Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission

MINUTES

Thursday, September 03, 2026
9:00 a.m.

In-Person Meeting
Watsonville City Council Chambers
275 Main Street, Fourth Floor
Watsonville, CA 95076

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

Members present:

City of Capitola	Gerry Jensen
City of Santa Cruz	Fred Keeley
City of Scotts Valley	Steve Clark
City of Watsonville	Eduardo Montesino
County of Santa Cruz	Jillian Ritter (Alt.)
County of Santa Cruz	Kimberly DeSerpa
County of Santa Cruz	Monica Martinez
County of Santa Cruz	Andy Schiffrin (Alt.)
County of Santa Cruz	Lowell Hurst (Alt.)
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District	Rebecca Downing
Caltrans (ex-officio)	Kyle Birch

Staff present:

Sarah Christensen	Shannon Munz
Amin AbuAmara	Yesenia Parra
Michele Gomez	Mitch Weiss
Steve Mattas (RTC Counsel)	
Marshall Ballard	

2. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agenda

Administrative Services Officer Yesenia Parra communicated that handouts for item 17 and a replacement page for item 4 were posted to the RTC website.

3. Oral Communications

Received public comment from:
Sally Arnold
Brian Peoples
Saladin Sale

The Chair recessed the meeting at 9:10 a.m. to address audio issues affecting the Zoom meeting and remote public participation. At 9:21 a.m., the Chair consulted with Legal Counsel regarding the appropriate next steps, as the audio issue had not yet been resolved. Legal Counsel advised that approximately one hour should be allowed to resolve the technical issue. The Chair continued the recess until 10:10 a.m., or earlier if the audio issue was resolved.

The meeting was reconvened at 10:00 a.m. after the audio issue was resolved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Legal Counsel Steve Mattas delivered a verbal report regarding Item 9

Commissioner (Alt.) Ritter commented on Item 9 and thanked Executive Director Sarah Christensen for her work and service with the RTC.

Received public comment from:
Brian Peoples
Barry Scott

Commissioner (Alt.) Schiffrin made a motion, and Commissioner Clark seconded, to approve the consent agenda.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Jensen, Clark, Montesino, Downing, Keeley, DeSerpa, Martinez and Commissioner Alternates Hurst, Ritter and Schiffrin voting "aye."

MINUTES

4. Approved draft minutes of the August 6, 2026 Regional Transportation Commission meeting

5. Accepted draft committee meeting minutes

   a. August 10, 2026 Bicycle Advