	Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History (MAH)	Varies	705 Front St. Santa Cruz, CA 95060	Varies		(831) 429-1964	https://www.santacruzmah.org/rent

North	Santa Cruz Veterans Memorial Building	Varies	846 Front St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060	Varies		booking@vetshall.org (831) 454-0478	https://www.veteranshall.org/ https://www.veteranshall.org/rental-rates/
North	Santa Cruz Police Department Community Room	Community room	155 Center St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060	85 seated 40 seated with tables	Projector and screen, microphone and stand Minimum rental 2 hours: \$135 6 hours: \$264 Additional hours: \$36	(831) 420-5812 confrmpc@santacruzca.gov	https://www.santacruzca.gov/Government/City-Departments/Police/How-do-I/Community-Room
North	County Building Basement Conference Room	Conference room	701 Ocean St # 520, Santa Cruz, CA 95060			(831) 454-2000	https://www.santacruzcountyca.gov/Government.aspx
North	Santa Cruz City Council Chambers	Council chambers	809 Center St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060	11 seats at the dais 140 seated	In-person only, no hybrid capability Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and Monday-Thursday 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.	(831) 420-5030	https://www.santacruzca.gov/Home
Mid	Aptos Library	Meeting room	7695 Soquel Dr, Aptos, CA 95003	76	85-inch wall-mounted screen		https://www.santacruzpl.org/meeting-rooms/
Mid	Capitola Library	Meeting room	2005 Wharf Rd, Capitola, CA 95010	60	90-inch wall-mounted screen Microphone with ceiling speakers		https://www.santacruzpl.org/meeting-rooms/
Mid	Mid County Senior Center	Hall	829 Bay Avenue Capitola, CA 95010	Hall: 185 Annex: 80	Hall: large screen TV, PA system Annex: large screen TV, projector and screen	mcsc4u@att.net (831) 476-4711	https://www.mcsc-capitola.org/rentals/
Mid	Community Foundation Santa Cruz County	Varies	7807 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA 95003			facilities@cfsc.org (831) 662-2000	https://www.cfsc.org/blog/community-foundation-room-reservations
South	Watsonville Civic Plaza Community Rooms	Hall	275 Main Street, Fourth Floor,	150 (2 rooms combined, can be split in half)	A/V	israel.tirado@watsonville.gov 831-768-3240	https://www.watsonville.gov/1143/Indoor-Facilities

			Watsonville, CA 95076				
South	Watsonville Library	Meeting rooms	250 Main Street Watsonville, CA 95076	Robert & Elayne Stein Meeting Room: 78	A/V with VGA connection (bring HDMI converter)	831-768-3406	https://www.watsonville.gov/608/Study-Meeting-Rooms
South	Mello Center	Auditorium	250 E Beach St, Watsonville, CA 95076			andrea_botsford@pvusd.net 831-234-3781	https://www.mellocenter.org/rental-information
South	Watsonville Senior Center	Hall	114 E. 5th Street, Watsonville, CA 95076	70		israel.tirado@watsonville.gov 831-768-3240	https://www.watsonville.gov/1143/Indoor-Facilities
South	Cabrillo Watsonville Center	Multiple	318 Union Street Watsonville, CA 95076	Auditorium : 70	Projector Audio \$150/hr plus staffing of \$75/hr, cleaning fee of \$120	chhankes@cabrillo.edu (831) 786-4701	https://extension.cabrillo.edu/facilitiesrentals/
South	Ramsay Park Family Center (closed until Spring 2026)	Hall	1301 Main Street, Watsonville, CA 95076			israel.tirado@watsonville.gov 831-768-3240	https://www.watsonville.gov/1143/Indoor-Facilities
South	Watsonville Veterans Hall (currently closed)	Hall	215 E Beach Street Watsonville, CA 95076	400		israel.tirado@watsonville.gov 831-768-3240	https://www.watsonville.gov/1143/Indoor-Facilities
South	Watsonville YMCA	Meeting room	27 Sudden St, Watsonville, CA 95076		Available Saturday or Sunday after 3 pm	831-728-9622	https://www.centralcoastymca.org/watsonville-family-ymca/

Digital Engagement Tools, Guides and Best Practices

Community Engagement Tools

[Poll Everywhere](#) – An innovative online polling platform. *Free and Paid options available.*

[Community Remarks](#) – Survey map that makes it easy for citizens to access a map, plot a comment, and go. *Paid options available.*

[Crowdbrite](#) – Online platform for crowdsourcing and innovative stakeholder & public engagement. *Paid options available.*

[Mind Mixer](#) – An online engagement platform. *Paid options available.*

[Interactive Text](#) – Platform to engage people through texts. *Paid options available.*

[Survey Monkey](#) – Online survey platform. *Paid options available.*

[MetroQuest](#) – Online planning and engagement platform for online public engagement solution for urban transportation planning. *Paid options available.*

[Bang the Table: Engagement HQ](#) – Platform for local and city governments to drive online public participation. *Paid options available.*

[OpenGov](#) – Online platform to help allocate resources, increase efficiency, improve public engagement, and make data and information readily available to staff and elected officials. *Paid options available.*

[Thoughtexchange](#) – Online crowdsourcing platform to solicit ideas from participants, who then rank the ideas submitted by other meeting participants. *Paid options available.*

[Miro](#) – Online collaborative whiteboard. *Free and Paid options available.*

[Slido](#) – Tool to empower an audience to ask questions, vote in polls and be a part of the discussion. *Free and Paid options available. Paid options available.*

[Balancing Act](#) – An easy-to-use online budget simulation that engages stakeholders to help leaders make tough choices. *Paid options available.*

[Konveio](#) – A digital outreach platform that turns regular PDFs into Social Documents to better convey ideas, collect feedback and spark action. *Free and Paid options available.*

[Social Pinpoint](#) – A customizable community engagement platform to help organizations improve the way they interact and engage their community. *Paid options available.*

[76Engage](#) – A platform for effective digital engagement, providing engagement managers with publishing, management, moderation, analysis, and reporting. *Paid options available.*

[Participate.online](#) – An online engagement platform for anytime, anywhere participation. *Paid options available.*

[Civic Responsibility Guide: Resources to Promote Civic Engagement](#) – Published by Concord Law School.

Meeting Tools

[Mentimeter](#) – Platform to create interactive presentations and meetings. *Free and Paid options available.*

[MeetingSift](#) – Collaboration platform to run more productive meetings. *Free and Paid options available.*

[GoToMeeting/GoToWebinar](#) – A video chat client that is one of the most established and reliable in the industry. *Paid options available.*

[Webex](#) – Cisco’s video conference solution, integrates directly with their Citrix cloud platform. *Free and Paid options available.*

[Zoom](#) – The newer and exceedingly popular video conferencing solution for online meetings and conferences. *Free and Paid options available.*

[Facebook Live](#) – Livestreaming platform for events, performances and gatherings on Facebook. *Free options available.*

[YouTube](#) – A platform to post videos and livestream events. *Free options available.*

[Form Site](#) – Online forms and surveys. *Free and Paid options available.*

[Minutes.io](#) – A platform for effortlessly taking meeting notes and minutes. *Paid options available.*

[Kahoot!](#) – A Fun multiple-choice customizable quiz game that users can play from their phones and computers. *Free and Paid options available.*

[Lucidcharts](#) – A web-based proprietary platform that is used to allow users to collaborate on drawing, revising and sharing charts and diagrams. *Free and Paid options available.*

Examples of Tools in Action

[Mullen Area Master Plan](#), Missoula, Montana — Online virtual charrette.

[Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation](#) – Project engagement page using participate online.

[City of San Luis Obispo Open City Hall](#) – Online forum using OpenGov’s Open City Hall.

Best Practices and Guides

[Best Practices for Virtual Engagement](#), Local Government Commission

[Understanding Digital-First Community Engagement](#), Bang the Table

[Virtual Toolkit](#), Divided Community Project

[Broadening Public Participation Using Online Engagement Tools](#), Institute for Local Government

[Equitable Public Participation](#), Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability

[Participation Tools for Better Community Planning](#), Local Government Commission

[Town Planning Stuff Everyone Needs to Know: Ep 13: Staying Engaged, Online](#), Dover Kohl & Associates – Town planner Victor Dover describes how and why to keep collaboration going, even during times of crisis and social distancing.

[Virtual Public Engagement](#): A more Inclusive Approach to Charrettes, CNU

[How to do Online Meetings and Town Halls Webinar](#), City of Oakland

[How To do Online Meetings & Town Halls Toolkit](#), City of Oakland

[How To Facilitate Effective Virtual Meetings](#), Beth’s Blog

[Online Facilitation Resources](#), 350 Global Trainings

[The Definitive Guide To Facilitating Remote Workshops](#), MURAL – Insights, tools and case studies from digital-first companies and expert facilitators.

[Virtual Meetings for Clarity and Momentum](#), CoCreative

[Facilitating Effective Virtual Meetings](#); Sarah Rubin, Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, California Department of Conservation

[Online Collaboration Tools](#), Community at Work

[Tips for Online Retreats and Meetings](#)

[Zoom tutorials for phone & computer; English & Español](#), UC Merced

Source: CivicWell

<https://civicwell.org/civic-resources/virtualengagement/>

Appendix B: Equity Discovery Report & Recommendations



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Equity Discovery Report & Recommendations 2025

Drafted August 2025, Revised November 2025



THE JUSTICE COLLECTIVE



An Organization of Phenomenal Potential

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) represents a remarkable example of public service excellence poised for transformational success. At its core lies an exceptional level of public service motivation that permeates all levels of staff, board, and committee membership. This deep commitment to serving the community, combined with demonstrated collaborative innovation, strategic leadership with board alignment, and a genuine growth mindset characterized by humility and continuous learning, creates a foundation of phenomenal potential for innovative solutions to complex public challenges.

The agency's expansion from transportation planning into engineering represents more than organizational growth; it demonstrates adaptability, vision, and the courage to evolve in response to community needs. This multi-generational, interdisciplinary workforce and board and community leadership has shown remarkable wisdom in seeking external expertise when needed, investing strategically in organizational development, and maintaining unwavering commitment to access, diversity, equity, and inclusion. These strengths position the organization not merely to navigate change, but to lead transformation in public service delivery.

Strategic Evolution and Community-Centered Excellence

The SCCRTC's growth in scope, scale, and professional capacity has created opportunities to strengthen community relationships and deepen equity practices, particularly with South County residents. Our comprehensive analysis, including document review, training observations, facilitated discussions, and engagement with staff, board members, and committee members, reveals significant opportunity to leverage the organization's technical excellence toward enhanced community impact.

Our multi-method approach has identified clear pathways for the SCCRTC to evolve from traditional public outreach compliance toward trauma-informed community engagement and equity-centered planning that ensures all county residents experience genuine representation in transportation decision-making.



Comprehensive Community Engagement Framework

The recommendations presented in this report reflect strategic opportunities to advance the SCCRTC's community service mission. Our extensive review of key documents, protocols, strategic plans, and public-facing materials, combined with training workshops and facilitated discussions, has identified opportunities for enhanced clarity and consistency in community engagement across all organizational functions.

We emphasize a critical principle: meaningful community impact requires not just policy excellence but consistent, thoughtful implementation through authentic relationships and culturally responsive practices. The recommendations focus on:

- **South County Engagement Strategy:** Comprehensive approach to deepen relationships with South County residents through culturally responsive practices, accessible engagement formats, and community partnership
- **Historical Context Training:** Building staff capacity to understand South County communities' experiences with development and transportation planning, enabling more effective outreach and partnership
- **Trauma-Informed Community Engagement:** Implementing best practices that honor community experiences and create safe, accessible participation pathways
- **Unified Communication Strategy:** Ensuring consistent, transparent communication that builds trust and demonstrates how community input influences transportation decisions
- **Equity Impact Integration:** Establishing frameworks to evaluate how transportation investments affect different communities and advance equitable outcomes

These recommendations position the SCCRTC to leverage its proven technical expertise and project delivery excellence toward deeper community partnerships and more equitable transportation planning that serves all Santa Cruz County residents.

The Path Forward: Deep Optimism and Commitment

The SCCRTC possesses everything necessary to become a regional model for community-centered transportation planning. The confluence of exceptional public service motivation, collaborative innovation capacity, strategic leadership, and demonstrated commitment to growth creates an environment ready for transformational community impact. With strategic investment in community engagement capacity and equity practices, this organization can extend its technical excellence into authentic community partnership that establishes the SCCRTC as a leader in equitable transportation planning throughout the region and beyond.

TABLE

- I. INTRODUCTION & PROJECT BACKGROUND**
- II. RESEARCH APPROACH & METHODOLOGY**
 - a. Orientation to Research
 - b. Approach & Methodology
- III. DATA ANALYSIS AND KEY INSIGHTS**
 - a. Comprehensive Strengths
 - b. Insights from Surveys
- IV. RECOMMENDATIONS, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS & TACTICS**
 - a. Community Engagement Strategy for Deeper Equity Impact
 - b. Strengthening Governance Collaboration and ADEI Capacity Across Board, Committees, & Staff
 - c. Specific Policy Recommendations
- V. CONCLUSION**
- VI. APPENDICES**
 - a. Appendix A: Board Survey Data
 - b. Appendix B: Committee Survey Data
 - c. Appendix C: Asset Review & Recommendations



This report focuses on the SCCRTC’s community engagement strategy, equity commitments, and external impact opportunities. Our comprehensive organizational assessment included extensive analysis and recommendations regarding internal organizational culture, leadership development, and operational systems, which is all work that is essential to supporting the community-centered practices described here. Those internal recommendations, along with detailed implementation guidance for staff and leadership, are provided in another version of this assessment. This report emphasizes the strategic community engagement and equity framework that will guide the agency's evolution as a regional leader in transportation planning, as these are the areas where board and committee understanding, support, and policy guidance are most critical to success.

Background

In response to SCCRTC’s 2024 Request for Proposals (RFP 2187), this project was initiated to conduct a thorough equity-focused organizational assessment of culture and operational practices and develop customized ADEI trainings and conflict resolution capacity building. The RFP emphasized the need to embed equity into all agency operations, including hiring, procurement, community engagement, and project prioritization. The Justice Collective, a women-of-color-owned Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), was selected for its expertise in racial and transportation equity, organizational transformation, and culturally responsive methodologies.

The project scope includes:

- A comprehensive assessment of policies, practices, and culture through an equity lens.
- Review and recommendations to remove barriers in hiring and procurement.
- Development and delivery of tailored ADEI trainings for staff, board, and committees.
- Conflict resolution and skill-building advising sessions.
- Equity recommendations to inform the SCCRTC’s creation of an actionable plan with monitoring and evaluation components to ensure sustained progress.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY





TJC Research Approach

TJC is inspired by the principles in Indigenous scholar Dr. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's groundbreaking text, *Decolonizing Methodologies*². We highlight her concerns with approaching research as “the context in which research problems are conceptualized and designed, and with the implications of research for its participants and their communities. It is also concerned with the institution of research, its claims, its values and practices, and its relationships to power.”¹ Smith continues, “Indigenous methodologies tend to approach cultural protocols, values and behaviors as an integral part of methodology. They are ‘factors’ to be built into research explicitly, to be thought about reflexively, to be declared openly as part of the research design, to be discussed as part of the final results of a study and to be disseminated back to the people in culturally appropriate ways and in a language that can be understood.” Smith is explicit that the sole purpose of *Decolonizing Methodologies* is the self-determination of Indigenous people.

While we are not attempting to make a direct connection to how this project fulfills the purpose of self-determination of Indigenous people at this time, we have shared concerns with the research approaches used by Western institutions, and we strive to continue to evolve our research design towards fulfilling the intended outcomes of *Decolonizing Methodologies*.

Many areas of government research have been and continue to be a tool of oppression and exploitation against Black, Indigenous, and People of the Global Majority (BIPOGM), aka BIPOC. We understand that “research is an important part of the colonization process because it is concerned with defining legitimate knowledge.”¹

In our assessments, these decolonizing principles translate into concrete practices: We center the lived experiences of those most impacted by inequity within your organization rather than privileging top-down perspectives. We design processes that build your internal capacity to define problems, generate solutions, and measure success according to the values and knowledge already present in your communities, rather than imposing external frameworks of what “good” looks like. Our methods prioritize transparency about power dynamics in the assessment process itself, create space for dissent and multiple truths, and ensure findings are accessible and actionable for all stakeholders, not just leadership.

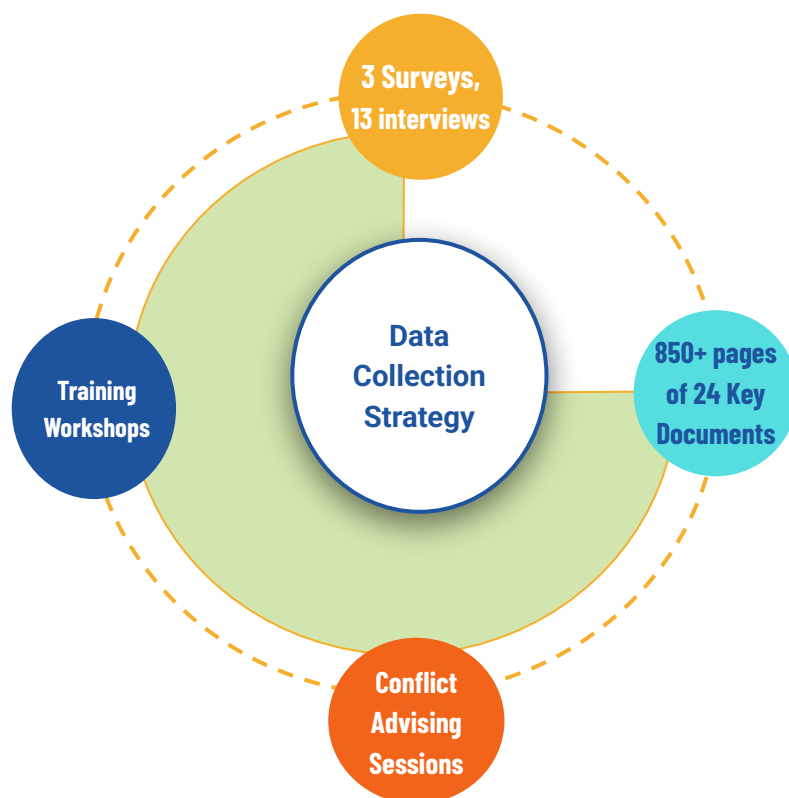
More importantly, we design our processes so you can replicate them. The goal is not dependence on external consultants but the development of your own organizational muscle for asking hard questions, listening across difference, and making decisions that honor the complexity of your people's experiences. When you understand the “why” behind our approach: that research and assessments are never neutral, that they can either reinforce or challenge existing power structures, you gain the ability to critically examine any framework you encounter and adapt it to serve your community's self-determined goals rather than simply reproduce dominant narratives about what equity should look like.

² Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing Methodologies : Research and Indigenous Peoples*. 2nd Ed. Zed Books, London.



Methodologies & Data Sources

The assessment employed a mixed-methods approach grounded in decolonizing and intersectional frameworks. Data collection included quantitative and qualitative surveys distributed via SurveyMonkey to staff, board, and committee members. Additionally, thirteen in-depth interviews with staff, board, and committee members were conducted between March and August 2025. The research also involved a document review of over 850 pages of policy in 24 documents, analyzing internal policies, staffing assessments, and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Finally, anecdotal observations and insights from the six trainings for Staff, Board, and Committees, and 3-part conflict training workshop series, facilitated staff discussions with, and group and eight individual advising sessions were also holistically incorporated to round out the data as significant sources of critical information. Where sample sizes allowed, data was disaggregated by race, gender, tenure, and income, with a focus on identifying disparities affecting marginalized groups.



Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

The stakeholder engagement process was designed to be inclusive, culturally relevant, and accessible. Web-based surveys were distributed to staff (February 12–March 2, 2025), board members (February 19–March 14, 2025), and advisory committee members (February 19–March 14, 2025). Quantitative research and engagement was supplemented by interviews, focus groups, six Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training workshops, three customized conflict resolution trainings and eight group and individual customized conflict advising sessions to deepen qualitative understanding and build trust.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY



As a value of being transparent and ethical, TJC acknowledges potential constraints of our methods. Like all other research efforts, TJC's information gathering has its limitations.

While this assessment utilized a mixed-methods approach and engaged a broad range of stakeholders, several limitations should be noted. First, the survey response rates, while robust for a small agency, represent a snapshot in time and may not fully capture the diversity of perspectives present within SCCRTC staff, board, and committee members. Some demographic groups, particularly those from historically marginalized backgrounds, may be underrepresented in the responses, potentially leading to an incomplete picture of equity-related opportunities, challenges and strengths.

The qualitative interviews, though in-depth, were limited to 13 participants (eight staff, two board/commissioners, and three committee members) and thus cannot be considered fully representative of all stakeholder views. The interview sample may also reflect self-selection bias, as those with strong opinions or particular experiences may have been more likely to participate. Additionally, the timing of the interviews and surveys, coinciding with periods of organizational change and leadership transition, may have influenced responses, with some findings reflecting temporary sentiments or heightened sensitivities.

Another limitation is the reliance on self-reported data, which can be subject to recall bias, social desirability bias, or reluctance to disclose negative experiences, particularly regarding sensitive issues such as retaliation or discrimination. The disaggregation of survey data by race, gender, and tenure was limited in some cases by small subgroup sizes, which may have restricted the depth of analysis and the ability to draw statistically robust conclusions for all identity groups.

Finally, while the document review was comprehensive for the materials provided, there may be relevant policies, practices, or unwritten norms not captured in the available documentation. As with any organizational assessment, the findings should be viewed as a foundation for ongoing inquiry and action, rather than as a definitive or exhaustive account of all equity issues and opportunities within SCCRTC.

OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY DATA COLLECTION PROCESS



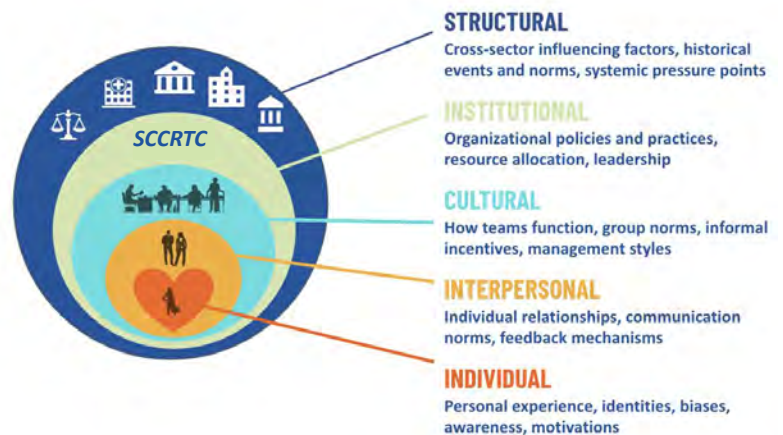
Table 1: TJC -SCCRTC Survey Responses by Survey Type

Survey Type	Number of Total Responses	Response Rate
Staff	20	87%
Board	8	62%
Committee	34	37%
Total	62	

How to Use This Report

As stated in the previous section, the data analyzed from this effort represents a snapshot in time. As such, it does not provide a comprehensive understanding of community needs and concerns. Instead, it is a tool for reflection and learning, as well as a launchpad into next steps. The findings are meant to support a high-level understanding of staff and volunteer community priorities,

both high-level and more specific. While the recommendations we offer represent reflections of the data collected, they are also intended to encourage thinking towards solutions that best fit the SCCRTC in ways that TJC may not have insight into as an external partner. Multiple dynamics, all with porous boundaries to each other, exert force on Santa Cruz County (see figure above). But the SCCRTC is not a passive actor, and dynamics shift in response to individual and collective behaviors. TJC has identified existing strengths and opportunities for the SCCRTC to prioritize towards greater access, equity, diversity, and inclusion at all levels.



DATA ANALYSIS AND KEY INSIGHTS





While the SCCRTC has navigated significant and critical leadership transitions alongside substantial growth in both the number and types of projects, including an important expansion of disciplines from a primarily planning focus to include engineering expertise, it has demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability. As a multicultural and multi-generational workplace and , the agency possesses several foundational assets that position it well for continued success and evolution.

Core Strengths and Assets

Exceptional Public Service Motivation

The most striking finding from our engagement process was the exceptionally high level of public service motivation demonstrated across the organization. Public service motivation, as defined by Perry and Wise (1990), refers to an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations. This was particularly evident among all staff who participated in interviews, focus groups, and especially those who took the initiative to engage in conflict resolution facilitated discussions and advising hours. Through the anecdotes and examples shared during conflict advising sessions around community engagement and working with the public, the team demonstrated an impressive level of care, thoughtfulness, and genuine commitment to learning what it will take to continue improving service to the public through enhanced communication, transparency, and creative community involvement strategies.

Deep Community Commitment

Perhaps the organization's greatest strength lies in the profound moral, intellectual, and emotional commitment of its staff, board, and committees to serving the community. While the definition of "serving the community" varies among stakeholders based on their unique identities, experiences, and perspectives, this shared dedication to community service creates a powerful unifying force that transcends individual differences and provides a strong foundation for collaborative work.

Capable Leadership with Organizational Trust

The current executive leadership is regarded as highly capable by many staff members and has earned both the buy-in and trust of the board. While some staff need greater alignment between leadership, staff, and governance, the evidence of trust in the Executive Director and desire by managers to grow and evolve can create an environment conducive to strategic decision-making and effective implementation of organizational initiatives if a growth mindset is more fully adopted among staff.

Commitment to Growth and Evolution

Several employees, board and committee members demonstrate a remarkable commitment to continuous evolution and change, coupled with a genuine desire to learn new skills, especially in community engagement, conflict, and operational practices. This growth mindset is particularly evident in areas critical to modern public service, including access, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI), conflict resolution, communication, and community engagement. This learning orientation positions the organization to adapt effectively to changing community needs and best practices.



Exceptional Collaborative Innovation

Staff at all levels, along with some board and many committee members, demonstrate a notable level of collaboration that stands as a significant organizational asset. Through the examples and questions they raised during our engagement process, these stakeholders revealed how they are proactively getting creative and innovating together to address complex challenges. Their collaborative approach to "figuring it all out" reflects both resourcefulness and a collective commitment to problem-solving that transcends traditional hierarchical boundaries.

Innovation and Learning Culture

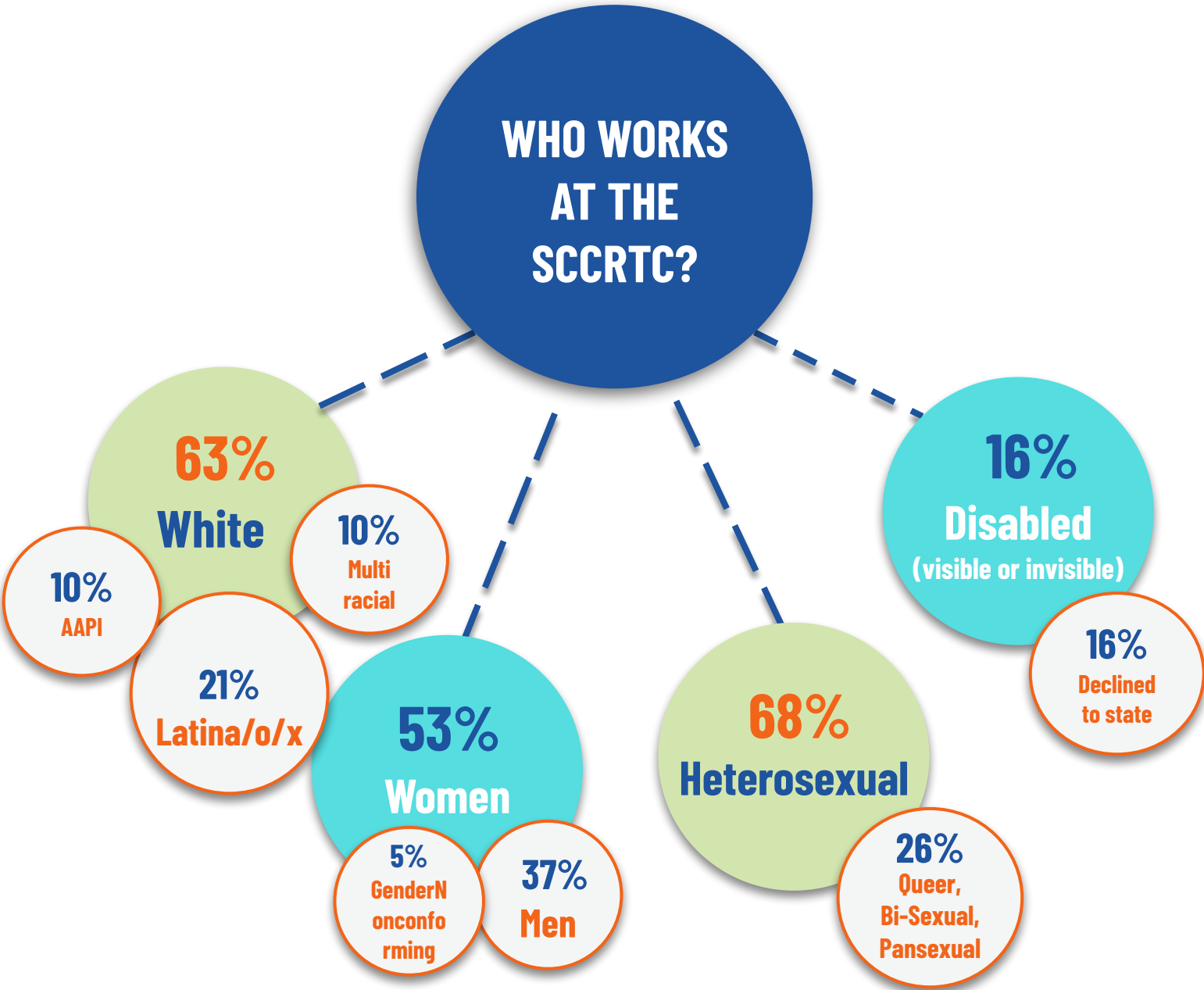
Among many staff members and managers, there is a demonstrated willingness to innovate and embrace new approaches to their work. This forward-thinking attitude, combined with the desire for continuous learning, creates an environment where creative solutions can flourish and where the organization can remain responsive to evolving challenges.

Strategic Investment in External Expertise

The agency has shown wisdom and self-awareness in recognizing where it needs additional support and has proactively sought outside assistance. The organization has invested both existing funds and pursued additional resources to engage external expertise in critical areas including organizational development, effectiveness, culture, general strategy, and ADEI initiatives. This demonstrates both humility and strategic thinking that will serve the organization well as it continues to grow and evolve.

Looking Forward

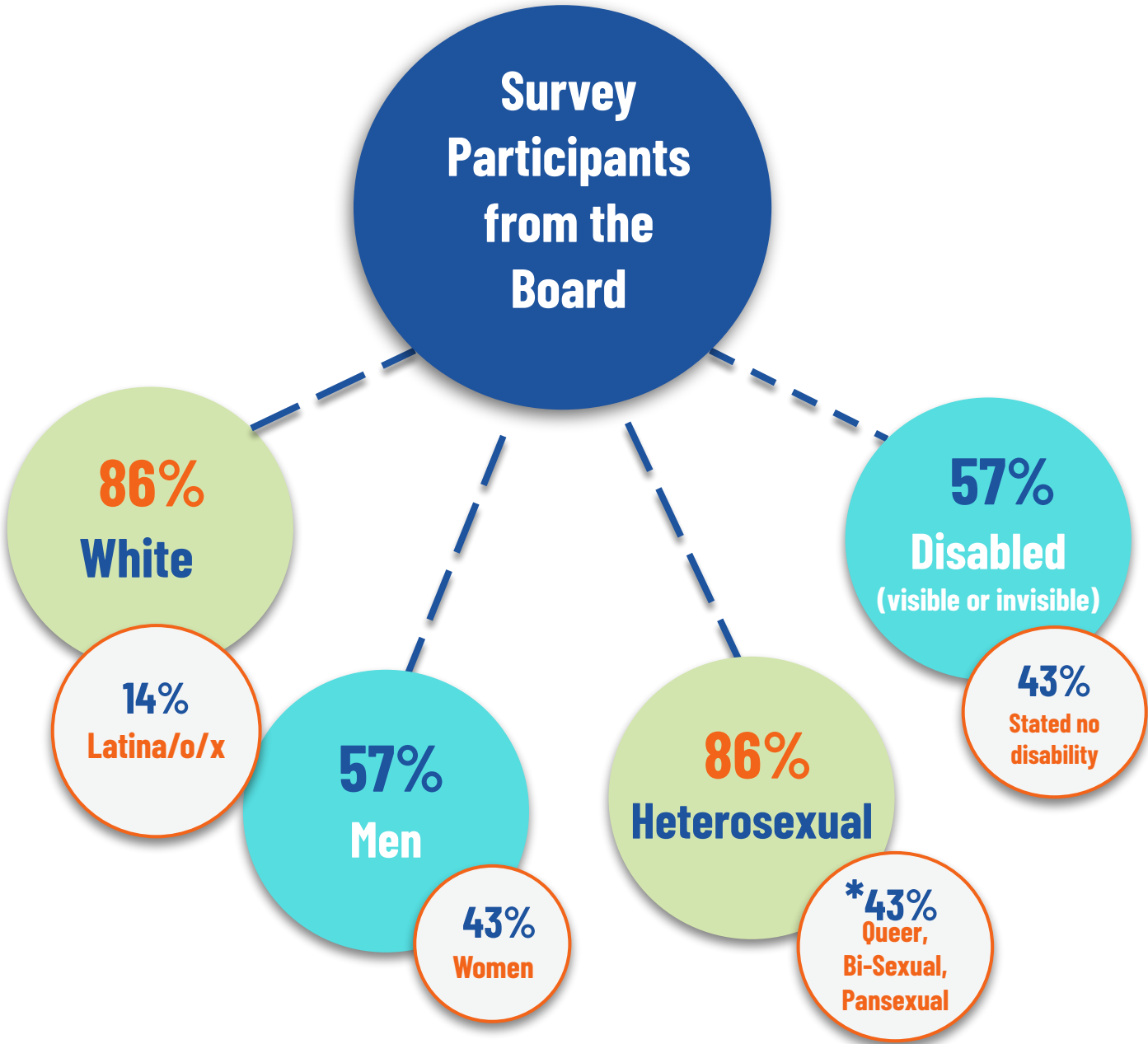
While the findings and recommendations outlined in this report present numerous opportunities for improvement and organizational change, we view these opportunities as pathways to leverage and build upon the existing strengths and assets detailed above. The organization's demonstrated commitment to community service, capable leadership, growth mindset, innovation capacity, and strategic approach to seeking support create a solid foundation for meaningful transformation. We have confidence that this agency can successfully implement recommended changes and continue its evolution to best serve the community it is dedicated to supporting.



*The survey allowed respondents to select more than one categorical answer so that respondents could identify as multiracial and/or specify an aspect of their racial or ethnic identity. This type of survey design helps to illuminate the socially-constructed and contradictory nature of race, as the idea of racial purity is contested and allows participants to identify with all parts of their racial or ethnic identity.



The staff survey, conducted from February 12 to March 2, 2025, engaged 20 respondents across various roles and tenures within SCCRTC. The survey combined quantitative Likert-scale questions with open-ended qualitative prompts to capture a holistic view of workplace climate, equity, and professional development. For purposes of this report, details on the staff survey and subsequent recommendations have been provided to the SCCRTC leadership and staff leading specific internal equity and organizational health and culture efforts.



**possible misunderstanding of question choices*

The survey allowed respondents to select more than one categorical answer so that respondents could identify as multiracial and/or specify an aspect of their racial or ethnic identity. This type of survey design helps to illuminate the socially-constructed and contradictory nature of race, as the idea of racial purity is contested and allows participants to identify with all parts of their racial or ethnic identity.

8-113



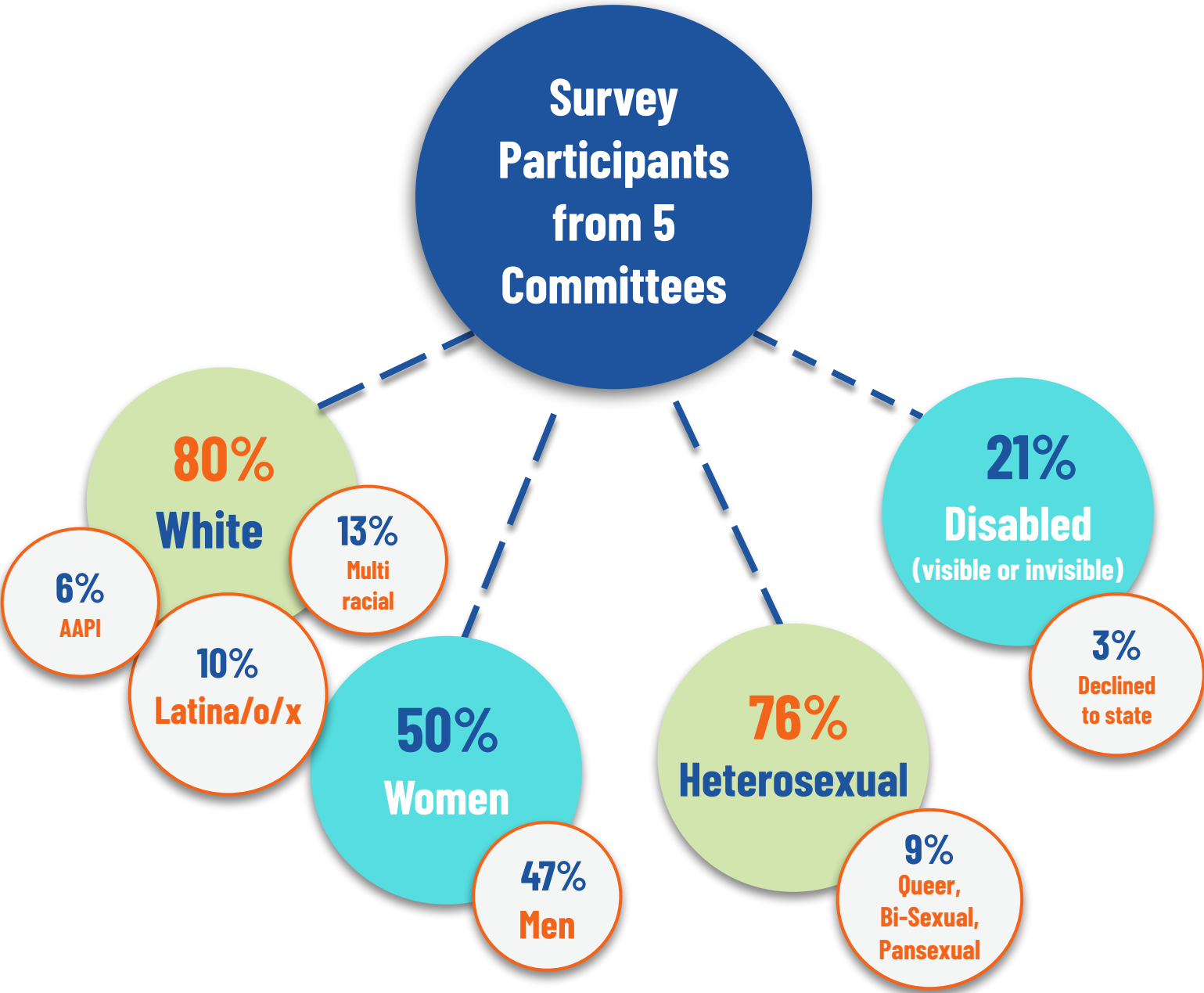
The board survey, conducted from February 19 to March 14, 2025, included 8 respondents, primarily long-tenured members with significant influence on policy and funding decisions. Data from the Board Survey can be found in Appendix A.

Eighty-eight percent of board members reported being very familiar with SCCRTC's mission. Fifty percent felt very confident representing diverse community needs, while the other 50% of respondents reported being somewhat confident. Funding constraints were identified as the most significant barrier to equitable transportation solutions by several respondents, while others cited gaps in community engagement, especially with lower income and Spanish-speaking populations.

When asked about ADEI integration and effectiveness, 88% of board members believed projects address equity to a moderate or great extent, but only 38% rated the board as very effective in integrating ADEI principles into decision-making. Training needs were also highlighted, with several respondents requesting community engagement skills and implicit bias training.

Qualitative responses from board members emphasized the challenges of funding and budget prioritization. Community engagement challenges were also noted, such as reaching working class communities.

ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS: Committee Survey



*The survey allowed respondents to select more than one categorical answer so that respondents could identify as multiracial and/or specify an aspect of their racial or ethnic identity. This type of survey design helps to illuminate the socially-constructed and contradictory nature of race, as the idea of racial purity is contested and allows participants to identify with all parts of their racial or ethnic identity.



The committee survey, conducted February 19 to March 14, 2025, engaged 34 advisory committee members, predominantly from the Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee. Data results from the Committee survey can be found in Appendix B.

Thirty-two percent of committee members reported an “excellent” level of understanding of ADEI concepts, with 59% reporting a “good” level of understanding. Forty-five percent indicated that equity is integrated into committee decisions to a great extent, while 12% reported integration to a small extent or not at all. Only 27% reported discussing diversity and equity issues at every meeting. Satisfaction with diversity was generally high, as 76% were very or somewhat satisfied with committee diversity; however, 21% were somewhat or very dissatisfied with diversity and representation within their committee.

Qualitative themes from committee members included concerns about geographic and demographic representation. Multiple members noted that more meetings located in South County are needed. Committees were described as lacking diversity, with limited representation from diverse communities. Language and communication barriers were also cited, such as a lack of Spanish-language materials that would make participation more accessible.

CROSSWALK OF FINDINGS: CORROBORATIONS & CONTRADICTIONS



A synthesis of key themes across staff, board, and committee surveys reveals both alignment and divergence in perspectives on ADEI priorities, barriers, and opportunities.

All groups identified gaps in reaching equity priority communities, citing language, transportation, and trust barriers. Geographic inequities, especially underinvestment in South County, were consistently noted. Staff emphasized internal capacity gaps, such as bilingual staffing, while the board focused more on external funding constraints.

All three cited funding constraints as a top barrier to equity. However, staff prioritized internal equity issues, while the board emphasized external project funding. All groups identified training gaps. The need for ADEI and implicit bias training was an emergent theme. The board expressed more optimism about cultural progress.

Committees and staff noted underrepresentation of marginalized groups, and both the board and committees acknowledged demographic mismatches with county diversity.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS



Priority Area: Community Engagement & Equity

Strategy for Deeper Impact



Through multiple sources of data spanning board members, staff, committee members, management, and executive leadership, a clear and present opportunity has emerged to focus on deeper engagement and representation from South County residents and community members, as well as allocation of greater funding to that community. Committee and board surveys consistently identified barriers to meaningful engagement with equity priority communities, including language, transportation, and trust. Only 27% of committee members said equity is discussed at every meeting, and multiple members called for more meetings in South County. Board members and committees both cited underrepresentation of marginalized groups and recognized the need for more accessible and culturally relevant outreach. This finding was consistently evidenced across data collection, including research interviews, training session questions, conflict resolution facilitated discussions, group advising sessions, and comprehensive review of key organizational documents including strategic plans and public-facing materials.

Recommended Goal: Creating a Strategic Focus on South County as a Priority

We recommend strategically focusing community engagement efforts on South County for a fundamental reason rooted in equity best practices: to achieve meaningful impact in an area identified as needing attention, especially when the opportunity is so clearly defined and ripe for action, organizations must be willing to overcorrect. We recognize that some stakeholders may perceive this targeted approach as an overemphasis on one geographic area. However, we stand by our decade of experience in the field to recommend that a comprehensive and strategically focused community engagement approach specifically targeting South County residents and community members will yield the greatest return on investment for this commission.

Root Causes Identified

The conflict resolution facilitated discussions and group advising sessions revealed that many of the conflicts staff experience stem directly from two critical gaps:

1. **Lack of clarity** regarding the agency's position and approach to community engagement and specific, tactical strategies for engaging with the public on details that may easily result in conflict
2. **Limited experience and skill sets** in community engagement and public outreach methodologies

These gaps create inconsistencies in public interactions and missed opportunities for meaningful community connection, particularly with underrepresented populations.

The strategy to achieve this goal should include the following Tactics:

Priority Area: Community Engagement & Equity Strategy for Deeper Impact



Comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy Framework

We recommend developing and implementing a comprehensive, agency-wide community engagement strategy that encompasses the following core components:

Foundational Elements:

- **Values and Core Principles:** Clearly articulated organizational values that center community voice and equity
- **Public Service Motivation Integration:** Explicit connection to the organization's demonstrated public service motivation as a driving force for authentic engagement

Methodological Approaches

Historical Context Training

Comprehensive training on the local history of what South County residents and community members have experienced regarding development changes, economic transitions, and socioeconomic and political shifts across the county, with particular focus on South County's unique trajectory. Engaging in this type of learning will enable and empower agency professionals, project managers, and staff at all levels to create more effective public outreach and engagement strategies, build stronger partnerships with local nonprofits, design the most effective policies, and construct the most critical capital assets with genuine community input and historical awareness.

Trauma-Informed Community Engagement

Training staff in trauma-informed approaches to community engagement, utilizing established curricula such as those developed by organizations with proven track records in this specialized area.

Culturally Responsive Practices

Strategies that acknowledge and adapt to the diverse cultural contexts within South County communities.

Communication and Consistency Framework:

- **Unified Communication Strategy:** A comprehensive approach that ensures consistency in the public's experience of the agency across all types of projects, regardless of depth, breadth, or scope
- **Cross-Project Integration:** Moving beyond project-by-project engagement to create a cohesive, recognizable approach that builds trust and familiarity with community members over time

Priority Area: Community Engagement & Equity Strategy for Deeper Impact



Our specific recommendations in Appendix C for the Public Participation Plan, Measure D Implementation Plan, SCCRTC Budget, 5-Year Strategic Plan, Rules and Regulations, and other documents apply to this priority area as well. We recommend implementing those specific recommendations for various policies and practices, which will strengthen SCCRTC's overall community engagement strategy.

Implementation Structure

- **Agency-Wide Adoption:** Ensuring all staff, regardless of role or department, understand and can implement core engagement principles
- **Measurable Outcomes:** Establishing clear metrics for success that prioritize community feedback and engagement quality over quantity

This comprehensive strategy will address the identified gaps while leveraging the organization's existing strengths in public service motivation and collaborative innovation. By providing clarity, consistency, and enhanced skills, this approach positions the agency to build authentic relationships with South County communities and create more equitable outcomes in all areas of service delivery.

Success in achieving this Goal can be tracked through implementation of the following Metrics:

South County Engagement Excellence

ADEI Alignment and Lived Experience of Principles

- Increase the percentage of committee members reporting “excellent” understanding of ADEI to 55% by 2027.
- Monitor and improve satisfaction with committee diversity and representation, aiming for at least 85% satisfaction.
- Begin demographic tracking and public reporting on outreach participation in 2026.

Relationship Building

- **Community Connections:** Establish meaningful partnerships with 8-10 South County community-based organizations and informal community leaders
- **Engagement Participation:** Achieve 40% South County resident participation in relevant transportation planning discussions (measured against population representation)
- **Language Accessibility:** Provide interpretation/translation services in Spanish and other identified community languages for 100% of South County-focused meetings

Priority Area: Community Engagement & Equity Strategy for Deeper Impact



Cultural Responsiveness

- **Meeting Accessibility:** Host 60% of South County engagement activities in community-identified locations (schools, community centers, faith organizations)
- **Flexible Participation:** Offer multiple engagement formats (evening meetings, weekend sessions, one-on-one conversations) achieving 50% non-traditional format participation
- **Community Leadership:** Partner with community members to co-facilitate 40% of South County engagement sessions

Historical Context and Trauma-Informed Practice

Staff Competency Development

- **Historical Knowledge:** 100% of public-facing staff complete local history training focused on South County development impacts and community experiences
- **Trauma-Informed Skills:** 85% of staff demonstrate competency in trauma-informed engagement practices through practical assessment
- **Cultural Humility:** Staff demonstrate measurable improvement in cultural responsiveness as evaluated by community feedback

Community Trust Building

- **Trust Indicators:** Achieve 65% community satisfaction with agency responsiveness and cultural competency in South County-focused surveys
- **Repair and Accountability:** Complete community listening sessions acknowledging past engagement gaps and committing to specific improvements
- **Partnership Quality:** Establish evaluation process with community partners showing 70% satisfaction with partnership approach and outcomes

Communication Strategy Excellence

Transparency and Accessibility

- **Plain Language:** Achieve readability scores at 8th-grade level for 100% of community-facing materials
- **Multi-Channel Communication:** Develop communication presence in community-identified platforms reaching 75% of priority demographics
- **Decision Transparency:** Implement public dashboard showing how community input influences actual project decisions with quarterly updates

Priority Area: Community Engagement & Equity Strategy for Deeper Impact



Authentic Engagement

- **Meaningful Participation:** Document specific examples where community input resulted in project modifications or priority changes
- **Sustained Relationships:** Maintain ongoing communication with community partners between formal planning processes
- **Community Voice:** Establish community advisory structure with decision-making authority over engagement protocols and community benefit requirements

Success Measurement Framework

Community Pulse Surveys

- Trust in agency responsiveness and cultural competency
- Satisfaction with engagement accessibility and meaningfulness
- Sense of authentic influence over transportation decisions
- Cultural responsiveness and respect demonstrated by staff

Annual Comprehensive Community Engagement Evaluations

- Independent assessment of equity practices implementation to measure effectiveness of these recommendations and related interventions
- Community-led evaluation of engagement quality and impact
- Staff satisfaction with clarity, support, and growth opportunities
- Quantitative analysis of South County representation in decision-making processes

Long Term Impact Indicators (next three years)

- Measurable reduction in transportation equity gaps affecting South County communities
- Recognition as model agency for community-centered transportation planning
- Staff retention and satisfaction among those engaged in community-facing roles
- Sustainable community partnerships extending beyond formal project timelines

Additional recommendations specific to Measure D are included in Appendix D: Asset Review & recommendations.

Priority Area: Community Engagement & Equity Strategy for Deeper Impact



Recommended Goal: Creating a Strategic Focus on South County as a Priority with Funding

As a tactic toward the goal of making an explicit equity focus on South County in SCCRTC's organizational strategy, finance and resource allocation to this community would address multiple stakeholders' clear feedback and desire to address specific needs in the region. Funding constraints and inequitable distribution of resources, especially for South County and other equity priority communities, were highlighted by all stakeholder groups. Only 45% of committee members felt equity was integrated into committee decisions to a great extent, and both staff and board cited funding as a top barrier to equity. The SCCRTC will deepen its broader equity strategy more meaningfully if it can ensure that discretionary funds and project prioritization processes are transparent and explicitly advance equity for historically underserved communities.

Suggested Success Metrics:

- Track and increase the proportion of discretionary funds allocated to South County and equity priority communities, aiming for progress toward the agency's 40% policy target.
- Publicly report on funding allocations and project outcomes by geography and demographic impact.
- Increase the percentage of committee and board members who perceive equity as "fully integrated" into funding decisions.

Suggested Timeline:

- Begin public reporting on funding allocation by geography and equity status in November 2025.
- Review and update funding criteria and project scoring to reflect equity goals by Spring 2026.
- Evaluate and adjust allocation strategies annually.

Priority Area: Strengthening Governance Collaboration and ADEI Capacity Across Board, Advisory Committees, and Staff



The SCCRTC functions through a collaborative governance structure comprised of its board of commissioners, advisory committees, and agency staff. Together, these three bodies are responsible for guiding policy, making funding decisions, and engaging the public around transportation planning. While significant progress has been made in embedding ADEI principles, especially through partnerships with consulting organizations and recent staff-focused initiatives, survey data from early 2025 suggests there is more to be done at the governance level. The data reflects a clear need for increased alignment, professional development, and inclusive infrastructure across all governing bodies, ensuring SCCRTC's policies and practices equitably serve all county residents.

Recommended Goal

To enhance the capacity of the SCCRTC Board, advisory committees, and staff to embed ADEI principles into governance processes through improved collaboration, targeted professional development, equitable participation practices, and ongoing structural support.

The strategy to achieve this goal should include the following Tactics:

- 1. Launch an Annual ADEI Training Series for Board and Advisory Committees**
 - Provide tailored workshops on implicit bias, inclusive community engagement, equitable decision-making, and ADEI-aligned budgeting.
 - Ensure all trainings are accessible, bilingual (English/Spanish), and evidence-based.
- 2. Develop a Joint Governance Learning Cohort**
 - Establish a working group of 3–4 Board members, 3–4 advisory committee members, and SCCRTC staff.
 - Meet quarterly to share learnings, align efforts, and coordinate on countywide ADEI strategies.
 - Members will serve as ADEI ambassadors within their respective groups.
- 3. Increase Geographic and Economic Accessibility for Advisory Participation**
 - Hold at least 25% of advisory committee meetings in South County or underserved areas.
 - Provide or expand transportation stipends and virtual access options.
 - Ensure all meeting materials are translated and interpretation services are available.
- 4. Evaluate and Enhance Advisory Stipend Structures**
 - Review current compensation structures with an equity lens.
 - Consider increasing stipends to support participation by low-income, working-class, or underrepresented community members.
 - Include considerations for travel, caregiving, and disability-related accommodations.

Priority Area: Strengthening Governance Collaboration and ADEI Capacity Across Board, Advisory Committees, and Staff



5. Implement an ADEI Review Framework for Governance Decisions

- Create a standard checklist or set of guiding questions to be used in policy, funding, and planning decisions.
- Questions may include: Who benefits? Who might be harmed or left out? What barriers to access exist?

6. Establish Regular Communication and Collaboration Channels

- Hold quarterly briefings or cross-body updates between the Board, advisory groups, and staff.
- Share ADEI-related insights, feedback, and priorities to ensure unified progress and eliminate silos.

Success in achieving this Goal can be tracked through implementation of the following Metrics:

- **Training Participation**
 - Board and advisory committee members complete annual ADEI training (target: 85%).
 - Pre- and post-training surveys assess growth in ADEI understanding and confidence.
- **Governance Cohort**
 - Cohort established and meeting quarterly.
Documented meeting agendas, outcomes, and shared tools or recommendations.
- **Geographic and Language Access**
 - At least 25% of advisory committee meetings held in South County or underserved areas.
 - 100% of meetings provide Spanish-language materials and live interpretation.
- **Stipend Equity**
 - Completion of stipend equity review by December 31, 2025.
 - Implementation of revised stipend structures to reduce participation barriers.
- **ADEI Decision Review Tool**
 - Number of major projects or decisions reviewed using an ADEI checklist.
 - Feedback collected on tool effectiveness from board and committee members.
- **Cross-Body Collaboration**
 - Quarterly communication and alignment updates between Board, advisory committees, and staff.
 - Qualitative feedback on collaboration and shared ADEI priorities.



Based on the comprehensive analysis of survey data and in-depth interview findings, several specific key policy recommendations emerge for SCCRTC to advance its ADEI goals. Many of these recommendations are included in our explicit document review and analysis of the 24 documents requested for our review in Appendices for staff and external stakeholders. Below are the policy recommendations that apply to the SCCRTC's external work in the community.

Prioritization of Multi-Language Reports

For external community engagement, the agency should create a publicly available multi-language report that tracks the progress towards the goal of allocating at least 40% of discretionary funds to projects in South County and other equity priority communities, and hire a bilingual Outreach Coordinator to lead proactive, consistent engagement in historically underserved areas.

Strategic Partnership with Nonprofits and Community-Based Organizations

SCCRTC should partner with community-based organizations and small businesses to reduce barriers to participation in public meetings, by providing childcare, food, or transportation as needed.

Accessible Language: Using Laymen's Terms Whenever Possible

All outreach and public communications should be in jargon-free language and available in both English and Spanish, and the agency should systematically track and publicly report the demographics of outreach participants to identify and address gaps in representation.

Publish annual diversity and equity progress reports and establish ongoing monitoring and evaluation programs to assess progress on ADEI goals and make data-driven adjustments, ensuring that equity is embedded into agency policies and practices and that progress is transparent and measurable.

CONCLUSION



The SCCRTC stands at a pivotal moment in its evolution as a regional transportation leader. The convergence of exceptional public service motivation, demonstrated collaborative innovation, strategic board alignment, and genuine commitment to continuous learning creates a powerful foundation for advancing community-centered transportation planning excellence.

The SCCRTC's proactive investment in deepening community relationships, particularly with South County residents, and strengthening equity practices positions the organization to transform technical transportation expertise into authentic community impact. The collaborative spirit and problem-solving creativity that have driven successful project delivery can now be channeled into innovative community engagement approaches that ensure all county residents experience genuine representation in transportation decision-making.

This evolution from traditional public outreach compliance toward a more trauma-informed community engagement approach and equity-centered planning represents the SCCRTC's readiness to lead regional innovation in transportation planning. By centering community voice, investing in culturally responsive practices, and implementing comprehensive equity frameworks, the SCCRTC can leverage its proven technical excellence to create transportation solutions that truly serve all communities.

With the same systematic approach and dedication that has secured in competitive grants and delivered complex infrastructure projects, this organization can build community partnerships and equity practices that establish the SCCRTC as a model for transportation planning excellence. The potential for regional leadership in community-centered transportation planning is extraordinary and entirely within the SCCRTC's reach.



Photo via Envato

APPENDICES



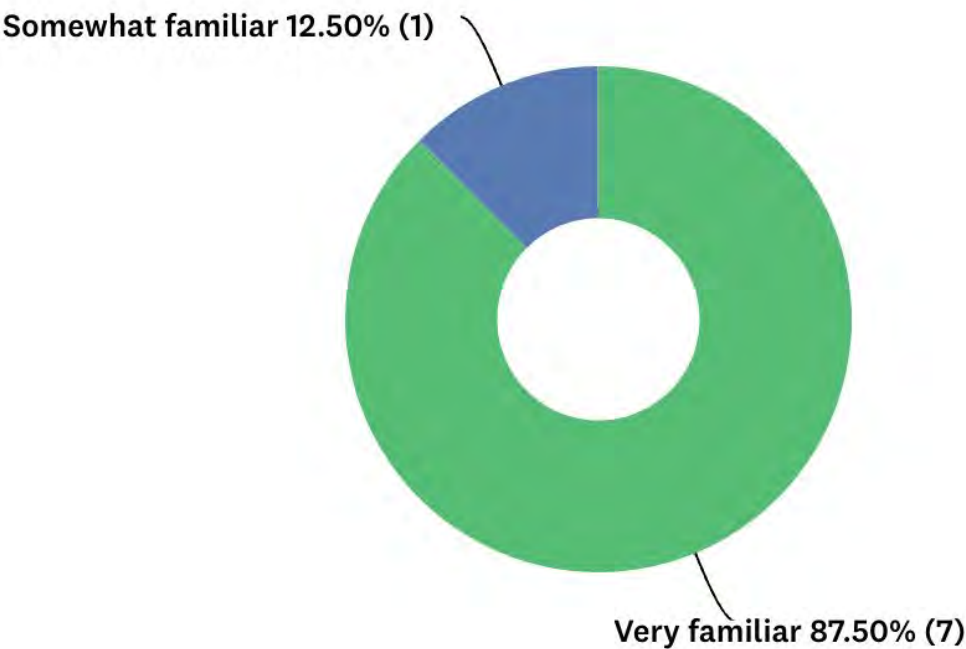
APPENDIX A:

Board Survey Results





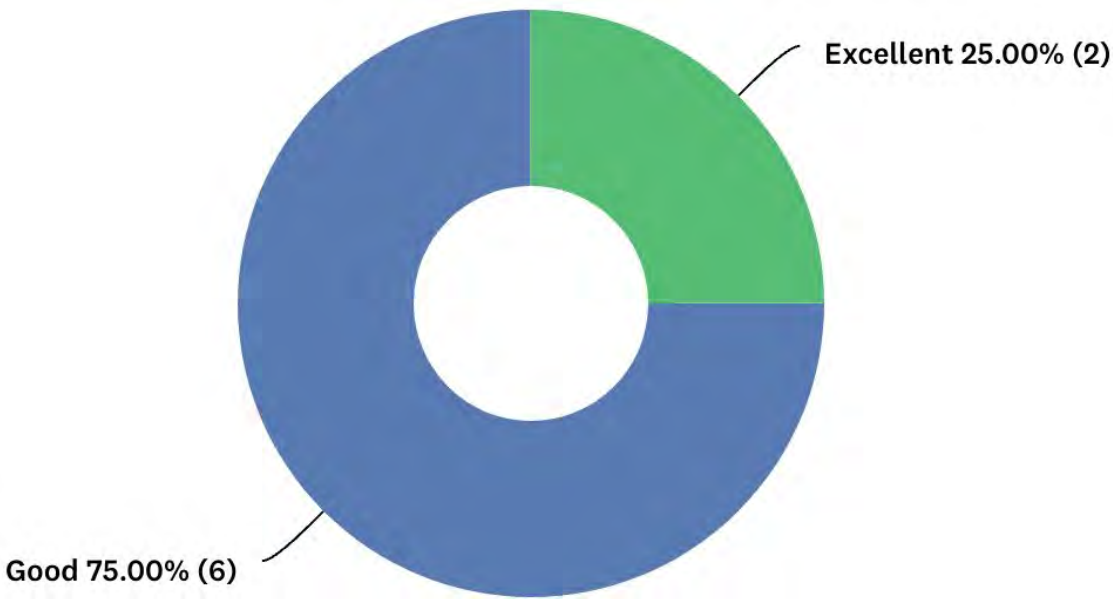
How familiar are you with SCCRTC's mission to develop and deliver transportation solutions for a vibrant, sustainable, and equitable community?



Q1



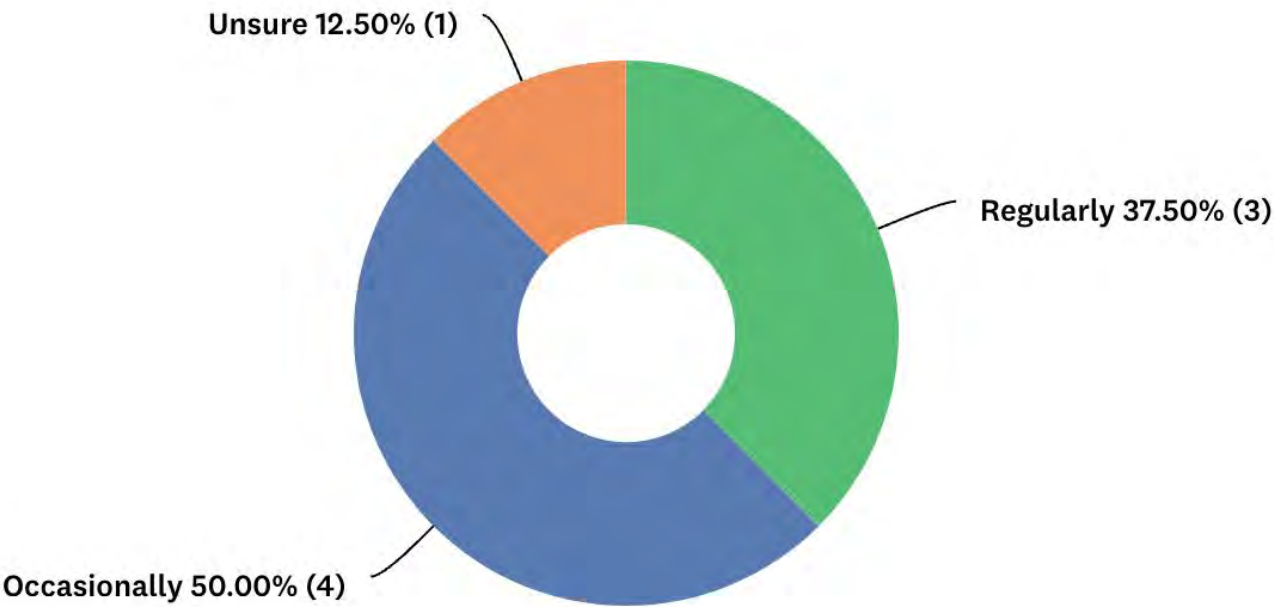
How would you rate your understanding of accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) concepts as they relate to transportation planning and decision-making?



Q2



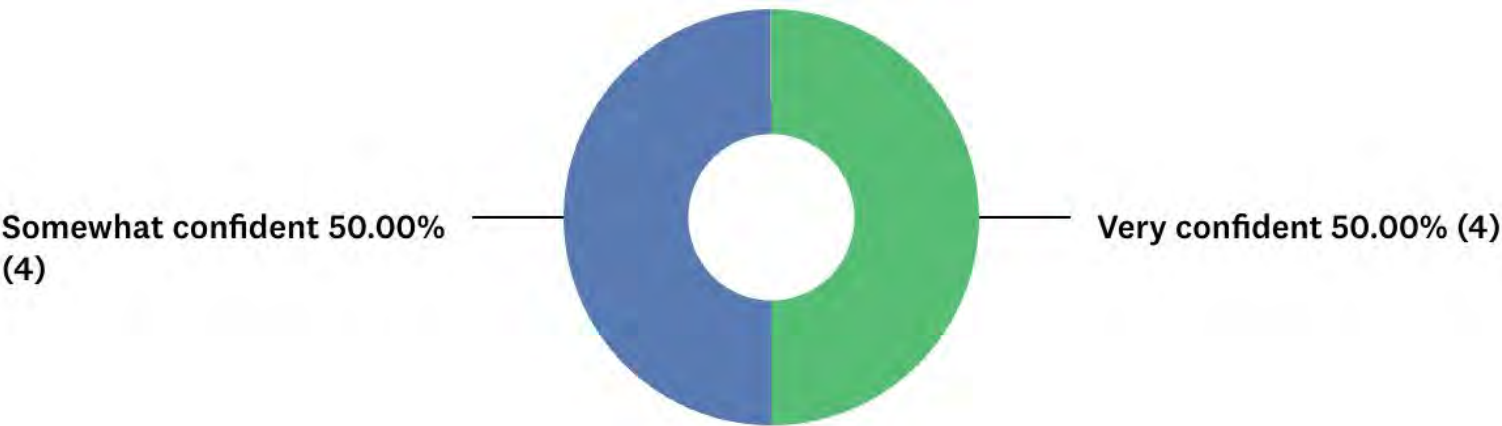
How often does the Board engage with underrepresented communities in Santa Cruz County regarding transportation issues?



Q3



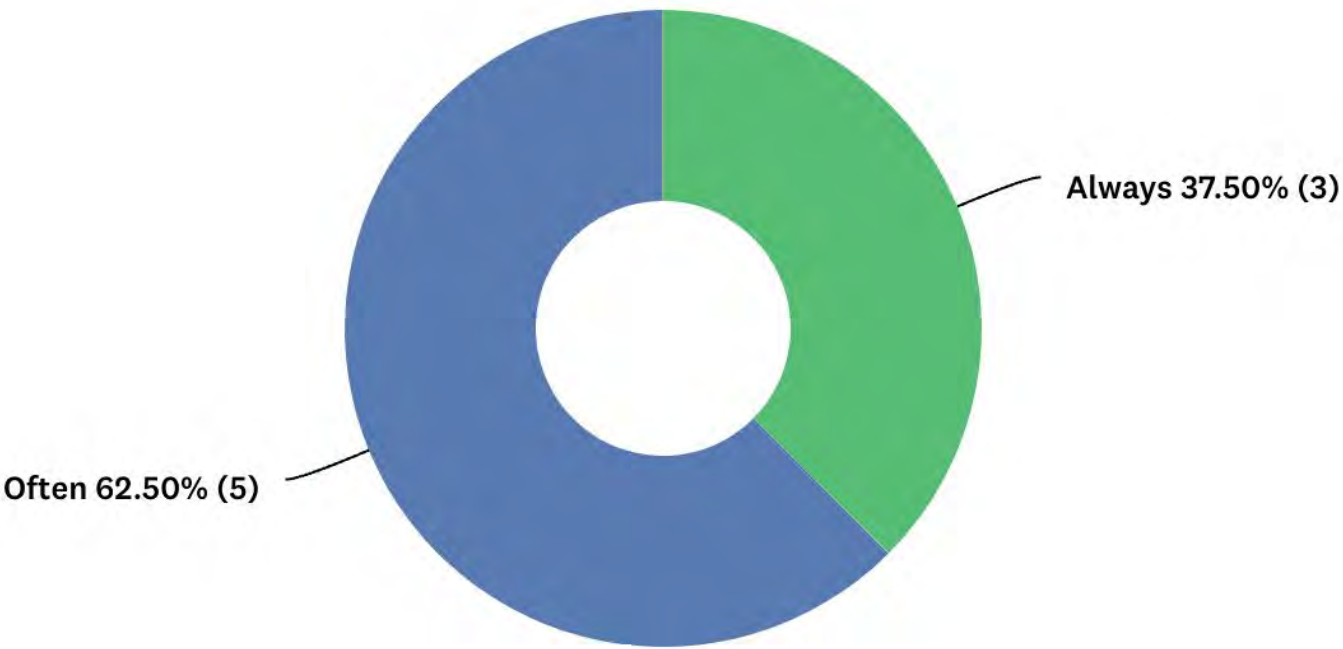
In your role as a Board member, how confident are you in your ability to represent the diverse needs of your constituencies in transportation discussions?



Q4



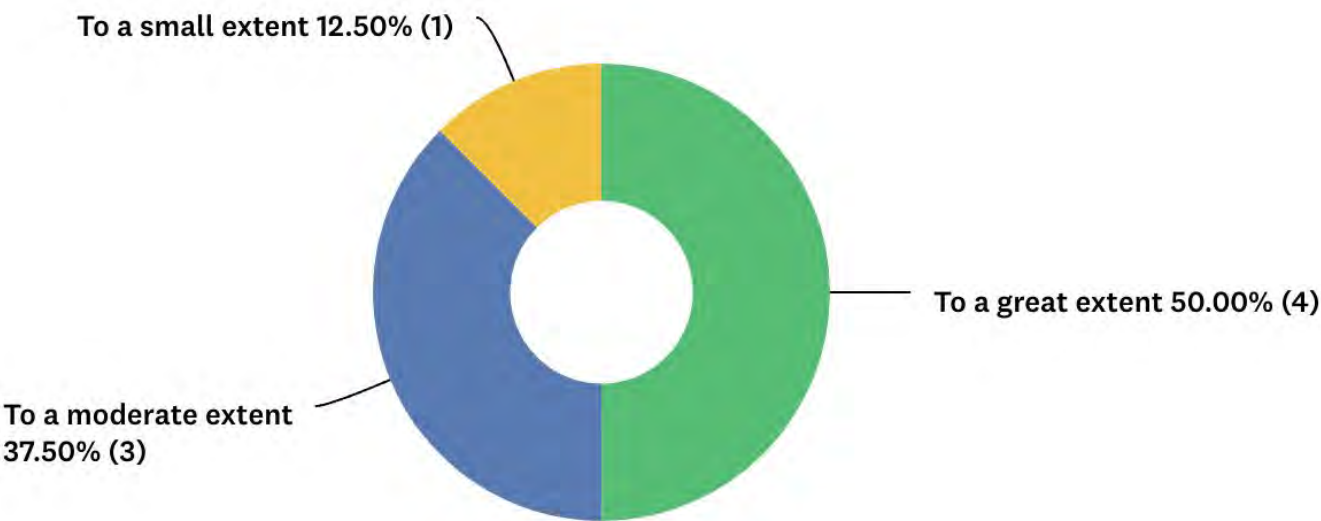
In your role as a Board member, how often do you consider ADEI when making decisions about transportation projects and policies?



Q5



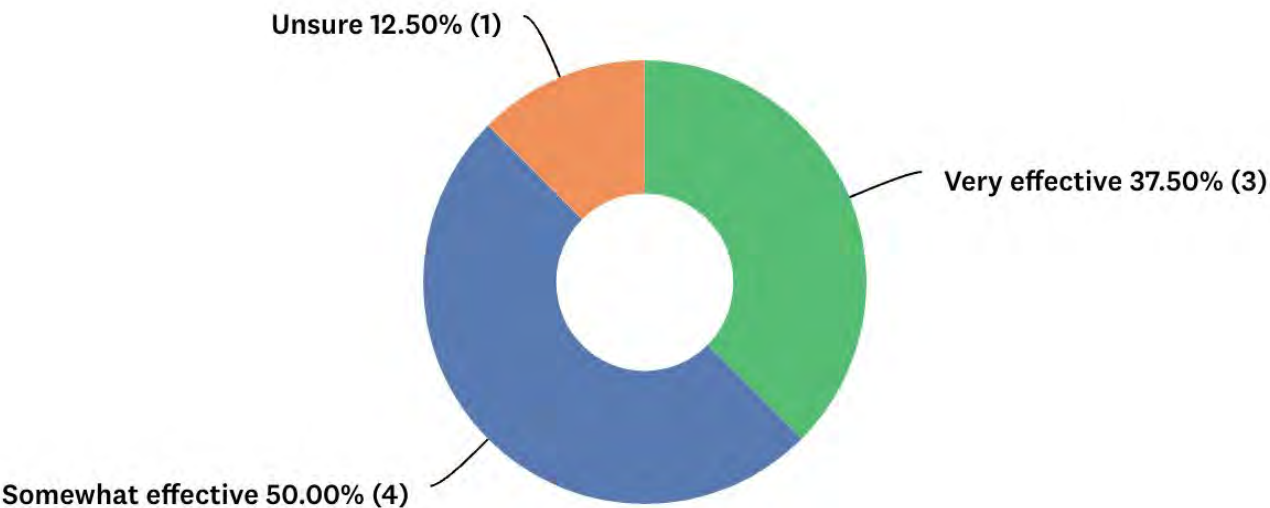
To what extent do you believe the current transportation projects and initiatives of SCCRTC address the needs of all community members equitably and do not benefit or negatively impact some communities more than others?



Q6



How would you rate the Board's effectiveness in ensuring that SCCRTC's decision-making processes consider ADEI?



Q7



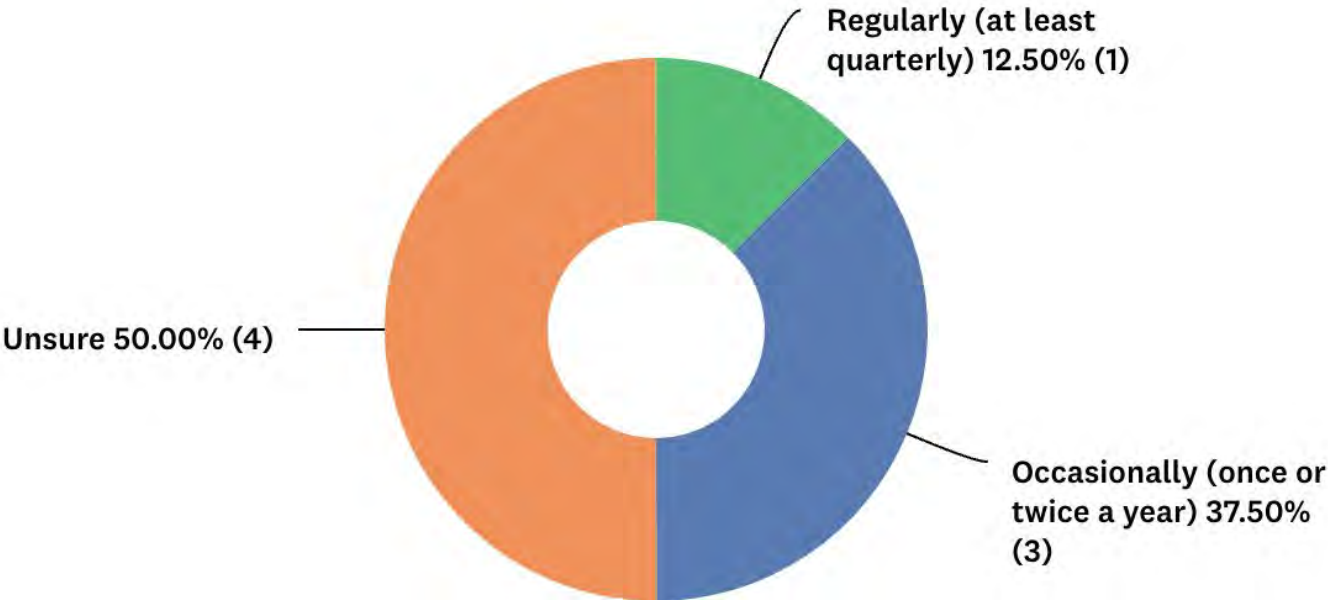
Themes and Insights: In your opinion, what is the most significant barrier to achieving equitable transportation solutions in Santa Cruz County?

1. Funding Constraints:
 - Insufficient Funding: The majority of respondents highlight funding as a major barrier, noting that it hinders the maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.
 - Budget Prioritization: There is a concern about how budgets are prioritized, suggesting that actual needs may not be adequately addressed.
2. Infrastructure Challenges:
 - Congested Infrastructure: Congested roads, such as Highway 1, are identified as significant barriers, particularly affecting immigrant communities in Watsonville.
 - Rail Development: There is a mention of obstacles to rail development, with some influential individuals potentially blocking progress.
3. Community and Stakeholder Dynamics:
 - Inconsistent Demands: Respondents note inconsistent definitions and demands from various stakeholders, which can complicate the development of equitable solutions.
 - Public Will: One respondent mentions the "will of the people" as a factor, suggesting that public support or opposition can influence the feasibility of transportation projects.

Q8



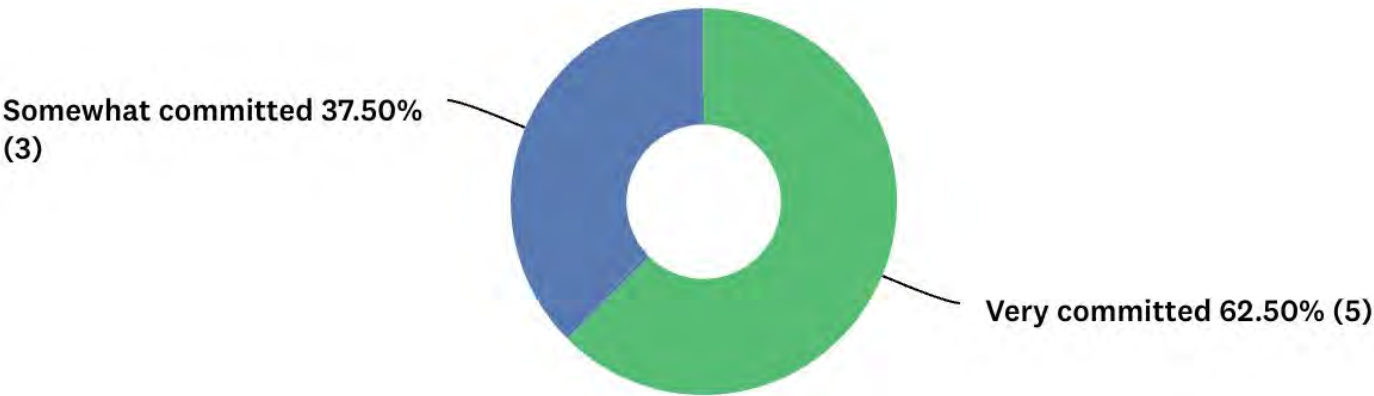
How often does the Board review and assess the ADEI impacts of SCCRTC's projects and initiatives?



Q9



How committed are you to advancing ADEI internally within SCCRTC via staffing and budgetary decisions, and externally in its transportation, projects, policies, procedures?



Q10

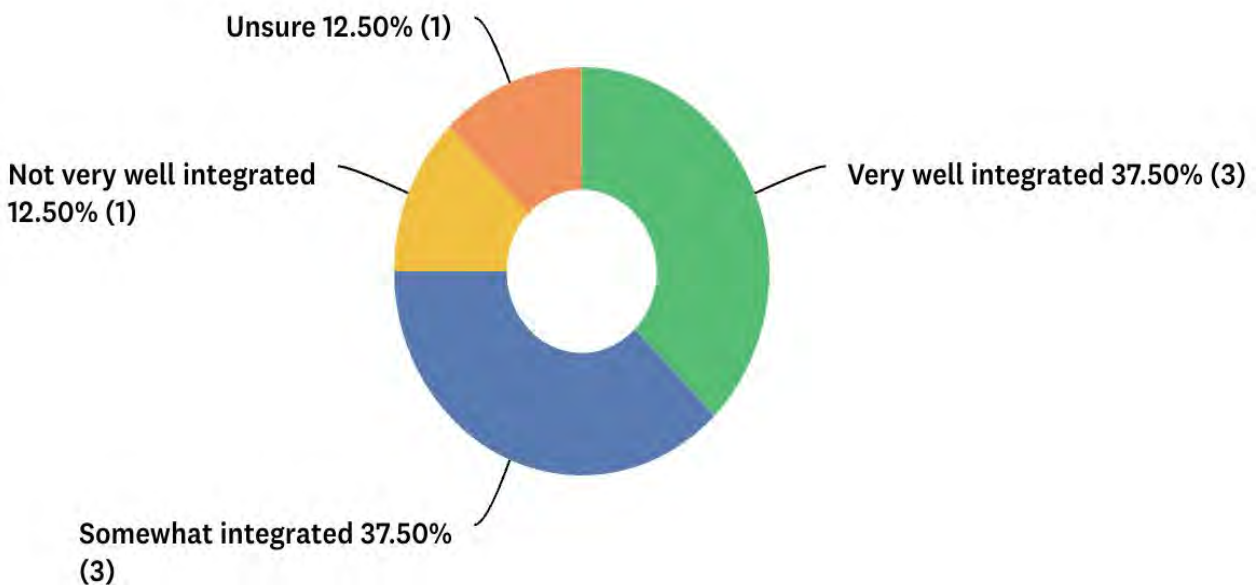


Themes and Insights: What specific ADEI-related training topics do you believe would be most beneficial for the Board to receive? These may include but are not limited to, implicit bias training, leading across lines of difference, community engagement skills and strategies, historical context of inequities, etc.

1. Community Engagement:
 - Community Engagement Skills and Strategies: This is the most frequently mentioned topic, highlighting the importance of effective engagement with diverse communities to ensure inclusive decision-making.
2. Implicit Bias and Leadership:
 - Implicit Bias Training: Respondents suggest that implicit bias training would be beneficial to help Board members recognize and address unconscious biases.
 - Leading Across Lines of Difference: There is also interest in training on leading across diverse backgrounds to enhance the Board's ability to manage and support diverse perspectives.
3. Inclusive Planning:
 - Inclusion of Seniors: One respondent emphasizes the need to include the needs of seniors in planning processes, ensuring that all age groups are considered.
4. Communication and Consensus Building:
 - Communication Skills and Strategies: There is a desire for training on communication skills to facilitate consensus-building among Board members and the broader community.
5. Skepticism About Training:
 - No Additional Training Needed: One respondent believes that the Board does not require additional training, suggesting confidence in current capabilities.



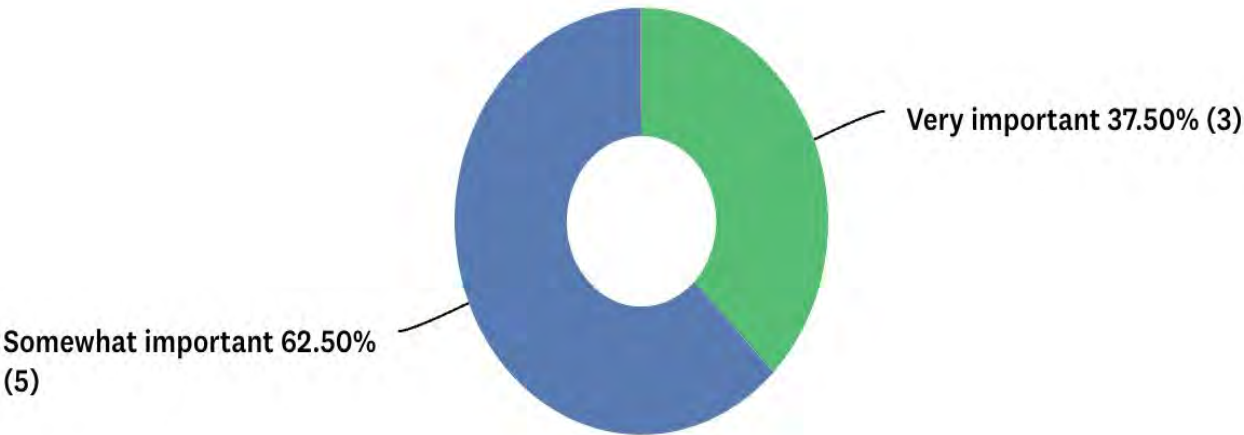
How well do you think the needs of and impacts to people with disabilities, people of color, low income individuals and neighborhoods, youth, seniors, and other groups are currently integrated into SCCRTC's transportation planning and decision-making processes?



Q12



In your opinion, how important is it for the board to reflect the demographics of Santa Cruz County?



Q13



Themes and Insights: What do you perceive as the main barriers to implementing ADEI initiatives within SCCRTC and its projects and programs?

1. Funding Constraints:
 - Inadequate Funding: The majority of respondents highlight funding as a significant barrier to implementing ADEI initiatives.
 - Budget Prioritization: There is a concern about the willingness to allocate budget towards practical solutions for equity initiatives.
2. Capacity and Resources:
 - Limited Capacity: Respondents mention capacity issues, which can hinder the effective implementation of ADEI initiatives.
 - Lack of Diverse Talent: There is a perceived lack of educated people of color available for technical employment, which can impact the diversity of perspectives and expertise.
3. Inclusivity and Accessibility:
 - Inaccessible Meeting Times: Meetings are sometimes scheduled at times that are inconvenient for working-class individuals, limiting their participation.
 - Inconsistent Definitions and Demands: There is confusion about what ADEI initiatives entail and how they should be implemented, leading to inconsistent demands and expectations.
4. Uncertainty:
 - Unsure: One respondent expressed uncertainty about the main barriers, indicating a need for further exploration or discussion.

Q14



Themes and Insights: How do you see your role as a Board member in engaging with diverse communities and ensuring their voices are heard in transportation planning, project development, and services?

1. **Advocacy and Representation:**
 - **Speaking Up for ADEI Values:** Respondents emphasize the importance of regularly advocating for ADEI values and being open to communication with diverse community groups.
 - **Representing Diverse Voices:** Board members see themselves as vessels for bringing diverse opinions and voices to the table, particularly from specific geographic areas like South County.
2. **Engagement and Feedback Mechanisms:**
 - **Soliciting Feedback:** There is a focus on soliciting feedback from diverse communities and disseminating information to keep them informed.
 - **Participating in Public Meetings:** Respondents highlight the importance of participating in public meetings and listening carefully to community concerns.
3. **Supporting Inclusive Practices:**
 - **Supporting Staff Outreach:** Board members support staff efforts to engage with diverse communities, taking their concerns seriously, and implementing responsive programs.
 - **Inclusive Decision-Making:** There is an emphasis on ensuring that all voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes.

Q15

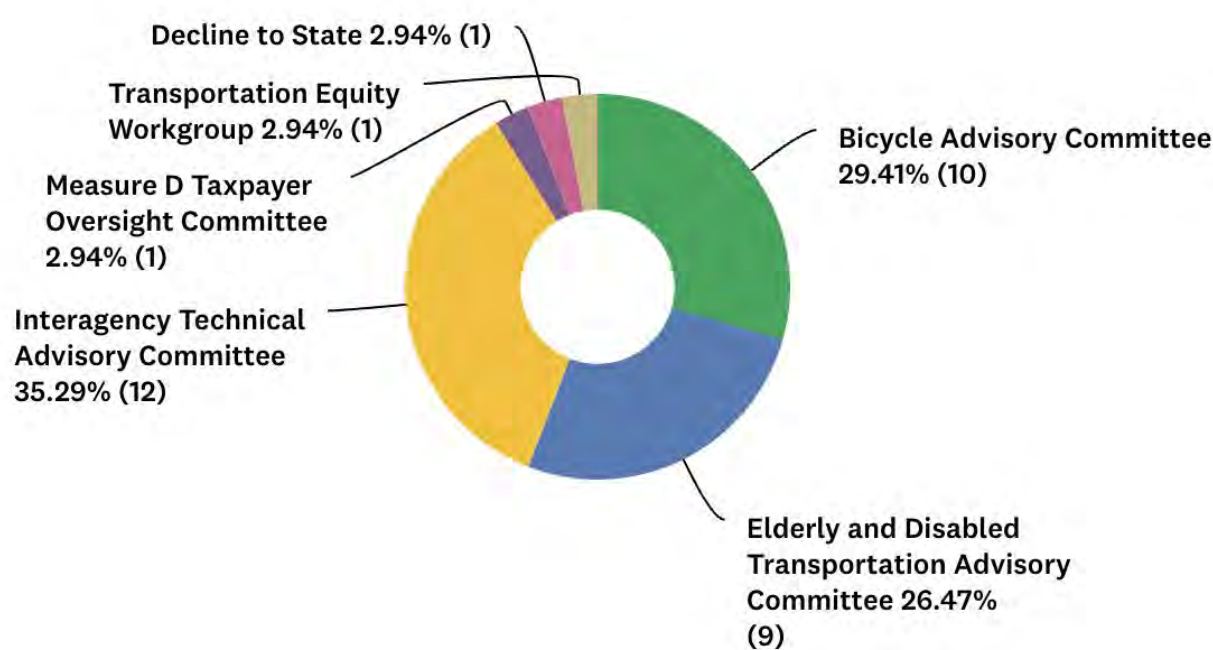
APPENDIX B:

Committee Survey Results





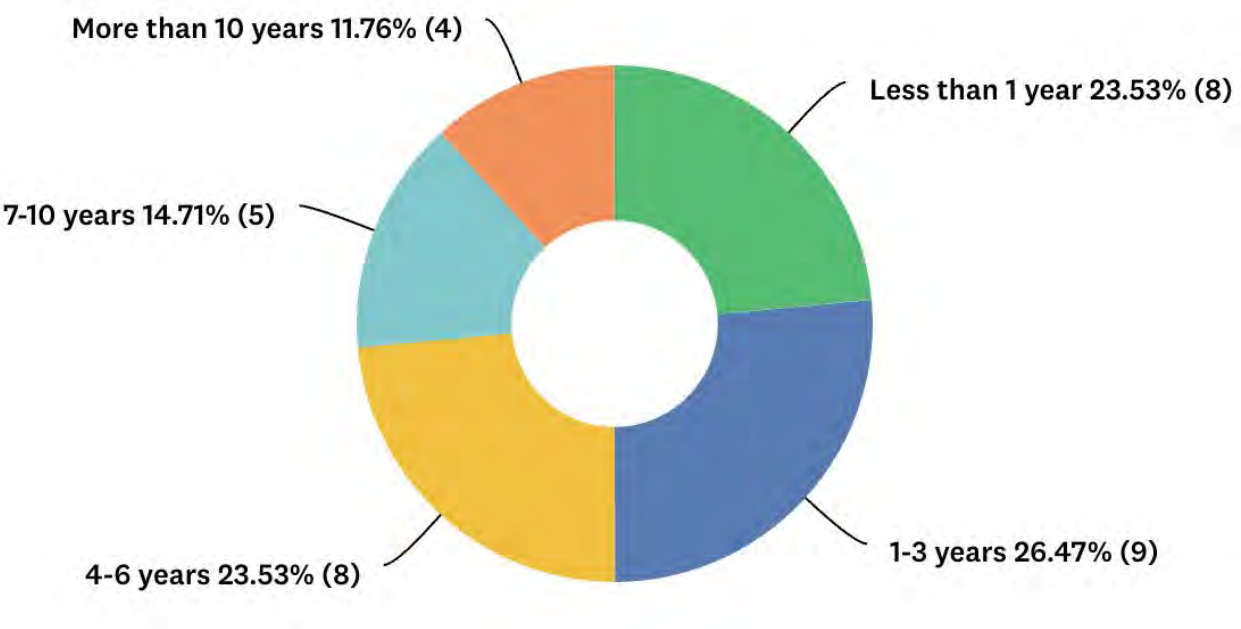
Which SCCRTC committee, subcommittee, or working group do you represent?



Q1



How long have you been involved with this SCCRTC committee or working group?



Q2



How would you rate your understanding of accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) concepts as they relate to transportation planning?

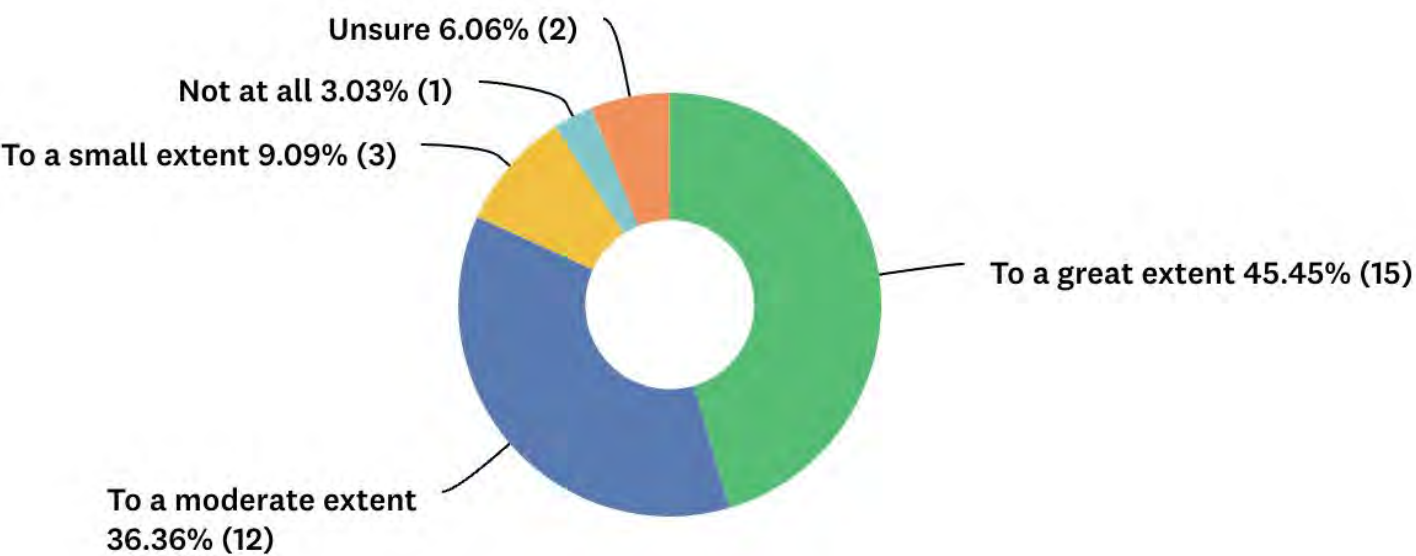


Q3

Disaggregated by Committee



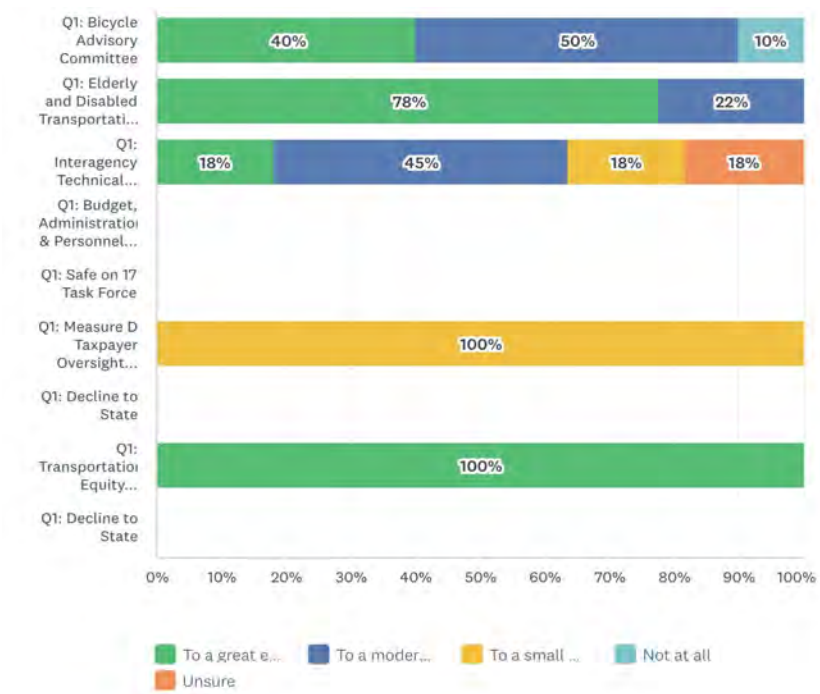
To what extent do you believe ADEI considerations
are integrated into your committee's
decision-making processes?



Q4



To what extent do you believe ADEI considerations are integrated into your committee's decision-making processes?

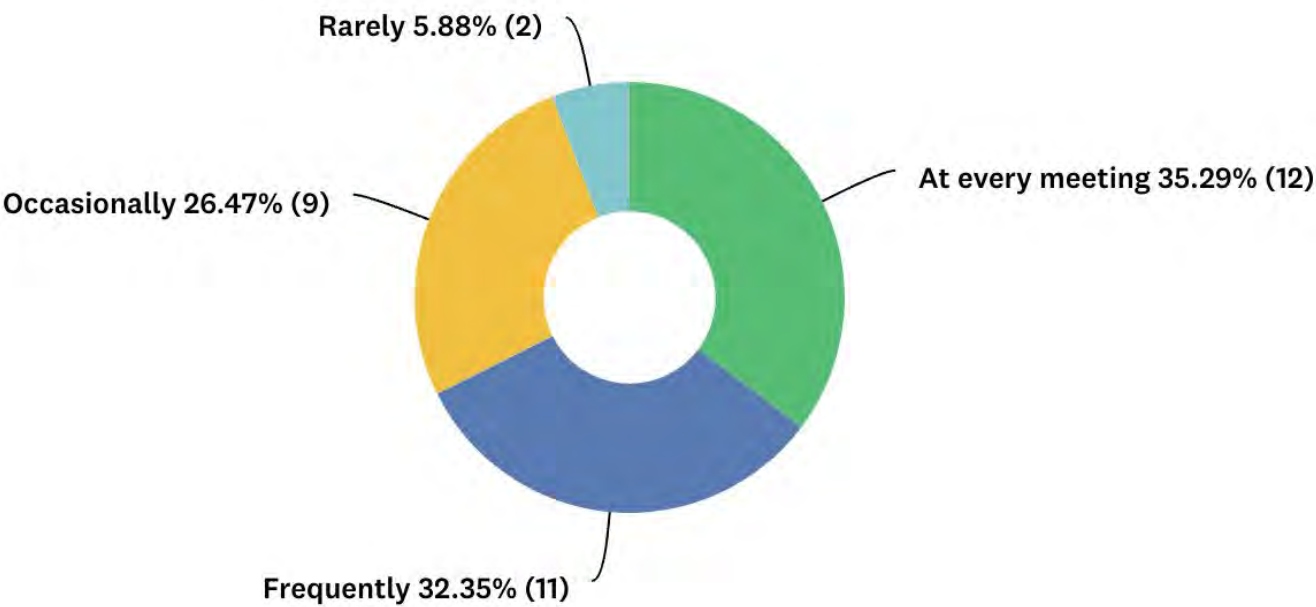


Q4

Disaggregated by Committee



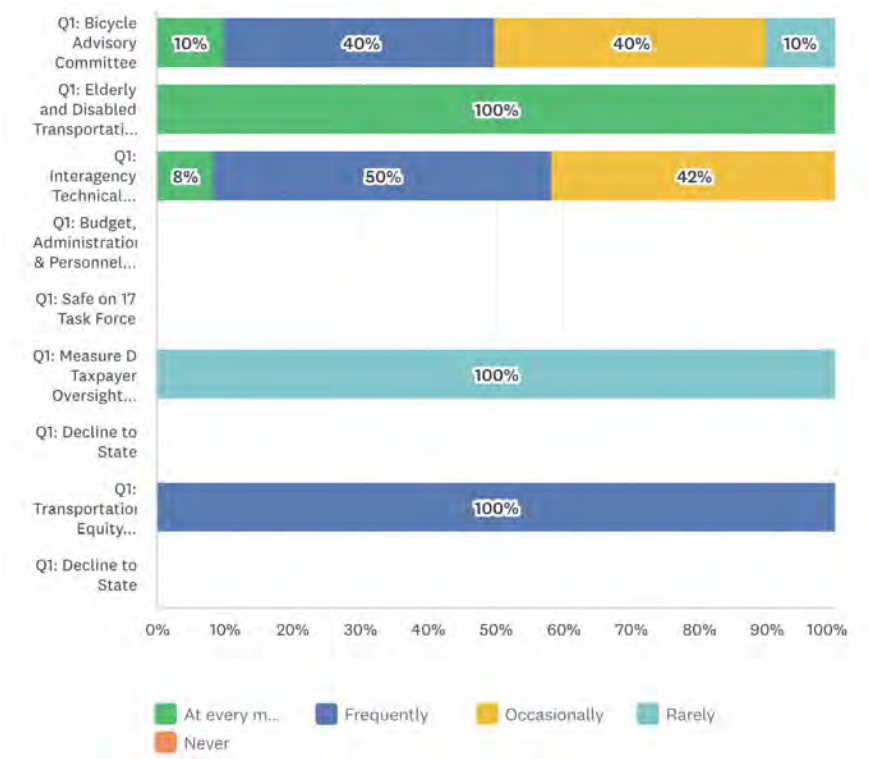
How often does your committee discuss accessibility in relation to transportation planning and projects?



Q5



How often does your committee discuss accessibility in relation to transportation planning and projects?

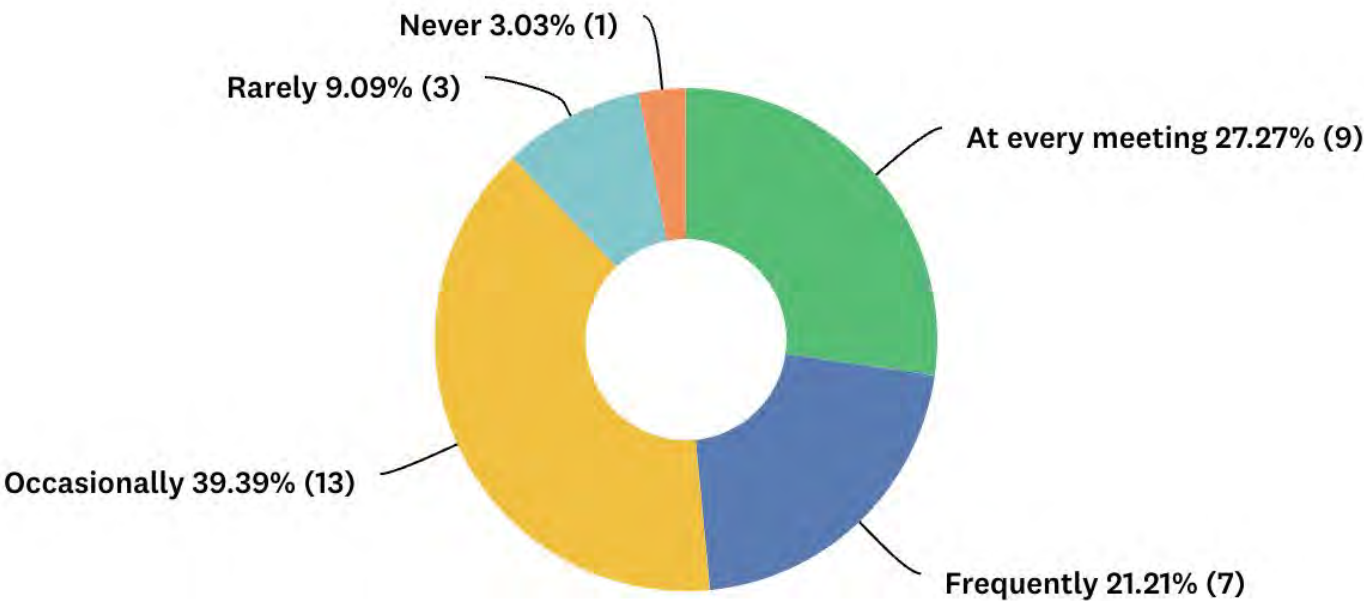


Q5

Disaggregated by Committee



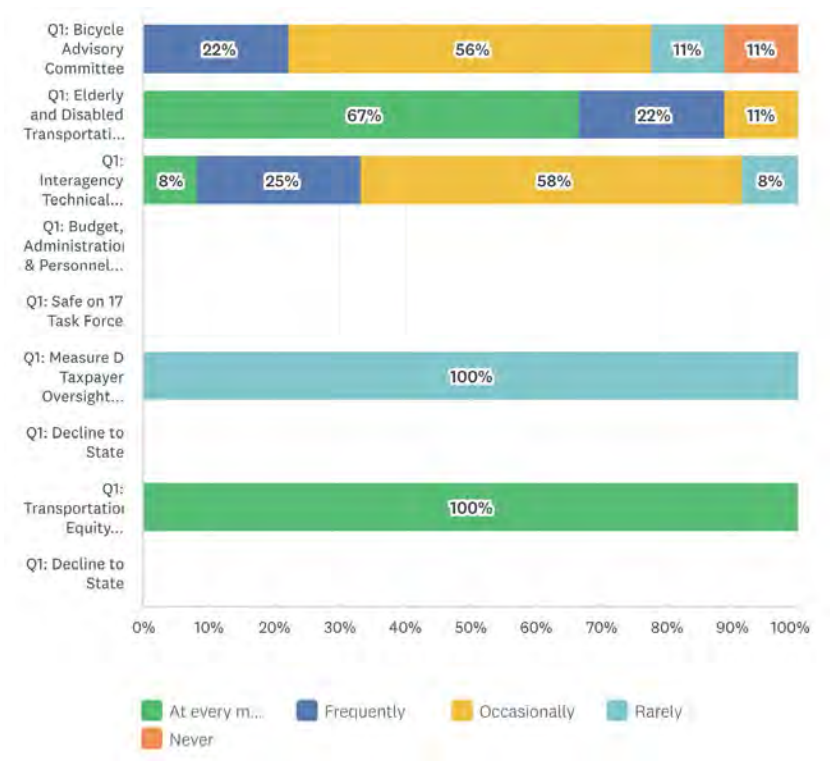
How often does your committee discuss
accessibility in relation to transportation planning
and projects?



Q6



How often does your committee discuss accessibility in relation to transportation planning and projects?

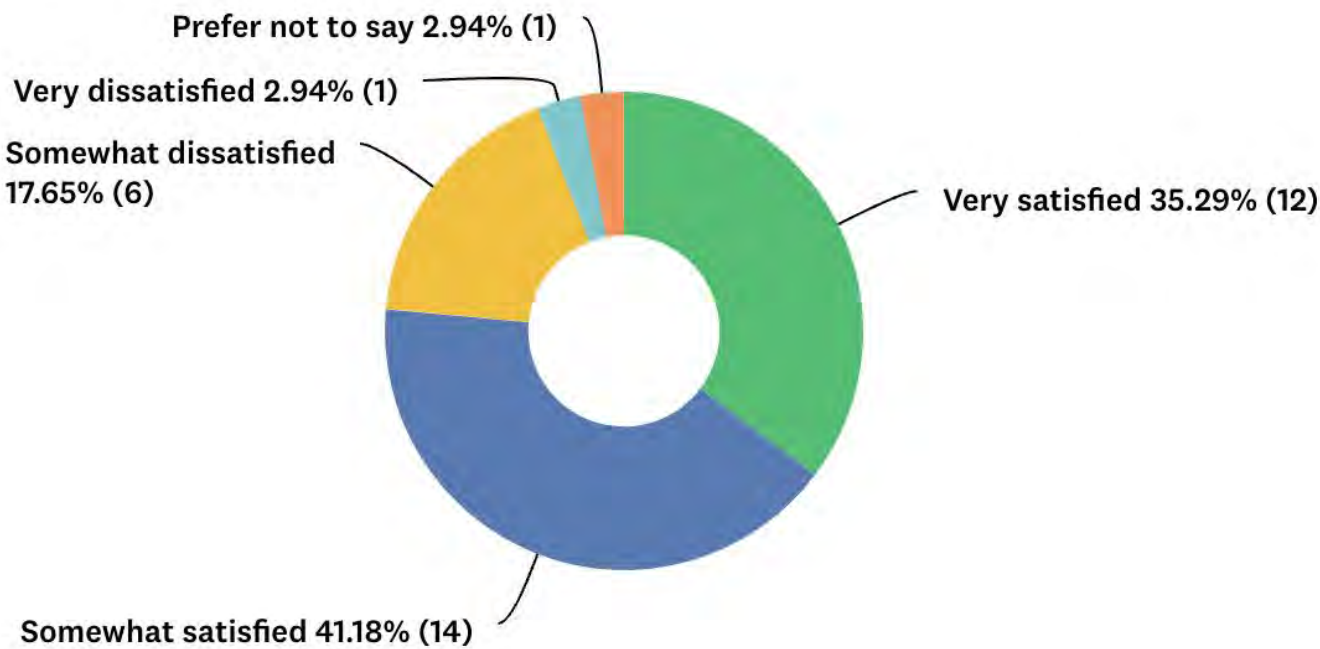


Q6

Disaggregated by Committee



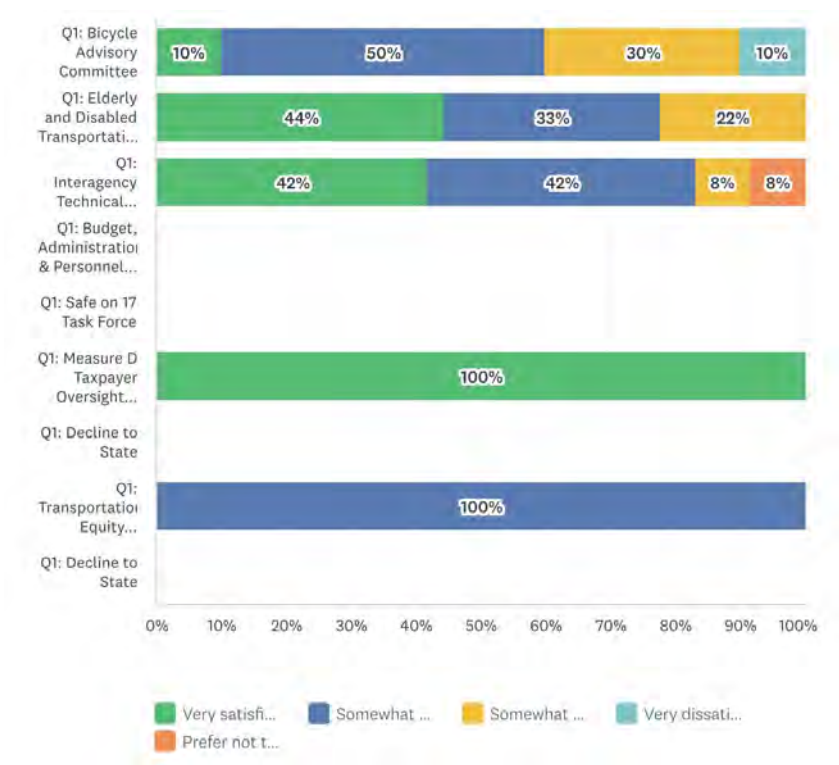
How satisfied are you with the diversity and representation within your committee?



Q7



How often does your committee discuss accessibility in relation to transportation planning and projects?

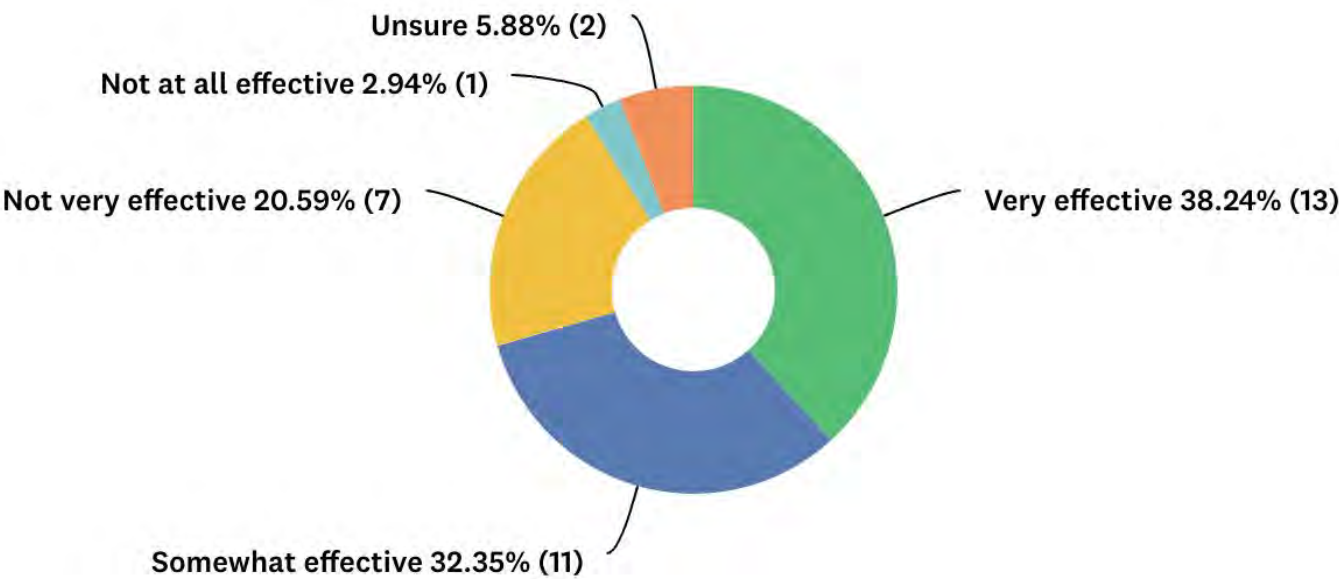


Q7

Disaggregated by Committee



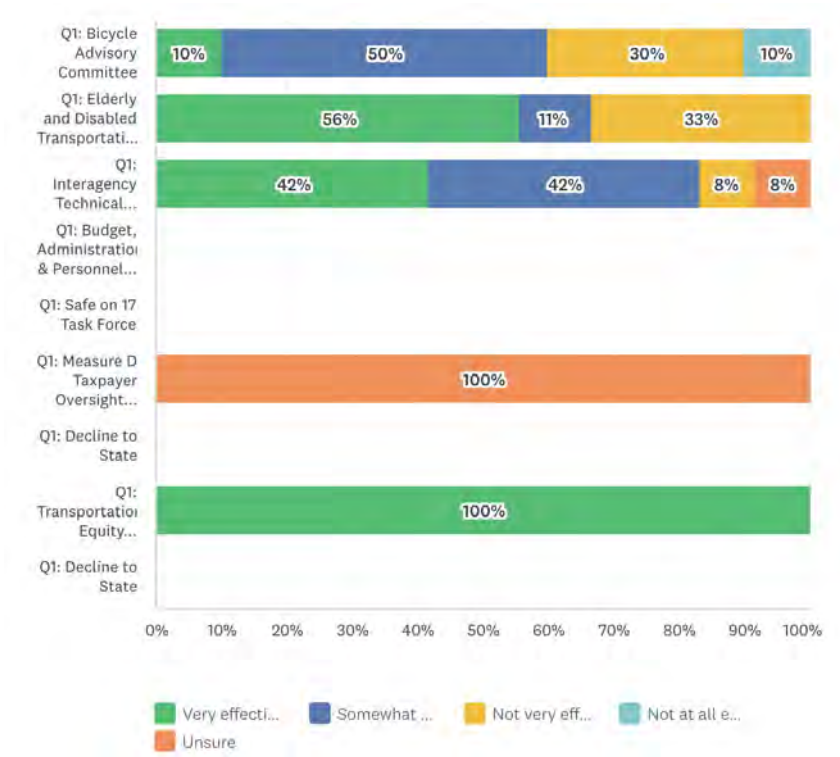
In your opinion, how effective is the SCCRTC in engaging with diverse communities in Santa Cruz County regarding transportation issues?



Q8



In your opinion, how effective is the SCCRTC in engaging with diverse communities in Santa Cruz County regarding transportation issues?

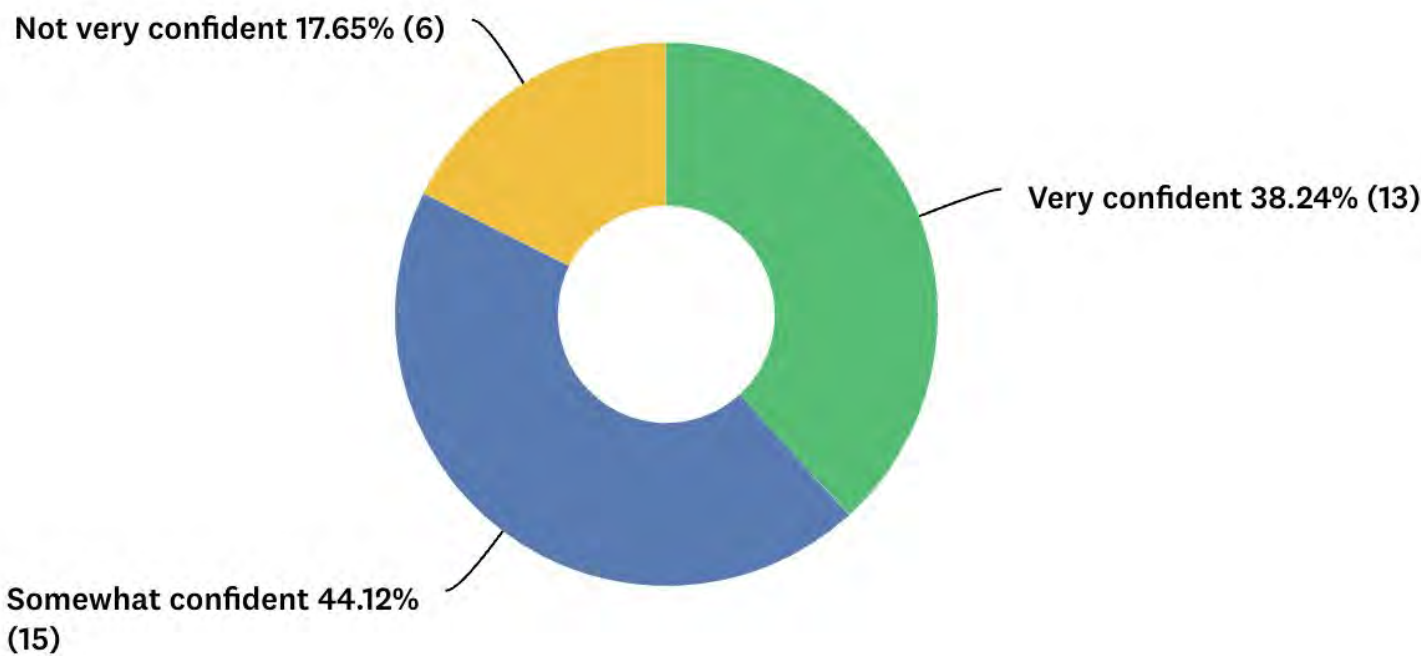


Q8

Disaggregated by Committee



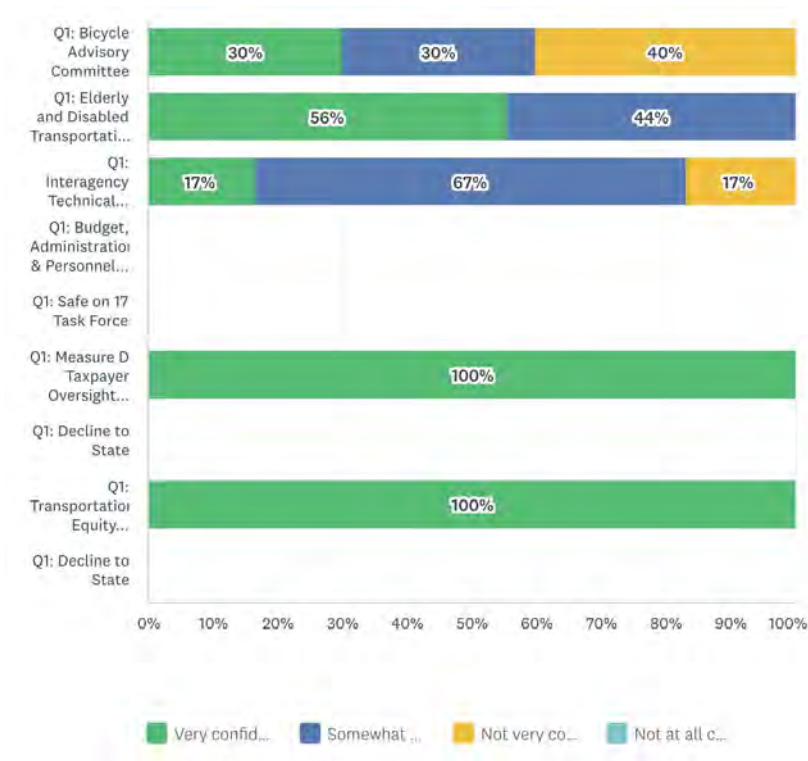
How confident are you in your ability to represent the diverse needs of people in Santa Cruz County in transportation planning discussions?



Q9



How confident are you in your ability to represent the diverse needs of people in Santa Cruz County in transportation planning discussions?



Q9

Disaggregated by Committee

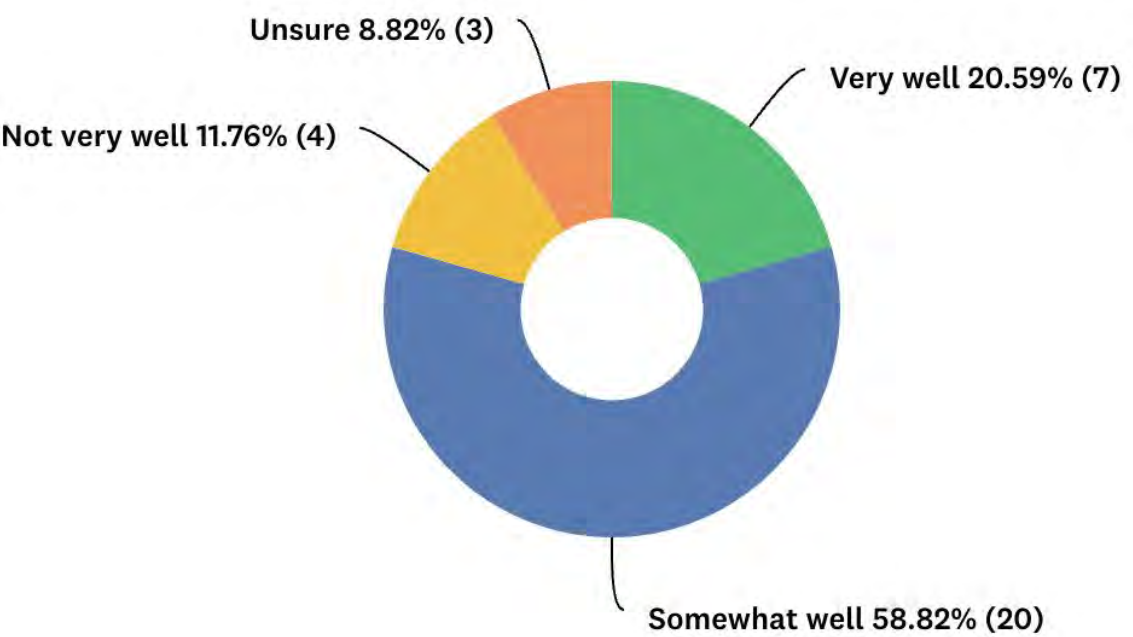


Themes and Insights: What do you perceive as the main barriers to implementing ADEI initiatives in SCCRTC's transportation projects and programs?

1. Funding and Resource Constraints:
 - Inadequate Funding: Respondents frequently mention funding as a significant barrier, noting that it limits the scope and effectiveness of ADEI initiatives.
 - Resource Shortages: There is also a concern about having sufficient resources, including time and personnel, to ensure ADEI is properly implemented.
2. Communication and Awareness:
 - Complex Language: The use of technical jargon and acronyms can be intimidating for non-experts, hindering effective communication and participation.
 - Lack of Awareness: Respondents highlight a lack of awareness about the benefits of DEI and unconscious bias, which can impede progress.
 - Inadequate Training: There is a perceived need for more training on DEI issues to enhance understanding and implementation.
3. Representation and Inclusivity:
 - Limited Diversity: Advisory committees and SCCRTC staffing are noted as lacking diversity, which can limit perspectives and hinder effective ADEI implementation.
 - Dominance of Certain Voices: The loudest voices in meetings are often from white males, which can overshadow other perspectives.
 - South County Representation: There is a call for more representation from South County to ensure that local needs are adequately addressed.
4. Project Planning and Community Engagement:
 - Ineffective Project Planning: Projects sometimes fail to consult with ADEI experts, leading to overlooked barriers and inequities.
 - Community Involvement: Respondents emphasize the importance of involving diverse communities and underserved populations in the planning process.
 - Public Awareness: There is a need for better public awareness of the work being done to address ADEI issues.
5. Systemic and Administrative Challenges:
 - Administrative Hurdles: Time delays and administrative obstacles are seen as barriers to implementing ADEI initiatives effectively.
 - Legal and Regulatory Challenges: Changes to federal law or obstruction of existing laws can also hinder progress.



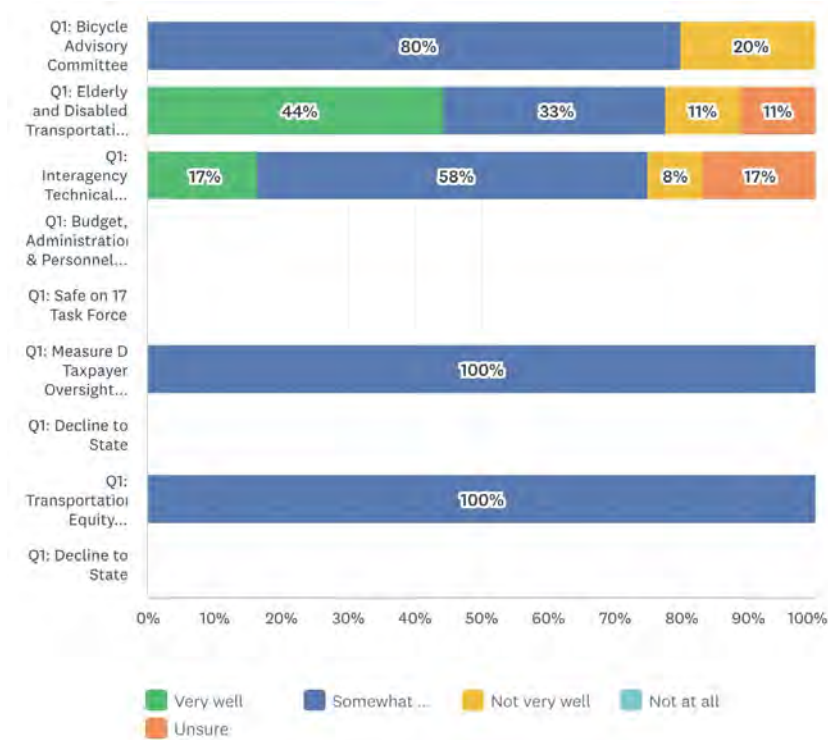
How well do you think the current transportation projects and initiatives of SCCRTC address the needs of all community members equitably?



Q11



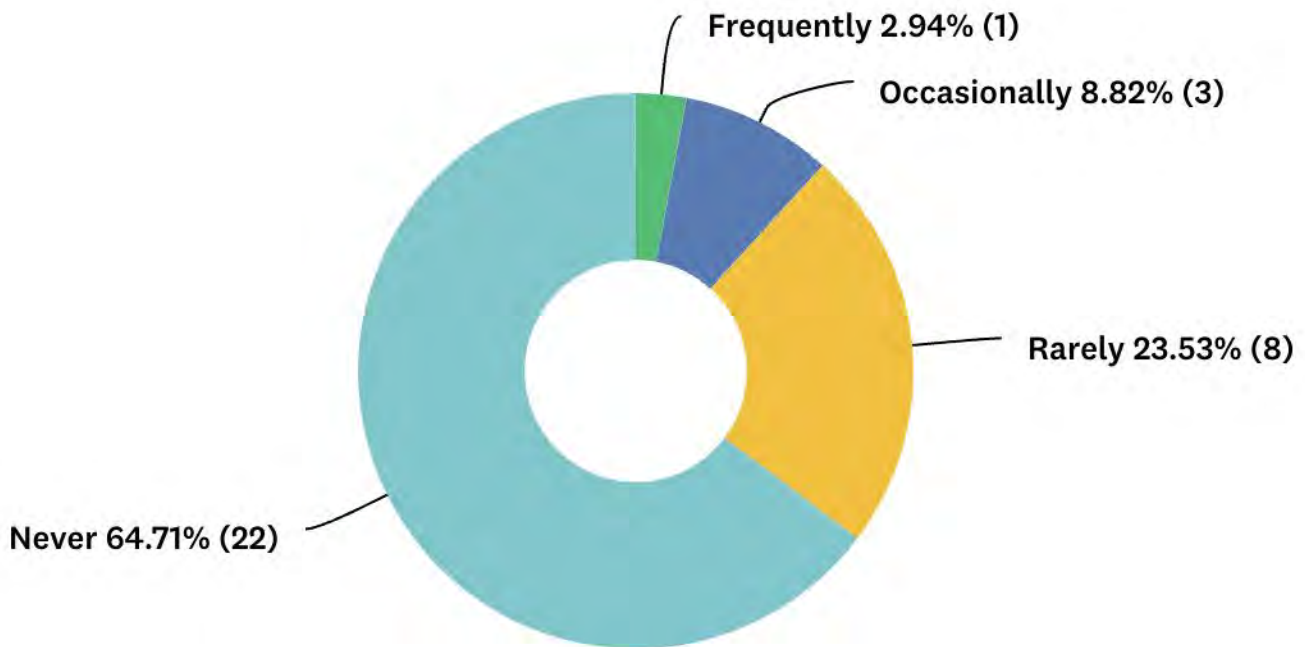
How well do you think the current transportation projects and initiatives of SCCRTC address the needs of all community members equitably?



Q11



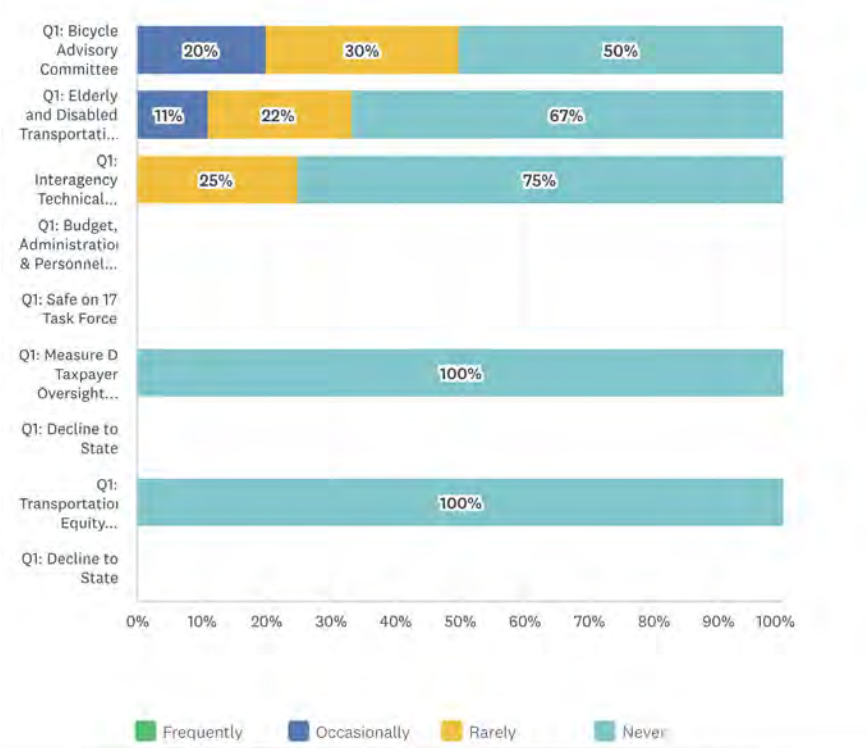
I have encountered accessibility issues while attempting to access RTC offices or meetings, or participate in RTC programs, services, and/or activities.



Q12



I have encountered accessibility issues while attempting to access RTC offices or meetings, or participate in RTC programs, services, and/or activities.



Q12 Disaggregated by Committee



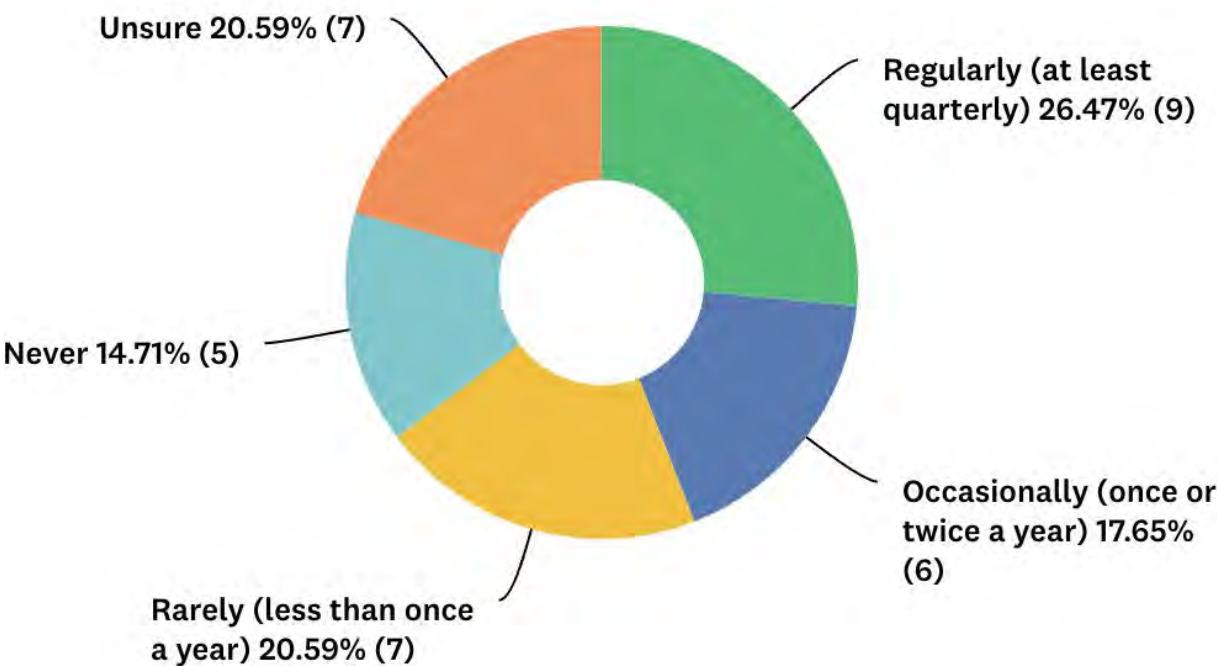
Themes and Insights: What specific ADEI-related training topics do you believe would be most beneficial for committee members to receive?

1. Community Engagement:
 - Community Engagement Skills and Strategies: This is the most frequently mentioned topic, highlighting the importance of effectively engaging diverse community groups and encouraging public participation.
 - Inviting Community Voices: Respondents suggest inviting speakers or media from the community to enhance engagement.
2. Historical Context and Awareness:
 - Historical Context of Inequities: Many respondents emphasize the need for training on the historical context of inequities, particularly in understanding the transportation needs of different regions like South County.
 - Implicit Bias Training: There is also interest in implicit bias training to help committee members recognize and address unconscious biases.
3. Cultural Competence and Decision Making:
 - Cultural Humility and Trauma-Informed Decision Making: Respondents suggest training on cultural humility and trauma-informed decision making to enhance sensitivity and effectiveness in decision-making processes.
 - Health in All Policies: This approach is also recommended to ensure that health considerations are integrated into all policy decisions.
4. Practical Experience and Creative Solutions:
 - Experiential Learning: One respondent suggests that committee members should experience using public transportation themselves to better understand its challenges.
 - Creative Funding Ideas: There is interest in exploring creative funding strategies to facilitate multiple project completions.
5. Skepticism About Training Programs:
 - Critique of Commercialized DEI Programs: Some respondents express skepticism about the value of certain commercialized DEI training programs, preferring practical problem-solving approaches.

Q13



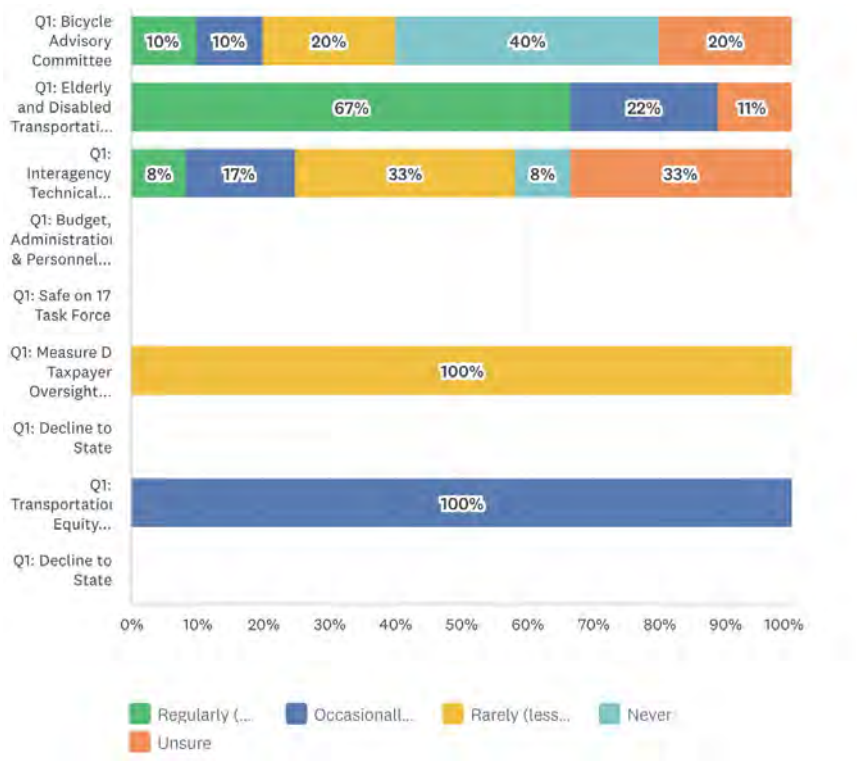
How often does your committee review and assess the ADEI impacts of SCCRTC's projects and initiatives?



Q14



How often does your committee review and assess the ADEI impacts of SCCRTC's projects and initiatives?



Q14 Disaggregated by Committee



Themes and Insights: How can SCCRTC improve its efforts to create a more equitable transportation system in Santa Cruz County?

1. Expand and Improve Public Transit and Multimodal Options
 - Respondents emphasize the need for more public transit, multi-modal education, and outreach to underserved communities, including Spanish speakers and students.
 - There is support for focusing on multi-modal solutions and encouraging alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles.
2. Increase Community Engagement and Input
 - Many responses highlight the importance of more outreach to diverse communities, transit users, and students.
 - Suggestions include more community input, continued discussions, and better communication with the public.
3. Resource Allocation and Funding
 - Several respondents call for acquiring additional resources, such as staffing and funding, to support equity initiatives.
 - There is a desire to lessen barriers and quicken completion of projects through increased funding.
4. Geographic Equity
 - Some responses suggest locating an RTC office in South County and better understanding and addressing the commute needs of that region.
5. Organizational Culture and Approach
 - There is a call to move away from paternalistic approaches and to listen to voices that may have been previously dismissed.
 - Respondents recommend making the system more efficient and user-friendly.
6. Public Awareness and Transparency
 - Increasing public awareness of SCCRTC's work and maintaining transparency in decision-making is seen as important.

Q15



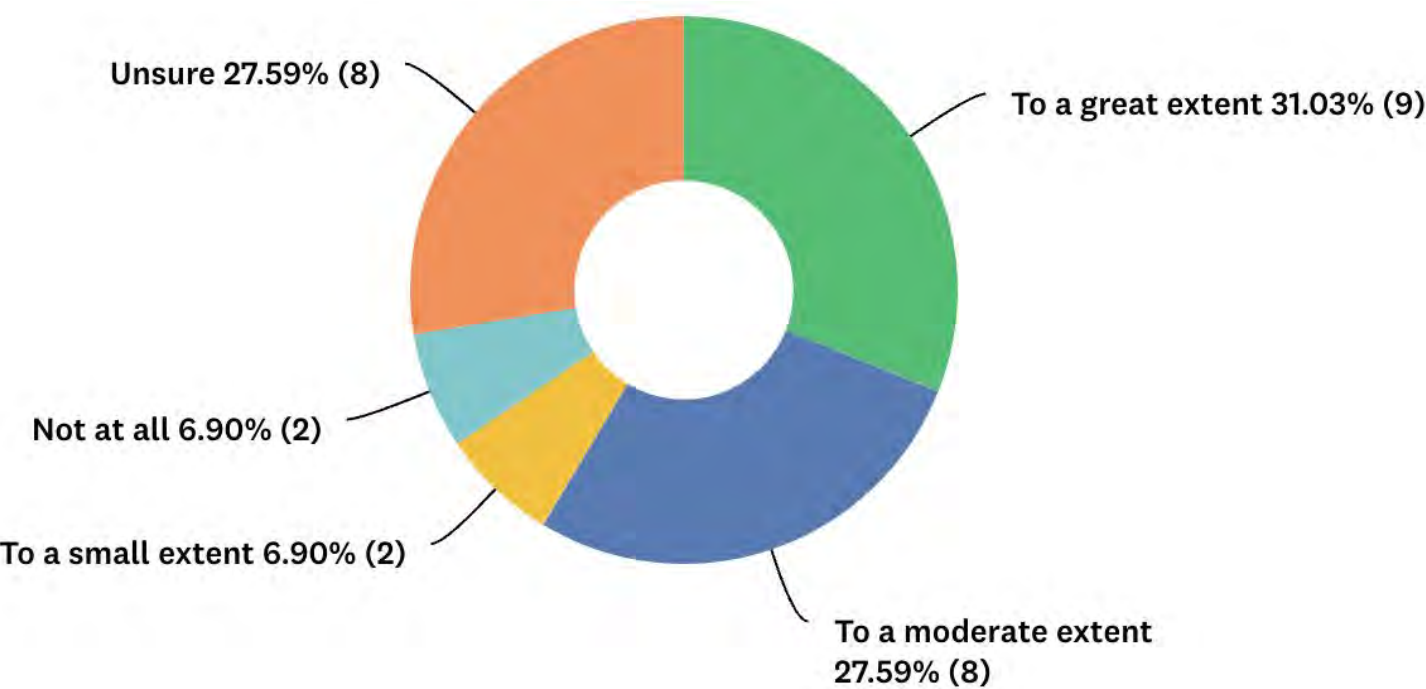
Themes and Insights: Additional suggestions for improving accessibility and supporting full participation in RTC programs, services, public outreach activities, or decision-making process?

1. Increase Outreach and Engagement in Underrepresented Areas
 - Hold more meetings in South County and in community centers or libraries to reach underrepresented communities.
 - Attend events in less represented communities to directly engage with those who may not typically participate.
2. Enhance Remote and Flexible Participation
 - Continue to invest in remote participation options, making it easier for more people to join meetings and provide input regardless of location or schedule.
3. Targeted Outreach to Families and Youth
 - Reach families and youth where they live, work, and play to ensure their voices are included in transportation planning and decision-making.
4. Leverage Large Public Events
 - Conduct public outreach activities at big events to maximize exposure and gather input from a broader segment of the community.
5. Collaborate with Community Institutions
 - Foster collaborative efforts between school districts and regional agencies to improve both accessibility and awareness.
 - Consider partnerships that help fund incentives for joining local transportation committees or programs.
6. Funding and Incentives
 - Secure additional funding to support accessibility enhancements and provide incentives for participation in transportation programs.
7. Broaden Criteria for Engagement
 - Move beyond traditional race, creed, or ability criteria and consider other factors that may affect participation and accessibility.

Q16



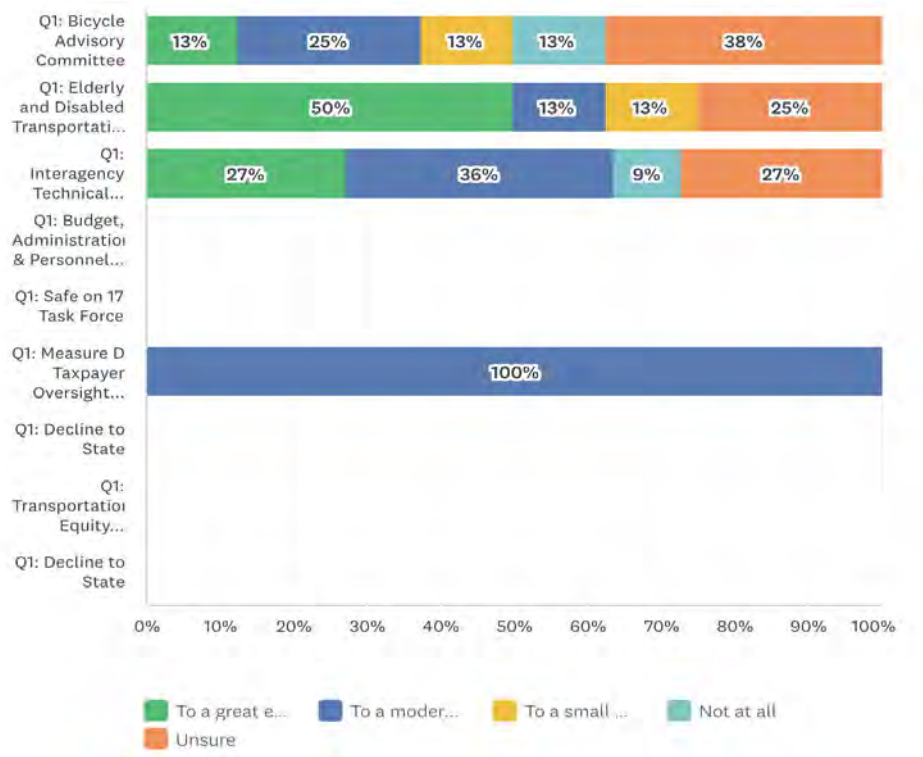
To what extent do you feel your committee's recommendations regarding ADEI are considered and implemented by the SCCRTC?



Q17



To what extent do you feel your committee's recommendations regarding ADEI are considered and implemented by the SCCRTC?



Q17 Disaggregated by Committee



Themes and Insights: How can SCCRTC better support your committee in addressing accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion in transportation projects, planning, and services?

1. Meeting Accessibility and Participation
 - Rotate meeting locations to different areas to increase accessibility for a broader range of participants.
 - Provide incentives such as lifetime bus passes for committee members to encourage participation.
2. Training and Capacity Building
 - Offer regular training for committee members on ADEI topics to build knowledge and skills.
 - Allow and encourage committee members to attend relevant conferences or external trainings.
3. Communication and Representation
 - Ensure committee members can get spokespersons or relevant topics on the agenda for discussion.
 - Make ADEI an open-ended agenda item to allow for ongoing dialogue and responsiveness.
4. Recognition and Support
 - Acknowledge and appreciate staff efforts, as several respondents feel SCCRTC staff are doing a great job.
 - Encourage field trips or site visits to better understand accessibility challenges and project impacts.
5. Coordination and Collaboration
 - Improve coordination among committees and with SCCRTC staff to address ADEI more effectively.
6. Resource Allocation
 - Expand funding and resources, such as specific projects like the Pasatiempo parkway, to enhance accessibility and equity.

Q18

**The Justice Collective Equity Assessment Report & Recommendations
for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission**

Appendix C: SCCRTC Asset Review & TJC Recommendations

Organizational Asset Review & Recommendations

As part of our partnership's support of the Equity Action Plan for the RTC, we have reviewed several of the organizational documents provided to us as part of our assessment, representing over 853 pages of 24 documents. These documents informed our efforts and helped to ground our assessment team in the inner workings of the SCCRTC. On the following pages, we identify specific recommended changes for each document for RTC review and consideration. In the case of reviewing documents over 50 pages, TJC augmented the analysis with AI technologies. This allowed for rapid identification and extraction of key information, patterns, and criteria within the documents that would have been significantly more time-consuming through manual review alone. The AI's role was to enhance the efficiency and initial accuracy of data extraction and analysis. TJC's consultants subsequently leveraged the AI-derived insights as a foundation for developing the criteria that informed the final recommendations contained within this appendix.

TJC is including in this version policies relevant to SCCRTC's external impact and has shared a separate copy of this report with staff, including documents relevant to internal operations.

1. [**Equity Action Plan D5-SCFY23-SCCRTC-Application \(53 pages\)**](#)
2. [**Measure D 2023 Strategic Implementation Plan \(192 pages\)**](#)
3. [**Public Participation Plan 2023 \(144 pages\)**](#)
4. [**SCC RTC Budget - FY Ending June 30, 2025 \(73 pages\)**](#)
5. [**2050 SCC Regional Transportation Plan: Goals, Policies, & Targets \(6 pages via website\)**](#)
6. [**SCC RTC Rules & Regulations 2024 \(67 pages\)**](#)
7. [**SCC RTC Five Year Strategic Plan: 2022-2027 \(13 pages\)**](#)
8. [**Title VI Presentation \(11 slides\)**](#)

Equity Action Plan D5-SCFY23 SCCRTC Application

Summary Notes:

This grant application outlines the scope and objectives of the Transportation Equity Action Plan. It emphasizes data-driven equity analysis, proactive community engagement, development of equity performance metrics, and integration of equity into planning and project prioritization. The application identifies disadvantaged communities and proposes a robust stakeholder engagement strategy.

Policy-Focused and Management Recommendations:

- Establish an Equity Workgroup to oversee plan development and implementation.
- Develop and maintain a public outreach toolkit with best practices for engaging marginalized communities.
- Implement data collection and reporting systems to track equity impacts and participation demographics.
- Prioritize transportation investments that reduce disparities and support sustainable, multimodal access.

Measure D 2023 Strategic Implementation Plan

Summary Notes

The 2023 Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan outlines the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's approach to administering a 30-year, half-cent sales tax generating over \$1 billion for transportation improvements. The plan details five major investment categories: Neighborhood Projects (30%), Highway Corridors (25%), Transit for Seniors and People with Disabilities (20%), Active Transportation/Coastal Rail Trail (17%), and Rail Corridor (8%).

This Plan demonstrates strong technical competency in financial planning, project management, and regulatory compliance. However, when analyzed through an equity and inclusion lens, several critical gaps emerge that align directly with the organizational challenges identified in your consulting work.

Geographic Equity Concerns

The Plan lacks explicit analysis of how this formula impacts different communities, particularly South County residents who were identified in your consulting work as underrepresented. There's no discussion of transportation justice or how past planning decisions may have created current inequities.

Recommendations for Geographic Equity

Implement equity impact assessments for all major funding decisions, with particular attention to cumulative impacts on historically marginalized communities. Consider developing supplemental criteria that account for historical underinvestment, community need indicators, and environmental justice concerns.

Community Engagement

While current engagement methods meet legal requirements, several opportunities exist to meet gaps:

- No trauma-informed engagement protocols
- Absence of culturally responsive practices
- Limited accessibility accommodations beyond ADA compliance
- No mention of language accessibility or interpretation services
- Minimal discussion of reaching historically marginalized communities

This directly connects to the conflict resolution sessions where staff expressed frustration about unclear community engagement approaches and limited skill sets in public outreach.

Decision Making Structure

The Plan doesn't address how diverse community perspectives are centered in priority-setting, project selection, or policy development. The Independent Oversight Committee requires geographic and economic diversity but lacks specific requirements for racial, ethnic, or other forms of representation.

Measure D 2023 Strategic Implementation Plan, *continued*

Policy & Operational Recommendations for Equitable Community Engagement

1. Establish formal equity policy requiring equity impact assessments for all projects over \$1 million
2. Develop community engagement standards incorporating trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices
3. Create accessibility protocol addressing language, physical, economic, and technological barriers
4. Implement multi-language interpretation and translation services for all public meetings
5. Establish community liaison positions focused on historically marginalized communities
6. Create mobile engagement strategies bringing planning discussions directly to affected neighborhoods
7. Develop compensation protocols for community members participating in advisory roles
8. Require disaggregated demographic data collection for all community engagement activities
9. Establish equity metrics for project evaluation beyond technical and financial criteria
10. Create public dashboard tracking equity outcomes across all investment categories
11. Expand advisory committee composition requirements to ensure meaningful representation from impacted communities
12. Create community advisory council with decision-making authority over community engagement protocols
13. Establish rotating meeting locations and flexible scheduling to increase accessibility
14. Implement mandatory training on historical context of transportation planning impacts on communities of color and low-income communities
15. Provide trauma-informed engagement training for all public-facing staff
16. Develop cultural competency requirements for project managers and community liaisons
17. Develop community-defined success metrics beyond traditional transportation indicators
18. Implement regular community satisfaction surveys with disaggregated analysis
19. Create accountability mechanisms for equity commitments with clear consequences for non-compliance

Recommendations Specific to Funding Formula Reallocation

1. Evaluate and potentially revise allocation formulas to account for historical underinvestment and community need
2. Establish dedicated funding stream for equity-focused projects and community-identified priorities
3. Create flexibility mechanisms allowing responsive funding for emerging community needs

These recommendations are intended to supplement the main Community Engagement Strategy recommendations in the narrative of our Discovery Report for the SCCRTC.

Public Participation Plan - 2023

Summary Notes

This document outlines strategies for enhancing public participation in transportation planning and decision making in the Monterey Bay region. It establishes processes for public participation in the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs). It also adheres to federal and state legislation, including IJIA/BIA and FAST Act, focuses on engaging diverse communities, including low-income, minority, and Limited English Proficiency populations, and incorporates eight guiding principles to promote equitable and transparent decision-making.

The Plan includes a strong foundation by outlining several strategies aimed to successfully enhance public participation, including streamlining collaboration between multiple agencies, establishing hybrid meetings and a multilingual approach, innovative pop up engagement at community locations, partnership with community based organizations, and door to door canvassing in underserved communities. These strategies are all helpful in creating more equitable public participation. However, the Plan still maintains traditional power structures. We recommend a few ways in which the Plan could go beyond these strong foundations from encouraging community engagement to full community empowerment and ownership of the policies and processes that govern their lives.

Recommendations

The SCCRTC can consider how the following bolder actions could advance the agency as a true advocate for equity and a leader in innovative community leadership:

1. **Establish community-led advisory councils with decision-making authority.** Moving beyond making recommendations to actually having a role in decision making with budget allocation authority would demonstrate trust in residents to know what is best for them and the communities they come from.
2. **Participatory budgeting implementation for community transportation priorities:** SCCRTC could start with a 10-15% allocation for community-controlled participatory budgeting processes where residents directly decide which projects receive funding in their neighborhoods.
3. **Create Community Navigator and capacity building programs:** Hire residents from marginalized communities, train them in fundamentals of transportation planning, and activate their leadership as liaisons between their communities and agency decision makers. This tactic also serves as a way to strategically build internal capacity rather than rely on external expertise.
4. **Begin revenue sharing with Community-Based Organizations:** Follow LA Metro's model by establishing formal partnerships that compensate community organizations for their expertise and outreach work, recognizing them as essential partners rather than volunteer helpers.
5. **From deficit-based to a strengths-based approach:** Partner with communities to map their existing cultural wealth, assets and social capital into transportation planning.
6. **Create anti-displacement and community benefit agreements:** adopt required community-negotiated agreements that include protections against displacement prior to implementing new transportation projects.
7. **Create intergenerational and Indigenous knowledge integration into existing planning processes:** Create formal mechanisms to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge and intergenerational wisdom from tribal and long-term community members into transportation planning decisions.

SCCRTC Budget - FY Ending June 30, 2025

Summary Notes

The SCCRTC Amended budget for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025 is a comprehensive document detailing resource allocation and planned organizational and programmatic investments in staffing, active transportation, highway projects, rail transit, and transportation demand management for a total expenditure of approximately \$29.7 million. Sources of funding include Measure D sales tax revenue, Transportation Development Act funds, and federal grants.

Notable Initiatives include Zero emission rail transit development, climate adaptation planning, equity action plan, rural highway safety improvements, and coastal resilience planning.

Recommended Immediate Actions:

- Expedite completion of the Equity Action Plan to establish concrete metrics and accountability measures
- Expand paratransit and specialized transportation funding beyond current Community Bridges allocation
- Ensure all active transportation projects include ADA-compliant infrastructure and wayfinding

Recommended Equity-Focused Program Enhancements:

- Increase funding for Vision Zero bike/pedestrian safety programs in disadvantaged communities
- Prioritize transit connections to affordable housing areas and essential services
- Expand multilingual outreach for public engagement on transportation projects

Recommended Long-term Planning:

- Integrate equity analysis into all Highway 1 corridor and rail projects to prevent displacement
- Develop fare assistance programs for low-income transit users
- Create dedicated funding stream for transportation improvements in underserved rural areas

Recommended Organizational Development:

- Include ADEI training costs in staff development budget
- Establish partnerships with community-based organizations serving disadvantaged populations
- Ensure Taxpayer Oversight Committee and advisory bodies reflect community demographics

2050 SCC Regional Transportation Plan: Goals, Policies, & Targets

Summary Notes:

The 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) sets ambitious goals for reducing vehicle miles traveled, improving safety, cost-effective delivery, climate resilience, and equity. Equity is primarily addressed in Goal #5, with policies and targets focused on disadvantaged populations and equitable funding. However, equity considerations are not fully integrated across all goals, and accountability mechanisms for equity targets are limited.

Policy-Focused Recommendations:

1. To deepen the equity impact of these goals, integrate equity analysis and reporting requirements across all RTP goals, not just Goal #5.
2. Establish mandatory public reporting on progress toward staff and committee diversity targets (Target 5.B.1).
3. Require annual audits of discretionary funding allocation to equity priority communities (Target 5.A.2).
4. Link equity funding priorities with climate resilience efforts (Policy 5.4).

Cultural Observations and Recommendations:

In our engagement with the RTC, we have aimed to ground in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) goals with employees, committee members, and board members. From our understanding, these goals were approved by the commission in 2024. While we are confident the RTC socialized the goals at the time, communication and engagement with committee members, board members, and some employees demonstrate that the work is not effectively grounded in these goals. Many members stated they hadn't seen these goals, don't know how the RTC is working towards them, or how their respective role supports the RTC in these efforts. We recommend the following:

Make the RTP goals a standing fixture of every meeting and a part of every project plan. All the work RTC does should be in service of these goals and stakeholders should be clear on how each project, initiative, and activity is in service to them.

By ensuring they are present and socialized in all aspects of the work, the RTC can close this communication and understanding gap. This will also support a more cohesive and unified team culture.

SCC RTC Rules & Regulations - 2024

Summary Notes

This document, titled "Rules & Regulation" of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), revised on May 2, 2024, outlines the regulations and procedures for the conduct of all meetings of the SCCRTC and its committees. It also details the implementation of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) of 1971, as amended, and administrative procedures for federal transportation funding programs. Its purpose is to establish and educate stakeholders on the rules for public meetings and for implementing the TDA, as well as details of submissions of various claims outlined in the TDA.

Recommendations

While the document is descriptive and comprehensive in its purpose of educating stakeholders on these various components of maintaining compliance with the TDA, there are a few opportunities the SCCRTC has to create more accessibility and inclusion when it comes to understanding the document and its detailed contents:

1. Add an executive summary to the beginning of the document in plain language. Use a conversational tone and avoid industry jargon. Keep sentences and paragraphs concise for readability.
2. Create multiple language versions of the document. If only one copy can be created, prioritize a Spanish language version.
3. Consider how the document can be used as a community engagement tool to educate the public, beyond those participating in committee or board service.

SCC RTC Five Year Strategic Plan: 2022-2027

Summary Notes:

The strategic plan articulates RTC's mission, values, and five key initiatives: Collaborative Engagement, Environmental Stewardship, Organizational Excellence, Fiscal Sustainability, and Community. It emphasizes equity as a core value but lacks detailed metrics or accountability mechanisms for equity goals. The plan recognizes workload and culture challenges and calls for continuous improvement.

Policy-Focused Recommendations:

- Develop clear, measurable equity performance metrics and success indicators for all strategic initiatives. This can be done through focused attention incorporating feedback from the TJC research efforts, comments in trainings, as well as the eight group and individual conflict advising sessions.
- Embed equity accountability in organizational culture initiatives and employee development plans. This can be done through focused retreats revisiting the Mission, Vision, and Values of the organization, leadership development, people and talent development by managers and supervisors, and regular, consistent review of performance on projects.
- Enhance collaborative engagement with equity priority communities through targeted outreach and transparent communication. We have included more detail on this in our recommendation of the Priority Area of Community Engagement.
- Align fiscal planning with equity priorities to maximize resources for disadvantaged communities. We recommend this to be a focus area of the SCCRTC moving forward.

Title VI EJ and ADA Nondiscrimination Plan Presentation

TJC's specific recommendations are as follows:

1. While it is important to ensure compliance with all local, state, and federal requirements, this presentation would be strengthened by connecting to the RTC's why. The following directive questions will help the RTC arrive at the necessary clarity to address this:
 - a. How does ensuring non-discrimination and equitable access connect to your mission as an agency?
 - b. How does ensuring non-discrimination and equitable access align with your agency's values?
 - c. Answering these questions and including it in the presentation is what takes this from a compliance-only perspective to an operational & cultural perspective. Moving from simply stating requirements to inclusion of clarifying points on "this is how RTC does the work" will mitigate for conflict and confusion and support a more cohesive and unified organizational culture moving forward.
2. Slide 4: "Protections afforded under Title VI apply to anyone regardless of whether the individual is lawfully present in the United States, or a citizen of a state within the United States."
 - a. We recommend not using the word "lawfully" and instead offer the following framing: *"regardless of immigration status..."*
 - b. The language as is introduces a judgment of morality and potential bias. By making this shift you can still get the same message across but in a more inclusive manner.
3. Slides 5-7: Responsibilities & Accountability
 - a. We recommend including more information on how RTC is working toward these things. How will the RTC evaluate for effectiveness? How is the RTC defining prompt resolution? Digging in and providing clearer articulation of this will be critical for true accountability.
 - b. We also noticed the language as passive rather than active (ex: waiting for a complaint or providing resources when asked or doing training every two years). We recommend shifting to a more proactive approach (ex. does the agency have a system in place that when someone calls they can request to hear options in the language they are most comfortable with? If not, are translators easily accessible and ready to support when needed? If not, how can the RTC take a more proactive approach to ensuring the resources are available before someone complains about a lack of access?)

CONTACT US



ELLIE TUMBUAN

Head of
Strategy and
Culture



EMAIL

ellie@thejusticecollective.com



ADDRESS

1440 Broadway,
Suite 200-1146
Oakland, CA
94612



PHONE

415-378-5957



THE JUSTICE COLLECTIVE

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Amin AbuAmara P.E., Director of Capital Projects

RE: Amendment 5 to Contract TP2122 with Mark Thomas & Company to split the Highway 1 Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project and the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project Plans, Specifications, and Estimate

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to execute amendment 5 to Professional Engineering Services Agreement TP2122 with Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. for additional scope and compensation in the amount of \$1,299,670 (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) for a total contract value not to exceed \$14,970,289 to split the Highway 1 Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes, Bus on Shoulder, and the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project Plans, Specifications, and Estimate.

BACKGROUND

In 2020, the RTC entered into Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the Project Approval & Environmental Document (PA/ED) component of the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulders between State Park Drive and Freedom Boulevard Interchanges and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 project (Project). Maps showing the project location are included as Figure 1 and Figure 2.

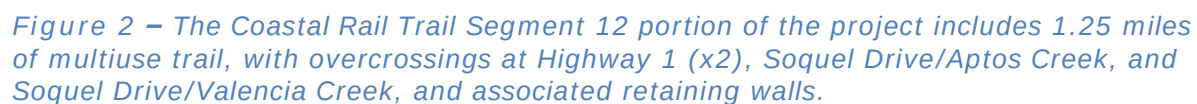
In 2021, the RTC issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure an engineering consultant to prepare the preliminary engineering and environmental documentation for the project. The RFP included a provision to retain the successful firm for final design, at the option of the RTC. The contract (TP2122) was awarded to Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. with an original contract value of \$2.08 million. In September of 2022 the RTC approved amendment 1 to the Mark Thomas contract for the final design of the project for a total contract value of \$12,079,064. The Final EIR/EA was completed in 2023. In 2023, the RTC approved amendment 2 to the Mark Thomas Contract to add \$49,905 for grant application support for a total

value of \$12,128,969. In September of 2023 Staff executed amendment 3 to the contract, adding \$299,776, with Mark Thomas for the additional PS&E work. In February of 2024 Staff executed amendment 4 adding an additional \$1,299,972 to cover the additional design fee associated with the single-span coastal rail trail bridge Aptos Creek and Soquel Drive on the north side of Aptos Village.

In 2023, the RTC entered into Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans for the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) and Right of Way components of the project designating the RTC as the implementing agency, with Caltrans providing oversight.

At its November 2024 meeting, the Commission considered splitting the Highway 1 Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project and the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 into two standalone construction projects, in advance of grant applications to the Senate Bill 1 funding programs. Staff and Caltrans subsequently evaluated two implementation strategies for delivering the construction phase of the combined project.

In November of 2025, the Commission directed staff to proceed with Strategy 1, which is the Caltrans and RTC Hybrid Implementation approach, to divide the project into two construction contracts. Under this approach, Caltrans would serve as the implementing agency for the Highway 1 auxiliary lanes and associated structures, and the RTC would serve as the implementing agency for the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. This strategy was recommended by staff and selected by the Commission because of Caltrans' extensive experience administering construction on Highway 1, their ability to apply statewide construction management resources, and the reduced administrative burden on RTC for delivery of the highway portion of the project.



DISCUSSION

Implementing Strategy 1 requires that the final design package be split into two complete bid packages. Mark Thomas and Company, Inc., RTC's professional engineering consultant, must therefore perform additional work to revise plans, specifications, and estimates into separate highway and trail contract documents.

In order for Mark Thomas to perform the work needed an amendment to add additional funds to the contract (TP2122) is needed. The amendment will add \$1,299,670 in compensation, for a total not to exceed contract value of \$14,970,289. The anticipated schedule impact of splitting the package is 4 to 6 months of delay to produce two complete and coordinated sets of construction documents.

This contract amendment is necessary to:

- Create two complete construction bid sets consistent with Caltrans and RTC standards.
- Revise project staging, coordination, and interface points between the two construction contracts.
- Support subsequent Cooperative Agreement actions between RTC and Caltrans for construction.
- Maintain eligibility for State SB1 and Federal MEGA grant funds used on the project.

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to execute amendment 5 to Professional Engineering Services Agreement TP2122 with Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. for additional scope and compensation in the amount of \$1,299,670 (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) for a total contract value not to exceed \$14,970,289 to split the Highway 1 Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes, Bus on Shoulder, and the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Project Plans, Specifications, and Estimate.

FISCAL IMPACT

This amendment is funded by Measure D-Highway Corridor program. Sufficient funding exists in the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 RTC budget and latest approved Measure D 5-year program of projects for the Highway Corridor program. No additional funds are required beyond those previously

programmed and budgeted for the project.

SUMMARY

Selection of Strategy 1 requires splitting the construction documents into two construction packages. This action requires an amendment to the contract for the RTC's professional engineering consultant, Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. Staff recommended approving this amendment to support timely delivery of both the Highway 1 and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 construction projects.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
 - a. Amendment 5 to Agreement TP2122 - Cost proposal for splitting the Project

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of December 4, 2025
on the motion of Commissioner
duly seconded by Commissioner

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND
EXECUTE AMENDMENT 5 TO PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES
AGREEMENT TP2122 WITH MARK THOMAS FOR ADDITIONAL SCOPE AT COST OF
\$1,299,670.

WHEREAS, Highway 1 is the most heavily traveled highway in Santa Cruz
County, is often congested and has safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, Highway 1 serves as the backbone for the movement of people and
goods through most of the urban area in Santa Cruz County, providing access to
schools, commercial, residential, and recreational destinations;

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Commission adopted a preferred scenario for the
Highway 1, Branch Line, and Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard corridors as part of
the Unified Corridor Investment Study, which included implementation of auxiliary
lanes and bus on shoulder projects on Highway 1;

WHEREAS, In 2020, the RTC entered into Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans
for the Project Approval & Environmental Document (PA/ED) component of the
Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulders between State Park Drive and
Freedom Boulevard Interchanges and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 project;

WHEREAS, In 2021, the RTC awarded contract (TP2122) was awarded to Mark
Thomas & Company, Inc for professional services for the Highway 1 State Park to
Freedom Blvd BOS/Segment 12 project;

WHEREAS, At its November 2024 meeting, the Commission approved splitting
the Highway 1 Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on
Shoulder Project and the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 into two standalone
construction projects;

WHEREAS, additional funds are required to be added to the TP2122 Mark
Thomas contract in order to split the project;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION THAT:

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to execute amendment 5 to Professional Engineering Services Agreement TP2122 with Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. for additional scope and compensation in the amount of \$1,299,670 (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) for a total contract value not to exceed \$14,970,289.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS

Eduardo Montesino, Chair

ATTEST:

Sarah Christensen, Secretary

Exhibits:

A. Amendment 5 to TP2122 Cost Proposal

COST PROPOSAL FOR PROJECT SCOPE - SCCRTC: : Hwy 1 State Pk/Freedom Aux PA/ED (AM 5)

MARK THOMAS *Please note that rates shown are for estimating purpose only. See Rate Schedule for actual rates/ranges.	Mark Thomas																					bconsultant	TOTAL COST	
	Principal	Sr. Engineering Manager	Sr. Project Manager	Sr. Technical Lead	Project Manager	Technical Lead	Sr. Project Engineer	Sr. Technical Engineer	Project Engineer	Design Engineer II	Design Engineer I	Sr. Technician	Sr. LAUD Project Manager	Landscape Architect	Landscape Designer	Sr. Survey Manager	Sr. Project Surveyor	Survey Technician	Sr. Project Accountant	Sr. Project Coordinator	Total Hours	Total MT Cost		ICF
	\$390.05	\$330.08	\$235.55	\$235.55	\$192.79	\$192.79	\$166.19	\$166.16	\$144.41	\$126.40	\$103.15	\$123.04	\$199.56	\$138.03	\$105.03	\$219.07	\$168.05	\$81.78	\$133.55	\$121.55				
1.0 Project Management																								
1.1 Project Management	40				40														24	24	128	\$29,436	-	\$29,436
1.2 PDT Meetings	40				40																80	\$23,314	-	\$23,314
1.3 QA/QC Review				20			60			80											160	\$24,794	-	\$24,794
Subtotal Phase 1	80	0	0	20	80	0	60	0	0	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	24	368	\$77,544	\$0	\$77,544
2.0 Final Design (Highway 1 Package)																								
2.1 100% PS&E (Highway 1 Package)	8	40	80	80	160	200	300	240	300	400	400	360	20	40	160						2788	\$418,906	30,000	\$448,906
2.2 Ready to List	8	20	40	20	100	120	160	120	160	200	200	160	16	40	80						1444	\$218,617	-	\$218,617
2.3 RE Pending File			4		15		30														49	\$8,820	-	\$8,820
2.4 Slope-Stake Notes					2		15			40											57	\$7,934	-	\$7,934
Subtotal Phase 2	16	60	124	100	277	320	505	360	460	640	600	520	36	80	240	0	0	0	0	0	4338	\$654,278	\$30,000	\$684,278
3.0 Final Design (Rail Trail)																								
3.1 100% PS&E (Rail Trail)	8	20	40	40	80	160	200		400	300	200	200	10	40	80						1778	\$264,914	10,000	\$274,914
3.2 Final PS&E			20	20	40	80	100		160	120	100	100	10	20	40						810	\$119,026	-	\$119,026
3.3 RE Pending File			8		8		15														31	\$5,920	-	\$5,920
3.4 Slope-Stake Notes					2		8			40											50	\$6,771	-	\$6,771
Subtotal Phase 3	8	20	68	60	130	240	323	0	560	460	300	300	20	60	120	0	0	0	0	0	2669	\$396,631	\$10,000	\$406,631
TOTAL HOURS	104	80	192	180	487	560	888	360	1020	1180	900	820	56	140	360	0	0	0	24	24	7375		0	
Anticipated Salary Increases																						\$131,218	\$0	\$131,218
OTHER DIRECT COSTS																						\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL COST	\$40,565	\$26,406	\$45,226	\$42,400	\$93,891	\$107,965	\$147,577	\$59,819	\$147,297	\$149,147	\$92,831	\$100,895	\$11,175	\$19,325	\$37,811	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,205	\$2,917		\$1,259,670	\$40,000	\$1,299,670

Please note that the rates shown are for estimating purposes only. See rate schedule for actual rates/ranges.

MT Fee (Cost Estimate Rates)

11/24/2025

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Grace Blakeslee, Senior Transportation Planner
Bella Kressman, Real Property Specialist

RE: North Coast Rail Trail Segment 5 Memorandum of Understanding with County of Santa Cruz Community Development and Infrastructure Sanitation Division for Davenport Lift Station

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with County of Santa Cruz Community Development and Infrastructure Sanitation Division to operate, maintain, and repair the Davenport lift station to be constructed as part of the North Coast Rail Trail Segment 5 Project (Attachment 1, Exhibit A).

BACKGROUND

Segment 5 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) includes construction of the 7.5-mile multi-use trail between Wilder Ranch State Park and Davenport, the construction of Panther/Yellowbank Beach and Davenport Beach parking lots and associated facilities and a new Highway 1 pedestrian overcrossing at Panther/Yellowbank Beach ("Project"). The Project is being led by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Central Federal Lands Access Department and RTC is the local project sponsor. The Project was awarded Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Grant funds and is being delivered with a combination of federal, state and local funds. The Project is undergoing a phased construction with completion of the trail and both parking lots anticipated to be open to the public in 2026.

As part of the Project, the Davenport Parking Lot will have a newly constructed restroom that utilizes a sewage lift station for wastewater management. RTC staff have considered options for lift station maintenance and have requested County of Santa Cruz Community Development and Infrastructure Sanitation Division (CDI Sanitation) operate, maintain, and repair the lift station once the parking lot and restroom are open to the public. The RTC has coordinated with CDI Sanitation to ensure the lift station

specifications allow for long-term management by CDI Sanitation. The management intent and obligations to service the lift station are outlined in the draft MOU (Exhibit A to Attachment 1), which will inform a future Cooperative Agreement between the RTC and CDI Sanitation.

DISCUSSION

Maintenance of the Davenport parking lot will necessitate sewage and wastewater management for the newly constructed restroom through a lift station pump. RTC staff have assessed various options for lift station maintenance and determined that contracting with CDI Sanitation, a public agency, will provide the best cost savings option to the RTC for long-term and reliable service. CDI Sanitation provides sewer maintenance, sewage collection, wastewater treatment, and disposal services for unincorporated portions of the County.

To provide assurances for the lift station's long-term maintenance, RTC Staff requested an MOU be entered into between both agencies outlining the intent for CDI Sanitation to provide maintenance services. The draft MOU anticipates that CDI Sanitation will provide the following services to be formalized through a future Cooperative Agreement:

1. Scheduled preventative maintenance of the lift station in accordance with manufacturer and industry standards;
2. Routine weekly and monthly inspections to inspect parts, test functionality, verify operations, and provide other cleaning, mechanical operations, and testing services;
3. Respond to operational Supervisory and Data Acquisition (SCADA) alarms, equipment failures, or emergencies within a reasonable timeframe, including 24/7 availability for lift station alarm or failures; and
4. Maintain records of inspections, repairs, and service activities.

The RTC will fund CDI Sanitation's work on a reimbursement basis for maintenance, monitoring and response, parts, routine inspections, as well as wet well cleaning and jetting, Programmable Logic Controller, and instrumentation or electrical upgrades as recommended by CDI Sanitation.

Executing the MOU will provide the RTC with assurances that the lift station is designed and built according to specifications that will accommodate CDI Sanitation's requirements for future maintenance and that the lift station will be reliably maintained once opened to the public. The MOU will be followed with a formal Cooperative Agreement between both parties to be recommended for approval at a future Commission meeting. The term of the

Cooperative Agreement will be negotiated and determined at a later date. Service costs are estimated to be \$52,000 annually with annual Consumer Price Index increases. An additional \$10,000 will be budgeted each year by the RTC for emergency and unexpected expenditures for replacement equipment, parts, and repairs.

Staff recommends the Commission approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, subject to negotiations and approval by legal counsel as to form, with CDI Sanitation to operate, maintain, and repair the Davenport lift station for the North Coast Rail Trail North Coast Segment 5 Davenport Parking Lot Restroom (Attachment 1, Exhibit A).

FISCAL IMPACT

The staff recommendations are consistent with the approved North Coast Rail Trail Maintenance program funding in the approved Measure D-Active Transportation 5-year plan. Annual maintenance cost for the complete Project, including the trail and parking lots, is estimated to be \$225k-\$250k annually. The cost to initiate maintenance and operations for the Project and to maintain the Davenport lift station in FY 26/27 is estimated to be \$52k, which is inclusive of a set aside for emergency expenses. The RTC will continue to program funding for a 5-year period for North Coast Rail Trail maintenance upon acceptance of the Project by the RTC.

SUMMARY

The Davenport Parking Lot will be constructed with the creation of a new restroom facility that requires a lift station for sewage and wastewater management. Operation of the facility will require ongoing maintenance. Staff recommend entering into an MOU with CDI Sanitation that anticipates their maintenance of the lift station through a future Cooperative Agreement between both agencies.

Attachments:

1. Resolution
 - a. Draft Memorandum of Understanding

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of December 4, 2025
on the motion of Commissioner
duly seconded by Commissioner

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SANITATION DIVISION FOR
MAINTENANCE, OPERATION, AND REPAIR OF THE DAVENPORT LIFT STATION AS
PART OF THE NORTH COAST RAIL TRAIL PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) purchased the
Santa Cruz Branch Line (Branch Line) in October 2012 to provide regional multi-
modal transportation options for the public;

WHEREAS, to address immense transportation needs and severe
transportation funding shortfalls, Santa Cruz County voters approved Measure D,
a ½-cent sales tax, in November 2016 to fund transportation improvements;

WHEREAS, 17% of Measure D revenues are allocated to the measure D-
Active Transportation category and can be used for trail construction, trail
operations and management, as well as maintenance and drainage of the
corridor;

WHEREAS, construction of Segment 5 of the Coastal Rail Trail, the “North
Coast Rail Trail”, is currently underway with funding from the Federal Lands
Access Program, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, the California Coastal
Conservancy, and the 2016 Measure D Sales Tax funds;

WHEREAS, the Davenport Parking Lot is under construction and will include
a new restroom facility for the public requiring a Lift Station;

WHEREAS, staff anticipates that maintenance, operation, and repair of the
Lift Station will be performed by CDI Sanitation;

WHEREAS, a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted to outline
CDI Sanitation’s intention to perform this maintenance, subject to final
negotiations and legal counsel review as to form;

WHEREAS, the roles and responsibilities of each agency will be outlined and
formalized through a future Cooperative Agreement to be recommended for
approval at a future Commission meeting;

WHEREAS, the RTC will reimburse CDI Sanitation for all work under the
Cooperative Agreement in accordance with the approved Measure D Five-Year

Plan programmed funds;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION THAT:

The Executive Director is authorized to enter into a Memorandum of
Understanding (MOU) and future Cooperative Agreement with CDI Sanitation to
operate, maintain, and repair the Davenport SCCRTC Lift Station (Exhibit A)
subject to final negotiations and legal counsel review as to form.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

Eduardo Montesino, Chair

ATTEST:

Sarah Christensen, Secretary

Exhibits:

A. Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Distribution: RTC Fiscal, RTC Project Manager, RTC Real Property

DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
SANITATION DIVISION
AND
THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into on _____, 2025 (“Effective Date”) between **The County of Santa Cruz Community Development & Infrastructure Sanitation Division (CDI-Sanitation)** and **Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)** for the purpose of establishing responsibilities and procedures for the operation, maintenance, and repair of the **Davenport SCCRTC Lift Station** (“Lift Station”).

WHEREAS, the Lift Station serves the SCCRTC’s bathroom facility on APN 058-072-03 located in Davenport, California, and on the coast side of Highway 1 requires ongoing maintenance and emergency response services, and,

WHEREAS, CDI-Sanitation has specialized skill providing Lift Station monitoring, maintenance, and emergency response, and provides oversight for similar infrastructure within County Sanitation Districts and Service Areas, and,

WHEREAS, both parties recognize the importance of ensuring reliable and continuous operation of the Lift Station to protect public health, property, and the environment, and,

WHEREAS, the SCCRTC has equipped the Lift Station with equipment, parts, and monitoring system that are compatible with those used throughout the facilities serviced by CDI-Sanitation, and,

NOW, THEREFORE, the Parties agree to the following terms of the MOU to be formalized through a future Cooperative Agreement. The Parties acknowledge that this MOU is intended to serve as a preliminary framework for collaboration and that a formal **Cooperative Agreement** will be developed to:

1. Define detailed scopes of work, performance standards, and deliverables that describes how the Lift Station that serves the SCCRTC’s bathroom facility will be maintained in a manner consistent with similar infrastructure within County Sanitation Districts and Service Areas;
2. Establish long-term funding commitments and cost-sharing mechanisms;
3. Include insurance, liability, and indemnification provisions as approved by County Counsel and SCCRTC Counsel;
4. Specify dispute resolution procedures and legal remedies; and,

5. Outline reporting requirements, audit rights, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The Cooperative Agreement will be subject to approval by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission.

Services Provided: CDI-Sanitation shall provide the following Lift Station infrastructure maintenance and emergency response services in accordance with, and subject to, the terms listed within **Exhibit A:**

1. Scheduled preventative maintenance of the Lift Station in accordance with manufacturer and industry standards.
2. Routine inspections [**at a frequency of weekly and monthly, as detailed in Exhibit A**].
3. Respond to operational Supervisory and Data Acquisition (SCADA) alarms, equipment failures, or emergencies **within 1 hour of notification, when feasible**.
4. Maintain records of inspections, repairs, and service activities.
5. Provide SCCRTC with an annual report summarizing maintenance activities, repairs, and system condition.
6. In the event that CDI Sanitation determines the bathroom facility must be closed due to lack of electrical power, clogged pipes, malfunctioning pumps, or other operational issues, CDI- Sanitation shall promptly notify the SCCRTC at (831) 460-3200.

Terms and Compensation: The SCCRTC recognizes that CDI-Sanitation has no vested interest in the Lift Station and all costs for parts and services must be borne wholly by the SCCRTC. Provisions for access and compensation for the Lift Station monitoring, maintenance, and emergency response services are provided below, subject to terms and conditions listed in Exhibit B:

The SCCRTC, or its designated representative, shall:

1. Grant access to CDI-Sanitation and its authorized personnel for inspection, operation, and maintenance activities;
2. Provide funding/reimbursement for maintenance, monitoring and response, parts, and routine inspections fully paid by SCCRTC;
3. Provide funding/reimbursement for spare parts and replacement parts, wet well cleaning and jetting of sewer lateral, PLC, instrumentation or electrical upgrades as recommended by CDI-Sanitation staff and approved by the SCCRTC;
4. Notify CDI-Sanitation immediately of any observed malfunctions, blockages, or unusual conditions in the lift station or SCCRTC sewer lateral to the sewer main in Highway 1 at the 24-hour emergency number (831) 477-3907;
5. Ensure that no unauthorized modifications, connections, or discharges are made to the Lift Station.

6. Notify CDI-Sanitation immediately of any observed malfunctions, blockages, or unusual conditions in the lift station or SCCRTC sewer lateral to the sewer main in Highway 1 at the 24-hour emergency number (831) 477-3907.

Exempt Work: This agreement expressly considers provision of Lift Station infrastructure maintenance and emergency response services, and the following work is beyond the scope of this MOU: emergency portable generator connection in the event of system power failures, capital improvements, electrical work beyond standard maintenance, Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) updates or network-related services, janitorial services, and environmental remediation.

CDI-Sanitation shall coordinate with the SCCRTC to facilitate the execution and completion of Exempt Work, whether performed by CDI-Sanitation, SCCRTC, or a third-party contractor. CDI-Sanitation's coordination obligation shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Notifying SCCRTC in advance of any required Exempt Work;
2. Obtaining necessary approvals or permits, if applicable;
3. Ensuring compliance with all relevant safety, environmental, and regulatory standards;
4. Providing documentation of completed work, including scope, timeline, and responsible party; and,
5. Coordinating access to facilities and ensuring minimal disruption to ongoing operations.

Indemnity: Parties agree to mutual indemnification to be addressed in a subsequent cooperative agreement.

Term Agreement: The anticipated term of the subsequent Cooperative Agreement will be a five year- period following the opening of the bathroom and RTC shall issue a written notice to proceed to CDI.

Termination of MOU: In the case that either of the Parties do not fulfill their portion of this agreement to the satisfaction of the other Party, the terms of this agreement shall be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors of the Santa Cruz County and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and a decision to either terminate or amend this agreement shall be considered, only after the CDI Deputy CAO/Public Works Director and the SCCRTC Executive Director have met and conferred to try to remedy the situation first.

Termination of MOU does not relieve the SCCRTC of undisputed financial obligations incurred prior to termination.

This MOU may be amended only by written agreement signed by authorized representatives of both Parties.

The County of Santa Cruz Community Development & Infrastructure and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission indicate agreement with this MOU by their signatures:

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

By: _____

Sarah Christensen
SCCRTC Executive Director

Date: _____

By: _____

Printed Name & Title

Date: _____

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: _____

Printed Name
County Counsel

Date: _____

By: _____

Steve Mattas
SCCRTC Counsel

Date: _____

EXHIBIT A

Routine Inspection and Maintenance

Inspections and maintenance will include:

- **Frequency:** Weekly and monthly inspections
- **Tasks:**
 - o Inspect pumps, motors, controls, and wet well conditions
 - o Check alarms and SCADA system functionality
 - o Verify proper operation of floats, level sensors, and backup systems
 - o Clean wet well as needed (at least semi-annually)
 - o Exercise valves and ensure access hatches are secure
 - o Lubricate and test mechanical components
 - o Remove debris and grease accumulation

Emergency Response

- Available 24/7 for lift station alarms or failures
- Sanitation Dispatch response within 1 hour of notification
- Coordinate with SCCRTC for major failures or spill events

Repairs and Replacements

- Perform minor repairs (**not exceeding a cumulative \$10,000 per fiscal year without pre-authorization**)
- Provide written estimates for major repairs or equipment replacements
- Coordinate all major work with [Owning Agency Name] for approval and coordinate with third parties for work performance as needed

Provide annual performance and condition reports to SCCRTC.

EXHIBIT B

Costs and Billing

- Maintenance and operational costs will be fully funded and paid by the SCCRTC.

Annual maintenance and operations costs **are estimated at \$52,000 annually and will be subject to an annual adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the San Francisco Bay Area, not to exceed 3% annually unless mutually agreed**

• Emergency repair costs will be handled as follows: The SCCRTC will budget annually \$10,000 for emergency and unexpected expenditures. CDI-Sanitation staff will notify SCCRTC within 24 hours of the emergency and unexpected expenditures and will be allowed to use the annual \$10,000 budget for replacement of equipment, parts, emergency repairs as needed. If this emergency fund is exhausted, SCCRTC shall as quickly as feasible replenish it with adequate funds for required work, and in the event of emergency fund exhaustion CDI-Sanitation shall have no obligation to use its own funds for any required work contemplated under this MOU.

- Invoices will be submitted by CDI-Sanitation to the SCCRTC quarterly and paid within 30 days of receipt. **SCCRTC reserves the right to request supporting documentation for invoiced services.**

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Amin AbuAmara, PE, Director of Capital Projects & Brian Zamora, EIT, Assistant Transportation Engineer

RE: Amendment 1 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0388 for Highway 1 Bay-Porter/State Park Project and Amendment 2 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0338 for Highway 1 41st/Soquel Project Final Design and Right of Way Components

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute amendment 1 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0388 and Amendment 2 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0338 for the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) and Right of Way Components of the Highway 1 Bay-Porter/State Park and 41st/Soquel Projects to add funds to cover Caltrans cost overruns associated with the construction contract advertisement and award process.

BACKGROUND

In May 2018 the RTC unanimously approved the RTC being the implementing agency for the Highway 1 41st/Soquel Auxiliary Lanes Project Plans, Specifications, and Engineer's Estimate (PS&E) component (otherwise known as the final design component), and authorized the Executive Director to negotiate a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans.

In April of 2021 the Commission approved the staff recommendation for the RTC being the implementing agency for the Highway 1 Bay/Porter to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes Project Plans, Specifications, and Engineer's Estimate (PS&E) and right of way components and authorized the Executive Director to negotiate a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans.

Under cooperative agreements with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), Caltrans is responsible for design oversight of state highway improvement projects implemented by others.

DISCUSSION

The RTC served as the Implementing Agency for the Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) phase of the projects. This included the responsibility of leading the final design process. Caltrans' responsibilities include providing independent quality assurance (oversight) review of the final design plans and ensuring compliance with state and federal funding requirements and maintaining accurate accounting and documentation of project expenditures. Since Caltrans was selected to implement Construction, Caltrans staff was also responsible for completing the Advertise and Award stage of PS&E component.

In the original Cooperative Agreement, the Advertise and Award process by Caltrans was estimated to initially cost \$100,000 (per project) and the initial invoices have been paid by SCCRTC. The Cooperative Agreement identified that if there were any overages, RTC is responsible for payment of eligible expenses. Costs exceeded the original estimates due to a much higher than anticipated number of bidder inquiries and the need to address them from the Caltrans Contracts Award Office, Office Engineer, and Design for the Highway 1 41st/Soquel Project and it took almost the same effort to address all the issues that came out from these bid inquiries to avoid similar inquiries on the Highway 1 Bay-Porter to State Park Project before going out to bid. After Caltrans reviewed their final costs at the completion of the PS&E phase in 2022 & 2023, it was determined that a total of \$294,269.23 was due to the state as eligible expenses. This reflects a balance of \$154,992.72 for the 41st to Soquel Avenue, segment 1, and \$139,276.51 for the Bay/Porter to State Park Drive, segment 2. The balances due reflect the PS&E Cooperative Agreement on three PS&E activities:

- Activity 255.20 Final PS&E Package
- Activity 260 Contract Bid Documents Ready to List
- Activity 265 Awarded and Approved Construction Contract

RTC staff reviewed all Caltrans PS&E charges and determined they were within the allowable charges as determined by the Cooperative Agreement.

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute amendment 1 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0388 (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) and amendment 2 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0338 (Exhibit B to Attachment 1) for the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) and Right of Way Components of the Highway 1 Bay-Porter / State Park and 41st / Soquel Projects to add funds to cover Caltrans cost

overruns associated with the construction contract advertisement and award process.

FISCAL IMPACT

Sufficient programming and budget exist to fund the amendments to the Cooperative Agreement in the latest approved Measure D-Highway Corridor 5 year Program of Projects and in the RTC's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025/26 budget.

SUMMARY

The RTC staff recommends amending Cooperative Agreements 05-0388 A1 and 05-0338 A2 with Caltrans for Bay/Porter to State Park and 41st to Soquel Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project to cover Caltrans cost overruns associated with the construction contract advertisement and award process.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
 - a. Amendment 1 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0388
 - b. Amendment 2 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0338

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of December 4, 2025
on the motion of Commissioner
duly seconded by Commissioner

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AMENDMENT WITH CALTRANS FOR THE PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS AND ESTIMATES (PS&E) A COMPONENTS OF WORK FOR THE HIGHWAY 1 AUXILIARY LANES AND BUS ON SHOULDER PROJECT FOR BOTH SEGMENTS 1 AND 2 PROJECTS

WHEREAS, Highway 1 is the most heavily traveled highway in Santa Cruz County, is often congested and has safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, Highway 1 serves as the backbone for the movement of people and goods through most of the urban area in Santa Cruz County, providing access to schools, commercial, residential, and recreational destinations;

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Commission adopted a preferred scenario for the Highway 1, Branch Line, and Soquel Drive/Freedom Boulevard corridors as part of the Unified Corridor Investment Study, which included implementation of auxiliary lanes and bus on shoulder projects on Highway 1;

WHEREAS, a Cooperative Agreement spelling out roles and responsibilities of RTC and Caltrans is needed in order for Caltrans to provide oversight for the project and to obtain the STIP funding allocation from the CTC;

WHEREAS, In the original Cooperative Agreement, the Advertise and Award process was estimated to cost \$100,000 (per project) and the initial invoices have been paid by SCCRTC.

WHEREAS, a balance of \$154,992.72 for the 41st to Soquel Avenue segment and \$139,276.51 for the Bay/Porter to State Park Drive segment are needed to close out the PS&E phases for both projects.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION THAT:

The Executive Director is authorized to negotiate and execute amendment 1 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0388 (Exhibit A) and amendment 2 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0338 (Exhibit B) for the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) and Right of Way Components of the Highway 1 41st/Soquel and Bay-Porter/State

Park Projects to add funds to cover Caltrans cost overruns associated with the construction contract advertisement and award process., subject to the final negotiations and approval by legal counsel as to form.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS

Eduardo Montesino, Chair

ATTEST:

Sarah Christensen, Secretary

Exhibits:

- A. Amendment 1 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0388
- B. Amendment 2 to Cooperative Agreement 05-0338

Last Update: March 5, 2024

Agreement 05-0388 A1
Project No. 0518000116
EA 0C733
05-SCR-1-10.54/13.44

AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO AGREEMENT 05-0388

This Amendment No. 1 (AMENDMENT) to Agreement 05-0388 (AGREEMENT), executed on and effective from _____, is between the State of California, acting through its Department of Transportation, referred to as CALTRANS, and:

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, a public corporation/entity, referred to hereinafter as SCCRTC.

RECITALS

1. CALTRANS and SCCRTC, collectively referred to as PARTIES, entered into AGREEMENT on May 18, 2021, defining the terms and conditions to *CONSTRUCT NORTHBOUND AND SOUTHBOUND AUXILIARY LANES BETWEEN THE BAY STREET/PORTER AVENUE AND STATE PARK DRIVE INTERCHANGES ON HIGHWAY 1, BUS-ON-SHOULDER ELEMENTS, DRAINAGE FACILITIES, CONSTRUCT RETAINING WALLS AND SOUND WALLS, INCLUDING THE REPLACEMENT OF THE CAPITOLA AVENUE OVERCROSSING WITH BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES ON CAPITOLA AVENUE IN BOTH DIRECTIONS AT THE NEW BRIDGE, AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN OVERCROSSING AT MAR VISTA DRIVE*, referred to as PROJECT.
2. PARTIES now seek to add \$139,276.51 in Local Measure D funds for Caltrans PS&E expenses associated with advertising and awarding to the project.

IT IS THEREFORE MUTUALLY AGREED:

1. A revised Funding Summary is attached and made part of the AGREEMENT. Any reference to the Funding Summary No. 1 in the AGREEMENT is deemed to refer to the revised Funding Summary No. 2 attached herein.
2. All other terms and conditions of the AGREEMENT shall remain in full force and effect.

3. This AMENDMENT is deemed to be included and made a part of the AGREEMENT.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The information provided below indicates the primary contact information for each PARTY to this AGREEMENT. PARTIES will notify each other in writing of any personnel or location changes. Contact information changes do not require an amendment to this AGREEMENT.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Project Manager: Brian Zamora, Assistant Transportation Engineer

Phone Number: (831) 460-3200

E-mail: bzamora@sccrtc.org

Billing Address: 1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

CALTRANS

Project Manager: Madilyn Jacobsen

Phone Number: (805) 835-6328

E-mail: Madilyn.Jacobsen@dot.ca.gov

SIGNATURES

PARTIES are authorized to enter into this AMENDMENT and have delegated to the undersigned the authority to execute this AMENDMENT on behalf of the respective agencies and hereby covenants to have followed all the necessary legal requirements to validly execute this AMENDMENT. By signing below, the PARTIES each expressly agree to execute this AMENDMENT electronically.

The PARTIES acknowledge that executed copies of this AMENDMENT may be exchanged by facsimile or email, and that such copies shall be deemed to be effective as originals.

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

By: _____
Scott Eades
District Director

By: _____
Sarah Christensen
Executive Director

VERIFIED OF FUNDS & AUTHORITY:

By: _____
Hannah Ferguson
Project Control Manager

By: _____
Steve Mattas
RTC Counsel

By: _____
Attorney
Department of Transportation

CERTIFIED AS TO FINANCIAL
TERMS & POLICIES:

By: _____
Lai Saephan
HQ Accounting Supervisor

FUNDING SUMMARY NO. 02

<u>FUNDING TABLE</u> v. 1.1						
<u>IMPLEMENTING AGENCY→</u>			<u>SCCRTC</u>	<u>SCCRTC</u>		Totals
Source	Party	Fund Type	PS&E	R/W SUPPORT	R/W CAPITAL	
STATE	SCCRTC	STIP/RIP	750,000	0	1,100,000	1,850,000
LOCAL	SCCRTC	Local	2,449,276.51	0	0	2,449,276.51
Totals			3,199,276.51	0	1,100,000	4,299,276.51

v 221						
<u>SPENDING SUMMARY</u>						
Fund Type	PS&E		R/W Support		R/W CAPITAL	Totals
	CALTRANS	<u>SCCRTC</u>	CALTRANS	<u>SCCRTC</u>	<u>SCCRTC</u>	
STIP/RIP	0	650,000	0	0	1,100,000	1,750,000
STIP/RIP LOCAL/STATE*	100,000*	0	0	0	0	100,000
Local	139,276.51	2,310,000	0	0	0	2,449,276.51
Totals	239,276.51	2,960,000	0	0	1,100,000	4,299,276.51

*State subvention

Funding

1. If there are insufficient funds available in this AGREEMENT to place the PROJECT right-of-way in a safe and operable condition, the appropriate IMPLEMENTING AGENCY will fund these activities until such time as PARTIES amend this AGREEMENT.

That IMPLEMENTING AGENCY may request reimbursement for these costs during the amendment process.

2. If there are insufficient funds in this AGREEMENT to implement the obligations and responsibilities of this AGREEMENT, including the applicable commitments and conditions included in the PROJECT environmental documentation, permits, agreements, and/or approvals that are in effect at a time that WORK stops, each PARTY accepts responsibility to fund their respective WORK until such time as PARTIES amend this AGREEMENT.

Each PARTY may request reimbursement for these costs during the amendment process.

ICRP Rate

3. The cost of any engineering support performed by CALTRANS includes all direct and applicable indirect costs. CALTRANS calculates indirect costs based solely on the type of funds used to pay support costs. State and federal funds administered by CALTRANS are subject to the current Program Functional Rate. All other funds are subject to the current Program Functional Rate and the current Administration Rate. The Program Functional Rate and Administration Rate are adjusted periodically.

In accordance with California Senate Bill 848, the Administration Rate is capped at 10 percent until July 1, 2021, for Self-Help Counties with a countywide sales tax measure dedicated to transportation improvements.

4. If the WORK is funded with state or federal funds, any PARTY seeking CALTRANS reimbursement of indirect costs must submit an indirect cost rate proposal and central service cost allocation plan (if any) in accordance with Local Assistance Procedures Manual, 2 CFR, Part 200 and Chapter 5. These documents are to be submitted annually to CALTRANS' Audits and Investigations for review and acceptance prior to CALTRANS' reimbursement of indirect costs.

5. Travel, per diem, and third-party contract reimbursements for WORK are to be paid from the funds in this AGREEMENT only after the contractor performs the work and incurs said costs.

Payments for travel and per diem will not exceed the rates paid rank and file state employees under current California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) rules current at the effective date of this AGREEMENT.

If SCCRTC invoices for rates in excess of CalHR rates, SCCRTC will fund the cost difference and reimburse CALTRANS for any overpayment.

6. In accordance with the CALTRANS Federal-Aid Project Funding Guidelines, PARTIES must obtain approval from the Federal Highway Administration prior to any PROJECT funding changes that that will change the federal share of funds.

Invoicing and Payment

7. PARTIES will invoice for funds where the SPENDING SUMMARY shows that one PARTY provides funds for use by another PARTY. PARTIES will pay invoices within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt of invoice when not paying with Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). When paying with EFT, SCCRTC will pay invoices within five (5) calendar days of receipt of invoice.
8. If SCCRTC has received EFT certification from CALTRANS then SCCRTC will use the EFT mechanism and follow all EFT procedures to pay all invoices issued from CALTRANS.
9. When a PARTY is reimbursed for actual cost, invoices will be submitted each month for the prior month's expenditures. After all PROJECT COMPONENT WORK is complete, PARTIES will submit a final accounting of all PROJECT COMPONENT costs. Based on the final accounting, PARTIES will invoice or refund as necessary to satisfy the financial commitments of this AGREEMENT.
10. If an executed Program Supplement Agreement (PSA) or STIP Planning, Programming, and Monitoring Program Fund Transfer Agreement (PPM) exists for this PROJECT then SCCRTC will abide by the billing and payment conditions detailed for the fund types identified in the PSA or PPM.

11. If CALTRANS reimburses SCCRTC for any costs later determined to be unallowable, SCCRTC will reimburse those funds.

Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E)

12. PARTIES will invoice and reimburse for actual costs incurred and paid.

RIGHT-OF-WAY Support

13. No invoicing or reimbursement will occur for the R/W SUPPORT PROJECT COMPONENT.

RIGHT-OF-WAY Capital

14. SCCRTC will invoice and CALTRANS will reimburse for actual costs incurred and paid.

Last Update: March 5, 2024

05-SCR-1-10.36/14.90
Project No. 0512000228
EA 0C732
Agreement 05-0338 A-2

AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO AGREEMENT 05-0338

This Amendment No. 2 (AMENDMENT) to Agreement 05-0338 (AGREEMENT), executed on and effective from _____ (date to be filled in upon signing), is between the State of California, acting through its Department of Transportation, referred to as CALTRANS, and:

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION, a public corporation/entity, referred to hereinafter as SCCRTC.

RECITALS

1. CALTRANS and SCCRTC, collectively referred to as PARTIES, entered into AGREEMENT on October 24, 2018, defining the terms and conditions to *construct auxiliary lanes to the north and southbound sides of Route 1 between 41st Ave. and Soquel Dr. Interchanges; and construct a new bike and pedestrian overcrossing at Chanticleer Ave.*, referred to as PROJECT.
2. PARTIES entered into Amendment No. 1 to AGREEMENT on February 2, 2020 to update Right of Way Capital and Support Costs.
3. The AGREEMENT established in the Funding Summary Invoicing and Payment section under *Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E)* that PARTIES will invoice and reimburse for actual costs incurred and paid.
4. PARTIES now seek to revise Funding Summary No. 02 to reflect the programmed funding of PROJECT to include \$154,992.72 in Local funds and to specify a deposit, for WORK to be performed by CALTRANS.

CALTRANS will invoice SCCRTC for work performed and SCCRTC will reimburse CALTRANS for actual costs incurred. SCCRTC will invoice and CALTRANS will reimburse SCCRTC from STIP/RIP funds for actual costs incurred for PROJECT.

IT IS THEREFORE MUTUALLY AGREED:

1. A revised Funding Summary No. 03 is attached and made part of the AGREEMENT. Any reference to the Funding Summary in the AGREEMENT is deemed to refer to the revised Funding Summary No. 03 attached herein, including Right of Way Capital and Initial Deposit.
2. All other terms and conditions of the AGREEMENT shall remain in full force and effect.
3. This AMENDMENT is deemed to be included and made a part of the AGREEMENT.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The information provided below indicates the primary contact information for each PARTY to this AGREEMENT. PARTIES will notify each other in writing of any personnel or location changes. Contact information changes do not require an amendment to this AGREEMENT.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Brian Zamora, Assistant Transportation Engineer
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone Number: (831) 460-3200
E-mail: bzamora@sccrtc.org

CALTRANS

Madilyn Jacobsen, Project Manager
50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Office Phone: (805) 835-6328
Email: madilyn.jacobsen@dot.ca.gov

SIGNATURES

PARTIES are authorized to enter into this AMENDMENT and have delegated to the undersigned the authority to execute this AMENDMENT on behalf of the respective agencies and hereby covenants to have followed all the necessary legal requirements to validly execute this AMENDMENT. By signing below, the PARTIES each expressly agree to execute this AMENDMENT electronically.

The PARTIES acknowledge that executed copies of this AMENDMENT may be exchanged by facsimile or email, and that such copies shall be deemed to be effective as originals.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

By: _____
Scott Eades
District Director

By: _____
Sarah Christensen
Executive Director

VERIFIED OF FUNDS & AUTHORITY:

By: _____
Hannah Ferguson
Project Control Manager

By: _____
Steve Mattas
RTC Counsel

By: _____
Attorney
Department of Transportation

CERTIFIED AS TO FINANCIAL TERMS & POLICIES:

By: _____
Lai Saephan
HQ Accounting Supervisor

FUNDING SUMMARY NO. 03

<u>FUNDING TABLE</u>						
<u>IMPLEMENTING AGENCY→</u>			<u>SCCRTC</u>	<u>SCCRTC</u>		Totals
Source	Party	Fund Type	PS&E	R/W SUPPORT	R/W CAPITAL	
STATE	CALTRANS	STIP/RIP	2,570,000	50,000	700,000	3,320,000
LOCAL	CALTRANS	Measure D	154,992.72	0	0	154,992.72
Totals			2,724,992.72	50,000	700,000	3,474,992.72

<u>SPENDING SUMMARY</u>						
Fund Type	PS&E		R/W Support		R/W CAPITAL	Totals
	CALTRANS (AA Tasks)	<u>SCCRTC</u>	CALTRANS	<u>SCCRTC</u>	<u>SCCRTC</u>	
STIP/RIP		2,470,000	0	50,000	700,000	3,220,000
STIP/RIP LOCAL-STATE*	100,000	0	0	0	0	100,000
Measure D	154,992.72	0	0	0	0	154,992.72
Totals	254,992.72	2,470,000	0	50,000	700,000	3,474,992.72

*State subvention

Funding

1. If there are insufficient funds available in this AGREEMENT to place the PROJECT right-of-way in a safe and operable condition, the appropriate IMPLEMENTING AGENCY will fund these activities until such time as PARTIES amend this AGREEMENT.

That IMPLEMENTING AGENCY may request reimbursement for these costs during the amendment process.

2. If there are insufficient funds in this AGREEMENT to implement the obligations and responsibilities of this AGREEMENT, including the applicable commitments and conditions included in the PROJECT environmental documentation, permits, agreements, and/or approvals that are in effect at a time that WORK stops, each PARTY accepts responsibility to fund their respective WORK until such time as PARTIES amend this AGREEMENT.

Each PARTY may request reimbursement for these costs during the amendment process.

ICRP Rate

3. The cost of any engineering support performed by CALTRANS includes all direct and applicable indirect costs. CALTRANS calculates indirect costs based solely on the type of funds used to pay support costs. State and federal funds administered by CALTRANS are subject to the current Program Functional Rate. All other funds are subject to the current Program Functional Rate and the current Administration Rate. The Program Functional Rate and Administration Rate are adjusted periodically.
4. If the WORK is funded with state or federal funds, any PARTY seeking CALTRANS reimbursement of indirect costs must submit an indirect cost rate proposal and central service cost allocation plan (if any) in accordance with Local Assistance Procedures Manual, 2 CFR, Part 200 and Chapter 5. These documents are to be submitted annually to CALTRANS' Audits and Investigations for review and acceptance prior to CALTRANS' reimbursement of indirect costs.
5. Travel, per diem, and third-party contract reimbursements for WORK are to be paid from the funds in this AGREEMENT only after the contractor performs the work and incurs said costs.

Payments for travel and per diem will not exceed the rates paid rank and file state employees under current California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) rules current at the effective date of this AGREEMENT.

If SCCRTC invoices for rates in excess of CalHR rates, SCCRTC will fund the cost difference and reimburse CALTRANS for any overpayment.

Invoicing and Payment

6. PARTIES will invoice for funds where the SPENDING SUMMARY shows that one PARTY provides funds for use by another PARTY. PARTIES will pay invoices within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt of invoice when not paying with Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). When paying with EFT, SCCRTC will pay invoices within five (5) calendar days of receipt of invoice.
7. If SCCRTC has received EFT certification from CALTRANS then SCCRTC will use the EFT mechanism and follow all EFT procedures to pay all invoices issued from CALTRANS.
8. When a PARTY is reimbursed for actual cost, invoices will be submitted each month for the prior month's expenditures. After all PROJECT COMPONENT WORK is complete, PARTIES will submit a final accounting of all PROJECT COMPONENT costs. Based on the final accounting, PARTIES will invoice or refund as necessary to satisfy the financial commitments of this AGREEMENT.
9. If an executed Program Supplement Agreement (PSA) or STIP Planning, Programming, and Monitoring Program Fund Transfer Agreement (PPM) exists for this PROJECT then SCCRTC will abide by the billing and payment conditions detailed for the fund types identified in the PSA or PPM.
10. If CALTRANS reimburses SCCRTC for any costs later determined to be unallowable, SCCRTC will reimburse those funds.

Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E)

11. CALTRANS has invoiced and SCCRTC has paid the \$100,000 initial deposit after execution of this AGREEMENT.

Thereafter, CALTRANS will invoice for CALTRANS' costs for work performed and SCCRTC will reimburse CALTRANS for actual costs incurred.

12. These costs are not to exceed the STIP programmed amount clause for PS&E. Thereafter, SCCRTC will fund actual costs above the programmed amount.
13. SCCRTC will invoice and CALTRANS will reimburse for actual costs incurred and paid.

RIGHT-OF-WAY Support

14. SCCRTC will invoice and CALTRANS will reimburse for actual costs incurred and paid.

RIGHT-OF-WAY Capital

15. SCCRTC will invoice and CALTRANS will reimburse for actual costs incurred and paid.
16. These costs are not to exceed the STIP programmed amount clause for Right of Way Capital. Thereafter, SCCRTC will fund actual costs above the programmed amount.

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

FROM: Italo Jimenez, Budget and Finance Officer

RE: Status report on FY 2025-26 Transportation Development Act
Revenues from October 2025

BACKGROUND

Transportation Development Act revenues are received monthly from the State of California Tax and Fee Administration. Attachment 1 provides the Commission with the status of cumulative revenue receipts for October 2025-26 and compares the total to the same period in fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 in dollars and as a percentage.

Included in the attachment are the FY 2025-26 Transportation Development Act revenues. Actual revenues for October FY 2025–26 exceeded those of October FY 2024–25 by 18%. Actual revenues for October FY 2025–26 surpassed the budgeted amount by 7.32%.

Staff will continue to monitor revenues and provide recommendations at a future Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) meeting, if action is needed.

DISCUSSION

As the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Santa Cruz County, the RTC is responsible for receiving and managing funds, and processing Transportation Development Act apportionments. These revenues are generated at the “point of sale” for purchases made within the County of Santa Cruz. Revenues are collected by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration and distributed each month to the TDA trust fund held at the Santa Cruz County treasury for the RTC as administrator.

FY 2025-26 Cash Receipts

Transportation Development Act FY 2025-26 budgeted revenues are projected to increase by \$295,229 (+0.57%) from \$12,322,348 in FY 2024-25 estimate to \$12,617,577 estimated for FY 2025-26. FY 2024-25 revenues came in lower than the estimated \$12,322,348 therefore, increasing the estimated growth projection for FY 2025-26 to \$313,852 (+3%). FY 2024-25 Transportation Development Act cash receipts for October 2025 are \$167,785 (18.33%) higher

at \$1,082,956 compared to \$915,717 in October 2024. October 2025 cash receipts represent October 2025 sales tax revenues as shown in Attachment 1.

<u>Actual Cash Receipts October 2025</u>			
<u>FY 2024-25</u>	<u>FY 2025-26</u>	<u>Increase / (-) Decrease</u>	
915,171	1,082,956	18.33%	167,785

<u>Budgeted to Actuals October 2025</u>			
<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Increase / (-) Decrease</u>	
1,009,117	1,082,956	7.32%	73,839

For seasonal comparison, we compare the current and prior fiscal years at the end of each quarter on an accrual basis. Q1 represents July 2025 through October 2025 revenues received from May 2025 through July 2025.

The October 2025 revenue distributions are considered an advance for December 2025 revenues. The table below provides revenue comparisons by quarter on an accrual basis between FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 revenues. On an accrual basis revenues are \$38,684 (1%) higher in FY 2025-26 than in FY 2024-25 for the same period. Quarter 2 is still in progress; therefore, there are no comparison available yet.

FY 2025-26 Year TDA Revenues - Quarterly Comparison
to FY 2024-25 Accrual Basis

	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>	<u>Fiscal YTD</u>
	(July-Sep)	(Oct - Dec)	(Jan-Mar)	(Apr - June)	
FY 2024-25	3,245,879				3,245,879
FY 2025-26	3,284,564				3,284,564
\$ Difference	38,685				38,685
% Difference	1.19%				1.19%

FISCAL IMPACT

This is a status report, there is no fiscal impact beyond reported TDA revenue.

Attachment

1. Status Report on Transportation Development Act Revenues as of October 2025

**SCCRTC
TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ACT (TDA)
SUMMARY OF REVENUE RECEIPTS BY MONTH
FY2026 ENDING JUNE 30, 2026**

ATTACHMENT 1

MONTH	FY2024-25 ACTUAL REVENUE	FY2025-26 BUDGETED REVENUE	FY2025-26 ACTUAL REVENUE	DIFFERENCE	DIFFERENCE AS % OF PROJECTION	CUMMULATIVE % OF ACTUAL TO PROJECTION	ACTUAL FY 2025-26 COMPARED TO ACTUAL FY 2024-25	
							\$ Increase (+) /Decrease (-)	% Increase (+) /Decrease (-)
							FY2025 to FY2026	FY2025 to FY2026
JULY	1,012,225	1,331,358	1,111,944	(219,414)	-16.48%	83.52%	99,719	9.85%
AUGUST	1,239,451	1,258,043	1,127,676	(130,367)	-10.36%	86.49%	(111,775)	-9.02%
SEPTEMBER	994,204	1,009,117	1,044,944	35,827	3.55%	91.28%	50,741	5.10%
OCTOBER	901,646	915,171	1,082,956	167,785	18.33%	96.76%	181,309	20.11%
NOVEMBER	1,120,653	1,137,463	-	-				
DECEMBER	1,018,473	1,033,750	-	-				
JANUARY	878,510	877,975	-	-				
FEBRUARY	1,292,658	1,319,500	-	-				
MARCH	881,767	893,200	-	-				
APRIL	775,261	827,225	-	-				
MAY	1,297,651	1,065,750	-	-				
JUNE	1,037,186	949,025	-	-				
TOTAL	12,449,684	12,617,577	4,367,520	(146,169)	-1.16%	34.61%	219,994	6.78 %
July 2025 through								
October 2025	4,147,526	4,513,689	4,367,520	(146,169)	-3.24 %	Cash	219,994	5.30 %
September 2025 through								
October 2025	1,895,850	1,924,288	2,127,900	203,612	10.58 %	Accrual	232,050	12.24 %

I:\FISCAL\7.TDA\MonthlyReceipts\FY2026\04. October 2025\[October 2025 TDA Revenue - BOD.xlsx]Summary

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

FROM: Italo Jimenez, Budget and Finance Officer

RE: Measure D Revenues from October 2025

BACKGROUND

Measure D revenues are received monthly from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration and distributed to the direct recipients.

Attachment 1 provides the Commission with the status of cumulative revenue receipts for July 2025 through October 2025 and compares the total to the same period in fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 in dollars and as a percentage.

Included in the attachment is the October 2025 Measure D revenue report, cash receipts are 2,299,335, (13%) higher than the receipts from September of FY 2024. Staff will continue to monitor revenues and provide updates monthly.

DISCUSSION

Measure D FY2025-26 budgeted revenues were projected to decrease by \$20,706 (.0007%) from \$27,687,507 in FY2024-25 to \$27,666,801 in FY2025-26, effectively no change in the projection.

FY 2025-26 Cash Receipts

FY 2025-26 Measure D cash receipts for October 2025 is \$264,766 (13%) higher at \$2,299,355 compared to \$2,034,588 in the same period in FY 2024-25. October 2025 cash receipts represent July 2025 sales tax revenues.

Oct. 2025	Oct. 2025	Increase / (-) Decrease	
2,034,589	2,299,355	13.01%	264,766

FY 2025-26 Quarterly Sales Tax Revenues

The October 2025 distribution from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration represents October 2025 sales tax revenues.

For seasonal comparison, we compare the current and prior fiscal years at the end of each quarter on an accrual basis. Q1 represents July 2025 through October 2025 revenues received from May 2025 through October 2025.

The table below reflects the April 2025 Measure D projection from Hinderliter de Llamas for FY 2024-25 quarter 1.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Fiscal YTD
	(July-Sep)	(Oct-Dec)	(Jan-Feb)	(Mar - June)	
FY 2024-25	7,067,613	-			7,067,613
FY 2025-26	7,270,142				7,270,142
\$ Difference	202,529				202,529
% Difference	2.87%				2.87%

FY 2025-26 Year Meas D Revenues - Quarterly Comparison to FY 2024-25 Accrual Basis - Projected

	Q1 Projected	Q2 Projected	Q3 Projected	Q4 Projected	Fiscal YTD
	(July-Sep)	(Oct-Dec)	(Jan-Mar)	(Apr-Jun)	
FY 2024-25	6,865,876	6,901,951			13,767,827
FY 2025-26	6,087,583	6,703,524			12,791,107
\$ Difference	(778,293)	(198,427)		-	(976,720)
% Difference	-11.34%	-2.87%			-7.09%

Quarter 1 FY 2026 receipts were \$202,529 (2.87%) higher compared to the same quarter in FY 2025. There is no data comparison for Quarter 2 FY 2026 because quarter2 ends December 31, 2026

As the administrator of Measure D, RTC allocates, administers, and oversees the expenditure of all Measure D revenues which are not directly allocated by formula annually to other agencies, consistent with the Expenditure Plan. Measure D revenues are collected by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration and distributed to the RTC each month by wire transfer to the Santa Cruz County treasury into the Measure D general fund and distributed to the separate fiduciary fund for each of the five investment categories. Each month the RTC distributes the revenues from the Neighborhood and Transit categories to the direct recipients based on actual revenues received.

FISCAL IMPACT

This is a status report, there is no fiscal impact beyond reported Measure D revenue.

Attachments

1. Status Report on Measure D Revenues from October 2025.

**SCCRTC
TRANSPORTATION TAX REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION FUND (TTRTF) - MEASURE D
SUMMARY OF REVENUE ALLOCATION BY MONTH
FY 2026 ENDING JUNE 30, 2026**

	RATE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	FY 2026 TOTAL	FY 2025 TOTAL	% Increase (+) /Decrease (-)	\$ Increase (+) /Decrease (-)
GROSS		2,379,185.25	2,591,120.94	2,299,835.82	2,371,098.28	9,641,240.29	9,102,201.09		
BOE FEES		-	(60,410.00)	-	-	(60,410.00)	(44,270.00)		
NET		2,379,185.25	2,530,710.94	2,299,835.82	2,371,098.28	9,580,830.29	9,057,931.09	5.77%	522,899.20
ADMINISTRATION & IMPLEMENTATION - 729100/75381									
ADMINISTRATION - SALARIES & BENEFITS	1%	23,791.85	25,307.11	22,998.36	23,710.98	95,808.30	90,579.31	5.77%	5,228.99
O/H ADMIN		25,153.46	26,755.44	24,314.55	25,067.96	101,291.41	68,272.34	48.36%	33,019.07
SALARIES & O/H IMPELME& OVERSIGHT		11,786.90	11,786.90	11,786.90	11,786.90	47,147.60	40,079.75	17.63%	7,067.85
SERVICES & SUPPLIES		11,177.42	11,177.42	11,177.42	11,177.42	44,709.67	16,166.67	176.55%	28,543.00
Subtotal		71,909.63	75,026.86	70,277.23	71,743.26	288,956.98	215,098.07	34.34%	73,858.91
TO DISTRIBUTE TO INVESTMENT CATEGORIES		2,307,275.62	2,455,684.08	2,229,558.59	2,299,355.02	9,291,873.31	884,283.02	950.78%	8,407,590.29
1. NEIGHBORHOOD - 729200/75382	30%	692,182.69	736,705.22	668,867.58	689,806.51	2,787,561.99	2,652,849.91	5.08%	134,712.08
SLV SR9	Fixed \$	27,777.78	27,777.78	27,777.78	27,777.78	111,111.11	111,111.11	0.00%	0.00
HWY 17 Wildlife	Fixed \$	13,888.89	13,888.89	13,888.89	13,888.89	55,555.56	55,555.56	0.00%	(0.00)
		41,666.67	41,666.67	41,666.67	41,666.67	166,666.67	166,666.67	0.00%	(0.00)
City of Capitola - V41597	4.8700%	31,680.13	33,848.37	30,544.68	31,564.41	127,637.59	120,234.53	6.16%	7,403.06
City of Santa Cruz - V110467	22.4071%	145,761.99	155,738.21	140,537.74	145,229.56	587,267.50	562,078.97	4.48%	25,188.53
City of Scotts Valley - V102713	4.8728%	31,698.12	33,867.60	30,562.03	31,582.34	127,710.09	124,705.57	2.41%	3,004.52
City of Watsonville - V111928	16.0085%	104,137.64	111,265.02	100,405.25	103,757.25	419,565.15	387,087.55	8.39%	32,477.60
County of Santa Cruz	51.8416%	337,238.14	360,319.35	325,151.21	336,006.29	1,358,714.99	1,292,076.61	5.16%	66,638.38
	100%	650,516.02	695,038.56	627,200.91	648,139.84	2,620,895.33	2,486,183.24	5.42%	134,712.09
2. HWY Corridors - 729300/75383	25%	576,818.91	613,921.02	557,389.65	574,838.75	2,322,968.33	2,210,708.26	5.08%	112,260.07
3. TRANSIT/PARATRANSIT - 729400/75384	20%	461,455.12	491,136.82	445,911.72	459,871.00	1,858,374.66	1,768,566.60	5.08%	89,808.06
Santa Cruz Metro (SCMTD) 16%	80%	369,164.10	392,909.45	356,729.37	367,896.80	1,486,699.73	1,414,853.28	5.08%	71,846.45
Community Bridges - V127587 - 4%	20%	92,291.02	98,227.36	89,182.34	91,974.20	371,674.93	353,713.32	5.08%	17,961.61
4. ACTIVE TRANSPORT262626ATION - 729500/75385	17%	392,236.86	417,466.29	379,024.96	390,890.35	1,579,618.46	1,503,281.61	5.08%	76,336.85
5. RAIL CORRIDOR - 729600/75386	8%	184,582.05	196,454.73	178,364.69	183,948.40	743,349.86	707,426.64	5.08%	35,923.22
DISTRIBUTED TO INVESTMENT CATEGORIES	100%	2,307,275.62	2,455,684.08	2,229,558.59	2,299,355.02	9,291,873.31	8,842,833.02	5.08%	449,040.29
TOTAL ADMIN & IMPEL AND INVESTMENT CATEGORIES		2,379,185.25	2,530,710.94	2,299,835.82	2,371,098.28	9,580,830.29	9,057,931.09	5.77%	522,899.20

I:\FISCAL\6.Measure D\2Distribution To Investment Category\FY2026\[FY2026 04 October 2025 Measure D Distribution with YTD comparison.xlsx]Summary

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

FROM: Luis Pavel Mendez, Director of Planning, Programming and Transportation Services

RE: Transportation Development Act (TDA) Fiscal Years 2021-22 to 2023-24 Triennial Performance Audits

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) accept the fiscal years (FY) 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audit reports of the RTC (Attachment 1) and Santa Cruz County transit operators (Attachment 2) and direct staff to implement the audit recommendations.

BACKGROUND

The Regional Transportation Commission receives and distributes Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds annually. The Transportation Development Act (also known as the Mills-Alquist-Deddeh Act) requires triennial performance audits of local transportation planning agencies and transit operators who receive TDA funds. The triennial performance audit determines compliance with state requirements and evaluates the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of operations. The TDA is codified in the California Public Utilities Code (PUC) Sections 99200-99420 and PUC section 99246 regarding triennial performance audits states:

“(b) The performance audit shall evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the operation of the entity being audited and shall be conducted in accordance with the efficiency, economy, and program results portions of the Comptroller General’s “Standards for Audit of Governmental Organizations, Programs, Activities, and Functions.” Performance audits shall be conducted triennially pursuant to a schedule established by the transportation planning agency, transit development board, or county transportation commission having jurisdiction over the operator.”

The FYs 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audits of the RTC and the transit operators were conducted by Michael Baker International in accordance

with Section 99246 of the California's Public Utilities Code (PUC). The final audit reports will be submitted to Caltrans as required by state law.

DISCUSSION

To conduct the triennial performance audit and prepare the audit reports, Rick Williams of Michael Baker International interviewed board members and staff and visited facilities of the entities being audited. Although not required by state law, the triennial performance audit of the Santa Cruz County operators includes Community Bridges and the Volunteer Center.

RTC Triennial Performance Audit

The RTC FYs 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audit ([Attachment 1](#)) lists 14 findings, including the following:

- The RTC has satisfactorily complied with applicable state legislative mandates for Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs).
- The RTC fully implemented one of the four prior performance audit recommendations, partially implemented others and did not implement one.
- The RTC experienced changes in both its executive and professional staffing during and after the audit period.
- The Commission oversaw several major multimodal infrastructure projects that reflect its evolving role as both a planning and implementation agency.
- Interviews with RTC commissioners provided overall high ratings for staff and activities undertaken during the audit period.
- The RTC significantly enhanced its Unmet Transit Needs process by adopting a more data-driven, transparent, and inclusive approach aligned with the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) goals.
- The RTC enhanced its Cruz511 traveler information platform and partnered with the Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to expand travel matching services. Through the GO Santa Cruz County program, RTC offered incentives for walking, biking, carpooling, and transit use, supported by a new commuter management platform and targeted outreach to low-income individuals. Additional initiatives included the Downtown E-Bike Incentive Program and collaboration with Santa Cruz METRO's "One Ride at a Time" campaign.

The RTC FYs 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audit includes the following three recommendations:

1. Maintain on file evidence of submission of TDA performance audits to Caltrans.
2. Continue to ensure that the transit operator TDA process and clarity of the performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds are consistent with the updated RTC rules and regulations.
3. Hold an annual Board retreat to foster better communication and cohesion among commissioners.

Transit Operators Triennial Performance Audit

The FYs 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audit of the Santa Cruz County transit operators (Attachment 2) lists 19 findings, including the following:

- The Santa Cruz County transit operators complied with each of the 11 compliance requirements.
- Santa Cruz METRO attained farebox ratios for both urban and rural services that exceeded the standard.
- The Santa Cruz County transit operators (Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges' Lift Line) participated in the California Highway Patrol (CHP) Transit Operator Compliance Program and received vehicle inspections within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim and received satisfactory ratings.
- Of the prior five performance audit recommendations, the Santa Cruz County operators fully implemented three recommendations and partially implemented one.
- From a combination of performance data trends, TDA performance indicators for Santa Cruz operators demonstrated a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, with significant improvements across key TDA performance indicators.
- METRO's One Ride at a Time campaign creatively blends environmental advocacy with public transit promotion by wrapping buses in striking wildlife imagery, themed around local ecosystems like whales, redwoods, and monarchs.
- Community Bridges' Lift Line demonstrated strong performance in expanding accessible transportation for vulnerable populations in Santa Cruz County. During the pandemic, it maintained essential service trips, including rides to vaccination centers, and increased weekday and weekend capacity by hiring more drivers.

- The Volunteer Center demonstrated strong performance in delivering senior transportation services, supporting 201 clients with the help of 118 volunteers, and facilitating trips to 279 destinations. Innovative use of Google Hub software has streamlined dispatching, ride coordination, and data tracking, enhancing service quality and operational efficiency.

The transit operators FYs 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audit includes the following four new recommendations:

1. Activate and optimize the key performance indicators module contained in the Workday ERP and consider the acquisition of transit performance analysis software. (Santa Cruz METRO)
2. Consider pursuing a local sales tax measure that would help sustain the recent system redesign (Santa Cruz METRO)
3. Enhance Grant Pursuit and Administration Capacity through Third-Party Support. (Community Bridges – Lift Line)
4. Integrate the Transportation Program goals with those of the Grocery Shopper Program. (City of Santa Cruz – Volunteer Center)

Details for each of the findings and auditor recommendations are available in the triennial performance audit reports. While not required, as has been the case with past triennial performance audits, staff will work to implement the audit recommendations. Staff does maintain evidence of submission of triennial performance audits to the state and staff will continue to do so. Unfortunately, evidence of submission of the FYs 2018-19 to 2020-21 audit was not found by RTC staff but was verified with Caltrans staff. While the RTC does not hold Board retreats annually, the RTC does hold Board retreats as needed and available. RTC staff will also work with staff of Santa Cruz METRO, Community Bridges and the Volunteer center on the implementation of audit recommendations.

Staff recommends that the RTC accept the FY 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audits of the RTC and transit operators and direct staff to implement the audit recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no fiscal impacts associated with accepting the triennial performance audits. The approved RTC budget already includes funds for all required RTC work associated with being a Regional Transportation Planning

Agency (RTPA) that receives TDA funds and administers TDA requirements for the region.

SUMMARY

The required FYs 2021-22 to 2023-24 triennial performance audits of the RTC and transit operators have been completed. The audit includes findings of compliance and recommendations. Staff recommends that the RTC accept the audits and direct staff to work to implement the audit recommendations.

Attachments:

1. FY 2021-22 to 2023-24 Triennial Performance Audit of the RTC
2. FY 2021-22 to 2023-24 Triennial Performance Audit of the Santa Cruz County Transit Operators

ATTACHMENT 1



FY 2022-2024 Triennial Performance Audit of Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Final

Submitted to:
Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission

October 2025

Michael Baker
INTERNATIONAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	i
Section I.....	1
Introduction – Initial Review of RTPA Functions	1
Overview of RTC.....	1
Organizational Structure.....	2
Audit Methodology	7
Section II.....	8
Compliance Requirements.....	8
Section III.....	18
Prior Triennial Performance Audit Recommendations	18
Section IV	21
Detailed Review of RTPA Functions	23
Administration and Management.....	23
Transportation Planning and Regional Coordination	31
TDA Claimant Relationships and Oversight	35
Marketing and Transportation Alternatives	41
Grant Applications and Management.....	42
Section V	45
Findings	45
Recommendations	48

LISTING OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure I-1 RTC Organization Chart.....	3
Table I-1 Santa Cruz County Demographics.....	2
Table II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix	8
Table IV-1 LTF Claims by the RTC for Administration and Planning	36
Table IV-2 Santa Cruz METRO Performance Measures	38
Table IV-3 Community Bridges Performance Measures.....	39
Table IV-4 Volunteer Center Performance Measures	39

Executive Summary

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC, Commission) retained Michael Baker International to conduct its Transportation Development Act (TDA) performance audit for fiscal years (FY) 2021–22, 2022–23, and 2023–24. As a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), the RTC is required by California Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 99246 to prepare and submit an audit of its performance on a triennial basis to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to continue receiving TDA funding. TDA funds are used primarily for RTC administration, planning, and implementation of public transportation and nonmotorized projects and programs.

This performance audit is intended to describe how well the RTC is meeting its obligations under the TDA, as well as its organizational management and efficiency. The *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities*, September 2008 (third edition), published by Caltrans, was used to guide the development and conduct of the audit. To gather information for the TDA performance audit, Michael Baker conducted interviews with agency staff and commissioners as well as with the public transit operators, reviewed various documents, and evaluated the RTC's responsibilities, functions, and performance of the TDA guidelines and regulations. Michael Baker interviewed several members of the Commission, management, and technical staff.

The audit comprises several sections, including compliance with TDA requirements, status of implementing prior audit recommendations, and review of functional areas. Findings from each section are summarized below, followed by recommendations based on our audit procedures.

Compliance with TDA Requirements

The RTC has satisfactorily complied with applicable state legislative mandates for RTPAs. One compliance measure that did not apply to the RTC pertains to adopting rules and regulations for TDA claims under Article 4.5. The agency does not disburse any TDA funds under this article section. Rather, the CTSA in the county (Community Bridges) receives TDA Article 8 funds through the City of Santa Cruz acting as the claimant on behalf of the paratransit/community transportation system.

Status of Prior Audit Recommendations

The RTC satisfactorily implemented one of the four prior performance audit recommendations. The implemented recommendation pertained to the development of a strategic plan. The recommendation to ensure consistency between the transit operator TDA process and RTC's Rules and Regulations was partially implemented. The recommendations to clarify performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds and to convene an annual Board retreat

were not implemented. Three of these prior recommendations are being forward in this audit for full implementation.

Functional Review

1. The Commission experienced changes in both its executive and professional staffing during and after the audit period. The Commission's executive director retired in December 2023 after five years of distinguished service. To maintain operational continuity, the RTC Board appointed an interim executive director with prior leadership experience at the California Transportation Commission. Following a comprehensive search, the Board appointed a former senior transportation engineer from within RTC's staff as the new executive director on September 9, 2024.
2. Measure D, a 30-year, countywide transportation one-half-cent transactions and use tax, gives the RTC leverage in applying for other transportation-related funding from state and federal grant programs as well as providing funding for transit services and maintaining and expanding transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. In FY 2023, RTC updated the measure's Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) through a collaborative process involving local jurisdictions and transit operators, incorporating revised project lists, funding allocations, and financial strategies such as pay-as-you-go, bond financing, and inter-program loans. The Final 2023 SIP was adopted in October 2023.
3. The Commission oversaw several major multimodal infrastructure projects that reflect its evolving role as both a planning and implementation agency. Key initiatives included ongoing stewardship of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, where RTC advanced the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) Project and completed storm damage repairs, while managing preventative maintenance and lease operations. The Coastal Rail Trail continued to expand, with construction beginning on the \$51.4 million North Coast Rail Trail Segment 5 and approximately 18 miles of trail either completed or under development. RTC also led planning and construction for the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane Project, incorporating California's first bus-on-shoulder facility and active transportation elements.
4. Interviews with RTC commissioners provided overall high ratings for staff and activities undertaken during the audit period. Management and staff are professional, focused, and responsive. Leadership transitions were also highlighted: the former executive director was credited with initiating agency restructuring, while the new executive director received strong praise for fostering a nimbler, implementation-focused organization.
5. The RTC advanced its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) process by adopting the 2045 RTP and initiating the 2050 RTP update. The 2045 RTP, adopted in June 2022, outlined \$9.7 billion in proposed projects across all modes, with an estimated \$5 billion in available funding, and emphasized reducing vehicle miles traveled through integrated land use and transportation planning. In mid-2023, RTC initiated the 2050 RTP Update, refining goals

around sustainability, equity, and system preservation, and incorporating performance measures such as the Pavement Condition Index.

6. Despite no TDA funds being allocated for streets and roads, the RTC continues with an unmet transit needs process that involves obtaining public input and coordinating with the E&D TAC and Santa Cruz METRO to update the Unmet Specialized Transportation/Transit Needs List. The Commission also formally adopts the list as a sign of agreement. A public hearing is held annually in compliance with the law.
7. TDA claims submitted to the RTC are required to include detailed past and budgeted information to support the claims. The claims forms are reviewed by different Commission staff versed in their respective transportation expertise. Claims for transit and specialized transportation services, and claims for pedestrian improvements, are also reviewed by the E&D TAC. TDA claims for bicycle projects are reviewed by the Bicycle Advisory Committee.
8. The Commission's *Rules & Regulations* serves as an in-house TDA manual documenting the claims administration process by the RTC. The manual was revised in November 2022 and May 2024 to focus on clarifying roles, streamlining operations, and aligning with updated memoranda of understanding.
9. The RTC significantly enhanced its Unmet Transit Needs process by adopting a more data-driven, transparent, and inclusive approach aligned with the RTP goals. In May 2023, RTC implemented a weighted scoring system to evaluate transit needs based on access and mobility, safety, cost effectiveness, and design feasibility. The annual needs list continues to be updated through a public survey distributed to partner agencies and the general public, with multilingual outreach to ensure broad participation. To address high turnover on the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), RTC conducted a targeted recruitment drive and successfully restored full representation across all supervisorial districts.
10. During the audit period, the Commission advanced its marketing and transportation demand management (TDM) efforts through a strategic shift to countywide outreach, digital modernization, and expanded commuter incentive programs. The RTC redesigned its website for improved accessibility, maintained active social media and email communications, and updated its Public Participation Plan in coordination with AMBAG to ensure inclusive engagement.
11. The agency enhanced its Cruz511 traveler information platform and partnered with the Bay Area MTC to expand travel matching services. Through the GO Santa Cruz County program, RTC offered incentives for walking, biking, carpooling, and transit use, supported by a new commuter management platform and targeted outreach to low-income individuals. Additional initiatives included the Downtown E-Bike Incentive Program and collaboration with Santa Cruz METRO's "One Ride at a Time" campaign.

12. The Commission demonstrated strong performance in grants management, securing and overseeing over \$150 million in active transportation projects. In coordination with AMBAG, RTC selects and monitors projects funded through regional shares of state and federal programs, leveraging Measure D funds as local match to enhance competitiveness. Collaborative efforts with Santa Cruz METRO and local agencies have strengthened funding strategies and project delivery, while RTC's support for grant writing and sponsorship has fostered positive interagency relationships.

Three recommendations are provided to improve RTC's administration and management of the TDA and its organization. Each recommendation is described in detail in the last chapter of this audit and is summarized below.

Performance Audit Recommendation	Background
1. Maintain on file evidence of submission of TDA performance audits to Caltrans.	As a compliance measure, a cover letter typically accompanies the electronic submission of the transportation planning agency's TDA triennial performance audit to Caltrans, while email submissions for claimant fiscal audits are made to the State Controller Office. Both types of audits are transmitted via email which provides evidence of date of submittal. These emails, including performance audit cover letter, should be filed in the agency's archives. The letter certifies completion of performance audits for both RTC and the Santa Cruz County transit operators. RTC staff could not locate the transmittal letter and verify that copies of the RTC and Santa Cruz County transit operators' performance audits were submitted to Caltrans. The auditor noted that RTC was unable to provide evidence that a cover letter and an email had been transmitted to Caltrans confirming completion of the performance audits for the past audit period. The auditor was able to confirm with Caltrans that the prior performance audits were received. In addition, the RTC had accepted these audit reports at their August 4, 2022, meeting. This oversight is considered an aberration since staff normally does maintain such documentation and it was just not found for the most recent previous audit. It is recommended that RTC exercise diligence in documenting and maintaining a file of its performance audit transmittals to Caltrans as per the statute.

Performance Audit Recommendation	Background
2. Continue to ensure that the transit operator TDA process and clarity of the performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds are consistent with the updated RTC rules and regulations.	This recommendation is being forwarded in this audit for full implementation. The <i>Rules and Regulations</i> manual underwent two revisions during the audit period: November 2022 and May 2024. Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation and does not use the alternative revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA funds. The resolutions submitted with recent TDA claims cite PUC Sections 99268.1 and 99268.2b, under which Santa Cruz METRO is classified as an older operator subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation (PUC Section 99268.1) or the farebox recovery ratio (PUC Section 99268.2). However, there is no mention of the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement in the <i>Rules & Regulations</i> manual. Instead, Section V, Subsection B. states that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to PUC Section 6645 (relating to operators in urbanized and non-urbanized areas), and that the Transit District shall meet fare revenue to operating cost ratios (farebox recovery ratio) as set forth by state law and show different ratios for urban and rural service. It suggested that manual be revised to include acknowledgement of the 50 percent expenditure limitation that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to. This will also ensure that the performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds have been clarified.
3. Hold an annual Board retreat to foster better communication and cohesion among commissioners.	This recommendation is being forwarded in this audit for full implementation. Due to the recent change in executive leadership, RTC has yet to convene a formal board retreat. It is noted that the recently adopted Strategic Plan has enhanced efforts to get commissioners to think regionally about key issues. A retreat would offer several valuable benefits that directly support the goals and implementation of the Strategic Plan. They are regarded as a tool that fosters: • Stronger relationships among board members and staff. • Clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities. • More cohesive decision-making processes.

Performance Audit Recommendation	Background
	The RTC informed the auditor and provided an agenda for a retreat that was scheduled for October 16, 2025. The Commission acknowledged that while Board members do recognize the importance of good, strong, and positive communications and relationships for the work that they do, they are extremely busy due to other commitments. Therefore, it can be challenging to schedule additional meetings. Given the turnover on the Commission, the RTC is encouraged to periodically schedule a Board retreat that would offer both members, alternates, and staff an opportunity to reaffirm RTC's vision and mission as it continues to expand in its role as an implementation agency.

Section I

Introduction – Initial Review of RTPA Functions

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC, Commission) retained the firm Michael Baker International to conduct its Transportation Development Act (TDA) performance audit covering the most recent triennial period, fiscal years (FY) 2021–22, 2022–23, and 2023–24. As a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), the RTC is required by California Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 99246 to prepare and submit an audit of its performance on a triennial basis to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to continue to receive TDA funding.

This performance audit, as required by the TDA, is intended to describe how well the RTC is meeting its obligations under the TDA.

Overview of RTC

The RTC is responsible for delivering a full range of safe, convenient, reliable, and efficient transportation choices for the community. With a focus on long-term sustainability, the RTC plans, funds, and implements transportation projects and services. Working together with transportation partners, the RTC secures funding to maintain the existing transportation network as well as prepare for the transportation needs of the next generation. The RTC keeps residents, visitors, and businesses moving wherever they want to go and however they choose to get there.

The RTC was originally created in 1972 by statute establishing RTPAs. The agency later became a State-designated transportation planning agency under State Government Code Sections 67940 and 67941. The RTC comprises 12 voting members plus an ex officio member. Consistent with law, the governing body is composed of all five members of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, one member for each of the cities in the county (Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville), and three members appointed by the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Santa Cruz METRO). An alternate member may serve in the place of the regular member when the regular member is absent or disqualified from participating in a meeting of the governing body. A representative from Caltrans serves as an ex officio, non-voting member of the Commission.

State legislative approval of Senate Bill 465 in 2002 provided additional powers to the RTC to function as a Rail/Trail Authority. Government Code Section 67941 added powers of eminent domain and the power to preserve, acquire, construct, improve, and oversee multimodal transportation projects and services on rail rights-of-ways within Santa Cruz County in any manner that facilitates recreational, commuter, intercity, and intercounty travel. It also provides authority to the RTC to contract for any services to accomplish its purpose.

The RTC is guided by its published *Rules & Regulations*, updated in November 2022, which specifies its membership requirements and procedures for administering various funding sources. Among them are the procedures for establishing and processing TDA apportionments, which are a major funding source for RTC operations and multimodal transportation, including transit operations and pedestrian and bicycle projects. Funds are established to account for funds that are restricted for a specific project or use. Separate funds are established for programs including Administration, Planning & Rideshare; Rail/Trail Authority; Highway 1 Project Approval/Environmental Documentation; Service Authority for Freeway Emergency (SAFE); Freeway Service Patrol; RSTP Exchange; State Transit Assistance; and the TDA.

Santa Cruz County is located in the Central Coast region of California and forms the northern portion of Monterey Bay. The county is bordered by Santa Clara County to the east and northeast, Monterey County to the south, San Benito County to the southeast, and San Mateo County to the north. Established in 1850, the county was one of the original counties in California; the county's name means "holy cross" in Spanish. It has the second smallest geographic area of any county in California after the City and County of San Francisco. A demographic snapshot of key cities and the county is presented in Table I-1.

**Table I-1
Santa Cruz County Demographics**

City/Jurisdiction	2020 US Census Population	Change from 2010 US Census (percentage)	Population 65 Years & Older (percentage)	2025 California DOF Estimates	Land Area (in square miles)
Capitola	9,938	+0.2%	23.9%	9,670	1.59
Santa Cruz	62,956	+5.0%	12.3%	62,972	12.74
Scotts Valley	12,224	+5.6%	17.0%	11,831	4.60
Watsonville	52,590	+2.7%	10.2%	51,101	6.69
Unincorporated Area	133,153	+2.6%	22.0%	128,136	419.55
Total Santa Cruz County	270,861	+3.2%	17.3%	263,710	445.17

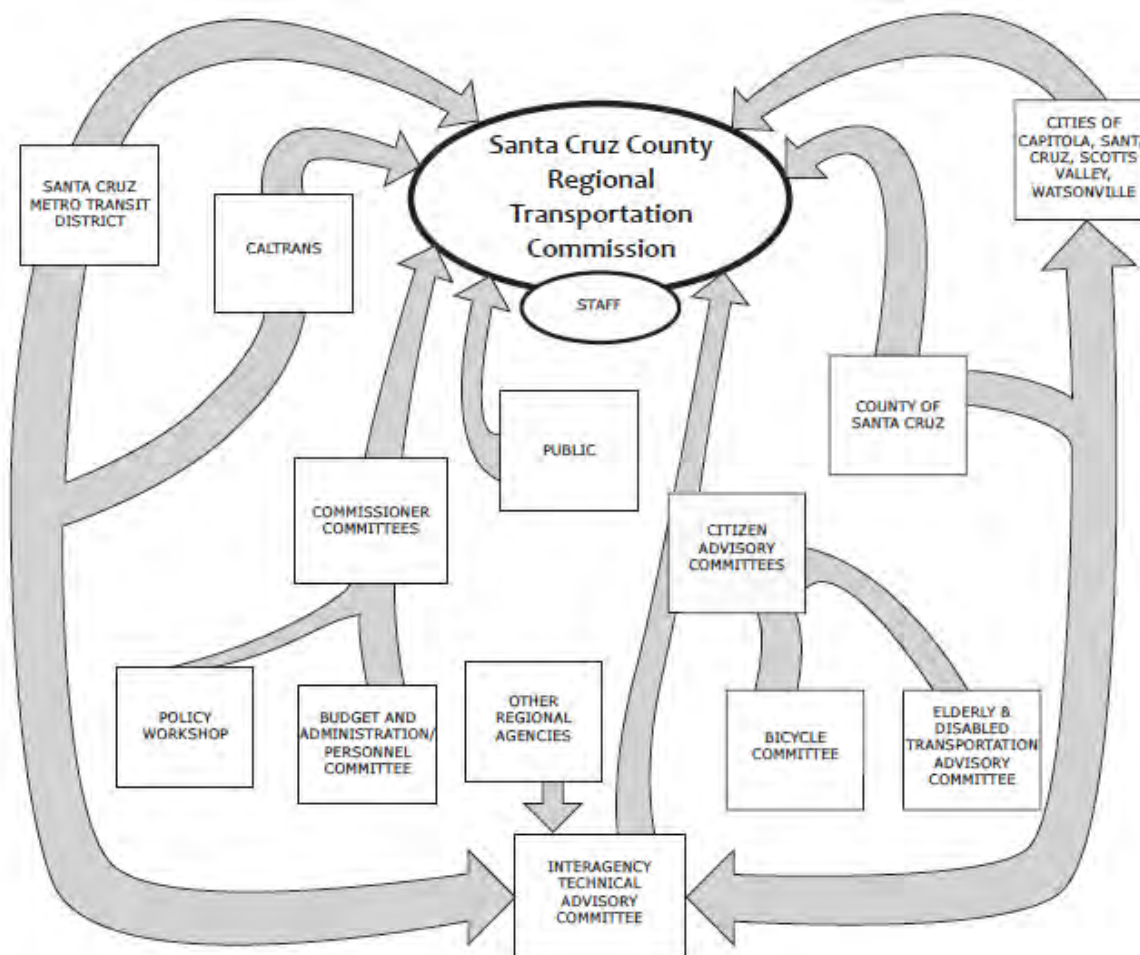
Source: 2020 US Census; California Department of Finance (DOF) 2025 Population Estimates

The City of Santa Cruz is the county seat and the largest city in the county. The county and its four incorporated cities saw modest growth between 2010 and 2020, as recorded in the US Census for each of those years. Scotts Valley had the highest percentage increase in population. The senior citizen population, comprising residents aged 65 and over, is 17.3 percent countywide. The 2025 population for Santa Cruz County is estimated to be 263,710, as reported by the California Department of Finance. The methodology behind this estimate is based on the correlation of three different methods that include administrative records, driver license, address changes, and household characteristics.

Organizational Structure

RTC staff offer administrative, technical, and policy recommendations to the Commission on decisions affecting transportation. Figure I-1 shows the current organization chart.

Figure I-1 RTC Organization Chart



Source: SCCRTC

As mentioned above, the Commission's governing board consists of five members of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, one member of the Watsonville, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Capitola City Councils and three members appointed by Santa Cruz METRO. The Caltrans District 5 Director serves as an ex-officio member of the Commission. Regular meetings of the Commission are held on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 9:00 a.m. Meetings are not convened in July. RTC meetings are generally televised on Community TV and include a full agenda on a wide range of topics. The RTC convenes on the first Thursday of the month and covers a full agenda on the scope of the RTC's work. The Transportation Policy Workshop meetings offer a forum for more informal and in-depth discussion on a limited set of agenda topics. The workshop meets on the third Thursday at 9:00 a.m. as needed.

In addition to the governing board, there are a number of committees and a task force. Each is briefly described below:

- Budget, Administration & Personnel Committee
- Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
- Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Interagency Technical Advisory Committee
- Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee
- Traffic Operations System Oversight and SAFE on 17 Task Force

Budget, Administration & Personnel Committee: This committee provides oversight with respect to Commission administration, budget, policy, finance, audit, and personnel issues and makes recommendations to the RTC on these matters. The committee consists of six commissioners elected annually by the RTC. The committee elects a chair each year and meets at least once a quarter.

Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC): The E&D TAC serves as the Paratransit Advisory Council and the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) required by TDA statute. The E&D TAC advises the RTC and other transportation agencies on the network of specialized transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities in Santa Cruz County, as well as about the transportation needs of these members of the community. In its capacity as the local SSTAC, the State-required entity seeks input from transit-dependent and transit-disadvantaged persons, including seniors, people with disabilities, low-income persons, and youth regarding transit needs in Santa Cruz County. The E&D TAC has 15 members comprising citizen, service provider, and agency representatives. The minimum membership for the SSTAC is nine; however, the Commission exceeds this participatory amount by including individuals representing elderly and/or disabled interests from each of the five supervisory districts, and a representative from Santa Cruz METRO. The E&D TAC meets the second Tuesday of every even-numbered month at 1:30 p.m. One meeting annually is scheduled at an appropriate location outside of the City of Santa Cruz and in proximity to a major transit route.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC): The BAC serves in an advisory capacity to the RTC and its member agencies on bicycle-related issues, policies, plans, programs, and projects. Its responsibilities include advising on bicycle-related issues; reviewing proposed bicycle-related policies, programs, projects, plans, funding applications, and legislation; providing input on existing roadway/bikeway conditions that affect cycling; reviewing and approving Bikes Secure (bike parking subsidy) applications; developing bike projects for future implementation; and

coordinating with local jurisdictions and bicycle-related organizations to promote cycling projects and programs. The 11-member committee comprises volunteers representing each of the five supervisorial districts, each of the four cities, Bike to Work, and the Community Traffic Safety Coalition. The committee meets the second Monday of every other month, or as needed, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The time may be changed by the committee with a majority vote.

Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC): The ITAC comprises staff from a variety of jurisdictions and agencies. The ITAC reviews and provides technical advice on transportation projects and programs in the region; coordinates and provides recommendations to the RTC on the use of transportation funds; and serves as a forum for sharing information on transportation projects and federal and state requirements for project implementation. There are 16 voting members and ex officio members drawing from agencies including City and County Public Works staffs; City and County Planning staffs; Santa Cruz METRO; Caltrans District 5; the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments; the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (ex officio member); transportation management associations; the University of California, Santa Cruz; Cabrillo College (ex officio member); and the California Highway Patrol (CHP; ex officio member). The ITAC meets on the third Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m., or as needed.

Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee: The oversight committee reviews the annual independent fiscal audits of the expenditures of local Measure D, the 30-year countywide one-half-cent transportation sales tax that was approved by Santa Cruz County voters in November 2016. The committee is tasked with releasing an annual report on its findings regarding compliance with the requirements of the Measure D Expenditure Plan and the Ordinance. Per the voter-approved ordinance, the total membership of the committee shall not exceed five members, each one a non-elected official selected represents the geographical, social, cultural, and economic diversity of Santa Cruz County to ensure maximum benefit for transportation users. The committee's membership includes at least one person with an accounting or fiscal management background. The committee meets at least once but no more than four times per year.

The responsibilities of the committee include:

- Reviewing Measure D Expenditure Plan expenditures on an annual basis to ensure they conform to the Ordinance;
- Reviewing the Measure D annual audit and report prepared by an independent auditor, describing how funds were spent; and
- Produce a publicly available Annual Report of Oversight Activities.

Traffic Operations System Oversight and SAFE on 17 Task Force: The task force meets jointly and regularly to share information about traffic operation systems in Santa Cruz County and about transportation projects and collisions on Highway 17. The task force is composed of staff

from various entities across jurisdictional lines to help ensure coordination and collaboration and improved safety and to help improve communication among the participating entities and with the public. The Highway 17 corridor was identified as a high collision corridor in 1998 because of collision data analysis and recommendations of local, regional, county, and state agencies. A task force was formed to develop collision-reducing strategies. Also, Santa Cruz County's transportation system runs more efficiently and safely due to several Traffic Operations System components that provide the public with vital information. Members represent the RTC, the San Francisco Bay Area's Metropolitan Transportation Commission, CHP, Caltrans, local law enforcement and fire departments, legislators' offices, and the media.

Santa Cruz County Transit Operators

Among its duties, RTC administers TDA funds for and monitors public transportation services in the county. Santa Cruz METRO is the public transit operator in Santa Cruz County and receives a majority of the jurisdictional Local Transportation Fund (LTF) allocation for transit services. Santa Cruz METRO was created in 1968 by the Santa Cruz Metropolitan District Act of 1967, a special district with taxing authority pursuant to Part 5 of the California PUC.

Community Bridges, the designated Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for Santa Cruz County, operates several specialized transportation services under the Lift Line program. The organization was founded in 1977 and offers a variety of human services programs. Since 1982, Community Bridges has been offering transportation services through Lift Line as well as from taxi vehicles through the taxi scrip program.

The Santa Cruz Volunteer Center offers a variety of community-based programs targeted to the senior, disabled, family, and youth populations. The Volunteer Center Transportation Program provides free rides to ambulatory seniors and disabled people throughout the county. The program matches drivers with seniors aged 60 and older and persons with disabilities for essential trips to access medical appointments, banking, pharmacies, and grocery shopping.

As required by the TDA, a triennial performance audit of the Santa Cruz County transit operators was also conducted and is provided under separate cover.

Audit Methodology

To gather information for this performance audit, Michael Baker accomplished the following activities:

- Document Review: Conducted an extensive review of documents, including various RTC files and internal reports, committee agendas, and public documents.
- Interviews: Conducted in-person interviews with RTC staff and telephone interviews with commissioners. In-person interviews were also held with the transit operators, including Santa Cruz METRO, to gain their perspectives about the agency's efficiency and economy.
- Analysis: Evaluated the responses from the interviews as well as the documents reviewed about the RTC's responsibilities, functions, and performance to TDA guidelines and regulations.

All the activities described above were intended to provide information necessary to assess RTC's efficiency and effectiveness in two key areas:

- Compliance with state TDA requirements
- Organizational management and efficiency

The remainder of this report is divided into four sections. In Section II, Michael Baker reviews the compliance requirements of the TDA administrative process. Section III describes the RTC's responses to the recommendations in the previous performance audit. In Section IV, Michael Baker reviews the RTC's functions in detail, while Section V summarizes our findings and recommendations.

Section II

Compliance Requirements

Fourteen key compliance requirements are suggested in the *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities*, which was developed by Caltrans to assess transit operators' conformance with the TDA. Our findings concerning the RTC's compliance with state legislative requirements are summarized in Table II-1.

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
All transportation operators and city or county governments which have responsibility for serving a given area, in total, claim no more than those Local Transportation Fund (LTF) monies apportioned to that area.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99231	The <i>RTC Rules & Regulations</i> manual, which was revised in November 2022 and May 2024, specifies the requirements for apportionments. The primary claimant of the funds is Santa Cruz METRO. Other transit allocations are made to the City of Santa Cruz acting on behalf of Community Bridges and Volunteer Center for transit services. Allocations are also made to local jurisdictions for other uses, including pedestrian and bicycle projects. Conclusion: Complied.
The RTPA has adopted rules and regulations delineating procedures for the submission of claims for facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles.	Public Utilities Code, Sections 99233.3 and 99234	The <i>RTC Rules & Regulations</i> specify the requirements for uses of LTF for pedestrian and bicycle projects. According to the document, rather than allocating under Article 3 (PUC Section 99233.3) which has funding allocation limitations for these uses (2 percent of the County's allocation), the RTC allocates funds under Article 8 of the TDA. An eligible claim for Article 8 includes planning and investment in pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Conclusion: Complied.

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
The RTPA has established a social services transportation advisory council. The RTPA must ensure that there is a citizen participation process which includes at least an annual public hearing.	Public Utilities Code, Sections 99238 and 99238.5	The RTC has established an SSTAC as required under PUC Section 99238. The roles and responsibilities of the 15-member E&D TAC, which serves as the SSTAC, are based on TDA guidelines. Additional members beyond the required positions include a member from Santa Cruz METRO and a representative from each county supervisorial district. Based on the member list provided by RTC, the committee has two vacancies (social service provider for the disabled-County and CTSA-Community Bridges) of the required positions. There was only one vacancy during the prior audit period. The RTC has an application form available on its website to help fill the vacancies. A quorum is seven members, if all positions are full. Quorum is determined by the number of filled positions. Conclusion: Complied.
The RTPA has annually identified, analyzed, and recommended potential productivity improvements which could lower the operating costs of those operators which operate at least 50 percent of their vehicle service miles within the RTPA's jurisdiction. Recommendations include, but are not limited to, those made in the performance audit. • A committee for the purpose of providing advice on productivity improvements may be formed.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99244	The RTC actively monitors the activities of the transit systems in the county through various methods, including reviewing quarterly and annual performance reports that are submitted by the operators. While a committee for the purpose of advising on productivity improvements is not formed, the E&D TAC, which includes Santa Cruz METRO as a member, also provides a venue for RTC discussion on transit activities and improvements. Through the commission of the triennial performance audit by the RTC, recommendations are made to

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
The operator has made a reasonable effort to implement improvements recommended by the RTPA, as determined by the RTPA, or else the operator has not received an allocation which exceeds its prior year allocation.		improve the efficiency and economy of the transit systems. Santa Cruz METRO's Short-Range Transit Plan and Comprehensive Operations Analysis provide further areas for productivity improvements. Also, the annual TDA claims administered by the RTC present areas of improvement by transit, including progress in meeting performance goals and measures. Furthermore, each of the transit systems provides performance measures to the RTC on a quarterly and annual basis. Conclusion: Complied.
The RTPA has ensured that all claimants to whom it allocates Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds submits to it and to the state controller an annual certified fiscal and compliance audit within 180 days after the end of the fiscal year (December 27). The RTPA may grant an extension of up to 90 days as it deems necessary (March 26).	Public Utilities Code, Section 99245	Annual certified fiscal and compliance audits were completed for the transit claimants, including for Santa Cruz METRO, Community Bridges and for City of Santa Cruz acting as the claimant for the Volunteer Center. For FYs 2022, 2023, and 2024, the annual financial audits were submitted within the 180-day period, in December each year. Conclusion: Complied.
The RTPA has designated an independent entity to conduct a performance audit of operators and itself (for the current and previous triennium). For operators, the audit was made and calculated the required performance indicators, and the audit report was transmitted to the entity that allocates the operator's TDA monies and to the RTPA within 12 months after the	Public Utilities Code, Sections 99246 and 99248	For the current three-year period, the RTC retained Michael Baker International to conduct the audit of the RTPA and the Santa Cruz County transit operators. Michael Baker International was retained to conduct the previous audit for the three fiscal years that ended June 30, 2021. Caltrans and RTC have granted extensions for submittal of the audits. Conclusion: Complied.

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
end of the triennium. If an operator's audit was not transmitted by the start of the second fiscal year following the last fiscal year of the triennium, TDA funds were not allocated to that operator for that or subsequent fiscal years until the audit was transmitted.		
The RTPA has submitted a copy of its performance audit to the Director of the California Department of Transportation. In addition, the RTPA has certified in writing to the Director, that the performance audits of the operators located in the area under its jurisdiction have been completed.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99246(c)	The RTC was unable to provide a copy of the submitted cover letter and an email transmittal to Caltrans, confirming completion of the performance audits of the agency and Santa Cruz County operators for the period ending June 30, 2021. The auditor received confirmation from the Division of Transportation Planning -Transit Programs Oversight Branch on July 15, 2025, that the performance audits were submitted electronically to Caltrans. The Regional Transportation Commission accepted these audit reports at their August 4, 2022, meeting. It is recommended that the RTC exercise diligence in documenting and maintaining a file of its performance audit transmittals to Caltrans as per the statute. Conclusion: Complied.
The performance audit of the operator providing public transportation service shall include a verification of the operator's operating cost per passenger, operating cost per vehicle service hour, passengers per vehicle service mile, and vehicle service hours per	Public Utilities Code, Section 99246(d)	The performance audit of the Santa Cruz County transit operators includes all required elements. Conclusion: Complied.

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
employee, as defined in Section 99247. The performance audit shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of the needs and types of passengers being served and the employment of part-time drivers and the contracting with common carriers of persons operating under a franchise or license to provide services during peak hours, as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 99260.2		
The RTPA has established rules and regulations regarding revenue ratios for transportation operators providing services in urbanized and new urbanized areas.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99270.1 and 99270.2	According to the SCCRTC <i>Rules & Regulations</i> manual (revised November 2022 & May 2024), Santa Cruz METRO is subject to “Section 6645 (relating to operators in urbanized and non-urbanized areas), the Transit District shall meet fare revenue to operating cost ratios (farebox recovery ratio) as set forth by state law, and show different ratios for urban and rural service.” There is no mention of the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement. However, Santa Cruz METRO is defined in the TDA as an older operator, having initiated service prior to July 1, 1974. Older operators may qualify for TDA under the 50 percent expenditure exemption or farebox recovery ratio standard. Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement and does not use the alternate revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
		funds. It is suggested that SCCRTC clarify and stipulate that Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery. Conclusion: Partial Compliance.
The RTPA has adopted criteria, rules, and regulations for the evaluation of claims under Article 4.5 of the TDA and the determination of the cost-effectiveness of the proposed community transit services.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99275.5	The RTC has not adopted rules and regulations for Article 4.5 claims, as the agency does not disburse any TDA funds under this article section. The CTSA in the county is Community Bridges, which receives TDA Article 8 funds through the City of Santa Cruz acting as the claimant on behalf of the transit system. Likewise, Volunteer Center also receives Article 8 transit funds through the City of Santa Cruz. Conclusion: Not Applicable.
State transit assistance funds received by the RTPA are allocated only for transportation planning and mass transportation purposes.	Public Utilities Code, Sections 99310.5 and 99313.3 and Proposition 116	The RTC allocates State Transit Assistance (STA) funds to Santa Cruz METRO for transit purposes. The RTC may also allocate this portion of STA funding for community transportation services, which has been allocated to Community Bridges for that purpose in its claims submitted during the audit period. Conclusion: Complied.
The amount received pursuant to Public Utilities Code, Section 99314.3; by each RTPA for state transit assistance is allocated to the operators in the area of its jurisdiction as allocated by the State Controller's Office.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99314.3	The RTC allocates operator revenue-based STA funds to Santa Cruz METRO in accordance with the amounts published by the State Controller's Office. Conclusion: Complied.

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
If TDA funds are allocated to purposes not directly related to public or specialized transportation services, or facilities for exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles, the transit planning agency has annually: • Consulted with the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) established pursuant to Public Utilities Code, Section 99238; • Identified transit needs, including: - o Groups that are transit-dependent or transit disadvantaged, - o Adequacy of existing transit services to meet the needs of groups identified, and - o Analysis of potential alternatives to provide transportation services; • Adopted or re-affirmed definitions of “unmet transit needs” and “reasonable to meet;” • Identified the unmet transit needs and those needs that are reasonable to meet; Adopted a finding that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet; or that there are unmet transit needs including needs that are reasonable to meet. If a finding is adopted that there are unmet transit needs, these	Public Utilities Code, Section 99401.5	As no TDA funding is used for streets and roads, the RTC is not required to hold a formal unmet transit needs process under PUC Section 99401.5. However, the RTC continues to obtain input on potential transit needs from the community. The RTC works through the E&D TAC and cooperatively with Santa Cruz METRO for this process in which an Unmet Specialized Transportation/ Transit Needs List is developed by staff. During the annual public hearing, staff reports that the unmet needs list helps determine projects for funding when funding becomes available. The list is organized under general needs, paratransit needs, and transit needs and is prioritized within those categories. The transit needs process is addressed by the E&D TAC through development and review of a draft and final list. The Commission adopts the Unmet Specialized Transportation/Transit Needs List each spring following a public hearing. Conclusion: Complied.

TABLE II-1 RTC Compliance Requirements Matrix		
RTC Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
needs must have been funded before an allocation was made for streets and roads.		
The RTPA has caused an audit of its accounts and records to be performed for each fiscal year by the county auditor, or a certified public accountant. The RTPA must transmit the resulting audit report to the State Controller within 12 months of the end of each fiscal year and must be performed in accordance with the Basic Audit Program and Report Guidelines for California Special Districts prescribed by the State Controller. The audit shall include a determination of compliance with the transportation development act and accompanying rules and regulations. Financial statements may not commingle the state transit assistance fund, the local transportation fund, or other revenues or funds of any city, county, or other agency. The RTPA must maintain fiscal and accounting records and supporting papers for at least four years following the fiscal year close.	California Administrative Code, Section 6662	The accounting firm of Moss, Levy & Hartzheim, LLP conducted the financial audit of the RTC on the following completion/submittal dates: FY 2022: April 10, 2023 FY 2023: February 15, 2024 FY 2024: May 5, 2025 The Audited Financial Statements and Compliance Reports were submitted to the State Controller within 12 months of the end of each fiscal year. The RTC also maintains fiscal and accounting records and supporting papers for at least four years following the fiscal year close. Conclusion: Complied.

Findings from RTPA Compliance Requirements Matrix

The RTC has satisfactorily complied with applicable state legislative mandates for RTPAs. One compliance measure that did not apply to the RTC pertains to adopting rules and regulations for TDA claims under Article 4.5. The RTC does not use this article section to disburse TDA funds. Rather, the CTSA (Community Bridges) receives TDA funds through the City of Santa Cruz as the claimant for Article 8.

The auditor noted that RTC was unable to provide evidence that a cover letter and an email had been transmitted to Caltrans confirming completion of the performance audits for the past audit period. The auditor was able to confirm with Caltrans that the prior performance audits were received. In addition, the RTC had accepted these audit reports at their August 4, 2022, meeting. It is recommended that RTC exercise diligence in documenting and maintaining a file of its performance audit transmittals to Caltrans as per the statute.

Despite no TDA funds being allocated for streets and roads, the RTC continues with an unmet transit needs process that involves obtaining public input and coordinating with the E&D TAC and Santa Cruz METRO to annually update the Unmet Specialized Transportation/Transit Needs List. The annual update process serves as a tool to identify and prioritize potential transit service and facility improvements throughout the county.

The RTC *Rules & Regulations* manual was revised in November 2022, and May 2024. The manual provides the documented guidance for TDA fund administration and distribution. The rules describe the processes necessary to ensure the proper sequence of actions that are taken and the eligibility requirements for the claimants. Other components of the rules and regulations stipulate the flow of TDA apportionments that directly affect the budgeting for the RTC and its members.

The *Rules and Regulations* and TDA claims form show the qualifying criteria for the transit operators. Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation and does not use the alternative revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA funds. The resolutions submitted with recent TDA claims cite PUC Sections 99268.1 and 99268.2b, under which Santa Cruz METRO is classified as an older operator subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation (PUC Section 99268.1) or the farebox recovery ratio (PUC Section 99268.2). However, there is no mention of the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement in the *Rules & Regulations* manual. Instead, Section V, Subsection B. states that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to PUC Section 6645 (relating to operators in urbanized and non-urbanized areas), and that the Transit District shall meet fare revenue to operating cost ratios (farebox recovery ratio) as set forth by state law, and show different ratios for urban and rural service.

In addition, Santa Cruz Volunteer Center has been subject to local match requirements for the TDA. Budgets for the volunteer driver program show generally include a 10 percent local match that would be provided through rider donations. However, based on the changes in service demand, rider donations have not been sufficient to maintain the 10 percent match requirement. In lieu of a local match, Volunteer Center, in concert with the RTC, came up with a minimum number of riders—1,000—per quarter metric.

Under PUC Section 99313, Community Bridges was apportioned STA funding under the population-based formula. The STA funds are designated toward specialized transportation programs. The Executive Director is authorized to modify the payment amounts based on actual STA funds approved by the State and received by the RTC from the State such that

Community Bridges receives 8.4 percent of the PUC Section 99313 STA funds received by the RTC.

TDA funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects are allocated under Article 8. Pedestrian and bicycle allocations under Article 3 are limited by state law to two percent of a County's apportionment. Pedestrian and bicycle allocations under Article 8 are not subject to this limitation and are therefore used by the SCCRTC instead of Article 3 monies to fund bicycle and pedestrian projects under the TDA. The allocations are made to support community programs such as the Community Traffic Safety Coalition, and Ride 'n Stride/Ecology Action's Walk Smart Program. Allocations are also made to the County and the cities for bicycle and pedestrian projects using a population formula after allocations are made to all other recipients of TDA funds.

Section III

Prior Triennial Performance Audit Recommendations

This chapter describes the RTC's responses to the recommendations included in the prior triennial performance audit. Each prior recommendation is described, followed by a discussion of the agency's efforts to implement the recommendation. Conclusions concerning the extent to which the recommendations have been adopted by the agency are then presented.

Prior Recommendation 1

Continue to ensure that the transit operator TDA process is consistent with the updated RTC rules and regulations.

Background: RTC's revised *Rules and Regulations* manual outlines the changes made to the TDA process enacted by state legislation such as SB 508. Some of the changes also directly impact the content of the TDA claim form for transit, which should be revised concurrently with the manual. The resolution accompanying the FY 2020–21 TDA claim for Santa Cruz METRO cites that “the level of passenger fares and charges is sufficient to enable METRO to meet the fare revenue requirements of PUC sections 99268.1 or 99268.2b as an older operator.” On the claim form itself, #24 displays a table showing the projected urban versus rural farebox recovery ratio for the claim year. The allocation of fare revenue between rural and urban service is from the actual fare revenue/total revenue from two years prior and the budgeted claim year fare revenue. However, included in the footnotes section is a reference to the additional exclusions from operating cost above the consumer price index for fuel, alternative fuel programs, power, insurance premiums, and payments in settlement of claims, and state and federal mandates in calculating urban/rural farebox recovery.

This is an indication of some changes made to the Santa Cruz METRO TDA claim submittal. However, further clarification was warranted regarding the performance eligibility for Santa Cruz METRO. It is also noted that #23 of the Santa Cruz METRO FY 2020–21 TDA claim addresses the progress made towards implementation of prior audit recommendations. The recommendations cited do not reflect the most recent prior triennial performance audit for FYs 2016–2018 but those of the one prior (FY 2013–2015). It was suggested that the RTC and the operator ensure the accuracy of the recommendations being addressed. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the TDA claim form was updated to link the claim to the annual unmet needs list in 2022.

Actions taken by the RTC

The *Rules and Regulations* manual underwent two revisions during the audit period: November 2022 and May 2024. Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure

limitation and does not use the alternative revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA funds. The resolutions submitted with recent TDA claims cite PUC Sections 99268.1 and 99268.2b, under which Santa Cruz METRO is classified as an older operator subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation (PUC Section 99268.1) or the farebox recovery ratio (PUC Section 99268.2). However, there is no mention of the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement in the *Rules & Regulations* manual. Instead, Section V, Subsection B. states that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to PUC Section 6645 (relating to operators in urbanized and non-urbanized areas), and that the Transit District shall meet fare revenue to operating cost ratios (farebox recovery ratio) as set forth by state law, and show different ratios for urban and rural service. It suggested that manual be revised to include acknowledgement of the 50 percent expenditure limitation that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to.

Conclusion

This recommendation has been partially implemented and is being carried forward in this audit for full implementation.

Prior Recommendation 2

Continue to ensure the clarity of the performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds.

Background: Article 4 of the TDA statute provides alternatives for Santa Cruz METRO to be eligible for TDA-Local Transportation Funds. One is for Santa Cruz METRO to meet the farebox recovery ratio. The other is to meet the 50 percent expenditure rule as an older operator, defined as service starting prior to 1974. Currently, Santa Cruz METRO meets both requirements but the documentation stating eligibility is not consistent. For example, the TDA claims submitted to the RTC by Santa Cruz METRO provide a breakdown of the farebox recovery ratio split out between urbanized service versus non-urban service farebox ratios for the prior year and year-to-date.

The claim includes a table showing the projected urban versus rural farebox recovery ratio for the claim year. The allocation of fare revenue between rural and urban service is from the actual fare revenue/total revenue from two years prior and the budgeted claim year fare revenue. However, the resolutions submitted with recent TDA claims cite PUC Sections 99268.1 and 99268.2b, under which Santa Cruz METRO is classified as an older operator subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation (PUC Section 99268.1) or the farebox recovery ratio (PUC Section 99268.2). Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation and does not use the alternative revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA funds. Santa Cruz METRO and RTC should discuss the applicability of each criterion and agree on which of the two meets compliance with rules and regulations for LTF.

METRO has since clarified that the agency and SCCRTC have discussed and agreed to use only the 50 percent expenditure limitation rather than farebox recovery on the TDA claims form to be consistent with METRO's audited financial statements for the FY 2022 TDA Claims.

However, METRO's inability to implement this prior recommendation was attributed to the prior triennial audit draft report being completed in February 2020 and the final report being completed in April 2020. On March 29, 2020, METRO had already submitted its FY 2021 draft and final TDA claim materials to SCCRTC, as per SCCRTC's FY 2020-21 TDA Funding Cycle Calendar. Therefore, there was no time for METRO and SCCRTC to discuss the applicability of each criterion and agree on which of the two criteria meets compliance with rules and regulations for the LTF allocation. This recommendation has been implemented with the submittal of the ensuing TDA claims; however, it was suggested that subsequent TDA claim guidelines clarify the proper criteria. This clarity will provide consistency in reporting performance measures for LTF eligibility.

Actions taken by the RTC

Although the *Rules and Regulations* manual underwent two revisions during the audit period, there is no mention of the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement in the *Rules & Regulations* manual. Instead, Section V, Subsection B. states that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to PUC Section 6645 (relating to operators in urbanized and non-urbanized areas), and that the METRO shall meet fare revenue to operating cost ratios (farebox recovery ratio) as set forth by state law, and show different ratios for urban and rural service. It suggested that manual be revised to include the reference of the 50 percent expenditure limitation that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to.

Conclusion

This recommendation has not been implemented and is being carried forward in this audit for full implementation.

Prior Recommendation 3

Consider the development of a strategic plan.

Background: During the audit period, the RTC underwent a change in executive leadership and technical and administrative personnel. Stakeholder feedback from the commissioners expressed confidence in the new executive director, citing the higher level of transparency and objectivity with Commission functions. With the adoption of the 2020 Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan and the Final Unified Corridor Investment Study concerning the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and other transportation corridors, RTC has expanded its role from being a planning and programming agency to an implementation agency. The preparation of a strategic plan would examine RTC's internal organizational processes as well as contain metrics gauging the amount of staff time spent on each project or program. A 5- or 10-year strategic

plan would also establish guiding principles of how the RTC can build upon its 50-year legacy as an RTPA, transportation authority and mobility facilitator by setting goals, objectives, and strategies for attaining its vision.

Actions taken by the RTC

A Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2022-2027 was adopted that outlines SCCRTC's mission, values, and strategic direction for delivering transportation solutions that are vibrant, sustainable, and equitable. It was developed collaboratively by staff through a structured planning process that included a SWOT analysis and stakeholder engagement involving remote meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to identify and evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to a project, organization, or initiative. The Strategic Plan was finalized and made publicly available in early 2022, and its implementation began shortly thereafter.

Conclusion

This recommendation has been implemented.

Prior Recommendation 4

Hold an annual Board retreat to foster better communication and cohesion among commissioners.

Background: Stakeholder interviews conducted during the prior audit with commissioners revealed concerns about meeting and inter-personal dynamics. The Santa Cruz Branch Rail has become a contentious issue resulting in deadlock. There is a perception that the balance of representation has moved away from the incorporated cities to the county. One commissioner suggested that more contentious issues undergo more vetting through the Transportation Policy Workshop prior to being presented to the Commission. Meeting locations have generally alternated between the four cities to encourage participation by the communities and enhance the visibility of the RTC to the community. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, meetings were moved to a virtual format through Community TV. As the RTC resumes in-person Commission meetings in a hybrid format, there is an opportunity to create a more collaborative environment. It was suggested that scheduling an annual Board retreat would serve to foster better communication and cohesion among the commissioners.

Actions taken by the RTC

The RTC was unable to convene a formal board retreat during the audit period due to the change in executive leadership. The recently adopted Strategic Plan has enhanced efforts to get commissioners to think regionally about key issues. A retreat offers several valuable benefits that directly support the goals and implementation of the Strategic Plan. They are regarded as a tool that fosters:

- Stronger relationships among board members and staff.
- Clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- More cohesive decision-making processes.

Conclusion

This recommendation was implemented after the audit period with a retreat that was scheduled for October 16, 2025. However, the RTC is encouraged to periodically schedule a Board retreat that would offer both members, alternates, and staff an opportunity to reaffirm RTC's vision and mission as it continues to expand in its role as an implementation agency. Therefore, this recommendation is being forwarded in this audit for further consideration by the RTC executive leadership.

Section IV

Detailed Review of RTPA Functions

This section assesses in detail the RTC's functions and performance as an RTPA during this audit period. Using Caltrans's *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities*, the RTC's activities can be divided into the following activities:

- Administration and Management
- Transportation Planning and Regional Coordination
- TDA Claimant Relationships and Oversight
- Marketing and Transportation Alternatives
- Grant Applications and Management

Administration and Management

RTC staff is led by the executive director responsible for reporting to the Commission and facilitating the coordination of the transportation system in Santa Cruz County. Historically, the longevity of personnel at both the executive and professional staff levels has brought remarkable stability to the agency to address the various technical and policy issues. However, the Commission saw turnover in both its executive and professional staffing during the audit period. The Commission's executive director retired in December 2023 after serving the agency with distinction for five years.

To ensure continuity, the RTC Board appointed an interim executive director on December 21, 2023. The interim executive director was a seasoned transportation administrator with prior leadership experience at the California Transportation Commission (CTC) that provided interim oversight while the Commission conducted a comprehensive search for a permanent successor. On September 9, 2024, a former senior transportation engineer was selected from the agency's staff to serve as the new executive director. Her appointment reflected RTC's commitment to internal talent development and institutional continuity, and she brought extensive experience managing key regional transportation projects. This structured transition underscores the Commission's proactive approach to leadership succession and organizational stability.

In addition to the executive leadership changes, the Commission experienced a range of staffing changes that reflect both organizational growth and routine turnover. There were four staff departures during the audit period, including one planner IV, one planner, and two planning technicians. Several new hires joined the agency during this period, including one planning

technician, one planner I), and one planner, as well as part-time interns and technical support personnel. These positions include one communications intern, one planning intern, and an accountant III. At the end of FY 2023–24, there were 25 full- and part-time employees including interns.

The Commission conducted an Organizational Assessment in early 2021 to evaluate its internal structure, management practices, and staff alignment. The assessment, performed by Regional Government Services (RGS), identified several key challenges and recommended strategic changes to improve agency performance and employee engagement. Implementation of the Assessment findings have resulted in the revision of job descriptions and reporting relationships were revised to better reflect operational needs and clarify responsibilities. The RTC identified human capital gaps and began recruiting for positions that support long-term project delivery and organizational growth. This included additional directors and supervising planner positions.

The RTC retains a contract with the County for certain functions like real estate and treasury. The Commission no longer uses County Counsel as its main legal counsel. The RTC has retained the law firm of Meyers Nave for legal services but continues to use County Counsel minimally for shared projects. In March 2024, the Commission adopted a resolution for the interim executive director to enter into an agreement with Redwood Public Law, LLP for general counsel legal services and extend the agreement with Meyers Nave, PLC for litigation and labor relations legal services.

After the audit period, the RTC and the County entered into a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement to retain Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP as legal counsel for eminent domain services. This agreement, approved by the County Board of Supervisors in June 2025, supports real property acquisition efforts for major infrastructure projects such as the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus-on-Shoulder Project and the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12. Under the terms of the agreement, the County compensates the legal provider directly, while SCCRTC reimburses the County for all associated costs, including an initial deposit of \$100,000 into a designated account.

The Procurement and Procedures Manual underwent an administrative update in April 2023 to enhance clarity, compliance, and operational efficiency in its purchasing practices. The revisions focused on aligning RTC’s procurement protocols with state and federal regulations, particularly those governing the use of Measure D and grant-funded projects. The update revised dollar thresholds for informal and formal procurement processes, streamlining procedures for smaller purchases while reinforcing oversight for larger contracts.

Every California public agency is required under the Political Reform Act to adopt a Conflict-of-Interest Code. During the audit period, the RTC updated its Conflict-of-Interest Code to ensure alignment with current roles, responsibilities, and legal standards. This update included instituting Form 700 filing requirements. The filing of Form 700 promotes transparency and helps prevent conflicts between personal financial interests and public duties.

Although the RTC does not employ a human resources officer, personnel management and other administrative functions are the responsibility of the administrative services officer. The agency contracts with vendors to offer health benefits and other coverage. Retirement benefits are provided through the California Public Employees' Retirement System, including voluntary contributions to a 457 Deferred Compensation Plan. Also, the RTC manages its own payroll using a web-based program. Staff evaluations are conducted for pay step increases until the employee reaches the maximum step. RTC created pension and OPEB trust funds to reduce long-term liabilities and improve fiscal health under Section 115. A Section 115 Trust is authorized under Internal Revenue Code Section 115, allowing government entities to set aside funds in a dedicated, irrevocable trust for specific governmental purposes.

Two employee unions are recognized: the RTC Association of Middle Managers (RAMM) representing management, and Community of RTC Employees (CORE) Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 521 representing planners, an accounting technician, and administrative employees. Both the RAMM and the SEIU memorandums of understanding (MOU) cover the period from April 1, 2022, through March 31, 2025, plus a side letter. For 2022 only, a one-time signing bonus of \$2,000 was paid to all members of the CORE unit in the first full pay period after ratification of the MOU.

Each year, the RTC produces an annual Overall Work Program (OWP) along with the annual budget and makes amendments to the work program throughout the year, as necessary. The OWP guides the allocation of staff resources to meet mandated responsibilities, including TDA LTF administration and RTC priorities, for the coming year. Key information for each work element is described, including financial data, project description, proposed federal expenditure, previous project accomplishments, and timelines and deliverables.

RTC's OWP and Budget reflected a strategic emphasis on multimodal transportation planning, infrastructure investment, and regional coordination. The agency's funding and activities were shaped by state and federal mandates, local transportation needs, and voter-approved initiatives such as Measure D. The FY 2021–22 OWP contained 16 work elements, while the FY 2022–23 and the FY 2023–24 OWPs contained 18 work elements each. The annual work program's direct expenditures ranged between \$48.86 million and \$54.68 million annually for the three-year audit period based upon the work program funding summary. The RTC also addresses the planning factors listed in the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and includes a matrix in the OWP indicating which planning factors are addressed by each work program element.

The RTC utilizes WinCAMS, an automated, modular cost and project accounting system originally designed and developed for government agencies looking to track costs. WinCAMS is developed by Cascade Software. In addition, the Santa Cruz County Public Works Department uses the program. WinCAMS offers unlimited ledger capacity and allows for the tracking of encumbrances and project time. Any designated employee can pull reports and receive push notifications for invoices. About four to five employees have been selected to train on the system.

Highlights of multimodal transportation initiatives and projects that the RTC has facilitated through its committees and partnerships that were either completed or underway during the audit period include the following:

Local Measure D

The November 2016 passage of Measure D, a 30-year countywide transportation one-half-cent transactions and use tax, has allowed RTC to become an implementation agency. Santa Cruz County is one of 25 self-help counties in California. Passage of the measure gives the RTC leverage to apply for other transportation-related funding from state and federal grant programs as well as providing funding for transit services, infrastructure, major capital projects, some of the backlog of local road maintenance, and to maintain and expand transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. The funding includes 20 percent of Measure D funds to Santa Cruz METRO (16 percent) and Community Bridges, the CTSA (4 percent), as well as 8 percent to the preservation of railroad infrastructure. This significantly increases the amount of funds that are dedicated to transit services and infrastructure. Measure D generates an estimated \$25 million in revenues annually.

As part of the measure's implementation, RTC prepares the Measure D Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP), which is intended to serve as the guiding policy and programming document for the implementation of regional Measure D projects. RTC typically holds a public hearing on and updates 5-year funding plans for all Measure D regional categories at the same time. In May 2022, the Commission was tasked with considering updates to the 5-year program of projects for the Active Transportation category and the Highway Corridors category. There was a need to address some cost increases, as well as to consider grant leveraging opportunities.

In FY 2023, RTC initiated an update to the SIP to guide the strategic use of Regional Measure D funds over a five-year horizon. Outreach was conducted to local jurisdictions, transit operators, and community organizations. Agencies receiving Measure D funds were asked to submit updated 5-Year Plans detailing project priorities, timelines, and funding needs. The RTC developed cash flow models to forecast Measure D revenues and expenditures. The Commission evaluated options for:

- Pay-as-you-go funding
- Bond financing
- Inter-program loans
- Policies were refined to ensure fiscal sustainability and equitable distribution of funds.

A draft SIP was compiled, integrating updated project lists, funding allocations, and implementation policies. The draft SIP was presented to the RTC board and made available for

public comment. After revisions, the Final 2023 SIP was adopted and published in October 2023.

The measure's implementation and expenditures are overseen by the Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee. The committee is composed of five members, who are non-elected officials. The members are selected to represent each of the five supervisorial districts in the county to ensure good geographical representation. At least one of the members is a certified public accountant. Measure D contains a maintenance of effort requirement supported by audited financial data.

RTC tracks and reports one-half cent sales tax revenues collected under Measure D. These funds are distributed monthly to recipient agencies, with quarterly updates provided to the Commission.

Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

The RTC acquired the Santa Cruz Branch Line from the Union Pacific Railroad in October 2012. The RTC is designated as a Rail/Trail Authority and construction management authority involved in engineering work to rehabilitate structures and award contracts for construction. The Commission is responsible for maintaining the portion of the right-of-way (ROW) outside of the railroad easement, which is defined as a 10-foot lateral width in each direction from the railroad centerline. Designations as a Rail/Trail Authority and construction management authority place the RTC in a unique role of evolving from a purely transportation planning agency to a project implementation agency offering multimodal transportation options. Internal goals and achievements must align with these multifaceted responsibilities, which the agency has exemplified through these large projects, among other functions. Challenges lie ahead, however, with regard to management of the rail corridor and its connectivity with the overall transportation network. The Rail/Trail Authority generates \$60,000 in lease revenues.

A preventative maintenance program for the Santa Cruz Branch Line Rail corridor includes a process for responding to maintenance reports from the community or local jurisdictions, and guidelines for regular maintenance inspections for preventative maintenance efforts. RTC staff procured on-call maintenance contractors for light civil/grading, vegetation control, encampment cleanup, no-trespassing signing installation, and graffiti abatement. The railroad corridor was damaged by the 2022-23 winter storms that impacted Santa Cruz County. In fall 2023, the RTC completed a project to remove storm damage debris at Mile Post 8.32 along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way that resulted from the severe weather impacts.

During the audit period, the RTC advanced planning for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) Project, a long-term initiative to develop commuter rail service alongside the Coastal Rail Trail. In July 2024, SCCRTC released a comprehensive draft report evaluating the feasibility, cost, and operational framework of the proposed system. In November 2024, the Commission approved a new 5-year plan for Measure D investments, including rail infrastructure and ZEPRT. The draft report found that the project would cost \$4.3 billion, which

was significantly higher than previous projections. The cost breakdown includes \$1.96 billion for construction; \$1.04 billion for land acquisition, professional services, and rolling stock; and \$1.3 billion contingency fund for unforeseen costs.

The project infrastructure requirements entail the full replacement of 28 of 33 bridges along the 32-mile corridor; reconstruction of all existing track; and the construction of nine train stations, grade crossings upgrades, and the installation of positive train control systems. The report assumes use of Stadler FLIRT zero-emission trainsets, potentially hydrogen-powered, battery-electric, or hybrid. A fleet of 10 two-car trainsets is proposed, with flexibility for coupling to increase capacity.

Coastal Rail Trail

The Coastal Rail Trail is a principal component of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network, designed to provide a continuous, car-free path for pedestrians and cyclists along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. The trail is being developed in segments, each managed by RTC in partnership with local jurisdictions. The spine of the trail network is composed of the 32-mile Coastal Rail Trail from Davenport to Watsonville, to build within or adjacent to the Commission-owned Branch Rail Line ROW.

Construction started on the 7.5-mile North Coast Rail Trail (Segment 5) in June 2024, fully funded at \$51.4 million. The construction extends from Davenport Main Beach to Wilder Ranch State Park. Infrastructure and amenities include new parking lots and restrooms in Davenport and Panther/Yellowbank Beach; improved access to Bonny Doon Beach; and a new pedestrian crossing in Davenport across Highway 1. Completion of this segment is targeted for 2026.

The Commission worked with Central Federal Lands to implement Segment 5 for which a Federal Lands Access Grant had been awarded, with matching funds provided by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, the California Coastal Conservancy, and the Commission. The environmental impact report was certified in March 2019 and the RTC worked with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Central Federal Lands Highway Division (CFL) to complete the final design. The FHWA CFL finalized the environmental assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act in October 2021.

Approximately 18 miles of the trail were either under development or completed by FY 2024. About 16.5 miles were fully funded, with construction supported by Measure D, state and federal grants, and private donations. Trail segments are designed to support future rail-with-trail integration, preserving the corridor for potential passenger rail service.

Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes

The Commission has been involved in the management and completion of a series of auxiliary lanes on Highway 1. The lanes extend the weaving and merging distance between the ramps and improve traffic flow by providing greater separation between vehicles entering and exiting

the freeway from mainline traffic. The Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane Project is a core component of the Watsonville–Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program, designed to:

- Improve traffic flow and safety
- Enhance transit reliability
- Expand active transportation options
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions

Auxiliary lanes connect on-ramps to the next off-ramps, creating smoother merging and reducing congestion and cut-through traffic on local streets.

During the audit period, the Commission engaged in the planning and environmental review of auxiliary lanes on Highway 1 for segments between 41st Avenue and Soquel Drive, and State Park Dr to Freedom Boulevard with a pedestrian and bicycle overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue (Phase 1). In FY 2023, construction commenced on Phase I.

The Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane Project incorporates several multimodal elements such as a bus-on-shoulder facility, the Chanticleer Avenue Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing; and Coastal Rail Trail Integration. The bus-on-shoulder facility is the first of its kind in California and allows transit buses to bypass congestion, improving frequency and on-time performance. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing supports active transportation and connects neighborhoods adjacent to Highway 1. In addition, 1.25 miles of Segment 12 of the Coastal Rail Trail is being constructed along the corridor. This enhances bike and pedestrian access and supports future rail-with-trail development.

Rapid Transit Corridor Study

The Rapid Transit Corridor Study aimed to identify strategies to improve transit speed, reliability, and accessibility along key corridors between Watsonville and Santa Cruz, particularly on Santa Cruz METRO Routes 1 and 2. It was funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant awarded in 2022. Key transit efficiency improvements identified in the study could reduce travel time by up to 40 percent on Routes 1 and 2.

Recommendations included transit signal priority, dedicated bus lanes, and streamlined stop spacing. Some underutilized stops were proposed for removal to improve overall route efficiency. Implementation would double the number of residents living within a quarter mile of a high-quality bus stop. The proposed amenities and safety enhancements included boarding islands to separate bike and bus traffic and expanded boarding areas and enhanced pedestrian crossings for safer, more accessible stops.

RTC's role in the study included public outreach and stakeholder coordination; funding strategy development; integration with regional multimodal planning, including the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane Project and Pacific Station Redevelopment.

Full implementation of the corridor improvements is estimated at \$24.1 million for full implementation. Santa Cruz METRO secured \$7.5 million in funding awarded through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle. The RTC and METRO are pursuing joint applications to fully fund the Watsonville–Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program.

Other multimodal transportation projects that the RTC has facilitated through its discretionary funding programs that are either completed or underway during the audit period include:

- Highway 9 Corridor Improvements (Felton to Santa Cruz), County of Santa Cruz
- Pacific Station Redevelopment, City of Santa Cruz/METRO
- San Andreas Road Resurfacing, County of Santa Cruz
- Chestnut Street St Storm Drain and Paving Rehab and Safety Improvements, City of Santa Cruz
- 41st Avenue/Capitola Road Intersections & Roadway Rehab, City of Capitola
- Watsonville Slough Trail Expansion, City of Watsonville
- Freedom Boulevard, Alta Vista Avenue, Davis Avenue, reconstruction, City of Watsonville
- Climate Adaptation Planning Grant Projects

Progress by the RTC is made through active support from the Commissioners. Regular monthly Commission meetings are held and are well attended by the commissioners, based on the auditor’s review of meeting minutes during the audit period. This is an indication of the education, interest, and engagement by the commissioners on transportation topics. Transportation Policy Workshops are also held for an in-depth focus on specific items. Meeting locations have alternated between the four cities to encourage participation by the communities and enhance the visibility of the RTC to the community. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, meetings were moved to a virtual format through Community TV Zoom. Assembly Bill (AB) 361, signed by the governor in September 2021, allows for continual virtual meetings by governmental bodies.

RTC resumed in-person Commission meetings during the audit period, with voting members expected to attend in person starting in 2023, following updated state guidelines under AB 2449. This legislation allows remote participation only under specific conditions such as “just cause” or “emergency circumstances.” While public participation remains available both in person and remotely, the Commission formally transitioned back to in-person attendance for its voting members to comply with evolving transparency and governance standards.

Telephone interviews with commissioners provided overall high ratings for staff and activities undertaken during the audit period. Highlights from the interviews are as follows:

- Commissioners interviewed reflected a wide range of experience. One commissioner has served as an alternate since 1976, representing various County supervisors over the decades. Others have served for an average of five years, bringing a more recent perspective to the Commission's evolving role.
- Commissioners shared mixed but constructive views on RTC's effectiveness as a regional decision-making body.
- The implementation of Measure D was described as contentious, particularly around the Rail Trail Plan and Rail Feasibility Study, which revealed divisions among commissioners. Despite these challenges, RTC was praised for its success in securing grants and maintaining a balanced approach to a wide range of transportation issues.
- The practice of rotating meeting locations across the county was noted as a positive step toward greater accountability and community representation.
- While the former executive director was recognized for external success, concerns were raised about internal administrative effectiveness. Commissioners also noted that the previous executive director had initiated efforts to restructure the agency, laying groundwork for the current transformation.
- The new executive director received high praise, described as the "right person for the position," with a leadership style that has made the organization nimbler, and implementation focused. The new executive director is still getting up to speed but has demonstrated an increasing awareness of the importance of public engagement.
- The Commission has been highly focused on project delivery, supported by a restructured organization that includes three director-level positions overseeing distinct program areas.
- Commissioners consistently praised RTC staff for their professionalism and responsiveness.
- Staff reports were described as informative and well-prepared, contributing to productive discussions. No significant concerns were raised regarding transit funding, and staff were seen as responsive to commissioner requests.
- Commissioners recommended providing ongoing updates on Measure D funding, project milestones, and their relevance to local jurisdictions.

Transportation Planning and Regional Coordination

Projects approved for funding by the RTC are included in the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), and/or the RTC budget and Measure D 5-year Program of Projects (5-year Plans). The RTIP identifies projects programmed to receive various state and federal funds, amends information on previously programmed projects, and acts as Santa Cruz County's proposal to the California Transportation Commission for programming STIP funds. Federally funded transportation projects, including those projects approved for funding by agencies other than the RTC, are included in the Federal Transportation

Improvement Program developed by the Association of Monterey Bay Association of Governments (AMBAG).

TDA revenues in the county increased during the audit period with an improving economy but were met by increased demands for the revenue to offset higher transit operating costs as well as from work programs undertaken by the Commission. Other state and federal funds for overall transportation activity were also carefully monitored. RTC management collaborated with the commissioners to continue to fund programmed improvements.

The 2024 RTIP was adopted by SCCRTC on December 7, 2023, and submitted to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Each funding cycle, the RTC establishes a process for programming discretionary funds. In some years, the RTC programs the region's discretionary funds through a consolidated competitive process. The RTC programmed approximately \$61.3 million in anticipated state and federal formula funds. An additional \$34.7 million in one-time transit capital and operations funding was allocated through the SB 125 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and the Zero Emission Transit Capital Program.

The five key project categories and specific projects programmed into the RTIP are listed below:

1. Local Roadway Rehabilitation & Pavement Maintenance

- Roads include: Murphy's Crossing, Roggie Lane, Lee Road, West Beach Street, Corralitos Road, Amesti Road, Empire Grade Road, Bear Creek Road, Soquel San Jose Road, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, Bay Street, Scotts Valley Drive, Mt. Hermon Road, 41st Avenue, and Green Valley Road.

2. Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure

- New and upgraded facilities in: Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, Watsonville, Ben Lomond, and Green Valley Road.

3. Complete Streets Projects

- Felton-San Lorenzo Valley Schools Complex area
- Bay Corridor in Santa Cruz

4. Transit Projects

- *Santa Cruz METRO Rapid Corridors Project*: Traffic signal priority for buses.
- *Reimagine METRO Wave Service*: Transit operations enhancement.
- *Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project*: Environmental analysis for future rail service.

5. Active Transportation & Incentives

- *Go Santa Cruz County Bicycle Incentives Program*: Encouraging mode shift through rewards and education.

The 2024 RTIP was developed in consultation with stakeholders and partner agencies, including Caltrans, the County of Santa Cruz, the cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville, Santa Cruz METRO, the University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC), and local non-profits that provide community transportation services or implement local transportation programs. The 2024 RTIP carries over projects from the 2022 RTIP and includes new projects proposed for the region's targeted share of 2024 STIP funds. Projects were selected based on alignment with safety, infrastructure condition, system performance, sustainability and resiliency, equity, and public health.

This RTIP document serves as the RTC's proposal to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for the 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The CTC's STIP is a planning document for funding five years of roadway, intercity rail, and transit improvements throughout California. State law requires the CTC and regions to update these programming documents biennially, with each new STIP adding two new years to prior programming commitments. STIP funds are primarily generated from the state excise tax on gasoline, which the state makes available for regional agency priorities in accordance with formulas and regulations established under SB 45 and subsequent laws. Senate Bill 1 (SB1), signed into law on April 28, 2017, provided more stability to the STIP, with the provision to adjust the per gallon excise tax annually for inflation.

For programming of available transportation improvement program funds, the RTC holds a call for projects and hosts a workshop for applicants. The evaluation of project applications includes linking evaluation criteria to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) performance measure targets to achieve a balanced transportation system by mode and by geography. Project sponsors must follow state rules for environmental clearance and local matches. The TDA, as an example, is used as a local match for some transit and bicycle projects, while state toll credits can be used for federally funded projects. RTC staff maintain a Microsoft Access database to track amendments submitted by project sponsors through correspondence to the Commission. A major amendment is required to go through the Commission's committees for review and approval. Staff conduct check-ins on the project sponsors about three times a year.

Regional Transportation Plan

The Commission is tasked with the development and update of its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP serves as the foundational blueprint for shaping the future of transportation in Santa Cruz County. It is a state-mandated, long-range planning document that guides how transportation investments are prioritized, funded, and implemented over a 20–25-year horizon. It is part of a broader regional planning effort led by AMBAG, which also included RTPs for Monterey and San Benito counties.

The audit period saw the adoption of the 2045 RTP and the initiation of the 2050 RTP update. The RTC released the draft 2045 RTP for public review and comment at the December 2, 2021, Commission meeting. The public comment period for the draft RTP was from December 2

through January 31, 2022. The RTC approved the final draft RTP at its March 3, 2022, meeting. The Final 2045 RTP was adopted by the RTC on June 16, 2022. This adoption aligned with AMBAG's broader 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), ensuring regional consistency and compliance with state mandates such as SB 375.

The cost of implementation is approximately \$9.7 billion, whereas the estimated funds available through 2045 are approximately \$5 billion. The role of the RTP is to plan for a transportation system that will reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled through coordinated land use and transportation planning. The final plan reflects ideas, issues, and recommendations received from RTC committees, project sponsors, partner agencies, resource agencies, the public, and public interest groups at key milestones.

The 2045 RTP included the following key proposals based on available funding:

- Maintenance of the existing transportation network including roads, highways, bike lanes, sidewalks, and transit;
- Safety and operational improvements to SR 1, 9, 17, 129, and 152;
- Addition of auxiliary lanes on SR 1 between Freedom Boulevard in Aptos and Soquel Avenue;
- Bicycle and pedestrian crossings over SR 1 at Chanticleer and Mar Vista;
- Modifications to major arterial roads, including intersection improvements and bus, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities;
- Freeway Service Patrol along SR 1 and SR 17;
- Expanded bus service for high ridership routes to serve University of California, Santa Cruz, South County, and San José commuters;
- Transit queue jumps and high occupant vehicle signal priority;
- Construction of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail, the Pajaro River Trail, and the San Lorenzo Valley Trail;
- Local bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs designed to increase bicycle commuting, and provide safe bicycle and pedestrian routes to schools and key destination areas;
- Expansion of specialized transport services in response to projected increases in senior and disabled populations; and
- Individualized marketing programs to employers to increase carpooling and vanpooling.

The Commission initiated the 2050 RTP Update in mid-2023 to guide transportation investments through 2050 with early planning activities and stakeholder engagement beginning that year. The Commission adopted updated Goals, Policies, and Targets for the plan in late

2024, following input from advisory committees and the public. This update builds on the 2045 RTP and reflects revised goals, updated performance targets, and a renewed focus on sustainability, equity, and system preservation. Goals were streamlined for clarity and alignment with state and federal planning frameworks. Target years were updated to 2035 and 2050. Key RTP goals include:

- Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- Expanding multimodal access
- Enhancing safety and equity
- Promoting climate resilience

A central emphasis of the RTP is on maintaining the transportation system, particularly through monitoring pavement conditions. The Commission utilizes the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) as a performance measure, with data sourced from local jurisdictions. The PCI survey is conducted biennially to assess roadway quality and guide investment decisions. The Commission compiled a comprehensive list of transportation projects across modes. Projects are categorized as:

- *Constrained*: Fundable with projected revenues
- *Unconstrained*: Require new funding sources

As part of the 2025 RTP update, the Commission has undertaken a robust public outreach effort designed to ensure broad stakeholder engagement and community input. The outreach strategy reflects RTC's commitment to inclusive planning and transparent decision-making. The RTC has actively collaborated with advisory committees, local jurisdictions, and regional partners to shape the RTP's goals, policies, and project priorities. These collaborations have informed both the Policy and Action Elements of the plan.

Community engagement during the RTP update has involved both virtual and in-person outreach. Virtual outreach activities included online surveys, virtual workshops, and digital comment platforms, which have been used to reach a broad audience and gather feedback on transportation priorities. In addition, the Commission has participated in public events such as the Santa Cruz County Fair to engage residents face-to-face, share RTP updates, and collect input.

TDA Claimant Relationships and Oversight

This functional area addresses the RTC's administration of the provisions of the TDA. As LTF allocated to claimants has been used for public transit or non-roadway purposes, state law does not require the RTC to undertake a formal unmet transit needs process. However, the RTC is recognized for continuing a process of soliciting and maintaining an annual prioritized transit needs list and working with its committees and Santa Cruz METRO. Unmet needs on the list are kept until they are implemented or removed. The E&D TAC endeavors to hold one unmet needs meeting per year in the City of Watsonville per the RTC *Rules & Regulations* to schedule an

appropriate location outside of the City of Santa Cruz and in proximity to a major transit route. A public hearing is also held at a Commission meeting in Santa Cruz. The public hearing complies with the TDA statute that requires at least one public hearing in the citizen participation process (PUC Section 99238.5).

RTC Administration and Planning

The uses of TDA revenues apportioned to Santa Cruz County flow through a priority process prescribed in state law. The RTC is able to allocate LTF revenues for TDA administration and general planning. During the audit years of 2022 through 2024, the RTC claimed the amounts shown in Table IV-1.

Table IV-1
LTF Claims by the RTC for
Administration and Planning

Fiscal Year	TDA Administration & Planning
2022	\$1,539,364
2023	\$1,824,442
2024	\$1,627,414

Source: Annual RTC TDA apportionment (audited)

Based on the above table, in FY 2022, the amount shown for administration and planning equaled approximately 13.3 percent of total LTF (\$11,589,590). In FY 2023, the amount was 13.3 percent (out of \$13,715,436), and for FY 2024, the amount was 13.5 percent (out of \$12,050,860). TDA planning is used for three programs: (1) General Planning; (2) Bike to Work; and (3) Bike & Pedestrian Safety (Community Traffic Safety Coalition and Ride & Stride Program). The Bike to Work and Bike & Pedestrian Safety programs are claimed by the Commission under Article 8 for Ecology Action and the County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency, respectively, in helping to support community-based bicycle and pedestrian operations. The two entities submit claims for review by the Commission for their programs, which have been supported by the RTC for many years. LTF allocations for these programs are matched by local funding sources. For instance, Ecology Action requested \$72,000 in Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds for FY 2023-24 to support the Santa Cruz County Bike to Work (BTW) and Walk and Roll to School (WRTS) program which includes Fall/Spring campaigns Bike Month and Biketober.

LTF funds are allocated to eligible agencies, including the RTC, Santa Cruz METRO for public transportation, the City of Santa Cruz as a pass-through for specialized transportation, and local jurisdictions for bike/pedestrian projects. The RTC has an existing adopted TDA reserve fund of at least 8 percent of the annual revenue estimate. Reserves are used due to a deficit in TDA revenues or a special allocation. This reserve fund can fluctuate in the RTC budget because it is dependent on carryover funds from one year to the next and it is used only to pay TDA

recipients if revenues come in below estimates. The reserve is replenished, as the *RTC Rules and Regulations* indicate new allocations are to be made to the reserve fund as a first priority.

TDA Claim Processing

On an annual basis during this audit period, the RTC was responsible for managing the apportionment of between \$11.9 and \$12.3 million in LTF revenues and between \$4.5 and \$6.7 million in STA funds.

TDA claims are submitted by applicants prior to the fiscal year of the claim. To its credit, the RTC uses a detailed TDA claim form that requires detailed past and budgeted information to support the claims. The TDA claim form is applicable to either Article 4 or Article 8 claimant, and the instructions in the form direct which sections need to be completed. The information provided by claimants ensures that proper information is submitted to justify the TDA claim. Among the required data for transit claims is the status of implementing prior audit recommendations and financial performance metrics. The claim form also incorporates a checklist of materials for claimants to include for each type of claim, whether for Article 4 or Article 8, and for transit systems such as CHP inspection certification and operating and capital plans. The checklist creates uniformity in the claims process and ensures that adequate information is provided to substantiate the claim for TDA revenues. Pedestrian/bicycle claims and transit claims are reviewed by different technical staff versed in their respective expertise. The E&D TAC also participates in the claims review prior to approval by the Commission, in May. Quarterly payments are then made to the claimants.

In addition to the checklist of items to submit with the claim, other RTPAs require transit claimants to sign off on a standard assurances form to confirm compliance with different TDA measures. These measures include completion and submittal of the annual financial audit and State Controller's Reports, among other requirements.

Rules & Regulations serves as an in-house TDA manual documenting the claims administration process by the RTC. Most recently updated in May 2024, the document provides guidance for TDA submissions but also describes the operating procedures for the Commission and for other funding programs, such as the RTIP and STP exchange. The latest update focused on clarifying roles, streamlining operations, and aligning with updated memoranda of understanding. The RTC may also elect to designate a portion of TDA revenues for research and/or demonstration projects based on specific evaluation criteria.

However, as per a prior audit recommendation, the RTC has yet to update the *Rules & Regulations Manual* to cite the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement for Santa Cruz METRO. Instead, Section V, Subsection B. states that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to PUC Section 6645 (relating to operators in urbanized and non-urbanized areas), and that the Transit District shall meet fare revenue to operating cost ratios (farebox recovery ratio) as set forth by state law, and show different ratios for urban and rural service.

Transit Performance Monitoring

Each transit claimant provides performance measures to the RTC on a quarterly and annual basis, which are shared with the E&D TAC. The list of performance metrics slightly differs among the transit systems (Community Bridges, Volunteer Center, and Santa Cruz METRO) to reflect their system size and service modes. As several commissioners also serve on Santa Cruz METRO's board, there is cross pollination of performance metrics review and regular monitoring of agendas. Documentation prepared by the transit systems shows their commitment to provide the information to the RTC as a condition of their receipt of TDA funds. The performance metrics for Santa Cruz METRO are listed in the TDA claims form and include those listed in Table IV-2.

Table IV-2
Santa Cruz METRO Performance Measures

1.	Annual passengers	15.	Number of FTE employees (all employees, not just drivers)
2.	Rides/passenger trips provided by type (student, senior, adult, pass holders, etc., or however stats are kept) and amount of TDA funds used for each type of ride	16.	Vehicle service hours/employee*
3.	Annual service hours	17.	Number of routes
4.	Passengers per vehicle service hour*	18.	Average route length
5.	Annual service miles	19.	Average travel times/rider
6.	Number of fixed-route miles	20.	Number of bus stops
7.	Service area – square miles	21.	Number of vehicles in operation
8.	Service area population	22.	Number of monthly bus passes in circulation
9.	Passengers per vehicle service mile*	23.	Maximum vehicles in service at any time
10.	Average passengers per weekday	24.	Hours of service
11.	Total operating costs in budget	25.	Approximate number of unduplicated passengers
12.	Operating cost per vehicle service hour*	26.	Cost per unit of service plus text about long range plans to make/keep this low
13.	Total operating cost per passenger*	27.	Funds and percentage spent on administration/overhead/grantee allocation/etc.
14.	Average farebox revenue per passenger (describe what is included)	28.	Actual financials compared with budget
29.	Actual number of rides provided compared with goal and text about whether the goal was met and why/why not		

* Denotes TDA indicator

The performance indicators submitted by Community Bridges are shown in Table IV-3.

**Table IV-3
Community Bridges Performance Measures**

1.	Unduplicated passengers per month	8.	Cancellations per month
2.	Total passenger trips (units of service) per month	9.	Donations per month
3.	Incidents per month	10.	Total operating cost per passenger*
4.	Accidents per month	11.	Total operating cost per vehicle service hour*
5.	Mechanical failures (including lift failure) per month	12.	Total passengers per vehicle service hour*
6.	No-shows per month	13.	Total passengers per vehicle service mile*
7.	Turndowns or referrals per month	14.	Van mileage per program

* Denotes TDA indicator

The performance indicators submitted by Volunteer Center are shown in Table IV-4.

**Table IV-4
Volunteer Center Performance Measures**

1.	Number of rides/deliveries provided	6.	Number of unduplicated passengers
2.	Trip destinations	7.	Number of requests for service
3.	Mileage claimed	8.	Number of turndowns
4.	Estimated total mileage	9.	Reason for turndowns
5.	Average length of trip	10.	Number of active volunteers
11.	Geographic distribution of clients		

The RTC is able to track and monitor transit operator trends using the above data and review them at E&D TAC meetings as well as with the Commission. The E&D TAC reviews transit data quarterly. Performance data prepared by the smaller operators are also submitted to the City of Santa Cruz as part of the conditions of the City claiming TDA funds on behalf of the agencies. As was discussed in the transit operator performance audit for this cycle, Community Bridges has enhanced its capability to report on time performance of its service vehicles using installed technology.

Unmet Transit Needs

Although the RTC does not allocate TDA funds to local streets and roads projects, and therefore is not required to perform this analysis, the RTC endeavors to solicit regular input on unmet transit and paratransit needs to provide a useful tool to identify and prioritize needs in the region. Serving as the SSTAC council per TDA statutes, the E&D TAC regularly hears and

considers unmet paratransit and transit needs in Santa Cruz County. Unmet paratransit and transit needs are those transportation needs which are not being met by the current public transit system, have community support, and do not duplicate transit services provided publicly or privately.

During the audit period, the RTC revised its approach to identifying and evaluating unmet transit needs. These changes reflect a shift toward a more data-driven, transparent, and inclusive process, aligning with the agency's broader goals contained in the RTP. The annual unmet transit needs list is still updated annually. Input is solicited through a public survey distributed to partner agencies, community organizations, and the general public. The survey is promoted through digital channels and translated into multiple languages to ensure accessibility and broad community participation.

In May 2023, RTC adopted a weighted scoring system to assess and prioritize unmet transit needs. This system evaluates each need based on four criteria derived from RTP goals:

- Access and Mobility
- Safety
- Cost Effectiveness
- Design and Feasibility

This approach enables RTC to objectively rank transit needs and integrate them more effectively into planning and funding discussions. Identified unmet transit needs are now presented in a tabular format, which include descriptions of each need; associated planning projects; and status updates and implementation considerations. This format enhances clarity for stakeholders and facilitates alignment with long-range transportation planning. The unmet needs list is substantiated with a series of strategies containing proposals and suggestions to address the need, including programs and projects. Starting in 2022, the TDA claim form was updated to link the claim to the annual unmet needs list.

In addition, RTC adjusted the timeline for the unmet needs process by initiating outreach and analysis in December rather than February. This extension allows for additional time for public engagement, more thorough data analysis and earlier integration into budget and programming cycles.

During the audit period, RTC staff reported that E&DTAC experienced high turnover due to member resignations. This resulted in temporary vacancies and reduced representation across supervisorial districts. In response, RTC conducted a targeted recruitment drive to restore full committee membership. Outreach efforts included:

- Direct engagement with community organizations and service providers
- Public announcements and application support
- Emphasis on geographic and demographic diversity

As a result, RTC successfully filled all seats on the E&DTAC, ensuring representation from each of the five Santa Cruz County supervisorial districts.

Marketing and Transportation Alternatives

During the audit period, the RTC implemented a strategic shift in its marketing and public outreach efforts, transitioning from localized engagement to a comprehensive countywide approach. This evolution was designed to enhance public awareness of transportation programs, improve accessibility, and promote equity across Santa Cruz County. In addition, The Commission updated its Public Participation Plan in conjunction with AMBAG to ensure consistency with regional planning efforts and inclusive public input.

The RTC undertook significant digital upgrades to improve public interface and program visibility. Public access and information about the RTC and its work is available through its home website (<https://www.sccrtc.org/>). The RTC launched a redesigned website to improve navigation, accessibility, and mobile responsiveness. The updated platform supports clearer communication of programs and services. The website contains information about the agency's role in current transportation projects and programming, transportation plans (RTP, RTIP, etc.), Commission meeting agendas and minutes, newsletters and issues, transportation links, and library listing of past projects and studies. RTC staff also maintain an active email database of stakeholders and members of the community for electronic transmission of information. Social media engagement is conducted through Facebook and Twitter. Website metrics are tracked through Google Analytics.

RTC has offered alternative transportation options since 1979. One such medium has been Cruz511 (<http://cruz511.org/>), an online, centralized, multimodal traveler information service. The service provides travelers with real-time traffic conditions including travel speeds, images from traffic cameras, and incident and construction notifications.

The Cruz511 website has since grown both in size and in popularity. From this organic growth, clients can receive a customized plan including making trips on transit. For added benefit, the RTC has an MOU with the Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission to partner in an expanded online travel matching service for 12 San Francisco Bay Area counties. Along with using performance indicators to measure the impact of transportation choices, Cruz511 offers users the ability to calculate the cost of their commute. The site includes web links to several tools that measure impacts such as the true cost of driving calculator, a calculator to compare the price of using public transportation with the cost of driving, and a side-by-side comparison of the impacts of various vehicles in terms of gas mileage, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and safety.

RTC also expanded its active transportation and commuter incentive programs to encourage sustainable travel behavior. RTC first partnered with the City of Santa Cruz to lead a small-scale implementation with downtown employees, and in October 2019 the city launched "GO Santa Cruz". In April 2021, the RTC expanded GO Santa Cruz to employers and commuters countywide

and renamed the platform GO Santa Cruz County. The GO Santa Cruz County Program had over 6,500 registrants as of FY 2024 with a 20 percent active participation rate. The program offers incentives for walking, biking, carpooling, and transit use. Employer outreach and commuter benefits have been integrated into the program.

The Commission initiated the rollout of a new digital commuter management platform to enable users to log sustainable trips, monitor progress, and earn incentives. This tool is intended to increase commuter engagement and support mode shift goals. The RTC sponsors the GO BIKE! Incentive Program, which includes support for bike share memberships as part of a broader initiative to promote sustainable transportation across Santa Cruz County. There was targeted outreach to low-income individuals to improve equity in program access.

Launched as part of the GO Santa Cruz County initiative, the Downtown E-Bike Incentive Program provides financial rebates to eligible individuals who work in Downtown Santa Cruz and wish to purchase an electric bicycle. The program builds on a successful pilot that began in June 2023 and has since expanded due to strong demand and positive outcomes. Eligible applicants may receive a \$400 base rebate for a standard e-bike or an \$800 income-qualified rebate for low-income individuals. Rebates are redeemed at the time of sale, reducing the upfront cost of the e-bike directly at participating local bike shops.

Further, RTC coordinated with regional partners to amplify outreach and align messaging related to transit usage. The agency collaborated with Santa Cruz METRO's award-winning "One Ride at a Time" marketing campaign to promote transit ridership and environmental awareness. To participate, riders sign up for Go Santa Cruz County and log their bus trips. They earn 10 points for each trip, with a maximum of two trips per day. Once participants reach 250 points, or 25 trips, they can choose one of two nonprofit partners to receive a \$10 donation.

The RTC is an active member of the Central Coast Coalition, a multi-jurisdictional alliance of transportation agencies representing California's Central Coast region. The Coalition includes agencies from Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara counties, among others. Its primary mission is to advocate for equitable transportation funding and policy support for the Central Coast, which has historically been underrepresented in statewide transportation allocations. Commission staff and leadership participate in regular monthly meetings where member agencies review and discuss pending state and federal legislation; coordinate positions on transportation policy; and share updates on regional projects and funding needs.

Pursuant to the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, a Title VI Program has been developed and adopted by the Commission. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person in the United States, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The Title VI Program was developed during the audit period and approved on December 2, 2021. Program compliance includes Title VI notices and complaint forms published in English and Spanish that are posted on the RTC website and in its offices.

RTC's Title VI Policy Statement is also posted on the website (<https://www.sccrtc.org/about/title-vi-civil-rights-program/>). The Title VI Plan was subsequently updated and adopted in February 2025.

Grant Applications and Management

In Santa Cruz County, grant programming and management duties are shared between the RTC and AMBAG, which serves as the federal metropolitan planning organization for the three-county areas of Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito. The RTC is responsible for selecting projects to receive regional shares of certain state and federal funds and monitoring the use of the funds. AMBAG performs metropolitan-level transportation planning on behalf of the region. Among its many duties, AMBAG manages the region's transportation demand model and prepares regional housing, population, and employment forecasts that are used in a variety of regional plans. RTC and AMBAG relations have been positive in the coordination of activities that impact each of their respective planning and programming responsibilities.

During the audit period, RTC demonstrated strong performance in securing and managing grant funding to support its expansive portfolio of transportation projects. With over \$150 million in active projects under management—including the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes Project, the Highway Expenditure Plan under Measure D, and the 32-mile Coastal Rail Trail—the agency has strategically leveraged federal, state, and local funding sources to advance regional mobility and infrastructure goals. The Commission maintains control over six distinct funding mechanisms and has consistently pursued competitive grants to supplement its capital and planning programs.

RTC's grant management practices are anchored by a structured tracking system using a Microsoft Access database, which monitors grant awards, milestones, and reporting requirements. While this system has supported effective oversight, the agency is exploring the development of a project dashboard program to enhance transparency, interdepartmental coordination, and real-time performance monitoring. Evaluation metrics such as Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reductions and transportation equity are used to assess project impact and align funding decisions with broader policy objectives.

The agency conducts thorough reviews of invoices and project documentation to ensure compliance with grant conditions and the timely achievement of deliverables. RTC is also working toward consolidating its funding process, aiming to streamline grant administration and improve resource allocation across departments. This effort reflects a broader organizational commitment to efficiency and accountability in public fund management.

RTC has actively pursued high-value federal grants during the audit period, including applications for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) and National Infrastructure Project Assistance (MEGA) programs. Notably, the agency submitted a \$30 million MEGA grant to support corridor improvements and applied for AB 2766 funding to advance the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes project. In partnership with Community Bridges, RTC

also applied for the Federal Thriving Communities grant, seeking consultant support to enhance community engagement and project delivery capacity.

In FY 2024, RTC submitted a \$100 million grant application for transit infrastructure improvements tied to the Rapid Corridors Study, underscoring its commitment to multimodal transportation and regional connectivity. The agency maintains a collaborative relationship with Santa Cruz METRO, including monthly executive meetings with the general manager/CEO to coordinate funding strategies, optimize resources, and align transit priorities. This interagency coordination has strengthened RTC's ability to deliver complex projects and secure competitive funding in a dynamic transportation landscape.

Local Measure D has allowed for greater leverage in the management and utilization of grant funding. Measure D funds are used as a local match for a variety of state and federal grant programs that RTC and transit operators rely upon. The adoption of the Strategic Implementation Plan has allowed RTC to match specific transportation improvement projects with potential grant and formula programs. Local Measure D has allowed RTC to better support specialized transportation services. Four percent of Measure D revenues are allocated to Community Bridges Lift Line, which has allowed for service expansion.

RTC also works with Caltrans and its grant funding partners to obtain Caltrans planning grants for special studies. Provided that RTC staff have good grant writing experience, staff provide assistance to local agencies that require help and RTC sponsorship for eligibility. This assistance further promotes good relations between the RTC and its member agencies. RTC also provides letters of concurrence to partner agencies to support their grant application submittals.

Section V

Findings and Recommendations

The following summarizes the findings from the triennial audit covering FYs 2022 through 2024. A set of recommendations is then provided.

Findings

1. The RTC has satisfactorily complied with applicable state legislative mandates for RTPAs. One compliance measure that did not apply to the RTC pertains to adopting rules and regulations for TDA claims under Article 4.5. The agency does not disburse any TDA funds under this article section. Rather, the CTSA in the county (Community Bridges) receives TDA Article 8 funds through the City of Santa Cruz acting as the claimant on behalf of the paratransit/community transportation system.
2. The RTC satisfactorily implemented one of the four prior performance audit recommendations. The implemented recommendation pertained to the development of a strategic plan. The recommendation to ensure consistency between the transit operator TDA process and RTC's Rules and Regulations was partially implemented. The recommendations to clarify performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds and to convene an annual Board retreat were not implemented. Three of these prior recommendations are being forward in this audit for full implementation.
3. The Commission experienced changes in both its executive and professional staffing during and after the audit period. The Commission's executive director retired in December 2023 after five years of distinguished service. To maintain operational continuity, the RTC Board appointed an interim executive director with prior leadership experience at the California Transportation Commission. Following a comprehensive search, the Board appointed a former senior transportation engineer from within RTC's staff as the new executive director on September 9, 2024.
4. Measure D, a 30-year, countywide transportation one-half-cent transactions and use tax, gives the RTC leverage in applying for other transportation-related funding from state and federal grant programs as well as providing funding for transit services and maintaining and expanding transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. In FY 2023, RTC updated the measure's Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) through a collaborative process involving local jurisdictions and transit operators, incorporating revised project lists, funding allocations, and financial strategies such as pay-as-you-go, bond financing, and inter-program loans. The Final 2023 SIP was adopted in October 2023.

5. The Commission oversaw several major multimodal infrastructure projects that reflect its evolving role as both a planning and implementation agency. Key initiatives included ongoing stewardship of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, where RTC advanced the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) Project and completed storm damage repairs, while managing preventative maintenance and lease operations. The Coastal Rail Trail continued to expand, with construction beginning on the \$51.4 million North Coast Rail Trail Segment 5 and approximately 18 miles of trail either completed or under development. RTC also led planning and construction for the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane Project, incorporating California's first bus-on-shoulder facility and active transportation elements.
6. Interviews with RTC commissioners provided overall high ratings for staff and activities undertaken during the audit period. Management and staff are professional, focused, and responsive. Leadership transitions were also highlighted: the former executive director was credited with initiating agency restructuring, while the new executive director received strong praise for fostering a nimbler, implementation-focused organization.
7. The RTC advanced its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) process by adopting the 2045 RTP and initiating the 2050 RTP update. The 2045 RTP, adopted in June 2022, outlined \$9.7 billion in proposed projects across all modes, with an estimated \$5 billion in available funding, and emphasized reducing vehicle miles traveled through integrated land use and transportation planning. In mid-2023, RTC initiated the 2050 RTP Update, refining goals around sustainability, equity, and system preservation, and incorporating performance measures such as the Pavement Condition Index.
8. Despite no TDA funds being allocated for streets and roads, the RTC continues with an unmet transit needs process that involves obtaining public input and coordinating with the E&D TAC and Santa Cruz METRO to update the Unmet Specialized Transportation/Transit Needs List. The Commission also formally adopts the list as a sign of agreement. A public hearing is held annually in compliance with the law.
9. TDA claims submitted to the RTC are required to include detailed past and budgeted information to support the claims. The claims forms are reviewed by different Commission staff versed in their respective transportation expertise. Claims for transit and specialized transportation services, and claims for pedestrian improvements, are also reviewed by the E&D TAC. TDA claims for bicycle projects are reviewed by the Bicycle Advisory Committee.
10. The Commission's *Rules & Regulations* serves as an in-house TDA manual documenting the claims administration process by the RTC. The manual was revised in November 2022 and May 2024 to focus on clarifying roles, streamlining operations, and aligning with updated memoranda of understanding.
11. The RTC significantly enhanced its Unmet Transit Needs process by adopting a more data-driven, transparent, and inclusive approach aligned with the RTP goals. In May 2023, RTC implemented a weighted scoring system to evaluate transit needs based on access and

mobility, safety, cost effectiveness, and design feasibility. The annual needs list continues to be updated through a public survey distributed to partner agencies and the general public, with multilingual outreach to ensure broad participation. To address high turnover on the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&DTAC), RTC conducted a targeted recruitment drive and successfully restored full representation across all supervisorial districts.

12. During the audit period, the Commission advanced its marketing and transportation demand management (TDM) efforts through a strategic shift to countywide outreach, digital modernization, and expanded commuter incentive programs. The RTC redesigned its website for improved accessibility, maintained active social media and email communications, and updated its Public Participation Plan in coordination with AMBAG to ensure inclusive engagement.
13. The agency enhanced its Cruz511 traveler information platform and partnered with the Bay Area MTC to expand travel matching services. Through the GO Santa Cruz County program, RTC offered incentives for walking, biking, carpooling, and transit use, supported by a new commuter management platform and targeted outreach to low-income individuals. Additional initiatives included the Downtown E-Bike Incentive Program and collaboration with Santa Cruz METRO's "One Ride at a Time" campaign.
14. The Commission demonstrated strong performance in grants management, securing and overseeing over \$150 million in active transportation projects. In coordination with AMBAG, RTC selects and monitors projects funded through regional shares of state and federal programs, leveraging Measure D funds as local match to enhance competitiveness. Collaborative efforts with Santa Cruz METRO and local agencies have strengthened funding strategies and project delivery, while RTC's support for grant writing and sponsorship has fostered positive interagency relationships.

Triennial Audit Recommendations

1. Maintain on file evidence of submission of TDA performance audits to Caltrans.

As a compliance measure, a cover letter typically accompanies the electronic submission of the transportation planning agency's TDA triennial performance audit to Caltrans, while email submissions for claimant fiscal audits are made to the State Controller Office. Both types of audits are transmitted via email which provides evidence of date of submittal. These emails, including performance audit cover letter, should be filed in the agency's archives. The letter certifies completion of performance audits for both RTC and the Santa Cruz County transit operators. RTC staff could not locate the transmittal letter and verify that copies of the RTC and Santa Cruz County transit operators' performance audits were submitted to Caltrans. The auditor noted that RTC was unable to provide evidence that a cover letter or an email had been transmitted to Caltrans confirming completion of the performance audits for the past audit period. The auditor was able to confirm with Caltrans that the prior performance audits were received. In addition, the RTC had accepted these audit reports at their August 4, 2022, meeting. This oversight is considered an aberration since staff normally does maintain such documentation and it was just not found for the most recent previous audit. It is recommended that RTC exercise diligence in documenting and maintaining a file of its performance audit transmittals to Caltrans as per the statute.

2. Continue to ensure that the transit operator TDA process and clarity of the performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds are consistent with the updated RTC rules and regulations.

This recommendation is being forwarded in this audit for full implementation. The *Rules and Regulations* manual underwent two revisions during the audit period: November 2022 and May 2024. Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation and does not use the alternative revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA funds. The resolutions submitted with recent TDA claims cite PUC Sections 99268.1 and 99268.2b, under which Santa Cruz METRO is classified as an older operator subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation (PUC Section 99268.1) or the farebox recovery ratio (PUC Section 99268.2). However, there is no mention of the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement in the *Rules & Regulations* manual. Instead, Section V, Subsection B. states that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to PUC Section 6645 (relating to operators in urbanized and non-urbanized areas), and that the Transit District shall meet fare revenue to operating cost ratios (farebox recovery ratio) as set forth by state law and show different ratios for urban and rural service. It suggested that manual be revised to include acknowledgement of the 50 percent expenditure limitation that Santa Cruz METRO is subject to. This will also ensure that the performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds have been clarified.

3. Hold an annual Board retreat to foster better communication and cohesion among commissioners.

This recommendation is being forwarded in this audit for full implementation. Due to the recent change in executive leadership, RTC has yet to convene a formal board retreat. It is noted that the recently adopted Strategic Plan has enhanced efforts to get commissioners to think regionally about key issues. A retreat would offer several valuable benefits that directly support the goals and implementation of the Strategic Plan. They are regarded as a tool that fosters:

- Stronger relationships among board members and staff.
- Clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- More cohesive decision-making processes.

The RTC informed the auditor and provided an agenda for a retreat that was scheduled for October 16, 2025. The Commission acknowledged that while Board members do recognize the importance of good, strong, and positive communications and relationships for the work that they do, they are extremely busy due to other commitments. Therefore, it can be challenging to schedule additional meetings. Given the turnover on the Commission, the RTC is encouraged to periodically schedule a Board retreat that would offer both members, alternates, and staff an opportunity to reaffirm RTC's vision and mission as it continues to expand in its role as an implementation agency.

ATTACHMENT 2



FY 2022-2024 Triennial Performance Audit of the Santa Cruz County Transit Operators

Final

Submitted to:
Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission

October 2025

Michael Baker
INTERNATIONAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I.....	1
Introduction	1
Overview of the Transit System.....	1
Fleet	11
Section II.....	14
Operator Compliance Requirements.....	14
Section III.....	24
Prior Triennial Performance Recommendations	24
Section IV	29
TDA Performance Indicators.....	29
Section V	40
Review of Operator Functions	40
Operations	40
Maintenance	50
Planning.....	53
Marketing.....	56
General Administration and Management.....	59
Section VI	67
Findings	67
Recommendations	71

Section I

Introduction

California’s Transportation Development Act (TDA) requires that a triennial performance audit be conducted of public transit entities that receive TDA revenues. The performance audit serves to ensure accountability in the use of public transportation revenue.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) engaged Michael Baker International to conduct the TDA triennial performance audit of the public transit operators under its jurisdiction in Santa Cruz County. This performance audit is conducted for the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Santa Cruz METRO, METRO), Community Bridges, and the Volunteer Center, covering the most recent triennial period, fiscal years 2021–22 through 2023–24.

The purpose of the performance audit is to evaluate the operators’ effectiveness and efficiency in their use of TDA funds to provide public transportation in their service areas. This evaluation is required as a condition for continued receipt of these funds for public transportation purposes. In addition, the audit evaluates the operators’ compliance with the conditions specified in the California Public Utilities Code (PUC). This task involves ascertaining whether the operators are meeting the PUC’s reporting requirements. Moreover, the audit includes calculations of transit service performance indicators and a detailed review of the transit administrative functions. From the analysis that has been undertaken, a set of recommendations has been made which is intended to improve the performance of transit operations.

In summary, this TDA audit affords the opportunity for an independent, constructive, and objective evaluation of the organizations and their operations that otherwise might not be available. The methodology for the audit included in-person interviews with management, telephone interviews with board members, collection and review of agency documents, data analysis, and on-site observations. The *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities* published by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) was used to guide the development and conduct of the audit.

Overview of the Transit System

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Santa Cruz METRO)

Santa Cruz METRO was created in 1968 by the Santa Cruz Metropolitan District Act of 1967, a special district with taxing authority pursuant to Part 5 of the California PUC. Santa Cruz METRO initially provided public transit services to Santa Cruz, Capitola, and Live Oak. Service was eventually expanded to the San Lorenzo Valley, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville in 1974. In 1979, Santa Cruz County voters approved a measure that changed the district’s local financing structure from a property tax to a one-half-cent sales tax. The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, which resulted

in the closure of State Route (SR) 17, prompted Santa Cruz METRO to provide an emergency bus bridge between Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and San José. This service eventually evolved into the Highway 17 Express-Amtrak Thruway bus service in partnership with Amtrak California, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). Santa Cruz METRO is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors comprising representatives of the Cities of Watsonville, Santa Cruz, Capitola, and Scotts Valley, and from the unincorporated areas of the county. In addition, there are two ex officio members representing the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), and Cabrillo College.

Community Bridges

Community Bridges, the designated Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for Santa Cruz County, operates several specialized transportation services under the Lift Line program. The organization was founded in 1977 and offers a variety of human services programs encompassing family resources, nutrition, youth outreach, and transportation. Since 1982, Community Bridges has been offering transportation services through Lift Line as well as from taxi vehicles through the taxi scrip program. In November 2017, Community Bridges administration relocated from Aptos to Watsonville which, among other changes, enables transit administrative staff to be closer to the drivers and the operations facility. The operations and maintenance facility is located at 545 Ohlone Parkway in Watsonville.

Volunteer Center

The Santa Cruz Volunteer Center offers a variety of community-based programs targeted to seniors, persons with disabilities, families, and youth. The agency also serves as a resource for businesses, nonprofits, schools, government, and faith-based agencies that want to make a difference through effective, meaningful volunteer initiatives. The Volunteer Center Transportation Program provides free rides to ambulatory seniors, aged 60 and older, and disabled persons throughout the county. The program matches drivers with riders for essential trips to access medical appointments, banking, pharmacies, and grocery shopping.

Transit Service Area

Santa Cruz County is in the Central Coast region of California and forms the northern portion of Monterey Bay. The county is bordered by Santa Clara County to the east and northeast, Monterey County to the south, San Benito County to the southeast, and San Mateo County to the north. Established in 1850, the county was one of the original counties in California; the county's name means "holy cross" in Spanish. It has the second smallest geographic area of any county in California after the City and County of San Francisco. Agriculture, education, government services, health care, and tourism are mainstays of the local economy. Major highways traversing Santa Cruz County include SR 1, 9, 17, 35, 129, 152, and 236. SR 1 is the main coastal highway connecting the Cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, and Watsonville. SR 17 is the main north-south highway connecting Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley with San José and the Santa Clara Valley. A demographic snapshot of incorporated cities and the county is presented in Table I-1.

Table I-1
Santa Cruz County Demographics

City/Jurisdiction	2020 US Census Population	Change from 2010 US Census (percentage)	Population 65 Years & Older (percentage)	2025 California DOF Estimates	Land Area (in square miles)
Capitola	9,938	+0.2%	23.9%	9,670	1.59
Santa Cruz	62,956	+5.0%	12.3%	62,972	12.74
Scotts Valley	12,224	+5.6%	17.0%	11,831	4.60
Watsonville	52,590	+2.7%	10.2%	51,101	6.69
Unincorporated Area	133,153	+2.6%	22.0%	128,136	419.55
Total Santa Cruz County	270,861	+3.2%	17.3%	263,710	445.17

Source: 2020 US Census; California Department of Finance (DOF) 2025 Population Estimates

The City of Santa Cruz is the county seat and the largest city in the county. The county and its four incorporated cities saw modest growth between 2010 and 2020, as recorded in the US Census for each of those years. Scotts Valley had the highest percentage increase in population. The senior citizen population, comprising residents aged 65 and over, is 17.3 percent countywide. The 2025 population for Santa Cruz County is estimated to be 263,710, as reported by the California Department of Finance. The methodology behind this estimate is based on the correlation of three different methods that include administrative records, driver license, address changes, and household characteristics.

Transit System Characteristics

Santa Cruz METRO

Santa Cruz METRO operates fixed-route and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant paratransit service within Santa Cruz County as well as commuter service to Santa Clara County along the SR 17 corridor. Santa Cruz METRO operates four transit centers, which provide connections between routes and other transit services. The main transit center is the Santa Cruz METRO Center (Pacific Station) located at 920 Pacific Avenue in Santa Cruz which was demolished in early 2024. Redevelopment started soon after and is anticipated to be completed in 2026. A temporary transit center has been established in the City of Santa Cruz as the River Front Temporary Transit Center. Temporary traffic patterns have been established along with sidewalk revisions, and ancillary facilities to support METRO's operations during the redevelopment of Pacific Station. The other three transit centers are Capitola Mall, Cavallaro (Scotts Valley), and Watsonville.

Transit services operate seven days a week with varying service hours based on the mode. Certain routes operate only during the school terms for the San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District, UCSC, and Cabrillo College. Local fixed route does not operate on New Year's Day, Independence

Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day, but operates on the weekend schedule on the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and New Year’s Eve. Highway 17 Express operates the weekend schedule on the aforementioned holidays, except Independence Day where the service does not operate. The METRO ParaCruz operates most holidays except on New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Santa Cruz METRO operates 22 fixed routes, including the Highway 17 Express commuter route. Headways range from 15 minutes to 60 minutes depending on the route, time of day, and day of the week. Certain routes operate during peak periods to serve students attending UCSC and Cabrillo College as well as local middle and secondary schools. A summary of Santa Cruz METRO’s fixed-route service is presented in Table I-2.

Table I-2
Santa Cruz METRO Fixed Route & Commuter Services

Route Number	Description	Frequency/Operation	Destinations/Timepoints
1	Soquel/Cabillo/Airport to Watsonville/Santa Cruz	Every 15 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 12:47 a.m.) Every 15 minutes (Weekends from 7:00 a.m. to 12:51 a.m.)	▪ Watsonville TC Lane 3 ▪ Airport Blvd (Freedom Centre) ▪ Cabrillo College ▪ Soquel Dr (Dominican Hospital) ▪ River Front Area 2 ▪ River Front Area 1
2	Capitola/Cabrillo/Main to Watsonville/Santa Cruz	Every 30 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:25 a.m. to 12:45 a.m.) Every 30 minutes (Weekends from 7:10 a.m. to 12:19 a.m.)	▪ River Front Area 3 ▪ Capitola Rd & 7th Ave ▪ Capitola Mall ▪ Cabrillo College ▪ Main & Green Valley ▪ Watsonville Transit Center ▪ Watsonville Transit Center Lane 1 ▪ River Front Area 1
3A/3B	Capitola Mall to Live Oak via East Cliff/17th/Brommer	Every 30 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:23 a.m. to 11:53 p.m.) Every 30 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 6:25 a.m. to 11:21 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 3 ▪ 7th Ave & Capitola Rd ▪ East Cliff Village ▪ Capitola Mall ▪ Capitola Mall Lane 1
4	Harvey West	Every 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:21 p.m.)	▪ Riverfront Area 3 ▪ Metro Admin Offices ▪ Harvey West Park ▪ Emeline Complex

Route Number	Description	Frequency/Operation	Destinations/Timepoints
			▪ Riverfront Area 1
4W	River/Harvey West	Every 60 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 8:10 a.m. to 6:33 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 3 ▪ Harvey West Park ▪ River Front Area 1
11	UCSC via West Gate - High	Every 30 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:20 a.m. to 11:57 p.m.) Every 30 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 6:55 a.m. to 11:32 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 1 ▪ High & Moore ▪ Science Hill (UCSC) ▪ River Front Area 3
18	UCSC via Main Gate - Mission	Every 15 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:15 a.m. to 12:53 a.m.) Every 30 minutes (Weekends from 8:35 a.m. to 12:18 a.m.)	▪ River Front Area 1 ▪ Mission & Olive ▪ Science Hill (UCSC) ▪ Mission & Almar ▪ River Front Area 3
19	UCSC via West Gate - Bay	Every 15 minutes (Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 12:06 a.m.) Every 30 minutes (Weekends from 8:05 a.m. to 11:43 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 1 ▪ Bay & Mission ▪ Science Hill (UCSC) ▪ Bay & Mission ▪ River Front Area 3
20	UCSC via Main Gate – Delaware/Western	Every 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 8:22 p.m.) Every 60 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:52 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 1 ▪ Delaware & Swift ▪ Seymour Center ▪ Bay Dr & High ▪ Science Hill (UCSC) ▪ River Front Area 3
35	Highway 9/Scotts Valley to Boulder Creek/Santa Cruz	Every 30 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 12:07 a.m.) Every 30 minutes (Weekends from 7:30 a.m. to 11:34 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 2 ▪ Pasatiempo ▪ Scotts Valley Dr & Granite Creek ▪ Cavallaro Transit Center (Scotts Valley) ▪ San Lorenzo Valley High School ▪ Glen Arbor & Quail Hollow ▪ Hwy 9 & (Highlands Park) ▪ Hwy 9 & Main (Ben Lomond)

Route Number	Description	Frequency/Operation	Destinations/Timepoints
			▪ Hwy 9 & Hwy 236 (Boulder Creek) ▪ Bear Creek Rd & Deerwood Dr ▪ Mountain Store ▪ Country Club ▪ Hwy 9 & Sylvan Ave ▪ Hwy 9 & Lomond (Boulder Cr.) ▪ Big Basin State Park
40	Highway 1 to Davenport/Santa Cruz	Three AM & Four PM Trips (Monday through Friday from 6:55 a.m. to 9:16 p.m.) Two AM & One PM Trip (Weekends from 7:15 a.m. to 4:08 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 1 ▪ Santa Cruz High School ▪ Natural Bridges & Mission Ext ▪ Pacific School (Davenport) ▪ Mission & Swift ▪ River Front Area 3
41	Empire Grade to Bonny Doon/Santa Cruz	Two AM & four PM Trips (Monday through Friday from 5:50 a.m. to 9:55 p.m.) Two AM & one PM Trip (Weekends from 7:20 a.m. to 4:41 p.m.)	▪ River Front Area 1 ▪ Santa Cruz High School ▪ Bay Dr & High ▪ Pine Flat & Empire Grade ▪ Bonny Doon Rd & Pine Flat Rd ▪ River Front Area 3
55	Cabrillo to Rio Del Mar	More than 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 7:47 p.m.) More than 60 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:10 p.m.)	▪ Capitola Mall Lane 2 ▪ Stockton Ave & Esplanade ▪ Cabrillo College ▪ Summer & Clubhouse ▪ La Selva Beach ▪ Capitola Mall
72/72W	Green Valley to Hospital/Corralitos	Every 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:18 p.m.) Every 2 hours (Saturday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:27 p.m.)	▪ Watsonville TC Lane 1 ▪ Main & Green Valley ▪ Airport Blvd (Freedom Centre) ▪ Amesti & Green Valley ▪ Watsonville Transit Center ▪ Browns Valley & Corralitos

Route Number	Description	Frequency/Operation	Destinations/Timepoints
73	Soquel/Freedom to Watsonville/Cabrillo	Every 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 5:35 a.m. to 12:10 a.m.) Every 60 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 6:00 a.m. to 11:34 p.m.)	▪ Capitola Mall Lane 2 ▪ Cabrillo College ▪ Aptos High School ▪ Airport Blvd (Freedom Centre) ▪ Main & Ohlone ▪ Watsonville Transit Center ▪ Watsonville Transit Center Lane 2 ▪ Main & Clifford ▪ Capitola Mall Lane 2
74S	Pajaro Valley High School/Watsonville Hospital	One AM trip & one PM trip (Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:47 p.m.)	▪ Watsonville TC Lane 2 ▪ Pajaro Valley High School ▪ Green Valley & Main ▪ Airport Blvd. & Freedom ▪ Bowker Rd & Buena Vista Dr ▪ Neilson (Watsonville Hospital) ▪ Watsonville Transit Center
75	Green Valley to Wheelock/Downtown	Every 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. to 6:55 p.m.) Every 60 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:53 p.m.)	▪ Watsonville TC Lane 2 ▪ Airport Blvd. (Freedom Centre) ▪ Wheelock & Monte Vista School ▪ Main & Green Valley ▪ Watsonville Transit Center
78	Ohlone to Hospital/Freedom Centre	Every 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 5:50 a.m. to 6:45 p.m.) Every 60 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 6:50 a.m. to 6:35 p.m.)	▪ Watsonville TC Lane 2 ▪ Westridge Dr (Government Center) ▪ Neilson (Watsonville Hospital) ▪ Airport Blvd (Freedom Centre) ▪ Watsonville Transit Center
79	East Lake/Crestview	Every 30 minutes (Monday through Friday from 6:15 a.m. to 6:41 p.m.) Every 60 minutes (Saturday through Sunday from 7:10 a.m. to 6:35 p.m.)	▪ Watsonville TC Lane 2 ▪ Watsonville High School ▪ East Lake Shopping Center ▪ College & East Lake ▪ Hwy 152 & SC County Fairgrounds ▪ Watsonville Transit Center

Route Number	Description	Frequency/Operation	Destinations/Timepoints
Hwy 17 Express	Highway 17 Express – Amtrak Thruway	Every 60 minutes (Monday through Friday from 4:55 a.m. to 12:16 a.m.) Every 60 minutes (Weekends/Holidays from 6:50 a.m. to 12:20 a.m.)	▪ River Front Transit Center (Area 4) ▪ Cavallaro Transit Center (Scotts Valley) ▪ Diridon Station (Caltrain Depot) ▪ San Fernando & 7th

Source: Santa Cruz METRO

Fares

Santa Cruz METRO fare media comprises cash and several pass options based on the number of days and rides. All Santa Cruz METRO Day passes are good for unlimited rides in Santa Cruz County, excluding the Highway 17 Express route. All Highway 17 Express passes are good for unlimited rides on all Santa Cruz METRO and VTA local routes. Santa Cruz METRO also offers a cash card with no expiration date that is available in denominations of \$10, \$20, \$30, and \$50. Electronic plastic smart cards, including the METRO CRUZ pass and CRUZ Cash cards, are reloadable and are read by tapping the GFI Odyssey electronic fareboxes on the Santa Cruz METRO buses. In addition to the CRUZ cards, METRO implemented mobile ticketing during the audit period with the Splash Pass. The riders can purchase tickets through the Splash Pass app, which can be downloaded using their Apple or Android smartphones (<https://scmttd.apps>). Transfers to Monterey Salinas Transit buses are available for passengers from certain Santa Cruz METRO routes at the Watsonville Transit Center. Starting on March 1, 2023, METRO began a pilot program called Youth Cruz Free where K-12th grade students can ride all METRO local routes for free with a student ID. The current fare structure for Santa Cruz METRO and Highway 17 Express is summarized in Table I-3.

Table I-3
Santa Cruz METRO and Amtrak Highway 17 Express Fare Schedule

Fare Category	Regular Santa Cruz METRO Service						Highway 17 Express			
	Cash	Day Pass	3-Day Pass	7-Day Pass	31-Day Pass	15-Ride Pass	Cash	Day Pass	31-Day Pass	15-Ride Pass
Adult (Age 18+)	\$2	\$6	\$15	\$32	\$65	\$27	\$7	\$14	\$145	\$94.50
Discount Fare	\$1	\$3	\$7.50	\$16	\$32	\$13.50	\$3.50	\$14	\$145	\$94.50
Youth (Grades K-12)	Youth Cruz Free pilot program allows K-12 Students to ride METRO for free. * Show your student ID to board (suggested for 9-12th grade). *Youth Cruz Free does not apply to Highway 17 Express service. Children up to 46" may ride free with a fare paying adult. Children over 46" will be charged Adult Fare.									

Source: Santa Cruz METRO, <https://www.scmttd.com/en/>

Note: Beginning November 1, 2019, customers who are legally blind may ride the Santa Cruz METRO fixed-route bus system for free as a way to resolve some concerns raised by visually impaired riders who had difficulty using the ticket vending machines.

Santa Cruz METRO discount fares and passes are available to eligible seniors and persons with disabilities by presenting the following forms of identification:

- A METRO Discount photo ID card
- A METRO ParaCruz ID card
- A Discount photo ID card/Paratransit ID card issued by another transit agency.
- A senior citizen ID card
- A Medicare ID card
- Current state driver's license or current state ID card
- Government-issued ID that displays date of birth.
- A valid ID card for California disabled person parking placard
- A disabled veteran's ID card

METRO ParaCruz Paratransit

Through its ParaCruz service, Santa Cruz METRO provides door-to-door paratransit service to any destination within Santa Cruz County that is within 0.75 miles of an operating fixed route. Eligibility for this complementary ADA paratransit service is determined through an in-person interview. METRO ParaCruz operates on days and hours that reflect the local fixed-route bus service in the same area. ParaCruz does not operate on New Year's Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, or Christmas Day. Rides must be reserved one to three days in advance between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The ParaCruz fare is \$4.00 per one-way trip equivalent to a single fixed-route bus fare, and \$6.00 maximum per one-way trip if equivalent to two or more fixed-route bus fares. Premium fares are charged for will-call returns (\$8.00) and for a re-dispatched vehicle (\$16.00). A personal care attendant accompanying a fare-paying passenger rides free if an attendant is determined necessary during the transit evaluation interview.

Community Bridges – Lift Line

Community Bridges' Lift Line offers a variety of demand-responsive transit services for disabled, frail, and elderly persons throughout Santa Cruz County as well as to the adjacent counties of Monterey, San Mateo, San Benito, San Francisco, and Santa Clara. Lift Line services during the audit period included:

- Countywide medical transportation
- Out-of-county medical transportation
- Veterans' medical transportation
- Taxi scrip
- Elderday Adult Health Care transportation
- Senior dining center transportation (Meals on Wheels)

- Same day medical transportation

The medical transportation program provides transportation for Santa Cruz County residents who meet age, disability, and/or income criteria. Eligible riders can access dental, medical, and prescription appointments free of charge. This service operates Monday through Friday except holidays. Lift Line is currently using the ADA paratransit system pickup window lasting up to 30 minutes, with a pickup no sooner than 10 minutes before the scheduled pickup time and not less than 20 after the scheduled pickup time. The pickup window for outside contracts varies depending on the agreement between Lift Line (contractor) and outside agency (contractee). Trips are prioritized on a first-come, first-served basis.

Lift Line Access for all is an expansion of Community Bridges Lift Line service. Made possible by a state grant from the California Public Utilities Commission's Transportation Network Company's (TNC) Access for All program administered by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, allows for residents, regardless of income level, within Santa Cruz County with a disability to pay a flat \$5.00 fee per ride to utilize Community Bridges Lift Line services. Income-eligible older adults and people with disabilities will continue to enjoy Lift Line's services at no cost.

The out-of-county medical transportation service provides transportation from Santa Cruz County to a number of facilities including the Stanford Medical Center in Palo Alto, the Veterans Hospital, VA Monterey Bay/Fort Ord, Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, as well as others located in San Jose, Santa Clara, Menlo Park, San Francisco, and Gilroy. The service operates Monday through Friday excluding holidays and is available free of charge to Santa Cruz County residents who meet age, disability, and/or income criteria. Due to budget reductions, out-of-county areas are served certain days of the week. Locations closer to Santa Cruz County such as Monterey, Salinas, and San Benito are served Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, while northern locations including San Jose, Santa Clara, and San Francisco are served Tuesday and Thursday.

The veteran's medical transportation program provided transport free of charge to veterans who met residency, income, age, and/or disability criteria. This program provided service to the Veterans Building in Santa Cruz and to the VA Hospital Monterey Bay/Fort Ord. The veteran's transportation was combined with the out-of-county medical transportation for days of service until 2017 when the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 grant revenue ended, and the veterans service was discontinued.

The taxi scrip program offers discounted coupons or "scrip" to use for taxi fares. This program receives federal and local support through the TDA. An eligible person purchases scrip from Lift Line at a discounted rate for use on any one of three designated taxi carriers in Santa Cruz. The participating taxi companies included Santa Cruz Yellow Cab, Deluxe Cab Company, and Courtesy Cab Company of Watsonville. Rides are arranged directly with the taxi companies. The growth of transportation network companies (TNCs) has impacted the taxi industry, disrupting taxi service in the county, particularly in northern Santa Cruz.

Elderday transportation provides rides to and from Elderday twice a day using seven set routes. The senior dining center transportation program provides coordinated transportation to Meals on Wheels congregate dining centers in Santa Cruz County. Community Bridges also offers bus charter services for outside contracts/private events to help support its free and reduced programming using competitive flat rates.

Fleet

Santa Cruz METRO Fleet

There were 110 vehicles in the Santa Cruz METRO fixed-route active fleet during the audit period. The fleet has been almost completely transitioned from diesel-powered vehicles to alternative fuels such as compressed natural gas (CNG) or electric batteries. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible with tie-downs in compliance with the ADA. Table I-4 shows the active vehicle fleet information.

Table I-4
Santa Cruz METRO Transit Fleet

Year	Make/Model	Quantity	Seating Capacity	Fuel Type
1998	New Flyer D35LF	6	30 (2 W/C)	Diesel
1998	New Flyer D40LF	3	39 (2 W/C)	Diesel
2002	New Flyer D60LF	4	57 (2 W/C)	Diesel
2003	New Flyer D35LFC	11	30 (2 W/C)	CNG
2003	New Flyer D40LFC	2	39 (2 W/C)	CNG
2006	New Flyer C40LF	2	39 (2 W/C)	CNG
2008	New Flyer C40LF	8	39 (2 W/C)	CNG
2008	New Flyer C40LF	5	36 (2 W/C)	CNG
2010	New Flyer C40LFR	5	39 (2 W/C)	CNG
2011	New Flyer C40LFR	11	39 (2 W/C)	CNG
2013	New Flyer XN35	6	28 (2 W/C)	CNG
2013	New Flyer 60' Artic	9	52 (2 W/C)	CNG
2014	Gillig Low Floor	10	39 (2 W/C)	Diesel Hybrid
2016	New Flyer XN40	3	40 (2 W/C)	CNG
2019	Gillig Low Floor	5	38 (2 W/C)	CNG
2020	Gillig Low Floor	1	38 (2 W/C)	CNG
2020	Proterra ZX5 Max	4	38 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
2021	Gillig 35' Low Floor	3	32 (2 W/C)	CNG
2021	Gillig Low Floor	3	38 (2 W/C)	CNG
2022	Gillig Low Floor	4	32 (2 W/C)	CNG
2023	Gillig 40' BE Low Floor	1	38 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
2023	Gillig 40' BE Suburban	4	35 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
Total		110		

Source: Santa Cruz METRO Revenue Vehicle Listing. W/C - Wheelchair

ParaCruz operates a fleet of 32 unleaded gasoline-powered vehicles. The fleet varies in model type and passenger capacity. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible with tie-downs in compliance with the ADA. Table I-5 summarizes the ParaCruz fleet.

Table I-5
ParaCruz Fleet

Year	Make/Model	Quantity	Seating Capacity	Fuel Type
2003	Ford Goshen GCII	1	17 (2 W/C)	Gas
2010	Dodge Amerivans	1	2 (1 W/C)	Gas
2011	Ford E350 - Versa Shuttle	2	4 (1 W/C)	Gas
2011	Ford E350 – Versa Shuttle	1	5 (1 W/C)	Gas
2015	Dodge Amerivans	2	4 (1 W/C)	Gas
2015	Ford/ElDorado-F550 Aeroelite 270	1	22 or 7 W/C	Gas
2017	Ford E350-Starlite 20	1	8 (1 W/C)	Gas
2018	Ford/Starcraft-T350 Starlite	11	10 (1 W/C)	Gas
2018	Ford/Starcraft-E450Allstar	2	14 (2 W/C)	Gas
2019	Ford/Starcraft-T350 Starlite	3	10 (1 W/C)	Gas
2023	Ford/Starcraft-T350 Starlite	7	14 (2 W/C)	Gas
Total		32		

Source: Santa Cruz METRO Revenue Vehicle Listing. W/C - Wheelchair

Community Bridges – Lift Line Fleet

Community Bridges’ Lift Line service operates a fleet of 19 unleaded gasoline-powered vehicles and 8 electric vehicles. The new electric vehicles are targeted for service in disadvantaged communities in Watsonville. Funding for the electric vehicles also provided two Level 2 charging stations at the Lift Line fleet facility in Watsonville. Newer vehicles have on-board cameras installed for safety. The fleet varies in type and passenger capacity, with many older vehicles being replaced during the audit period. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible with tie-downs in compliance with the ADA. Table I-6 summarizes the Lift Line fleet.

Table I-6
Lift Line Fleet

Year	Make/Model	Quantity	Seating Capacity	Fuel Type
2006	Chevy Uplander	1	3 (1 W/C)	Gas
2006	Chevy Uplander	1	3 (1 W/C)	Gas
2007	Ford E350	1	8 (2 W/C)	Gas
2008	Chevy Uplander	1	3 (1 W/C)	Gas
2013	Dodge Grand Caravan	1	3 (1 W/C)	Gas
2013	Ford E450	1	16 (2 W/C)	Gas
2013	Ford E450	5	11 (2 W/C)	Gas

Year	Make/Model	Quantity	Seating Capacity	Fuel Type
2016	Dodge Grand Caravan	2	3 (1 W/C)	Gas
2019	Dodge Grand Caravan	3	3 (1 W/C)	Gas
2019	Ford E-350	1	6 (2 W/C)	Gas
2019	Ford E-450	3	(2 W/C)	Gas
2019	Ford E-450 EV	2	15 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
2019	Ford E-450 EV	1	6 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
2019	Ford PHNX	2	15 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
2019	Ford PHNX	1	6 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
2022	Ford PHNX	1	11 (2 W/C)	Battery Electric
2023	Ford Transit	1	7 (1 W/C)	Battery Electric
Total		27		

Source: Lift Line/Community Bridges Vehicle List. W/C - Wheelchair

Volunteer Center

The Santa Cruz Volunteer Center’s volunteer driver transportation program addresses the needs of ambulatory seniors and disabled people by offering free rides throughout the county. Wheelchair riders cannot be accommodated. The program matches drivers with seniors aged 60 years and older and disabled persons for essential trips to medical appointments, grocery shopping, banking, and pharmacies. Two rides per week are available for eligible persons to meet basic needs or get to needed appointments. Rides are provided throughout Santa Cruz County including Watsonville, San Lorenzo Valley, Scotts Valley, and Santa Cruz. Drivers are required to have a good driving record, a reliable automobile, and insurance. The Volunteer Center offers drivers supplemental insurance. At the beginning of the audit period, the Volunteer Center launched a Grocery Shopper Program and medication delivery services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This program served the same specialized population served by the Volunteer Center’s Transportation Program.

Section II

Operator Compliance Requirements

This section of the audit report contains the analysis of the Santa Cruz County transit operators' abilities to comply with state requirements for continued receipt of TDA funds. The evaluation uses the guidebook, *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies*, September 2008 (third edition), developed by Caltrans to assess transit operators. The guidebook contains a checklist of 11 measures taken from relevant sections of the PUC and the California Code of Regulations. Each of these requirements is discussed in the table below, including a description of the systems' efforts to comply with the requirements. In addition, the findings from the compliance review are described in the text following the table.

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
The transit operator has submitted annual reports to the RTPA based upon the Uniform System of Accounts and Records established by the State Controller. The report is due within seven (7) months after the end of the fiscal year (on or before January 31). The report shall contain underlying data from audited financial statements prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, if this data is available.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99243	Completion/submittal dates: <i>For Santa Cruz METRO:</i> FY 2022: January 31, 2023 FY 2023: January 31, 2024 FY 2024: January 31, 2025 <i>For Santa Cruz METRO-ParaCruz: (specialized service)</i> FY 2022: January 31, 2023 FY 2023: January 31, 2024 FY 2024: January 31, 2025 Reports were filed electronically. Conclusion: Complied.
The operator has submitted annual fiscal and compliance audits to the RTPA and to the State Controller within 180 days following the end of the	Public Utilities Code, Section 99245	Completion/submittal dates: <i>For Santa Cruz METRO (prepared by Brown Armstrong Accountancy Corporation):</i>

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
fiscal year or has received the appropriate 90-day extension by the RTPA allowed by law.		FY 2022: December 9, 2022 FY 2023: December 27, 2023 FY 2024: December 13, 2024 <i>For Community Bridges (prepared by Kaku & Mersino, LLP CPA):</i> FY 2022: December 12, 2022 FY 2023: December 14, 2023 FY 2024: December 11, 2024 Conclusion: Complied.
The CHP has, within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim submitted by an operator, certified the operator’s compliance with Vehicle Code Section 1808.1 following a CHP inspection of the operator’s terminal.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99251 B	Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges – Lift Line participate in the California Highway Patrol (CHP) Transit Operator Compliance Program in which the CHP has conducted inspections within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim. <i>For Santa Cruz METRO:</i> Inspections were conducted at the Santa Cruz METRO facility located at 138 Golf Club Drive in Santa Cruz (for METRO fixed route) and 2880 Research Park Drive #160 in Soquel (for *ParaCruz). Inspection dates applicable to the audit period of fixed route vehicles were November 30, December 1 - 3, 2021; November 28 - December 1, 2022; and November 27 - 30, 2023.

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
		During an inspection on November 30, 2023, one Santa Cruz METRO vehicle was found having an obstructed emergency exit window due to the misapplication of an exterior vehicle body wrap and had to be taken out of service. In addition, there were minor discrepancies involving the completion of the daily vehicle inspection reports, broken mirrors, and vehicle cleanliness. Inspection dates applicable to the audit period of ParaCruz paratransit vehicles were November 3 - 4, 2021. <i>*Due to the seating capacity being reduced on ParaCruz paratransit vehicles, CHP terminal inspections are no longer required. The last inspections were conducted in FY 2022.</i> Inspections were found to be satisfactory. <i>For Community Bridges – Lift Line:</i> Inspections were conducted at the Lift Line Operations Facility located at 545 Ohlone Parkway in Watsonville. Inspection dates applicable to the audit period were June 28 and July 1, 2021; June 22 – 23, 2022;

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
		October 2, 2023; and June 11 – 12, 2024. Inspections were found to be satisfactory. Conclusion: Complied.
The operator’s claim for TDA funds is submitted in compliance with rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA for such claims.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99261	As a condition of approval, the Santa Cruz County transit operators’ annual claims for Local Transportation Funds (LTF)_and State Transit Assistance funds are submitted in compliance with the rules and regulations adopted by the SCCRTC. Conclusion: Complied.
If an operator serves urbanized and non-urbanized areas, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to the ratio determined by the rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99270.1	According to the SCCRTC <i>Rules & Regulations</i> manual (revised November 2022), Santa Cruz METRO is subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement (see Table IV-6 for the 50 percent expenditure calculation). Santa Cruz METRO is defined in the TDA as an older operator, having initiated service prior to July 1, 1974. Older operators may qualify for TDA under the 50 percent expenditure exemption or farebox recovery ratio standard. Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation required by

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
		Public Utilities Code, Section 99268 and does not use the alternate revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA funds. Conclusion: Complied.
The operator’s operating budget has not increased by more than 15% over the preceding year, nor is there a substantial increase or decrease in the scope of operations or capital budget provisions for major new fixed facilities unless the operator has reasonably supported and substantiated the change(s).	Public Utilities Code, Section 99266	Percentage increase in the Santa Cruz County transit operators’ operating budgets: <i>For Santa Cruz METRO:</i> FY 2022: +2.9% FY 2023: +7.7% FY 2024: +6.8% <i>For Community Bridges (LTF/STA):</i> FY 2022: +15.9% FY 2023: +52.7% FY 2024: -10.2% <i>For Volunteer Center:</i> FY 2022: -8.3% FY 2023: +22.0% FY 2024: -3.3% The operating budget increases exceeding 15 percent for Community Bridges are attributed to a 30 percent increase in insurance premiums, employee salary, and benefits. The 22 percent increase in the FY 2023 operating budget for the Volunteer Center is attributed to increased insurance costs,

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
		recruitment, marketing, and mileage reimbursement. <i>Source: Santa Cruz County transit operators' budgets for FYs 2021–2024</i> Conclusion: Complied.
The operator's definitions of performance measures are consistent with Public Utilities Code Section 99247, including (a) operating cost, (b) operating cost per passenger, (c) operating cost per vehicle service hour, (d) passengers per vehicle service hour, (e) passengers per vehicle service mile, (f) total passengers, (g) transit vehicle, (h) vehicle service hours, (i) vehicle service miles, and (j) vehicle service hours per employee.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99247	The Santa Cruz County transit operators' definition of performance is consistent with PUC Section 99247, based on data collection methods and reporting. Conclusion: Complied.
If the operator serves an urbanized area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to one-fifth (20 percent), unless it is in a county with a population of less than 500,000, in which case it must maintain a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs of at least equal to three-twentieths (15 percent), if so determined by the RTPA.	Public Utilities Code, Sections 99268.2, 99268.3, 99268.12	According to the SCCRTC <i>Rules & Regulations</i> manual (revised November 2022), Santa Cruz METRO is subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement (see Table IV-6 for the 50 percent expenditure calculation). Conclusion: Complied.

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
If the operator serves a rural area, or provides exclusive services to elderly and disabled persons, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to one-tenth (10 percent).	Public Utilities Code, Sections 99268.2, 99268.4, 99268.5	SCCRTC updated its <i>Rules & Regulations</i> manual in November 2022 that affirms Santa Cruz METRO is subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement (see Table IV-6 for the 50 percent expenditure calculation). Community Bridges and Volunteer Center are subject to a 10 percent local match requirement established by the SCCRTC. The TDA claim forms attest to at least a 10 percent local match to TDA allocations. However, the budget for Volunteer Center transportation shows less than a 10 percent local match through donations. With the shortfall in the local match, an alternative performance measure should be discussed between the SCCRTC and Volunteer Center as to which is allowable under PUC 99400(c) claims. Pursuant to a prior audit recommendation, in lieu of the 10 percent local match, the Volunteer Center, in concert with the SCCRTC, came up with a minimum number of riders of 1,000 per quarter metric. Conclusion: Complied.
The current cost of the operator's retirement system is fully funded with respect to	Public Utilities Code, Section 99271	Santa Cruz METRO contributes toward its employees' defined benefit pension plan, the

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
the officers and employees of its public transportation system, or the operator is implementing a plan approved by the RTPA which will fully fund the retirement system within 40 years.		Miscellaneous Plan for the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. The plan is part of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS). There were 301 active members in the Plan as of June 30, 2024, who were required to contribute a percentage of their annual covered salary. Santa Cruz METRO also offers a deferred compensation plan under IRS Section 457. Community Bridges offers a deferred compensation plan for full-time employees, covering employees who have six consecutive months of service from the date of hire, as described in the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with SMART Local 23. Conclusion: Complied.
If the operator receives state transit assistance funds, the operator makes full use of funds available to it under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 before TDA claims are granted.	California Code of Regulations, Section 6754(a)(3)	Santa Cruz METRO receives State Transit Assistance funds in addition to federal funds that are available to the district as reported in the federal NTD reports: FY 2022: \$20,847,377 (Operations) \$1,496,889 (Capital) FY 2023: \$10,323,762 (Operations) \$4,234,641 (Capital) FY 2024: \$11,763,897 (Operations) \$257,957 (Capital) <i>Source: National Transit Database</i>

Table II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix		
Operator Compliance Requirements	Reference	Compliance Efforts
		Conclusion: Complied.

Findings and Observations from Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix

1. The Santa Cruz County transit operators complied with each of the 11 compliance requirements. Community Bridges and Volunteer Center are subject to a 10 percent local match requirement established by the SCCRTC. The TDA claim forms attest to at least a 10 percent local match to TDA allocations. The 10 percent local match for LTF funding by Volunteer Center has historically been met through donations. In lieu of the 10 percent local match, Volunteer Center in concert with the SCCRTC, came up with a minimum number of riders of 1,000 per quarter metric.
2. According to the SCCRTC *Rules & Regulations* manual (revised November 2022), Santa Cruz METRO is subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement. The agency met the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement.
3. The Santa Cruz County transit operators (Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges - Lift Line) participate in the CHP Transit Operator Compliance Program and received vehicle inspections within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim. Satisfactory ratings were made for all inspections conducted during the audit period for both agencies. During an inspection on November 30, 2023, one Santa Cruz METRO vehicle was found having an obstructed emergency exit window due to the misapplication of an exterior vehicle body wrap and had to be taken out of service. In addition, there were minor discrepancies involving the completion of the daily vehicle inspection reports, broken mirrors, and vehicle cleanliness. In another development, due to the seating capacity being reduced on ParaCruz paratransit vehicles, CHP terminal inspections are no longer required. The last inspections pertaining to that service mode were conducted in FY 2022. No violations were noted for the Community Bridges' CHP inspections.
4. The operating budget for Santa Cruz METRO exhibited modest fluctuations during the audit period and did not exceed 15 percent. In contrast, the operating budgets for Community Bridges – Lift Line and the Volunteer Center did exhibit increases above 15 percent. The operating budget increases for Community Bridges are attributed to a 30 percent increase in insurance premiums, higher employee salaries, and benefits. The 22 percent increase in the FY 2023 operating budget for the Volunteer Center is attributed to increased insurance costs (for drivers), recruitment, marketing, and mileage reimbursement.

Section III

Prior Triennial Performance Recommendations

The Santa Cruz County transit operators' efforts to implement the recommendations made in the prior triennial audit are examined in this section of the report. For this purpose, each prior recommendation for the agency is described, followed by a discussion of the transit operators' efforts to implement the recommendation. Conclusions concerning the extent to which the recommendations have been adopted by the operator(s) are then presented.

Prior Recommendation 1

Continue to ensure the clarity of the performance eligibility criteria for TDA-Local Transportation Funds. (Santa Cruz METRO)

Background: Article 4 of the TDA statute provides alternatives for Santa Cruz METRO to be eligible for TDA-Local Transportation Funds. One is for Santa Cruz METRO to meet the farebox recovery ratio. The other is to meet the 50 percent expenditure rule as an older operator, defined as service starting prior to 1974. Currently, Santa Cruz METRO meets both requirements but the documentation stating eligibility has not been consistent. For example, the TDA claims submitted to the SCCRTC by Santa Cruz METRO provide a breakdown of the farebox recovery ratio split out between urbanized service versus non-urban service farebox ratios for the prior year and year-to-date.

The claim includes a table showing the projected urban versus rural farebox recovery ratio for the claim year. The allocation of fare revenue between rural and urban service is from the actual fare revenue/total revenue from two years prior and the budgeted claim year fare revenue. However, the resolutions submitted with recent TDA claims cite PUC Sections 99268.1 and 99268.2b, under which Santa Cruz METRO is classified as an older operator subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation (PUC Section 99268.1) or the farebox recovery ratio (PUC Section 99268.2). Pursuant to the TDA, Santa Cruz METRO meets the 50 percent expenditure limitation and does not use the alternative revenue ratio to determine eligibility for TDA funds. Santa Cruz METRO and SCCRTC should discuss the applicability of each criterion and agree on which of the two meets compliance with rules and regulations for LTF.

METRO has since clarified that the agency and SCCRTC have discussed and agreed to use only the 50 percent expenditure limitation rather than farebox recovery on the TDA claims form to be consistent with METRO's audited financial statements for the FY 2022 TDA Claims.

However, METRO's inability to implement this prior recommendation was attributed to the prior triennial audit draft report being completed in February 2020 and the final report being completed in April 2020. On March 29, 2020, METRO had already submitted its FY 2021 draft and final TDA claim materials to SCCRTC, as per SCCRTC's FY 2020-21 TDA Funding Cycle Calendar. Therefore,

there was no time for METRO and SCCRTC to discuss the applicability of each criterion and agree on which of the two criteria meets compliance with rules and regulations for the LTF allocation. This recommendation has been implemented with the submittal of the ensuing TDA claims; however, it is suggested that subsequent TDA claim guidelines clarify the proper criteria. This clarity will provide consistency in reporting performance measures for LTF eligibility.

Actions taken by Santa Cruz METRO

SCCRTC updated its *Rules & Regulations* manual in November 2022 that affirms Santa Cruz METRO is subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement.

Conclusion

This recommendation has been implemented.

Prior Recommendation 2

Update aging website infrastructure. (Santa Cruz METRO)

Background: The Santa Cruz METRO website was redesigned with an upgraded content management system. This has resulted in better functionality. The website features METRO's refreshed logo, a Google Transit trip planner, and service calendar, as well as a Spanish version of the site. Website maintenance and coding are conducted in-house by the IT department. Even though the website continues to function well and supports METRO's efforts to inform and engage the community, the underlying infrastructure is 12 to 13 years old. This has inhibited further upgrades such as adding headers to the webpages. In addition, METRO's efforts in recent years to procure and implement CAD-AVL and mobile ticketing as well as the Cruz On-Demand pilot necessitate improvements to the website in order to integrate effectively with these recent developments. The new infrastructure could also provide a better interface with social media platforms and enhance accessibility.

Actions taken by Santa Cruz METRO

Santa Cruz METRO has made several recent upgrades to their transit system website as part of their Reimagine METRO initiative. The website has been redesigned to be more user-friendly, with easier navigation and access to schedules, service changes, and real-time updates. In addition, the website now provides detailed information about the increased frequency and new routes introduced under the Reimagine METRO plan. This includes more frequent service on popular routes and extended evening service. The site features updated trip planning tools, including integration with Google Transit, making it easier for riders to plan their trips. In addition, METRO has added sections for community feedback and updates on ongoing projects, ensuring riders are informed and can participate in the planning process.

Conclusion

This recommendation has been implemented.

Prior Recommendation 3

Continue to ensure the alignment of data analytics training for staff with the deployment of new technology. (Santa Cruz METRO)

Background: Santa Cruz METRO has placed a priority on replacing aging equipment and upgrading its communication infrastructure. Santa Cruz METRO has been in the process of implementing components of its intelligent transportation systems platform, which includes CAD-AVL, APCs, voice annunciators, and mobile ticketing apps. The agency is also seeking to procure a new ERP system as well as laying the groundwork for the integration of zero-emission vehicle infrastructure. The agency has placed an emphasis on KPIs as an essential performance monitoring tool. The deployment of these technologies requires that staff be kept abreast of how to analyze and integrate the performance data from these new systems. Therefore, it was suggested that METRO ensure continued data analytics training for staff as these technologies are implemented.

Actions taken by Santa Cruz METRO

The agency made significant strides in upgrading its technological infrastructure. During FY 2024, Santa Cruz METRO implemented Workday, its new enterprise resource planning software program. This upgrade replaces outdated legacy systems and manual processes, enabling electronic funds transfers, direct deposits, and more efficient financial reporting. In addition, the agency implemented Microsoft 365 as well as cybersecurity enhancements. Technology upgrades on the vehicles included implementation of the second phase of automated passenger counters (APCs) from Cleaver Devices. The new APCs are designed to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of ridership data collection. The Workday ERP software does have a KPI module, which has yet to be activated. In addition, the agency is considering the acquisition of TransTrack, a comprehensive transit operations software designed to help transit agencies manage and analyze their data effectively. With these new tools in place or under consideration, particularly with the implementation of Reimagine METRO, the agency is encouraged to optimize the modules contained in these tools to implement a useful KPI system for analysis and planning purposes.

Conclusion

This recommendation has been partially implemented and is being carried forward for full implementation. Santa Cruz METRO is encouraged to optimize the KPI features offered through the Workday ERP as well as look into the acquisition and implementation of TransTrack or another comparable transit operations tracking software program.

Prior Recommendation 4

Consider the development of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) option that would complement existing service modes. (Community Bridges – Lift Line)

Background: The recent integration of the Ecolane software program has given the Lift Line transportation service more tools with which to develop and implement Mobility as a Service (MaaS) option. Community Bridges has been considering the implementation of a complementary Mobility on Demand pay per ride taxi service. Community Bridges already has an existing business plan for a taxi service. The new Ecolane dispatching software has made it more efficient to combine rides and searches for the most accessible driver for trip requests. It also has a self-booking feature that is poised to be implemented in mid-2022. In addition, the software has an AVL feature tied to Google Maps. Furthermore, procurement of smaller, electric-powered vehicles would make the implementation of such a service more feasible.

Actions taken by Community Bridges – Lift Line

During the audit period, Lift Line launched the Access for All program, which aims to provide accessible transportation to residents with disabilities. Made possible by a state grant from the California Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC) Transportation Network Company’s Access for All program, and administered by the SCCRTC, residents with disabilities can travel to any destination within Santa Cruz County for a flat fee of \$5.00 per ride. Older-income-eligible adults and people with disabilities can utilize the service at no cost. Rides can be scheduled through a mobile app developed through Ecolane. Rides are billed weekly every Friday. Fare payment can also be made through PayPal.

Conclusion

This recommendation has been implemented.

Prior Recommendation 5

Integrate the Transportation Program goals with those of the Grocery Shopper Program. (City of Santa Cruz – Volunteer Center)

Background: As part of its annual TDA claim submittal, the City of Santa Cruz on behalf of the Volunteer Program, provides a series of performance goals for its key programs. That has been generally for the Transportation Program. Goals for the program are reviewed each year and compared to actual data in the reports submitted to the City of Santa Cruz and the SCCRTC as conditions of receiving TDA funds. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Volunteer Center shifted focus and created the Seniors Grocery Shopper Program, which provides grocery and medication delivery services to its client base. The number of senior clients served measures performance. The Volunteer Center’s goal is to serve 150 seniors with the Grocery Shopper

Program. It is suggested that as the Transportation Program resumes normal operations that the Volunteer Center can provide and integrate those program goals with those of the Grocery Shopper Program in its annual TDA claim.

Actions taken by the Volunteer Center – City of Santa Cruz

The Volunteer Center continued to maintain the Seniors Grocery Shopper Program during the audit period. Its focus has been on building back its volunteer driver pool since the COVID-19 pandemic. The center experienced huge declines in volunteer participation rates in 2022 and 2023. However, 12 new volunteers were onboarded in 2024 within a six-month period. Performance data are reported quarterly to SCCRTC and the City of Santa Cruz. Ridership statistics for both the Transportation Program and the Grocery Shopper Program are track on a spreadsheet compiled by Volunteer Center staff quarterly. However, the program goals for the Transportation Programs have yet to be integrated with those of the Grocery Shopper Program. It is suggested once the volunteer driver pool has recovered to pre-pandemic level that staff revisit setting measurable goals for both programs.

Conclusion

This recommendation has not been implemented and is being forwarded for full implementation.

Section IV

TDA Performance Indicators

This section reviews the Santa Cruz County transit operators' performance in providing transit service to the community in an efficient and effective manner. The TDA requires that at least five specific performance indicators be reported, which are contained in the following tables. Although farebox recovery ratio is not one of the five specified indicators, it is a requirement for continued TDA funding. Two additional performance indicators, operating cost per mile and average fare per passenger, are included as well to help gauge operational efficiency. Findings from the analysis are contained in the section following the tables.

Tables IV-1 through IV-5 provide the performance indicators for the Santa Cruz METRO system-wide service, including fixed-route and paratransit services, as well as indicators for Community Bridges/Lift Line and Volunteer Center. Graphs are also included to depict the trends in the indicators. It is noted that the system-wide operating costs and fare revenues are based on audited figures drawn from the financial statements, while modal costs and fare revenues for fixed-route and paratransit costs are unaudited and drawn from the federal National Transit Database (NTD). The annual fiscal audits do not provide a modal breakdown.¹ Also, only operations costs for Community Bridges are audited figures for the small operators, as the fiscal audits do not separate transportation costs and revenues from all programs provided by the nonprofit entities.

¹ The sum of operating expenses by mode reported in the NTD does not equal the audited total operating costs. The NTD operating costs by mode only reflect costs allocated by Santa Cruz METRO to that particular mode in following NTD guidelines. Additional operating costs are classified as other reconciling items in the NTD and are not separated by mode.

Table IV-1
Santa Cruz METRO TDA Performance Indicators
System-Wide

Performance Data and Indicators	FY 2021	Audit Period			% Change FY 2021-2024
		FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	
Operating Cost	\$56,125,285	\$50,646,314	\$53,653,001	\$63,430,727	13.0%
Total Passengers	946,114	2,837,891	3,350,026	3,911,719	313.5%
Vehicle Service Hours	175,253	211,715	214,748	223,104	27.3%
Vehicle Service Miles	2,365,482	2,952,329	2,975,126	3,085,619	30.4%
Employee FTE's	291	279	314	356	22.3%
Passenger Fares	\$4,898,901	\$8,247,748	\$9,042,854	\$9,172,032	87.2%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$59.32	\$17.85	\$16.02	\$16.22	-72.7%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$320.25	\$239.22	\$249.84	\$284.31	-11.2%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$23.73	\$17.15	\$18.03	\$20.56	-13.4%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	5.4	13.4	15.6	17.5	224.8%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.40	0.96	1.13	1.27	217.0%
Vehicle Service Hours per Employee	602.2	758.8	683.9	626.7	4.1%
Average Fare per Passenger	\$5.18	\$2.91	\$2.70	\$2.34	-54.7%
Fare Recovery Ratio	8.73%	16.28%	16.85%	14.46%	65.7%
CPI - (California Index - All Consumers)	4.2%	7.3%	3.9%	3.1%	

Source: SCMTD Financial Statements (Audited), National Transit Database, Transit Operators Financial Transactions Reports

Table IV-2
Santa Cruz METRO TDA Performance Indicators
Fixed Route

Performance Data and Indicators	FY 2021	Audit Period			% Change FY 2021-2024
		FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	
Operating Cost	\$40,048,905	\$44,791,509	\$43,462,747	\$51,191,324	27.8%
Total Passengers	907,140	2,775,283	3,275,802	3,841,381	323.5%
Vehicle Service Hours	150,220	179,509	177,849	187,427	24.8%
Vehicle Service Miles	2,130,718	2,585,108	2,541,657	2,678,401	25.7%
Employee FTE's	254	241	276	308	21.3%
Passenger Fares	\$4,251,755	\$8,037,201	\$8,781,549	\$8,924,823	109.9%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$44.15	\$16.14	\$13.27	\$13.33	-69.8%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$266.60	\$249.52	\$244.38	\$273.13	2.4%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$18.80	\$17.33	\$17.10	\$19.11	1.7%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	6.0	15.5	18.4	20.5	239.4%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.43	1.07	1.29	1.43	236.9%
Vehicle Service Hours per Employee	591.4	744.9	644.4	608.5	2.9%
Average Fare per Passenger	\$4.69	\$2.90	\$2.68	\$2.32	-50.4%
Fare Recovery Ratio	10.62%	17.94%	20.20%	17.43%	64.2%
CPI - (California Index - All Consumers)	4.2%	7.3%	3.9%	3.1%	

Source: National Transit Database, Transit Operators Financial Transactions Reports

Table IV-3
ParaCruz TDA Performance Indicators
Paratransit

Performance Data and Indicators	FY 2021	Audit Period			% Change FY 2021-2024
		FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	
Operating Cost	\$5,013,166	\$5,316,792	\$5,106,574	\$5,814,281	16.0%
Total Passengers	38,974	62,608	74,224	70,338	80.5%
Vehicle Service Hours	25,033	32,206	36,899	35,677	42.5%
Vehicle Service Miles	234,764	367,221	433,469	407,218	73.5%
Employee FTE's	37	38	38	48	29.7%
Passenger Fares	\$114,807	\$210,547	\$261,306	\$247,209	115.3%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$128.63	\$84.92	\$68.80	\$82.66	-35.7%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$200.26	\$165.09	\$138.39	\$162.97	-18.6%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$21.35	\$14.48	\$11.78	\$14.28	-33.1%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	1.6	1.9	2.0	2.0	26.6%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	4.0%
Vehicle Service Hours per Employee	676.6	847.5	971.0	743.3	9.9%
Average Fare per Passenger	\$2.95	\$3.36	\$3.52	\$3.51	19.3%
Fare Recovery Ratio	2.29%	3.96%	5.12%	4.25%	85.7%
CPI - (California Index - All Consumers)	4.2%	7.3%	3.9%	3.1%	

Source: National Transit Database, Transit Operators Financial Transactions Reports

Table IV-4
Community Bridges - Lift Line TDA Performance Indicators

Performance Data and Indicators	FY 2021	Audit Period			% Change FY 2021-2024
		FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	
Operating Cost	\$1,567,508	\$1,672,860	\$1,908,364	\$2,676,029	70.7%
Total Passengers	20,970	32,683	45,473	53,735	156.2%
Vehicle Service Hours	35,304	17,476	14,413	22,583	-36.0%
Vehicle Service Miles	159,119	173,626	252,087	299,382	88.1%
Employee FTE's	20	16	16	19	-5.0%
Passenger Fares (donations)	\$2,144	\$6,517	\$4,252	\$6,650	210.2%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$74.75	\$51.18	\$41.97	\$49.80	-33.4%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$44.40	\$95.72	\$132.40	\$118.50	166.9%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$9.85	\$9.63	\$7.57	\$8.94	-9.3%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	0.6	1.9	3.2	2.4	300.6%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.13	0.19	0.18	0.18	36.2%
Vehicle Service Hours per Employee	1,765.2	1,092.2	900.8	1,188.6	-32.7%
Average Fare per Passenger	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.09	\$0.12	21.0%
Fare Recovery Ratio	0.14%	0.39%	0.22%	0.25%	81.7%
CPI - (California Index - All Consumers)	4.2%	7.3%	3.9%	3.1%	

Source: Community Bridges Annual Financial Reports (audited) for operations costs; Community Bridges TDA Annual Reports.

Table IV-5
Volunteer Center TDA Performance Indicators

Performance Data and Indicators	FY 2021	Audit Period			% Change FY 2021-2024
		FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	
Operating Cost	\$92,698	\$88,351	\$107,813	\$104,234	12.4%
Total Passengers	3,895	8,059	3,423	2,909	-25.3%
Vehicle Service Miles	178,987	87,593	121,308	131,188	-26.7%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$23.80	\$10.96	\$31.50	\$35.83	50.6%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$0.52	\$1.01	\$0.89	\$0.79	53.4%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.02	0.09	0.03	0.02	1.9%

Source: Volunteer Center Quarterly Reports FYs 2021-2024

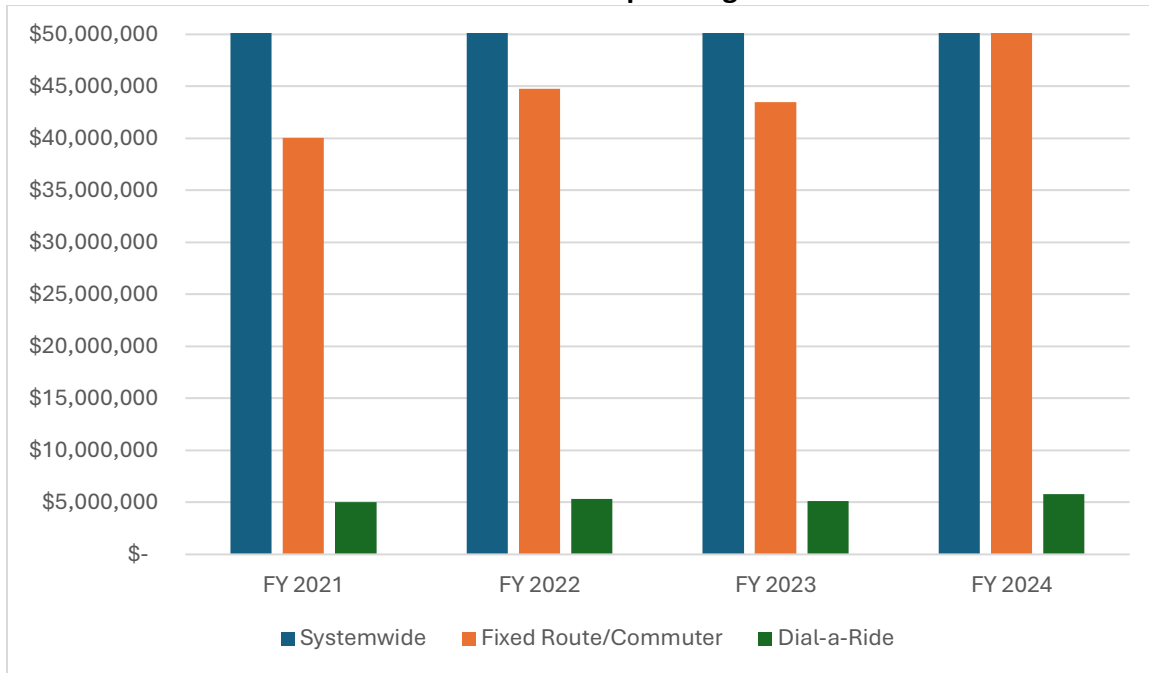
Santa Cruz METRO is defined in the TDA as an older operator, having started service prior to July 1, 1974. Older operators may qualify for the TDA under the 50 percent expenditure limitation (PUC Section 99268.1) or the farebox recovery ratio (PUC Section 99268.2). As described in Santa Cruz METRO’s financial compliance audit, the operator has met the 50 percent expenditure limitation. The calculation below by the performance auditor in Table IV-6 shows compliance with the expenditure limitation.

Table IV-6
50 Percent Expenditure Limitation

Line#	Description	FY 2022		FY 2023		FY 2024	
		\$ Amount	\$ Subtotal	\$ Amount	\$ Subtotal	\$ Amount	\$ Subtotal
1	Total Operating Cost	\$50,646,314		\$53,623,001		\$63,430,727	
2	Total Depreciation	\$5,421,450		\$6,062,911		\$6,508,960	
3	Total Capital Outlay	\$7,329,243		\$7,616,453		\$5,789,130	
4	Total Lines 1, 2 & 3		\$63,397,007		\$67,302,365		\$75,728,817
	Less Federal Ops Grants						
5a	Received	\$20,653,492		\$9,954,727		\$11,408,199	
	Less Federal Capital Grants						
5b	Rec'd	\$1,496,892		\$4,234,640		\$257,947	
6	Less LTF Capital Intensive	\$0		\$0		\$0	
7	Less STAF Received	\$4,437,224		\$6,362,055		\$5,588,858	
8	Total Lines 5, 6 & 7		\$26,587,608		\$20,551,422		\$17,255,004
9	Total Line 4 Less Line 8		\$36,809,399		\$46,750,943		\$58,473,813
10	50% of Line 9	\$18,404,700		\$23,375,472		\$29,236,907	
	Add amount of LTF Claimed						
11	in Excess of Line 9 for Match	\$5,163,373		\$2,488,682		\$2,852,050	
	to Federal Operating Grant						
12	Add LTF Capital Intensive	\$0		\$0		\$0	
13	Total Permissible LTF Expenditure		\$23,568,073		\$25,864,153		\$32,088,956
14	Total LTF applied to Operations		\$8,592,943		\$10,166,800		\$8,912,046

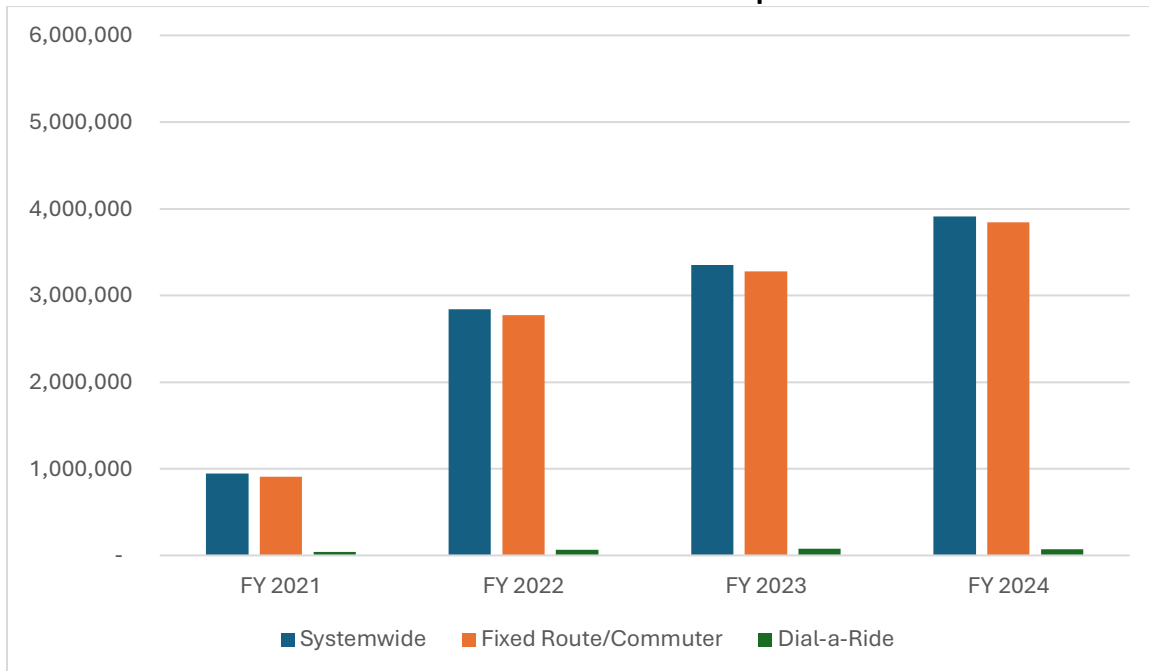
Source: SCMTD Financial Statements (Audited); Michael Baker International calculation

Graph IV-1
Santa Cruz METRO Operating Costs

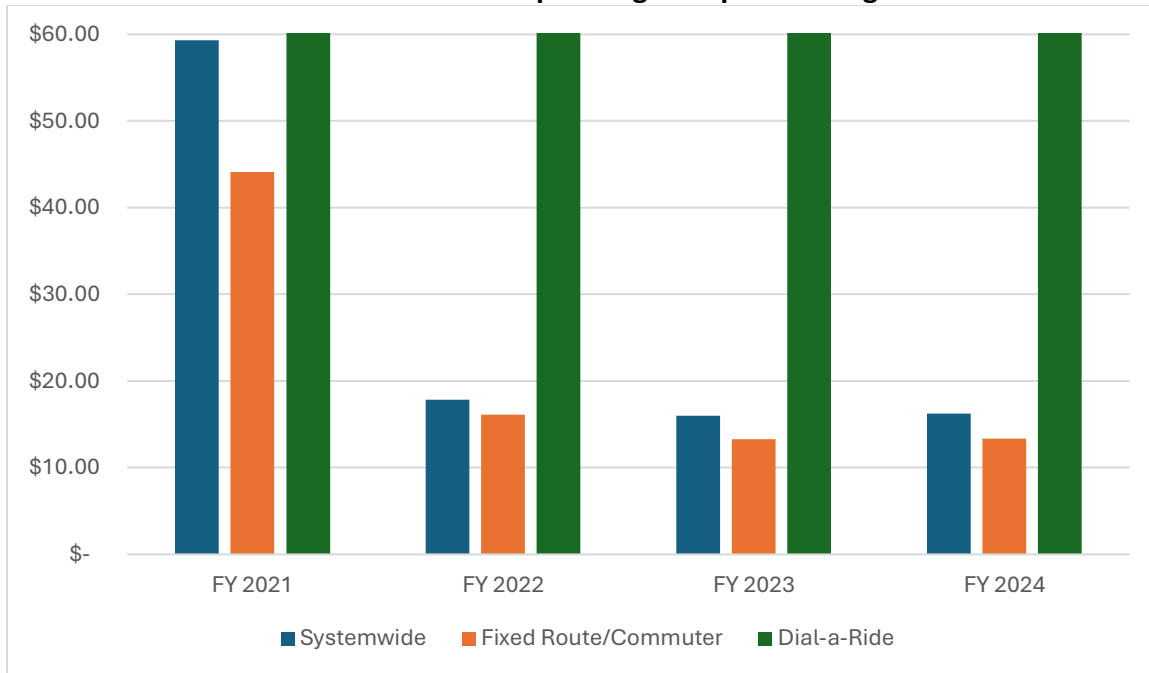


Note: System-wide operating costs are drawn from audited data, while data by mode are unaudited using NTD data.

Graph IV-2
Santa Cruz METRO Ridership

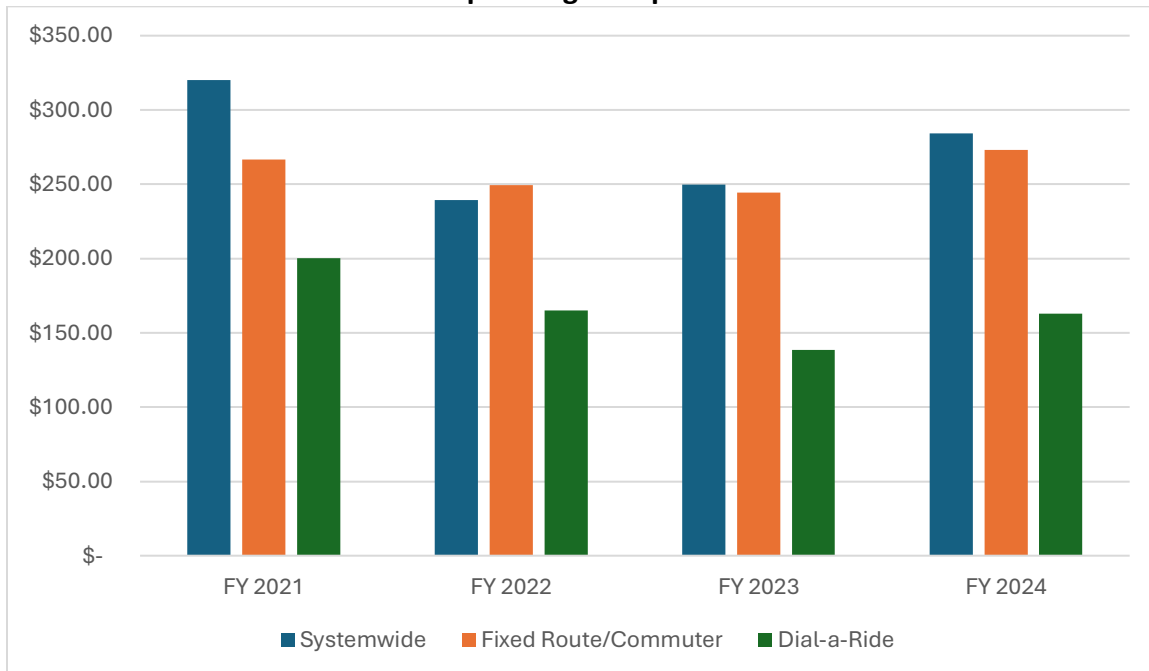


Graph IV-3
Santa Cruz METRO Operating Cost per Passenger



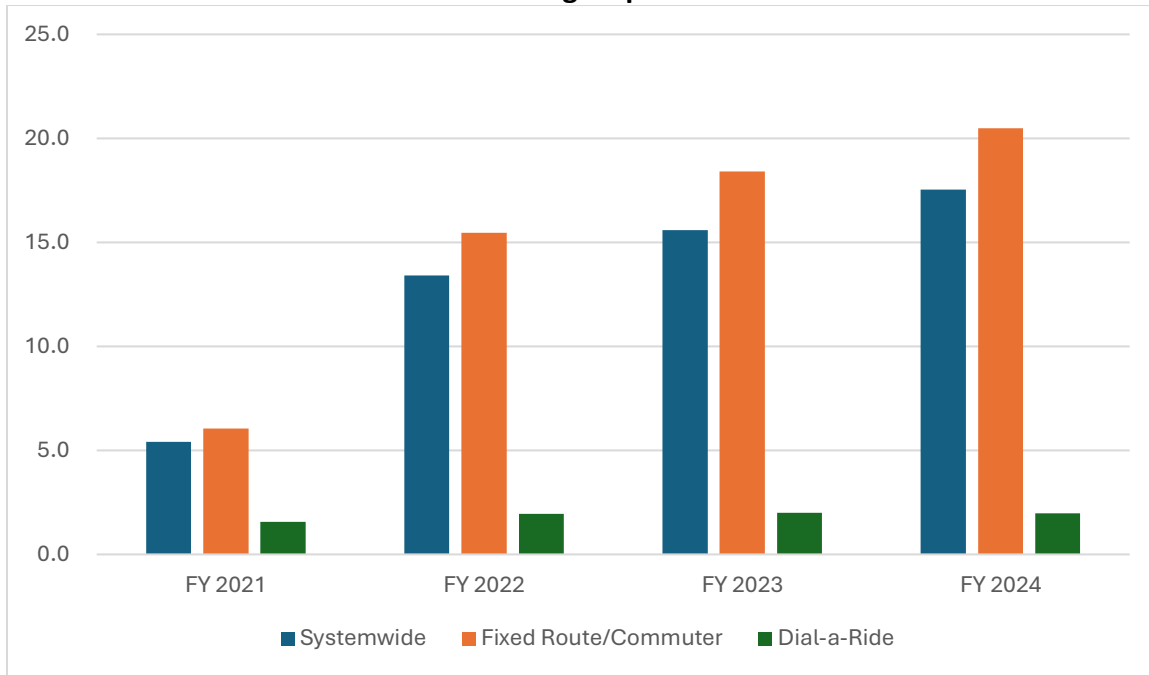
Note: System-wide operating costs are drawn from audited data, while data by mode are unaudited using NTD data.

Graph IV-4
Santa Cruz METRO Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour

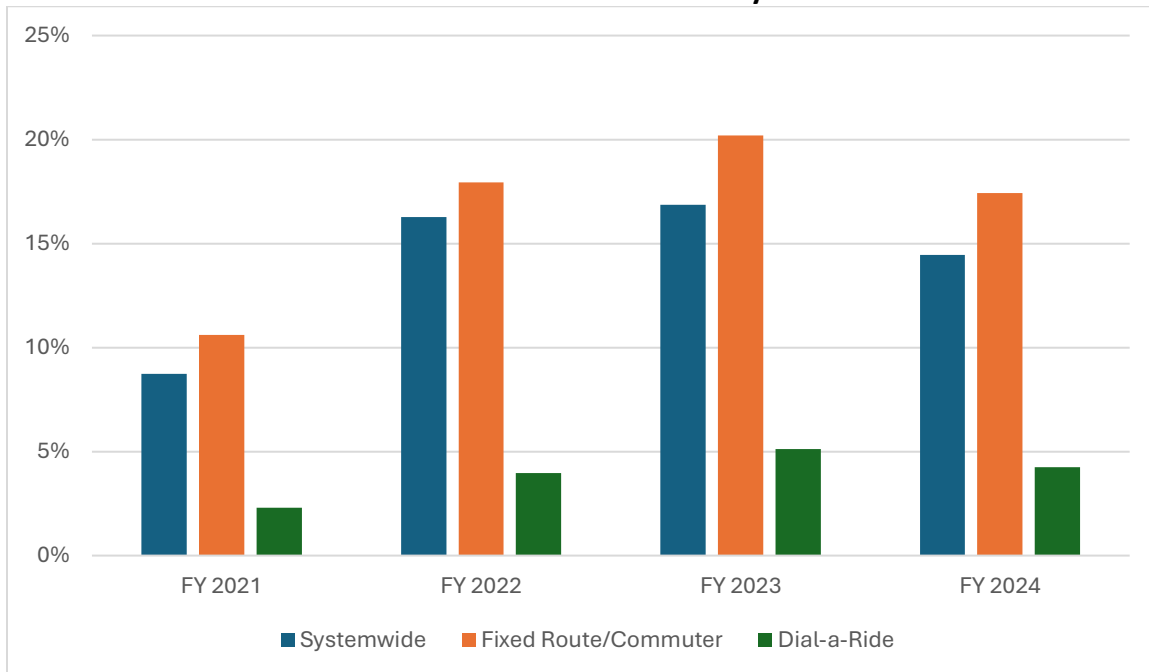


Note: System-wide operating costs are drawn from audited data, while data by mode are unaudited using NTD data.

Graph IV-5
Santa Cruz METRO Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour



Graph IV-6
Santa Cruz METRO Fare Recovery Ratio



Note: System-wide operating costs are drawn from audited data, while data by mode are unaudited using NTD data.

Findings from Verification of TDA Performance Indicators

Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and statewide shelter-in-place order heavily impacted service throughout this audit period. Various performance measure trends are described below.

1. **Operating Costs:** Santa Cruz METRO operating costs increased 13.0 percent system-wide over the period based on audited data from the FY 2021 base year through FY 2024. System-wide operating costs reflect all costs and exclude depreciation costs. Using unaudited modal operating cost data drawn from the NTD, operating costs increased by 27.8 percent for fixed-route and increased by 16.0 percent for ParaCruz.² According to the annual financial audit, the trend in system-wide operating cost increases was due to increases in personnel expenses related to wage increases and contractual obligations pursuant to labor agreements negotiated during the audit period, as well as implementation costs for a new ERP business management system. Community Bridges' Lift Line operating costs increased substantially by 70.7 percent due to a return to pre-pandemic service levels. Volunteer Center transportation costs increased by 12.4 percent for the audit period.
2. **Passenger Trips:** Ridership on Santa Cruz METRO increased by 313.5 percent system-wide during the audit period. Fixed-route ridership soared by 323.5 percent, rebounding from 907,000 to 3.8 million passengers between the FY 2021 base year and FY 2024. ParaCruz ridership increased by 80.5 percent, from 39,000 to 70,000 riders over the same period. Overall, these metrics mark a return of 76.1 percent of pre-pandemic (FY 2019) fixed-route ridership in FY 2019, and a return to 95.7 percent of pre-pandemic ParaCruz ridership. Lift Line ridership increased 156.2 percent during the audit period by more than 33,000 passengers. Volunteer Center transportation ridership decreased 25.3 percent for the period, from 3,900 to 2,900 passengers. For Santa Cruz METRO and Lift Line, the trend in this indicator reflects a significant return in passengers following the COVID-19 pandemic, including the return of students to campus at University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) which significantly impacted Santa Cruz METRO's fixed-route service.
3. **Vehicle Service Hours and Miles:** The provision of revenue hours and miles by Santa Cruz METRO increased system-wide during the audit period, 27.3 percent, and 30.4 percent, respectively. Fixed-route revenue hours and miles increased 24.8 percent and 25.7 percent, respectively. ParaCruz revenue hours and miles also increased by 42.5 percent and 73.5 percent, respectively. Although Santa Cruz METRO's hours of service have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels, an ongoing driver shortage (which has impacted transit providers across the country) has meant that service hours are still lower than they were in FY19. For Lift Line, vehicle service hours decreased during the audit period by 36.0

² The sum of operating expenses by mode reported in the NTD do not equal the audited total operating costs. The NTD operating costs by mode only reflect costs allocated by Santa Cruz METRO to that particular mode based on NTD guidelines, which excludes depreciation costs. Additional operating costs are classified as other reconciling items in the NTD and not separated by mode.

percent, while miles actually increased 88.1 percent. Volunteer Center vehicle service miles decreased 26.7 percent, from 179,000 in FY 2021 to 131,000 in FY 2024.

4. **Operating cost per passenger**, an indicator of cost effectiveness, decreased by 72.7 percent system-wide for Santa Cruz METRO using audited data. On a modal basis using NTD data, cost per passenger for fixed-route and ParaCruz decreased by 69.8 percent and 35.7 percent, respectively. The trends for these indicators using audited costs reflect ridership rebounding even as operating costs grew. Operating cost per passenger for Lift Line decreased by 33.4 percent as ridership increased significantly faster than costs did. Volunteer Center’s cost per passenger increased 50.6 percent as ridership decreased.
5. **Operating cost per hour**, an indicator of cost efficiency, system-wide decreased 11.2 percent using audited data for Santa Cruz METRO as operating costs and vehicle hours increased at the same pace during the audit period. On a modal basis using NTD costs, the performance trend showed a slight increase of 2.4 percent for fixed-route service and a decrease for ParaCruz of 18.6 percent. As noted in this section, the NTD costs by mode do not show all operations costs compared to the system-wide audited figures. Lift Line operating cost per hour increased by 166.9 percent as the number of vehicle hours fell sharply.
6. **Passengers per vehicle service hour**, which measures the effectiveness of the service delivered, exhibited a significant increase on Santa Cruz METRO system-wide, from 5.4 passengers to 17.6 passengers per hour. The trend in this indicator was driven primarily by fixed-route service, as the number of passengers per vehicle hour increased from 6 passengers per hour to 20.5 passengers per hour. For ParaCruz, passengers per hour remained fairly stable at 2.0 passengers per hour. For Lift Line, with a much smaller rider base, this performance indicator showed an immense increase of 300.6 percent with the number of passengers increasing from 0.6 to 2.4 passengers per hour during the audit period.
7. **Farebox Recovery:** The fare recovery ratio remained relatively strong over the audit period for Santa Cruz METRO. For the three-year period, the system-wide farebox averaged 17.1 percent compared to only 8.7 percent in FY 2021. Separately, fixed-route farebox recovery averaged 18.53 percent for the three years, while ParaCruz averaged 4.44 percent. Santa Cruz METRO is subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement.

Section V

Review of Operator Functions

This section provides an in-depth review of various functions within each of the Santa Cruz County transit operators. The review highlights accomplishments, issues, and/or challenges that were determined during the audit period. The following functions were reviewed at the Santa Cruz METRO's and Volunteer Center's offices in Santa Cruz and the Community Bridges – Lift Line offices in Watsonville:

- Operations
- Maintenance
- Planning
- Marketing
- General Administration and Management

Within some departments are subfunctions that require review as well, such as Grants Administration that falls under General Administration.

Operations

Santa Cruz METRO

During the audit period, Santa Cruz METRO's operations saw expanded service levels and changes in its executive leadership as it recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic. Santa Cruz METRO continued to maintain a forward and innovative outlook in keeping with its mission statement:

To provide a public transportation service that enhances personal mobility and creates a sustainable transportation option in Santa Cruz County through a cost-effective, reliable, accessible, safe, clean, and courteous transit service.

Moreover, the agency's vision is to create a sustainable transportation system that reduces harmful carbon emissions and provides fast, frequent, and reliable public transportation options. METRO aims for 100 percent zero-emission bus service and strives to develop affordable, transit-oriented housing to improve the quality of life in Santa Cruz County.

Operations are conducted from the Judy K Souza Operations Facility (JKS) located at 1200 River Street in Santa Cruz. The facility is named after the district's first female bus driver and supervisor, Judy K. Souza, who passed away in 2011. Her career spanned 32 years, beginning as a driver and eventually becoming Superintendent of Operations. The JKS Facility houses dispatching and

training facilities as well as a base for operators and supervisory personnel. The site also includes a service lane, a CNG fueling station, parking, four battery electric bus (BEB) charging stations with conduit ready for an additional six charging stations. According to METRO's Zero Emission Vehicle Rollout Plan, the parking available to METRO at the JKS facility is not sufficient to house its entire fleet, with about 10 percent of the fleet being required to park at the maintenance facility across the street from JKS facility.

The most significant development has been the implementation of Reimagine METRO, rolled out in FY 2024. The Reimagine METRO system redesign is a comprehensive initiative aimed at improving the efficiency and accessibility of Santa Cruz METRO's transit services. The redesign focuses on providing more frequent and reliable service in high ridership corridors and areas where transit is essential while ensuring that changes do not disproportionately impact disadvantaged communities, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The first phases of implementation took place in December 2023 and were cost neutral. The agency hired and trained over 100 operators, going from 155 to 250 budgeted positions. Additional personnel hired included supervisors and maintenance technicians.

As part of this initiative, Santa Cruz METRO purchased 53 New Flyer hydrogen-powered, fuel cell electric buses including nine 60-foot ARTIC (articulated) vehicles. This constitutes the largest acquisition of hydrogen buses in the United States. In addition, METRO procured five Gillig battery-electric vehicles as well as 13 buses from the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and 10 buses from the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). The ARTIC vehicles are deployed on routes serving UCSC.

In April 2021, METRO launched a one-year Mobility on Demand (MoD) pilot service called Cruz On-Demand. This was the agency's first endeavor into MoD, which would allow for greater service coverage in Santa Cruz County. Cruz On-Demand pilot was a shared ride service utilizing smaller vans operated by ParaCruz drivers. The service area comprised 0.75 miles of any Santa Cruz METRO fixed route excluding the Highway 17 route and the UCSC campus. Trips could be booked up to 24 hours in advance through the Ecolane app scheduling feature. METRO actively collected rider feedback throughout the pilot to assess efficiency, rider satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness. With the assistance of Ecolane, adjustments were made to improve scheduling and coverage. The pilot aligned with METRO's broader Reimagine METRO initiative to modernize and diversify transit offerings.

The Pacific Station Transit Center, located in downtown Santa Cruz, closed on February 8, 2024, for demolition and redevelopment. Transit operations and customer service were moved to the temporary River Front Transit Center on February 12, 2024. The redevelopment is expected to take two years. The project will transform Pacific Station into a transit-oriented mixed-use complex featuring 126 units of affordable housing, retail spaces, office spaces, and onsite transit services.

During the audit period, METRO steadily upgraded its intelligent transportation system (ITS) infrastructure. These ITS enhancements have included the implementation of Cleaver Devices

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) and Automatic People Counters (APCs) on the METRO fleet in December 2022. METRO was under contract with Syncromatics during the years of 2018 through May 2022. The company was tasked with providing METRO with annual on time performance and other reporting data. The company proved to be unreliable, and the data was inconsistent related to on time performance, transmission of data to vehicles and a multitude of key performance indicators.

The Clever Suite is listed in METRO’s Enterprise Systems Catalog as a core platform for:

- Real-time transit data
- Passenger counting
- AVL tracking
- GTFS feed generation

It is actively used by METRO’s Planning, Operations, and IT departments, with daily data collection and updates.

The AVL system tracks the real-time location of buses across the METRO network. Enables dispatchers to monitor and manage vehicle movements with precision. It supports real-time passenger information systems (RTPI), including apps and signage, powers service disruption alerts and detour notifications via GTFS-RT feeds. In addition, the AVL Integrates with CleverCAD, a dispatch and control platform that facilitates direct communication with operators and route management.

The APCs collect accurate boarding and alighting data, which help METRO analyze ridership trends, optimize service levels as well as inform planning decisions and compliance reporting. They also support occupancy management, allowing riders to view crowding levels in real time. METRO is among the first agencies to implement GTFS-RT Trip Modifications, allowing real-time detour and stop change data to be shared directly with riders via the Transit app. This enhances transparency and improves the rider experience during service disruptions.

The on-time performance standard METRO is 80 percent. Schedule adherence and on-time performance for several bus routes have been challenging for a variety of reasons, including construction along the SR-1 corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, narrow travel corridors, and congestion. Santa Cruz METRO’s definition of “on-time” departures from timepoints is not early and no more than 5 minutes late. Its system-wide on-time goal is 72 percent of all departures, according to the Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP). For FY 2024, fixed-route on-time performance averaged 67.20 percent.

The majority of Santa Cruz METRO’s ridership is considered transit dependent. Discretionary riders have historically been drawn to the Highway 17 Express route, which offers a viable alternative to commuters traveling to the Santa Clara Valley and other Bay Area destinations. The Highway 17 Express route took the longest to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The service has recovered only about 50 percent of its pre-COVID ridership. The route operates 30-minute headways seven

days a week, which is heavily utilized by UCSC students. METRO did revamp the service to coordinate with Caltrain at the San Jose Diridon Station, which resulted in a 10 percent increase in ridership.

ParaCruz serves ADA-certified riders and its operating hours mirror those of the fixed route. The service celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2024. With changes to the taxi industry resulting from the influx of ride-hailing companies such as TNCs, local taxi services have limited means to provide reliable backup for ParaCruz. The use of larger wheelchairs by customers has heightened challenges given the limited space on the vehicle, weight of the wheelchairs, and security restraint system. To address these challenges, half of the ParaCruz fleet consists of newer vehicles with rear lift capacity and Q'Straint wheelchair securement systems.

On-time performance for ParaCruz averaged 86.43 percent for the audit period. On Time performance is calculated as number of on-time trips divided by total number of trips with actual pick-up information. According to ParaCruz Ecolane trip reports, on-time performance for the vehicle arriving within the ready window averaged 92.04 percent in FY 2022, 83.35 percent in FY 2023, and 83.91 percent in FY 2024. Other performance factors for ParaCruz, such as the percentage of passenger no-shows, remained at or slightly above the goal of less than 3 percent of trips requested, which meets general industry standard. ParaCruz has exhibited improved performance, with a no-show rate around three percent. Cancellations during the audit period were 19.24 percent in FY 2022 and 20.91 percent in FY 2023. Cancellation data for FY 2024 were unavailable.

Also, there were no denied rides. ParaCruz has a no-show policy that is not typically enforced due to the small number of no-shows. The policy when enforced involves sending a letter to those with an excessive number of no-shows. If a customer takes 24 rides or more within a 12-month period without being assessed a “No-Show”, he/she shall be allowed one round-trip ride free of charge.

Chargeable occurrences, or preventable accidents/incidents, are tracked and reviewed. METRO reported 24 chargeable accidents in FY 2021; 53 in FY 2022; and 50 in FY 2023. Chargeable accident data for FY 2024 were unavailable. Santa Cruz METRO has an accident review committee that reviews preventable accidents/incidents for the month. The committee is overseen by the assistant safety and training coordinator.

Dispatching and bus scheduling is conducted using the Hastus software system for fixed route and Ecolane for ParaCruz. Key elements of Ecolane include real-time mapping features as well as the ability to batch rides automatically, improved on-time performance monitoring, and NTD reporting. The automated features can create a more productive schedule for the ParaCruz driver. The driver can override the system manually. Staff are cross trained in both systems to enable flexibility in staffing and ample shift coverage. ParaCruz reservations can be booked directly into the Ecolane system. Paratransit vans have mobility safety devices to improve ergonomics and safety for both the passengers and the driver.

Community Bridges

Community Bridges' Lift Line demonstrated significant progress in expanding service accessibility, modernizing its fleet, and enhancing operational capacity. These accomplishments reflect the agency's commitment to sustainable, equitable, and responsive transportation services for vulnerable populations in Santa Cruz County. Lift Line continued providing trips to essential services during the pandemic based on demand. This also included providing rides to vaccination centers. The agency added weekday and weekend service capacity by hiring additional drivers, improving access to transportation during non-traditional hours. Ridership rebounded to pre-pandemic levels by FY 2025.

Elderday Adult Day health center transportation remains Lift Line's largest program. Congregant center rides on the Elderday service increased by more 15 percent due to daily attendance increasing from 40 passengers to 70 passengers. Passengers from Lift Line's programs may share vehicles; however, Lift Line works to efficiently dedicate trips for each program. Community Bridges is also a participant in the City of Santa Cruz emergency resource program list of organizations that can assist during an emergency. As the CTSA for Santa Cruz County, Community Bridges coordinates transportation with social service agencies and participates through the SCCRTC Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Group to identify and discuss program issues and needs in addition to providing justification for the TDA claim.

Community Bridges had been considering the implementation of a complementary Mobility on Demand pay per ride taxi service. Lift Line expanded its door-to-door transportation services to all residents with disabilities in Santa Cruz County and northern Monterey County, regardless of income. This initiative was supported by a state grant from the CPUC's Transportation Network Company's Access for All program and administered by SCCRTC. Under this program, residents with disabilities can travel to any destination within Santa Cruz County, significantly broadening the program's reach. Lift Line launched the Access for All program, which aims to provide accessible transportation to residents for a flat fee of \$5.00 per ride. Older-income-eligible adults and people with disabilities can utilize the service at no cost. Rides can be scheduled through a mobile app developed through Ecolane. The agency reports 25 to 30 active users of the mobile app. Rides are billed weekly every Friday. Fare payment can also be made through PayPal.

The reasons cited by riders for using Lift Line have expanded as Community Bridges increases its visibility in the community. Trips are provided to more than just social events but also for outpatient medical services such as physical therapy and counseling. The diversity of reasons for taking Lift Line aligns with County policy to address senior living and reduce isolation. In addition to receiving TDA funds and donations, Community Bridges has separate contracts with the local jurisdictions that support the transportation services. Contracts are in place with the Cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville and the County for services such as transportation for senior and low-income residents to medical appointments and dining centers within their respective jurisdictions.

Community Bridges, through Lift Line and the Family Resource Collective, played a vital role in responding to the Pajaro flooding disaster in neighboring Monterey County following the levee breach on March 11, 2023. Lift Line provided evacuation transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. Residents were advised to schedule rides before evacuation orders were issued to ensure safe transport.

Lift Line has continued to optimize its Ecolane dispatching and scheduling software program during the audit period. Ecolane dispatching software has made it more efficient to increase capacity, combine rides and search for the most accessible driver for trip requests. In addition, the software has an AVL feature tied to Google Maps. The automated scheduling is integrated with mobile data terminals (MDTs) in the vehicles, which allows for changes to be made en route and track rides. The MDTs allow the drivers to communicate with dispatch. As rides are completed, the MDTs tag completed rides with real-time pick up and drop off data and highlight these times in blue, making it easier for the dispatchers to monitor all rides. Likewise, uncompleted, or unassigned rides are highlighted in red to inform the dispatcher of the priority of pending trips. Lift Line's dispatch and scheduling system still maintains some manual components, to be used in the event power is disrupted or due to technical difficulties.

Another feature of Ecolane is the ability to track on-time performance. This metric is tracked for all drivers, and an average is calculated for the system on an annual basis. The on-time performance is a 30-minute pickup window, with the pickup no sooner than 10 minutes before the scheduled pickup time and not less than 20 minutes after the scheduled pickup time. The time of pickup is documented by drivers and tracked by the MDTs and AVL system. On-time performance averaged 88 percent in FY 2022; 89 percent in FY 2023; and 90 percent in FY 2024.

A no-show policy reduces inefficiencies caused by passengers' failures to meet their assigned trip. The policy defines no-shows and identifies ways that passengers can avoid this issue. A suspension penalty could occur for a pattern of this behavior. Community Bridges tracks no-shows for three programs—Medical, Meals on Wheels, and Elderday. The no-show rate compared to total trips for these programs was 5.18 percent in FY 2022, 5.01 percent in FY 2023, and 3.94 percent in FY 2024. The industry standard rate is below 5 percent. Since the implementation of Ecolane, the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) feature has minimized no-shows and cancellations. The IVR tool calls passengers the night before the scheduled trip as well as the day of the scheduled trip. Passengers can also utilize the IVR feature to book and cancel rides.

Complaints collected by Community Bridges are formally documented, ranging between 1 and 9 per year. When a complaint is received, a narrative of the incident is composed by a staff member. Beginning in FY 2024, the agency implemented the Lift Line Comment Report form to document complaints and compliments. The Comment Report documents the person filing the report, contact agency (e.g., Lift Line), client information, location of the incident, date and time, driver, and vehicle information as well as an explanation of the incident. Complaints are forwarded to the executive assistant and manager on duty for review. A copy of the complaint is also forwarded to the operations manager, program director or fleet and facilities manager depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

The number of accidents reported in the TDA-STA quarterly report were 2 in FY 2022, 6 in FY 2023, and 0 in FY 2024. The number of incidents, which could be any reported activity by Lift Line during operations, were 0 in FY 2022, 4 in FY 2023, and 0 in FY 2024. Each vehicle is equipped with four cameras: two external and two internal cameras.

Volunteer Center

The program serves 201 senior clients, supported by 118 volunteers, and regularly transports riders to 279 favorite destinations. The grocery shopping service remains active, with four volunteers using bicycles. Eight volunteers drive electric vehicles. Donation protocols include remittance envelopes carried by drivers, online donations, and annual appeals to churches and service clubs, generating approximately \$2,000 annually. New clients fill out a registration form and are contacted by the dispatcher to confirm their eligibility through age (60+) or disability. The average age of riders is 78 years of age.

Trips are prioritized by Volunteer Center in order of 1) medical, 2) shopping, and 3) other essential destinations that contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of the individual (for example: fall prevention classes) and could include multiple stops during the trip. Each rider is limited to two trips per week with medical appointments taking priority. The primary ridership is seniors who are ambulatory; drivers and their passengers stay together and form a bond. Reservations are made between 5 and 7 days in advance to secure a driver. Volunteer Center will send a letter to riders who fall into a habit of not following general ride guidelines, including canceling their trips or not showing. Drivers will also conduct welfare checks on their passengers.

Google Hub is utilized for remote dispatching, enabling efficient coordination and mileage tracking via Google Maps. Through The Hub platform, staff and drivers can leave notes for the dispatchers. The platform is integrated with Google Voice, which allows volunteers to notify of their availability from home. The Hub also provides integrated matching through Google Maps. The software has reduced the time spent coordinating individual rides and has increased the quality of service to clients by standardizing the coordination process between dispatcher volunteers; eliminating time-consuming handwritten dispatch processes; enabling the auto-tracking of drivers through Google Maps; automating repetitive tasks like driver check-ins, email composition, and ride matching; and quickly generating program reports and statics. Overall, the software has streamlined the program's administration and simplified complex, volunteer-run processes, enabling existing resources to be used more efficiently.

Client profiles are created in the software to capture data for creating successful trips. Data are stored on the “Firestore” Google Cloud Platform product, which reduces physical storage needs. Dispatchers send emails to the drivers with a list of ride needs and drivers select the trips to make. Dashboard summaries are available that show pertinent trip data. Alerts are also made when drivers need to renew their license, thus keeping Volunteer Center and drivers aware of important actions. The software can capture key data such as trip distance and time through the Google map system, which visually shows the direction of the trip from point to point.

The Volunteer Center participated in a "muck-out" flood disaster recovery effort in Pajaro (northern Monterey County/southern Santa Cruz County) by helping clean out flooded homes that were inundated in March 2023. There were approximately 6,000 residents displaced. Hundreds of volunteers also participated in the wildfire evacuations and relief efforts in Felton Grove. The agency received a state grant and partnered Meals on Wheels to provide disaster preparedness kits. Sixty-five transportation participants were assisted with disaster planning kits.

Personnel

Santa Cruz METRO

Nonexempt employees are represented by two unions: Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 521 and the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART) Local 23. The SEIU represents Santa Cruz METRO employees, including the Professional Supervisors Association, Salaried Employees Association, and Vehicle Maintenance Unit. SMART represents employees for the ParaCruz operation. Labor agreements in place during the audit period went into effect during the audit period. Communication between the agency and the union has been described as good and collaborative.

The current MOU between Santa Cruz METRO and SEIU Local 521 went into effect for a three-year period from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026. The MOU incorporates pay increases and payout bonuses to employees covered under the MOU. Two separate labor agreements between Santa Cruz METRO and SMART Local 23 were also approved during the audit period for a three-year term from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026. The pay rate schedule and paid leave provisions were modified.

Santa Cruz METRO pays medical premiums depending on bargaining union contract requirements. Union leadership fosters a cooperative relationship between Santa Cruz METRO and the unions as evidenced by the union agreement to defer the cost-of-living adjustment, which has maintained the number of drivers. A summary of employees for both Santa Cruz METRO and ParaCruz during the period is presented in Table V-1:

Table V-1
Santa Cruz METRO Employee Count

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Santa Cruz METRO Bus/All Other	241	269	346
ParaCruz DAR	38	38	48
Total Employees	279	307	394

Source: Santa Cruz METRO

Santa Cruz METRO has focused on increasing their operator count since the last audit. Since the last audit, they have increased their ParaCruz operator count from 31 to 38 and have added 155 fixed route operators. A single recruiter found most of these operators. The focused skillset for

new hires was customer service, with most having a background in retail and restaurants, although they did have some with experience as delivery drivers. Three trainers have trained all the new hires from either little or no experience to the status of capable drivers. Routes are bidded out based on seniority. METRO maintains an extraboard composed of 45 drivers.

Santa Cruz METRO implemented several new methods of recruitment during the period. The agency implemented a hiring bonus of up to \$4,000 for new operators. The \$4,000 hiring bonus is paid as follows:

- \$500 after training.
- \$1,500 after probation; and
- \$2,000 one year after probation (approximately 2,080 hours worked).

In October 2022, METRO extended the hiring bonus to mechanics. METRO has since scaled back employee incentive programs since the last audit. However, the agency has indicated a willingness to bring back more of the incentives in 2025 once they are finished with onboarding all their new employees. There are also plans to create an advisory committee for the incentive program to get operator input on agency improvements.

Training is conducted in-house and in person. Operations has been working with Human Resources to obtain online training courses. Operators undergo eight hours of recurring Verification of Transit Training annually. In addition, each operator is required to attend eight hours of annual safety training. With the addition of the new articulated buses, the training protocol has been expanded. DMV pull notices are monitored daily. Employees also undergo trainings regarding sexual harassment and violence in the workplace every three years as required by Santa Cruz METRO's Sexual and Gender Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Prevention Policy. Additional training topics include verbal defense/de-escalation tactics, human trafficking, social distancing, and ADA protocols.

Santa Cruz METRO provides health insurance coverage through CalPERS, which is 95 percent paid. METRO pay 100 percent of ParaCruz employee premiums under that MOU. There are five HMO, and three PPO plans offered. There are PPO dental and vision plans that are 100 percent paid by Santa Cruz METRO. The defined benefit retirement plan is offered through CalPERS. Santa Cruz METRO utilizes Workday for payroll and benefit processing.

Community Bridges

Based on the organizational chart of the CTSA, Lift Line employed 20 personnel, which includes the division director, three management and supervisory staff, four dispatchers/schedulers, one office assistant, one operations assistant, one mechanic and 19 drivers (15 full and two part-time drivers, and two on-call drivers). Lift Line updated its employee policies and procedures manual to reflect new dispatching system protocols.

Community Bridges utilizes several methods of recruiting new drivers and personnel. The CTSA has used Indeed, the Employment Development Department, Craigslist, local classified advertising, flyers, social media posts over Facebook/X (formerly Twitter), and the Community Bridges website. New full-time drivers have Class B licenses and go through the requisite orientation and training, including drive-alongs, safety training, and general proficiency with the routes. On-call drivers do not need to have a Class B license upon joining but must work toward getting the license. The vehicle fleet includes minivans, which require a Class C license and can be driven for service during the time the driver is training for the Class B license. Lift Line management indicated challenges in recruiting drivers and retaining personnel due to similar reasons affecting the transit industry, such as other job opportunities.

The agency offered a \$2,500 hiring bonus for candidates hired into commercial driver positions (holding commercial license) at 30 hours per week or more, an additional \$2,500 retention bonus paid after one year of continuous employment, and a \$5,000 retention bonus paid after two years of continuous employment. The bonuses are paid on a pro-rated basis for positions less than 30 hours per week. Community Bridges implemented 3.5 percent step increases, wage equity increases, and reclassification increases.

The hiring of a driver trainer has improved the in-house training program, although DMV certifications are conducted remotely and take long to schedule testing with more strict rules for certification. Training takes place over a four-week period encompassing the features of the Ecolane dispatching software program, wheelchair securement, customer service skills, and harassment awareness. Driver meetings are held once a month to review safety and operational procedures and include the use of a driver simulator supplied by the insurance carrier. The customer service-oriented training places an emphasis on palliative care and conflict resolution skills with individuals who have complex medical issues.

Route assignments are rotated monthly whereas weekend routes are bidded out based on seniority. Each dispatcher is assigned four drivers. All Lift Line personnel, including administration, operations management, maintenance, and drivers, are in Watsonville, a significant and positive change during the audit period. The operations and maintenance staff are housed in a permanent facility using Measure D funds and are located near the Community Bridges administrative building. Quarterly meetings are held for different purposes, including one for all staff, another for safety training, and another for drivers to discuss other issues.

Volunteer Center

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the pool of volunteer drivers. Many volunteers were aged 65 and older, thus falling into the high-risk category for contracting the virus. Therefore, the Volunteer Center had to recruit new volunteer drivers under the age of 65. The program experienced a decline in volunteer participation during 2022–2023 due to the COVID-19 pandemic but has since onboarded 12 new volunteers towards the end of FY 2024. The average age of volunteer drivers is 65 years of age.

The number of volunteer drivers fluctuates among each of the three service areas of Santa Cruz, San Lorenzo Valley, and Watsonville. Santa Cruz typically has the most drivers, followed by San Lorenzo Valley and Watsonville; more available drivers mean more rides provided in each of the service areas. Volunteer Center staff expend resources conducting screens of volunteer drivers, including criminal background checks and their ability to provide frequent service over at least a 6-month commitment.

During the audit period, the program dispatcher completed a volunteer driver safety course. The two-hour online course was conducted by the National Volunteer Transportation Center and the Community Transportation Association of America. Course certification is valid for three years.

Mileage reimbursement rates have been increased to support volunteer drivers. In-kind contributions are accepted in lieu of reimbursements. Drivers log mileage manually or via Google Hub, which performs an estimate of hours. Google Maps is also used for mileage tracking. No major accidents or incidents have occurred in the past five years. Additional safety protocols have been adopted for volunteer drivers, contributing to a strong safety record.

Drivers are required to complete a volunteer registration form, vehicle insurance form, and an authorization for Volunteer Center to do a background check. Volunteer Center staff also conduct screenings and interviews. Driver background checks are conducted through Sterling background screening services and incur a nominal cost to the agency. Volunteer Center provides excess general liability and medical insurance above the driver's own insurance coverage. During the pandemic, a vaccine attestation was required for drivers.

Maintenance

Santa Cruz METRO's maintenance facility was completed in 2009 and features 11 bays, five in-ground lifts, eight portable lifts, and one set of six posts for the newer articulated buses. The facility is open daily with the following hours: Monday through Friday, 24 hours, and Saturday and Sunday from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The facility opens at 10:45 p.m. on Sunday to begin the week. The facility is equipped with energy-efficient LED lighting.

The fleet maintenance staff had 62 authorized FTEs as of FY 2024 with 38 FTEs funded. Overseeing fleet maintenance is the deputy director of maintenance and the maintenance manager. Other personnel include the maintenance trainer, fleet maintenance supervisors, lead mechanics, mechanics (Levels I, II & III), senior accounting technician, lead vehicle service workers, vehicle service workers (Levels I & II), and an electronic technician. There were some promotions and turnover in the fleet maintenance department. New mechanics undergo a three-month training process and training is tracked for each mechanic. Training is conducted through the manufacturer or coordinated with other transit agencies such as SamTrans and the Southern California Regional Transit Training Consortium. METRO has budgeted additional resources for maintenance training as the agency prepares for the introduction of electric buses to the fleet. Mechanics obtain Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification for specific technical tasks. Safety concerns are discussed during "toolbox" meetings.

The Maintenance department utilizes MaintStar asset management software to track repairs and parts inventory. The department is interested in integrating mobile tablets and modules with the MaintStar program. Repairs are coded and categorized. Labor time and vehicle mileage are also tracked. The lead mechanic reviews repairs, which are followed up by the supervisor who approves the work order. Defect cards are obtained from operations for review by the lead mechanic before being assigned and tracked in MaintStar.

Most vehicle maintenance for both fixed-route and ParaCruz services is conducted in-house as a cost-saving measure. METRO will outsource maintenance on ParaCruz vehicles depending on the workload. Major engine repairs are also outsourced as well as body work. Preventative Maintenance Inspections (PMIs) are performed per the original equipment manufacturers (OEM) requirements, including in 6,000-mile increments and within a 10 percent mileage window. Santa Cruz METRO performs a safety inspection midway through the 6,000-mile PMI cycle for all fixed-route and commuter-revenue vehicles, not to exceed 3,500 miles. ParaCruz vehicles require PMIs to be performed in 5,000-mile increments within a 10 percent mileage window. Extended warranties are leveraged.

Pre- and post-vehicle inspection reports include placing a sticker on the bus wheel indicating maintenance attention. Quality control/quality assurance requirements are documented in the work plan, as are 10 key performance indicators to measure maintenance quality and compliance. These indicators are included in the monthly fleet service summary worksheet.

METRO maintains \$1.2 million in parts inventory for its diverse fleet of diesel-hybrid, compressed natural gas (CNG) and electric vehicles. Cycle counts are conducted annually. The agency owns its own tires due to the potential supply chain issues that leasing tires would present. Part requisitions must be approved prior to use. Parts are barcoded but not used in the module. Safety issues and operations were addressed involving engine in frames, staffing levels, and vehicle spare ratio levels. Warranties on new vehicle procurements have been negotiated, which resulted in a five-year warranty on engines and a two-year warranty on transmissions. Body and paint work are outsourced. Santa Cruz METRO can receive parts the next day. Every part issued is entered into a work order for both fleet and facility maintenance. Santa Cruz METRO keeps brake kits in stock to allow mechanics to perform a full brake job. The implementation of the Workday ERP system will help with tracking the parts inventory.

Road calls refer to instances when a transit vehicle experiences a breakdown or other issue while in service and require assistance or repair on the road. These calls are typically made by the vehicle operator to METRO's maintenance department, who then dispatches a technician or a tow truck to address the problem and get the vehicle back in service as quickly as possible. Road calls are tracked and summarized in the following table for the audit period:

Table V-2
Santa Cruz METRO Road Calls

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Santa Cruz METRO Bus	170	166	229
ParaCruz Paratransit	19	16	7
Total Road Calls	189	182	236

Source: National Transit Database - Form R-20 Revenue Vehicle Mechanical System Failures

Road calls remained stable during the first two years of the audit period. This metric declined from 189 in FY 2022 to 182 in FY 2023. The initial trend in road calls was attributed to the implementation of newer vehicles and the reduction in vehicle service hours and miles. However, there was a 30 percent increase in road calls in FY 2024, which is attributed to the batteries in the hybrid diesel vehicles. Approximately 13 to 14 buses have been out of service due to lack of parts. Annual CHP terminal inspections conducted during the period have been satisfactory.

METRO has been laying the groundwork for zero-emission vehicle infrastructure and enhanced training. The agency has been in the process of procuring and implementing 22 next-generation hydrogen fuel cell powered 40-foot buses. Additionally, to support the statewide transition to zero-emission vehicles through the construction of a hydrogen fueling station at METRO's JKS Operations Facility that will include bus fueling with the possibility of adding over-the-fence retail fueling accessible to the public in the future.

Community Bridges

The permanent operations and maintenance facility funded by Measure D is on two acres of land located at 545 Ohlone Parkway in Watsonville. The facility features two bays and two lifts, and a 3,000-square-foot maintenance shop. Maintenance is overseen by one fleet manager and one mechanic. The fleet manager serves in the capacity of lead mechanic and possesses Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification. Preventive maintenance inspections (PMIs) are scheduled every 10,000 miles while full vehicle inspections are scheduled every three months. Drivers are tasked with wiping down and disinfecting the vehicles. While most maintenance functions are conducted in-house, Community Bridges outsources body work, paint, and major engine work to local vendors.

Community Bridges' Lift Line implemented Fleetio, a new fleet management software program in 2023, to enhance the efficiency, accountability, and sustainability of its vehicle operations. Fleetio was adopted to digitize maintenance workflows, track vehicle health and service history, monitor fuel usage and expenses, and improve scheduling and dispatch coordination. In addition, the software has helped track electric vehicle metrics, including charging schedules and energy consumption, aligning with Lift Line's sustainability goals. Fleetio is also utilized by the drivers conducting pre-trip inspections. The data are fed to the mechanic and fleet manager.

Roadcalls or in-service mechanical failures reported by Community Bridges in the TDA-STA quarterly report covering the audit period were 10 in FY 2022; 19 in FY 2023; and 30 in FY 2024

with the higher number of failures occurring at the end of the period. The data also includes wheelchair lift malfunctions.

Lift Line replaced two gas-powered shuttles with three electric vehicles (EV) equipped with wheelchair lifts, the first of their kind in Santa Cruz County. To support the procurement of zero-emission vehicles, two Level II EV charging stations were installed at the Watsonville facility, supporting both operational needs and public access. The EV transition resulted in measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (73 MTCO₂e), nitrogen oxides (76 lbs), particulate matter (21 lbs.), and fossil fuel consumption (2,586 gallons). Community Bridges reported issues with the range of its electric vehicles as well as with the charging infrastructure.

Planning

The most prominent planning initiative implemented by METRO was the Reimagine METRO system redesign. Under the direction of the prior Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/general manager in 2022, the METRO Board set three goals:

- Double ridership within three years,
- Develop affordable housing at the transit centers, and
- Transition to a zero-emission fleet.

Over the initial period, general public phone surveys were conducted, which found that 70 percent of riders and 50 percent of non-riders preferred frequency over coverage. The system redesign kicked off in December 2022 and began with a 15-month planning period. In September 2023, the first phase of implementation approved with service commencing in December of 2023. The first phase was cost neutral, where they streamlined some of their routes and consolidated others. After implementation, there was a big jump in productivity, especially on routes that had previously had one-hour headways. The second phase commenced when METRO received state funding for operating costs and two one-time funding grants for the capital costs of a zero-emission fleet. Phase 2 implementation commenced in March 2024 and there have been continuing increases over the first three quarters. Ridership increased 26 percent from the four quarters of the Phase 2 implementation.

Reimagine METRO was a part of their Comprehensive Operational Analysis in lieu of a Short-Range Transportation Plan. The Rapid Corridors Plan was completed at the end of 2023 and highlighted some capital improvements. METRO decided to combine Reimagine METRO and the improvements cited in the Rapid Corridors Plan. This was to capitalize on increasing route efficiency. The redesign did not include any specific branding outside of special bus wraps for their rapid corridors to signify that it is a special service. All the signage and maps have been updated, they utilize a tiered service visual where red lines signify 15-minute service, blue lines are for 30-minute service, light blue for 60-minute service, and yellow for service that runs more than 60 minutes. METRO is looking to go for a local sales tax measure to help with their operating funds, but before they did that, they wanted to show the public how well they can run a service through their Reimagine METRO

At Watsonville Transit Center, METRO offers free transfers to Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST). In addition, they have been starting the process of rolling out contactless payments. These contactless payment methods would match MST’s contactless payment methods through Caltrans’ California Integrated Travel Project (Cal-ITP). Cal-ITP is supported by the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and Caltrans, with funding from the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP). While MST has been in the forefront of implementing cashless payment, METRO is still weighing their options of going cashless.

METRO has been involved in redeveloping the Watsonville Transit Center into a four-story, 60-plus unit, net-zero affordable housing development, serving historically disadvantaged communities with increased access to affordable housing and supporting mode shift from single occupancy vehicles use to transit.

METRO has an agreement with Flixbus to manage the ticket sales for the Highway 17 bus. Flixbus is no longer a transit service, METRO is the only provider of this service. Every month, METRO meets with the Regional Transportation Commission so they can continue to get METRO’s projects on their plans. METRO attends meetings on the elderly and disabled where they can help guide the conversation toward implementable and realistic outcomes that those groups of people may want out of transit service. SCCRTC is completing segments of the Bus-On-Shoulders Project on SR-1 in 2026 and is securing funding for the third segment.

Each transit system provides performance measures to SCCRTC on a quarterly and annual basis. The list of performance metrics differs slightly between the transit systems to reflect their system size and service modes. As several commissioners also serve on Santa Cruz METRO’s board, the performance of Santa Cruz METRO is shared as needed with the SCCRTC. Documentation supplied by the transit systems shows their commitment to providing the information to the SCCRTC as a condition of their receipt of TDA funds. The performance metrics for Santa Cruz METRO are listed in the TDA claims form and include those listed in Table V-3.

Table V-3
Santa Cruz METRO Performance Measures

1.	Annual passengers	15.	Number of FTE employees (all employees, not just drivers)
2.	Rides/passenger trips provided by type (student, senior, adult, pass holders, etc., or however stats are kept) and amount of TDA funds used for each type of ride	16.	Vehicle service hours/employee*
3.	Annual service hours	17.	Number of routes
4.	Passengers per vehicle service hour*	18.	Average route length
5.	Annual service miles	19.	Average travel times/rider
6.	Number of fixed-route miles	20.	Number of bus stops
7.	Service area – square miles	21.	Number of vehicles in operation

8.	Service area population	22.	Number of monthly bus passes in circulation
9.	Passengers per vehicle service mile*	23.	Maximum vehicles in service at any time
10.	Average passengers per weekday	24.	Hours of service
11.	Total operating costs in budget	25.	Approximate number of unduplicated passengers
12.	Operating cost per vehicle service hour*	26.	Cost per unit of service plus text about long range plans to make/keep this low
13.	Total operating cost per passenger*	27.	Funds and percentage spent on administration/overhead/grantee allocation/etc.
14.	Average farebox revenue per passenger (describe what is included)	28.	Actual financials compared with budget
29.	Actual number of rides provided compared with goal and text about whether the goal was met and why/why not		

* Denotes TDA indicator

The performance indicators submitted by Community Bridges are shown in Table V-4.

Table V-4
Community Bridges Performance Measures

1.	Unduplicated passengers per month	8.	Cancellations per month
2.	Total passenger trips (units of service) per month	9.	Donations per month
3.	Incidents per month	10.	Total operating cost per passenger*
4.	Accidents per month	11.	Total operating cost per vehicle service hour*
5.	Mechanical failures (including lift failure) per month	12.	Total passengers per vehicle service hour*
6.	No-shows per month	13.	Total passengers per vehicle service mile*
7.	Turndowns or referrals per month	14.	Van mileage per program

* Denotes TDA indicator

The performance indicators submitted by the Volunteer Center are shown in Table V-5.

Table V-5
Volunteer Center Performance Measures

1.	Number of rides/deliveries provided	6.	Number of unduplicated passengers
2.	Trip destinations	7.	Number of requests for service
3.	Mileage claimed	8.	Number of turndowns

4.	Estimated total mileage	9.	Reason for turndowns
5.	Average length of trip	10.	Number of active volunteers
11.	Geographic distribution of clients		

Community Bridges and METRO have invested in AVL technology that enables more automation in the tracking of vehicle movements. Technology serves multiple benefits including safety and operational efficiencies. The AVL feature, when combined with dispatch/scheduling and other communications technology, can provide accurate performance measures such as on-time performance for the different vehicle modes as the technology becomes more available on the vehicle fleet. Given this technological integration of the transit systems, reporting on-time performance in the quarterly reports should be added as another key indicator of operational effectiveness and customer service.

Marketing

Marketing and communications are conducted by customer service staff in the operations division. METRO resumed public outreach events as the COVID-19 pandemic abated. METRO undertook a series of impactful marketing and outreach initiatives aimed at increasing ridership, improving accessibility, and promoting environmental awareness.

As part of the Reimagine METRO service transformation launched in December 2023, METRO offered two weeks of free fares from December 21, 2023, to January 4, 2024, across all services, including fixed-route, Highway 17, and ParaCruz. The agency offered free transfers for two hours on all routes to ease the transition to the new network. Fare promotions also included the Youth Cruz Free program launched in March 2023. This new expansion allows all youth up to the 12th Grade to ride for free. METRO worked with local school districts to promote the Youth Cruz initiative and saw a 400 to 500 percent increase in ridership.

With the redevelopment of the Pacific Station in downtown Santa Cruz, METRO leased temporary space nearby for its customer service. The Riverfront Transit Center in downtown Santa Cruz is the temporary central hub for Santa Cruz METRO operations, established in February 2024 following the demolition of the former Pacific Station. This interim facility will serve riders until the new permanent transit center is completed, which is expected by 2026. During initial opening of the Riverfront Transit Center, operators assisted customer service staff with inquiries and directing riders to their bus connections.

The Santa Cruz METRO website (<https://scmtd.com/en/>) is the agency’s principal digital marketing platform. The website offers a wide range of features designed to support riders with trip planning, real-time updates, fare payment, and accessibility. METRO also offers a Spanish version (<https://scmtd.com/es/>). Accessibility tools support riders with disabilities, including ParaCruz services and online account management. The website displays live bus locations, predicted arrival times, and route maps without needing to download an app. GTFS-RT Integration supports real-time data in popular apps like Transit App, Google Maps, and Apple Maps, allowing riders to track

buses and plan trips seamlessly. The planned website redesign will feature mobile compatibility and accessibility.

The METRO Splash Pass App enables contactless fare payment via smartphones. Riders can purchase and activate tickets for local routes and the Highway 17 Express. The Ecolane Mobility App allows ParaCruz riders to book and cancel trips directly from their smartphones.

METRO's Headways is a quarterly rider's guide that serves as a comprehensive resource for transit users across the service area. Approximately 10,000 copies of the rider's guide are published. It is available in print at METRO buses, transit centers, and pass vendor locations. A PDF version is also accessible online via METRO's website for rider convenience. Usage of the Headways guide has been dropping due to the growing use of electronic and mobile sources of transit information.

One of the most innovative initiatives undertaken by METRO has been the One Ride at Time campaign. This innovative campaign combines environmental advocacy with public transit promotion. METRO partnered with Frans Lanting, a renowned wildlife photographer, and local organizations to wrap buses in stunning images of local wildlife and ecosystems. Each bus featured a unique theme—whales, redwoods, mountain lions, monarchs—highlighting the biodiversity of the Monterey Bay region. The campaign's tagline, "Protecting One Ride at a Time," emphasized the environmental benefits of choosing transit over driving. The initiative aimed to connect riders emotionally to the region's natural beauty and inspire conservation through everyday transit use.

METRO has developed a robust and award-winning social media and outreach strategy. METRO actively uses platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter/X to share real-time service updates and alerts; promote free fare events (e.g., Earth Day, Clean Air Day, Strawberry Festival); highlight community campaigns like "Stuff the Bus" and "Youth Cruz Free."; as well as showcase environmental and conservation efforts through the "One Ride at a Time" campaign. Social media content also includes video ads and photo campaigns featuring wildlife and local landmarks. METRO has even collaborated with organizations like the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI) and local artists to create visually compelling posts.

Customer service is the front line for handling complaints and following the procedures described on the Santa Cruz METRO website. Customer complaints, compliments, inquiries, and suggestions are managed by Santa Cruz METRO through oTicket by Enhancesoft. METRO uses oTicket to manage its customer service inquiries through a dedicated support portal called METRO Customer Service. This setup allows the agency to efficiently handle rider feedback, service issues, and community engagement, all while keeping communication organized and accessible. Complaints have varied and relate to operations such as wireless Internet issues, driver rudeness, and unsafe driving. The customer service supervisor manages most entries and receives support from other staff if the issue cannot be readily addressed.

Pursuant to the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, a Title VI Program has been developed and adopted by the agency. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person in the United States, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from, be denied the benefits of, or

be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The Title VI Program was updated and submitted to the FTA on November 29, 2022, and was effective from June 1, 2022, through May 31, 2025. Program compliance includes Title VI notices and complaint forms published in English and Spanish that are posted on the transit website and vehicles. METRO's Title VI Policy document is posted on the website (http://www.scmtd.com/images/departments/legal/policies/title_vi_policy_2019).

Community Bridges

Community Bridges updated its marketing and outreach strategies to better connect with eligible riders and promote its expanding transportation services across the service area. Lift Line invested in new promotional materials and videos to raise awareness of its paratransit services, which encompassed radio advertisements, brochures, newsletters, and outreach at community events. The agency conducted incentivized surveys and raffles to gather rider input and improve service delivery. Marketing and outreach activities were supported by Measure D allocations, with over \$250,000 programmed for publicity materials and outreach efforts during the audit period.

The expanded outreach aligns with County policy to address senior living and reduce loneliness and isolation. Community Bridges developed a brochure for its services and tailored flyers for specific services and zip codes. The brochure is provided in both English and Spanish and contains detailed information about Lift Line services and eligibility. Community Bridges made notable updates to its website (<https://communitybridges.org/liftline/>) and social media presence to enhance public engagement and improve access to information about its transportation services. The Lift Line page of the Community Bridges website was updated to clearly outline available services, including medical transportation, Meals on Wheels, Elderday, Access for All, and taxi scrip programs.

Social media engagement involves a presence on Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter). Community Bridges expanded its use of eNewsletters to keep stakeholders informed about Lift Line and other programs. These newsletters included updates on services, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and advocacy efforts. Archived newsletters from 2022 through 2025 were made available online, providing transparency and continuity in communications.

Lift Line offered advertising opportunities to local businesses, generating revenue while increasing visibility for both the agency and its partners. Businesses could advertise on the back of Lift Line vehicles, which travel extensively throughout the county. Pursuant to the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, a Title VI Program has been developed and adopted by the agency. Lift Line provides a Title VI complaint form and instructions for individuals who believe they have been discriminated against. Complaints must be filed within 180 days of the alleged incident and can be submitted to their dispatch office in Watsonville.

Volunteer Center

Volunteer Center also produces a community brochure for distribution and markets an ongoing need for volunteer drivers to maintain a qualified pool. By filling a transportation need that other transit modes cannot efficiently provide, Volunteer Center is serving a different rider market and is developing a means to share its clients' stories. For growth in the program and recruitment of both drivers and passengers, the Volunteer Center has taken steps to better highlight how its programs benefit various individuals in the community.

The recent website upgrade now allows for referral intake and features surveys and audio testimonials to showcase impact. A legacy giving program is under consideration, with Planned Giving cited on the website, though community engagement is still in preliminary stages. Marketing efforts are mindful of the generation gap, balancing technological tools with accessibility for older adults. On the Volunteer Center website, the "Our Stories" drop-down box contains links to volunteer stories, videos, and blog posts. Another example of how Volunteer Center has been promoting its activities involves recorded audio testimonials of seniors who use the program to access medical appointments and shopping. Volunteer Center has also been featured in the "Young at Heart" section of the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* newspaper.

General Administration and Management

Santa Cruz METRO's general administration and management is structured to ensure effective oversight, strategic planning, and operational efficiency across its transit services. METRO is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors composed of the five members of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and six city council members or their appointees: one each from Capitola and Scotts Valley, two from Santa Cruz, and two from Watsonville. In addition to the 11 members, there are two ex-officio members representing UCSC and Cabrillo College. A number of members on the board serve as commissioners on the SCCRTC. A few board members also serve on the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) board.

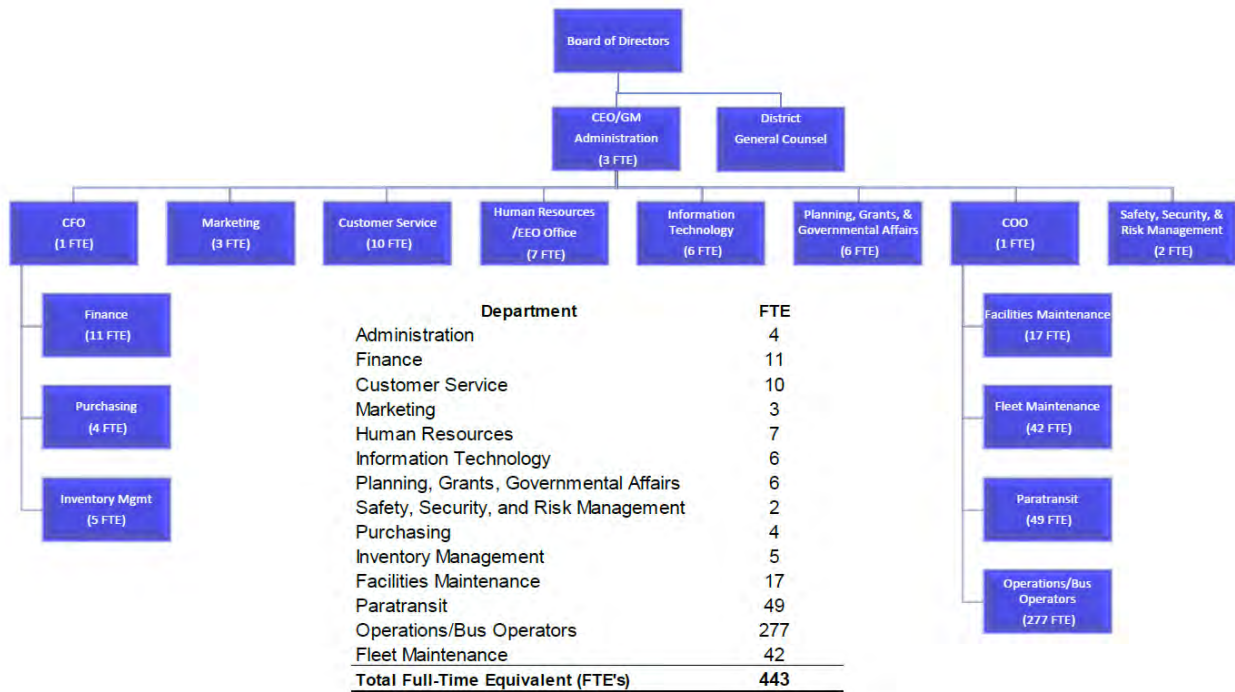
The METRO Advisory Committee advises Santa Cruz METRO's Board of Directors on matters of policy and operations referred to by the board or the CEO/general manager. The Advisory Committee may also address issues regarding the quality and quantity of transportation services provided by Santa Cruz METRO. Membership comprises anyone from Santa Cruz County who applies and is appointed by a Santa Cruz METRO board member.

Administrative departments are located at the Administration Facility at 110 Vernon Street in Santa Cruz. The CEO/General Manager leads the agency and reports directly to the Board. The CEO is supported by a District Counsel who provides legal guidance. METRO experienced a leadership transition in early 2024 when the CEO/General Manager announced his retirement effective February 16, 2024. During his nearly two-year tenure, the CEO/General Manager led several transformative initiatives including Reimagine METRO, Youth Cruz Free, Zero-Emission Fleet Expansion, the One Ride at a Time Campaign, and initiated Transit-Oriented Development of the Pacific Station and the Watsonville Transit Center.

Following the departure of the former CEO/General Manager, a special Board of Directors meeting was convened in March 2024 that launched a nationwide search for his replacement. After vetting dozens of applicants, METRO appointed a new CEO/General Manager in April 2024. The METRO Board collaborated with stakeholders, union leaders, and an advisory committee during the hiring process. The new CEO brings over a decade of experience as a general manager in public transit. Prior to joining METRO, he served as CEO of Mountain Line Transit in Missoula, Montana since 2015. His background includes leadership in ballot initiatives, green transit projects, and ridership growth strategies.

The organization chart of the agency is shown below.

Figure V-1
Santa Cruz METRO Organization Chart



Source: Santa Cruz METRO, FY 2025-2026 Budget

With emphasis on open communication, departments participate in board meetings and present their own topics and reports to build rapport with board members and each other. A leadership meeting occurs weekly and empowers staff to participate in decision-making for the agency.

The transition from the prior CEO to the new CEO has gone well for METRO. The new CEO has stated that the agency is headed in an overall good direction. The goal envisioned is to create a system that is dependable and easier for people to use. The CEO has been focused on updating policies and developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across departments.

Part of that strategy is through the development of key performance indicators or KPIs. One of the roles of the CEO is to keep the Board apprised of METRO's operational performance across departments and service modes. Therefore, the new CEO has been looking at implementing dashboard metrics where data are easily accessible. A prior CEO/general manager engaged in a management style centered on data analysis and development of KPIs for every department. The value of KPIs relies on collection and analysis of multitude of data, but there has been a lack of staff analysts and data warehousing space at Santa Cruz METRO.

However, some departments have developed and reported some KPI figures in monthly reports, such as the maintenance department through its Fleet Maintenance Resource Work Plan. Formalizing a KPI program based on benchmarks gathered from peer agencies and having the resources and infrastructure in place to support this have continued. METRO should continue with training staff on data analysis and using the amount of information generated from new technology programs for decision making. This would include participation of the IT department, which houses the data systems and networks.

Technology improvements at METRO have been ongoing. The agency has undertaken a significant modernization effort by implementing a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system using Workday. This transformation was aimed at replacing outdated legacy systems and streamlining operations across finance, human resources, payroll, and procurement. The finance system dated back to the 1990s and lacked support for modern functions like electronic funds transfers or direct deposits. Tasks such as printing and mailing over 400 checks weekly were labor-intensive and error prone. Legacy systems were hosted on in-house servers, which were vulnerable to outages and power surges. METRO selected Workday for several strategic reasons:

- **Cloud-Based Infrastructure:** Eliminates reliance on physical servers and improves system reliability.
- **Integrated Applications:** Workday offers a unified environment where HR, payroll, and finance modules communicate seamlessly.
- **Automation Capabilities:** Reduces manual data entry and enables features like electronic reimbursements and real-time reporting.
- **Vendor Support and Longevity:** Workday's reputation and partnership with Avaap for implementation provided confidence in long-term support.

All the workstations have been updated with Microsoft 365. At the end of the last audit period to the beginning of this audit period, METRO upgraded their servers and migrated them to offsite locations. Their VPN infrastructure was bolstered to aid in a hybrid workplace policy.

The agency's most recent FTA triennial review was conducted on March 1, 2023 (scoping meeting) with virtual site visits conducted on August 14-16, 2023. A draft report was completed September 15, 2023, with the final report released on October 10, 2023. The triennial review focused on compliance in 23 areas; three of which were not applicable to METRO. No deficiencies were found in 18 of the 20 areas of FTA requirements reviewed. Two deficiencies found in two review areas: Satisfactory Continuing Control and Section 5307 Program Requirements. The Satisfactory

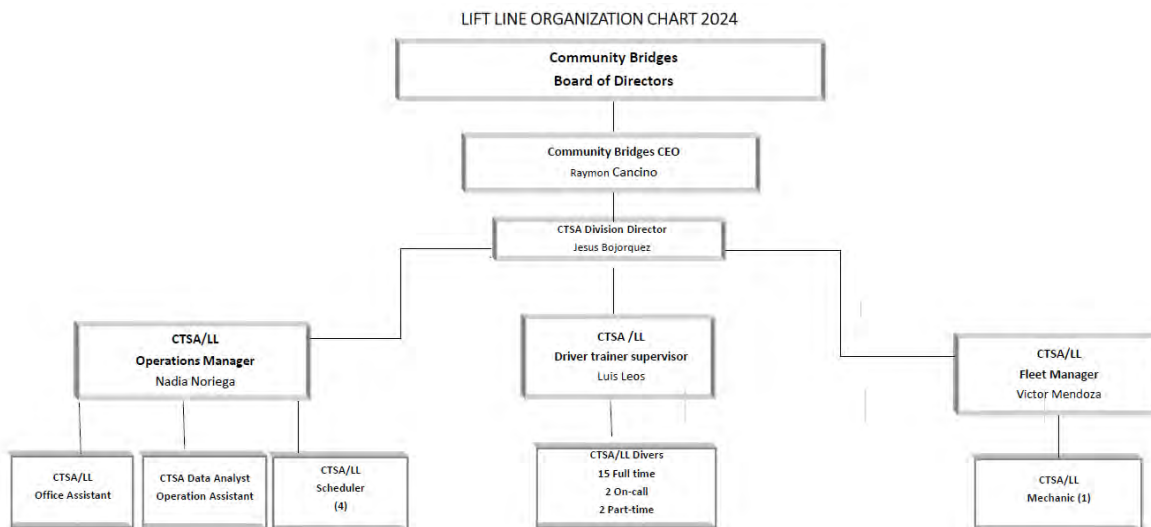
Continuing Control finding pertained to non-permitted use of insurance proceeds. The Section 5307 Program Requirements finding pertained to all parties not being signatory the metropolitan transportation planning agreement. Santa Cruz METRO responded to these deficiencies, which were closed out. The agency received its triennial review closeout letter in response to the Summary of Findings and Corrective Actions on February 7, 2024.

Community Bridges

General management of Lift Line was unchanged during the audit period following changes to the organization in the prior period. The management layer supports the director, including an operations manager who oversees daily operations and management of drivers. With both administration and operations located in Watsonville, communications and interaction occurs more frequently among management and drivers. Operations and maintenance were separated to allow each manager to focus on their primary duties.

The organization chart of Lift Line is shown below.

Figure V-2
Community Bridges Lift Line Organization Chart



Source: Community Bridges

Because Lift Line is one program within Community Bridges, the transportation program is allocated joint administrative costs, including administrative and fiscal personnel and other agency-wide operating expenses. A documented cost allocation policy is regularly updated and

specifies the method used for allocation of indirect costs, which is required for grant funding. Community Bridges uses a fixed percentage indirect cost rate that is universally applied to all its programs. The joint cost rate is determined by taking the pooled joint administrative costs as a percentage of total program direct operating costs. Direct operating costs are total program costs, less capital expenditures for major equipment, leasehold improvements, in-kind expenses, and amounts passed through to other agencies. Documentation provided by Community Bridges shows an indirect cost rate of 17.1 percent applied to direct program costs, such as Lift Line expenditures. Since the joint cost rate is based on expenses incurred, each Lift Line transportation program is assessed proportional to the expenses incurred for that particular program.

Volunteer Center

The Volunteer Center operates under a centralized administration and support structure, ensuring consistency across programs. The Volunteer Center employs 60 staff, with four dedicated to the Empowered Aging Division. The program was rebranded from Senior Services to Empowered Aging, emphasizing independence, health, and integrated lifestyle support. Goals for the program are reviewed each year and compared to actual data in the reports submitted to the City of Santa Cruz and the SCCRTC as conditions of receiving TDA funds. The number of senior clients served measures performance. Clients register with the program and individual records are kept on each client with their personal information, emergency contacts and rides and deliveries received. The number of groceries delivered is evaluated through reports compiled on each service provided that details client, date, and time of ride and/or groceries delivered, destination and volunteer providing the ride or delivery. Another metric involves the number of people to be served or the anticipated number of users of the program. Quarterly performance data are reported to SCCRTC and the City of Santa Cruz.

The Volunteer Center has been conducting a Strategic Plan. Data points are driving the approach to developing the plan. Surveyed 5,000 people in the community. The Volunteer Center received 4.4 to 4.6 out of 5.0 stars. The survey included demographic questions on age-range and generational categories.

Grants Management

Santa Cruz METRO historically relies on a variety of grants and other funding mechanisms, including local sales tax revenues, to support its transit system. The grants/legislative analyst evaluates the feasibility of obtaining funding for proposed projects, writes grant applications, and ensures agency compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and funding source requirements. The analyst also monitors and analyzes the impact of legislative and regulatory issues and develops a coordinated strategy for responding to these issues as they impact METRO's transportation services.

The analyst monitors and reports on grant activity as well as prepares and presents a quarterly status report on grant applications and active grants to the METRO Board. On a monthly basis, the analyst meets with the executive and management team to review pending grant awards,

upcoming and current grant solicitations, active grants, and a review of capital needs. METRO's annual financial audits include a Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards, which details how federal funds were used. The audit confirms that METRO complied with federal requirements and internal controls related to grant management.

METRO has demonstrated exemplary fiscal management and strategic planning in administering over \$150 million in federal, state, and local funding. This report outlines the agency's use of federal stimulus programs, capital investments, regional collaborations, and future initiatives aimed at enhancing public transit services and infrastructure across Santa Cruz County.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Santa Cruz METRO received and fully expended federal stimulus funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSSA), and American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). These funds were administered via the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under Sections 5307 and 5311. Notably, the CARES Act funding required no local match, to transfer a portion of its operating carryover, comprised of fungible revenues, into its COVID recovery reserve account and commit approximately \$4 million annually to capital improvements.

Under CRRSSA, METRO applied FTA Section 5307 and 5311 funds to cover operational expenses and personnel costs, ensuring service continuity during a period of economic uncertainty. Additional funding under ARPA further supported METRO's operational resilience and long-term planning.

In 2023, METRO underwent a supplemental audit as part of the FTA Triennial Review, specifically focused on the administration of COVID-related funding. This audit reinforced METRO's commitment to transparency and compliance with federal regulations. To strengthen its internal capacity, METRO plans to hire a dedicated grants analyst to support ongoing and future funding initiatives.

During the audit period, METRO transitioned to a new federal lobbyist, aligning its advocacy efforts with evolving legislative priorities. The newly appointed CEO/general manager has assumed responsibility for legislative affairs, enhancing the agency's engagement with federal and state policymakers. In addition, METRO maintains strong collaborative relationships with SCCRTC and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). These partnerships ensure alignment with regional transportation goals and compliance with federal funding requirements.

METRO utilizes Senate Bill 1/State of Good Repair (SGR) funds to support capital projects. The largest portion of SGR funding is allocated to facilities and equipment rehabilitation, followed by vehicle replacement and rehabilitation, and the development of zero-emission infrastructure. In April 2023, METRO was awarded a \$38.6 million grant from the California State Transportation Agency's Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle 6 discretionary program. Combined with \$16.9 million in matching funds, this investment will:

- Modernize METRO’s intercity bus fleet with zero-emission bus (ZEB) technology and infrastructure.
- Expand transit service on primary intercity corridors.
- Improve rider experience through transit priority infrastructure and a contactless payment platform.
- Support transit-oriented development at METRO transit centers.
- Additionally, METRO received a separate TIRCP grant to fund upgrades to bus stops, enhancing accessibility and comfort for riders.

In November 2016, Santa Cruz County voters approved Local Measure D, a one-half-cent sales tax to be used for transportation-related expenditures within the county. Santa Cruz METRO receives a portion of these proceeds to support ParaCruz operations and transit capital needs. METRO receives Measure D revenue estimates from SCCRTC and submits a five-year plan outlining proposed projects to be funded under Measure D. This planning process ensures transparency and strategic alignment with community needs.

METRO has made significant strides in expanding and modernizing its transit services through the Reimagine METRO initiative. While recent state and federal grants have provided essential support, much of this funding is one-time and project-specific, creating uncertainty around long-term operational sustainability. To maintain newly expanded services and continue delivering on the goals of Reimagine METRO, a local sales tax measure may be warranted. However, this effort faces competition from other regional entities also seeking access to limited sales tax capacity.

Yet, without a dedicated and recurring revenue stream, METRO risks service reductions and delays in implementing key improvements. It is recommended that METRO consider placing a local transit sales tax measure on the ballot. A voter-approved funding mechanism would provide the financial certainty needed to sustain service enhancements, invest in zero-emission infrastructure, and meet the region’s evolving mobility needs. This measure would empower METRO to continue advancing equity, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality through reliable public transit.

Community Bridges receives FTA Section 5310 Elderly and Disabled Specialized Transit Program funds for vehicle and capital equipment purchases and submits its semi-annual reports to Caltrans certifying use and condition of the equipment. Community Bridges also receives grant funding from contracts with various government entities, including the Area Agency on Aging and each of the four cities and the County for services such as Meals on Wheels, as well as outside contracts for specific programs like the Elderday program.

In addition, Community Bridges has received grant funding from the Monterey Peninsula Foundation, which is listed among its \$50,000–\$100,000 grant sources for FY 2023-24. Grants from the Foundation range from \$1,000 to \$500,000, and they offer operating, program, and capital support depending on the nature of the request. Staff have expressed concerns over the challenges in securing grant funding due to legal and governmental red tape. Therefore, the organization has been unable to apply for grants directly. By contracting with a third-party grant

administrator and writer, Community Bridges could be better equipped to navigate the grants landscape and secure sufficient funding for its programs.

The Volunteer Center, in partnership with the City of Santa Cruz, has also participated in the FTA Section 5310 program. As a sub-recipient of an expansion grant through FTA Section 5310, the agency received funding focused on recruitment and expanding hours of operation from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. as well as on Saturday.

Section VI

Findings

The following summarizes the findings obtained from this triennial audit covering fiscal years 2022 through 2024. A set of recommendations is then provided.

Triennial Audit Findings

1. The Santa Cruz County transit operators complied with each of the 11 compliance requirements. Community Bridges and Volunteer Center are subject to a 10 percent local match requirement established by the SCCRTC. The TDA claim forms attest to at least a 10 percent local match to TDA allocations. The 10 percent local match for LTF funding by Volunteer Center has historically been met through donations. In lieu of the 10 percent local match, Volunteer Center in concert with the SCCRTC, came up with a minimum number of riders of 1,000 per quarter metric.
2. According to the SCCRTC *Rules & Regulations* manual (revised November 2022), Santa Cruz METRO is subject to the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA (PUC 99268.1) in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement. The agency met the 50 percent expenditure limitation under the TDA in lieu of meeting the farebox recovery requirement.
3. The Santa Cruz County transit operators (Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges - Lift Line) participate in the CHP Transit Operator Compliance Program and received vehicle inspections within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim. Satisfactory ratings were made for all inspections conducted during the audit period for both agencies. In another development, due to the seating capacity being reduced on ParaCruz paratransit vehicles, CHP terminal inspections are no longer required. The last inspections pertaining to that service mode were conducted in FY 2022. No violations were noted for the Community Bridges' CHP inspections.
4. The operating budget for Santa Cruz METRO exhibited modest fluctuations during the audit period and did not exceed 15 percent. In contrast, the operating budgets for Community Bridges – Lift Line and the Volunteer Center did exhibit increases above 15 percent. The operating budget increases for Community Bridges are attributed to a 30 percent increase in insurance premiums, higher employee salaries, and benefits. The 22 percent increase in the FY 2023 operating budget for the Volunteer Center is attributed to increased insurance costs (for drivers), recruitment, marketing, and mileage reimbursement.
5. Of the prior five performance audit recommendations, the Santa Cruz County operators fully implemented three recommendations and partially implemented one. Santa Cruz METRO successfully clarified its eligibility criteria for TDA-LTF through an SCCRTC TDA manual update and modernized its website infrastructure under the Reimagine METRO initiative, enhancing user experience and access to transit information. It also made substantial progress with the

deployment of Workday ERP and automated passenger counters, though full implementation of KPI tracking tools remains pending. Community Bridges – Lift Line implemented a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) model via the Access for All program, offering accessible, app-based transportation for residents with disabilities. However, the City of Santa Cruz’s Volunteer Center has yet to integrate goals between its Transportation and Grocery Shopper Programs, with progress contingent on rebuilding its volunteer driver pool. This final recommendation is being carried forward for future implementation.

6. Santa Cruz METRO operating costs increased 13.0 percent system-wide over the period based on audited data from the FY 2021 base year through FY 2024. System-wide operating costs reflect all costs and exclude depreciation costs. Using unaudited modal operating cost data drawn from the NTD, operating costs increased by 27.8 percent for fixed-route and increased by 16.0 percent for ParaCruz.³ According to the annual financial audit, the trend in system-wide operating cost increases was due to increases in personnel expenses related to wage increases and contractual obligations pursuant to labor agreements negotiated during the audit period, as well as implementation costs for a new ERP business management system. Community Bridges’ Lift Line operating costs increased substantially by 70.7 percent due to a return to pre-pandemic service levels. Volunteer Center transportation costs increased by 12.4 percent for the audit period.
7. Ridership on Santa Cruz METRO increased by 313.5 percent system-wide during the audit period. Fixed-route ridership soared by 323.5 percent, rebounding from 907,000 to 3.8 million passengers between the FY 2021 base year and FY 2024. ParaCruz ridership increased by 80.5 percent, from 39,000 to 70,000 riders over the same period. Overall, these metrics mark a return of 76.1 percent of pre-pandemic (FY 2019) fixed-route ridership in FY 2019, and a return to 95.7 percent of pre-pandemic ParaCruz ridership. Lift Line ridership increased 156.2 percent during the audit period by more than 33,000 passengers. Volunteer Center transportation ridership decreased 25.3 percent for the period, from 3,900 to 2,900 passengers. For Santa Cruz METRO and Lift Line, the trend in this indicator reflects a significant return in passengers following the COVID-19 pandemic.
8. From a combination of performance data trends, TDA performance indicators for Santa Cruz operators demonstrated a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, with significant improvements across key TDA performance indicators. Operating costs rose moderately system-wide (13 percent) but more sharply for individual services like Lift Line (70.7 percent), primarily due to wage increases and system upgrades. Despite cost increases, cost effectiveness improved markedly, with operating cost per passenger dropping 72.7 percent system-wide.

³ The sum of operating expenses by mode reported in the NTD do not equal the audited total operating costs. The NTD operating costs by mode only reflect costs allocated by Santa Cruz METRO to that particular mode based on NTD guidelines, which excludes depreciation costs. Additional operating costs are classified as other reconciling items in the NTD and not separated by mode.

9. Santa Cruz METRO’s Reimagine METRO initiative, launched in FY 2024, marked a transformative system redesign focused on enhancing transit efficiency, accessibility, and equity. The initiative prioritizes frequent and reliable service in high-demand corridors. The first phase, implemented in December 2023, was cost-neutral and supported by a major workforce expansion, growing from 155 to 250 budgeted operator positions, along with new supervisors and maintenance staff.
10. The Pacific Station Transit Center in downtown Santa Cruz closed on February 8, 2024, to begin a two-year demolition and redevelopment project. Transit operations and customer service were relocated to the temporary River Front Transit Center on February 12, 2024. Once completed, the revitalized Pacific Station will become a transit-oriented mixed-use complex, featuring 126 units of affordable housing, retail and office spaces, and integrated onsite transit services
11. Santa Cruz METRO steadily upgraded its intelligent transportation system (ITS) infrastructure. These ITS enhancements have included the implementation of Cleaver Devices AVL and APCs on the METRO fleet in December 2022. METRO was under contract with Syncromatics during the years of 2018 through May 2022. The company was tasked with providing METRO with annual on time performance and other reporting data. The company proved to be unreliable, and the data was inconsistent related to on time performance, transmission of data to vehicles and a multitude of key performance indicators.
12. METRO utilizes two specialized dispatching systems to manage its transit operations: Hastus for fixed-route services and Ecolane for its ParaCruz paratransit program. Ecolane offers key features such as real-time mapping, automated ride batching, on-time performance tracking, and NTD reporting. ParaCruz reservations are entered directly into Ecolane, and paratransit vans are equipped with mobility safety devices to enhance comfort and safety for both passengers and drivers.
13. METRO’s marketing initiatives have focused on boosting ridership, enhancing accessibility, and promoting environmental awareness through strategic outreach and digital engagement. Led by customer service staff within the operations division, METRO resumed public events post-pandemic and launched impactful fare promotions, including two weeks of free rides during the Reimagine METRO rollout and the Youth Cruz Free program, which saw a 400–500 percent increase in youth ridership. METRO also supports contactless fare payment through the Splash Pass App and enables ParaCruz riders to manage trips via the Ecolane Mobility App, reinforcing its commitment to modern, rider-friendly service.
14. METRO’s One Ride at a Time campaign creatively blends environmental advocacy with public transit promotion by wrapping buses in striking wildlife imagery, themed around local ecosystems like whales, redwoods, and monarchs. The campaign encourages riders to see transit as a tool for conservation, under the tagline “Protecting One Ride at a Time.” Supported

by an award-winning social media strategy, METRO amplifies the campaign through engaging content, free fare events, and collaborations with groups like MBARI and local artists.

15. In early 2024, METRO underwent a leadership transition as its CEO/General Manager retired in February after nearly two years of transformative leadership, during which he spearheaded initiatives such as Reimagine METRO, Youth Cruz Free, and Zero-Emission Fleet Expansion. A nationwide search was launched in March, culminating in the appointment of a new CEO/General Manager in April 2024. The incoming CEO brings over a decade of public transit leadership experience, having served as CEO of Mountain Line Transit in Missoula, Montana since 2015, with a strong background in ballot initiatives, sustainable transit development, and ridership growth.
16. METRO undertook a major technology modernization by adopting the Workday ERP system to replace outdated legacy platforms dating back to the 1990s. This transition streamlined operations across finance, HR, payroll, and procurement, eliminating manual processes, and addressing vulnerabilities tied to in-house servers. Workday's cloud-based infrastructure, integrated applications, and automation capabilities significantly improved reliability and efficiency.
17. METRO's most recent FTA triennial review was conducted on conducted on March 1, 2023 (scoping meeting) with virtual site visits conducted on August 14-16, 2023. A draft report was completed September 15, 2023, with the final report released on October 10, 2023. The triennial review focused on compliance in 23 areas; three of which were not applicable to METRO. No deficiencies were found in 18 of the 20 areas of FTA requirements reviewed. Two deficiencies found in two review areas: Satisfactory Continuing Control and Section 5307 Program Requirements. Santa Cruz METRO responded to these deficiencies, which were closed out.
18. Community Bridges' Lift Line demonstrated strong performance in expanding accessible transportation for vulnerable populations in Santa Cruz County. During the pandemic, it maintained essential service trips, including rides to vaccination centers, and increased weekday and weekend capacity by hiring more drivers. Ridership rebounded to pre-pandemic levels by FY 2025, with Elderday remaining its largest program, growing 15 percent due to increased attendance. Lift Line launched the Access for All program, offering \$5.00 rides—or free for eligible users—supported by a CPUC grant and managed via a mobile app.
19. The Volunteer Center demonstrated strong performance in delivering senior transportation services, supporting 201 clients with the help of 118 volunteers, and facilitating trips to 279 destinations. Innovative use of Google Hub software has streamlined dispatching, ride coordination, and data tracking, enhancing service quality and operational efficiency. The Center also played a vital role in regional disaster response, assisting with flood recovery in Pajaro and wildfire evacuations in Felton Grove, and distributed preparedness kits through a state grant partnership with Meals on Wheels.

Recommendations

1. **Activate and optimize the key performance indicators module contained in the Workday ERP and consider the acquisition of transit performance analysis software. (Santa Cruz METRO)**

This recommendation has been carried forward in this audit for full implementation. During the audit period, METRO undertook a significant modernization effort by implementing a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system using Workday. This transformation was aimed at replacing outdated legacy systems and streamlining operations across finance, human resources, payroll, and procurement. One of the key features contained in Workday is a KPI module, which has yet to be activated. The development of a comprehensive set of KPIs through the Workday ERP could encompass:

- *Ridership & Demand Metrics:* Passenger trips per service type (fixed route versus ParaCruz and microtransit), peak versus off-peak demand.
- *Operational Efficiency:* On-time performance, average wait time, trip duration, vehicle utilization rates.
- *Financial Performance:* Farebox recovery ratio, cost per trip, operational expenditure trends.
- *Regulatory Compliance:* Accurate data reporting for State Controller Reports and National Transit Database submissions.
- *Customer Experience:* Rider satisfaction scores, accessibility enhancements, service reliability.

In addition, the agency is considering the acquisition of TransTrack, a comprehensive transit operations software designed to help transit agencies manage and analyze their data effectively. TransTrack is already utilized by transit systems and transportation planning agencies in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. With these new tools in place or under consideration, particularly with the phased implementation of Reimagine METRO, the agency is encouraged to optimize the modules contained in these tools to implement a useful KPI system for analysis and planning purposes.

2. **Consider pursuing a local sales tax measure that would help sustain the recent system redesign (Santa Cruz METRO)**

METRO has proven adept at managing state and federal transportation resources over the years. Leadership has implemented transformative transit solutions, such as the Reimagine METRO initiative, launched in FY 2024, Youth Cruz Free program that further transit efficiency, accessibility, and equity. In addition, METRO has been active in repurposing its transit centers in Santa Cruz and Watsonville into transit-oriented development. With the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, federal stimulus programs have provided much needed support in the short-term to local transit operations and transportation programs. Once that stimulus

funding runs its course while existing and future expenditures continue, METRO and its partner agencies will have to consider other options.

A local dedicated sustainable revenue source to fund and support transportation priorities as well as provide a local match for state and federal grants could be considered. METRO currently receives a portion of local Measure D revenues to support ParaCruz operations and transit capital needs. To maintain newly expanded services and continue delivering on the goals of Reimagine METRO, a local sales tax measure may be warranted. However, this effort faces competition from other regional entities also seeking access to limited sales tax capacity.

Yet, without a dedicated and recurring revenue stream, METRO risks service reductions and delays in implementing key improvements. It is recommended that METRO consider placing a local transit sales tax measure on the ballot. A voter-approved funding mechanism would provide the financial certainty needed to sustain service enhancements, invest in zero-emission infrastructure, and meet the region’s evolving mobility needs. This measure would empower METRO to continue advancing equity, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality through reliable public transit.

Peer agencies in neighboring Central Coast counties have been successful in passing local transportation tax measures such as Measure X in Monterey County and Measure A in Santa Barbara County. By leveraging the success of Reimagine METRO, the agency could identify and recruit champions on the Board and in the community, who can effectively articulate the necessity of transportation self-help funding.

**3. Enhance Grant Pursuit and Administration Capacity through Third-Party Support.
(Community Bridges – Lift Line)**

Community Bridges is encouraged to strengthen its grant acquisition and management capabilities by contracting with a qualified third-party grants administrator and writer. While the organization currently receives funding from federal programs such as FTA Section 5310, local government contracts, and philanthropic sources like the Monterey Peninsula Foundation, staff have cited persistent challenges in navigating complex legal and governmental requirements that hinder direct grant application efforts. Engaging external expertise would allow Community Bridges to proactively identify and pursue a broader range of funding opportunities, including competitive grants for operating, capital, and programmatic support—and ensure compliance with reporting and administrative requirements. This strategic investment could enhance financial sustainability and expand service capacity across its transit and human services programs.

**4. Integrate the Transportation Program goals with those of the Grocery Shopper Program.
(City of Santa Cruz – Volunteer Center)**

This recommendation has been carried forward in this audit for full implementation. The Volunteer Center has focused its efforts on building back its volunteer driver pool since the

COVID-19 pandemic. The center experienced huge declines in volunteer participation rates in 2022 and 2003. However, 12 new volunteers were onboarded in 2024 within a six-month period. Despite these challenges, it has continued to maintain the Seniors Grocery Shopper Program. Performance data are reported quarterly to SCCRTC and the City of Santa Cruz. Ridership statistics for both the Transportation Program and the Grocery Shopper Program are tracked on a spreadsheet compiled by Volunteer Center staff quarterly. However, the program goals for the Transportation Programs have yet to be integrated with those of the Grocery Shopper Program. It is suggested once the volunteer driver pool has recovered to pre-pandemic levels that staff revisit setting measurable goals for both programs.

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Nisha Singh, Director of Internal Services

RE: Amendment 2 to Agreement No. TP 2192 with Redwood Public Law, LLP to add Compensation and Extend the Term

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director recommends that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director to amend Agreement no. TP 2192 (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) with Redwood Public Law, LLP for legal services to increase compensation by \$260,000 for a revised not to exceed contract value of \$935,000 and extending the contract term through March 31, 2026.

BACKGROUND

RTC General Counsel Steve Mattas and the team of attorneys who work with him have provided legal counsel services to the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) since August 1, 2019. In 2024, Mr. Mattas and Meyers Nave notified the RTC that Mr. Mattas and his team of attorneys were departing Meyers Nave, PLC and joining Redwood Public Law, LLP. Redwood Public Law, LLP is a law firm that is focused on the representation of public agencies and includes lawyers who specialize in public agency law, transportation agency law, and general counsel services.

DISCUSSION

The legal services provided to RTC under the current agreement with Redwood Public Law, LLP include both general and special counsel services. The agreement with Redwood Public Law, LLP approved in March 2024 included a term through June 30, 2025. It is advisable to re-procure contracts for ongoing professional services every 5-years. Rather than reprocurring the legal services contract in 2024, Interim Executive Director Mitch Weiss recommended extending the term for the legal service contracts through June of 2025 in order to have continuity of legal services through the meet & confer process related to the organizational restructuring, recruitment of the Executive Director, and to allow the permanent Executive Director to reprocure the legal services.

The Commission previously approved Amendment 1 to Legal Services Agreement No. TP2192 with Redwood Public Law, LLP. This amendment increased the contract compensation by \$375,000, resulting in a not-to-exceed amount of \$675,000, and extended the contract term through December 31, 2025, to ensure continuity of general and special counsel services.

The reprocurement of the legal services contract is underway. The contract is scheduled to be recommended for award at the Commission's March 2026 board meeting. In order to maintain continuity of legal counsel services, **staff recommends approving the attached resolution (Attachment 1) approving Amendment 2 to TP 2192 (Exhibit A to Attachment 1), which would increase the contract compensation by an additional \$260,000, for a revised not-to-exceed value of \$935,000, and extend the contract term through March 31, 2026.** This extension will ensure uninterrupted legal services during the re-procurement period.

FISCAL IMPACT

The RTC's FY 2025-26 budget includes funds for legal services under administration, planning, and specific projects and programs.

SUMMARY

Staff recommends amending the contract with Redwood Public Law, LLP to increase compensation and extend the term through March 31, 2026. This will ensure continued legal services and provide sufficient time for staff to re-procure the legal services contract, anticipated to occur during winter through spring 2026.

Attachments:

1. Resolution
 - a. Amendment 2 to Contract No. TP 2192

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of December 4, 2025
on the motion of Commissioner Alternate
duly seconded by Commissioner

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AN
AMENDMENT TO INCREASE COMPENSATION AND EXTEND THE TERM TO
CONTRACT TP 2192 WITH REDWOOD PUBLIC LAW, LLP FOR
GENERAL COUNSEL AND SPECIAL COUNSEL SERVICES**

WHEREAS, Mr. Steve Mattas (formerly of Meyers Nave) and the team of attorneys who work with him provided legal counsel services to the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) under contract TP 2046-01;

WHEREAS, in 2024, Mr. Mattas and Meyers Nave notified RTC that Mr. Mattas and the team of attorneys that work with him were departing Meyers Nave, PLC and joining Redwood Public Law, LLP that is focused on the representation of public agencies and includes lawyers who specialize in public agency law, transportation agency law, and general counsel services;

WHEREAS, the Commission provided approval for the Interim Executive Director, Mitch Weiss, to execute contract TP 2192 with Redwood Public Law, LLP for general counsel and special counsel services with a termination date of June 30, 2025;

WHEREAS, the Commission subsequently approved this action as Amendment 1, authorizing an increase in compensation to Redwood Public Law, LLP by \$375,000, for a total amount not to exceed \$675,000, and extending the contract term through December 31, 2025, to ensure continued continuity of services;

WHEREAS, the agreement with Redwood Public Law, LLP is scheduled to be re-procured during Winter through Spring 2026;

WHEREAS, to maintain continuity of services through the re-procurement period, staff recommends increasing compensation by \$260,000 to an amount not to exceed \$935,000, and extending the contract term to March 31, 2026.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION HEREBY:

1. The Executive Director is hereby authorized to execute Amendment 2 to contract TP2192 with Redwood Public Law, LLP increasing compensation from \$675,000 to \$935,000 and extending the term to March 31, 2026.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

Eduardo Montesino, Chair

ATTEST:

Sarah Christensen, Secretary

Exhibit:

- A. Draft Amendment 2 to contract TP 2192 with Redwood Public Law, LLP

Distribution: Contract Manager

AMENDMENT 2

TO AGREEMENT NO. TP2192 BETWEEN REDWOOD PUBLIC LAW, LLP AND THE
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Effective _____, the parties hereto agree to amend that certain agreement dated March 19, 2024, and amended March 27, 2025, by and between the SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION hereinafter called COMMISSION, and REDWOOD PUBLIC LAW, LLP hereinafter called CONSULTANT, as follows:

Section 2. Compensation: Payment amount shall be increased by \$260,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$935,000.

Section 3. Term: The term of this contract shall be extended through March 31, 2026.

All other provisions of said Agreement shall remain the same.

SIGNATURES**1. CONSULTANT:**

By _____
Steven Mattas
Partner

Date _____

Redwood Public Law, LLP
66 Franklin Street, Suite 300
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 282-7033
steve.mattas@redwoodpubliclaw.com

**2. SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION:**

By _____
Sarah Christensen
Executive Director

Date _____

1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 460-3200
info@sccrtc.org

3. APPROVED AS TO INSURANCE:

By _____
Yesenia Parra
RTC Administrative Services Officer

Date _____

Distribution: Fiscal, RTC Contract Manager, RTC Contracts, CONSULTANT

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Krista Corwin, Administrative Assistant II

RE: Monthly Meeting Schedule

The monthly meeting schedule is presented to inform the Commission and the public of upcoming Commission, Committee, and Advisory Committee meetings. The meetings are open to the public. Information needed to attend the meetings can be found on the first page of the meeting agenda. Agendas for the meetings will be posted to the appropriate webpage five to seven days prior to the meetings.

- Commission Meetings:
<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/regional-transportation-commission/agendas/>
- Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee:
<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/budget-administration-personnel-committee/>
- Bicycle Advisory Committee:
<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/bicycle-advisory-committee/>
- Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee:
<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/elderly-disabled/>
- Interagency Technical Advisory Committee:
<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/inter-agency/>
- Traffic Operations System/SAFE on 17:
<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/traffic-operations-system-safe-on-17/>
- Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee:
<https://sccrtc.org/meetings/measure-d-taxpayer-oversight-committee/>

Attachments:

1. Three Month Meeting Schedule

Three Month Meeting Schedule

www.sccrtc.org

December 4, 2025 RTC Meeting

December 2025-February 2026

Note: Please check website for most up-to-date information. All meetings are subject to cancellation when there are no action items to be considered.

Date	Day	Meeting Body	Time	Place
12/04/25	Thu	Regional Transportation Commission	9:00am	Watsonville
12/08/25	Mon	Bicycle Advisory Committee	5:30pm	Aptos Branch Library *New Location*
12/09/25	Tue	Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30pm	RTC Office
12/18/25	Thu	Interagency Technical Advisory Committee	1:30pm	RTC Office
01/15/26	Thu	Regional Transportation Commission	6:00pm *New Time*	Watsonville
01/22/26	Thu	Interagency Technical Advisory Committee *New Date* (one week later)	1:30pm	RTC Office
02/05/26	Thu	Regional Transportation Commission	9:00am	Watsonville
02/09/26	Mon	Bicycle Advisory Committee	5:30pm	RTC Office
02/10/26	Tue	Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30pm	RTC Office
02/19/26	Thu	Interagency Technical Advisory Committee	1:30pm	RTC Office

- Aptos Branch Library – 7695 Soquel Drive, Aptos, CA
- RTC Office – 1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250A, Santa Cruz, CA
- Watsonville – 275 Main Street, Watsonville, CA

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Krista Corwin, Administrative Assistant II

RE: Correspondence Log

The Correspondence Log is included in the meeting packet to inform the Commission of correspondence from members of the public on matters within its jurisdiction and from members of the Commission and its staff to other agencies. The correspondence log and the accompanying Full Comments (linked in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the log) demonstrate the value the Commissioner places on transparency and responsiveness.

Attachments:

1. Correspondence Log

TO							From			Link to Full Comments
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
10/22/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 10.28.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Bryan	Largay	Resident	Comments on Rural Highways Safety Plan
10/27/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Lorna	Grundeman	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
10/27/25	Email	Incoming	pending	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Anne	Vyorka	Dodge Construction Network	Questions about the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail project
10/27/25	Email	Incoming	K. Corwin 11.3.2025	Krista	Corwin	SCCRTC	Dani	Andrade	Santa Cruz City Council	Request for PDF of the 2026 SCCRTC meeting schedule
10/27/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Laurie	Leonard	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
10/28/25	Email	Incoming	R.Graeven 10.28.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Brian	Peoples	Trail Now	CC'd on communicatio to California Coastal Commission regarding Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project
10/28/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Gabrielle	Wilder	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
10/28/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Bruce	Sawhill	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
10/29/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Dean	Silvers	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
10/29/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Jack	Brown	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
10/29/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Jack	Brown	Resident	Comment - item 18, RTC 11.6.2025
10/29/25	Email	Incoming	n/a	Amanda	Marino	SCCRTC	Jack	Brown	Resident	Correction for the agenda packet pag 6-12
10/29/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Steve	Lustgarden	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
10/29/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Tim Brattan	Suzi Mahler	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
10/29/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Juan	Speckert	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
10/30/25	Email	Outgoing	n/a	Interested	Parties	Various	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Consolidated Grants/2026 RTIP Staff Recommendations
10/30/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	James	Cook	Resident	Opposition to funding a train and support for building the interim trail
10/30/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Jennifer	Harris-Anderson	Resident	Opposition to funding a train and support for building the interim trail
10/31/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah Christensen	Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Jim	Cumming	Resident	Comment - item 14, RTC 11.6.2025
10/31/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah Christensen	Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	E. Ariel	Young	Resident	Comment - item 14, RTC 11.6.2025
10/31/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Dan	Dion	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/01/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah Christensen	Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Brian	Peoples	Trail Now	Comment - item 14, RTC 11.6.2025
11/01/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Brian	Peoples	Trail Now	Comment - item 18, RTC 11.6.2025
11/01/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Grace Blakeslee	Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Brian	Peoples	Trail Now	Comment - item 19, RTC 11.6.2025
11/01/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Brian	Peoples	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/02/25	Email	Incoming	pending	Amin AbuAmara	Brian Zamora	SCCRTC	Rick	Longinotti	Campaign for Sustainable Transportation	Questions for item 21, RTC 11. 6. 2025

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/02/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Laura	Livingston	Resident	Opposition to funding a train and support for building the interim trail
11/02/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah Christensen	Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Dianne	Dryer	Resident	Comment - item 14, RTC 11.6.2025
11/02/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah Christensen	Rachel Moriconi, Grace Blakeslee, Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Ellen	Martinez	Resident	Comments on items 14, 18, 19, and 21 - RTC 11.6.2025
11/02/25	Email	Incoming	n/a	Sarah Christensen	Tommy Travers & Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Brian	Peoples	Trail Now	Comment on Bicycle Advisory Committee and item 14 RTC 11.6.2025
11/02/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Sarah Christensen	Rachel Moriconi, Grace Blakeslee, Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Joe	Martinez	Resident	Comments on items 14, 18, 19, and 21 - RTC 11.6.2025
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Kaki	Rusmore	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Michael	Setty	Train Riders Association of California	Comments on Rail Concept Report
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Nancy	Willard	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Amanda	DeJesus	Resident	Comments on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Amanda	DeJesus	Resident	Comments on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Amanda	DeJesus	Resident	Comments on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.3.2025	Amin AbuAmara	Brian Zamora	SCCRTC	Todd	Balian	Resident	Request for a soundwall to be added to Highway 1 project near Grange Hall in Aptos
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Mikey	Cohen	Bike Santa Cruz County	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Nate	Villaume	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	John	Rusmore	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Theo	Rusmore	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Frank	Rimicci	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Tina	Davey	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/03/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Teresa	Driscoll	Resident	Support for trail without train

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah Christensen	Rachel Moriconi, Grace Blakeslee, Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Anderson	Shepard	Resident	Comments - Items 14, 28, and 19
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Amin AbuAmara	Riley Gerbrandt, Janine Ramirez	SCCRTC	Bob	Fifield	Resident	Opposition to train and views on improvements to the transportation system - Highway 1, Interim Trail
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Stephen	Svete	Bike Santa Cruz County	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.20205	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Barbara	Hanson	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	pending	Brian	Zamora	SCCRTC	Oscar	.	Resident	Question about Capitola Ave bridge construction
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Faelyn	O'Grady	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Scott	Miller	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Anne	Berne	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Michael	Pisano	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Amber	Gillespie	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Darren	Huckle	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Brett	Graf	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Joel	Dodge	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Renate	Kupke	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Natascha	Bruckner	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Elliott	Campbell	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Mitchell	Bramlett	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Letter	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Jed	Wilson	Pajaro Valley Fire Protection District	Comment - item 18, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Bill	Cook	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Letter	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Terri	Baker	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Kathy	Montano	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025

Correspondence Log (10.27.2025-11.24.2025)

RTC December 4, 2025

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/04/25	Letter	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Prentice	Steffen	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Daniel	Spero	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Letter	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC				
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	K.Corwin 11.4.2025	Krista	Corwin	SCCRTC	Hollie	Terrell	Resident	Question about voicing concerns at the November 6, 2025 RTC meeting & procedure for written comments
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.4.2025	Grace Blakeslee	Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Jennifer	Harris-Anderson	Resident	Comment - item 19, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Letter	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Sarah	Reed	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Jonathan	Evans	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	David	Van Brink	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Letter	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Meg	Dennison	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Natalie	Goff	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Neil	Waldhauer	Resident	Comments on ZEPRT estimate and time frame for service

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Sara	Wainer	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Darrow	Feldstein	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Karsten	Mueller	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Grace Blakeslee	Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Tom	Kellogg	Resident	Comment - item 19, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Brian	Blackwell	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Connie	Wilson	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Curt	Coleman	Resident	Advocacy for building the trail to Aptos next to the tracks
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Caitlin	Brune	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Peter	Lansdale	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Christie	Donaldson	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Geoffrey	Laredo	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Patrice	Boyle	La Posta Restaurant	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Cris	Tulloch	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah Christensen	Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Kaki	Rusmore	Resident	Comment - item 14, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Nadene	Thorne	Resident	Comment - item 18, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Rosalind	Alley	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Fred	Ferdinand	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Duncan	Coppedge	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Teri	Coppedge	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Eva	Holt	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Clint	Angus	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Jack	.	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/04/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Grace Blakeslee	Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Tom	Brady	Resident	Comment on Measure D 5-year plan
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Carol Libby	Mike Young	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Steven	Jonsson	Bike Santa Cruz County	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah Christensen	Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Vicki	Miller	Resident	Comment - item 14, RTC 11.6.2025

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Will	Mayall	Resident	Comments on feasibility of maintaining county-wide rail system
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Richard	Barrick	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah Christensen	Rachel Moriconi, Grace Blakeslee, Tommy Travers, Amin AbuAmara, Brian Zamora	SCCRTC	Matt	Farrell	Friends of the Rail and Trail	Comments on items 14, 18, 19, and 21 - RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Leah	Laddon	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Matt	Farrell	Friends of the Rail and Trail	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Suzanne	Cochran	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	M	Jackson	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Frank	Kline	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Gerardo	van den Hoek	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Matt	O'Leary	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Orry	Korb	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah Christensen	Rachel Moriconi, Grace Blakeslee, Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Lani	Faulkner	Equity Transit	Comments on items 14, 18, 19, and 21 - RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Robert	Stephens	Resident	Comments on ZEPRT
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah Christensen	Grace Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Rosemary	Kendall	Resident	Comment - item 14, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Grace Blakeslee	Tommy Travers	SCCRTC	Johanna	Lighthill	Resident	Comment - item 19, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Johanna	Lighthill	Resident	Comment - item 18, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Susan	Cavalieri	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Colleen	Holland	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Mary	Morgan	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Enda	Brannan	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Lisa	Sheridan	Resident	Comments on ZEPRT
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.5.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Ann	Durbin	Resident	Comment - item 21, RTC 11.6.2025
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Jack	Brown	Resident	Comments on "false claims regarding railbanking and trackside landowners"

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Russell Weisz	Judith Carey	Resident	Opposition to covering the tracks
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Max	Copperman	Resident	Support for temporary trail on the Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Robert	Staton	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.12.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Will	Mayall	Resident	Concern about MCDC invitation of railbanking litigation firm
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Edward	Banks	Resident	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Fran	Taylor	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Bella	Kressman	SCCRTC	Dan	Schwartz	California Dept. Fish and Wildlife	Follow up regarding the Record of Survey
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Bud	Colligan	Resident	Comments on November's agenda decisions
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Steven	Voisin	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Lisa	Ford	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Bruce	Finney	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Carol	Turley	Resident	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Joseph	Martinez	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Gail	Marzolf	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Roland	Saher	Resident	Opposed to railbanking, embargo, interim trail
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Barry	Scott	Resident	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Marc	Yellin	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Karen	Madura	Brady's Yacht Club	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Daniel	Dodge	Resident	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Tom	Davis	Pacific Edge Climbing Gym	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Tara	Lutz	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Jane	Orbuch	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Alida	Espinoza	Resident	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	R.Moriconi 11.5.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Jim	Helmer	Resident	Question re: Consolidated Grant projects and Glen Arbor Road
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Nick	Littlestone	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Natalie	Goff	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Bob	Hickman	Resident	Comments on the October 2, 2025 RTC meeting - comments made by Commissioners
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Bob	Hickman	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Cindy	Pierce	Resident	Request to see current diagrams with Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Miles	Reiter	Resident	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Peggy	Lizaur	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Paul	Yost	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/05/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Patrick	Devine	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Geoffrey	Laredo	Resident	Comments on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Sandy	Rintoul	Resident	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Chet	Raskin	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Jess	Brown	Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau	Comment on item 18 Consolidated Grants
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Oriana	Farrier-Nolan	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Carolyn	Dille	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/06/25	Email	Outgoing	pending	Interested	Parties	Various	Rachel	Moriconi	SCCRTC	Consolidated Grants/2026 RTIP Awards - confirm by November 12
11/06/25	Email	Outgoing	n/a	BNO	Builders	BNO Builders	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Notice of Intent to Award Contract and RTC Resolution - RFB 2202
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Colleen	Young	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Leonard	Foreman	Resident	Request to remove foliage along Highway 1
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Bill	Heinze	Resident	Comment on item 21 Murray Street Bridge
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Jessica	Evans	Friends of the Rail and Trail	Follow up to statement at RTC meeting - notes from meeting between Friends of the Rail and Trail & Chief of Rail Operations for Caltrans Shannon Simonds
11/06/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Stacie	Brownlee	Chief, Ben Lomond Fire Protection District	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/07/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Tom	Brady	Resident	Thank you for moving forward with the trail
11/07/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Leslie	Nicolett	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/07/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Alejandro	Ferrer	Resident	Opposition to train, support for railbanking
11/09/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.17.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Michael	Mora	Resident	Opposition to rail; where feasible, build traffic circles instead of traffic lights, other suggestions for vehicle congestion
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Glenda	Mecredy	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Kathryn	James	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Warwick & Claudia	Boulton	Resident	State Park to Sumner Trail Proposal

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	S.Munz 11.10.2025	Shannon	Munz	SCCRTC	Johanna	Lighthill	Resident	Questions about Santa Cruz Local article
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Sterling	Lewis	Resident	Support for converting existing bridges between Capitola and Summer Rd to a bike path
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Dawn	Shawhan	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Greg	McBride	Resident	Support for construction of coastal trail from Watsonville to Santa Cruz
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Rosalind	Alley	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Tamera	Norma-Martinez	Resident	Support for opening trail using the existing railways
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Chris	Hadland	Resident	Support for railbanking and pedestrian trail
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Damon	Meyer	Resident	Opposition to railbanking
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	B.Goodman 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Liz	Armbrust	Resident	Request for more information related to "Complete streets plan for downtown boulder creek"
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Andrew	Crager	Resident	Comments on Coastal Rail Trail and ZEPRT
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Steven	Most	Resident	Comments about serving the community
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Gary	Niblock	Resident	Opposition to rail planning

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/10/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.17.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Tina	Andreatta	Resident	Support for rail and trail to connect the county for future generations
11/11/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Kevin	Maguire	Bike Capitola	Comments on abandonment, railbanking, interim trail
11/11/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.17.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Tom and Becky	Hart	Resident	Opposition to rail studies, support for investing in bus travel
11/12/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Carol	Younge	Resident	Support for trail, opposition to continued rail studies
11/12/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.17.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Robert	Corrigan	Resident	Opposition to the train, support for expediting trail
11/13/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	RTC			Brian	Peoples	Trail Now	Support for opening a temporary trail from State Park Drive to Sumner Road
11/13/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Frank	Rimicci Jr.	Resident	Support for seeking passenger rail with trail
11/13/25	Email	Incoming	N.Fabbricino 11.21.2025	Nick	Fabbricino	SCCRTC	Nadene	Thorne	Resident	Question on Rail Corridor Maintenance Costs
11/13/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Doug	Spilman	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/13/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.13.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	James	Weller	Resident	Comments on ZEPRT and
11/13/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.17.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Linda	Garfield	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/16/25	Email	Incoming	pending	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Johanna	Lighthill	Resident	Questions about Progressive Rail's objections to opening the Murray St rail bridge to temporary bike/ped use
11/17/25	Email	Incoming	pending	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Damon	Meyer	Resident	Questions about Clarification on Corridor Constraints at Schwan Lagoon
11/17/25	Email	Incoming	pending	Grace	Blakeslee	SCCRTC	Damon	Meyer	Resident	Questions about Clarification of Terminology Used in Grant Applications
11/18/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.18.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Bud	Colligan	Resident	Comments on proliferation of e-bikes and cargo bikes for transport and business enterprise
11/18/25	Email	Incoming	M.Koenig 11.18.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Ray	LeBeau	Resident	Support for opening the Murray St bridge to pedestrian traffic
11/18/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.19.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Warwick	Boulton	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/18/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.19.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Jim	Helmer	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/19/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.19.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Jim	Helmer	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/20/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.20.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Stephany	Buswell	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/20/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.20.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Meghan	Arnold	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Amin	AbuAmara	SCCRTC	Dave	Faulkner	Resident	Request to build a physical barrier to prevent drivers from misusing auxiliary lane
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Jim	Helmer	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Russell	Weisz	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Brooke	Secor	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Anne	Vyorka	Dodge Construction Network	Inquiry about Interlaken Routes Phase 1 Resurfacing Project
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Anne	Vyorka	Dodge Construction Network	Inquiry about project to resurface Bear Creek and Empire Grade roads
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	RTC		SCCRTC	Damon	Meyer	Resident	Selections from RTC website & cartoon
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Martha	Graham-Waldon	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Malin	Pinsky	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	David	Stolz	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.21.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Amelia	Conlen	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.24.2025	Riley	Gerbrandt	SCCRTC	Michael	Ballingall	Resident	Support for moving forward with passenger rail
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.24.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Pete	Rasmussen	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.24.2025	Brianna	Goodman	SCCRTC	Rick	Hyman	Resident	Comment on the Rural Highways Safety Plan

TO							From			
Date Letter Rec'd / Sent	Type	Incoming / Outgoing	Response	First	Last	Organization	First	Last	Organization	Subject
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.24.2025	Brian Zamora	Amin AbuAmara	SCCRTC	Steven	Gray	Resident	Exist closed signage suggestion
11/21/25	Email	Incoming	RTC Staff 11.24.2025	Sarah	Christensen	SCCRTC	Kyle	Jordan	Resident	Urge a "no" vote on railbanking

AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: Sarah Christensen, Executive Director
RE: Caltrans Report

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) receive a report generated by Caltrans on their active projects within Santa Cruz County.

BACKGROUND

Caltrans provides a project update report listing all active project locations, brief description, construction timeline, cost, assigned project manager, construction contractor (as applicable) and comments with updates to the Commission for each RTC meeting.

DISCUSSION

The December 4, 2025, Caltrans report includes updates on projects in construction and under development. Changes since the last project update are shown in bold-face font. Each project location is listed by route and postmile, which can be found using the Caltrans postmile services website query tool: postmile.dot.ca.gov. The types of projects range from storm damage repairs, pavement preservation, drainage upgrades, bridge rehabilitation or replacement, and safety upgrades. Resources for general Caltrans inquiries can be found after the project update report.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no fiscal impacts associated with receiving a report generated by Caltrans on their active projects within Santa Cruz County.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Caltrans Project Update Report



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

REPORT PURPOSE: This report lists high profile or moderate to high impact to the traveling public projects on the State Highway System (SHS) in Santa Cruz County (SCR). This report does not necessarily list all projects or encroachment permit activities. To be included in the SCCRTC's agenda packet, this report generally begins compiling information two to three weeks in advance of the SCCRTC's board meeting. Please refer to Caltrans' News Releases and social media posts for the most up to date road closure information and activity notices.

For information on current roadway conditions and active closures: <https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov/>

For a 7-day look-ahead on planned lane closures, updated each Friday: <https://lcswebreports.dot.ca.gov/searchdistricts?district=5>

Given the sheer number of Caltrans projects in Santa Cruz County, and to assist in providing satisfactory responses: If a Commissioner/Commissioner's Alternate of the SCCRTC intends in advance to ask about a particular project at the Board meeting, it is kindly requested that they submit their inquiry in advance so that Caltrans staff have time to research details & nuances on the matter.

The projects below are listed in order of State Route, then by beginning post mile, with all projects covering multiple State Routes listed first. There are two tables of projects displayed:

1. *"Projects in Construction"* (Milestone range: Construction Contract Approval to Construction Contract Acceptance);
2. *"Projects in Development"* (project phases "Project Initiation Document" (PID), "Project Approval & Environmental Documents" (PA&ED), "Plans, Specifications, & Estimates" (PS&E), and "Right of Way" (RW));

The Right of Way phase often overlaps with the Plans, Specifications, & Estimates (PS&E) phase. Oversight Projects are usually only included below when Caltrans is the Lead Agency for a given phase or activity. Maintenance activities are not generally included. Generally, updates since the last publication of the project update list are in **bold** type.

Please see a list of Caltrans resources available to the public at the end of this document.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in CONSTRUCTION

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Timeline	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Contractor	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
C1	Drainage Improvements 1K640	State Route: 1 PM: MON SR-1 PM 101.53 to SCR County Line / SCR PM 0 to R7.7 From 0.5 miles south of the Santa Cruz / Monterey County Line to 0.2 miles north of Larkin Valley Rd	Culvert repairs, improved lighting, new traffic monitoring systems, and construct maintenance vehicle pullouts.	February 2025 – December 2025	Construction Capital: \$5.9 million Total: \$12 million SHOPP- Drainage	Ryan Caldera	Granite Construction	Construction in progress. Please watch for Caltrans News Releases and social media posts regarding specific construction updates.
C2	Inside Shoulder Widening 1P180	State Route: 1 PM: R5 to 8.2	Widen existing paved inside shoulder to improve vehicle drift recovery	April 2025 – November 2025	Construction Capital: \$4.5 million Total: \$8 million 010 Safety Funds	Chad Stoeher	Granite Rock Company	Construction was completed and the contractor's work accepted October 31, 2025. This project is now in Closeout and will be removed after the January publication of this list.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

	Projects in CONSTRUCTION							
	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Timeline	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Contractor	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
	Auxiliary Lanes & BOS from State Park Dr to Bay/Porter 0C733	State Route: 1 PM: 10.4 to 13.3	Construct auxiliary lanes between State Park Dr & Bay/Porter interchanges. Construct Bus-on-shoulder elements. Reconstruct the Capitola Ave overcrossing.	July 2023 – September 2028	Construction Capital: \$82.3 million Total: \$94.1 million SCCRTC Project-Caltrans Lead for Construction	Madilyn Jacobsen	Granite Construction Company	Regular project updates are being published as News Releases through Caltrans' Public Information Office and SCCRTC's constant contact list. Both publications use identical information.
	Aux Lanes & BOS 41 st to Soquel Ave 0C732	State Route: 1 PM: 13.4 to 14.9	Construct auxiliary Lanes, Bus-on-shoulder elements, & bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing near Chanticleer Avenue.	November 2022 – February 2026	Construction Capital: \$34.6 million Total: \$39.1 million Oversight Project: SCCRTC Project - Caltrans Lead for Construction	Madilyn Jacobsen	Granite Construction Company	The project held a ribbon cutting ceremony on July 30, 2025. Minor construction activities will continue through Winter 2025-26 .
C3								
C4								
C5	FLAP N. Coast Rail Trail 1N610	State Route: 1 PM: 26.45 to 28.78	Formalize two parking areas along Highway 1 with toilet facilities and other amenities. Add turn-pockets on Highway 1 for entry into parking lots. Install a crosswalk with high-visibility striping across Highway 1 in Davenport. Convert existing pedestrian beacon to Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons on existing poles.	April 2024 – March 2026	Construction Capital: \$31.9 million Oversight Project: Federal Highway Administration: Central Federal Lands	Madilyn Jacobsen	Joseph J. Albanese Inc.	FHWA awarded the construction contract in late April 2024. Construction is underway and estimated to be complete in Spring 2026.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in CONSTRUCTION

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Timeline	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Contractor	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
C6	Upper Drainage & Erosion Control Improvements 1G950	State Route: 9 PM: 8.5 to 25.5 In Boulder Creek from Holiday Ln, just south of Ben Lomond, to 4.7 miles north of the SR 236/9 Junction	Upgrade drainage and erosion control at 17 spot locations along Highway 9	July 2025 – August 2027	Construction Capital: \$11.1 million Total: \$19.5 million SHOPP- Sustainability / Climate Change	Kelli Hill	Gordon N. Ball	Please watch for Caltrans News Releases and social media posts for specific construction updates. This project features several full and partial closures both at night and during the day. This project will feature a temporary signal for reversing traffic between Brookdale & Boulder Creek.
C7	Prospect Ave Retaining Wall (Emergency Project) 1S360	State Route: 9 PM: 12.14 Between Prospect Ave and Lorenzo Ave, just south of Boulder Creek	Replacement of a fractured culvert system, failing retaining wall, and long-term restoration of the structural integrity of the roadway.	January 2025 – December 2025	Construction Capital: \$4.7 million Total: \$6.25 million SHOPP- Emergency Restoration	Victor Devens	Granite Construction	This emergency project is using a temporary signal for reversing traffic. Please watch for Caltrans News Releases for additional project information as it becomes available.
C8	San Lorenzo River Bridge & Kings Creek Bridge Replacement 1H470	State Route: 9 PM: 13.6 & 15.5 North of Boulder Creek, at the San Lorenzo River Bridge and at Kings Creek Bridge	Replace two bridges on State Route 9	September 2025 – May 2028	Construction Capital: \$14.7 million Total: \$25.9 million SHOPP- Bridge	Kelli Hill	Gordon N. Ball	This project has approved a construction contract & will mobilize crews in 2026. This project will feature temporary signals for reversing traffic at each bridge location.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in CONSTRUCTION

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Timeline	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Contractor	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
C9	Semitruck Spillage Repair (Emergency Project) 1T390	State Route: 17 PM: 8.4 South of Sugarloaf Rd, Scotts Valley. Southbound lanes.	Grind and replace damaged pavement. Repair retaining wall. Reconstruct guardrail	October 2025 – December 2025	Construction Capital: \$1.18 million Total: \$1.48 million SHOPP- Emergency Restoration Director's Order	Victor Devens	Granite Construction	Following a semitruck turning over, this project repairs damage caused. Please watch for Caltrans News Releases for notification of overnight lane closures.
C10	Struve Slough Sidewalk Repair 1S380	State Route: 152 PM: T1.35 to T1.59 Along SR-152 westbound	Repair the sidewalk and supporting embankment located along Highway 152 westbound at Struve Slough.	October 2025 – July 2026	Construction Capital: \$5.17M Total: \$6.395M SHOPP- Permanent Restoration Director's Order	Madilyn Jacobsen	Granite Rock Company	As a project responding to the failure of the existing sidewalk, this project is on an accelerated timeline under a Director's Order. This project will look to address the near-term conditions necessary to reopen the sidewalk. Construction began after the contract was awarded to Granite Rock. Please watch for Caltrans News Releases and social media posts for specific construction updates.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Please continue to the next page for Projects in Development



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D1	SR-17 Pavement Maintenance Treatment 1R450	State Route: 1, 17, 152 PM: SR-17 0.15 to 0.55 NB lanes; SR-1 fish hook; SR-152 east of Carlton Rd	Install Non-Rubberized Open Grade Friction Coarse pavement for enhanced vehicle to roadway grip at 4 locations in Santa Cruz County	Fall 2027 – Fall 2028	Construction Capital: \$2.1M Total: \$2.1 million Minor A Program	Chad Stoehr	PA&ED	This project is working through the Environmental Phase (PA&ED) and anticipates completing this phase in Winter 2025-26 . After adding additional locations to the project's scope for environmental clearance, this project's Capital Costs are beyond the Minor A Program limits. This project will evaluate funding strategies after PAED is completed to maximize implementation options.
D2	Pajaro Flood Management Bridges 1Q980	State Routes: 129 & 152 PMs: 1.841 & 2.028	Raise levees along the Pajaro River and Salsipuedes Creek and raise & replace the SR-152 (36-0001) and SR-129 (36-0034) bridges over Salsipuedes Creek.	Winter 2027-28 – Winter 2029-30	Local Funds Oversight Project: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency	Ryan Caldera	PID - Completed	The local agency developed a Project Initiation Document (PID) using a consultant. The final document was approved and signed. Caltrans will continue to serve as the oversight agency through the Environmental Phase (PA&ED), anticipated to begin in early 2026.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D3	Harkins Slough Bike-Ped Overcrossing 1G490	State Route: 1 PM: 1.86 to 2.73	Widen overcrossing to accommodate the widening of the sidewalk and addition of a Class 4 two-way bikeway on the north side of the bridge.	Fall 2026 – Summer 2028	Construction Capital: \$10.54 million Total: \$15.8 million Active Transportation Program Funds Oversight Project: Caltrans completing PS&E and RW on behalf of City of Watsonville.	Madilyn Jacobsen	PS&E/RW	City of Watsonville and Caltrans have completed Design plans. The CTC allocated Construction Phase funds on March 21, 2025. The project team will continue to prepare and seek bids from contractors. This project is experiencing delays due to utility relocation needs. Note: This project is part of the City's ATP Project called the "Safer Access to Pajaro Valley High School and Beyond".
D4	Freedom to State Aux Lanes 0C734	State Route: 1 PM: 8.1 to 10.7	Construct auxiliary lanes between State Park Dr and Freedom Blvd at ramps. Construct bus-on-shoulder facilities, bridge replacements, and the Class 1 Rail Trail	Spring 2027 – Fall 2029	Construction Capital: \$165 million Total: \$221 million SCCRTC Project-Caltrans CEQA/NEPA Lead Agency	Madilyn Jacobsen	PS&E/RW	The team is working on the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (Design) and Right-of-Way phases. The 95% Plans milestone was met in November 2024. Final design continues.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D5	Roadside Safety 1J960	State Route: 1 PM: 8.20 to 26 From 0.5 miles north of Larkin Valley Rd to Laguna Rd (North)	Drainage system restoration; remove thrie Beam Barrier & Install Concrete Barrier (PM 10.38/12.9; 13.65/14.84); Roadside Safety Improvements paving at multiple ramps; Install Lighting at Interchanges and Install Count Stations	Winter 2026-27 – Spring 2028	Construction Capital: \$9.9 million Total: \$19.3 million SHOPP- Drainage	Mark Leichtfuss	PS&E/RW	The 100% PS&E package is going through final DOE review. The milestone, “Ready to List” is anticipated to be reached in early summer 2026 . Construction is anticipated to begin in Winter 2026-27 .
D6	SR 1/9 Junction Lighting Project 1Q250	State Route: 1 PM: 17.46 to 17.66	Construct continuous lighting approaching the junction of SR 1 with SR 9 to improve intersection illuminance and uniformity and to enhance motorist and pedestrian safety.	Spring 2026 – Winter 2026-27	Construction Capital: \$1.6 million Total: \$3.5 million 010 Safety Funds	Aaron Wolfram	PS&E/RW	The project is in final Design review and anticipates achieving the milestone “Ready to List” in December 2025.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D7	Santa Cruz CAPM 1M110	State Route: 1 PM: 17.5 to 20.2 In & near the City of Santa Cruz from 0.06 miles south of SR-1/9 Junction to 0.09 miles north of the Mission St intersection	Grinding/ paving 2.7 miles of pavement, upgrading up to 89 curb ramps, guard rail upgrade, sign panel upgrade, loop detector replacement; enhanced crosswalks; pedestrian refuge islands; 2 new bus stop locations.	Fall 2027 – Spring 2029	Construction Capital: \$9.9 million Total: \$16.8 million SHOPP-Pavement IIJA Supplement	Madilyn Jacobsen	PS&E/RW	This project is in the Plans, Specifications & Estimates (PS&E) phase, aka the Design phase. The design continues to consider public comments received regarding project features from the environmental phase. The 95% Design milestone is anticipated to be reached in Winter 2025-26.
D8	Cotoni-Coast Dairies NM Hwy 1 Overpass 1S850	State Route: 1 PM: 26.764 to 26.764 Over State Route 1 north of the entrance to the Yellowbank Parking lot.	Construct a pedestrian overcrossing over State Route 1, connecting BLM lands known as the Cotoni-Coast Dairies to the MBSST. This project is also known as Segment 5, Phase 3 of the North Coast Rail Trail.	Fall 2029 – Summer 2031	Construction Capital: \$2.195M Total: \$5.4M Oversight Project: SCCRTC and FHWA Central Federal Lands	Madilyn Jacobsen	PA&ED	SCCRTC and Caltrans kicked off this oversight project in January 2025. Preliminary (30%) plans and relevant environmental documents were reviewed. Coordination continues on the project's environmental and preliminary engineering phase.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D9	Scott Creek Coastal Resiliency Project 1M720	State Route: 1 PM: 31.3 to 32	Replace the existing Scott Creek Bridge with an 800-foot bridge that addresses the needs of the proposed restoration of the Scott Creek Lagoon.	Fall 2034 – Winter 2037-38	Construction Capital: \$110,000,000 Total: \$136,660,000 SHOPP- Bridge Health Potentially other funding sources	Meg Henry	PA&ED	This project is conducting studies and related work as part of the Project Approval & Environmental Document (PA&ED) phase. This project is a multi-agency collaboration project. The project team continues to seek funding opportunities for future phases and ways to reduce overall construction costs. This project held a multi-agency stakeholder meeting on November 20, 2025.
D10	Waddell Creek Bridge Replacement 1R420	State Route: 1 PM: 36.3	Replace existing Waddell Creek Bridge to address scour at existing structure and build a new bridge that will address climate resiliency and sea level rise.	Targeted Construction Year: 2030-31	To be developed during the PID phase SHOPP- Bridge Health	Aaron Wolfram	PID	Development of this bridge replacement project's Project Initiation Document has been put on a long-term pause to allow the SCRTC's Coastal Resiliency study to be completed prior to the project moving forward. Although no updates are anticipated, this project will be kept on this list for awareness.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D11	SR-9 South CAPM 1K890	State Route: 9 PM: 0.046 to 7.5 From 0.5 miles south of Irwin Way to 150 feet south of El Solyd Heights Dr	Pavement Preservation, Drainage, TMS, ADA, Sign Panel replacement and Stormwater Mitigation elements in Santa Cruz County on Route 9.	Fall 2027 – Summer 2029	Construction Capital: \$14.7 million Total: \$25 million SHOPP-Pavement Local Contribution pending coop agreement with SCCRTC	Kelli Hill	PS&E/RW	The project completed its environmental phase in April 2025. The Design phase has now begun with the first design milestone, “60%” anticipated to be reached in Winter 2025-26. This project will continue in close partnership with the SCCRTC to deliver additional complete streets scope.
D12	Felton Safety Improvements 1M400	State Route: 9 PM: 6.3 to 7.2 From Kirby St To the San Lorenzo Valley High School signaled intersection	Construct a continuous sidewalk and a bikeable shoulder on the west/southbound side of Highway 9 from Graham Hill Rd to the SLV Schools Complex.	Fall 2025 – Summer 2027	Construction Capital: \$5.8 million Total: \$17.6 million 010 Safety Funds	Kelli Hill	PS&E/RW	The project reached the milestone “Ready to List” (RTL) on June 4, 2025. The project is now preparing to approve a construction contract.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT								
	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D13	Hwy 9 Complete Streets: Seg 5-Boulder Creek: River St to Bear Creek Rd 1M555	State Route: 9 PM: 12.45 to 13.239 On Hwy 9 in Boulder Creek from River St to Bear Creek Rd	This project proposes at select locations: bike lanes; curb extensions; widened and new sidewalk; median islands for traffic calming; enhanced shoulders; enhanced crosswalks.	Summer 2029 – Summer 2031	Oversight Project: SCCRTC Project. SCCRTC leading PA&ED phase	Kelli Hill	PA&ED	Following the completion of the RTC-funded Project Initiation Document by Caltrans in 2022, RTC has opened & funded the PA&ED phase for the segment of Hwy 9 through Boulder Creek. RTC will conduct the primary PA&ED work. Caltrans will be the CEQA and NEPA lead-agency. A draft environmental document is anticipated to be available to the public in Winter 2026-27.
D14	Boulder Creek Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Project 1T340	State Route: 9 PM: 12.78 to 12.92 On Hwy 9 in Boulder Creek between Mountain St and Forest St	This project proposes to construct: a sidewalk on the southbound side of Hwy 9 from the Lomond St bus stop to Mountain St; mid-block crossing & RRFB between Mountain St and Lomond St; curb extensions across Hwy 9 on the north side of the Lomond St intersection; curb extensions on the north & south side of Forest St intersection	Spring 2029 – Fall 2029	Construction Capital: \$3.25 million Total: To be estimated during the PID phase 010 Safety Funds	Kelli Hill	PID	This is a new Reactive Safety project. A traffic safety investigation was conducted resulting in the project's scope being recommended and approved as a method to enhance pedestrian safety in the area.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D15	SR-9 North CAPM 1K900	State Route: 9 PM: 18.89 to 27.09 From 0.4 miles south of Saratoga Toll Rd to the Santa Cruz/San Mateo County Line	Pavement preservation strategies including but not limited to dig-outs, profile grinding, overlay, placing shoulder backing and dike. Reconstruct guardrail, rehabilitate or replace 6 culvert and replace 67 sign panels	Fall 2026 – Fall 2028	Construction Capital: \$7.5 million Total: \$13.15 million SHOPP-Pavement	Kelli Hill	PS&E/RW	The project completed its environmental phase at the end of June 2024 and kicked-off its Plans, Specifications, & Estimates (design) phase in August 2024. The first design milestone, “60% Design”, was reached in July 2025. Design continues toward the next milestone, 95% Design, anticipated to be reached in December 2025 .
D16	Waterman Gap Fish Passage 1K901	State Route: 9 PM: 19.2 to 19.2	The project is a “child” of the 1K900 pavement project. This project proposes to replace a culvert identified as a fish passage barrier with a bridge structure to. This project is in partnership with the CA State Parks.	Fall 2026 – Fall 2028	Construction Capital: \$9.17 million Total: \$14.65 million SHOPP-Sustainability/Climate Change Federal Grant + State Parks Contribution	Kelli Hill	PS&E/RW	This project is progressing its Design in tandem with “parent” project 1K900.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D17	SR-17 Drainage Improvements 1K670	State Route: 17 PM: 0 to 12.5 At various locations within the project limits	Stormwater mitigation by replacing and restoring culverts and drainage systems at 13 locations.	Fall 2027 – Fall 2028	Construction Capital: \$4.6 million Total: \$9.5 million SHOPP-Stormwater Mitigation	Ryan Caldera	PS&E/RW	The design phase (PS&E) began in March 2024, with the milestone, 60% Design, reached October 30, 2025. The project continues toward the 95% Design milestone, anticipated to be reached in Summer 2026.
D18	SR-17 Replace Culverts 1R980	State Route: 17 PM: 7.31 & 11.96	Replace 2 drainage systems currently in poor condition.	Fall 2027 – Spring 2028	Construction Capital: \$1.25 million Minor A Program	Aaron Wolfram	PA&ED	The Project is on schedule for an approved Project Report and Environmental Document in April 2026 .
D19	Hwy 129 & Hwy 1 Ramp Roundabout Project 1T330	State Route: 129 PM: L0.12 to L0.12 On Hwy 129 at the Hwy 1 northbound on- and off-ramp	This project proposes to construct: a one-lane roundabout with bypass lanes	Spring 2029 – Fall 2029	Construction Capital: \$7 million Total: To be estimated during the PID phase 010 Safety Funds	Aaron Wolfram	PID	This is a new Reactive Safety project responding to the determination that the location has a Traffic Safety Index of greater than 230. A traffic safety investigation was conducted resulting in the project's scope being recommended and approved as a method to improve the project area's statistics.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT								
	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D20	SR-129 CAPM 1J830	State Route: 129 PM: 0.0 to 0.56 In and neat Watsonville from the SR 1/129 junction to Salspuedes Creek Bridge. This project includes curb extensions at select locations on SR-152.	Pavement Preservation (grind and repave), Lighting, Sign Panel Replacement and TMS Elements improvements	Winter 2025-26 – Spring 2027	Construction Capital: \$8.4 million Total: \$17.1 million SHOPP-Pavement	Madilyn Jacobsen	PS&E/RW	The milestone, Ready to List, was reached in June 2025 and construction funding was authorized at the August CTC Meeting. The project was advertised on October 13, 2025, and expects bid opening in early December.
D21	Highway 129 Pavement Preservation Project 1R340	State Route: 129 PM: 0.56 to 9.998 (County line)	Pavement preservation (CAPM)- grind and repave pavement, refresh striping. Replace degraded culverts.	Fall 2029 – Spring 2031	Construction Capital: \$16 million Total: \$21.3 million SHOPP-Pavement	Aaron Wolfram	PID Completed (Candidate for Programing)	This project completed its Project Initiation Document (PID) in June 2025 and is now a candidate project to be funded to begin its environmental (PA&ED) phase. This project is anticipated to begin PAED in Spring 2026.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D22	SR-152 Rehabilitation Project 1P110	State Route: 152 PM: T0.31 to 4.14 In and near Watsonville, from the SR-1/152 junction to 0.5 miles east of Carlton Rd	Preserve pavement, rehabilitate or replace Salsipuedes Creek culvert/bridge, replace culverts, rehabilitate traffic signals, upgrade curb ramps, reconstruct guardrail, replace sign panels, and complete streets elements including road diet, bike lanes, and curb extensions in various locations	Long-lead: Spring 2031 – Winter 2033-34	Construction Capital: \$28.3 million Total: \$44.7 million SHOPP- Complete Streets; Pavement	Madilyn Jacobsen	PA&ED	The Project team began the Project Approval & Environmental Document (Environmental) phase in July 2024. This phase will conduct project-level studies evaluating the impact and feasibility of proposed scope. A draft environmental document is anticipated to be ready in late Fall 2026. The Final Environmental Document and the Project Report are anticipated to be completed by Fall 2027.
D23	Downtown Watsonville Pedestrian Safety Project 1Q150	State Route: 152 PM: T2.45 to T2.929 In Watsonville, between Freedom Blvd & Beck St	Construct curb extensions & high visibility crosswalks to enhance pedestrian safety	Winter 2026-27 – Summer 2029	Construction Capital: \$4.6 million Total: \$10.1 million 010 Safety Fund	Madilyn Jacobsen	PS&E/RW	The project's environmental documents were completed in April 2025. Design work reached the 95% Design milestone on October 29, 2025. The project continues toward 100% final design.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Projects in DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name / EA ID	State Route / Post Mile (PM)	Description	Construction Target (Contract Approval to Acceptance)	Project Costs & Fund Source	Project Manager	Phase (PID, PA&ED, PS&E, RW, Construction)	Comments & Updates to Commissioners
D24	Watsonville Downtown Gateway Intersection Redesign 1S400	State Route: 152 PM: T2.5 to T2.5 In Watsonville, at the intersection of Hwy 152 & Freedom Blvd	Perform an intersection control evaluation and consider conceptual redesigns, including as a roundabout, of the intersection that are consistent with adjacent & overlapping State & Local projects & plans.	Spring 2031	To be developed during the PID phase. This project's Project Initiation Phase is funded and led by Caltrans with the understanding that further development must be carried forward by a local agency.	Kelli Hill	PID	This project, identified in the Watsonville Downtown Specific Plan, won State-sponsored Project Initiation Document (PID) development. The State-sponsorship program only covers the project's first phase, at which point a local agency will need to lead it forward. Members of the project team will be setting up a meeting with representatives from the City of Watsonville's Public Works and Planning offices to discuss concepts and configurations to ensure that the City supports the early progress and options under consideration.
D25	Scour Mitigation (Bridge No. 36-0006) 1P240	State Route: 236 PM: 4.27 to 4.27 On Hwy 236 over Boulder Creek at Branson Ranch Rd	Place a reinforced concrete curtain wall along the footing of one abutment; patching "spalls and rock pockets" to prevent scour from undermining the bridge structure.	Summer 2026 – Winter 2027-28	Construction Capital: \$1.1 million Total: \$3.3 million SHOPP Minor A	Chad Stoehr	PS&E/RW	PS&E package has been submitted to the Office Engineer for review. The milestone Ready to List (RTL) is anticipated to be reached in February 2026.



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Active Caltrans “Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program” Projects				
Awardee	Sub-Awardee(s)	Grant Project Title	Grant Expiration	Grant Category
SCCRTC		Santa Cruz County Transportation Equity Action Plan	Dec 31, 2025	Strategic Partnerships, FTA 5304
SCCRTC		Santa Cruz County Rural Highways Safety Plan	Jun 30, 2026	Strategic Partnerships, FHWA SPR Part 1
SCCRTC		Santa Cruz County North Coast Transportation Demand Management Plan	Jun 30, 2026	Strategic Partnerships, FHWA SPR Part 1
SCCRTC	Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (RCD)	Planning for Coastal Resilience along the Highway 1 Corridor at Waddell and San Vicente Creeks	Jun 30, 2027	Climate Adaptation Planning, SHA-CAP
SCCRTC		Planning for Climate Resilience of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Corridor	Jun 30, 2027	Climate Adaptation Planning, SHA-CAP
City of Santa Cruz	Ecology Action	City of Santa Cruz Active Transportation Plan Update	Apr 30, 2026	Sustainable Communities, RMRA
City of Watsonville	Ecology Action	City of Watsonville Vision Zero Corridor Study	Apr 30, 2026	Sustainable Communities, RMRA
City of Capitola	Ecology Action	Capitola Active Transportation Plan	Jun 30, 2028	Sustainable Communities, RMRA
Santa Cruz METRO		Santa Cruz METRO Bus Stop Master Plan	Jun 30, 2028	Strategic Partnerships, FTA 5304



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS REPORT:

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CC	Coastal Commission
CCA	Construction Contract Acceptance (formal end of Construction activities)
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation Air Quality
CTC	California Transportation Commission
DOE	District Office Engineer (conducts review of final design plan packages for completion)
ED	Environmental Document
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
HFST	High Friction Surface Treatment
Hwy	Highway
ISOAP	Intersection Safety & Operational Assessment Process
MBSST	Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail
PIR	Project Initiation Report- a type of PID and a product of the PID phase
PM	Postmile or Post Mile or Project Manager (based on context)
PSR-PDS	Project Study Report-Project Development Support- a type of PID and a product of the PID phase
RRFB	Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon

RTL	Ready to List- when project design is complete, and efforts begin to take the project to Bid
SB1	Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017
SCCP	Solutions for Congested Corridors [grant program]
SCL	Santa Clara (County)
SCR	Santa Cruz (City or County)
SHOPP	State Highway Operation and Protection Program
SR	State Route
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
TMS	Traffic Management System
VMT	Vehicle Miles Travelled

Project Phases

PID	Project Initiation Document (<i>development of the project scope</i>)
PA&ED	Project Approval and Environmental Document (<i>study of environmental impacts of project scope; development of a Project Report; determination of project's permit, right-of-way, and mitigation needs</i>)
PS&E	Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (<i>the Design phase</i>)
RW	Right-of-Way
CON	Construction, as a phase title



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

-Resources-

COMMUNICATIONS:

For General Caltrans' Inquiries, or to be added to the Santa Cruz County News Release Distribution List:

Public Information Office, District 5

Info-d5@dot.ca.gov

General Phone: (805) 549-3318

Celeste Morales, Public Information Officer assigned to Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties

Celeste.Morales@dot.ca.gov

Office Phone: (805) 556-5820

For Project Specific Questions or Partnering Opportunities:

Please reach out to the Public Information Office who will assist with coordinating your inquiry.

REQUESTS:

Customer Service Requests:

To notify Caltrans of specific concerns regarding current roadway or facility conditions, please submit a Customer Service Request through the following website: <https://csr.dot.ca.gov/>

Examples of Customer Service Requests:

Any of the following on the State's highway system:

- Streetlight issues
- Plant over-growth
- Damaged roadway
- Graffiti
- Trash on the roadway
- Any other highway concerns or maintenance issues



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

For less specific concerns, please reach out to the Public Information Officer to be directed to the appropriate respondent.

Public Records Requests:

For all public records requests, please submit your request through the Public Records Request portal:

[https://caltrans.mycusthelp.com/WEBAPP/_rs/\(S\(4iui15cbqujv3ppvenlmgvx1\)\)/supporthome.aspx](https://caltrans.mycusthelp.com/WEBAPP/_rs/(S(4iui15cbqujv3ppvenlmgvx1))/supporthome.aspx)

INFORMATIONAL:

Quickmaps Mobile App/Caltrans Website: “Caltrans QuickMap”

- Available for free in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store
- Provides realtime conditions for the State Highway System
- Desktop Format: <https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov/>

Caltrans Lane Closures Reporting System: <https://lcswebreports.dot.ca.gov/>

- Provides a 7-day look-ahead for planned lane closures
- Does not include unanticipated emergency closures (see Quickmaps for in-the-moment roadway conditions)

Caltrans' Postmile Tool

- Postmiles or Post Miles are used to specify locations on California's State Highway System.
- Postmiles may have prefixes or suffixes and may use up to three decimal places.
- Use this website to locate or determine postmiles along the State Highway System (SHS) or to determine the closest highway postmile to a location off the system.
- <https://postmile.dot.ca.gov/PMQT/PostmileQueryTool.html>

Caltrans CCTV Camera Map: <https://cwwp2.dot.ca.gov/vm/iframeemap.htm>

- Allows the public to see current conditions along the State Highway System

The Caltrans District 5 Office of Local Assistance: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/>

- Includes links to many Federal and State funding opportunities
- Can help guide interested folks through the above-mentioned program requirements

The Official Caltrans District 5 Webpage: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-5>



PROJECT UPDATE REPORT – SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Prepared and finalized November 24, 2025 for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC)'s Board Meeting on: **December 4, 2025**

Caltrans District 5 serves the locale of San Benito, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties

STAY CONNECTED WITH CALTRANS DISTRICT 5

Follow us on social media and download the official Caltrans QuickMap app to stay up to date.

 CaltransDistrict5

 Caltrans_D5

 CaltransD5



AGENDA: December 4, 2025

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Italo Jimenez, Finance and Budget Officer

RE: Amendments to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 RTC Budget & Work Program and Measure D Budget

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Budget and Administration/Personnel (B&A/P) Committee and staff recommend that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1):

1. Amending the FY 2025-26 Budget and Work Program for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and FY2025-26 Budget for Measure D as shown in Exhibits A and B; and
 2. Authorizing the Executive Director to make amendments and modifications to the RTC's FY 2025-26 Overall Work Program as required by Caltrans to ensure receipt of grant funds and ensure the completion of work products as long as such amendments and modifications are consistent with the approved budget.
-

BACKGROUND

On April 3, 2025, the RTC adopted a FY 2025-26 Budget and Work Program based on revenue projections from:

- Santa Cruz County Auditor-Controller for Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenue, a $\frac{1}{4}$ cent general sales tax collected statewide;
- Hinderliter de Llamas (HdL) for Measure D revenue, a county wide $\frac{1}{2}$ cent transaction and use tax; and
- State Controller's Office for State Transit Assistance and State of Good Repair revenue allocation estimates for the FY 2025-26.

The proposed budget amendment to the RTC budget and work program and Measure D budget incorporates information from prior year-end balances, new projects or funds, updated estimates, and other necessary changes for

regional programming and pass-through revenues, operating, and capital. The RTC's budget is balanced with pay-as-you-go financing for upcoming capital projects. Pay-as-you-go financing utilizes current revenues and available fund balances to finance capital projects.

DISCUSSION

The proposed amended FY2025-26 budget (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) is balanced and implements the RTC's priority projects, on-going programs and Measure D funding, projects and activities. Proposed budget changes are discussed below. Explanations for specific line items in the budget are included as notes.

RTC Budget and Overall Work Program – Exhibit A to Attachment 1

Several expenditure and funding lines have been updated to reflect current estimates.

Staffing resources (pp.11 through 13)

Staff is working to fill positions previously approved by the RTC, including Senior Transportation Engineer which remains vacant. Two additional positions within the Capital Projects department have been added, consistent with the RTC's direction to be the implementing agency for the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 construction component at the November 6, 2025 meeting.

Administration (pp.14 and 15)

Budget increased due to salary, overhead, and legal costs.

Planning Program Budget (pp.16 through 20)

The budget for the planning program includes carryovers from FY 2024-25 for the Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing project and state planning grants funds that were awarded to the RTC in past years along with the required local match for those grants. The RTC continues the planning work associated with these grants. Staff completed the Climate Adaptation Vulnerability Assessment in fiscal year 2024-25. Planning efforts that will continue in fiscal year 2025-26 include the Equity Action Plan, Coastal Resiliency Plan along Highway 1 at Waddell and San Vicente Creeks, the Santa Cruz County North Coast Transportation Demand Management Plan, Santa Cruz County Rural Highways Safety Plan, and Climate Resilience Plan for the Zero Emissions Passenger Rail and Trail Corridor. RTC staff will submit grant applications for other planning efforts and, if secured, will return with corresponding proposed budget amendments.

San Lorenzo Valley/Highway 9 (p. 21 and 22)

The budget includes proposed changes to the Measure D 5-year plans for amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase. The RTC began the Project Approval/Environmental Document phase for the Boulder Creek Complete Streets Project, which is funded primarily with a federal earmark for the project. In FY 2024-25, the RTC entered into a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans to partially fund preconstruction phases of complete streets elements in Felton that Caltrans is delivering as part of their State Highway Operation & Protection Program (SHOPP). Caltrans has initiated the work and staff anticipate paying the RTC's share of the cost to Caltrans in this fiscal year.

Freeway Service Patrol (p. 28)

The state allocation is \$12,280 higher than estimated.

Rail (p.32)

The budget for the rail corridor projects includes carryover from proposed changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase. The proposed budget includes funds from the Measure D Rail category and Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) funds awarded to the RTC for the Zero Emission Rail and Trail project, and makes a correction to the prior approved budget.

Highway (pp.33 through 37)

The budget for the highway corridor projects includes proposed changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase. Consultant project management increased, and staff time decreased due to vacant Senior Transportation Engineer position.

Active Transportation/Coastal Rail Trail (pp.38 through 45)

The budget for the trail includes proposed changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase.

Fund balances (pp. 46 and 47) - Estimated beginning and ending balances for all funds including reserves with sufficient funding for the proposed budget available.

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) FY 2024-25 TDA revenues were slightly higher than estimated and reserve fund balance is at target. As of August 2025, FY 2025-26 TDA revenues are \$461,501 lower than estimated. If TDA revenues come in higher than estimated at the end of the fiscal year, staff will recommend allocating the additional funds.

A summary of changes to the RTC's FY2025-26 budget is shown on page 49

of Exhibit A of Attachment 1.

Measure D Budget – Exhibit B to Attachment 1

The proposed FY 2025-26 budget amendment for Measure D includes proposed amendments to programming for projects and programs that receive Measure D funds. A summary of proposed changes has been incorporated into the Measure D budget as shown on page 24 of Exhibit B to Attachment 1.

The Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and staff recommend that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) amending the FY 2025-26 RTC Budget and Work Program as shown on Exhibit A of Attachment 1 and Measure D Budget as shown on Exhibit B of Attachment 1; and authorize the Executive Director to make amendments and modifications to the RTC's FY2025-26 Overall Work Program.

FISCAL IMPACT

The FY 2025-26 RTC proposed budget and work program amendment (Attachment 1) includes the following:

- Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) increase in revenues of \$12,280.
- Rail expenses decreased by \$8,886,960 due to grant funds not yet secured, to make a correction to the previously approved budget.
- Highway - Increase of \$9,279,399, due to changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase.
- Trail - increase of \$8,525,009 due to changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase.
- Planning - Planning revenue increase of \$1,446,823 carryover from FY 2024/25 primarily for the Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing project and planning grants.
- San Lorenzo Valley/State Route 9 - increase of \$1,230,778 due to proposed changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status; and adding earmark funds for Boulder Creek Complete Streets project.
- Administration - increase of \$65,000 due to salary, overhead, and

legal costs.

The FY 2025-26 Measure D proposed budget amendment (Exhibit B Attachment 1) includes the following:

- San Lorenzo Valley/State Route 9 - expenditure increase of \$1,349,324 for proposed changes due to Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and adding to the Boulder Creek Complete Streets project.
- Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing - expenditure increase of \$1,349,324 for FY 2023-24 carryover of project costs.
- Highway Corridor - expenditure increase of \$13,316,514 due to changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor; project costs based on status and phase; and inter-program loan to Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing project.
- Active Transportation - expenditure increase of \$5,653,899 for proposed changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase.
- Rail - expenditure increase of \$2,777,812 for proposed changes to the Measure D 5-year plans amending labor and project costs based on project status and phase.

Staff will continue to monitor all revenues, including TDA, seek additional revenues, and manage costs to maintain a sound budget.

SUMMARY

The proposed FY 2025-26 budget for the RTC includes continuation of on-going RTC projects and programs, continued oversight of the Highway 1 projects, and the administration and implementation of Measure D. The Budget and Administration/Personnel (B&A/P) Committee and staff recommend that the RTC approve the proposed FY 2025-26 RTC budget and work program (Exhibit A to Attachment 1) and proposed Measure D budget (Exhibit B to Attachment 1).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution Amending the Budgets and Work Programs
 - a. FY2025-26 RTC Budget
 - b. FY2025-26 Measure D Budget

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of December 4, 2025
on the motion of Commissioner
duly seconded by Commissioner

A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE FY 2025-26 BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAM FOR THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION AND THE FY 2025-26 BUDGET FOR MEASURE D

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) adopts and periodically amends a budget and work program for each fiscal year to guide its expenses and work; and

WHEREAS, the RTC is responsible for administering and implementing the *Measure D Ordinance*;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION:

1. The FY 2025-26 Budget and Work Program for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and FY2025-26 Budget for Measure D are hereby amended as shown in Exhibits A and B; and
2. The Executive Director, or their designee, is authorized to make amendments and modifications to the RTC's FY 2025-26 Overall Work Program as required by Caltrans to ensure receipt of grant funds and completion of work products as long as such amendments and modifications are consistent with the budget approved by the RTC.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

Eduardo Montesino, Chair

ATTEST:

Sarah Christensen, Secretary

Exhibit A – FY 2025-26 SCCRTC Budget and Work Program as amended
Exhibit B – FY 2025-26 SCCRTC Measure D Budget as amended

Distribution: RTC Fiscal

EXHIBIT A



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

SCCRTC BUDGET – PROPOSED AMENDMENT

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING

JUNE 30, 2026

PROPOSED DECEMBER 4, 2025

Italo Jimenez
ijimenez@sccrtc.org

Introduction	2
Formulaic Transit Revenues	3
Revenue Apportionment	5
Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange	7
Staffing	11
Administration	14
Regional Planning Projects	16
Highway 9 Improvements	21
Cruz 511 Traveler Information Rideshare	23
Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)	25
Freeway Service Patrol	27
Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line	29
Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Capital Projects	31
Highway 1 Corridor Investment Program	33
Active Transportation	38
RTC Summary and Fund Balances	46
RTC Budget Summary and Differences	48
Budget Glossary and Acronym Guide	50
Programming, Planning, and Project Glossary and Acronym Guide	53

Introduction

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is an autonomous regional transportation planning agency headquartered in downtown Santa Cruz. Created in 1972 under the Transportation Development Act (TDA) to carry out transportation responsibilities that cross city-county boundaries in Santa Cruz County, the RTC:

- Sets priorities for major improvements to the transportation infrastructure and network of services, including highways, major roads, bus transit, paratransit, rail, and active transportation facilities.
- Pursues and allocates funding for major capital improvements to all elements of the transportation system, consistent with long-range plans.
- Adopts policies to maximize the efficiency of the current transportation system and improve mobility, access and air quality.
- Plans for future projects and programs to develop a balanced transportation system that addresses all modes, while improving the region's quality of life.
- Informs businesses and the public about actions needed to better manage the existing transportation system; and
- Conducts programs and advocates for increased use of alternative transportation modes.

Funding and Apportionment

The RTC distributes or is responsible for selecting projects to receive certain state, federal and local funds. General Ledgers with GL Keys and object codes with descriptions are established in the accounting system to track revenues and expenditures separately and by fund purpose for specific projects or programs.

Formulaic Transit Revenues

Transportation Development Act GL Key 721950 / Fund 76630

State Transit Assistance and State of Good Repair Revenues GL Key 721755 / Fund 76640

Low Carbon Transit Operations Program GL Key 721756 / Fund 76631

The RTC receives Transportation Development Act, State Transit Assistance, and State of Good Repair Program revenues from the state on a monthly or quarterly basis. The funds are wired to the Santa Cruz County Treasury and deposited to the respective fiduciary fund and GL Key by funding source. Annually, the state apportions Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds for Santa Cruz County with 50% of funds based on county population (Public Utilities Code (PUC) 99313) and 50% based-on transit operator revenues (PUC 99314). RTC works with Santa Cruz METRO and Community Bridges to submit local transit projects to Caltrans for allocation of the funds.

Revenues for Apportionment		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
1	Transportation Development Act (TDA) GL Key 721950:				
2	1/4 Cent Sales Tax 40172	12,617,577	12,617,577	-	
3	Prev FY Rev Carryover 40172	-	313,146	313,146	FY 2024-25 actual & interest
4	Interest 40430	10,000	10,000		
5	Total TDA	12,627,577	12,940,723	313,146	
6	State Transit Assistance (STA) & State of Good Repair (SGR) GL Key 721755 Revenues:				
7	Interest 40430	250	250	-	
8	STA Sec 99313-RTC Discretionary 40886	2,668,936	2,655,992	(12,944)	FY 2025/26 State Controller's estimate as of August 2025 for STA and SGR revenue
9	STA Sec 99314-Santa Cruz Metro 40886	2,435,676	2,435,676	-	
10	SGR Sec 99313-RTC Discretionary 42384	462,871	460,626	(2,245)	
11	SGR Sec 99314-Santa Cruz Metro 42384	422,417	422,417	-	
12	Total STA	5,990,150	5,974,961	(15,189)	
13	State Transit Assistance (STA) & State of Good Repair (SGR) GL Key 721755 Allocation:				
14	Santa Cruz Metro - STA 75302	4,704,272	5,091,668	387,396	Based on FY 2025/26 State Controller's estimate of August 2025 for STA and SGR and SGR 99313 funds programmed by RTC 9/4/25 and STA 9313 funds programmed by RTC 11/6/25
15	Santa Cruz Metro - SGR 75365	422,417	733,043	310,626	
16	Community Bridges - STA 75302	-	-	-	
17	Community Bridges - SGR 75365	-	150,000	150,000	
18	Total	5,126,689	5,974,711	848,022	
19	Unallocated	863,461	250	(863,211)	Funds programmed on 9/4/25 and 11/6/25
20	Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) GL Key 721756 Allocation:				
21	Interest 40430	-	10,898	10,898	Reflect carryover and anticipated new interest
22	LCTOP Revenues 99313 40894	-	188,161	188,161	Reflect carryover funds
23		-	199,059	199,059	
24	Allocated				
25	Community Bridges 75365	-	188,161	188,161	Carryover from FY24/25
26	Total	-	188,161	188,161	
27	Unallocated	-	10,898	10,898	
28	Transit Intercity Capital Program (TIRCP) GL Keys 721757 and 721758 Allocation:				
29	SB862 TIRCP Competitive Program 40894	-	-	-	
30	SB125 TIRCP Formula Program 40894	6,902,601	6,902,601	-	
31		6,902,601	6,902,601	-	
32	Allocated				
33	RTC ZEPRT Project SB125 75301	-	2,000,000	2,000,000	Funds approved by RTC 12/3/23
34	Santa Cruz Metro SB862 75365	-	-	-	
35	Santa Cruz Metro SB125 75365	6,902,601	17,870,819	10,968,218	
36	Total	6,902,601	19,870,819	12,968,218	
37	Unallocated	-	(12,968,218)	(12,968,218)	
38	Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP) GL Key 721759				
39	SB125 ZETCP Formula Program 40894	1,486,567	1,486,567	-	Funds approved by RTC 12/3/23
40		1,486,567	1,486,567	-	
41	Allocated				
42	SB125 Program Administration (RTC) 75301	-	346,861	346,861	
43	Santa Cruz Metro SB125 75365	1,486,567	1,486,567	-	
44	Total	1,486,567	1,833,428	346,861	
45	Unallocated	-	(346,861)	(346,861)	

Revenue Apportionment

Eligible recipients of Transportation Development Act (TDA), State Transit Assistance (STA), and SB1-Transit State of Good Repair (SGR) funds submit claims to the Commission for approval. STA funds can be used for planning, public transit, and community transportation services. SGR funds can be used on transit and community transportation services maintenance, rehabilitation, and capital projects. The RTC determines how much of the population formula STA to distribute to public transit and community transportation service operators as part of the annual TDA claims process. The RTC is required to program SGR and LCTOP funds based on criteria set forth by Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transit. The LCTOP unallocated funds shown are the revenues available for programming.

Transportation Development Act and other transit funds help the RTC implement Regional Transportation Plan goals and targets related to improving access and mobility, reducing pollution, and increasing transit ridership, improving health, equity, economy, and system preservation.

Apportionment Schedule		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference \$	Difference %	Note
Transportation Development Act (TDA):						
1	TDA Reserve Fund	24,418	24,418	-	0.00%	To meet 8% Reserve Target*
2	RTC Reserve Fund	-	-	-		
3						
4	SCCRTC:					
5	Administration	785,966	801,633	15,667	1.99%	Based on FY 2024-25 revenue above estimate and interest
6	Planning	675,956	689,378	13,422	1.99%	
7		1,461,923	1,491,011	29,088	1.99%	
8						
9	Bike to Work/School/Encouragement	72,000	72,000	-	0.00%	
10	HSA Vision Zero Bike & Ped Safety	156,000	156,000	-	0.00%	
11		228,000	228,000	-	0.00%	
12						
13	Santa Cruz Metro	9,330,817	9,573,686	242,869	2.60%	Based on FY 2024-25 revenue above estimate and interest
14	Spec Transit (CB/CTSA)	916,712	940,573	23,861	2.60%	
15	Volunteer Center	109,132	111,973	2,841	2.60%	
16	City of Capitola	20,130	20,654	524	2.60%	Based on FY 2024-25 revenue above estimate and interest
17	City of SC-Non Transit	133,058	136,522	3,463	2.60%	
18	City of Scotts Valley	25,045	25,697	652	2.60%	
19	City of Watsonville	108,166	110,982	2,815	2.60%	
20	County of Santa Cruz	270,176	277,208	7,032	2.60%	
21	Subtotal	10,913,236	11,197,294	284,058	2.60%	
22	Total TDA Apportioned	12,627,577	12,940,723	313,146	2.48%	

*In FY 2025/26 the amount needed to meet the reserve target is due to the increase in TDA revenue estimates.

Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange

The Commission approves a multi-year list of projects to receive Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX)/Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds and apportions the funds to projects expected to be implemented in the next year through its budget. Regional shares are determined by the federal transportation act and state law. Approved projects are eligible to receive reimbursement of state exchange (RSTPX) funds from the RTC six months prior to project initiation or when a phase of the entire project is complete.

The following table is a list of projects that have been approved for RSTPX by the commission that have not yet been reimbursed for funds or otherwise are anticipated to have fund balances carried over into FY 2025-26. The RTC programmed RSTPX unappropriated balances and anticipated revenues through FY 2025/26 as part of adoption of the 2024 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) in December 2023.

The RSTPX Exchange Program helps the RTC implement Regional Transportation Plan goals and targets related to improving access and mobility, reducing pollution, improving health, safety, equity, economy, and system preservation.

In December 2024, the Commission approved a long-term loan of RSTPX funds for the 2017 and 2023 storm damage projects on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

RSTPX Current FY Revenues and Unallocated		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
1	RSTPX revenues programmed	10,569,203	10,569,203	-	
2	RSTP Exchange Funds - Carryover	7,700,888	11,886,084	4,185,196	Carryover from FY 2024-25
3	Current Year Revenues:				
4	State RSTP Exchange Funds	4,186,323	4,171,323	(15,000)	Updated estimate from Caltrans
5	Interest	5,000	200,000	195,000	Updated estimate
6	Total RSTPX funding for projects	22,461,414	26,826,610	4,365,196	
7					
8	Approved RSTP Exchange - All Projects				
9	Allocations budgeted for disbursement in fiscal year:				
10	City of Capitola				
11	Upper Pacific Cove Parking Lot Pedestrian Trail and Depot Park bus stop	200,000	200,000	-	
12	41st Avenue Pavement Rehabilitation and Multimodal Improvements	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	
13	Bay Avenue Corridor - Design	-	500,000	500,000	Funds approved 11/6/25
14	Capitola Complete Streets Sidewalk Infill	-	100,000	100,000	Funds approved 11/6/25
15	Kennedy Drive Sidewalk	197,000	197,000	-	
16	City of Capitola Total	1,397,000	1,997,000	600,000	
17	City of Santa Cruz				
18	Bay Corridor Design	319,103	319,103	-	
19	Bay Street Paving	875,000	875,000	-	
20	Bethany Culvert Replacement	871,000	871,000	-	
21	Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8/9 Preconstruction	-	2,000,000	2,000,000	Funds approved 11/6/25
22	Escalona Complete Streets	169,656	169,656	-	
23	City of Santa Cruz Total	2,234,759	4,234,759	2,000,000	
24	City of Scotts Valley				
25	Bean Creek Road Rehab	429,769	429,769	-	
26	Granite Creek Rd Overcrossing	500,000	1,000,000	500,000	Additional funds approved 11/6/25
27	Scotts Valley Dr. Corridor Improvements	500,000	500,000	-	
28	Mount Hermon Road Improvements	523,000	523,000	-	
29	City of Scotts Valley Total	1,952,769	2,452,769	500,000	
30	City of Watsonville				
31	Freedom Blvd Plan Line (Green Valley to Buena Vista)	70,322	70,322	-	
32	Road Rehab/Reconstruction (various locations)	1,129,518	1,129,518	-	
33	Pennsylvania Dr Trail Rehabilitation Project	-	560,000	560,000	Funds approved 11/6/25
34	Complete Streets Downtown	352,000	352,000	-	
35	Green Valley Road Rehabilitation	1,833,000	1,833,000	-	
36	City of Watsonville Total	3,384,840	3,944,840	560,000	

RSTPX Current FY Revenues and Unallocated		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
Continued					
1	County of Santa Cruz				
2	Hwy 1 Mar Vista Overcrossing (co-op)	32,899	32,899	-	
3	Hwy 17 to Soquel Corridor Resurfacing	335,356	335,356	-	
4	Holohan Road Resurfacing	53,554	53,554	-	
5	Corralitos Corridor Resurfacing (Amesti Rd & Corralitos Rd)	1,500,000	-	(1,500,000)	Delayed to FY27
6	Emergency Routes Phase 2 Resurfacing	3,200,000	2,140,000	(1,060,000)	Change \$1.06M to STIP, est. CON 2027
7	Green Valley Road Multi-Use Path	2,000,000	2,000,000	-	
8	Intercounty Routes Resurfacing	2,044,000	2,044,000	-	
8	Rio Del Mar Resurfacing	300,000	-	(300,000)	Delayed to FY27
9	Soquel Drive Multimodal Project - Preconstruction	-	3,800,000	3,800,000	Funds approved 11/6/25
10	Robertson Street and Soquel Drive Signalization	1,595,536	1,595,536	-	
11	County of Santa Cruz Total	11,061,345	12,001,345	940,000	
12	SCCRTC				
13	MBSST - North Coast Phase 2 Environmental Review	19,756	19,756	-	
14	Project Paseo (Bike Santa Cruz County)	14,953	12,573	(2,380)	
15	Youth Safe Route to Schools Bike/Pedestrian Education - Ecology Action	300,000	300,000	-	
16	Davenport - Highway 1 Crosswalk	125,000	125,000	-	
17	State Route 1-41st to Soq HOV EIR	250,000	250,000	-	
18	State Route 1-Freedom to State Park Aux Lanes, Bus in Shoulder, Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12	25,000	25,000	-	
19	Go Santa Cruz County Bicycle Incentives Program	305,100	305,100	-	
20	SCCRTC Total	1,039,809	1,037,429	(2,380)	
21	Total All Projects	21,070,523	25,668,143	4,597,620	
22					
23	Loan to RTC for 2017 Storm Damage/FEMA	3,589,038	3,589,038	-	To be repaid to RSTPX from Measure D -
24	Loan to RTC for 2023 Storm Damage/FEMA	1,260,159	1,260,159	-	Rail if not reimbursed by FEMA.
25	Loan Receivable from SCCRTC	4,849,197	4,849,197	-	
26	Funds not Programmed/Appropriated*	1,390,891	1,158,467	(232,424)	

RSTPX Current FY Revenues and Unallocated GL Key 722000		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
Total by Recipient	Object				
1 Interest	40430	5,000	200,000	195,000	updated estimate
2 RSTP Exchange Funds - Carryover	40894	18,270,091	22,455,287	4,185,196	Carryover from FY 2024-25
3 RSTP Exchange Funds	40894	4,186,323	4,171,323	(15,000)	updated estimate from Caltrans
4 Loan Proceeds-FEMA 2017 Storm Damage	42506	-	-	-	
5	Current FY Revenues	22,461,414	26,826,610	4,365,196	
6					
7	Includes the adopted 2023 Consolidated Grants Program.				
8 SCCRTC	62856	1,039,809	1,037,429	(2,380)	
9 City of Capitola	75203	1,397,000	1,997,000	600,000	
10 City of Santa Cruz	75204	2,234,759	4,234,759	2,000,000	
11 City of Scotts Valley	75205	1,952,769	2,452,769	500,000	
12 City of Watsonville	75206	3,384,840	3,944,840	560,000	
13 County of Santa Cruz	75303	11,061,345	12,001,345	940,000	
14	Total Programmed	21,070,523	25,668,143	4,597,620	
15	To/(From) Fund Balance:	1,390,891	1,158,467	(232,424)	
16					
17 FEMA 2017 Storm Damage Receivable	75303	3,589,038	3,589,038	-	
18 FEMA 2023 Storm Damage Receivable	75303	1,260,159	1,260,159	-	
19		4,849,197	4,849,197	-	
20					
21					
22 Beginning Fund Balance		7,700,888	11,886,084		
23 FY25 /26 Estimated RSTP Exchange Funds		4,186,323	4,171,323		
24 Interest		5,000	200,000		
25 SCCRTC FEMA 2017 & 2023 Loan Receivable		4,849,197	4,849,197		
26 Total Programmed		(21,070,523)	(25,668,143)		
27 Ending Fund Balance*		(4,329,115)	(4,561,539)		

* Future RSTPX programmed funds beyond the budget year are negative

Staffing

GL Key 721100/Fund 76620

The RTC's authorized staffing model has 28 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

Staff utilize the payroll system to track and allocate labor costs when dedicating their time to a specific program or project as a direct cost.

The FY 2025-26 proposed budget amendment increased by \$233,635 for additional staffing, classification step increases for current staff, and assumptions for Cost-of-Living Adjustments and benefits. The FY 2025/26 budget includes salaries and benefits for 28 FTE positions; 1 FTE position are currently vacant.

Staffing - Costs GL KEY 721100		FY 2025/26		Difference	Note
		Approved 4/3/25	Proposed 12/4/25		
	Object				
1	Regular Pay	51000	3,808,972	4,020,669	211,697
2	Overtime Pay	51005	25,000	35,000	10,000
3	Social Security and Medicare	52010	258,417	270,713	12,296
4	<u>PERS Retirement</u>				
5	Employer Current Contributions	52015	359,239	376,386	17,147
6	UAL required payment*	52015	138,282	117,516	(20,766)
7	Unfund Acc Liab-UAL add'l pmt**	52015	165,000	220,751	55,751
8	Total Retirement		662,521	714,653	52,132
9					Increase for step increases for current staff and Cost-of-Living Adjustments and benefits.
10	Employee Insur and Benefits	53010	752,373	901,292	148,919
11	Unemployment Insurance	53015	17,550	17,550	-
12	Workers Comp Insurance	54010	18,762	19,832	1,070
13	Other -Compensation***	55021	46,958	50,174	3,216
14	Temporary Contract Services	62395	10,000	10,000	-
15	Unfund Acc Liab-UAL OPEB****	75273	137,745	153,579	15,834
16	Retiree Health Contr to PERS	75273	134,605	148,361	13,756
17			5,872,903	6,341,824	468,921

* The Unfunded Accrued Liability (UAL) required payment is calculated using the fiscal year liability and amortization base schedule by asset and non-asset gains/losses (20-30 years).

** The most recent valuation for the RTC's Classic Plan UAL as of June 30, 2024, is \$2,174,725 and is 85.4% funded. The most recent valuation for the RTC's PEPR Plan UAL as of June 30, 2024, is \$169,834 and is 96.4% funded. The budget includes Additional Discretionary Payment (ADP) toward the UAL and a contribution to a Section 115 Trust to prefund the pension liability totaling \$165,000. The purpose of continuing to fund the Classic pension UAL is to account for the change in valuation methodology due to CalPERS most recent changes to their financial policies.

***Includes employer contribution to employee 457 deferred compensation plan as part of employment agreement and benefit in lieu of Social Security, auto allowance, cell phone and bike commute benefit.

****Other Post-Employment Benefit (OPEB) contribution to prefund the retiree health liability

Classification	FTE Authorized Positions	FTE Budgeted Positions	Positions by Classification	FTE
			Management	
Executive Director	1.00	1.00	Executive Director	1.00
Director of Planning, Programming, and Trans Services	1.00	1.00	Director of Planning, Programming, and Transportation Services	1.00
Director of Capital Projects	1.00	1.00	Director of Capital Projects	1.00
Director of Internal Services	1.00	1.00	Director of Internal Services	1.00
Budget & Finance Officer	1.00	1.00	Budget & Finance Officer	1.00
Administrative Services Officer	1.00	1.00	Administrative Services Officer	1.00
Senior Transportation Engineer	2.00	2.00	Senior Transportation Engineer	2.00
Supervising Transportation Planner	2.00	2.00	Total Management	8.00
Transportation Planner I-IV	6.00	6.00	Planning & Project Delivery	
Transportation Engineer	3.00	3.00	Supervising Transportation Planner	2.00
Communications Specialist	1.00	1.00	Transportation Planner I-IV	6.00
Accountant I-III	2.00	2.00	Transportation Planning Tech	2.00
Accounting Technician	0.50	0.50	Transportation Engineer	3.00
Administrative Assistant I-II	1.00	1.00	Paid Intern Planning	0.50
Contract Specialist	1.00	1.00	Paid Intern Engineering	0.50
Real Property Specialist I-II	1.00	1.00	Total Planning & Project Delivery	14.00
Real Property Technician	1.00	1.00	Internal Services	
Transportation Planning Tech	2.00	2.00	Communications Specialist	1.00
Paid Intern* 3	1.50	1.50	Accountant I-III	2.00
Total Positions	30.00	30.00	Accounting Technician	0.50
Note: FTE = full-time equivalent			Administrative Assistant I-III	1.00
			Contract Specialist	1.00
			Real Property Specialist I-II	1.00
			Real Property Technician	1.00
			Paid Intern Communications	0.50
			Total Internal Services	8.00
			Total Positions	30.00
			Note: FTE = full-time equivalent	

Administration

GL Key 721750 / Fund 76620

The Administration budget includes expenditures for administering Measure D and TDA, and operating costs not directly related to a specific program or budget, including office expenses, general liability insurance, accounting, and audit services.

The table below includes expenditures and reimbursements for the RTC administration and implementation of Measure D. Measure D Administration includes preparation of audits, expenditure reports, annual reports, 5-year program of projects and public outreach, review of revenues and information from the state tax board, and work associated with the Taxpayer Oversight Committee and bonding. Implementation includes the development of the longer-range implementation plan and overall implementation of the expenditure plan.

Measure D Administration & Implementation budget detail included in RTC Administration Budget

		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Meas D Admin	51070	276,668	327,530	50,862
2	Meas D Implementation Labor	51070	68,754	73,492	4,738
3	Meas D Admin Overhead	62354	365,190	382,121	16,931
4	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	710,612	783,143	72,531	
5					
6	Meas D Services & Supplies				
7	Materials and supplies	62856	5,000	5,000	-
8	Accounting & Audit Services	62856	1,000	16,500	15,500
9	Consultant Services	62856	125,629	125,629	-
10	Advertisement/Publication	62856	2,500	2,500	-
11	Total Services & Supplies	134,129	149,629		
12	Total Measure D Administration	844,741	932,772	88,032	

Administration RTC and Measure D		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	TDA Revenue	40172	785,966	801,633	15,667
2	Measure D	40186	844,741	932,772	88,031
3	Contr from Other Funds	42367	-	-	-
3	Total Revenues	1,630,707	1,734,405	103,698	
4	<u>Salaries, Benefits & Overhead</u>				
5	<u>TDA Administration</u>				
6	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	116,662	156,410	39,748
7	Allocated Overhead	62354	123,338	144,616	21,278
8	Meas D Admin Labor	51070	276,668	327,530	50,862
9	Meas D Implementation Labor	51070	68,754	73,492	4,738
10	Meas D Admin Overhead	62354	365,190	382,121	16,931
11	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	950,612	1,084,169	72,531	
12	<u>Services & Supplies</u>				
13	Telephone & Mobile Device	61221	10,000	10,000	-
14	Office Equipment	61312	5,000	5,000	-
15	Liability Insurance	61535	174,130	174,130	-
16	Office Equip Repair/Maint	61725	5,000	5,000	-
17	Repairs & Maintenance	61845	16,000	16,000	-
18	Membership	62020	25,000	25,000	-
19	Duplicating	62214	1,500	1,500	-
20	Computer Software	62219	86,200	86,200	-
21	Postage	62221	1,500	1,500	-
22	General Supplies & Expenses	62223	9,000	9,000	-
23	Accounting & Audit	62301	50,000	50,000	-
24	County Mainframe/Intranet	62325	7,000	7,000	-
25	Commissioners' Stipend	62327	10,000	10,000	-
26	Legal Fees	62359	100,000	150,000	50,000
27	Professional & Special Serv	62381	222,500	222,500	-
28	Office Rent	62610	176,819	176,819	-
29	Adv, Promo and Incent for Public Engagement	62801	10,000	10,000	-
30	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	154,129	169,629	15,500
31	Transp/Travel/Educ	62914	75,000	75,000	-
32	Vehicle Maint, Rentals & Serv	62920	4,000	4,000	-
33	Utilities	63070	2,500	2,500	-
34	Mobile Equipment	86209	-	-	-
34	Office Equipment	86210	20,000	20,000	-
35	Total Services & Supplies	1,165,278	1,230,778	65,500	
36					
37	Total Expenditures	2,115,890	2,314,947	138,031	
38					
39	To/(From) reserves:	(485,182)	(580,542)	(34,333)	

Regional Planning Projects

GL Key 721751 / Fund 76620

With a focus on long-term sustainability, the RTC provides transportation services, planning, and funding for all travel modes. Working together with transportation partners, the RTC obtains and distributes funding, including voter-approved Measure D funds, to maintain the existing transportation network as well as prepare for the transportation needs of the future generations.

The planning budget supports the planning activities of the RTC in accordance with federal, state, and local requirements and available funding. This includes development, coordination, and meetings with local, regional, state, and federal agencies (including Association of Monterey Bay Governments, Caltrans, Federal Highway Administration, Transportation Agency for Monterey County and San Benito Council of Governments) to ensure that the entire three-county region is meeting federal requirements. The Regional Planning Projects budget includes the RTC staff and services required to meet state and federal mandates including the development of the long range Regional Transportation Plan; the five-year Regional Transportation Improvement Program, which identifies projects to receive certain state and federal funds; public outreach; the public advisory Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee; the Bicycle Committee; as well as state, federal, and local interagency coordination and planning activities.

Planning projects included in the planning budget:

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

For FY 2025/26, the RTC will implement the 2045 RTP as it participates with local partners on a variety of planning efforts and will continue the work with a variety of partner agencies for the next update of the RTP to be completed in 2026, including updates to goals, policies, and performance metrics and targets; revenue forecasts; project list updates and evaluation, taking into consideration equity, greenhouse gas reductions, and other RTP goals, state and federal goals; and addressing new state and federal guidelines for regional plans.

Scotts Creek

The Scotts Creek project will continue critical work to develop a replacement bridge design for Highway 1 over Scotts Creek in north Santa Cruz County that includes restoration of the ecological condition and

dynamism of the Scotts Creek lagoon, marsh, and dune system, while also planning for climate change. Caltrans is the implementing agency for the project and RTC provides support and input on the preliminary engineering and environmental components of the project. Caltrans, RTC, and the Resource Conservation District are seeking funding for project implementation and will continue to serve on the project team in FY 2025/26.

Equity Action Plan

An action plan will be completed in FY 2024/25 that includes a data-based effort to identify and address current and past inequities; an equity analysis of the existing transportation network, transportation projects and services, plans, and RTC policies and procedures; a public outreach toolkit to proactively engage community members that have been historically underrepresented or disadvantaged by transportation decisions; an equity-focused advisory group; and staff, board, advisory committees, and partner agency trainings related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The tools developed as part of this equity action plan development will be employed in FY 2025-26 and beyond in all of the work of the RTC.

Climate Adaptation Plan

In FY 2024/25 and in partnership with the County of Santa Cruz, the RTC completed a Climate Adaptation Vulnerability Assessment and Transportation Priorities Report for roads in the unincorporated sections of the county and for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. The vulnerability assessment will be used for development of resiliency concepts for other planning efforts in 2025-26 and beyond. These include resiliency planning for transportation infrastructure at Waddell and San Vicente Creeks and transportation resiliency planning for various vulnerable locations along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line corridor.

North Coast Transportation Demand Management Plan

Development of a North Coast Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan for Santa Cruz County to improve access without a car to North Coast facilities and destinations, while also addressing regional and state safety and equity goals. The plan will identify transportation challenges, strategies for managing demand and providing alternatives to access the spectacular North Coast without an automobile.

Highway 1 Coastal Resilience at Waddell and San Vicente Creeks

Development of a Coastal Resilience Plan for Highway 1 at Waddell and San Vicente Creeks. The RTC will work in partnership with the Resource Conservation District (RCD) to identify short-, medium- and long-

term actions for viability and resilience to climate stressors in tandem with ecological restoration of the creeks. A best practices framework will be developed outlining a workable methodology that facilitates multi-agency consensus for developing resilience plans for coastal transportation infrastructure.

Rural Highways Safety Plan

In partnership with Caltrans, the RTC is developing a highway safety plan for rural highways to meet federal requirements for a safe streets for vision zero action plan that will allow projects identified in the plan to qualify for federal and state funds. This plan will be used to apply for such funds and make improvements at locations that are identified in the plan.

Planning for Climate Resilience for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Corridor

This effort will analyze various locations along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Corridor that are vulnerable to climate change impacts and identify options for long term viability. The locations include the Capitola bluffs, the La Selva and Manresa Beach bluffs, the Harkins Slough Rail Crossing, and the Pajaro River railroad bridge. The analysis will include sea level rise, wave runup, geotechnical characteristics, wetland delineation, etc.

Planning		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	<u>Revenues</u>				
2	TDA Planning	40172	903,956	917,378	13,422 Carryover funds from FY 2024-25
3	Measure D	40186	1,000	901,708	900,708 Carryover funds from FY 2024-25
4	RSTP Exchange	40761	14,953	312,573	297,620 Carryover funds from FY 2024-25
5	STIP for Planning (PPM)	40770	160,000	175,839	15,839 Carryover funds from FY 2024-25
6	Rural Planning Assistance (RPA)	40786	466,500	527,722	61,222 Carryover funds from FY 2024-25
7	Sustainable Communities - FTA 5304	40786	-	38,294	38,294 Carryover funds from FY 2024-25
8	SB125-TIRCP (for program administration)	40894	-	346,861	346,861 Administration of SB125 TIRCP & ZETCP Funds
9	Strategic Partnership - FHWA	40786	299,733	255,700	(44,032) Some work completed in FY 2024-25
10	State TNC Access Fee Funds	40786	101,407	103,707	2,300 Updated estimate
11	Climate Adaptation - SHA	40894	2,387,550	2,549,000	161,450 Carryover from FY 2024-25
12	Total Revenues		4,335,099	6,128,783	1,793,684
13					
14	<u>Salaries, Benefits & Overhead by Program</u>				
15	Regional Planning Coordination		155,000	155,000	-
16	Work Program		45,000	50,000	5,000 Updated estimate
17	Public Information		60,000	60,000	-
18	Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning		75,000	75,000	-
19	Specialized Transportation		80,000	80,000	-
20	Regional Transp Plan for MTP		325,000	340,000	15,000 More work on RTP in FY 2025-26
21	Transp Improv Program (TIP)		255,000	270,000	15,000 More work on Programming in FY 2025-26
22	Highway & Roadway Planning		100,000	80,000	(20,000) Some work covered under other budget lines
23	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing		1,000	1,000	-
24	Scotts Creek Marsh Restoration		25,000	25,000	-
25	TNC Access for All		5,200	7,500	2,300 Updated estimate
26	Equity Action Plan Grant		20,000	30,000	10,000 Carryover from FY 2024-25
27	SB125-TIRCP Administration		-	50,000	50,000 Administration of SB125 TIRCP & ZETCP Funds
28	Coastal Resiliency Plan - Waddell & San Vicente		75,000	90,000	15,000 Updated estimate
29	SCC Rural Highways Safety Plan		60,000	50,000	(10,000) Some work completed in FY 2024-25
30	SCC North Coast TDM Plan		65,000	90,000	25,000 Carryover from FY 2024-25
31	Climate Res for ZEPRT Corridor		262,808	262,808	-
32	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	836,022	891,774	55,752
33	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	772,986	824,534	51,548
34	Subtotal Staff and Overhead		1,609,008	1,716,308	107,300

Planning Continued		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	<u>Services & Supplies</u>				
2	Passthrough Programs				
3	Bike To Work and School Program (Ecology Action)	62856	72,000	72,000	-
4	HSA Vision Zero Bike and Pedestrian Safety Program	62856	156,000	156,000	-
5	Ecology Action - Bike Smart and Walk Smart	62856		300,000	300,000
6	Ecology Action - Safe Route to Schools & Bike SC Co. Project	62856	14,953	12,573	(2,380) Carryover from FY 2024-25
7	Project Paseo (Bike SC County)	62856	-	-	-
8	<u>Professional Services (contracts)</u>				
9	Legislative Assistant	62381	50,000	50,000	-
10	Eng and Other Tech Consultants	62381	25,000	25,000	-
11	AMBAG for RTP/MTP	75230	30,000	30,000	-
12	Coastal Resiliency Plan - Waddell & San Vicente	62381	450,000	650,000	200,000 Carryover from FY 2024-25
13	SCC Rural Highways Safety Plan	62381	139,260	55,632	(83,628) Some work completed in FY 2024-25
14	SCC North Coast TDM Plan	62381	175,265	208,698	33,433 Carryover from FY 2024-25
15	Transportation Equity Action Plan	62381	-	54,000	54,000 Carryover from FY 2024-25
16	Climate Adaption-Vulnerability Assessment	62381	-	-	-
17	Climate Res for ZEPRT Corridor	62381	788,422	830,000	41,578 Carryover from FY 2024-25
18	TNC Access for All	62381	96,207	96,207	-
19	<u>RTC Work Element Related Items</u>				
20	Traffic Monitoring services	62381	30,000	30,000	-
21	Printing Documents & Pub Engagement Activities	62381	40,000	40,000	-
22	Transfer to Rail/Trail Authority	75233	110,000	110,000	-
23	Subtotal Services & Supplies		2,177,107	2,720,110	543,003
24	<u>Other & for Future Fiscal Years</u>				
25	Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing Construction to Caltrans	75230	-	900,708	900,708 Carryover from FY 2024-25
26	Equity Action Plan for Future Fiscal Years	62856	-	-	-
27	Climate Adaptation for Future Fiscal Years	62856	-	-	-
28	Coastal Resiliency Plan - Waddell/San Vicente Future FYs	62856	791,940	628,335	(163,605) Updated carryover from FY 2024-25
29	SCC Rural Highways Safety Plan - Future FYs	62856	-	-	-
30	SCC North Coast TDM Plan Future FYs	62856	-	-	-
31	Climate Res for ZEPRT Corridor for Future Years	62856	328,750	422,893	94,143 Carryover from FY 2024-25
32					-
33	Total Expenditures		4,906,805	6,338,354	1,431,549
34					
35	To/(From) Reserves:	(571,706)	(556,432)	15,273	

Highway 9 Improvements

GL Key 721740 / Fund 76620

Transportation projects in the Highway 9 complete streets corridor program will improve safe travel in the San Lorenzo Valley (SLV) for users of all modes of transportation. Highway 9 investments focus on safety, speeding reduction, and traffic flow improvements; multimodal access to schools, libraries, parks, bus stops, businesses, and other destinations in town centers; as well as other needs identified by the community in this travel corridor.

RTC is partnering with Caltrans, Santa Cruz Metro, the County of Santa Cruz, and San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District (SLVUSD) to implement investments that address community concerns, improve safety, access, and connectivity for all modes of transportation, as well as economic vitality, environmental quality, and emergency preparedness, while improving the condition of existing infrastructure.

Recent, current, and near-term expenditures in the program include funding preconstruction activities for the Felton complete streets project being implemented by Caltrans, and preliminary engineering and environmental analysis of complete streets improvements along Highway 9 in Boulder Creek. Expenditures may include research and pursuit of grant opportunities. Some of the funds programmed and budgeted for FY 2024/25 will carry over to FY 2025/26 and will be included in a future budget amendment.

Highway 9 Improvements		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Measure D	40186	458,000	586,824	128,824
2	2023 Federal Earmark	40786	-	1,500,000	1,500,000
3	Total Revenues		458,000	2,086,824	1,628,824
4	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead				
5	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	-	45,747	45,747
6	Allocated Overhead	62354	-	42,298	42,298
7	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead		-	88,045	88,045
8					
9	Services & Supplies				
10	Legal Fees	62359	-	-	-
11	Professional & Special Serv	62381	458,000	1,070,000	612,000
12	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	-	619,000	619,000
13	Total Services & Supplies		458,000	1,689,000	1,231,000
14					
15	Total Expenditures:		458,000	1,777,045	1,319,045
16					
17	Excess of Revenues over Expenditures:		-	309,779	309,779

Cruz 511 Traveler Information Rideshare

GL Key 721410 / Fund 76621

Cruz511 is the traveler information transportation demand management (TDM) program administered by the RTC. Cruz511 provides resources for travel options around the county including a trip planner, carpool and vanpool match services, bicycle maps, accessible travel options, and an interactive traffic map with real-time information on construction, incidents, and travel speeds. Knowledgeable travel counselors are also available to help people understand their options for getting around. In partnership with the City of Santa Cruz, Ecology Action, UCSC, and other local jurisdictions, the RTC launched “Go Santa Cruz County,” a robust demand management program, including an online commute manager and rewards platform with dynamic ride matching and trip planning. The platform is also being used for Santa Cruz METRO’s “One Ride at a Time” program to increase transit ridership by promoting environmental causes. In FY 2025/26, the RTC will continue to work to provide traffic safety messaging and active transportation mapping resources to community members throughout the county. In FY 2024/25 the RTC launched a program to provide incentives to lower income residents for purchase and use electric bicycles and regular bicycles. The program will carryover into FY 2025/26.

Cruz 511 Rideshare		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Measure D	40186	231,000	231,000	-
2	Interest	40430	4,000	4,000	-
3	RSTP Exchange/STBG	40761	65,535	370,635	305,100 Carryover from FY 2024-25
4	Contr from Other Agencies	41150	-	194,900	194,900 Carryover from FY 2024-25
5	Contr from Other Funds	42367	50,000	50,000	-
6	Total Revenues	350,535	850,535	500,000	
7					
8	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead				
9	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	102,339	109,042	6,703
10	Allocated Overhead	62354	108,196	100,820	(7,376)
11	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	210,535	209,862	(673)	
12					
13	Services & Supplies				
14	Telephone & Mobile Device	61221	500	500	-
15	Membership	62020	600	600	-
16	Postage	62221	1,000	1,000	-
17	General Supplies & Expenses	62223	2,000	2,000	-
18	Professional & Special Serv	62381	133,000	258,000	125,000 Carryover from FY 2024-25
19	Adv, Promo and Incent for Public Ei	62801	50,000	425,000	375,000 Carryover from FY 2024-25
20	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	20,000	20,000	-
21	Subscriptions	62890	3,300	3,300	-
22	Transp/Travel/Educ	62914	2,000	2,000	-
23	Total Services & Supplies	212,400	712,400	500,000	
24					
25	Total Expenditures:	422,935	922,262	499,327	
26					
27	To/(From) Reserves:	(72,400)	(71,727)		

Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)

GL Key 721825 / Fund 76625

The RTC serves as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) for Santa Cruz County. SAFEs are funded by a \$1 vehicle registration fee on all vehicles in their region. The funds are used to provide the highway call box system, Freeway Service Patrols (tow trucks) on Hwy 1 and 17, extra California Highway Patrol (CHP) enforcement on Hwy 17 and other motorist-aid services aimed at improving safety and reducing non-recurrent congestion on highway. California Highway Patrol (CHP) operations are also reimbursed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for the Santa Clara County portion of Highway 17.

Call boxes are connected to an answering service and require regular maintenance and utilities including electricity for lighting and telephone service. Due to a significant reduction in the use of call boxes, staff is analyzing the long-term viability of the call box system along with other agencies in the state. Depending on the results of that analysis, staff may propose significant changes to the budget for this program in the near future.

Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Measure D	40186	50,000	50,000	-
2	Local Assistance (MTC)	40384	50,000	50,000	-
3	Interest	40430	1,000	1,000	-
4	DMV Fees	40754	257,750	257,750	-
5	Total Revenues	358,750	358,750	-	
6					
7	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead				
8	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	65,136	77,938	12,802
9	Allocated Overhead	62354	68,864	72,062	3,198
10	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	134,000	150,000	16,000	More work anticipated to plan and implement callbox removal
11					
12	Services & Supplies				
13	Telephone & Mobile Device	61221	10,200	10,200	-
14	Liability Insurance	61535	5,250	5,250	-
15	Other Equip Repair/Maint	61730	75,000	37,500	(37,500) Anticipate removal of call boxes
16	General Supplies & Expenses	62223	2,000	2,000	-
17	Legal Fees	62359	1,000	1,000	-
18	Professional & Special Serv	62381	3,000	3,000	-
19	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	150,000	150,000	-
20	Transp/Travel/Educ	62914	2,000	2,000	-
21	Utilities	63070	1,200	1,200	-
22	Transfer to Other Funds	75233	50,000	50,000	-
23	CHP Operations	75280	150,600	150,600	-
24	Total Services & Supplies	450,250	412,750	(37,500)	
25					
26	Total Expenditures:	584,250	562,750	(21,500)	
27					
28	To/(From) reserves:	(225,500)	(204,000)		

Freeway Service Patrol

GL Key 721827 / Fund 76627

The Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) program consists of tow trucks patrolling Highway 17 from Mount Herman Road to the Santa Clara County Line and Highway 1 from Highway 9 to State Park Drive. FSP tow trucks reduce congestion on the highway by quickly clearing accidents, debris, and other incidents, and allowing traffic to return to normal conditions during a limited schedule on weekends.

The benefit/cost ratio for the Santa Cruz County FSP program is 3:1. This ratio represents the FSP cost effectiveness based on operational performance measures.

Freeway Service Patrol (FSP)		FY 2025/26	FY 2025/26	Difference	Note
	Object	Approved 4/3/25	Proposed 12/4/25		
1	Measure D	40186	231,000	-	
2	SB 1	40465	134,398	6,587	FY 2025-26 allocation from Caltrans
3	Caltrans FSP	40884	157,417	5,693	FY 2025-26 allocation from Caltrans
4	Total Revenues	522,815	535,095	12,280	
5					
6	<u>Salaries, Benefits & Overhead</u>				
7	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	42,047	44,944	2,898
8	Allocated Overhead	62354	44,453	41,556	(2,898)
9	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	86,500	86,500	-	
10					
11	<u>Services & Supplies</u>				
12	Telephone & Mobile Device	61221	2,000	2,000	-
13	Liability Insurance	61535	4,200	4,200	-
14	General Supplies & Expenses	62223	4,000	4,000	-
15	Legal Fees	62359	1,000	1,000	-
16	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	5,000	5,000	-
17	Towing	62893	419,115	419,115	-
18	Transp/Travel/Educ	62914	1,000	1,000	-
20	Total Services & Supplies	436,315	436,315	-	
21					
22	Total Expenditures:	522,815	522,815	-	
23					
24	To/(From) reserves:	-	12,280	12,280	

Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

GL Key 722100 / Fund 76623

The RTC is the owner of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, which is an active freight railroad that the RTC purchased for the purpose of preserving and expanding transportation uses in the corridor, such as a trail and passenger rail. The RTC contracts with a short-line railroad operator, Saint Paul & Pacific Railroad, through an Administration, Coordination, and License agreement for freight uses. The RTC performs regular inspections and repairs to preserve and maintain the railroad infrastructure for future use, including potential zero emission rail transit and the Coastal Rail Trail. The trail portion of the project is funded by Measure D Active Transportation category.

Real Property Management

Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line property management work includes processing and issuing right of entry agreements; reviewing, cataloguing, and updating of utility agreements; and updating and pursuing lease agreements in accordance with the RTC's policies for Leases, Licenses, Encroachments and Rights of Entry; and for Capital Projects implemented by others along the SCBRL. The RTC uses professional service contracts with Real Property consultants to support the property management needs along the branch line, and staff plans to reprocure the on-call Real Property Management contracts in FY 2025/26.

Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line		FY 2025/26	FY 2025/26	Difference	Note
GL Key 722100		Approved	Proposed		
Real Property	Object	4/3/2025	12/4/2025		
Revenues					
1	Leases, Licenses & Other Revenue	40440	83,772	83,772	-
2	Transfer from TC Funds	42367	110,000	110,000	-
3	Total Revenues	193,772	193,772	-	
Expenditures					
5	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	53,470	57,155	3,685
6	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	56,530	52,845	(3,685)
7	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	110,000	110,000	-	
8	Liability Insurance	61535	32,425	32,425	-
9	Telephone	61221	480	480	-
10	Office Expense	62223	500	500	-
11	Legal Counsel	62359	5,000	5,000	-
12	Professional Services	62381	54,520	54,520	-
13	Training	62914	5,000	5,000	- FY 2025/26 Hi-rail truck training
14	Transfer to Other Funds	75233	-	-	-
15	Total Services, Supplies & Other	97,925	97,925	-	
16					
17	Total Expenditures	207,925	207,925	-	
18					
19	To/(From) Reserves Real Property:	(14,153)	(14,153)	-	

Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Capital Projects

GL Key 722100 / Fund 76623

Zero Emission Rail & Trail (ZEPRT) Project Concept Development

In FY 2025-26, the RTC will complete the development of the Zero Emission Rail Transit & Trail Project concept and continue with project activities subject to the availability of funding. The project proposes new high-capacity passenger rail service and stations along approximately 22-miles of the branch line from Watsonville/Pajaro to Santa Cruz. Staff are actively pursuing competitive grants to fully fund the project through environmental clearance. The trail portion of the project is funded by Measure D Active Transportation category.

Infrastructure Inspections and Repairs

Regular inspections and repairs to the railroad infrastructure are needed to preserve the line for future use. The work may include repairs to the bridges, track bed, drainage system, and grade crossings. The RTC procures consultants and contractors to inspect and perform repairs to the infrastructure.

Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line		FY 2025/26	FY 2025/26	Difference	Note
GL Key 722100		Approved	Proposed		
Capital Projects	Object	4/3/2025	12/4/2025		
Revenues					
1 Measure D	40186	2,343,000	5,120,812	2,777,812	Carryover from FY24-25
2 Measure D Active Transportation	40186	-	350,000	350,000	Carryover from FY24-25
3 FEMA storm damage	41093	-	-	-	
3 Short-Line RR Improvement Program	40894	-	-	-	
3 TIRCP Cycle 6	42384	13,436,000	1,697,019	(11,738,981)	Grant funds not yet secured
4	Total Revenues	15,779,000	7,167,831	(8,611,169)	
Expenditures					
6 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	425,329	457,685	32,356	
7 Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	449,671	423,176	(26,495)	
8	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	875,000	880,861	5,861	
9 Legal Counsel	62359	25,000	145,000	120,000	
10 Professional Services	62381	13,983,777	5,117,817	(8,865,960)	Grant funds not yet secured
11 Contingency-General	62856	100,223	100,000	(223)	
12 Loan Repayment	74244	-	-	-	
13 Construction	86110	795,000	910,000	115,000	
14	Total Services, Supplies & Other	14,904,000	6,272,817	(8,631,183)	
15					
16	Total Expenditures	15,779,000	7,153,678	(8,625,322)	
17					
18	To/(From) Reserves Capital Projects:	-	14,153	14,153	
19	Total To/(From) Reserves Rail Fund:	(14,153)	0	14,153	

*Zero-Emissions Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) Project

**Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP)

Highway 1 Corridor Investment Program

Fund 76626

The Highway 1 Corridor Investment Program was developed to provide multimodal solutions to congestion and improve traffic flow and safety to increase the safety and efficiency of these corridors in Santa Cruz County.

The program of projects includes auxiliary lanes, bus on shoulder improvements, and bicycle and pedestrian overcrossings. Future potential projects within the program include interchange modifications, ramp metering, and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

41st Avenue to Soquel Drive Auxiliary Lanes, Bus on Shoulder, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue. GL Key 722261

The project will construct northbound and southbound auxiliary lanes between the 41st Avenue and Soquel Avenue/Drive interchanges, bus on shoulder improvements, and construct a new bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue. Construction began in 2023, with planned activities including design support during construction, project management, and public information campaign ongoing through 2025. State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Solutions for Congested Corridors Program (SCCP) funds programmed for construction capital were allocated by the CTC to Caltrans and do not flow through the RTC budget. Caltrans is managing construction of the project and RTC is the sponsor agency. The budget includes funding approved by RTC in 2024 to address Caltrans cost overruns.

Highway 1 Corridor GL Key 722261 41 st Avenue to Soquel Drive		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
1	Revenues				
2	Measure D	40186	3,665,382	7,737,488	4,072,106 Carryover from FY 24/25
1	SB1 SCCP 41st/Soquel	40465	-	-	-
3	Soquel Water District Contribution	41150	-	-	-
4	Total Revenues	3,665,382	7,737,488	4,072,106	
5	Expenditures				
6	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	48,609	63,748	15,139
7	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	51,391	58,941	7,550
8	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	100,000	122,689	22,689	
9	Legal Fees	62359	1,000	868	(132)
10	Engineering Consultant	62381	-	-	-
11	Project Management Consultant	62381	25,000	28,302	3,302 Carryover from FY 24/25
12	Pub Info, materials, & meetings	62381	16,000	16,000	-
13	Right of Way Capital and Support	62856	130,000	230,115	100,115
14	Construction Capital	62856	3,393,382	7,339,514	3,946,132 Increase due to full year of construction
15	Contingency	62856	-	-	- Carryover to be determined at end of FY 24/25
16	Total Services & Supplies	3,565,382	7,614,799	4,049,417	
17					
18	Total Expenditures	3,665,382	7,737,488	4,072,106	
19					
20	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

Bay Avenue/Porter Street to State Park Drive Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulders. GL Key 722262

The project will construct northbound and southbound auxiliary lanes between the Bay Avenue/Porter Street and State Park Drive interchanges, bus on shoulder improvements, replace the existing Capitola Avenue local roadway overcrossing, and construct a Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing at Mar Vista Drive. State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Solutions for Congested Corridors Program (SCCP) and Local Partnership Program (LPP) funds programmed for construction capital in FY 2022-23 have been allocated by the CTC to Caltrans and will not flow through the RTC budget. Caltrans is managing construction of the project and RTC is the sponsor agency.

Highway 1 Corridor GL Key 722262 Bay/Porter to State Park Drive		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
1	Revenues	Object			
2	Measure D	40186	6,555,000	17,457,345	10,902,345 Carryover from FY24-25 and recently approved 5Year Plan
3	STIP	40770	-	-	
4	SB1 SCCP Bay/Porter to State Park	40465	278,914	278,914	-
5	Total Revenues	6,833,914	17,736,259	10,902,345	
6	Expenditures				
7	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	72,914	178,870	105,956
8	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	77,086	165,384	88,298
9	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	150,000	344,254	194,254	Total staff costs increased by \$50k, allocation due to indirect cost rate
10	Legal Fees	62359	20,000	24,952	4,952
11	Engineering Consultant	62381	278,914	278,914	-
12	Project Management Consultant	62381	50,000	126,264	76,264 Carryover from FY 24/25
13	Right of Way Capital and Support	62856	-	-	-
14	Construction Capital	62856	5,835,000	15,982,502	10,147,502 Costs based on project status and schedule
15	Contingency	62856	500,000	979,373	479,373
16	Total Services & Supplies	6,683,914	17,392,005	10,708,091	
17					
18	Total Expenditures	6,833,914	17,736,259	10,902,345	
19					
20	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

State Park Drive to Freedom Boulevard Auxiliary Lanes, Bus on Shoulders, and Coastal Rail Trail Segment

12. GL Key 722263

The project will construct northbound and southbound auxiliary lanes, bus on shoulder improvements, widen the Highway 1 bridge over Aptos Creek/Spreckles Drive, and construct a 1.25-mile section of Segment 12 of the Coastal Rail Trail/Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST), including new bridges over Highway 1 (2 bridges) and Soquel Drive (2 bridges). The environmental component of the project was completed in 2024, and the right-of-way and final design components will continue in FY 2025/26; the project is expected to be construction-ready in 2026, pending availability of funds for construction. This project will reduce congestion, improve coastal access, and improve connectivity for walkers and bikers to adjacent neighborhoods, schools, and Aptos Village. The RTC is the implementing agency for the final design and right of way components of the project. The budget reflects both highway and active transportation Meas D funds.

Highway 1 Corridor GL Key 722263 State Park Drive to Freedom Boulevard		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
1	Revenues				
2	Measure D - Highway	40186	8,546,632	6,109,782	(2,436,850) Highway right of way work anticipated
3	Measure D - Active Transportation	40186	2,964,000	-	(2,964,000) Segment 12 right of way work anticipated
4	STIP	40770	300,000	300,000	-
5	Total Revenues	11,810,632	6,409,782	(5,400,850)	
6	Expenditures				
7	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	121,523	219,839	98,316 Total staff costs increased in both labor (construction) and
8	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	128,477	203,264	74,787 indirect cost rate
9	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead		250,000	423,103	173,103
10	PA/ED Consultants	62381	-	-	-
11	PS&E Consultant	62381	1,500,000	2,874,764	1,374,764 Carryover from FY 24/25
12	Legal Fees	62359	50,000	50,000	-
13	Project Management Consultant	62381	80,000	78,504	(1,496)
14	Pub Info, materials, & meetings	62381	15,000	25,000	10,000 More outreach anticipated
15	Right of Way Capital and Support	62856	8,847,000	2,891,558	(5,955,442) Costs based on project status and schedule
15	Contingency	62856	1,068,632	66,853	(1,001,779) Costs based on project status and schedule
16	Total Services & Supplies	11,560,632	5,986,679	(5,573,953)	
17					
18	Total Expenditures	11,810,632	6,409,782	(5,400,850)	
19					
20	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

Highway 1 Corridor All Segments Combined		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
1	Revenues	Object			
2	Measure D Hwy	40186	18,767,014	31,304,615	12,537,601
3	Measure D Active	40186	2,964,000	-	(2,964,000)
4	SB1 SSCP 41st/Soquel & BP-SP	40465	278,914	278,914	-
5	STIP	40770	300,000	300,000	-
5	Soquel Water District Contribution	41150	-	-	-
6	Total Revenues	22,309,928	31,883,529	9,573,601	
7	Expenditures				
8	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	243,046	462,458	219,412
9	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	256,954	427,588	170,634
10	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead		500,000	890,046	390,046
12	Legal Fees	62359	71,000	75,820	4,820
11	Engineering Consultant	62381	1,778,914	3,153,678	1,374,764
13	Pub Info, materials, & meetings	62381	31,000	41,000	10,000
12	Project Management Consultant	62381	155,000	328,914	173,914
12	Right of Way Capital and Support	62856	8,977,000	3,121,673	(5,855,327)
14	Construction Capital	62856	9,228,382	23,322,016	14,093,634
15	Contingency	62856	1,568,632	1,046,226	(522,406)
16	Total Services & Supplies	21,809,928	31,089,327	9,279,399	
17				-	
18	Total Expenditures	22,309,928	31,979,373	9,669,445	
19				-	
20	To/(From) Reserves:	-	(95,844)	(95,844)	

Active Transportation

Fund 76628

MBSST Network Implementation GL Key 722280

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) is a proposed 50-mile bicycle and pedestrian trail project within Santa Cruz County, divided into 20 segments. The spine of the trail network will be the 32-mile Coastal Rail Trail from Davenport to Watsonville, to be built within or adjacent to the Regional Transportation Commission-owned rail right-of-way (Segments 5-20). The FY 2025/26 budget includes funds for ongoing maintenance of the trail corridor, property management, as well as RTC oversight, coordination, and technical assistance during project implementation.

Maintenance and property management for the trail corridor includes vegetation control; tree maintenance; trash and dumping abatement; encampments; drainage maintenance and repairs; storm debris cleanup, identifying and addressing encroachments onto right-of-way property; supporting capital projects and lease updates by clarifying real property rights, conducting appraisals, and acquiring additional rights, if needed. FY 2025/26 also includes RTC work to secure environmental permits to support maintenance activities.

RTC staff provide technical support and stakeholder coordination for development of the MBSST/Coastal Rail Trail projects implemented by others. Consultant services are utilized for technical assistance when needed.

The budget includes major drainage work projects and vegetation control in FY 2025/26.

MBSST Coastal Rail Trail GL Key 722280		FY 2025/26 Approved	FY 2025/26 Proposed	Difference	Note
General Network and Maintenance	Object	4/3/2025	12/4/2025		
Revenues					
1 Measure D	40186	2,255,332	2,483,173	227,841	Carryover from FY 24/25
2	Total Revenues	2,255,332	2,483,173	227,841	
Expenditures					
4 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	289,808	306,132	16,324	Total staff costs increased by \$16K
5 Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	306,394	283,050	(23,344)	
6	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	596,202	589,182	(7,020)	
7 Maintenance	61845	1,650,218	1,325,079	(325,139)	
8 Legal Fees	62359		120,000	120,000	
9 Professional Services	62381	3,912	93,912	90,000	
10 Training	62914	5,000	5,000	-	
11 Transfer to Other Funds	75233	-	350,000	350,000	
12	Total Services, Supplies & Other	1,659,130	1,543,991	(115,139)	
13				-	
14	Total Expenditures	2,255,332	2,133,173	(122,159)	
15					
16	To/(From) Reserves:	-	350,000	350,000	

North Coast Rail Trail

GL Key 722281

Segment 5 will construct 7.5 miles of the MBSST's rail trail spine between Wilder Ranch and Davenport along the rail right-of-way. Segment 5 will be a new multi-use paved path and parking improvements along the scenic North Coast in Santa Cruz County and the project includes improved parking lots and connections to the trail at Davenport and Panther/Yellowbank Beach, access improvements from the Bonny Doon Beach parking lot to the trail, and a pedestrian crosswalk in Davenport.

The project is funded by the Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) and Measure D in FY 2024/25 and FY 2025/26 and is being implemented by FHWA. Construction of the project is ongoing and is anticipated to be complete in 2026.

MBSST Coastal Rail Trail GL Key 722281 North Coast		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
Object					
Revenues					
1 Measure D	40186	768,000	3,953,367	3,185,367	
2 RSTPX	40761	-	-	-	
3 Land Trust	42384	75,000	75,000	-	
4 Coastal Conservancy	42384	-	-	-	
5	Total Revenues	843,000	4,028,367	3,185,367	
Expenditures					
6 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	43,748	46,763	3,015	
8 Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	46,252	43,237	(3,015)	
9	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	90,000	90,000	-	
10 Maintenance	61845	37,000	55,000	18,000	
11 Prelim Engineering and Tech Asst	62381	-	28,367	28,367	
12 Construction	86110	716,000	3,855,000	3,139,000	
13	Total Services, Supplies & Other	753,000	3,938,367	3,185,367	
14				-	
15	Total Expenditures	843,000	4,028,367	3,185,367	
16					
17	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

GL Key 722282 City of Santa Cruz

The City of Santa Cruz started construction of Segment 7, Phase 2 between Bay Avenue and Pacific Avenue (0.8 miles of trail) in 2022. The project is scheduled to complete construction in 2025.

The City of Santa Cruz, in partnership with the County of Santa Cruz, is completing preliminary design and environmental review of Segments 8 & 9 of the Coastal Rail Trail between Pacific Avenue and 17th Avenue (2.5 miles) in FY 2024/25, which is funded by state and private funds. The city secured an Active Transportation Program (ATP) and other grants, using Measure D funds as match, to fully fund design, right-of-way, and construction. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2027.

MBSST Coastal Rail Trail GL Key 722282 City of Santa Cruz		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
	Object				
Revenues					
1	Measure D	40186	1,039,646	4,759,899	3,720,253
2	Total Revenues	1,039,646	4,759,899	3,720,253	
Expenditures					
4	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	19,444	21,303	1,859
5	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	20,556	19,697	(859)
6	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	40,000	41,000	1,000	
7	Professional Services	62381	-	-	
8	City of Santa Cruz Maintenance	75204	49,000	49,000	-
9	City of Santa Cruz Project Sponsor	75204	950,646	4,669,899	3,719,253
10	Total Services & Supplies	999,646	4,718,899	3,719,253	
11					
12	Total Expenditures	1,039,646	4,759,899	3,720,253	
13					
14	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

City of Watsonville

GL Key 722283

Segment 18 includes 2 miles of trail from Lee Road to Walker Street in the City of Watsonville connecting the city to the existing trail network in the Watsonville Slough Wetlands. Phase 1 has been completed and the FY 2025/26 budget includes some funds for maintenance of the rail trail and preliminary engineering and environmental analysis of trail projects in Watsonville. Future phases of the trail through Watsonville are proposed to be included in the Zero Emission Rail Transit & Trail Project.

MBSST Coastal Rail Trail GL Key 722283 City of Watsonville		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Revenues				
2	Measure D	40186	1,043,600	1,047,000	3,400
3	Total Revenues	1,043,600	1,047,000	3,400	
4	Expenditures				
5	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	19,444	20,784	1,340
6	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	20,556	19,216	(1,340)
7	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	40,000	40,000	-	
8	Professional Services	62381	-	-	-
9	City of Watsonville	75206	1,003,600	1,007,000	3,400
10	Total Services, Supplies & Other	1,003,600	1,007,000	3,400	
11	Total Expenditures	1,043,600	1,047,000	3,400	
12					
13	Tot/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

City of Capitola

GL Key 722284

The City of Capitola constructed a walkway from the city hall parking lot to Monterey Avenue, parallel to the rail corridor, using previously programmed RTSPX funds. Measure D funds were used to provide RTC staff and technical support. No work is planned in FY 2025/26.

MBSST Coastal Rail Trail		FY 2025/26	FY 2025/26		
GL Key 722284		Approved	Proposed	Difference	Note
City of Capitola		4/3/2025	12/4/2025		
Revenues		Object			
	40186				
1	Measure D	1,000	-	(1,000)	
2	Total Revenues	1,000	-	(1,000)	
3	Expenditures				
4	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	570	-	(570)
5	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	430	-	(430)
6	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	1,000	-	(1,000)	
7	Total Expenditures	1,000	-	(1,000)	
8					
9	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

County of Santa Cruz

GL Key 722285

Segments 10 & 11 will construct 4.7 miles between 17th Avenue in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County known as Live Oak through Jade Street Park in the City of Capitola, then up to State Park Drive in Aptos in unincorporated Santa Cruz County. The County of Santa Cruz in partnership with the City of Capitola, will continue final design and right of way activities in FY 2025/26 of Segments 10 & 11 of the trail from 17th Ave to State Park Drive (4.7 miles). The county secured an Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant for design, right-of-way, and construction, using Measure D as a match. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2027.

MBSST Coastal Rail Trail GL Key 722285 County of Santa Cruz		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
Object					
Revenues					
1 Measure D	40186	2,269,000	3,675,038	1,406,038	
2	Total Revenues	2,269,000	3,675,038	1,406,038	
Expenditures					
4 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	14,583	28,011	13,428	
5 Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	15,417	25,899	10,482	
6	Total Salaries, benefits, & overhead	30,000	53,910	23,910	
7 Professional Services	62381	10,000	10,000	-	
8 County of Santa Cruz Seg 10-11	75303	2,229,000	3,611,128	1,382,128	
9	Total Services, Supplies & Other	2,239,000	3,621,128	1,382,128	
10					
11	Total Expenditures	2,269,000	3,675,038	1,406,038	
12					
13	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	-	

Active Transportation All Segments Combined		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/2025	FY 2025/26 Proposed 12/4/2025	Difference	Note
	Object				
1 Measure D	40186	7,376,578	15,918,477	8,541,899	
2 RSTP Exchange/STBG	40761	-	-	-	
3 Land Trust	42384	75,000	75,000	-	
4 Coastal Conservancy	42384	-	-	-	
5	Total Revenues	7,451,578	15,993,477	8,541,899	Carryover to be determined at end of FY 24/25
6					
7 Salaries, Benefits & Overhead					
8 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	387,597	422,993	35,396	
9 Allocated Overhead	62354	409,605	391,099	(18,506)	
10	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	797,202	814,092	16,890	
11					
12 Services & Supplies					
13 Repairs & Maintenance	61845	1,687,218	1,380,079	(307,139)	
14 Legal Fees	62359	-	120,000	120,000	
15 Professional & Special Serv	62381	13,912	132,279	118,367	
16 Contingency/Special Exp	62856	-	-	-	
17 Training	62914	5,000	5,000	-	
18 Transfer to Other Funds	75233	-	350,000	350,000	
19 Funds to City of Santa Cruz	75204	999,646	4,718,899	3,719,253	
20 Funds to City of Watsonville	75206	1,003,600	1,007,000	3,400	
21 Funds to SC County	75303	2,229,000	3,611,128	1,382,128	
22 Construction	86110	716,000	3,855,000	3,139,000	
23	Total Services & Supplies	6,654,376	15,179,385	8,525,009	
24					
25	Total Expenditures:	7,451,578	15,993,477	8,541,899	Carryover to be determined at end of FY 24/25
26					
27	Excess of Revenues over Expenditures:	-	-	-	
28					

RTC Summary and Fund Balances

Proposed December 4, 2025								
Fund Balances and Reserves for RTC Programs & Projects								
Description	RTC FUND (1)	RIDESHARE FUND (2)	RAIL/TRAIL AUTHORITY FUND (3)	SAFE OPERATING FUND (2)	FSP FUND (2)	MBSST ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION	HWY 1 PA/ED & ENG FUND (3)	TOTAL ALL FUNDS
1 Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	1,486,471	408,873	567,358	476,933	85,083	253,623	676,512	3,954,853
2 FY 2024/25 Revenues budgeted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 Reserve carried over	(728,669)	(276,679)	-	(168,825)	-	-	-	(1,174,173)
4 FY 2024/25 Excess Revenues over Expenditures	(827,195)	(71,727)	0	(204,000)	12,280	-	(95,844)	(1,186,486)
5 Subtotal Fund Balance	(69,393)	60,467	567,358	104,108	97,363	253,623	580,668	1,594,195
6 To Cashflow Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7 To Restricted Reserve Fund	(633,875)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(633,875)
8 Total Fund Balance	(703,268)	60,467	567,358	104,108	97,363	253,623	580,668	960,320
9								
10								
11 Reserve Funds								
12 Reserve Target (30%)	1,362,544	276,679	-	168,825	-	-	-	1,808,048
13								
14 Cashflow Reserve (8%)	363,345	276,679	-	168,825	-	-	-	808,849
15 Restricted Reserve (22%)	999,199	-	-	-	-	-	-	999,199
16 Total Reserve Funds	1,362,544	276,679	-	168,825	-	-	-	1,808,048
17								
18 Reserve Fund Difference from Target	633,875	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19								
20 Notes:								
21 Numbers in parentheses are negative numbers. All other numbers are positive numbers.								
22 Funds within each category (column) are restricted for use on projects/programs within that category.								
23 Fund Balance = Balances of Funds not used at the end of prior fiscal year.								
24 Budgeted Carryover = Portion of Fund Balance used in current fiscal year budget.								
25								
26 (1) 3.6 month (or 30%) operating reserve target established in RTC Rules and Regulations for the RTC Fund ; months (or %) available in this proposed budget								
(2) 3.6 month (or 30%) operating reserve target approved for the SAFE Fund to cover SAFE, FSP and Cruz511 operations								
(3) Reserve funds not proposed for capital project funds								

Proposed December 4, 2025

Fund Balances and Reserves for Special Revenue Funds

Description	TDA FUND (1)	RSTP EXCHANGE FUND (2)	STA FUND (3)	LCTOP Fund (3)	TOTAL ALL FUNDS
1					
2 Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	3,452,155	11,886,084	-	55,161	15,393,399
3 FY 2025/26 Revenues & FY 2024-25 Carryover budgeted	12,940,723	4,371,323	-		17,312,046
4 FEMA Reimbursement for 2017 Storm Damage		3,589,038	-	-	3,589,038
5 RTC Reimbursement for 2023 Storm Damage		1,260,159			1,260,159
6 Restricted Reserve carried over	(985,788)	-	-	-	(985,788)
7 Funds Not Yet Programmed	-	-	-	-	-
8 Funds programmed - Prior FY	(2,366,178)	(20,034,486)			(22,400,664)
9 Funds programmed - Current FY	(12,891,253)	(5,633,657)	-	188,161	(18,336,750)
10 Subtotal Fund Balance	149,658	(4,561,539)	-	243,322	(4,168,559)
11					
12 To Restricted Reserve Fund	(49,470)				(49,470)
13 Total Fund Balance	100,188	(4,561,539)	-	243,322	(4,218,029)
14					
15					
16 Reserve Funds					
17 Reserve Target (8% target for TDA fund; 30% target for others)	1,035,258	-	-	-	1,035,258
18					
19 Restricted Reserve Carryover from prior FY (8% target for TDA fund)	985,788				985,788
20 Restricted Reserve Budgeted in Current FY (8% target for TDA fund)	49,470	-	-	-	49,470
21 Total Reserve Funds	1,035,258	-	-	-	1,035,258
22					
23 Reserve Fund Difference from Target	-	-	-	-	-

24

25 Notes:

26 Numbers in parentheses are negative numbers. All other numbers are positive numbers.

27 Funds within each category (column) are restricted for use on projects/programs within that category.

28 Fund Balance = Balances of Funds not used at the end of prior fiscal year.

29 Budgeted Carryover = Portion of Fund Balance used in current fiscal year budget.

30

31 (1) 8% reserve established in RTC Rules and Regulations for the TDA Fund; % available in this proposed budget

32 (2) Reserve funds not proposed for capital project funds. Future RSTPX programmed funds beyond the budget year are negative.

33 (3) This is a pass-through fund, all receipts are paid to Santa Cruz Metro or other transit providers

RTC Budget Summary and Differences



Budget Summary by Purpose, Program or Project (with allocated labor and overhead)
Fiscal Year FY 2025/26
Proposed December 4, 2025

	Object	Cruz 511	SAFE	FSP	Rail	Hwy	MBSST	Planning	Hwy 9-SLV	Admin	Total
1	TDA Revenue	40172	-	-	-	-	-	917,378	-	801,633	1,719,011
2	Measure D	40186	231,000	50,000	231,000	5,470,812	31,304,615	15,918,477	901,708	586,824	55,627,208
3	Local Assistance (MTC)	40384	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000
4	Interest	40430	4,000	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000
5	Leases, Licenses & Other Rev	40440	-	-	83,772	-	-	-	-	-	83,772
6	SB 1	40465	-	140,985	-	278,914	-	-	-	-	419,899
7	DMV Fees	40754	-	257,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	257,750
8	RSTP Exchange/STBG	40761	370,635	-	-	-	-	312,573	1,500,000	-	2,183,208
9	STIP	40770	-	-	-	300,000	-	175,839	-	-	475,839
10	Rural Planning Assistance (RPA)	40786	-	-	-	-	-	527,722	-	-	527,722
11	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	Caltrans FSP	40884	-	163,110	-	-	-	-	-	-	163,110
13	State-Other	40894	-	-	-	-	-	2,999,568	-	-	2,999,568
14	Sustainable Communities - FTA 5304	40962	-	-	-	-	-	293,994	-	-	293,994
15	Contr from Other Funds	42367	50,000	-	110,000	-	-	-	-	-	160,000
17	Other revenue	42384	-	-	1,697,019	-	75,000	-	-	-	1,772,019
18	Total Revenues	850,535	358,750	535,095	7,361,603	31,883,529	15,993,477	6,128,783	2,086,824	1,734,405	66,933,001
20	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead										
21	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	109,042	77,938	44,944	514,840	422,993	891,774	45,747	557,432	3,127,168
22	Allocated Overhead	62354	100,820	72,062	41,556	476,021	427,588	391,099	824,534	42,298	2,902,716
23	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	209,862	150,000	86,500	990,861	890,046	814,092	1,716,308	88,045	1,084,169	6,029,883
25	Services & Supplies										
26	Telephone & Mobile Device	61221	500	10,200	2,000	480	-	-	-	10,000	23,180
27	Office Equipment	61312	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
28	Liability Insurance	61535	-	5,250	4,200	32,425	-	-	-	174,130	216,005
29	Office Equip Repair/Maint	61725	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
30	Other Equip Repair/Maint	61730	-	37,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	37,500
31	Repairs & Maintenance	61845	-	-	-	-	1,380,079	-	-	16,000	1,396,079
32	Membership	62020	600	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000	25,600
33	Duplicating	62214	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,500	1,500
34	Computer Software	62219	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,200	86,200
35	Postage	62221	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,500	2,500
36	General Supplies & Expenses	62223	2,000	2,000	4,000	500	-	-	-	9,000	17,500
37	Accounting & Audit	62301	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
38	County Mainframe/Intranet	62325	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,000	7,000
39	Commissioners' Stipend	62327	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
40	Legal Fees	62359	-	1,000	1,000	150,000	75,820	120,000	-	150,000	497,820
41	Professional & Special Serv	62381	258,000	3,000	-	5,172,337	3,523,592	132,279	2,039,537	1,070,000	12,421,245
42	Office Rent	62610	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	176,819	176,819
43	Adv, Promo and Incent for Public Engagement	62801	425,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000	435,000
44	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	20,000	150,000	5,000	100,000	27,489,915	-	1,888,662	619,000	30,442,206
45	Subscriptions	62890	3,300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,300
46	Towing	62893	-	-	419,115	-	-	-	-	-	419,115
47	Transp/Travel/Educ	62914	2,000	2,000	1,000	5,000	-	5,000	-	75,000	90,000
48	Vehicle Maint, Rentals & Serv	62920	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,000	4,000
49	Utilities	63070	-	1,200	-	-	-	-	-	2,500	3,700
50	Funds to City of Santa Cruz	75204	-	-	-	-	4,718,899	-	-	-	4,718,899
51	Funds to City of Watsonville	75206	-	-	-	-	1,007,000	-	-	-	1,007,000
52	Contribution to Other Agency	75230	-	-	-	-	-	930,708	-	-	930,708
53	Transfer to Other Funds	75233	-	50,000	-	-	350,000	110,000	-	-	510,000
54	CHP Operations	75280	-	150,600	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,600
55	Funds to SC County	75303	-	-	-	-	3,611,128	-	-	-	3,611,128
56	Construction	86110	-	-	-	910,000	3,855,000	-	-	-	4,765,000
57	Office Equipment	86210	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
58	Total Services & Supplies	712,400	412,750	436,315	6,370,742	31,089,327	15,179,385	4,968,907	1,689,000	1,230,778	62,089,604
59											
60	Total Expenditures:	922,262	562,750	522,815	7,361,603	31,979,373	15,993,477	6,685,215	1,777,045	2,314,947	68,119,487
61											
62	Excess of Revenues over Expenditures:	(71,727)	(204,000)	12,280	-	(95,844)	-	(556,432)	309,779	(580,542)	(1,186,486)
63	*Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	132,194	308,108	85,083	567,358	676,512	253,623	556,432	(309,779)	(122,726)	2,146,805
64	Ending Fund Balance (estimate):	60,467	104,108	97,363	567,358	580,668	253,623	-	-	(703,268)	960,319
65											

Budget Glossary and Acronym Guide

Allocate: The process used to release funding to transportation projects.

Amendment: A proposed or adopted change to the budget.

Appropriate / Appropriation: Authorization for a specific agency to make expenditures or incur liabilities from a specific fund for a specific purpose.

Audit: A review of financial statements or performance activity (such as of an agency or program) to determine conformity or compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and/or standards.

Budget: A plan of operation expressed in terms of financial or other resource requirements for a specific period of time.

Budget Cycle: The period of time, usually one year, required to prepare a financial plan and enact that portion of it applying to the budget year. Significant events in the cycle include:

- Proposed Budget for a new fiscal year with estimated revenues from the State Controller's Office, County Auditor, and RTC consultants (February-March) for adoption (April-May). The proposed budget purpose is to inform local agencies in the development of their budget adoption in June.
- Mid-Year Budget Amendment to evaluate revenue and expenditures based on project status and carryover balances from the prior fiscal year (June).
- Fall Budget Amendment incorporates the final spending for prior fiscal year and adoption of the Measure D 5-yr programming of funds (October-November).
- Other Amendments are submitted throughout the year to include unanticipated funding, revenues, or expenditures.
-

Budget, Program or Traditional: A program budget expresses the operating plan in terms of the costs of activities (programs) to be undertaken to achieve specific goals and objectives. A traditional (or object of expenditure) budget expresses the plan in terms of categories of costs of the goods or services to be used to perform specific functions.

Capital Outlay: A character of expenditure of funds to acquire land, plan and construct new buildings, expand, or modify existing buildings, and/or purchase equipment.

Carryover: The balance of an appropriation available for expenditure in years subsequent to the year of enactment. For example, if a three-year appropriation is not fully encumbered in the first year, the remaining amount is carried over to the next fiscal year.

Cash Basis: The basis of accounting that records receipts and disbursements when cash is received or paid.

Cash Statement: A statement of cash receipts and disbursements for a specified period of time. Amounts recorded as accruals, which do not affect cash, are not reflected in this statement.

Capital Improvements: Physical infrastructure improvements such as pavement, sidewalks, bridges, signals and purchases of equipment, vehicles.

COLA: see Cost of Living Adjustment

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA): Cost of living is the cost of maintaining a certain standard of living.

Expenditure: In transportation terms, this is any allowable expense associated with a project or program.

Fiscal Year (FY): The 12-month period established for budgeting purposes. The fiscal year for state and most local governments in California begins July 1 and ends June 30. The federal fiscal year begins October 1 and ends September 30.

Fund: A legal budgeting and accounting entity that provides for the segregation of moneys or other resources in the County Treasury for obligations in accordance with specific restrictions or limitations. A separate set of accounts must be maintained for each fund to show its assets, liabilities, reserves, and balance, as well as its income and expenditures.

Fund Balance: Excess of a fund's assets over its liabilities and reserves.

FY: see Fiscal Year.

ICAP: see Indirect Cost Allocation Plan

Indirect Costs: Costs which by their nature cannot be readily associated with a specific organization unit or program. Like general administrative expenses, indirect costs are distributed to the organizational unit(s) or program(s) which benefit from their incurrence.

Indirect Cost Allocation Plan (ICAP): The amount of administrative and general costs chargeable to and recovered from federal and state funds, as determined by the Department of Transportation.

Local Jurisdictions: The four cities (Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville) and the (unincorporated) County of Santa Cruz, each of which has its own elected decision-makers, planning and public works departments, and control over land-use decisions within its boundaries.

Overhead: Those elements of cost necessary in the performance of a service that are of such a nature that the amount applicable to the service cannot be determined directly. Usually, they relate to those costs that do not become an integral part of the service, such as rent, heat, light, supplies, management, or supervision. See also "Indirect Costs."

Reimbursements: An amount received as a payment for the cost of services performed, or of other expenditures made for, or on behalf of, another entity. Reimbursements represent the recovery of an expenditure. Reimbursements are available for expenditure up to the budgeted amount (scheduled in an appropriation).

Reserve: An amount of a fund balance set aside to provide for expenditures from the unencumbered balance for continuing appropriations, economic uncertainties, future apportionments, pending salary or price increase appropriations, and appropriations for capital outlay projects.

Programming, Planning, and Project Glossary and Acronym Guide

Active Transportation: Active Transportation includes any method of travel that is human powered, but most commonly refers to walking and bicycling.

Accrual basis of accounting: The basis of accounting in which revenue is recorded when earned and expenditures are recorded when obligated, regardless of when the cash is received or paid.

Active Transportation Program: State funding program established in 2013 for projects that increase bicycling and walking. Consolidates several federal and state programs - including the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)/formerly Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA), Safe Routes to Schools, and Bicycle Transportation Account.

AMBAG: see Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG): A voluntary association, formed by a Joint Powers Agreement, of Santa Cruz, San Benito and Monterey counties and the cities therein. AMBAG has been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) by the State of California.

ATP: see Active Transportation Program

Auxiliary Lane: Freeway lanes linking adjacent interchanges to reduce weaving conflicts between exiting and entering vehicles.

B2W: Bike to Work

Bikeway: Facility designated for use by bicyclists. There are three types of bicycle facilities.

Buffered Bike / Pedestrian Facility: A bicycle or pedestrian facility that has additional space between the motor vehicle travel lane and the bicycle and pedestrian facility. A buffered facility offers a more comfortable biking or walking environment.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): A broad term that, through improvements to infrastructure, vehicles, and scheduling, attempts to use buses to provide a service that is of a higher quality than an ordinary bus line.

California Coastal Trail (CCT): The CCT is a network of public trails that will extend the entire 1200-mile length of the California Coast and currently is more than half complete.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans or CT): State agency which builds and maintains state highways, some state railways, and administers multi-modal transportation programs within the state.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Legislation which requires private entities, state, and local agencies to disclose, consider and mitigate the environmental impacts of various actions.

California Transportation Commission (CTC): A board appointed by the governor and state legislature that sets spending priorities for highways and transit, reviews Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs) and allocates funds to transportation projects from several funding programs.

California Transportation Plan (CTP): A statewide, long-range transportation policy plan that provides for the movement of people, goods, services, and information. The CTP offers a blueprint to guide future transportation decisions and investments that will ensure California's ability to compete globally, provide safe and effective mobility for all persons, better link transportation and land-use decisions, improve air quality, and reduce petroleum energy consumption.

Call Box System: A network of roadside phones which link motorists directly with dispatchers to request assistance or emergency services.

Caltrans: see California Department of Transportation

Capital Improvement Program (CIP): A document which sets forth the cost, funding, and year of construction for projects over a specified number of years (typically five to seven years).

Carpool: An arrangement in which two or more people share the use of a privately-owned automobile to travel together to and from pre-arranged destinations — typically between home and work or home and school.

Carsharing: Organized short-term auto rental, often located in downtowns, near public transit stations, residential communities, and employment centers. Carsharing organizations operate fleets of rental vehicles that are available for short trips by members who pay a subscription fee, plus a per trip charge.

CHP: California Highway Patrol

Climate Adaptation: Refers to efforts by society or ecosystems to prepare for or adjust to climate change and its impacts.

CNG: see Compressed Natural Gas

Collector Streets: Streets that collect traffic.

COMMISSION: see Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Community Traffic Safety Coalition (CTSC): A coalition of agencies and individuals that promotes bicycle and pedestrian safety, particularly for school children. Operated by the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency and partially funded by the RTC.

Commute Solutions: Santa Cruz County's rideshare program which provides information about transportation alternatives to the single occupant vehicle and carpool match lists.

Commute: The trip to/from a regular location, usually work or school.

Commuter Rail: Conventional rail passenger service within a metropolitan area. Service primarily is in the morning (home-to-work) and afternoon (work-to-home) travel periods.

Commuter: A person who travels regularly between home and work or school.

Complete Streets: Streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders of all ages and abilities can safely move along and across a complete street.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG): A clean-burning alternative fuel for vehicles.

Congestion: Congestion is usually defined as travel time or delay more than what is normally experienced under free-flow traffic conditions. Congestion is typically accompanied by lower speeds, stop-and-go travel conditions, or queuing, such as behind ramp meters or heavily used intersections.

Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA): Agency responsible for coordinating specialized transportation services. In Santa Cruz County, the CTSA is Lift Line, a division of Community Bridges.

Constrained (Fiscal Constraint / Financially Constrained): Denotes a funding scenario under which projects, programs, expenditures in a plan or programming document that can be implemented within the constraints of

committed, available or reasonably available revenue sources. This document also identifies constrained projects as “Within Projected Funds.”

Corridor: A major transportation route which can consist of one or more highways, arterial streets, transit lines, rail lines and/or bikeways.

Council of Governments (COG): A voluntary organization of local governments that strives for comprehensive regional planning. AMBAG is the COG for Monterey and Santa Cruz counties.

County Shares: A formula in state law that requires a minimum return of STIP revenues to counties based on population and state highway miles.

CT: see California Department of Transportation

CTC: see California Transportation Commission

CTP: see California Transportation Plan

CTSA: see Consolidated Transportation Services Agency

CTSC: see Community Traffic Safety Coalition

DAC: see Disadvantaged Community

Dedicated Funds: Federal, state, or local funds which can be used only for specific purposes or by specific agencies.

Demand Responsive: Individualized transportation services requested by passengers, and/or where routes are developed around a group of requests, which may change daily. Oftentimes provided to people unable to use fixed-route buses by taxis or by advance reservation on paratransit vehicles.

Department of Transportation (DOT): At the federal level, the cabinet agency headed by the Secretary of Transportation that is responsible for highways, transit, aviation, and ports. The DOT includes the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and other agencies. The state DOT is Caltrans.

Disadvantaged Community (DAC): For Santa Cruz County, transportation disadvantaged communities are defined as census tracts where greater than 65% of the total population is non-white (minority areas) and/or

greater than 33% of residing families earn less than 200% of the 2015 federal poverty level (low-income areas). Poverty areas are defined as census tracts where greater than 25% of households earned less than the 2015 federal poverty level.

In FY2022/23 the RTC will be working with the community to reevaluate this definition as part of its Equity Action Plan.

Discretionary Funds: Federal, state, and local funds which can be used for a variety of purposes. Sometimes also referred to as “flexible funds.”

DMV: CA Department of Motor Vehicles

DOT: see Department of Transportation

ED: see Environmental Document

EIR: see Environmental Impact Report

Environmental Document (ED): The draft or final Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Impact Report, Finding of No Significant Impact, Environmental Assessment or Negative Declaration.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR): An assessment of the environmental effects and mitigations for a proposal or decision which, under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has been determined may significantly impact the environment.

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency: Federal agency established to develop and enforce regulations that implement environmental laws enacted by Congress to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment.

Excise Tax: Excise taxes are taxes paid when purchases are made on a specific good, such as fuel. Excise taxes are often included in the price of the product.

Expressway: A divided highway for high-speed traffic with at least partial control of access. In some areas, expressways are divided arterial roads with limits on the frequency of driveways and intersecting cross-streets. In other area, access to expressways is limited only to grade-separated interchanges, making them the full equivalent of freeways.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): The federal agency responsible for the approval of transportation projects related to the roadway system.

FHWA: see Federal Highway Administration

Freeway Service Patrol (FSP): Roving tow truck service that clears incidents on roadways during peak travel periods.

Freeway: A divided arterial highway designed for the unimpeded flow of large traffic volumes. Access to a freeway is controlled and intersection grade separations are required.

FSP: see Freeway Service Patrol

FTA: see Federal Transit Administration

FTA Section 5307: Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Urbanized Area Formula Program for public transit.

FTA Section 5310: Competitive funding to increase the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. The former New Freedom Program (SECT 5317) was folded into this program.

FTA Section 5311: Federal funding provided for rural public transportation programs.

Gas Tax: The tax applied to each gallon of fuel sold. In California this is also called the Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax or Highway Users Tax Account (HUTA).

General Plan: A policy document required of California cities and counties by state law that describes a jurisdiction's future development in general terms and includes policy statements and maps. Land use decisions must be derived from the document, which includes seven mandatory elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety.

GHG: see Greenhouse Gas

GIS - Geographic Information System: Mapping software that links information about where things are with information about what things are like. GIS allows users to examine relationships between features distributed unevenly over space, seeking patterns that may not be apparent without using advanced techniques of query, selection, analysis, and display.

Grants: Typically used to describe amounts of money received by an organization for a specific purpose but with no obligation to repay.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG): Any of the atmospheric gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect by absorbing infrared radiation produced by solar warming of the Earth's surface. Including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes: A lane on a multi-lane highway designated for use, primarily in the peak periods, free of charge by vehicles with two or more occupants or for single-occupant vehicles paying a toll.

High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes (or Diamond Lanes): A lane on a multi-lane highway designated for use, primarily in the peak periods, only by vehicles with more than one (or sometimes two) occupants – such as carpools, vanpools, shuttles, and buses. In California, motorcycles, emergency vehicles, and certain low/zero emissions vehicles may also use HOV lanes.

Highway Bridge Program (HBR): Federal funding program administered by Caltrans for bridge replacement or rehabilitation on public roads.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP): Formerly the Hazard Elimination and Safety Program (HES). Federal funding program administered by Caltrans for improving safety.

Highway: A general term which includes roads, streets, and parkways and all their appurtenances. In this document “highway” typically refers only to roads on the State Route System however (e.g. Highway 17).

HIP: Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP) federal funding program.

HOT: see High Occupancy Toll Lanes

HOV: see High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

HQ: Headquarters

HSIP: see Highway Safety Improvement Program

HSR - High Speed Rail: Railroad passenger service that, as defined by California state law, operates at maximum speeds of more than 200 miles per hour. Because of the speed, high speed rail normally operates on intercity (longer) routes.

IIJA: see Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act: The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA, P.L. 117-58) is a federal bill that includes the federal Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act and Surface Transportation Investment Act. Sometimes also referred to as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), it includes provisions related to federal-aid highway, transit, highway safety, motor carrier, research, hazardous materials, and rail programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT). Overall, the bill includes \$1.2 trillion in investments over five years, from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 through FY 2026, including \$550 billion in new spending on transportation, water and power infrastructure, and pollution cleanup, in addition to regular annual spending on infrastructure projects.

Initial Study: Under CEQA, a systematic review of a proposed project was undertaken to determine whether there is substantial evidence that it may result in one or more significant impacts.

In-Lieu Fee (ILF) Mitigation: A permittee pays a fee to the operator of the ILF program instead of conducting project-specific mitigation. An ILF program typically combines fees collected from a number of permittee's projects to finance a mitigation project.

Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC): An RTC committee consisting of representatives from planning and public works departments, transit, UCSC and Cabrillo College, transportation management associations, the Air District, and other entities who review and make recommendations about regional plans, projects, and funding.

Inter-modal: Using or addressing inter-connections between various transportation facilities or modes.

IS: see Initial Study

ITAC: see Interagency Technical Advisory Committee

Jobs/Housing Balance: The interrelationship between the location and type of housing versus the location and type of jobs in a region. This interrelationship has implications for transportation demand.

Key Destinations: Eleven locations of employment and commercial centers identified throughout Santa Cruz County for use in target analysis.

LCP: see Local Coastal Program

Level of Service (LOS): A qualitative assessment of a facility's operating conditions. The extent or degree of service provided by, or proposed to be provided by, a facility based on and related to the operational characteristics of the facility. Level of Service indicates the capacity per unit of demand for each public facility. For automobiles, LOS ratings typically range from LOS A, which represents free-flow conditions, to LOS F, which is characterized by heavy congestion, stop-and-go traffic, and long queues forming behind breakdown points.

Light Rail: A passenger transportation system of self-propelled vehicles that operate over steel rails located in the street, on an aerial structure, or on a separated right of way.

LNG: see Liquefied Natural Gas

Local Coastal Program (LCP): Local Coastal Programs are basic planning tools used by local governments to guide development in the coastal zone, in partnership with the Coastal Commission.

Local Streets: Streets that provide direct access to adjacent residential areas, on which through traffic is generally discouraged.

Local Transportation Commission (LTC): Established under SB 325 to allocate Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues and designated under AB 69 as the regional transportation planning agency (RTPA). The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is the LTC for Santa Cruz County.

LOS: see Level of Service/Level of Service Standard

Low Emission Vehicles: Vehicles using alternative fuel sources which emit little or no tailpipe exhaust, e.g., electric, hybrid electric, hydrogen, and fuel cell.

LTC: see Local Transportation Commission

LTF: Local Transportation Funds. See Transportation Development Act

Mass Transit: A common carrier service provided for transporting passengers on established routes, with fixed schedules, published rates of fares. Includes buses and rail.

MBSST Network: see Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network

Measure D: The 2016 transportation ballot measure approved by over two-thirds of Santa Cruz County voters in November 2016 which generates revenues from a half-percent transaction and use tax (sales tax).

Metro: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): A federally designated agency responsible for monitoring and planning associated with regional employment, residential and transportation. AMBAG is the MPO for Santa Cruz County as part of the three-county Monterey Bay region.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP): The federally mandated transportation plan for the tri-county Monterey Bay region, composed of transportation projects from the transportation plans from Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito counties prepared by AMBAG. With SB375, also includes the regional Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).

Mitigation: Project or program intended to offset impacts of a transportation project on an existing natural resource such as a stream, wetland, and/or endangered species.

Mitigation Banking: The preservation, enhancement, restoration or creation of a wetland, stream, or habitat conservation area which offsets, or compensates for, expected adverse impacts to similar nearby ecosystems.

Mixed Flow Lane: Travel lanes shared by autos, trucks, buses, and motorcycles (as compared to restricted lanes, such as HOV lanes).

Mixed Use: Combining commercial, office, and/or residential land uses to reduce travel distances and facilitate walking. Examples include multi-story buildings containing businesses and retail stores on the lower floors, and homes on the upper floors.

MMLOS: see Multimodal Level of Service

Mode Split or Mode Share: The proportion of total travel in each travel mode.

Mode: Method of travel, e.g., private automobile, walking, bicycle, transit, airplane, bus, train.

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network: A planned recreation, transportation and interpretive pathway that links existing and new trail segments into a continuous coastal trail around the Monterey Bay, from Lover's Point in Monterey County to the San Mateo County line in Santa Cruz County.

MPO: see Metropolitan Planning Organization

MTD: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

MTIS: see Major Transportation Investment Study

Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS): *A way to measure the degree to which street design and operations meets the traveling needs of each user type – automobile, bus, pedestrian, bicycle, etc.*

Multi-modal: Using or addressing more than one transportation mode.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Federal law identifying environmental disclosure requirements. Required to be followed on projects using federal funds.

National Highway System (NHS): A federally established national road system. In Santa Cruz County, the NHS includes sections of Highway 1, Highway 17, Highway 129, Highway 152, 41st Avenue, Capitola Road, Freedom Boulevard, Graham Hill Road, Mt. Hermon Road, Ocean Street, Soquel Avenue, and other major arterials.

NB: Northbound

ND: see Negative Declaration

Negative Declaration (ND): A determination based upon an initial study that there is no substantial evidence that a proposed project may result in a significant effect.

NEPA: see National Environmental Policy Act

NHS: see National Highway System

O&M: Operations and Maintenance. The range of activities and services provided by the transportation system and for the upkeep and preservation of the existing system.

Obligate: The act of securing commitment from Federal or State government (e.g., FHWA or Caltrans) to pay or reimburse entities for a project's eligible costs. Many funding programs require a project sponsor to obligate funds in a timely manner or lose the funds.

Off-Peak Period: The time of day when the lowest concentration of travel is using a transportation facility. These times are generally before 6 a.m., midday, and after evening commute hours.

Open Space: Generally understood as any area of land or water which is not developed for urbanized uses. In General Plans areas may be designated as Open Space for the purposes of the preservation or managed production of natural resources, outdoor recreation, or the promotion of public health and safety.

Operations: On-going activities necessary to manage and perform services for a system, such as labor costs. For transit, costs include fuel, salaries, and replacement parts.

Overall Work Program (OWP): Budgetary document describing proposed activities for the upcoming fiscal year, including those required by federal and state law.

OWP: see Overall Work Program

PA&ED: see Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED)

Paratransit: Term used to describe transportation services which operate on flexible routes and/or provide demand-responsive service and is most frequently used by elderly and disabled passengers unable to take fixed route transit. Generally, vans, small buses, or taxis are used to provide this service. The ADA-mandated service in our region is Para Cruz and is provided by METRO. Another main provider is Community Bridges Lift Line.

Park-and-Ride Lot: A facility where individuals can meet to utilize carpools, vanpools, and transit to continue traveling to their destinations.

Parking Management: Strategies which use parking supply or pricing as an incentive or disincentive to affect the demand for parking. Preferred parking for carpools is an example of a parking management incentive, and charging parking fees is an example of a disincentive.

Passenger Miles: The total number of passengers carried by a transit system, multiplied by the number of miles each passenger travels. Passenger miles are normally measured on a daily or annual basis.

Pavement Condition Index (PCI): A numerical index between 0 and 100 used to indicate the general condition of a pavement with 0 representing the worst possible condition and 100 representing the best possible condition.

Peak Periods: The hours during which the greatest traffic volumes or highest transit use occur.

Performance Based Planning: An approach that uses performance measures to support investment decisions to help achieve desired outcomes.

Performance Measures (or Evaluation Measures or Targets): Objective, quantifiable measures used to evaluate the performance of the transportation system, and to determine how well-planned improvements to the system are achieving established objectives.

PID: see Project Initiation Document

Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E): A phase or milestone in the life cycle of a project following PA&ED and preceding construction; includes the preparation of construction contract documents, the acquisition of right of way, and the securing of permits.

“Planned” Projects: Projects on the Constrained/within projected funds RTP list which have not previously been approved for funding by the RTC. Projects are expected to be funded through 2035.

PM: see Post Mile

Post Mile: The mileage measured in statute miles from a county line or the beginning of a route to another county line or the ending of the route. Each post mile along a route in a county is a unique location on the State Highway System.

Primary Transportation Network: Includes state highways, principal arterials, and rail line in Santa Cruz County.

Program: *verb-* to assign funds to a project.

Programs and Projects: Activities of an organization grouped on the basis of common objectives. Programs and projects are comprised of elements, which can be further divided into components and tasks.

Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR): Environmental review process used to evaluate the potential environmental effects of large-scale plans or programs.

“Programmed” Projects: Projects on the Constrained/within projected funds list for which funding has already been approved by the RTC. These projects will be initiated and/or completed by 2019.

Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED): A major phase in the life cycle of a project following the Project Initiation Document and Programming but preceding PS&E.

Project Initiation Document (PID): an engineering document or technical report that documents the scope, cost, and schedule of a project.

Project Study Report (PSR): A preliminary engineering report that documents agreements on the scope, a set of reasonable and feasible alternatives, the schedule, and the estimated cost of a project so that the project can be included in a future State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Proposition 1A: Bond measure passed by voters in November 2008 authorizing \$9.95 billion to the California High-Speed Rail Authority to construct the core segments of the rail line from San Francisco to the Los Angeles area.

Proposition 1B: Bond measure passed by voters in November 2006 authorizing \$27 billion in bonds distributed to highway, local road, and transit projects through a combination of competitive and formula programs.

Proposition 116: Bond measure passed by voters in June 1990 providing \$1.9 billion in funds primarily for rail projects, but also included funds for paratransit vehicles, bicycle facilities, and ferries. \$11 million was earmarked for Santa Cruz County rail projects.

PS&E: see Plans, Specifications and Estimates

PSR: see Project Study Report

Rail Transit: Public transportation services provided on a fixed rail line, e.g., light rail.

Ramp Metering: Electronic traffic control devices located at freeway access points to meter the entry of vehicles onto the freeway. The goal is to help optimize the movement of persons and vehicles.

Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP): See Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG).

Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX): Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)/Regional Surface Transportation Program funds (federal) exchanged for state funding.

Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP): The state required a multi-year capital improvement program for transportation projects using state and federal funds. The RTIP for Santa Cruz County is adopted by the SCCRTC and is submitted to the California Transportation Commission for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and to AMBAG for inclusion in the FTIP.

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): The state-mandated long-range plan that acts as a blueprint to guide transportation development. Developed by regional transportation planning agencies, it includes a policy, action, and financial elements. The SCCRTC prepares and adopts the RTP for Santa Cruz County. The RTP must be consistent with other local plans.

Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA): Agencies designated by the State of California to provide regional transportation planning and make funding decisions, including preparation of the Regional Transportation

Plan and the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is the designated RTPA for Santa Cruz County.

Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM): A computer software program using demographic data to estimate the transportation impacts of population growth and land use decisions on the transportation system, and to assess the utility of transportation projects.

Reverse Commute: Travel in the direction opposite to the main flow of peak period commute traffic.

Ridership: The number of transit users, usually reported as a yearly total or as the average for a normal workday.

Rideshare: Alternatives to driving alone, including carpooling, vanpooling, taking the bus, bicycling, walking, and telecommuting.

Right-of-Way (ROW): The area of property owned by a public or private entity used for transportation purposes.

ROE: Right of Entry

ROW: see Right-of-Way

RPA: see Rural Planning Assistance

RSTP: see Regional Surface Transportation Program

RSTPX: see Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange

RTC: see Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

RTDM: see Regional Travel Demand Model

RTIP: see Regional Transportation Improvement Program

RTP: see Regional Transportation Plan

RTPA: see Regional Transportation Planning Agency

Rural Planning Assistance (RPA): Funds awarded by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) annually for use by the Regional Transportation Planning Agency.

Safe Routes to Schools: Initiatives, such as education, encouragement campaigns, and infrastructure improvements, that make it easier and safer for children to walk and bicycle to school.

SAFE: see Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC or RTC): Transportation policy, planning and funding body designated as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), Local Transportation Commission (LTC), Rail/Trail Authority and Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) for Santa Cruz County.

Santa Cruz METRO: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD or METRO): The public transit operator for Santa Cruz County. Also known as Santa Cruz Metro.

SB: Southbound

Council of San Benito County Governments (SBCOG or San Benito COG): The Council of Governments is San Benito County's regional transportation planning agency.

SB 375 (2008): Established to implement the state's greenhouse gas (GHG) emission-reduction goals, as set forth by AB 32, in the sector of cars and light trucks. Requires California's Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop regional reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and requires MPO's to develop "Sustainable Community Strategies" (SCS) to reduce emissions from vehicle use through integrated land use and transportation planning.

SBCOG: see Council of San Benito County Governments

SCCRTC: see Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Scenario Planning: A decision making tool to help identify the projects that are prioritized in a transportation plan. Scenario planning allows a community to evaluate the likely outcomes of a number of scenarios to explore possible benefits and costs of alternative futures.

SCMTD: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

SCS: see Sustainable Communities Strategy

Self-Help Counties: A term used to describe counties that have enacting local voter-approved funding mechanisms -- such as half-cent sales taxes -- to pay for transportation improvements.

Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE): As the designated SAFE for Santa Cruz County, the SCCRTC owns and manages the call box system on local state highways and other motorist aid programs. Funded by \$1-per-year vehicle registration fee.

SHOPP: see State Highway Operations and Protection Program

Signal Preemption: A system used for emergency and public transit vehicles to change signal phasing from red to green allowing for more rapid crosstown access.

SIP: see Strategic Implementation Plan for Measure D

SOV - Single Occupant Vehicle: Privately operated vehicle that contains only one driver or occupant.

Specialized Transportation: Often used synonymously with “paratransit,” refers to vehicles and programs operated primarily for the elderly and persons living with disabilities. Service is generally provided door-to-door in vans or automobiles on a semi-fixed route or demand- responsive basis.

STA: see State Transit Assistance

State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP): State plan and funding program to maintain the operational integrity and safety of the state highway system. It includes primarily rehabilitation, safety, and operational improvement projects.

State Transit Assistance (STA): State funding program for mass transit operations and capital projects. As of March 2010, funds derived from statewide sales tax on diesel fuel, distributed based on population.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP): A multi-year program of transportation projects to be funded with various state and federal revenues. Adopted biennially by the California Transportation Commission (CTC), based on projects proposed in RTIPs and from Caltrans (ITIP). Funds distributed to regions based 75% on population and 25% on highway miles.

Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS): Database of collisions managed by the California Highway Patrol.

STIP: see State Transportation Improvement Program

STP: see Surface Transportation Program

Strategic Implementation Plan for Measure D: The SIP serves as the guiding policy and programming document for the implementation of Regional Measure D projects.

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG): A flexible federal funding program initially established by ISTEA and distributed to regions based on population formula to fund local streets and roads, bicycle, pedestrian, highway, and transit projects. Previously known as the Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP).

Sustainability: Sustainability is defined as balancing economic, environmental and equity interests. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations.

Sustainable Community Strategies (SCS): An element of the MTP, as required by SB 375, that demonstrates how development patterns and the transportation network, policies, and programs can work together to achieve the state's targets for reducing regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from cars and light trucks in a region.

System Preservation: The maintenance of the existing transportation system.

TAMC: see Transportation Agency for Monterey County

TCRP: Transportation Congestion Relief Program

TDA: see Transportation Development Act

TDM: see Transportation Demand Management

Telecommute (or Telework): Conducting some or all daily work activities from a location other than the normal worksite, usually from home or remote site, and often with the assistance of telecommunications equipment. Employees are sometimes referred to as teleworkers or e-workers.

TIA: see Transportation Improvement Area

TIP: Transportation Improvement Program

TCAA: Transportation Corridor Alternatives Analysis

TMC: Traffic Management Center. Monitors roadways using closed circuit cameras, loop detectors and information from the CHP and field staff. Posts and updates messages on traffic conditions on various systems, including the 511-telephone number, road signs, and websites.

TOD: see Transit-Oriented Development

TOS: see Traffic Operations System

TPP: see Transit Priority Project

Traffic Operations System (TOS): A system of highway communications equipment to monitor traffic conditions and relay traveler information in real time.

Transit: Travel by bus, rail, or other vehicle, either publicly or privately owned, that provides general or specialized service on a regular or continuing basis.

Transit Dependent: An individual who because of age, income, physical/mental condition, geographic location, or personal choice, does not have a private vehicle available and relies on transit for his/her transportation needs.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): Residential and employment growth that occurs near existing and planned public transit facilities.

Transportation Agency for Monterey County: The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) serves as Monterey County's regional transportation planning agency and is a state designated agency responsible for planning and financial programming of transportation projects.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): Strategies to reduce demand by automobiles on the transportation system, by promoting telecommuting, flextime, bicycling, walking, transit use, staggered work hours, and ridesharing.

Transportation Development Act (TDA): State law enacted in 1971. Local TDA funds (or Local Transportation Funds – LTF) are generated from a one-quarter of one percent state sales tax. Revenues are allocated annually to support transportation planning and administration, transit, transportation for the elderly/disabled, bikeway and pedestrian projects, based on state law and RTC rules and regulations.

Transportation Disabled: People who cannot use public transportation easily or at all because of physical, emotional, or mental limitations.

Transportation Disadvantaged: People who have significant unmet transportation needs. May include people experiencing poverty, people experiencing language barriers, people of color, older adults, youth, and people with disabilities who experience a disproportionately small share of benefits from transportation investments, particularly because traditional transportation investments prioritize vehicles.

Trip: A one-way journey that proceeds from an origin to a destination by a single type of vehicular transportation.

TSP: see Transit Signal Priority

U.S. DOT: United States Department of Transportation. The federal agency responsible for highways, mass transit, aviation and ports and headed by the Secretary of Transportation. Includes the FHWA, FTA and FAA, among others.

UCS/UCIS: Unified Corridors Investment Study

UCSC: University of California, Santa Cruz

Unconstrained: Denotes a funding scenario not constrained by existing funding assumptions. New funds, above and beyond existing or anticipated revenues, would be needed to fund “unconstrained” projects in this RTP.

Unmet Transit Needs Findings: TDA funds can be used for local streets and roads in smaller counties only if the RTPA in their jurisdiction makes a finding that public transit service and operations in the county have no unmet needs that are reasonable to meet. RTPAs must hold public hearings prior to making such a determination.

Urbanized Area: An area with a population of 50,000 or more as designated by the U.S. Census.

Vanpool: A group of seven to fifteen people traveling together to work or school in a van at set times. Many vans are leased from companies which include insurance, emergency services and maintenance in the monthly rental fees.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): The term used for the total number of miles traveled by motor vehicles within a specified region during a particular time period.

Vehicle Occupancy Rate: Also known as Average Vehicle Occupancy or Ridership; the number of persons per vehicle on a given road at a given time without distinguishing trip purpose.

Vehicle Trip: A single vehicle movement from the beginning of travel to its destination, in a vehicle that is motor-driven (e.g., automobiles, motorcycles, trucks, buses, and vans).

ZEV: Zero Emission Vehicle

VMT: see Vehicle Miles Traveled

Walkability: A measure of how friendly an area is to walk. Walkability has many health, environmental, and economic benefits. Factors influencing walkability include the presence or absence and quality of footpaths, sidewalks or other pedestrian rights-of-way, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, building accessibility, and safety, among others.

WB: Westbound



EXHIBIT B

MEASURE D BUDGET-PROPOSED AMENDMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2026

PROPOSED DECEMBER 4, 2025

Italo Jimenez
ijimenez@scrtc.org

Contents

Measure D Budget	2
Introduction	2
Measure D Fiduciary Fund	4
Measure D Administration and Implementation	5
Measure D Transit – Direct Allocations	9
Measure D Regional Projects	10
Measure D Highway Corridors.....	10
Measure D Active Transportation	14
Measure D Rail Corridor.....	18
Measure D San Lorenzo Valley Highway 9 Corridor Improvements.....	20
Measure D Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing	22
Measure D Summary and Fund Balances	23
Budget Glossary and Acronym Guide	26
Programming, Planning, and Project Glossary and Acronym Guide.....	29

Measure D Budget

Introduction

Measure D is a 1/2 cent transaction and use tax measure passed in November 2016, to improve, operate and maintain Santa Cruz County's transportation network through an Expenditure Plan.

As the administrator of Measure D, the RTC allocates, administers, and oversees the expenditure of all Measure D revenues which are not directly allocated by formula annually to other agencies, consistent with the Expenditure Plan and five-year program of projects which are updated at least annually following a public hearing.

In accordance with the Ordinance, a separate fund for all Measure D revenues was established and an annual independent fiscal audit of the financial statements, including compliance with the requirements of the Expenditure Plan, is conducted. The Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee reviews audits and expenditures from the prior fiscal year for all recipient agencies and prepares an annual report.

The distribution and budgeting of the Expenditure Plan are accounted for in One Solution, the Santa Cruz County Auditor Controller's accounting program. General Ledgers are established to track revenues and expenditures separately and by fund purpose for each investment category, a specific project or program.

Expenditures for Measure D programs and projects are paid by RTC or other agencies and reimbursed from Measure D. These reimbursements are shown as revenue consistent with the rules of governmental accounting.

After allocating an amount to the RTC for the cost of administration and implementation of Measure D, funds are distributed by formulas set forth in the voter-approved Measure D Expenditure Plan to five investment categories as follows:

Direct Allocations

1. Neighborhood (cities and county, excluding \$500,000 annually allocated to Highway 9 & Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing) – 30%
2. Transit/Paratransit (Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District and Community Bridges)– 20%

Regional Projects

3. Highway Corridor – 25%
4. Active Transportation – 17%
5. Rail Corridor – 8%
6. San Lorenzo Valley Highway 9 Corridor Improvements (from Neighborhood Category) - \$10 Million (over 30 years)
7. Highway 17 Wildlife Corridor (from Neighborhood Category) - \$5 Million (over 30 years)

While the Measure D budget reflects anticipated distributions and expenditures of Measure D revenues, Measure D typically is used to fund a portion of the total project cost. Leveraged grants and other funds used to fund regional projects or phases of projects implemented by the RTC are reflected in the RTC Budget.

Measure D Fiduciary Fund

GL Key 729000

Measure D revenues are collected by the California Department of Tax & Fee Administration (CDTFA) and distributed to the RTC each month by wire transfer to the Santa Cruz County treasury into the Measure D general fund and distributed to the separate fiduciary fund for each of the five investment categories. Revenues are net of CDTFA fees. We do not expect interest income to be earned in the general fund, all revenues will be distributed to investment categories as soon as practicable.

Measure D Fiduciary Deposit		FY 2025/26	FY 2025/26	Difference	Difference %	Note
	Object	Approved 4/3/25	Proposed 10/9/25			
<u>Revenues Received from CDTFA</u>						
1	Measure D	40186	27,666,801	27,666,801	-	0.00% January 2025 estimate from HdL
2	Interest	40430	250	250	-	0.00%
3	Total Revenues	27,667,051	27,667,051	-	0.00%	
4						
5	Admin and Impl Alloc	75381	844,741	932,772	88,031	10.42% Carryforward
6						
7	<u>Distributions to Investment Categories per Ordinance</u>					
8	Neighborhood 30%*	75382	8,046,618	8,020,209	(26,409)	-0.33%
9	Highway Corridors 25%	75383	6,705,515	6,683,507	(22,008)	-0.33%
10	Transit/Paratransit 20%	75384	5,364,412	5,346,806	(17,606)	-0.33%
11	Active Transp 17%	75385	4,559,750	4,544,785	(14,965)	-0.33%
12	Rail Corridor 8%	75386	2,145,765	2,138,722	(7,043)	-0.33%
13	Total Distributions	26,822,060	26,734,029	(88,031)	-0.33%	
14						
15	To/(From Reserves):	250	250	-		
16	Ending Fund Balance (estimate):	250	250	-		
17						
18	*Includes Highways 9 & 17					

Note: Revenues are net of CDTFA fees. We do not expect interest income to be earned in the general fund, all revenues will be distributed to investment categories as soon as practicable.

Measure D Administration and Implementation

GL Key 729100

Expenditures include allocated salaries, benefits, and overhead, materials and supplies, and consultant services including sales and use tax forecast, auditing of tax receipts, fiscal audit, and financial advisory services for administration and overall implementation of the expenditure plan, as well as staffing and reports for the Taxpayer Oversight Committee. The Measure D ordinance limits salary and benefits for RTC administration to 1% of net revenues. The indirect costs are calculated using the amount allowed per the ordinance.

The RTC's consultant regularly prepares near-term forecasts for Measure D funds, which staff uses to update long-term projections and cash flow models, which were originally included in the Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP), first adopted by the RTC in February 2020. In FY 2023/24 staff evaluated project funding needs and updated the SIP, including the Measure D cash flow model. In future years, if the RTC decides to bond or use other financing tools to expedite implementation of the Expenditure Plan, that will be reflected in future budgets.

Measure D Administration & Implementation		FY 2025/26 Approved	FY 2025/26 Proposed	Difference	Note
GL Key 729100	Object	4/3/25	10/9/25		
Measure D	40186	844,741	932,772	88,031	Carryover from FY 24/25
Interest	40430	1,000	1,000	-	
	Total Revenues	845,741	933,772	88,031	
 Salaries, Benefits & Overhead					
Admin Labor Costs	51070	276,668	327,530	50,862	Carryover from FY 24/25
Impl Labor Costs	51070	68,754	73,492	4,738	
Overhead (indirect)	62354	365,190	382,121	16,932	Carryover from FY 24/25
	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	710,612	783,143	72,532	
 Services & Supplies					
General Supplies & Expenses	62223	5,000	5,000	-	
Accounting & Audit	62301	1,000	16,500	15,500	
Professional & Special Services	62381	125,629	125,629	-	
Adv & Promo Materials	62801	2,500	2,500	-	
	Total Services & Supplies	134,129	149,629	15,500	
	Total Expenditures:	844,741	932,772	88,032	
 To/(From) Reserves:					
Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):		1,000	1,000	(1)	
Ending Fund Balance (estimate):		-	458,936	458,936	
		1,000	459,936	458,936	

Measure D Neighborhood– Direct Allocations

GL Key 729200

Measure D revenues are transferred to the respective GL Key for disbursement directly to the recipient agency using the following GL Keys each month by Journal Entry, electronic funds transfer or check.

Neighborhood funds are first allocated to Highway 9 & 17, then by formulas set forth in the Measure D Expenditure Plan to the cities and the County of Santa Cruz to address transportation needs on local roads and trails.

Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley Corridor GL Key 729202: Transportation projects to improve travel for residents of San Lorenzo Valley (page 18).

Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing GL Key 729203: Construction of a safe passage for wildlife to cross under Highway 17 (page 20).

As stated in Measure D, funds will be distributed at least quarterly to cities and the County of Santa Cruz based on their proportional share of the countywide population (29%), lane miles of roadway (39%) and the site where the measure revenue from the transactions and use tax is generated (32%). Population, road mile and tax site generation will be updated each year based on the latest available data. Site of tax revenue generation is estimated from existing T&U taxes in the county. Each year after the RTC obtains the data specific to this T&U tax adjustments will be made based on actual data of site of tax revenue generation.

Measure D Neighborhood Fund GL Key 729200			FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 10/9/25	Difference	Note
	Object					
1	Measure D Funds	40186	8,046,618	8,020,209	(26,409)	
2	Interest	40430	500	500	-	
3	Total Revenues		8,047,118	8,020,709	(26,409)	
4						
5	Direct Allocations:					
6	Highway 9 Corr Improv	62856	333,333	333,333	-	
7	Highway 17 Wildlife Cross	62888	166,667	166,667	-	
8	City of Capitola	75203	361,926	360,659	(1,267)	
9	City of Santa Cruz	75204	1,685,042	1,679,145	(5,897)	
10	City of Scotts Valley	75205	372,162	370,860	(1,302)	
11	City of Watsonville	75206	1,208,899	1,204,668	(4,231)	
12	County of Santa Cruz	75303	3,918,590	3,904,876	(13,714)	
13	Total Direct Allocations		8,046,619	8,020,209	(26,410)	
14						
15	To/(From) Reserves:		499	500	1	

Measure D Transit – Direct Allocations

GL Key 729400

Measure D allocates 20% of the revenue to two (2) transit providers as a direct allocation to serve seniors and people with disabilities. 80% of the transit funds (16% of net Measure D revenues) are allocated to Santa Cruz METRO, and 20% (4% of net Measure D revenues) to Community Bridges Lift Line for paratransit and public transit for seniors and people with disabilities.

Meas D Transit GL Key 729400		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 10/9/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Measure D	40186	5,364,412	5,346,806	(17,606)
2	Interest	40430	200	200	-
3	Total Revenues	5,364,612	5,347,006	(17,606)	
4					
5	<u>Direct Allocation to Service Providers:</u>				
6	Santa Cruz Metro	75302	4,291,530	4,277,445	(14,085)
7	Community Bridges	75365	1,072,882	1,069,361	(3,521)
8	Total Distributions	5,364,412	5,346,806	(17,606)	
9					
10	Unappropriated Revenues:	200	200	-	

Measure D Regional Projects

The RTC is responsible for regional projects and programs funded by Measure D. Regional projects and programs include the Highway Corridor, Active Transportation/Trail Program, the Rail Corridor, the San Lorenzo Valley/Highway 9 Corridor (Neighborhood Project), and the Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing (Neighborhood Project). The RTC updates the Measure D 5-year program of projects (5-year Plan) for each regional program or project at least annually to program funds to specific projects. The budget reflects new funds for FY 2024-25, as approved in the 5-year Plan, and anticipated carryover from prior years.

Measure D Highway Corridors

GL Key 729300

Measure D allocates 25% of revenue to highway corridor programs to improve the safety and efficiency of major highway corridors in Santa Cruz County.

Highway Corridors funds programs and projects including:

- Cruz 511 county traveler information services
- Safe on 17
- Freeway Service Patrol
- Auxiliary lanes between exits and bus-on-shoulder facilities on Highway 1
- Bicycle and pedestrian bridges over Highway 1

The budget includes:

Freeway Safety Patrol towing: A slightly higher proportion of the Freeway Safety Patrol program cost is expected to be covered by Measure D due to rising costs for the towing operator.

Cruz511 TDM: Expenditures include continued implementation of Go Santa Cruz County/Ride Amigos rideshare platform.

41st to Soquel Aux Lane: Construction of auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder facilities between 41st Avenue and Soquel Drive (Phase 1) and a bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing at Chanticleer Avenue started in 2023 and will continue through 2025.

State Park to Bay/Porter: Construction of the Highway 1 auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder project between the State Park Drive and Bay-Porter interchanges, including a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge over Highway 1 at Mar Vista Drive and replacement of the Capitola Avenue overcrossing, started in FY 2023-24 and will continue through 2025.

Freedom-State Park: During FY 2024/25 the RTC will continue final design and right-of-way for Highway 1 auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder facilities between Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive interchanges. The project also includes the 1.25-mile Segment 12 of the Coastal Rail Trail from State Park Drive to Rio Del Mar Boulevard along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. Design is funded by a combination of STIP, RSTPX, and Measure D and the project is scheduled to be construction-ready in 2026.

Measure D Highway Corridor GL Key 729300		FY 2025/26 Amended 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 10/9/25	Difference	Note
Object					
1 Revenues					
2 Measure D	40186	6,705,515	6,683,507	(22,008)	
3 Interest	40430	50,000	50,000	-	
4 Loan Proceeds	42506	-	-	-	
5 Total Revenues		6,755,515	6,733,507	(22,008)	
6					
7 Program and Project Expenditures					
8 <u>Freeway Service Patrol (FSP)</u>					
9 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	-	4,438	4,438	
10 Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	-	4,103	4,103	Carryover from FY 24/25
11 Salaries, Benefits & Overhead		-	8,540	8,540	
12 Supplies	62223	4,000	4,000	-	
13 Legal Fees	62359	1,000	1,000	-	
14 Contingency/Special Exp	62856	5,000	5,000	-	
15 Towing	62893	221,000	221,000	-	
16 Transportation/Travel/Education	62914	-	-	-	
17 Subtotal Services & Supplies		231,000	231,000	-	
18 <u>SAFE</u>					
19 CHP	75280	50,000	50,000	-	
20 Subtotal Services & Supplies		50,000	50,000	-	
21 <u>Cruz 511</u>					
22 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	63,921	57,674	(6,247)	
23 Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	67,579	73,826	6,247	
24 Salaries, Benefits & Overhead		131,500	131,500	-	
25 Subscriptions - Data Collecting	62222	2,000	2,000	-	
26 Website Maintenance and Tech Sup	62381	8,000	8,000	-	
27 Commute Manager	62381	29,000	29,000	-	
28 Transportation Demand Management	62381	60,500	60,500	-	
29 Subtotal Services & Supplies		99,500	99,500	-	
30 <u>41st to Soquel Aux Lanes & Bike/Ped Xing</u>					
31 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	48,609	100,787	52,178	
32 Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	51,391	93,188	41,797	
33 Salaries, Benefits & Overhead		100,000	193,975	93,975	
34 Legal Fees	62359	1,000	868	(132)	
35 Engineering & Project Management	62381	25,000	28,302	3,302	
36 Pub Info, materials, & meetings	62381	16,000	16,000	-	
37 Right of Way Capital and Support	62856	130,000	230,115	100,115	
38 Construction & Contingency	62856	3,393,382	7,268,228	3,874,846	
39 Subtotal Services & Supplies		3,565,382	7,543,513	3,978,131	

Measure D Highway Corridor - Continued

	Object	FY 2025/26 Amended 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 10/9/25	Difference		
1	<u>State Park Dr to Bay Porter Aux Lanes and Mar Vista Overcrossing:</u>					
2	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	72,914	111,149	38,236	
3	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	77,086	102,769	25,682	
4	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	150,000	213,918	63,918		
5	Legal Fees	62359	20,000	24,952	4,952	Costs based on project status and schedule
6	Engineering & Project Management	62381	50,000	126,264	76,264	
7	Pub Info, materials, & meetings	62381	-	-	-	
8	Right of Way Support & Capital	62856	-	-	-	
9	Contingency & Supplies	62856	500,000	979,373	479,373	
10	Construction Capital	62856	5,835,000	15,982,502	10,147,502	
11	Subtotal Services & Supplies	6,405,000	17,113,091	10,708,091		
12	<u>Freedom to State Park Dr Aux Lanes:</u>					
13	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	121,523	219,839	98,317	
14	Allocated Overhead (indirect costs)	62354	128,477	203,264	74,786	
15	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	250,000	423,103	173,103		
16	Legal Fees	62359	50,000	50,000	-	
16	Engineering Consultant	62381	1,200,000	2,574,764	1,374,764	
17	Project Management Consultant	62381	80,000	78,504	(1,496)	
18	Pub Info, materials, & meetings	62381	15,000	25,000	10,000	
19	Right of Way Support & Capital	62856	5,883,000	2,891,558	(2,991,442)	
20	Contingency & Supplies	62856	1,068,632	66,853	(1,001,779)	
21	Subtotal Services & Supplies	8,296,632	5,686,679	(2,609,953)		
22						
23	Interprogram loan to Highway 17	95046	-	1,141,776	1,141,776	
24						
25	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	631,500	971,037	339,537		
26	Subtotal Services & Supplies	18,647,514	30,723,783	12,076,269		
27						
28	Total Expenditures:	19,279,014	32,836,596	13,557,582		
29						
30	To/(From) Reserves:	(12,523,499)	(26,103,089)	(13,579,590)		
31	Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	15,643,165	15,643,165	-		
32	Ending Fund Balance (estimate):	3,119,666	(10,459,924)	(13,579,590)		Future Borrowing needs of FY25-26

Measure D Active Transportation

GL Key 729500

Measure D allocates 17% of revenue for Active Transportation by means of investing in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST), otherwise known as the Coastal Rail Trail, for people walking and bicycling along the coast in Santa Cruz County.

Projects for the Monterey Bay Scenic Sanctuary Trail include:

- Construction of bicycle and pedestrian trails
- New bike and pedestrian bridges
- Adding lighting and security features
- Keeping the trail safe and clean for active use
- Storm and drainage management
- Leveraging matching state and federal grants

Maintenance and property management for the future trail corridor, including vegetation control; tree maintenance; trash and dumping abatement; encampments; drainage maintenance and repairs; addressing encroachments; and lease management. RTC also initiated work to secure environmental permits to support maintenance activities.

RTC staff provide technical support and stakeholder coordination for development of the MBSST/Coastal Rail Trail projects. Consultants are hired for technical assistance when needed.

Significant changes from the prior fiscal year include:

Segment 5: The 5.4-mile section from Wilder Ranch to Panther/Yellowbank Beach is fully funded for construction by the Federal Land Access Program (FLAP). The 2.1-mile section from Panther/Yellowbank Beach to Davenport has also been awarded FLAP funding.

FLAP funding for construction of Phase 1, and Phase 2, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Central Federal Lands Division approved an early allocation of programmed funds in FY 2023/24 to begin

construction of Phase I in FY 2024/25. The FHWA Central Federal Lands Division will lead implement the project construction. Therefore, FLAP funds will not run through the RTC budget.

Segments 8 and 9: The City of Santa Cruz, in partnership with the County of Santa Cruz, expect to complete preliminary design and environmental review of Segments 8 & 9 of the Coastal Rail Trail between the Santa Cruz Wharf and 17th Avenue (2.5 miles) in FY 2024/25. Using Measure D funds as a match, the City of Santa Cruz secured \$35.7 million in Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds from the state to fully fund construction. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2026.

Segments 10 and 11: The County of Santa Cruz in partnership with the City of Capitola, expects to complete preliminary design and environmental review of Segments 10 & 11 of the trail from 17th Ave to State Park Drive (4.7 miles) in FY 2023-24. Using Measure D as matching funds, the County of Santa Cruz secured \$67.6 million in Active Transportation Program (ATP) funds from the state to fund construction of the project. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2026.

Segment 12: This segment is being implemented as part of the Highway 1 Freedom-State Park project, environmental and initial design and right-of-way acquisition work done in FY 2023-24 and will continue through FY 2024-25. The environmental component of the project is underway, and the right-of-way and final design components will continue in FY 2023-24; the project is expected to be construction-ready in 2025.

Segment 18: 1.2 miles of Coastal Rail Trail. Phase I (Ohlone Parkway to the Watsonville Slough Trail Network trailhead) was completed in summer 2021. Phase II & III of Segment 18 are combined with development of the RTC's Electric Passenger Rail Transit Project.

Measure D		FY 2025/26	FY 2025/26	Difference	Note
Active Transportation		Approved	Proposed		
GL Key 729500	Object	4/3/25	10/9/25		
1	Revenues				
2	Measure D	40186	4,559,750	4,544,785	(14,965)
3	Interest	40430	10,000	10,000	-
4	Other Revenue	42386	-	-	-
5	Total Revenues	4,569,750	4,554,785	(14,965)	
6	Expenditures				
7	MBSST Corridor and Electric Transit & Trail RTC Oversight				
8	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	413,697	422,993	9,295
9	Allocated Overhead (indirect)	62354	382,505	391,099	8,595
10	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	796,202	814,092	17,890	
11	Services and Supplies:				
12	Corridor encroach & maint	61845	1,655,218	1,325,079	(330,139)
13	Legal Fees	62359	-	120,000	120,000
14	Technical Assistance	62381	3,912	98,912	95,000
15	Electric Rail Transit & Trail	62381	-	350,000	350,000 Carryover from FY 24/25
16	Subtotal Services & Supplies	1,659,130	1,893,991	234,861	
17	MBSST North Coast Segment 5 (RTC Oversight):				
18	Legal Fees	62359	-	-	-
19	Maintenance	61845	37,000	55,000	18,000
20	Davenport Crosswalk	62381	-	-	-
20	Technical Assistance	62381	-	28,367	28,367
21	Contingency	62856	-	-	-
21	Construction & Contingency	86110	641,000	3,855,000	3,214,000
22	Subtotal Services & Supplies	678,000	3,938,367	3,260,367	
23	MBSST City of Santa Cruz:				
24	RTC Oversight Segments 7, 8 & 9				
25	Technical Assistance	62381	-	-	-
26	City of Santa Cruz Segments 7, 8 & 9 Project Sponsor				
27	Segment 7 Phase 2 to City of Santa Cru	75204	-	519,253	519,253
28	Segments 8&9 to City of Santa Cruz	75204	950,646	4,150,646	3,200,000
29	Ongoing Maintenance	75204	49,000	49,000	-
30	Subtotal Services & Supplies	999,646	4,718,899	3,719,253	

Measure D Active Transportation - Continued		FY 2025/26	FY 2025/26		
Active Transportation		Approved	Proposed	Difference	Note
GL Key 729500	Object	4/3/25	10/9/25		
1	MBSST County of Santa Cruz:				
2	RTC Oversight Segments 10&11				
3	Technical Assistance 62381	10,000	10,000	-	
4	RTC Oversight Segment 12				
5	Right of Way Capital 62856	2,964,000	564,000	(2,400,000)	
6	County of Santa Cruz Segments 10 & 11 Project Sponsor				
7	Env Review and Design to SCC 75303	2,229,000	3,047,128	818,128	
8	Subtotal Services & Supplies	5,203,000	3,621,128	(1,581,872)	
9	RTC Oversight City of Watsonville				
10	Technical Assistance 62381	-	-	-	
11	Segment 18 Environmental Document 75206	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	
12	Ongoing Maintenance 75206	3,600	7,000	3,400	
13	Subtotal Services & Supplies	1,003,600	1,007,000	3,400	
14					
15					
16	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	796,202	814,092	17,890	
17	Subtotal Services & Supplies	9,543,376	15,179,385	5,636,009	
18				-	
19	Total Expenditures:	10,339,578	15,993,477	5,653,899	
20					
21	To/(From) Reserve Funds	(5,769,828)	(11,438,692)	(5,668,864)	
22	Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	10,750,642	9,009,157	(1,741,485)	
23	Ending Fund Balance (estimate):	4,980,814	(2,429,535)	(7,410,349)	Future Borrowing needs of FY25-26

Measure D Rail Corridor

GL Key 729600

Measure D allocates 8% of revenue for the Rail Corridor for infrastructure preservation and analysis of options and alternatives to driving, to plan for future mobility needs, preservation of rail corridor infrastructure, and management of rights of entry and utilities.

RTC Labor: Construction projects on the rail line will continue and additional environmental permitting will require additional RTC staff time.

Services, supplies, and construction: Construction for FY 2025/26 includes repairs to bridges, track bed, drainage system, and grade crossings.

Zero Emission Rail Transit: The RTC programmed Measure D funds to initiate a project concept report for passenger rail transit and applied for state funds for preliminary design and environmental review.

Meas D Rail Corridor		FY 2025/26 Amended 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 10/9/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Measure D	40186	2,145,765	2,138,722	(7,043)
3	Total Revenues	2,145,765	2,138,722	(7,043)	
4					
5	<u>Salaries, Benefits & Overhead</u>				
6	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	133,675	142,887	9,212
7	Allocated Overhead	62354	141,325	132,113	(9,212)
8	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	275,000	275,000	-	
9	<u>Services & Supplies</u>				
10	Legal Fees	62359	25,000	145,000	120,000
11	Professional & Special Services	62381	1,125,000	4,100,812	2,975,812
12	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	123,000	100,000	(23,000)
13	Construction	86110	795,000	500,000	(295,000)
14	Total Services & Supplies	2,068,000	4,845,812	2,777,812	
15					
16	Total Expenditures:	2,343,000	5,120,812	2,777,812	
17					
18	To/(From) Reserve Funds	(197,235)	(2,982,090)	(2,784,855)	
19	Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	3,794,448	3,794,448	-	
20	Ending Fund Balance (estimate):	3,597,213	812,358	(2,784,855)	
21					

Measure D San Lorenzo Valley Highway 9 Corridor Improvements

GL Key 729202

The San Lorenzo Valley Highway 9 Corridor Investment program is allocated ten (\$10) million over 30 years to prepare and implement projects including:

- Safety projects for people walking, biking, or driving
- Projects that provide safe access to schools
- Intersection and signal improvements
- Bicycle lanes, paths, and signage
- Accessible pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks
- Improved access to bus stops and bus service

One million dollars in Measure D funds have been programmed to leverage other funds, including State Highway Operations Protection Program, for Complete Streets projects and are expected to be needed in FY 2025/26.

Measure D SLV SR9 Improvements		FY 2025/26 Approved 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 10/9/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Measure D	40186	333,333	333,333	-
2	Interest	40430			-
3	Total Revenues	333,333	333,333		-
4					
5	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead				
6	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	-	2,236	2,236
7	Allocated Overhead	62354	-	1,876	1,876
8	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead	-	4,112	4,112	Carryover from FY 24/25
9					
10	Services & Supplies				
11	Legal Fees	62359	-	-	-
12	Professional & Special Services	62381	458,000	363,712	(94,288) Costs based on project status and schedule
14	Contingency/Special Exp	62856	-	219,000	219,000 Carryover from FY 24/25
15	Grant Match	75230	-	-	-
16	Total Services & Supplies	458,000	582,712	124,712	
17					
18	Total Expenditures:	458,000	586,824	128,824	
19					
20	To/(From) Reserves:	(124,667)	(253,491)	(128,824)	
21	Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	1,452,260	2,464,101	1,011,842	
22	Ending Fund Balance (estimate):	1,327,593	2,210,610	883,017	

Measure D Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing

GL Key 729203

The Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing project will improve safety for both drivers and wildlife. Five (\$5) million is allocated for the construction of a safe passage for wildlife to cross under Highway 17. Caltrans completed construction in 2023. The FY 2025/26 budget includes repayment of an inter-program loan from Measure D-Highway Corridors used to expedite construction.

Measure D Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing		FY 2025/26 Proposed 4/3/25	FY 2025/26 Proposed 10/9/25	Difference	Note
	Object				
1	Measure D	40186	166,667	166,667	0
2	Loan Proceeds	42506	-	1,141,776	1,141,776
3	Total Revenues		166,667	1,308,443	1,141,776
4					
5	Salaries, Benefits & Overhead				
6	Allocated Labor Costs	51070	486	520	34
7	Allocated Overhead	62354	514	480	(34)
8	Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead		1,000	1,000	-
9					
10	Services & Supplies				
11	Princ & Int Trans Repayment	74244	165,667	-	(165,667)
12	Contribution to Other Agency	75230	-	1,349,324	1,349,324
13	Total Services & Supplies		165,667	1,349,324	1,183,657
14					
15	Total Expenditures:		166,667	1,350,324	1,183,657
16					
17	To/(From) Reserves:	-	-	(41,881)	(41,881)
18	Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):	-	-	41,881	41,881
19	Ending Fund Balance (estimate):	-	-	-	-

Measure D Summary and Fund Balances



Measure D Regional Funding Program and Project Budget Summary
Administration and Implementation by RTC - Proposed Budget

Fiscal Year FY 2025/26

Proposed October 9, 2025

	Object	Admin & Impl	Hwy 9	Hwy 17 Wildlife Crossing	Highway Corridor	Active Transp	Rail Corridor	Total
Revenues								
1 Measure D	40186	932,772	333,333	166,667	6,683,507	4,544,785	2,138,722	14,799,787
2 Interest	40430	1,000	-	-	50,000	10,000	-	61,000
3 Loan Proceeds	42506	-	-	1,141,776	-	-	-	1,141,776
4 Total Revenues		933,772	333,333	1,308,443	6,733,507	4,554,785	2,138,722	16,002,563
5								
6 Salaries, Benefits & Overhead								
7 Allocated Labor Costs	51070	401,022	2,236	520	493,888	422,993	142,887	1,463,546
8 Allocated Overhead	62354	382,121	1,876	480	477,149	391,099	132,113	1,384,839
9 Total Salaries, Benefits & Overhead		783,143	4,112	1,000	971,037	814,092	275,000	2,848,385
10								
11 Services & Supplies								
12 Repairs & Maintenance	61845	-	-	-	-	1,380,079	-	1,380,079
13 Subscriptions	62222	-	-	-	2,000	-	-	2,000
14 General Supplies & Expenses	62223	5,000	-	-	4,000	-	-	9,000
15 Accounting & Audit	62301	16,500	-	-	-	-	-	16,500
16 Design and Eng Consult	62340	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16 Legal Fees	62359	-	-	-	76,820	120,000	145,000	341,820
17 Professional & Special Services	62381	125,629	363,712	-	2,946,334	487,279	4,100,812	8,023,766
18 Adv & Promo Materials	62801	2,500	-	-	-	-	-	2,500
19 Contingency/Special Exp	62856	-	219,000	-	27,423,629	564,000	100,000	28,306,629
26 Subscriptions	62890	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 Towing	62893	-	-	-	221,000	-	-	221,000
21 Transportation/Travel/Education	62914	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21 Princ & Int Trans Repayment	74244	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22 Funds to City of Capitola	75203	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22 Funds to City of Santa Cruz	75204	-	-	-	-	4,718,899	-	4,718,899
23 Funds to City of Scotts Valley	75205	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23 Funds to City of Watsonville	75206	-	-	-	-	1,007,000	-	1,007,000
24 Contribution to Other Agency	75230	-	-	1,349,324	-	-	-	1,349,324
25 Transfer to Other Funds	75233	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24 CHP Operations	75280	-	-	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
25 Funds to SC County	75303	-	-	-	-	3,047,128	-	3,047,128
26 Construction	86110	-	-	-	1,141,776	3,855,000	500,000	5,496,776
27 Total Services & Supplies		149,629	582,712	1,349,324	31,865,559	15,179,385	4,845,812	53,972,421
28								
29 Total Expenditures:		932,772	586,824	1,350,324	32,836,596	15,998,477	5,120,812	56,820,806
30								
31 Excess of Revenues over Expenditures:		1,000	(253,491)	(41,881)	(26,103,089)	(11,438,692)	(2,982,090)	(40,818,243)
32 Beginning Fund Balance (estimate):		458,936	2,464,101	41,881	15,643,165	9,009,157	3,794,448	31,411,688
33 Ending Fund Balance (estimate):		459,936	2,210,610	-	(10,459,924)	(2,429,535)	812,358	(9,406,555)

Budget Glossary and Acronym Guide

Accrual basis of accounting: The basis of accounting in which revenue is recorded when earned and expenditures are recorded when obligated, regardless of when the cash is received or paid.

Allocate: The process used to release funding to transportation projects.

Amendment: A proposed or adopted change to the budget.

Appropriate / Appropriation: Authorization for a specific agency to make expenditures or incur liabilities from a specific fund for a specific purpose.

Audit: A review of financial statements or performance activity (such as of an agency or program) to determine conformity or compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and/or standards.

Budget: A plan of operation expressed in terms of financial or other resource requirements for a specific period of time.

Budget Cycle: The period of time, usually one year, required to prepare a financial plan and enact that portion of it applying to the budget year. Significant events in the cycle include:

- Proposed Budget for a new fiscal year with estimated revenues from the State Controller's Office, County Auditor, and RTC consultants (February-March) for adoption (April-May). The proposed budget purpose is to inform local agencies in the development of their budget adoption in June.
- Mid-Year Budget Amendment to evaluate revenue and expenditures based on project status and carryover balances from the prior fiscal year (June).
- Fall Budget Amendment incorporates the final spending for prior fiscal year and adoption of the Measure D 5-yr programming of funds (October-November).
- Other Amendments are submitted throughout the year to include unanticipated funding, revenues, or expenditures.

Budget, Program or Traditional: A program budget expresses the operating plan in terms of the costs of activities (programs) to be undertaken to achieve specific goals and objectives. A traditional (or object of expenditure) budget expresses the plan in terms of categories of costs of the goods or services to be used to

perform specific functions.

Capital Outlay: A character of expenditure of funds to acquire land, plan and construct new buildings, expand or modify existing buildings, and/or purchase equipment.

Carryover: The balance of an appropriation available for expenditure in years subsequent to the year of enactment. For example, if a three-year appropriation is not fully encumbered in the first year, the remaining amount is carried over to the next fiscal year.

Cash Basis: The basis of accounting that records receipts and disbursements when cash is received or paid.

Cash Statement: A statement of cash receipts and disbursements for a specified period of time. Amounts recorded as accruals, which do not affect cash, are not reflected in this statement.

Capital Improvements: Physical infrastructure improvements such as pavement, sidewalks, bridges, signals and purchases of equipment, vehicles.

COLA: see Cost of Living Adjustment

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA): Cost of living is the cost of maintaining a certain standard of living.

Expenditure: In terms of transportation, this is any allowable expense associated with a project or program.

Fiscal Year (FY): The 12-month period established for budgeting purposes. The fiscal year for state and most local governments in California begins July 1 and ends June 30. The federal fiscal year begins October 1 and ends September 30.

Fund: A legal budgeting and accounting entity that provides for the segregation of moneys or other resources in the County Treasury for obligations in accordance with specific restrictions or limitations. A separate set of accounts must be maintained for each fund to show its assets, liabilities, reserves, and balance, as well as its income and expenditures.

Fund Balance: Excess of a fund's assets over its liabilities and reserves.

FY: see Fiscal Year.

ICAP: see Indirect Cost Allocation Plan

Indirect Costs: Costs which by their nature cannot be readily associated with a specific organization unit or program. Like general administrative expenses, indirect costs are distributed to the organizational unit(s) or program(s) which benefit from their incurrence.

Indirect Cost Allocation Plan (ICAP): The amount of administrative and general costs chargeable to and recovered from federal and state funds, as determined by the Department of Transportation.

Local Jurisdictions: The four cities (Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville) and the (unincorporated) County of Santa Cruz, each of which has its own elected decision-makers, planning and public works departments, and control over land-use decisions within its boundaries.

Overhead: Those elements of cost necessary in the performance of a service that are of such a nature that the amount applicable to the service cannot be determined directly. Usually, they relate to those costs that do not become an integral part of the service, such as rent, heat, light, supplies, management, or supervision. See also "Indirect Costs."

Reimbursements: An amount received as a payment for the cost of services performed, or of other expenditures made for, or on behalf of, another entity. Reimbursements represent the recovery of an expenditure. Reimbursements are available for expenditure up to the budgeted amount (scheduled in an appropriation).

Reserve: An amount of a fund balance set aside to provide for expenditures from the unencumbered balance for continuing appropriations, economic uncertainties, future apportionments, pending salary or price increase appropriations, and appropriations for capital outlay projects.

Programming, Planning, and Project Glossary and Acronym Guide

Active Transportation: Active Transportation includes any method of travel that is human powered, but most commonly refers to walking and bicycling.

Active Transportation Program: State funding program established in 2013 for projects that increase bicycling and walking. Consolidates several federal and state programs - including the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)/formerly Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA), Safe Routes to Schools, and Bicycle Transportation Account.

ATP: see Active Transportation Program

Auxiliary Lane: Freeway lanes linking adjacent interchanges to reduce weaving conflicts between exiting and entering vehicles.

Bikeway: Facility designated for use by bicyclists. There are three types of bicycle facilities.

Buffered Bike / Pedestrian Facility: A bicycle or pedestrian facility that has additional space between the motor vehicle travel lane and the bicycle and pedestrian facility. A buffered facility offers a more comfortable biking or walking environment.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): A broad term that, through improvements to infrastructure, vehicles and scheduling, attempt to use buses to provide a service that is of a higher quality than an ordinary bus line.

California Coastal Trail (CCT): The CCT is a network of public trails that will extend the entire 1200-mile length of the California Coast and currently is more than half complete.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans or CT): State agency which builds and maintains state highways, some state railways, and administers multi-modal transportation programs within the state.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Legislation which requires private entities, state and local agencies to disclose, consider and mitigate the environmental impacts of various actions.

California Transportation Commission (CTC): A board appointed by the governor and state legislature that sets spending priorities for highways and transit, reviews Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and Regional

Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs) and allocates funds to transportation projects from several funding programs.

Call Box System: A network of roadside phones which link motorists directly with dispatchers to request assistance or emergency services.

Caltrans: see California Department of Transportation

Capital Improvement Program (CIP): A document which sets forth the cost, funding and year of construction for projects over a specified number of years (typically five to seven years).

Carpool: An arrangement in which two or more people share the use of a privately-owned automobile to travel together to and from pre-arranged destinations — typically between home and work or home and school.

Carsharing: Organized short-term auto rental, often located in downtowns, near public transit stations, residential communities and employment centers. Carsharing organizations operate fleets of rental vehicles that are available for short trips by members who pay a subscription fee, plus a per trip charge.

CHP: California Highway Patrol

Climate Adaptation: Refers to efforts by society or ecosystems to prepare for or adjust to climate change and its impacts.

CNG: see Compressed Natural Gas

Collector Streets: Streets that collect traffic.

COMMISSION: see Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Community Traffic Safety Coalition (CTSC): A coalition of agencies and individuals that promotes bicycle and pedestrian safety, particularly for school children. Operated by the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency and partially funded by the RTC.

Commute Solutions: Santa Cruz County's rideshare program which provides information about transportation alternatives to the single occupant vehicle and carpool match lists.

Commute: The trip to/from a regular location, usually work or school.

Commuter Rail: Conventional rail passenger service within a metropolitan area. Service primarily is in the morning (home-to-work) and afternoon (work-to-home) travel periods.

Commuter: A person who travels regularly between home and work or school.

Complete Streets: Streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders of all ages and abilities can safely move along and across a complete street.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG): A clean-burning alternative fuel for vehicles.

Congestion: Congestion is usually defined as travel time or delay more than what is normally experienced under free-flow traffic conditions. Congestion is typically accompanied by lower speeds, stop-and-go travel conditions, or queuing, such as behind ramp meters or heavily used intersections.

Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA): Agency responsible for coordinating specialized transportation services. In Santa Cruz County, the CTSA is Lift Line, a division of Community Bridges.

Constrained (Fiscal Constraint/Financially Constrained): Denotes a funding scenario under which projects, programs, expenditures in a plan or programming document that can be implemented within the constraints of committed, available or reasonably available revenue sources. This document also identifies constrained projects as "Within Projected Funds."

Corridor: A major transportation route which can consist of one or more highways, arterial streets, transit lines, rail lines and/or bikeways.

CT: see California Department of Transportation

CTC: see California Transportation Commission

CTP: see California Transportation Plan

CTSA: see Consolidated Transportation Services Agency

CTSC: see Community Traffic Safety Coalition

DAC: see Disadvantaged Community

Dedicated Funds: Federal, state, or local funds which can be used only for specific purposes or by specific agencies.

Demand Responsive: Individualized transportation services requested by passengers, and/or where routes are developed around a group of requests, which may change daily. Oftentimes provided to people unable to use fixed-route buses by taxis or by advance reservation on paratransit vehicles.

Department of Transportation (DOT): At the federal level, the cabinet agency headed by the Secretary of Transportation is responsible for highways, transit, aviation, and ports. The DOT includes the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and other agencies. The state DOT is Caltrans.

Disadvantaged Community (DAC): For Santa Cruz County, transportation disadvantaged communities are defined as census tracts where greater than 65% of the total population is non-white (minority areas) and/or greater than 33% of residing families earn less than 200% of the 2015 federal poverty level (low-income areas). Poverty areas are defined as census tracts where greater than 25% of households earned less than the 2015 federal poverty level.

In FY2022/23 the RTC will be working with the community to reevaluate this definition as part of its Equity Action Plan.

Discretionary Funds: Federal, state and local funds which can be used for a variety of purposes. Sometimes also referred to as “flexible funds.”

DMV: CA Department of Motor Vehicles

DOT: see Department of Transportation

ED: see Environmental Document

EIR: see Environmental Impact Report

Environmental Document (ED): The draft or final Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Impact Report, Finding of No Significant Impact, Environmental Assessment or Negative Declaration.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR): An assessment of the environmental effects and mitigations for a proposal or decision which, under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has been determined may significantly impact the environment.

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency: Federal agency established to develop and enforce regulations that implement environmental laws enacted by Congress to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment.

Expressway: A divided highway for high-speed traffic with at least partial control of access. In some areas, expressways are divided arterial roads with limits on the frequency of driveways and intersecting cross-streets. In other area, access to expressways is limited only to grade-separated interchanges, making them the full equivalent of freeways.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): The federal agency responsible for the approval of transportation projects related to the roadway system.

FHWA: see Federal Highway Administration

Freeway Service Patrol (FSP): Roving tow truck service that clears incidents on roadways during peak travel periods.

Freeway: A divided arterial highway designed for the unimpeded flow of large traffic volumes. Access to a freeway is controlled and intersection grade separations are required.

FSP: see Freeway Service Patrol

FTA: see Federal Transit Administration

GHG: see Greenhouse Gas

GIS - Geographic Information System: Mapping software that links information about where things are with information about what things are like. GIS allows users to examine relationships between features distributed unevenly over space, seeking patterns that may not be apparent without using advanced techniques of query, selection, analysis, and display.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG): Any of the atmospheric gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect by absorbing infrared radiation produced by solar warming of the Earth's surface. Including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes: A lane on a multi-lane highway designated for use, primarily in the peak periods, free of charge by vehicles with two or more occupants or for single-occupant vehicles paying a toll.

High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes (or Diamond Lanes): A lane on a multi-lane highway designated for use, primarily in the peak periods, only by vehicles with more than one (or sometimes two) occupants – such as carpools, vanpools, shuttles, and buses. In California, motorcycles, emergency vehicles, and certain low/zero emissions vehicles may also use HOV lanes.

Highway Bridge Program (HBR): Federal funding program administered by Caltrans for bridge replacement or rehabilitation on public roads.

Highway: A general term which includes roads, streets, and parkways and all their appurtenances. In this document “highway” typically refers only to roads on the State Route System however (e.g. Highway 17).

HOV: see High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

HQ: Headquarters

HSR - High Speed Rail: Railroad passenger service that, as defined by California state law, operates at maximum speeds of more than 200 miles per hour. Because of the speed, high speed rail normally operates on intercity (longer) routes.

Initial Study: Under CEQA, a systematic review of a proposed project undertaken to determine whether there is substantial evidence that it may result in one or more significant impacts.

In-Lieu Fee (ILF) Mitigation: A permittee pays a fee to the operator of the ILF program instead of conducting project-specific mitigation. An ILF program typically combines fees collected from a number of permittee's projects to finance a mitigation project.

Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC): An RTC committee consisting of representatives from planning and public works departments, transit, UCSC and Cabrillo College, transportation management

associations, the Air District, and other entities who review and make recommendations about regional plans, projects, and funding.

Inter-modal: Using or addressing inter-connections between various transportation facilities or modes.

IS: see Initial Study

ITAC: see Interagency Technical Advisory Committee

Level of Service (LOS): A qualitative assessment of a facility's operating conditions. The extent or degree of service provided by, or proposed to be provided by, a facility based on and related to the operational characteristics of the facility. Level of Service indicates the capacity per unit of demand for each public facility. For automobiles, LOS ratings typically range from LOS A, which represents free-flow conditions, to LOS F, which is characterized by heavy congestion, stop-and-go traffic, and long queues forming behind breakdown points.

Light Rail: A passenger transportation system of self-propelled vehicles that operate over steel rails located in the street, on an aerial structure, or on a separated right of way.

LNG: see Liquefied Natural Gas

Local Streets: Streets that provide direct access to adjacent residential areas, on which traffic is generally discouraged.

LOS: see Level of Service/Level of Service Standard

Low Emission Vehicles: Vehicles using alternative fuel sources which emit little or no tailpipe exhaust, e.g., electric, hybrid electric, hydrogen, and fuel cell.

Mass Transit: A common carrier service provided for transporting passengers on established routes, with fixed schedules, published rates of fares. Includes buses and rail.

MBSST Network: see Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network

Measure D: The 2016 transportation ballot measure approved by over two-thirds of Santa Cruz County voters in November 2016 which generates revenues from a half-percent transaction and use tax (sales tax).

Metro: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Mitigation: Project or program intended to offset impacts of a transportation project on an existing natural resource such as a stream, wetland, and/or endangered species.

Mitigation Banking: The preservation, enhancement, restoration or creation of a wetland, stream, or habitat conservation area which offsets, or compensates for, expected adverse impacts to similar nearby ecosystems.

Mixed Flow Lane: Travel lanes shared by autos, trucks, buses, and motorcycles (as compared to restricted lanes, such as HOV lanes).

Mixed Use: Combining of commercial, office, and/or residential land uses to reduce travel distances and facilitate walking. Examples include multi-story buildings containing businesses and retail stores on the lower floors, and homes on the upper floors.

MMLOS: see Multimodal Level of Service

Mode Split or Mode Share: The proportion of total travel in each travel mode.

Mode: Method of travel, e.g., private automobile, walking, bicycle, transit, airplane, bus, train.

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network: A planned recreation, transportation and interpretive pathway that links existing and new trail segments into a continuous coastal trail around the Monterey Bay, from Lover's Point in Monterey County to the San Mateo County line in Santa Cruz County.

MTD: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

MTIS: see Major Transportation Investment Study

Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS): *A way to measure the degree to which street design and operations meets the traveling needs of each user type – automobile, bus, pedestrian, bicycle, etc.*

Multi-modal: Using or addressing more than one transportation mode.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Federal law identifying environmental disclosure requirements. Required to be followed on projects using federal funds.

National Highway System (NHS): A federally established national road system. In Santa Cruz County, the NHS includes sections of Highway 1, Highway 17, Highway 129, Highway 152, 41st Avenue, Capitola Road, Freedom Boulevard, Graham Hill Road, Mt. Hermon Road, Ocean Street, Soquel Avenue and other major arterials.

NB: Northbound

ND: see Negative Declaration

Negative Declaration (ND): A determination based upon an initial study that there is no substantial evidence that a proposed project may result in a significant effect.

NEPA: see National Environmental Policy Act

NHS: see National Highway System

O&M: Operations and Maintenance. The range of activities and services provided by the transportation system and for the upkeep and preservation of the existing system.

Obligate: The act of securing commitment from Federal or State government (e.g., FHWA or Caltrans) to pay or reimburse entities for a project's eligible costs. Many funding programs require a project sponsor to obligate funds in a timely manner or lose the funds.

Off-Peak Period: The time of day when the lowest concentration of travels is using a transportation facility. These times are generally before 6 a.m., mid-day, and after evening commute hours.

Open Space: Generally understood as any area of land or water which is not developed for urbanized uses. In General Plans areas may be designated as Open Space for the purposes of the preservation or managed production of natural resources, outdoor recreation, or the promotion of public health and safety.

Operations: On-going activities necessary to manage and perform services for a system, such as labor costs. For transit, costs include fuel, salaries and replacement parts.

Overall Work Program (OWP): Budgetary document describing proposed activities for the upcoming fiscal year, including those required by federal and state law.

OWP: see Overall Work Program

PA&ED: see Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED)

Paratransit: Term used to describe transportation services which operate on flexible routes and/or provide demand-responsive service and is most frequently used by elderly and disabled passengers unable to take fixed

route transit. Generally, vans, small buses, or taxis are used to provide this service. The ADA-mandated service in our region is ParaCruz and is provided by the METRO. Another main provider is Community Bridges Lift Line.

Park-and-Ride Lot: A facility where individuals can meet to utilize carpools, vanpools, and transit to continue traveling to their destinations.

Parking Management: Strategies which use parking supply or pricing as an incentive or disincentive to affect the demand for parking. Preferred parking for carpools is an example of a parking management incentive, and charging parking fees is an example of a disincentive.

Passenger Miles: The total number of passengers carried by a transit system, multiplied by the number of miles each passenger travels. Passenger miles are normally measured on a daily or annual basis.

Peak Periods: The hours during which the greatest traffic volumes or highest transit use occur.

Performance Based Planning: An approach that uses performance measures to support investment decisions to help achieve desired outcomes.

Performance Measures (or Evaluation Measures or Targets): Objective, quantifiable measures used to evaluate the performance of the transportation system, and to determine how well planned improvements to the system are achieving established objectives.

PID: see Project Initiation Document

Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E): A phase or milestone in the life cycle of a project following PA&ED and preceding construction; includes the preparation of construction contract documents, the acquisition of right of way, and the securing of permits.

“Planned” Projects: Projects on the Constrained/within projected funds RTP list which have not previously been approved for funding by the RTC. Projects are expected to be funded through 2035.

PM: see Post Mile

Post Mile: The mileage measured in statute miles from a county line or the beginning of a route to another county line or the ending of the route. Each post mile along a route in a county is a unique location on the State Highway System.

Primary Transportation Network: Includes state highways, principal arterials and rail line in Santa Cruz County.

Program: *verb-* to assign funds to a project.

Programs and Projects: Activities of an organization grouped on the basis of common objectives. Programs and projects are comprised of elements, which can be further divided into components and tasks.

Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR): Environmental review process used to evaluate the potential environmental effects of large-scale plans or programs.

“Programmed” Projects: Projects on the Constrained/within projected funds list for which funding has already been approved by the RTC. These projects will be initiated and/or completed by 2019.

Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA&ED): A major phase in the life cycle of a project following the Project Initiation Document and Programming but preceding PS&E.

Project Initiation Document (PID): an engineering document or technical report that documents the scope, cost, and schedule of a project.

Project Study Report (PSR): A preliminary engineering report that documents agreements on the scope, a set of reasonable and feasible alternatives, the schedule, and the estimated cost of a project so that the project can be included in a future State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

PS&E: see Plans, Specifications and Estimates

PSR: see Project Study Report

Rail Transit: Public transportation services provided on a fixed rail line, e.g., light rail.

Ramp Metering: Electronic traffic control devices located at freeway access points to meter the entry of vehicles onto the freeway. The goal is to help optimize the movement of persons and vehicles.

Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP): See Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG).

Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX): Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)/Regional Surface Transportation Program funds (federal) exchanged for state funding.

Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP): The state required multi-year capital improvement program for transportation projects using state and federal funds. The RTIP for Santa Cruz County is adopted by the SCCRTC and is submitted to the California Transportation Commission for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and to AMBAG for inclusion in the FTIP.

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): The state-mandated long-range plan that acts as a blueprint to guide transportation development. Developed by regional transportation planning agencies, it includes a policy, action, and financial elements. The SCCRTC prepares and adopts the RTP for Santa Cruz County. The RTP must be consistent with other local plans.

Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA): Agencies designated by the State of California to provide regional transportation planning and make funding decisions, including preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is the designated RTPA for Santa Cruz County.

Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM): A computer software program using demographic data to estimate the transportation impacts of population growth and land use decisions on the transportation system, and to assess the utility of transportation projects.

Reverse Commute: Travel in the direction opposite to the main flow of peak period commute traffic.

Ridership: The number of transit users, usually reported as a yearly total or as the average for a normal workday.

Rideshare: Alternatives to driving alone, including carpooling, vanpooling, taking the bus, bicycling, walking and telecommuting.

Right-of-Way (ROW): The area of property owned by a public or private entity used for transportation purposes.

ROE: Right of Entry

ROW: see Right-of-Way

RPA: see Rural Planning Assistance

RSTP: see Regional Surface Transportation Program

RSTPX: see Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange

RTC: see Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

RTDM: see Regional Travel Demand Model

RTIP: see Regional Transportation Improvement Program

RTP: see Regional Transportation Plan

RTPA: see Regional Transportation Planning Agency

SAFE: see Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC or RTC): Transportation policy, planning and funding body designated as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), Local Transportation Commission (LTC), Rail/Trail Authority and Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) for Santa Cruz County.

Santa Cruz METRO: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD or METRO): The public transit operator for Santa Cruz County. Also known as Santa Cruz Metro.

SB: Southbound

SCCRTC: see Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Scenario Planning: A decision making tool to help identify the projects that are prioritized in a transportation plan. Scenario planning allows a community to evaluate the likely outcomes of a number of scenarios to explore possible benefits and costs of alternative futures.

SCMTD: see Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

SCS: see Sustainable Communities Strategy

Self-Help Counties: A term used to describe counties that have enacting local voter-approved funding mechanisms -- such as half-cent sales taxes -- to pay for transportation improvements.

Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE): As the designated SAFE for Santa Cruz County, the SCCRTC owns and manages the call box system on local state highways and other motorist aid programs. Funded by \$1-per-year vehicle registration fee.

Signal Preemption: A system used for emergency and public transit vehicles to change signal phasing from red to green allowing for more rapid crosstown access.

SIP: see Strategic Implementation Plan for Measure D

SOV - Single Occupant Vehicle: Privately operated vehicle that contains only one driver or occupant.

Specialized Transportation: Often used synonymously with “paratransit,” refers to vehicle and programs operated primarily for the elderly and persons living with disabilities. Service is generally provided door-to-door in vans or automobiles on a semi-fixed route or demand- responsive basis.

Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS): Database of collisions managed by the California Highway Patrol.

Strategic Implementation Plan for Measure D: The SIP serves as the guiding policy and programming document for the implementation of Regional Measure D projects.

Sustainability: Sustainability is defined as balancing economic, environmental and equity interests. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.

System Preservation: The maintenance of the existing transportation system.

TDM: see Transportation Demand Management

TCAA: Transportation Corridor Alternatives Analysis

TMC: Traffic Management Center. Monitors roadways using closed circuit cameras, loop detectors and information from the CHP and field staff. Posts and updates messages on traffic conditions on various systems, including the 511 telephone number, road signs, and websites.

TOD: see Transit-Oriented Development

TOS: see Traffic Operations System

TPP: see Transit Priority Project

Traffic Operations System (TOS): A system of highway communications equipment to monitor traffic conditions and relay traveler information in real time.

Transit: Travel by bus, rail, or other vehicle, either publicly or privately owned, that provides general or specialized service on a regular or continuing basis.

Transit Dependent: An individual who because of age, income, physical/mental condition, geographic location, or personal choice, does not have a private vehicle available and relies on transit for his/her transportation needs.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): Residential and employment growth that occurs near existing and planned public transit facilities.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): Strategies to reduce demand by automobiles on the transportation system, by promoting telecommuting, flex-time, bicycling, walking, transit use, staggered work hours, and ridesharing.

Transportation Disabled: People who cannot use public transportation easily or at all because of physical, emotional, or mental limitations.

Transportation Disadvantaged: People who have significant unmet transportation needs. May include people experiencing poverty, people experiencing language barriers, people of color, older adults, youth and people with disabilities who experience a disproportionately small share of benefits from transportation investments, particularly because traditional transportation investments prioritize vehicles.

Trip: A one-way journey that proceeds from an origin to a destination by a single type of vehicular transportation.

TSP: see Transit Signal Priority

U.S. DOT: United States Department of Transportation. The federal agency responsible for highways, mass transit, aviation and ports and headed by the Secretary of Transportation. Includes the FHWA, FTA and FAA, among others.

UCS/UCIS: Unified Corridors Investment Study

Unconstrained: Denotes a funding scenario not constrained by existing funding assumptions. New funds, above and beyond existing or anticipated revenues, would be needed to fund “unconstrained” projects in this RTP.

Unmet Transit Needs Findings: TDA funds can be used for local streets and roads in smaller counties only if the RTPA in their jurisdiction makes a finding that public transit service and operations in the county have no unmet needs that are reasonable to meet. RTPAs must hold public hearings prior to making such a determination.

Urbanized Area: An area with a population of 50,000 or more as designated by the U.S. Census.

Vanpool: A group of seven to fifteen people traveling together to work or school in a van at set times. Many vans are leased from companies which include insurance, emergency services and maintenance in the monthly rental fees.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): The term used for the total number of miles traveled by motor vehicles within a specified region during a particular time period.

Vehicle Occupancy Rate: Also known as Average Vehicle Occupancy or Ridership; the number of persons per vehicle on a given road at a given time without distinguishing trip purpose.

Vehicle Trip: A single vehicle movement from the beginning of travel to its destination, in a vehicle that is motor-driven (e.g., automobiles, motorcycles, trucks, buses, and vans).

ZEV: Zero Emission Vehicle

VMT: see Vehicle Miles Traveled

Walkability: A measure of how friendly an area is to walking. Walkability has many health, environmental, and economic benefits. Factors influencing walkability include the presence or absence and quality of footpaths, sidewalks or other pedestrian rights-of-way, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, building accessibility, and safety, among others.

WB: Westbound

TO: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: RTC Staff
RE: Railbanking Overview

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) accept this informational overview of railbanking as it relates to the RTC-owned Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL).

BACKGROUND

The Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) is a 32-mile long federally regulated single track freight railroad between Pajaro and Davenport constructed in the late 1800's and early 1900's. The RTC purchased the SCBRL with the intent to use it for public transportation. The corridor connects the region's two largest cities of Watsonville and Santa Cruz and is within one mile of 80 parks, 25 schools, and about half the County's population creating a unique opportunity to connect communities and offer new travel options.

There have been past informational presentations to the Commission about preservation strategies for the SCBRL including the railbanking process, in [2021](#) and [2022](#).

Acquisition of the SCBRL and Freight Rail Service

The RTC acquired the SCBRL from Union Pacific Railroad in 2012 for \$14.2 million following years of negotiations and completion of a Major Transportation Investment Study. At the time of purchase, active freight on the line was declining and the line was falling into a state of disrepair with serious neglect to its 37 bridges, over 100 culverts, and 115 public and private grade crossings. The purchase, funded through Proposition 116 Clean Air and Transportation Improvement Act funds, established the SCBRL as a publicly owned right-of-way intended to support future multi-modal transportation options in Santa Cruz County. As a condition of the state funding, the RTC committed to maintaining recreational and freight rail

service as long as its required by the Surface Transportation Board (STB). A map showing active freight and recreational excursion areas is included as Figure 1.



Figure 1 - Current Use of the SCBRL - Freight and Recreational

The acquisition included the underlying property and railroad facilities, with a freight easement reserved for a designated common carrier to serve freight customers along the SCBRL. The RTC selected Iowa Pacific Holdings as the initial common carrier through a competitive process and executed an Administration, Coordination, and License (ACL) Agreement approved by the Commission and STB in 2012. Iowa Pacific provided limited freight and recreational service but ceased operations after storm damage in 2017 rendered portions of the line inoperable, leading to the termination of the ACL Agreement.

In 2018, the RTC through an open procurement process selected a new common carrier and entered into a new ACL agreement with Saint Paul and Pacific Railroad (SPPR), a subsidiary of Progressive Rail Incorporated (PGR), for a 10-year term. The agreement envisioned a two-phase approach: first, restoration of freight service 7 miles north to Buena Vista Drive following RTC-led repairs, and second, the potential for recreational excursion service contingent on additional 25 miles of rehabilitation north to Davenport. Although the Phase 1 repairs were substantially completed in 2020, PGR has not expanded freight service or assumed maintenance responsibilities beyond the Watsonville area, and Phase 2 of the ACL Agreement has not

been initiated. A map showing the SCBRL with Phases 1 & 2 of the ACL agreement is shown as [Figure 2](#).



Figure 2 - Phases Identified in the Administration, Coordination, and License Agreement

A subsequent bridge inspection program (2019–2021) identified significant deficiencies across multiple structures, with repair or replacement costs estimated between \$48.7 million and \$63.7 million (in 2021 dollars), excluding necessary major trestle replacements. A map showing the SCBRL bridges with their existing conditions is included as [Figure 3](#).



Figure 3 - Condition of Railroad Bridges along the SCBRL

Existing funding sources, such as Measure D's Rail category, are insufficient to cover the substantial investment required to restore the corridor to operational standards for freight or recreational rail service, leaving the SCBRL inoperable to freight service north of Watsonville indefinitely.

Negotiations with Progressive Rail

In May 2020, PGR notified the RTC of its intent to terminate the ACL Agreement due to significant economic loss and operational problems ([Attachment 1](#)) citing vandalism, theft, and damage to railroad facilities exceeding \$100,000. Their request to terminate the ACL included willingness to cooperate and assist with finding a new common carrier to assume the freight obligations. Following staff and general counsel's questioning of their claims, in November 2020, PGR submitted a 90-day Notice of Intent to Abandon the SCBRL ([Attachment 2](#)).

In a March 2021 follow up letter, PGR requested the freight easement be assigned to a new operator ([Attachment 3](#)) over concerns that abandonment could be costly due to the risk of denial by the STB on the basis of isolating Roaring Camp Railroad, who publicly opposed initiation of abandonment and railbanking ([Attachment 4](#)). A map showing the location of the Felton Line with respect to the SCBRL and national rail network is included as [Figure 4](#).



Figure 4 – Railroads in Santa Cruz County connect to the National Freight Rail Network via the Central Coast Corridor Located in Pajaro (North Monterey County)

Rather than assigning the ACL agreement to another operator, PGR subsequently entered into a separate sub-contract with Roaring Camp Railroad to reduce PGR's costs. Roaring Camp Railroad acts as a contracted operator to PGR, who remains the common carrier of the SCBRL to-date, to continue serving the 3 freight customers in the Watsonville area. The RTC does not have a contract with Roaring Camp Railroad.

In October of 2025 the RTC requested that PGR review plans and subsequently approve a right of entry (ROE) agreement for the City of Santa Cruz's temporary use of the railroad bridge over the Santa Cruz Yacht Harbor (also known as the Woods Lagoon railroad bridge at Milepost 18.84) for pedestrian and bicycle access during construction of the adjacent roadway bridge closure. PGR responded stating that they are not able to proceed with the City's proposal citing safety and liability concerns. Last month, the City of Santa Cruz decided not to proceed with the proposal to use the railroad bridge for temporary bicycle and pedestrian access, in part due to the resistance by PGR.

Coastal Rail Trail

While originally built and operated for freight service, the SCBRL was purchased by the RTC to advance regional multi-modal transportation options, such as multi-use regional trail and options for passenger rail service. The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) or "Coastal Rail Trail" Master Plan, approved in 2014, envisions a connected north and south Santa Cruz County through a pedestrian and bicycle trail within the SCBRL corridor. As of today, segments of the Coastal Rail Trail have been constructed in the City of Santa Cruz (Segment 7), the City of Watsonville (a portion of Segment 18), and is under construction between Wilder Ranch and Davenport (Segment 5) along the north coast of Santa Cruz County.

The Coastal Rail Trail projects under development between Pacific Avenue and 17th Avenue (Segments 8 & 9) by the City of Santa Cruz, and between 17th Avenue and State Park Drive (Segments 10 & 11) by the County of Santa Cruz are in the final design and right of way phase of project development. The latest cost estimates for the projects as currently designed adjacent to the existing railroad tracks show that the project will cost much more than originally anticipated.

For full construction, the estimated costs are far beyond what can be supported by Measure D and other secured funding sources, due to the high cost of retaining walls and structures associated with constructing the trail adjacent to the existing railroad tracks. Funding 100% of the project with Measure D alone is not feasible. Covering about 60% of the costs would completely use up Measure D Active Transportation funds over the remaining life of the measure, leaving no remaining funds for other trail projects in the southern part of our region. Our region's ~\$120 million in

grants is at risk if the trail projects cannot be delivered within the funding deadlines.

Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail

The Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail (ZEPRT) Project Concept Report was completed and released in October of 2025 and staff recommends accepting the final report as part of item 26 on today's agenda. In 2022, following failure of a citizen's ballot initiative that intended to amend the County's general plan to support an interim trail along the SCBRL, staff was directed by the Commission to pursue the next step of project development for passenger rail along the SCBRL, which was preliminary engineering and environmental analysis. The full cost of completing the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis exceeded \$20 million which the RTC did not have. In 2023, the RTC was successful in securing a portion of the funds needed to complete preliminary engineering and environmental analysis which led to the development of the ZEPRT Project Concept, to answer the community and the Commission's primary questions about what passenger rail could look like for our region, including travel times, cost to build, operate, and maintain the facility, and ridership projections.

Staff continues to seek full funding to complete the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis of the project. There are very few available funding sources at the state and federal level for pre-construction components of capital projects and therefore it is common for pre-construction work be funded locally. Following the request for \$15 million in regional discretionary funds to continue development of the ZEPRT project, at the November 6, 2025 meeting the Commission committed \$1 million in future 2028 State Transportation Improvement Program shares toward this effort, however a \$14-15 million funding gap remains. The remaining preliminary engineering and environmental analysis work is on hold until additional funds are secured.

DISCUSSION

Below is a description of railbanking defined, an outline of the process, and how railbanking could apply to the SCBRL.

Railbanking Definition

Railbanking was established as an alternative to full abandonment of unused freight rail lines through a 1983 amendment to the National Trails System Act, or “Rails to Trails Act”, and provides for the legal, temporary, use of a rail corridor for interim uses, such as a trail or other non-freight rail use. A rail line is considered for abandonment when the lack of use and preference for alternative shipping methods create a non-economically viable condition for the freight rail operator, who seeks to abandon their legal obligation to provide freight services.

If a rail line were fully abandoned, the easements for railroad purposes over private property would revert to the underlying owners and potentially fragment the linear rail corridor right of way. If a rail line was railbanked, the easements for railroad purposes over private property would be allowed to be used for other non-rail uses for an interim period of time, until the need and economic viability for freight rail use returns. Railbanking provides the opportunity to repurpose rail rights of way for transportation uses with the stipulation that the corridor may be converted back to freight rail uses at a future time if the need arises.

Railbanking Process

Railbanking begins with the process of a common carrier seeking abandonment of a freight rail line by filing a Notice of Abandonment with the STB. Abandonment of freight rail service is reviewed and regulated by the STB with the goal of balancing the “potential harm to affected shippers and communities against the [...] burden” of continued operations on the railroad and on interstate commerce (49 U.S.C. § 10903(d)). Once abandonment is initiated, an interested entity, or “sponsor”, has the opportunity to file a Petition for Interim Use and subsequently negotiate an interim use agreement with the common carrier to preserve the linear right of way for interim use. The sponsor must include in the petition a statement of willingness to assume financial responsibility for managing the corridor.

Following the common carrier’s filing of abandonment, another interested freight rail carrier could file an Offer of Financial Assistance (OFA) to prevent full abandonment. The OFA must be legitimate and includes an obligation to assume the freight easement and common carrier obligations, including maintenance and repair of the line. If an OFA is rejected by the STB, and a Petition for Interim Use has been filed by a sponsor entity interested in using

the line, the common carrier has one-year to negotiate an interim use agreement with the interested sponsor. The one-year period for negotiation of the interim use agreement can be extended. A signed interim use agreement indicates that a line has been railbanked with the sponsor agency assuming financial liability to maintain the right-of-way. Once railbanked the sponsor may begin to use the corridor for other transportation uses.

There is no fixed timeline for abandonment or railbanking. An unopposed Notice of Exemption (NOE) Abandonment Application could be approved within 6 months or, if met with an OFA, 8 months, with a subsequent interim use agreement negotiated that could take 1 month to one-year, or later if extended by the STB. Requirements for an NOE abandonment include noticing relevant local, state, and federal agencies, providing environmental and historical reports, filing and publication in the Federal Register. Below are the steps to railbank a corridor:

1. Environmental Consultation Letters are mailed to state, local, and federal environmental agencies and the State Historic Preservation Office (Agencies) (30-day waiting period)
2. Environmental and Historical Reports are provided to Agencies (20-day waiting period before filing Notice of Exemption with the STB)
3. File the Notice of Exemption, STB Publication in the Federal Register (20 days)
4. Waiting period for Offer of Financial Assistance (30 days)
5. If Offer of Financial Assistance received, STB will examine (~ 2 months)
6. Sponsor files petition for interim use (within 10 days of publication)
7. Negotiate interim use agreement (up to one-year to negotiate agreement with option to extend)
8. Execution of the interim use agreement concludes the railbanking process.

The process can take longer due to complications, opposition, whether there are active freight customers who would no longer be served, or challenges with the abandonment and railbanking process.

How Railbanking Could Apply to the SCBRL

To-date, the RTC has preserved the SCBRL through maintaining an active freight easement and contracting with a private common carrier. This strategy prioritizes freight rail use over all other modes of transportation along the SCBRL. The RTC could decide to implement an alternative

preservation strategy, which could be to railbank the SCBRL north of Watsonville and use the corridor in the interim, for transportation modes other than freight rail. ***This strategy could be used concurrent with project development activities for future passenger rail (long-term) and multiuse trail (short-term) projects, while maintaining service for the existing freight customers along the southernmost 3 miles of the SCBRL in Watsonville.***

There are sections of the SCBRL that RTC owns easements for rail purposes, as shown in [Figure 5](#). In the SCBRL's current status, additional land rights may be needed in locations where railroad easements exist, to allow for the Coastal Rail Trail to be constructed. If the SCBRL was railbanked, the areas where RTC owns easements for railroad purposes over private property along the SCBRL would be allowed to be used for other modes of transportation, including the Coastal Rail Trail.



Figure 5 – RTC Ownership – Locations of Fee and Railroad Easements along the SCBRL

The railbanking process begins with the filing for abandonment with the STB. There are two possible options (1) the common carrier, who is currently PGR, could initiate abandonment by filing with the STB; or (2) another entity could initiate abandonment, through an adverse abandonment filing with the STB. Adverse abandonment is not a preferred approach to initiating abandonment if the ultimate goal is to railbank a corridor, because it creates a difficult environment to subsequently negotiate an interim use agreement with the common carrier.

The common carrier, PGR, in 2021 expressed opposition to a change in status of the SCBRL. Roaring Camp Railroad, who is technically the common carrier of the Felton line under the name Big Trees & Pacific Railway, opposes initiation of abandonment of the SCBRL because doing so would leave them as a stranded segment from the national rail network, and unable to carry goods to and from the San Lorenzo Valley via the SCBRL. Roaring Camp Railroads has an interest in maintaining connection to the national rail network via the SCBRL and has an interest in maintaining the SCBRL status as active. However, today Roaring Camp Railroads is not connected to the national freight network from the Felton line due to the poor condition of the SCBRL infrastructure, which the RTC does not have the financial capacity to address.

Roaring Camp Railroads primary operation is the recreational Beach Train which runs along the Felton line and a portion of the SCBRL with its terminus at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. Roaring Camp Railroads has a trackage use agreement that allows them to use a portion of the SCBRL between Maple Street and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk for interchange and recreational rail purposes. Railbanking the SCBRL would not halt or preclude the Beach Train's ability to reach the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk unless the trackage use agreement was modified or terminated. Railbanking the SCBRL would not change Roaring Camp's common carrier status on its line.

The RTC under the current agreement structure is not able to use the SCBRL for anything other than freight, which its infrastructure cannot physically support the loads of. Constructing the Coastal Rail Trail adjacent to the existing freight tracks is financially infeasible at this time, and staff is seeking cost saving measures such as the interim trail configuration in order to save the ~\$120 million in secured grants to construct the Coastal Rail Trail along a portion of the SCBRL.

If the RTC desires to use the corridor for uses other than freight, the RTC could: (1) wait out the term of the ACL agreement that expires in 2028 and either seek a new common carrier for the line who could agree to take actions to take inoperable portions of the SCBRL out of service through railbanking or other form of interim cessation of freight service such as embargo, OPSL, or discontinuance, or (2) RTC could decide to become the common carrier of the SCBRL in 2028 and institute one of these processes. RTC could also pursue modifying the current ACL, but a successful amendment would be contingent on PGR's willingness to negotiate. The RTC could also decide to terminate the ACL agreement and either find a new

common carrier, or become the common carrier in advance of the expiration of the ACL agreement.

Without initiation of abandonment of the freight easement through the common carrier filing with the STB or an outside entity filing of adverse abandonment, the railbanking process cannot proceed.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with accepting this informational overview of railbanking as it relates to the RTC-owned Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL).

SUMMARY

Railbanking is the process of preserving a rail corridor for future rail use while removing freight service obligations. Staff provided a background of the SCBRL ownership and preservation strategy, an overview of the railbanking process, and how the railbanking process could apply to the RTC-owned SCBRL.

Attachments:

1. Letter from PGR dated May 27, 2020 Notice of Termination of the Administration, Coordination, & License Agreement
2. Letter from PGR dated November 17, 2020 Notice of Intent to Abandon the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
3. Letter from PGR dated March 18, 2021 Request for Assignment of the Administration, Coordination, and License Agreement
4. Letter from Roaring Camp dated March 18, 2021 Opposing Railbanking of the SCBRL



MOVING YOU FORWARD

May 27, 2020

Executive Director
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Ave
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Executive Director,

Pursuant to the terms and conditions of the July 16, 2018 Administration, Coordination and License Agreement ("Agreement") between St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, LLC ("SPP") and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission ("SCCRTC") this letter provides notice that SPP is electing to terminate the Agreement pursuant to section 2.6.2 effective 90 days from the date of this letter.

There have been multiple incidents of trespassing, vandalism and theft causing significant economic loss and operational problems for SPP:

Vandalism – On April 29, 2020 it was reported that the lock on the Signal Bungalow at Ohlone Road was Cut Off and 20 Railroad Batteries were stolen.

Time for repair: Not Yet Replaced

Approximate Repair/Replacement Cost: \$20,000.00

Operational Interference: Crew must Stop and Flag for each movement through the Crossing.

January 17, 2020

Damage/Vandalism - On January 11, 2020 a nest of ties on the Pajaro River Bridge were found to be burned by trespassers.

Time for repair: Repaired – 5 Day Railroad Closure

Approximate Repair/Replacement Cost: \$4,496.10

Operational Interference: Crew must be extra cautious as to not step into any trap left by trespassers on the bridge.

January 11, 2020

Damage - On January 11, 2020 a vehicle drove onto the Pajaro River Bridge causing damage to the Bridge structure, walkway, and handrail.

Time for repair: Not Yet Repaired – 5 Day Railroad Closure expected

Approximate Repair/Replacement Cost: \$9,776.10

Operational Interference: Crew must be extra cautious as to not trap any trespassers on the bridge.

December 6, 2019

Threat – On December 6, 2019 SPP received a Credible Threat to remove part of the walkway from the Aptos Railroad bridge. The SCCRTC Office, and TSA were informed of this.

Time for repair: N/A

Approximate Repair/Replacement Cost: N/A

Operational Interference: Crew continues to be concerned regarding their Safety while performing their daily duties.

July 22, 2019

Damage - On July 22, 2019 a vehicle drove onto the Pajaro River Bridge causing damage to the Bridge structure, walkway, and handrail.

Time for repair: Repaired - 5 Day Railroad Closure

Approximate Repair/Replacement Cost: \$14,000.00

Operational Interference: Crew was unable to provide service while repairs were made.

May 25, 2019

Damage – On May 25, 2019 a vehicle struck and knocked down the Signal Gate and Lights at the W. Riverside Drive Crossing. Not Repaired, as the restitution Claim is still pending.

Time for repair: Not Yet Repaired – Timeline is unknown

Approximate Repair/Replacement Cost: \$60,000.00

Operational Interference: Crew must Stop and Flag for each movement through the Crossing

November 13, 2018

Vandalism – On November 13, 2018 a report of Trespasser Vandalism was received. A ratchet strap was found to be set between a timber tie and a railcar.

Time for repair: Immediate upon inspection

Approximate Repair/Replacement Cost: N/A

Operational Interference: Crew continues to be concerned regarding their Safety while performing their daily duties

The events recorded above are just a portion of the countless acts of Trespasser Vandalism that continue to cause damage to the Rail Line. There is visible evidence of Trespassers lighting the Railroad Bridge Ties on Fire, as well as homeless encampments along the line within the Right of Way, not to mention the number of Trespassers that are encountered by the SPP crew on the Right of Way daily.

Since November 2018 SPP has spent well over \$100,000.00 on repairs and other expenses related to trespassing, vandalism and theft. This does not include the man hours spent on projects and extra flagging and precautions needed to operate. Accordingly, SPP hereby exercises its right under section 2.6.2 and terminates the Agreement. Please contact me with any questions or concerns. SPP is happy to cooperate with SCCRTC to find another operator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lon Van Gemert', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lon Van Gemert

CEO Progressive Rail, Inc.



MOVING YOU FORWARD

St. Paul and Pacific Administration, Coordination, and License Agreement Termination

1. St. Paul and Pacific ("SPP") intends to terminate its Administration, Coordination, and License Agreement ("ACL").
2. Pursuant to the terms of the ACL it appears that RTC can transfer the lease to another Operator. ("Upon termination of the Agreement, whether through the expiration of the term or by the Parties as contemplated herein, Railway shall cooperate,..., with the transfer...of Freight Service...")(8.2.2). Because the ACL can be transferred per the Agreement, fees, costs and other expenses can be greatly limited.
3. SPP wishes to assist RTC with finding another operator.
4. In that regard SPP has had discussions with and entered into NDA's with 4 potential qualified operators. Per those NDA's, SPP is providing the potential operators with information necessary for them to evaluate the ACL and the operation of both freight and passenger service. These four potential operators have the necessary experience with both freight and passenger service to better work with RTC on both aspects of the service contemplated by the ACL.
5. SPP will work with the new operator to assist in the transition; including a possible locomotive lease and encouraging the current employees and new operator to work together to make the transition work smoothly.
6. SPP is interested in working with the new operator to continue marketing the freight component of the rail line. There are several new freight opportunities that SPP has been working on and will continue to work with the new Operator to develop, if requested.



21778 Highview Avenue
Lakeville, MN 55044

November 17, 2020

Steve Mattas
General Counsel, Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission
1999 Harrison Street, 9th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: NOTICE OF INTENT TO ABANDON PURSUANT TO SECTION OF 8.3 of St. Paul and Pacific/Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Administration and Coordination and License Agreement

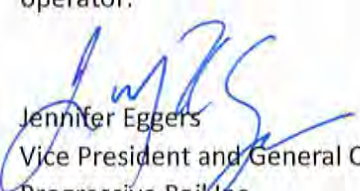
Dear Mr. Mattas:

This letter is response to yours of November 16, 2020, while I do not intend, in this letter, to reiterate all of our prior correspondence regarding the St. Paul and Pacific/Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Administration and Coordination License Agreement ("ACL") it remains St. Paul and Pacific Railroad's ("SPP") position that the conditions necessary to terminate the ACL pursuant to Section 2.6.2 of the ACL have been met. As we discussed, we do not need to reach agreement on this point at this time, but SPP is not waiving that argument should we ultimately end up in litigation over the ACL. As you have suggested we will gather the documentation for required repairs due to trespassers, vandals and other illegal activity and work with Luis on reimbursement.

Further, as you recommend in your November 17 letter, please consider this letter as official NINETY (90) DAY NOTICE OF SPP's INTENT TO ABANDON TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PURSUANT TO SECTION OF 8.3 OF THE ACL. To the extent SPP's prior notice on May 27, 2020 did not, this notice triggers the RTC's obligations regarding use of "reasonable efforts," to obtain a new operator to which Freight Service can be transferred.

SPP has provided RTC with names of at least six (6) potential operators in addition to the attached Concept Proposal provided by a team ready and able to take over the Operations. This Proposal has been previously provided to Luis and Guy.

The Ninety (90) day Notice Period begins today and ends on February 14, 2021. As we have always agreed, SPP is happy to work with RTC to seamlessly transfer the Freight Operations to the RTC or a new operator.


Jennifer Eggers
Vice President and General Counsel
Progressive Rail Inc.



21778 Highview Avenue
Lakeville, MN 55044

March 18, 2021

Via email

Dear Guy and Luis,

As we have discussed for over a year now, Progressive Rail Inc./St. Paul and Pacific ("PGR") cannot make the operation of the freight easement profitably work under the current ACL Agreement. PGR has requested the agreement be assigned to another operator, preferably one with more local connections, to ease the burden of the maintenance and other regulatory requirements. The ACL itself contemplates that the ACL can be modified. See paragraph 22. Accordingly, if modification is necessary to effectuate an assignment under paragraphs 8.3-8.5, then that should be accomplished by RTC.

In addition, in our view the terms of the ACL do not provide a viable structure for the engagement of a passenger operator. Further, it does not appear that RTC is complying with its obligations in terms of Initial Rehabilitation and Repair Projects pursuant to paragraph 5.1 including repair and replacement of damaged bridges, overpasses, trestles, culverts, and tracks making passenger operations even more difficult.

Further, if RTC essentially forces PGR to institute an expensive and potentially futile abandonment process we are concerned it will be denied by the STB because it will leave Roaring Camp isolated from the rail system, which we also do not want to do. Accordingly, we are in the process of implementing an agreement with Roaring Camp that will substantially reduce our costs. As a result, while we greatly favor the renegotiation of the ACL and believe that RTC is obligated to make reasonable efforts to find a new operator, including a renegotiation if necessary, we do not, at this time, plan to terminate our participation in the ACL by filing for abandonment. Although we reserve our right to do so at any time without an additional 90 days' notice.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lon Van Gemert", is written over a horizontal line.

Lon Van Gemert

cc Jennifer Eggers
Steve Mattas



March 18, 2021

Mr. Guy Preston
Executive Director
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Guy:

I wanted to thank you, Luis and Steve for taking the time out of your busy schedules to speak with us Wednesday. We certainly share your concerns regarding the Santa Cruz Branch Line and believe there could be real potential in collaborating on railroad projects and other operations. Your update on the line was very informative and helps us to understand the issues you're dealing with in regards to the railroad bridges. We just completed our annual engineering report and subsequent list of repairs for our bridges in accordance with FRA CFR Part 237 program. We certainly understand the challenges that inspections bring both financially and logistically and are happy to discuss avenues and solutions we've taken.

As stated in our meeting, we are not in support of railbanking. This has led to our discussion with Progressive in regards to the handling of freight service between MP 0 – MP 7. We feel our partnership could help bridge a gap between the RTC and Progressive so that freight can be served in accordance with STB requirements. Progressive has expressed the opinion that the ACL should be amended because the current agreement creates too large of a burden on the operator. As you know we have concurred in this opinion and would like to request a discussion on the few items of concern. We hope you will consider our request as we feel future negotiations may become difficult.

We also encourage you to continue communications with TIG/m whom we view as a potential partner for the transportation service requirement of the ACL. They shared that their initial offer was just one possible scenario and that they can offer a much more modest approach that would include track remediation, rolling stock, new stations and an O&M facility, none of which would require public sector funding. TIG/m can solve the issues of service operation, EIR's, etc., given the chance. Clean air, battery and hydrogen fuel propelled, 20 hours of operation on a single charge, TIG/m truly offers a environmentally friendly, cost-effective answer to smaller regional rail transportation. Roaring Camp is offering our support and services to assist in TIG/m's success on the corridor.

During our meeting, you expressed concern about the long-term future. Roaring Camp shares concerns about the future too, our business depends on it. We look to partner with state-of-the-art transportation services like TIG/m, we look to freight service on our Felton Branch Line and we look to what we can bring to the table however it fits best on the Santa Cruz Branch Line. We support the rail with trail and think it is an asset to all those living and visiting Santa Cruz County. We hope the efforts of Mark Stone, Sam Farr and so many others who worked hard for a multi-use corridor will be proud of the decisions made by you during your tenure at the RTC.

Best regards,

Melani Clark
CEO, Roaring Camp Railroads

TO: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Riley Gerbrandt, P.E., Associate Transportation Engineer

RE: Accept Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Final Project Concept Report

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) receive a presentation on the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) Final Project Concept, and approve the resolution (Attachment 1) to accept the Final Project Concept Report ([Exhibit A to Attachment 1](#)), direct staff to continue pursuing eligible state and federal funding to complete the preliminary engineering and environmental review for the ZEPRT Project, and direct staff to continue coordinating with state and federal partners to pursue passenger rail along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Commission acquired the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (Branch Line), which provides a unique opportunity for Santa Cruz County to have a dedicated transportation facility connecting the county's two largest cities, Watsonville and Santa Cruz, and the communities in between. At Watsonville Junction in Pajaro, it also provides opportunities for connections outside of Santa Cruz County and to other parts of the state.

Subsequently, several planning studies evaluated public transportation investment options for Santa Cruz County. These culminated in a preferred scenario comprising high-capacity zero emission passenger rail with a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail (Coastal Rail Trail) along the Branch Line. Seventeen miles of Coastal Rail Trail projects have been constructed or are under development as separate projects.

In 2022, the Commission solicited proposals from qualified and experienced professional consultants to develop the project concept and subsequently the environmental documentation for the proposed passenger rail transit and Coastal Rail Trail project. The project scope includes zero emission passenger rail along the Branch Line between Pajaro and Santa Cruz, and

the remaining segments of the Coastal Rail Trail including between Rio del Mar and Pajaro (Segments 13 through 20) as well as the Capitola Trestle (Segment 11, Phase 2). In 2023, the Commission awarded a Professional Engineering Services Agreement to HDR Engineering, Inc. to complete the Project Concept Report for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project (Project).

On February 1, 2024, the Commission received a presentation and held a public hearing to start public engagement for Milestone 1 of the Project concept development. The public hearing and subsequent engagement sought to gather input on the Project preliminary purpose and need statement.

At the April 4, 2024 Commission meeting, loading guidelines for railroad bridge repairs and replacements were adopted. At the May 2, 2024 Commission meeting, typical design cross sections for preferred, constrained and unconstrained scenarios of the rail and trail facilities were also adopted. Additionally, the Commission adopted horizontal setback guidelines from the Branch Line right-of-way.

The Commission held a public hearing at the June 2024 meeting, kicking off public engagement for Milestone 2 in the development of the project concept. The public hearing and ensuing engagement effort sought to gather input on the initial conceptual Project alignment and analysis of conceptual rail transit vehicle types. Staff returned at the September 2024 meeting to provide a summary of Milestone 2 engagement and community feedback as well as an update on coordination efforts with the California Public Utilities Commission.

On December 5, 2024, the Commission held a public hearing to receive feedback on the Project's Milestone 3. Public engagement was conducted from October through December 2024, focused on collecting public feedback on the Project's updated conceptual alignment, potential station locations and features, Quiet Zones, funding and service, and bridge infrastructure.

Based on community and stakeholder feedback received during the Milestone 3 public engagement, it became apparent that additional engineering and community engagement work was needed to resolve some of the complex engineering constraints encountered by the Project. This work was completed in Spring 2025, and a summary is presented in the Discussion section of this item.

At its March 20, 2025 meeting, the Commission received an update on the status of the Project's concept development, including an overview of

Milestone 3 engagement activities completed as well as information on current work in progress, infrastructure evaluation and potential funding opportunities. The Commission also directed staff to pursue intercity passenger rail service on the Branch Line by aligning the project concept with what is envisioned in the [2024 California State Rail Plan](#). At this meeting, the Commission also formed two ZEPRT working groups of Commissioners to focus on understanding and resolving key project alignment challenges, specifically in the areas of Watsonville and Santa Cruz.

At its June 12, 2025 meeting, the Commission received an update on the status of the Project's concept development and on the ZEPRT Draft Project Concept Report's Executive Summary, providing new information on the proposed rail and trail alignment, conceptual station locations and access features, conceptual ridership projections, conceptual passenger rail operations and freight interface, vehicle types, environmental screening findings, detailed capital and operating cost estimates, a preliminary funding and regulatory strategy to support future project development, and a summary of public engagement feedback received to date.

The Commission directed staff to prepare and present a financial analysis utilizing the cost estimates in the Draft Project Concept Report to calculate the local share required to cover 20 to 50 percent of capital costs as a match to future federal and state construction grants, while covering operations and maintenance costs following construction and testing of the new facility.

Most recently, at its August 7, 2025, meeting, the Commission received an update and held a public hearing on the Draft Project Concept Report and financial analysis prepared in response to the Commission's June 2025 request. During that meeting, the Commission directed staff to return in December 2025, and to respond to the following requests:

1. The Final Concept Report is released no later than two and a half weeks prior to the Commission meeting;
2. The final report include specific feedback from the Coastal Commission about any input they have that would add costs;
3. Specific discussion of constraints on Beach Street and Walker Street;
4. Specific financial analysis of cost per passenger mile that compares the costs of the ZEPRT system to others; and
5. Peer review of the Final Concept Report.

The ZEPRT Final Project Concept Report was published on October 24, 2025 on the RTC's project website at www.sccrtc.org/zeprt. Additional information related to Commission's requests is detailed below and/or will be provided in the staff presentation to the Commission.

DISCUSSION

Final ZEPRT Project Concept Report Updates

The Final Project Concept Report was published on October 24, 2025 and is the final deliverable in the development of the project concept for the passenger rail component of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project. The report presents the project concept developed for the proposed implementation of a new daily passenger rail service and multi-use trail operating on the RTC-owned Branch Line corridor. The report also details the development and related background, analysis, assumptions, findings, and potential next steps.

The Final Project Concept Report considered feedback received from extensive public engagement and stakeholder coordination. Staff solicited community feedback on the Final Project Concept throughout the summer Milestone 4 engagement period from June 12 through August 22, 2025. A summary of the engagement activities and feedback received is available in the Milestone 4 Engagement Summary, available on the project website at www.sccrtc.org/zeprt under the “Engagement Opportunities” header.

Key updates in the Final Project Concept Report are summarized below:

1. **Preface.** A preface to the Final Project Concept Report includes information on the purpose and intent of the final report to respond directly to the questions most frequently raised by our community, our partner agencies, and the Commission about the feasibility and potential of implementing passenger rail service along the Branch Line rail corridor.
2. **Next Steps and Funding.** The Final Project Concept Report identifies potential steps that the RTC and stakeholders can consider for strategic advancement of ZEPRT that would help to inform and progress future project activities. These potential steps will help inform the environmental process by providing more clarity on how the project can serve Santa Cruz County and will also serve to benefit the Commission in making future decisions on funding and a specific approach to implementation. The final report also identifies potential federal, state, and local funding sources and other options for phased advancement of the ZEPRT Project. Details on these potential next steps and funding are presented in Chapter 20 of the Final Concept Report.

While the Final Project Concept Report reflects refined study and analysis, it is notable that several key project components have not changed substantively from the Draft version of the Project Concept Report. These components include the ZEPRT Project's conceptual ridership and revenue forecasts, proposed rail and trail alignment and station locations, estimated end-to-end travel time, and conceptual project cost estimates.

Coastal Commission Feedback

Early engagement has been conducted with the California Coastal Commission (CCC), as one of many stakeholders, throughout the development of the Project's Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis (2022) and Project Concept Report (2025). Most recently, RTC staff have met with CCC staff through each of the ZEPRT Project milestones to provide updates on the project approach. Key discussion topics have included reiteration of the CCC's permitting process and guidelines, public access to the coastline, use of seasonal stations to provide new access to coastal areas, whether the project is considered a new or existing facility and if it can be considered a coastal-dependent use, and what design approaches may be permissible to address anticipated bluff retreat (erosion).

Although very little information or direction has been provided to the project team by the CCC on what to expect from a future permitting process, the project team anticipates the CCC requiring additional mitigation measures, such as enhanced coastal access and/or seasonal stations, that would be added features to the project concept that are not currently included. These features could change the project footprint, travel times, and capital & operations cost. Development of climate resilience measures and alternatives analyses (building on efforts recently started via a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant) would ultimately be used to seek CCC approval of a Coastal Development Permit.

Constraints on Walker Street in Watsonville and Beach Street in Santa Cruz

Analysis and stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the project concept considered the constraints and opportunities on the Walker Street Corridor in Watsonville and the Beach Street Corridor/Beach Flats area in Santa Cruz. Community and stakeholder feedback were considered in the project's design and is represented in the Final Project Concept Report. Continued coordination will be conducted as the project advances.

In central Watsonville, the existing Branch Line alignment (track) is located within Walker Street. Due largely to vehicle movement, intersection conflicts, constraints related to limited street right-of-way, and challenges

associated with providing for sufficient tangent track to support a new station platform at the historic Downtown Watsonville Depot location, several alternatives were considered preliminarily for the conceptual rail alignment through Walker Street. At this stage of the ZEPRT Project, the conceptual rail alignment includes a slight shift of the Branch Line to the east side of the Walker Street footprint, which helps to resolve some of these constraints. A final rail alignment through Watsonville that meets the objectives of the ZEPRT Project will be defined through future analysis and stakeholder coordination as the ZEPRT Project advances.

In the Beach Flats area of Santa Cruz, from the San Lorenzo River to the traffic roundabout at Pacific Avenue, the current Branch Line alignment passes in front of the Boardwalk and through the center of Beach Street. The current alignment carries significant complexities due to conflicting priorities, such as visitor access and safety, parking, maintenance and operations activities by the Boardwalk, vehicular traffic and pedestrian circulation, railroad operations, adjacent property use, physical topography, and coastal constraints. Various alternatives were preliminarily considered for the conceptual rail and trail alignments through this area, including shifting the rail alignment farther north as well as placing it on an elevated guideway. While the project concept identifies conceptual alternatives for the rail and trail alignments through this area, the conceptual cost estimates in the Final Project Concept Report assume an at-grade alignment (tracks at street level) for the ZEPRT baseline concept. Additional study and stakeholder coordination will be required in future ZEPRT Project phases to confirm the final rail and trail alignments.

Project Cost Analysis

A memorandum (Attachment 2) was prepared which provides an overview of the factors affecting the conceptual capital costs and constructability of the ZEPRT Project as presented in the Final Project Concept Report. This memorandum also includes comparison with capital costs and construction experience from a selection of other comparable rail transit projects in California.

The analysis relies on construction cost trends and discusses project cost estimate elements, the key drivers of those costs, and comparisons of those cost categories with similar elements on other transit projects.

Peer Review

A peer review of the ZEPRT project concept was held in Santa Cruz on November 17-19, 2025. The purpose of the peer review was to review the project analysis completed to-date and as presented in the Final Project Concept Report. Five panelists participated in the peer review process, with

the panelists selected for their relevant statewide and local rail and infrastructure knowledge and expertise, including active and retired representatives of regional public agencies and the private sector. Panelists participated in a tour of the Branch Line to observe the existing rail corridor and current conditions, with an emphasis on areas with known challenges, received presentations from the Project team regarding the project concept, and engaged in discussion to develop feedback and recommendations regarding the Final Project Concept Report and how the RTC can best move forward to advance passenger rail service and a multimodal Coastal Rail Trail in Santa Cruz County.

A memorandum summarizing the peer review and recommendations is included as Attachment 3.

RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, as culmination of the project concept phase of the ZEPRT Project, **Staff recommend the Commission approve the resolution (Attachment 1) to accept the Final Project Concept Report (Exhibit A to Attachment 1), direct staff to continue pursuing eligible state and federal funding to complete the preliminary engineering and environmental review for the ZEPRT Project, and direct staff to continue coordinating with state and federal partners to pursue passenger rail along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.**

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no new fiscal impacts associated with receiving a presentation and accepting the ZEPRT Final Project Concept Report.

NEXT STEPS

Following the Commission's acceptance of the Final Project Concept Report, the next phase of the ZEPRT Project would be to complete the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis of the Project. Staff continues to seek full funding to complete this phase, however, there are very few available funding sources at the state and federal level for pre-construction components of capital projects. Therefore, it is common for pre-construction work be funded locally. Following the request for \$15 million in regional discretionary funds to continue development of the ZEPRT project at the November 6, 2025, meeting the Commission committed \$1 million in future 2028 State Transportation Improvement Program shares toward this effort. However, a \$14 to \$15 million funding gap remains. The remaining

preliminary engineering and environmental analysis work is on hold until additional funds are secured.

SUMMARY

A presentation was provided regarding the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project Final Project Concept Report and response to other requests made at the Commission's August 2025 meeting. Staff recommended the Commission accept the Final Project Concept Report for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
 - a. Final Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project Concept Report (posted online)
2. Memorandum – Capital Cost Description and Comparison
3. Memorandum – Peer Review Summary and Recommendations

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
on the date of December 4, 2025
on the motion of Commissioner
duly seconded by Commissioner

**A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE ZERO EMISSION PASSENGER RAIL & TRAIL
PROJECT CONCEPT REPORT**

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) purchased the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line in 2012 to preserve and expand transportation uses of the corridor;

WHEREAS, following extensive community input, the RTC prepared a Passenger Rail Transit Feasibility Study in 2015, the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) in 2019, and the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study (TCAA/RNIS) in 2021, which evaluated public transit investment options for an integrated transit network for Santa Cruz County utilizing all or part of the length of the branch line right-of-way. The TCAA/RNIS identified electric passenger rail as the locally preferred alternative;

WHEREAS, at its August 2022 meeting, the Commission directed staff to release a request for proposals (RFP) from qualified consultants to prepare an operating concept, project definition, right of way services, preliminary engineering, and environmental documentation with optional services for full engineering through construction of the Electric Passenger Rail and Coastal Rail Trail project;

WHEREAS, in 2022, RTC released an RFP soliciting proposals from qualified and experienced professional engineering consultants to perform preliminary engineering and environmental documentation for a proposed zero emission passenger rail and trail project along the RTC-owned Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) right of way

WHEREAS, the RTC did not have full funding to advance the entire scope of the environmental analysis and preliminary engineering work, thus awarded a contract in December of 2022 to HDR Engineering, Inc. to complete a portion of the work which was the Project Concept Report;

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2024, the Commission received a presentation and held a public hearing to start public engagement for Milestone 1 of the Project concept development to seek input on the Project preliminary purpose and need statement;

WHEREAS, on April 4, 2024, the Commission adopted loading guidelines for railroad bridge repairs and replacements; on May 2, 2024 the Commission adopted typical design cross sections for preferred, constrained and unconstrained scenarios of the rail and trail facilities; and horizontal setback guidelines from the Branch Line right-of-way;

WHEREAS, in June of 2024 a public hearing was held to kick off public engagement for Milestone 2 to gather input on the initial conceptual Project alignment and analysis of conceptual rail transit vehicle types;

WHEREAS, in December of 2024 a public hearing was held to receive feedback on the Project's Milestone 3 focused on the Project's updated conceptual alignment, potential station locations and features, Quiet Zones, funding and service, and bridge infrastructure;

WHEREAS, in March of 2025 the Commission directed staff to pursue intercity passenger rail service along the branch line by aligning the project concept with what is envisioned in the 2024 California State Rail Plan, which identifies the Santa Cruz Branch Line as a long-term-horizon capital project;

WHEREAS, in June of 2025 the Draft Project Concept Report was released and community engagement continued through August of 2025 to gain input on the Project Concept Report;

WHEREAS, a financial analysis was prepared in July of 2025 following a request by the Commission to understand the local share needed to cover 20 to 50 percent of capital costs as a local match to future state and federal construction grants, while covering the operations and maintenance costs once operational;

WHEREAS, in August of 2025 a public hearing was held on the Draft Project Concept Report and financial analysis, and the Commission directed staff to return with more information about the final concept report feedback from the Coastal Commission, discussion of constraints along Beach Street in Santa Cruz and Walker Street in Watsonville, analysis of cost-per passenger mile in comparison to other systems, and a peer review of the Final Project Concept; and

WHEREAS, staff released the Final Project Concept Report in October of 2025, and completed the peer review in November of 2025.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION THAT:

1. The Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail Project Concept is hereby adopted;

2. Staff is directed to continue pursuing eligible state and federal funding to complete the preliminary engineering and environmental review for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project; and
3. Staff is directed to continue coordinating with state and federal partners to pursue passenger rail along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, with current examples including alignment with the 2024 California State Rail Plan as a long-term capital project, and Federal Railroad Administration Corridor Identification Program service development planning work;

AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

Eduardo Montesino, Chair

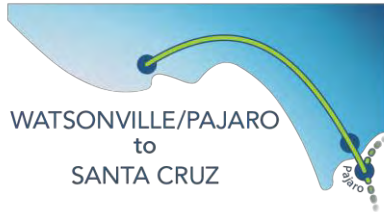
ATTEST:

Sarah Christensen, Secretary

Exhibit:

- A. Final Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project Concept Report (posted online)

ZERO EMISSION PASSENGER RAIL AND TRAIL



Capital Cost Description and Comparison Memorandum

November 20, 2025

SCCRTC Zero Emission
Passenger Rail and Trail Project



1.0 Introduction

This memorandum provides an overview of the factors affecting the conceptual capital costs and constructability of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's (SCCRTC's) Zero-Emission Passenger Rail and Trail (ZEPRT) project, in addition to a comparison with capital costs and construction conditions encountered by a selection of other rail transit projects in California. The ZEPRT Project proposes implementation of new passenger rail service approximately 22 miles of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) extending from Pajaro in the east to Santa Cruz in the west.

This memo begins with an overview of recent construction cost trends, followed by a description of the various cost elements in the conceptual estimate, the key drivers of those costs, and comparisons of those cost categories with similar elements on other projects.

2.0 Construction Cost Trends

When undertaking a comparison of capital costs between projects, it is important to distinguish between estimates of future costs for a conceptual project where the scope is not fully-defined (such as the current stage of the ZEPRT project) and actual construction costs from past projects (occurring at an earlier time and a different place). This brief summary of cost trends will focus on cost trends for common construction elements over time.

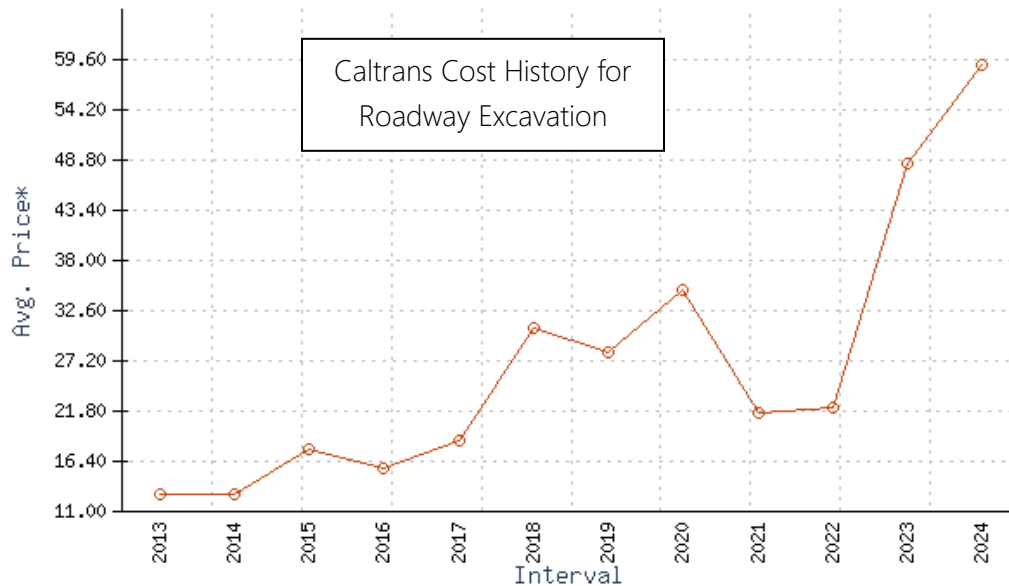
The timing and schedule of a project has an effect on the cost. While accelerating the delivery typically increases construction costs, the year in which expenditures were, or would be, made also affects the total cost. This is particularly important to consider when comparing actual construction costs from past projects with projections of construction costs for a future project, such as the ZEPRT project. The time value of money and inflation have significant effects on costs, making direct comparisons challenging.

It is worth noting that the overall competitive environment at the time of construction also has a significant effect on costs. If, for example, specialty contractors for important items such as railroad track construction or railroad signal construction are forecasted to be particularly busy on other projects (as they are in the current environment in late 2025), pricing for those items will be relatively high and cost estimates may reflect that situation. Similarly, competition for materials, such as Buy America-compliant steel (used for reinforcing in concrete and, most significantly for the ZEPRT project, railroad rail), increases the cost of those items.

Many heavy civil construction projects involve similar types of work as the ZEPRT project. For example, Caltrans provides historical cost data for roadway projects, which due to the similarities in construction activities, can be used as a reference for cost trends. The following graphs illustrate these trends.

2.1 Cost for Roadway Excavation

The graph below illustrates the cost for Roadway Excavation, the description Caltrans uses for excavating soil within the prism of a roadway. This would be a comparable activity to the excavation needed to prepare the SCBRL corridor for the new railbed and trail. Other than a brief dip during the Covid-19 pandemic, the average bid cost of Roadway Excavation has increased dramatically from 2013 to 2024, with the statewide average increasing by a factor of approximately 4.6 from year 2013 to year 2024.

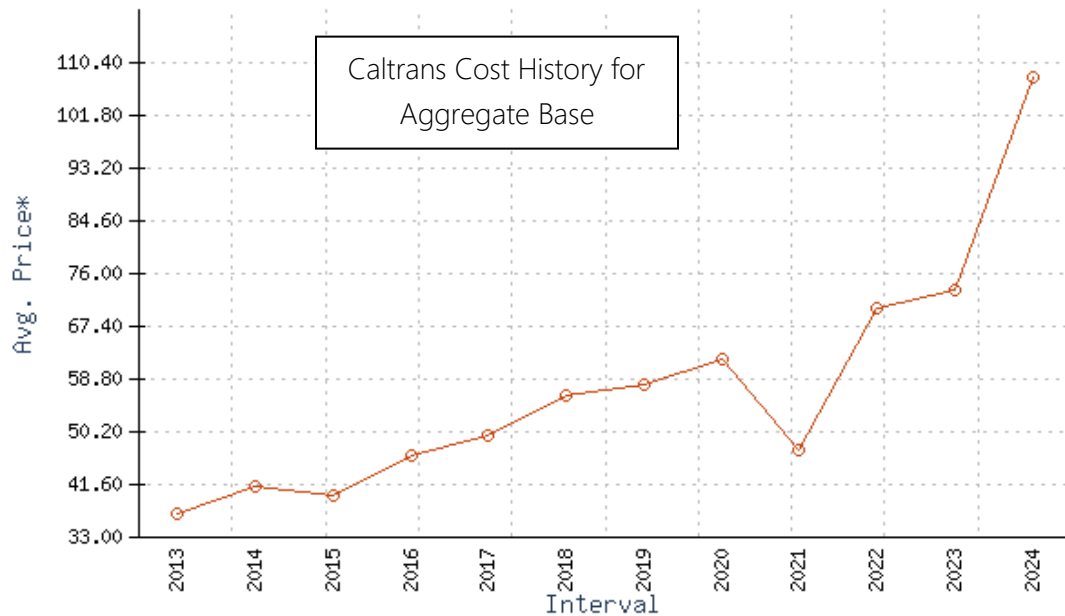


Interval	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Avg. Price*	\$12.80	\$12.91	\$17.79	\$15.62	\$18.62	\$30.74	\$28.05	\$34.80	\$21.55	\$22.24	\$48.52	\$58.97
Project Count	159	153	197	187	154	207	196	187	175	212	182	178

* Average price is weighted by the quantity of the item used.
 Note: All districts' and all years' data used to generate graph.

2.2 Cost for Aggregate Base

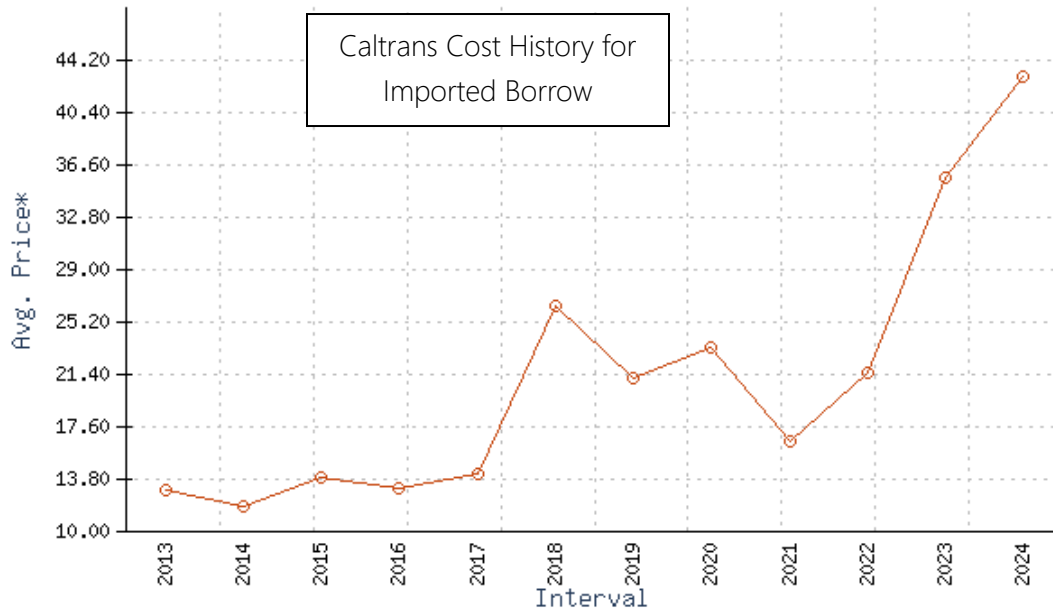
Another item common in construction projects is Aggregate Base, which is used as the granular material underlying the asphalt or concrete on paved roadways and is comparable to railroad subballast. Similar to Roadway Excavation, the statewide average bid cost of Aggregate Base has increased dramatically in recent years, by a factor of approximately 3 from the year 2013 to the year 2024.



* Average price is weighted by the quantity of the item used.
Note: All districts' and all years' data used to generate graph.

2.3 Cost for Imported Borrow

The cost for imported borrow (soil imported from off-site locations, used to build embankments) has also increased, from \$12.98 per cubic yard to \$43.04 per cubic yard, a factor of 3.3 from 2013 to 2024.

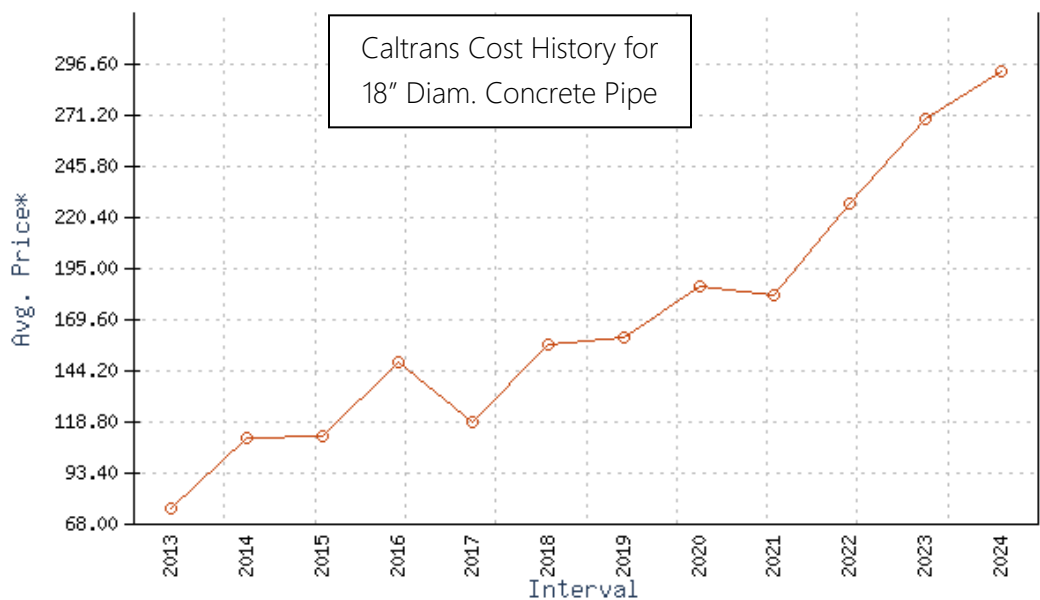


Interval	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Avg. Price*	\$12.98	\$11.88	\$13.91	\$13.16	\$14.19	\$26.40	\$21.08	\$23.34	\$16.56	\$21.58	\$35.72	\$43.04
Project Count	49	51	53	61	48	60	54	73	63	84	58	61

* Average price is weighted by the quantity of the item used.
 Note: All districts' and all years' data used to generate graph.

2.4 Cost for Other Construction Items

The cost for other construction items, outside of earthwork, has similarly increased. For example, the cost of 18" diameter concrete pipe, which would be typical of storm drain pipe, is illustrated below. The cost of concrete pipe increased from \$76.13 per linear foot in 2013 to a cost of \$292.66 per linear foot 2024, a factor of approximately 3.8.



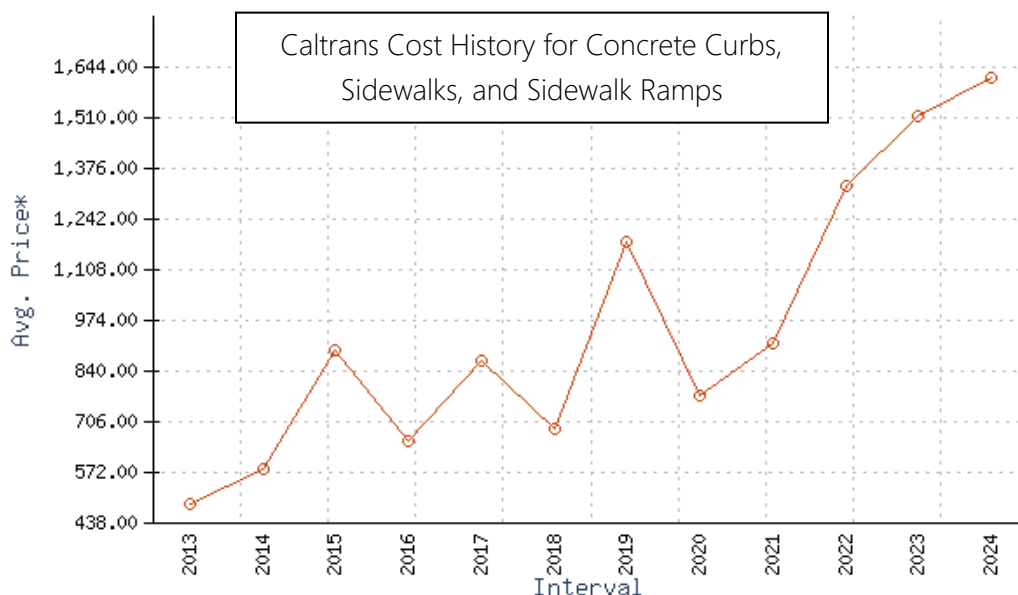
Interval	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Avg. Price*	\$76.13	\$110.77	\$111.46	\$148.73	\$118.72	\$157.45	\$160.56	\$186.32	\$181.91	\$227.04	\$269.33	\$292.66
Project Count	26	30	36	32	26	36	28	36	21	39	47	39

* Average price is weighted by the quantity of the item used.

Note: All districts' and all years' data used to generate graph.

2.5 Cost for Concrete Curbs, Sidewalks, and Sidewalk Ramps

The price for unreinforced concrete placed for curbs, sidewalks, and sidewalk ramps has also increased; while these prices have been more variable, the upward trend is still clear. From a low of \$487.20 per cubic yard in 2013 to a high of \$1,615.92 in 2024, the cost has increased by a factor of 3.3.



* Average price is weighted by the quantity of the item used.
Note: All districts' and all years' data used to generate graph.

2.6 Cost Trend Summary

Note that the above graphs illustrate statewide averages for construction costs across all projects, both large projects with large quantities of these items and smaller projects with lower quantities. The project count (shown in the bar at the bottom of each graph) is helpful in understanding how many projects included these particular items of work. For instance, an item occurring on relatively few projects might have more variation in the actual pricing, since one project with a very high or very low cost could disproportionately affect the average that is shown in the graphed line.

Nonetheless, there is a clear trend of significant price increases for these foundational items of civil construction. (A similar trend of increasing prices can also be seen in data from other state

departments of transportation.) It is important to remember this overall trend when making comparisons with projects bid and constructed 10 or more years ago.

The causes of these price increases are varied, ranging from scarcity of skilled construction labor, to raw materials input price increases (and potential uncertainty due to tariffs), to fuel and energy cost increases (which ultimately affect every activity and input), to interest rates (which affect construction contractors' carrying costs). Some portion of these price increases also reflect the recent construction environment: with many large civil construction projects being undertaken in the last few years, each project competes for the same pool of resources.

3.0 Elements of the ZEPRT Construction Cost

The ZEPRT project cost estimate has been organized generally in accordance with the Federal Transit Administration Standard Cost Categories (SCCs). Similar SCCs are also used by the Federal Railroad Administration.

1. Guideway and Track Elements
2. Station Stops, Terminals
3. Support Facilities: Yards, Shops, Admin Buildings
4. Sitework and Special Conditions
5. Systems
6. Right of Way, Land
7. Vehicles
8. Professional Services
9. Contingency

The nature of each SCC will be discussed with respect to the ZEPRT project, and in comparison with other transit projects.

3.1 Guideway and Track Elements

Note that the Guideway and Track Elements SCC is defined on a route mile basis, including the cost of sidings and second tracks within the route mile unit cost.

Guideway: The SCC "Guideway" includes the subballast (the engineered material that underlays the track and ballast), finishing the subgrade and subballast, ditching, track-related drainage, underdrains, and asphalt (HMA) for the trail. After preparation of the new subgrade, new subballast would be placed on the final alignment.

Aerial Structure: the SCC "Aerial Structure" refers to bridges. The quantity of bridges on the ZEPRT project and construction challenges associated with most of the ZEPRT bridges distinguish the ZEPRT project from other, recent, transit projects. By comparison, the bridges on most other recent transit



projects, such as the SMART project, are mostly shorter in height, length and had better access than those on the ZEPRT project (though there were exceptions on each transit project).

The ZEPRT project includes over 20 bridge locations, many of which require complete replacement, are tall, require long clear spans, feature difficult construction access, and/or are located in environmentally sensitive areas. Any one of these characteristics increases the complexity and therefore the cost of a structure. However, in the case of structures such as the Capitola trestle, San Lorenzo River bridge, or the bridges over Valencia Creek and Aptos Creek, all four characteristics are present.

There are several other bridges and timber trestles with similar characteristics, such as the timber bridges located along the largely inaccessible section between Buena Vista Drive and Harkins Slough, each of which would need replacement.

The availability of space adjacent to and at the ends of each bridge for staging heavy equipment (such as cranes and earthmoving equipment) and construction materials is a critical driver of productivity for a construction contractor.

While the necessary amount of staging area and access is dependent upon the length, type of bridge and substructure, in general, the staging areas that promote the most efficiency are larger and wider than the structure being constructed. These larger and wider staging areas would also allow access adjacent to at least one side of the proposed structure. In the case of the ZEPRT project, this means that in order to maximize efficiency, the ideal staging areas would extend outside the SCBRL right-of-way. In almost no bridge locations along the corridor does such space exist.

There are several cost implications due to the narrow corridor on the various bridges. For example, if only one piece of equipment at a time can reach a bridge site due to a narrow approach corridor, or if equipment can only reach the bridge site from one end, construction may need to proceed sequentially, without the possibility of multiple activities being performed simultaneously. The sequential constraint reduces construction efficiency. In practice, sequential construction also increases schedule risk, since the contractor's ability to embark on any one step of construction becomes dependent upon completion of all preceding steps and any delay impacting an early activity may affect subsequent activities.

A comparison of construction conditions is shown in the following photographs.



Photo illustrating construction work for replacement of an existing railroad timber trestle at San Elijo Lagoon in San Diego County. Note that at San Elijo, the new bridge was wide enough for two tracks (rather than the single track used for most bridge on the SCBRL) and was constructed adjacent to the existing track in order to maintain that track in operation. Conversely, the ZEPRT bridges would typically be only one track wide and would be constructed on the existing track alignment. However, the width of the freshly-graded area the contractor is using for a laydown pad, materials storage area, and crane work area is indicative of the space needed for bridge construction. Photo from SANDAG website.



Photo illustrating construction work for replacement of the Santa Ana River bridge for the SBCTA Arrow project and laydown area for equipment and materials on both sides of the bridge. Photo from SBCTA website.



Photo illustrating constrained construction location at the timber trestle approaches to the Capitola bridge. All construction activities, including pile driving or shaft drilling, as well as staging of materials would need to occur in an area approximately 40 feet wide. It is likely that the existing timber structure would need to be disassembled piece-by-piece, since conventional wrecking equipment could risk damage to adjacent homes.



Photo of the Capitola truss bridge, viewed from Stockton Avenue. Access to the main truss span across Soquel Creek from either end is extremely limited. It may be necessary to construct temporary falsework in the water – essentially a temporary bridge under the existing bridge – in order to provide a stable work platform for disassembly of the existing structure and construction of the new bridge. Photo from Google Earth.



Adding to complexity of several bridges is the need to retain their iconic design forms. For example, the main spans of the bridges at Capitola and San Lorenzo River are truss bridges, with a lattice-like structure. Both bridges would need to be replaced with new structures. At this early stage, to maintain visual consistency with the existing conditions, it has been assumed that the replacements would also need to be some kind of truss span to echo the design form of the existing bridges. However, these truss bridge designs will be substantially more expensive than other modern bridge designs (such as plate girders).

The need for replacement of many bridges distinguishes this project from several other transit projects which have been able to leverage existing bridges for their operations. For example, the North County Transit District's (NCTD) Coaster commuter rail service continued to operate on numerous timber trestles for many years. But, when NCTD assumed maintenance responsibility for that line, the bridges were all in serviceable condition. And, in most locations along the NCTD Coaster corridor, there was ample right of way adjacent to each existing structure to allow for construction activities. That additional right-of-way allowed NCTD to construct new bridges on entirely new alignments adjacent to the existing timber structures, leaving the existing timber structures in service.

Conversely, the ZEPRT corridor is very narrow, and, even if some of the bridges (particularly timber bridges) were deemed to be serviceable for use in the near-term, they would eventually need replacement. In many areas the surrounding land uses would not allow for the new track alignments that would be needed to build a new, replacement structure adjacent to the existing structure. Thus, once passenger service commences, removing a bridge from service for replacement would interrupt operations for some time, possibly several months, depending upon the construction conditions at a particular location.

Guideway: Retained Cut or Fill: This SCC refers to retaining walls along the corridor. Much of the existing SCBRL corridor is constructed on hillsides, ranging from relatively shallow slopes (as in the area near Mar Vista Drive) to relatively steep slopes (as in the area near Manresa and the area between Harkins Slough and Buena Vista Drive). This means that the existing ground on one side of the corridor is higher than the track, while the other side is lower than the track. In the relatively narrow corridor, areas of side-hill topography require that retaining walls would be required to accommodate track shifts, such as those necessary to accommodate a trail or realignments to accommodate curve realignments or passing sidings.

As with the bridges, retaining wall construction requires space for staging and positioning materials, driving trucks carrying cement or steel, etc. And, as with the other construction activities, the constrained corridor means that construction productivity would be low and unit costs would be relatively high. An initial estimate includes nearly 25,000 linear feet (approximately 4.7 miles) of

retaining wall. At this early level of development, it is not yet known whether the retaining walls would be cut (excavating into a hillside) or fill (adding material to the top of a slope). The latter is often less expensive than the former, but topographic features would dictate which approach is feasible in any given location.

Track: Ballasted and Track: Embedded: This item is relatively self-explanatory, and includes costs for construction of the rail, ties, and ballast for both the main line track and sidings, as well as track through grade crossings with crossing panels, and ballasted track that is embedded in asphalt or concrete within the streets (such as Beach Street in Santa Cruz and Walker Street in Watsonville), and ancillary hardware like insulated joints. In many areas along the corridor, the track is assumed to be shifted to a new alignment to allow sufficient space for the trail.

Note that, by comparison to other projects, the ZEPRT project includes many grade crossings, as well as track in streets, which have significantly higher track construction costs than regular ballasted track. To minimize disruption to roadway traffic, track reconstruction at grade crossings typically occurs at night, or during compressed time frames like weekend closures. The construction contractor must also provide a new roadway surface across the track, as well as roadway detours and flagging during construction. These constraints increase construction costs substantially; historically, track construction at grade crossings is an order of magnitude more expensive than “regular” track outside of at-grade crossings.

As with other construction items, the narrow right of way and limited access will impact track construction logistics and costs. For example, on many other projects, the new rail has been delivered by train in 1600' lengths, and the tens of thousands of new ties delivered by railcar, all distributed alongside the locations where they would be placed. Those projects had serviceable rail lines to facilitate those deliveries. Since the SCBRL is out of service west of Watsonville, there is no viable rail access to much of the corridor. Thus, Watsonville would be the nearest location for delivery of these materials (if a suitable staging area could be found). The materials would then need to be trucked to their final location for installation. While trucking of ties short distances is typical, the need to truck rail to every location implies that the rail would likely be delivered in 80' lengths to be welded together on-site, as opposed to being delivered in the 1600' lengths produced by rail mills (delivered on special trains directly to the point of installation), which offer cost efficiencies. Moreover, the materials would need to be moved-in from a limited number of access points, with limited or no space to store materials on the grade, meaning many trips with equipment to move materials to their final locations as track construction advances (and thus precludes access where track has already been constructed).

Track: Special: This SCC includes turnouts on the main line for passing sidings and spurs, as well as switches for the gauntlet tracks, but excludes the turnouts within the maintenance facility. While there are a range of turnout sizes and configurations to match the constrained geometry at several locations, all costs are included in this single line item.

3.2 Stations

This SCC accounts for the nine at-grade stations, each of which includes a 350-foot long, raised concrete boarding platform that is long enough for two ZEMU trains coupled together. The platform would be configured to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Standard for Transit and Passenger Rail Systems. Platforms would be equipped with passenger shelters, lighting, and passenger display information systems.

This station configuration is comparable to stations on similar corridors, such as the ARROW or Sprinter services in southern California, or the SMART service in northern California. The two southern California services provide low-floor, level-boarding, similar to that proposed for the ZEPRT project, with generally similar platform configurations (note that SMART provides high-level boarding, with platform surfaces typically 42" or more above top of rail).

ADA requirements for level boarding between the platform and the vehicle effectively dictate the need for high-level platform at each station, close to or at the same elevation as the floor of the vehicle. For the ZEMUs currently under consideration, this would require a platform elevation on the order of 15" to 24" above the top of rail. However, to comply with CPUC's General Orders for clearance requirements for mixed freight and passenger operations, which requires 8'-6" clear distance from centerline of track) the ZEPRT project would use gauntlet tracks at the stations to shift freight trains away from the platforms. Where stations have two platform tracks, the gauntlet would only be installed on one side. This is same approach SMART has taken.

It has been assumed that Transportation Agency for Monterey County would construct the main elements of the Pajaro station, such as the main line passenger platforms along the Union Pacific tracks, the upgrades to the station building, and the parking lot; only the platforms and platform tracks specific to the ZEPRT project (i.e., used solely by ZEPRT trains) would be constructed by the ZEPRT project.

3.3 Support Facilities

The support facilities include the vehicle maintenance and storage facility and operations control center. The maintenance facility would be designed to accommodate the fleet of ZEMU vehicles, including track storage space, enclosed maintenance space for daily inspections and preventative maintenance as well as heavy overhauls, hydrogen refueling facilities, train wash facilities, wastewater filtration facilities, crew locker rooms, restrooms, and office space from which daily operations (including dispatching) would be managed. This particular SCC also includes the track within the yard facility.

The capabilities of the proposed facility would be similar to those of the Sprinter DMU maintenance and operations facility in Escondido or the SMART DMU maintenance and operations facility near Santa Rosa.

The facility has been preliminarily located at the east end of the line, in Watsonville, for operational reasons: early morning trains would likely originate at nearby Pajaro station to start each day to allow trains to operate in the direction of heaviest commute. To find sufficient space, the entire facility site would need to be on property acquired from private landowners. This area is in a flood plain and portions of the facility, particularly the buildings, would need to be raised above the 100-year flood elevation. This would necessitate a significant amount of imported fill material. Some of this material could be sourced from other excavations along the corridor.

The ZEPRT maintenance facility presents an opportunity for value engineering. Additional operational analysis may indicate that the facility could be located at the far west end of the corridor, in West Santa Cruz, where the facility may be able to occupy existing SCCRTC right of way and avoid the major land acquisition and flood plain issues. If the main maintenance facility were located in West Santa Cruz, a small train storage area at the Pajaro station would also be needed to provide overnight layover capacity for several trainsets in order to have trains in position for the morning commute. Relocating the maintenance facility to West Santa Cruz may also require additional passing sidings mid-route to facilitate equipment positioning trips at the beginning and end of each operating day, with the attendant crew, fuel, and vehicle maintenance expenses. The trade-offs would need to be analyzed to assess whether a West Santa Cruz location would make sense from financial and operational perspectives.

3.4 Sitework and Special Conditions

The major cost drivers in this SCC are demolition and earthwork, utility relocation, hazardous materials, temporary facilities, and indirect costs during construction.

Demolition, Clearing and Earthwork: This SCC includes clearing trees and debris, demolition of existing infrastructure and track, and new earthwork (grading) for the new track and trail. Earthwork was estimated based on the conceptual track profile. Where that profile resulted in the new track section being above the existing ground (after removal of the existing track), it was assumed that fill would be needed. Where that profile was at or below existing ground, it was assumed that excavation (cut) would be needed. Other allowances were made in areas of sidehill territory. However, it is important to remember that at this early conceptual stage, there was not enough existing information to prepare an earthwork model which could be used to estimate quantities. Thus, the grading plan is not yet known. The current quantities were estimated from photographs and plan views and, while they are believed to be conservative, that assumption would need to be validated.

In the case of the ZEPRT project, the earthwork and grading effort is anticipated to be extensive. In many areas, the track must be shifted to a new alignment to provide space for the trail in the comparatively narrow right of way. Even where the existing track is not being shifted, the existing track and ballast are not suitable for use in a passenger rail operation, are heavily fouled with fine dirt,

and require replacement. To address these conditions, the existing track and ballast would be excavated and replaced with new material.

Complicating the earthwork is that, in the narrow right-of-way, construction access will be challenging. In many areas the earthwork will occur on side-hill terrain, exacerbating the space constraints. This means that the productivity of construction crews will be limited.

For example, in many areas there may be insufficient width for a truck to turn around, much less space for earthmoving equipment to load trucks from the side, necessitating long backing moves and forcing excavation spoil to be loaded onto dump trucks from the end of the truck by excavators (typically limited to one to three cubic yards of material per bucket), rather than from the side by end loaders (which could handle six or eight cubic yards of material per bucket, but which require substantially more maneuvering room adjacent to each truck). As a result of the change in earthmoving equipment type and associated reduction in equipment bucket size means that crew and machinery productivity would be reduced by half or, alternately, require twice as long compared to the same activities performed in a non-confined corridor. This is one example of the practical cost implications of construction in a narrow right-of-way.

These images illustrate the constrained ZEPRT corridor, compared with other recent transit project corridors follow.



Example of ZEPRT side hill alignment east of Buena Vista Road. Track is located on a narrow shelf with steep embankments on both sides of the track.

This is one of the steeper areas of the corridor, though other steep areas, like the bluffs at Manresa, have similar construction constraints.



Example of ZEPRT corridor near 47th Ave in Santa Cruz. While flat, construction activities would be constrained by the narrow right of way (approximately 35' wide) and the need to protect mature trees and their root systems on the north side of the right-of-way.

By comparison with other west coast transit projects, access for grading activities on the ZEPRT project is much more restrictive. The same constraints also affect the ability to stage and place materials such as rail, ties, ballast, subballast, structural fill, retaining wall components, and other items.

Although a mile-by-mile inventory of construction constraints has not been developed, there are obvious constraints along several sections of the corridor. For example, the section of the corridor from Seabright to Capitola, while relatively flat, is constrained by narrow right-of-way with development on both sides and access only from grade crossings. The section from Capitola to Rio Del Mar is, in many areas, on an embankment, on a sidehill, or in a cut. The same is true for the section from La Selva Beach to Harkins Slough, through this area has the further constraint of environmentally sensitive areas. Together, these constrained areas comprise more than half the distance from Santa Cruz to Watsonville.

Conversely, on many other transit projects the corridors were mostly flat, allowing contractors to easily maneuver equipment and stage material without restriction. The flat corridors on other projects also meant that sloping embankments, cuts, and retaining walls were minimized, thus saving substantial space and cost, even in constrained locations.



Example of relatively flat right of way along SMART corridor at East Railroad Avenue crossing. Corridor is relatively flat and approximately 60 feet wide. Photo from Google Earth



Example of wide and flat right of way along SPRINT corridor at North Drive crossing. Corridor is 100 feet wide, with ample space for construction activities and infrastructure. Photo from Google Earth.

Another key driver of guideway costs for the ZEPRT project is the additional grading needed to elevate the track at specific locations in order to account for sea level rise. This grading has a significant impact on the material quantities and construction costs at the narrow embankment in the vicinity of Harkins Slough (surrounded on both sides by wetlands), on the approach to the Pajaro River Bridge, and at the approaches to the San Lorenzo River bridge. At each location, the available working area is narrow and, like the situation with earthwork, creates inefficiencies for construction equipment operation and material staging. (Note that the additional grading for the track at the maintenance facility, which would need to be elevated above its current location for sea level rise resiliency, is included in the SCC for the maintenance facility itself.)

The project is expected to be a “net excavation” project, meaning that, despite the areas where there is additional fill needed to elevate the track for sea level rise, over the entire project there will be substantially more soil released from excavation than soil needed for embankment construction. This excess soil will need to be hauled away (possibly a long distance) and disposed of, which adds to the cost of the excavation.

The graphs illustrating cost inflation at the beginning of this memorandum are indicative of the change in price for excavation and fills. Specifically, the graph for “Roadway Excavation” illustrates the change that has occurred in excavation cost between the time other transit projects (e.g., those constructed in the 2010s) were constructed and this cost estimate for the ZEPRT project. When making comparisons to other projects, it is important to account for the effects of cost escalation.

Site Utilities, Utility Relocation: The ZEPRT project’s impact on existing utilities is not known; however, utility relocation and protection has historically been a major cost driver for many projects. Although the corridor is an existing rail corridor, the addition of the pathway will change the railroad alignment and thus shift the location where the track crosses some utilities, so protection for buried utilities (e.g., casings) may need to be extended. There may also be utilities parallel to the track within the right-of-way;; these parallel facilities would likely require relocation to make space for the trail and track.

The costs for utility relocations have been assumed to be significant, based on prior experience. As noted, additional design work would be needed to assess the extent of utility relocation and could result in significant changes in this cost. While some agreements between SCCRTC and the various utilities may theoretically place the cost burden of utility relocation on the respective utility owners, it has been assumed that the ZEPRT project will bear the costs for utility relocation.

Hazardous Materials: Similar to utilities past experience guided development of hazardous material costs. Where there were historically industrial uses (such as in Watsonville) or rail servicing facilities (as in Santa Cruz and Pajaro), there may be a possibility of contaminated soils. Where the rail line is adjacent to streets or freeways, there is a possibility of aially deposited lead that may increase the cost of soil disposal. This cost could be refined with further site investigation.

Environmental Mitigation: This SCC was specific to the salamander crossing which, based on the concept, would also need to be lighted. Other specific mitigations were not identified at the time the estimate was developed. (Note that an allowance for non-location-specific mitigations for water issues was included in the temporary facilities category, discussed below).

Pedestrian and Bike Access/Landscaping: This item includes landscaping, fencing, striping, and signage for the trail, as well as station pedestrian crossings and other bike trail elements that were not accounted for in the earthwork item.

Automobile Accessways, Including Roads and Parking Lots: This item includes the concrete flatwork and pavement upgrades in the immediate vicinity of grade crossings (this excludes both the roadway and railroad signalization at crossings, which are covered in other SCCs).

Temporary Facilities and Indirect Costs: “Temporary Facilities and Other Indirect Costs” includes contractor’s mobilization cost, bonding, insurance, traffic control, survey, flagging, and a significant amount (nearly half this item’s budget) for erosion control and mitigations assumed to be required for the coastal areas. As discussions with regulatory agencies such as the California Coastal Commission and the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board progress, the cost impact of erosion control and mitigations could be further refined.

3.5 Systems

The Systems SCC includes the signal system that controls train movements, the positive train control system, the warning devices at highway-rail at-grade crossings and pedestrian crossings, the dispatching system that controls the railroad signals, the passenger information systems at station platforms, and new or upgraded traffic signal control systems, and voice radio network. Many of these systems (such as the railroad signal system, dispatching system, and positive train control system) need a secure data link; fiber optic cable laid along the track would provide this functionality.

This is a similar architecture, with similar infrastructure requirements to other transit and commuter rail systems, such as Sprinter, SMART, ARROW, and even to heavy rail systems like Caltrain and Metrolink in southern California.

3.6 Right-of-Way

This SCC includes right-of-way for the vehicle maintenance facility and associated yard tracks and access roads, which would be located on property currently in-use as farmland. While the vehicle maintenance facility is the largest single right-of-way acquisition, the concept design identified potential need for acquisition of parcels (in many cases, only partial acquisitions) along the main line alignment. These acquisitions account for infrastructure such as retaining walls as well as additional right-of-way near at-grade crossings, where additional space would be required for active warning devices and enclosures for electronic equipment. At this stage it is not possible to identify whether the partial acquisitions would in fact need to be full acquisitions due to impacts on the remainder parcels.

At this conceptual level, the uncertainty in the right-of-way impacts makes comparisons to right-of-way costs at other transit systems challenging. In addition, the nature of the acquired right-of-way (e.g., agricultural, residential, commercial, etc.), would be distinctly different from that at other transit systems, further complicating comparisons.

Note that refinements in design along the corridor could similarly result in refinements in the right-of-way impacts and costs. And if the scope of the maintenance facility, which represents the largest

single right-of-way acquisition, were reduced (as described above), the right-of-way cost would similarly be reduced.

3.7 Vehicles

The Vehicles SCC includes the zero-emission multiple unit (ZEMU) vehicles. The technology has not been determined, but the hydrogen fuel cell ZEMU vehicles recently delivered to San Bernardino County Transportation Authority's Arrow system are representative of the vehicles assumed for the ZERPT project. A supply of basic spare parts would also be included in the initial capital cost.

3.8 Professional Services

Professional services include planning, public outreach, coordination with other agencies, preliminary engineering, environmental documentation, final design, permitting, construction management, inspection and testing, program management, legal services, non-construction insurance costs, agency costs, and commissioning, testing, and start-up costs for developing and delivering the project. The Federal Transit Administration typically expects agencies to allow one quarter of project costs for professional services, a guideline followed for this conceptual estimate.

3.9 Contingency

At this stage, an approximate 40% contingency has been included to reflect the comparatively low level of design and uncertainties about scope or proposed work, constructability, existing conditions (such as utilities and environmental considerations), and cost escalation. The contingency percentage was selected prior to the current uncertainty in the international tariff schedule, which could affect costs for commodities which trade in international markets, such as steel (for rail and structures), concrete (for structures), and wood ties. The cost of fuel is also affected by international trade, and it also affects nearly every construction activity. This contingency percentage would be comparable to other projects at this early concept stage.

4.0 Summary

Cost estimates will continue to be refined as the ZEPRT Project advances through future design and environmental phases. The initial capital cost estimate includes a contingency typical of a project at this early phase of design. The contingency is intended to account for the risks associated with the environmental process and final design, as well as changes that may occur to the Project as development advances.

Additionally, considerations for cost savings could be evaluated in the following areas.

- Reduce the scope and reassess the location of the vehicle maintenance facility.
- Plan stations and assess amenities and right of way requirements at stations.
- Refine designs and for bridges and assess structure type at “signature” bridges.
- Incrementally advance design of earthwork to better understand the topographic constraints on the typical sections used for estimating. Such an effort would identify grading and drainage considerations and the interaction with the trail (which are currently based on assumptions). This process would also allow better identification of the extent of retaining walls (which have, to date, been estimated based on aerial imagery). This would also assist in refining right-of-way costs.
- Conduct additional constructability assessments for the entire corridor that could refine unit costs on a location-specific basis (e.g., adjust the unit cost of grading to reflect lower costs in flatter areas with better access and higher costs in steeper areas with poor access).
- Work with third parties (such as regulatory agencies and utilities) to refine assumptions and understanding of the scope of third-party impacts.

ZERO EMISSION PASSENGER RAIL AND TRAIL PROJECT

Peer Review Recommendations

November 2025



Overview

- **Held November 17-19, 2025**
- **Peer Review Panelists:**
 - **Carrie Schindler**, CEO
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA)
 - **Sam Sargent**, Directory, Strategy and Transformation
Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
 - **Bill Gamlen**, Chief Engineer
Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART)
 - **Chris Shiels**, Principal/PMP
SSC Inc.
 - **Darrell Maxey**, Project Manager
RSE Corp (Retired Metrolink, Caltrain, UPRR)

Peer review panelists were selected for their relevant statewide and local rail and infrastructure knowledge and expertise, including active and retired representatives of regional public agencies and the private sector.



Agenda

- **November 17**
 - Project Overview
 - Corridor Tour
- **November 18**
 - Project Concept Deep Dive and Discussion
 - Development of Peer Review Observations and Recommendations
- **November 19**
 - Peer Review presentation to RTC staff and project team



Peer Review Purpose

Develop Observations and Recommendations to present to SCCRTC for consideration and implementation in future phases. Asked Peer Review to consider:

- Do you see the long-term benefit of maintaining freight and developing passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line?
- Is the estimated capital cost in line with industry practice for similar projects?
- Do you see any best practices to reduce costs?
- What else do you see as next steps the RTC could be doing to advance the project?





Big Picture

- The estimated cost of the project is high for the projected ridership. Securing enough grant funding coupled with setting a feasible tax measure target is challenging to fund both Capital and O&M.
 - There are opportunities to reduce costs, but not to fully fund capital and operations and maintenance without significant down-scoping.
 - Recognizes there is a value in connectivity the corridor provides in connecting communities from Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and points between.
- Important to preserve the corridor for future rail/transportation opportunities, given the surrounding transportation network is constrained.
- Explore railbanking approach to allow preservation of future rail/transportation use while constructing a trail in the near term.
- Project Concept Report was comprehensive and enabled a successful Peer Review.



Concept Report - Costs

- Better define the baseline rail project scope to ensure the project is not addressing non-rail needs (e.g., local street road widening with rail bridge replacement)
- Consider doing a cost comparison with recent projects/estimates from similar projects like SMART and SBCTA (using recent bid tab information).
 - Cost per mile seems high comparative to relatable projects.
- Messaging related to year of expenditure cost is important.
 - Value Engineer Maintenance Facility (e.g., reduce size and consider outsourcing heavy maintenance)
 - Look at reducing initial station footprints to two car consist.
 - Investigate ending rail service east of the Boardwalk and utilizing local circulator to service downtown and UC Santa Cruz, and consider future extension at later phase.
 - Consider options near 3rd Street and west of San Lorenzo River with bike/ped connectivity maintained over the river
 - Allows for Beach Train to continue operations and minimizes impacts to the Beach Flats neighborhood
 - Consider limiting freight service to the Watsonville area.

Concept Report - Operations

- Separate freight service (i.e., temporal separation) from passenger service to minimize impact to passenger rail service.
- Review SPRINTER operating model to determine if it is viable for an initial phase to simplify operating model, regulatory oversight and reduce initial costs.
 - Develop as a closed system with opportunity to connect later.
 - Investigate deferring initial cost of train control systems (i.e. interoperable train control) to a future date.
 - Ensure a simpler and reduced-scope initial project doesn't preclude future funding eligibility (e.g., Corridor Identification and Development).



Next Steps

- Investigate updating operating agreement to reflect current freight and Beach Train limits and allow for trail outside of active use areas.
 - Retain legal/railroad business and operations subject matter experts to assist the Commission
- Develop Corridor Maintenance of Way Plan.
- Consult with Caltrans to better understand preservation of corridor for rail if proceeding with trail first.
- Develop viable funding plan for capital and O&M that includes upfront activities such as completing environmental analysis.

Thank you!

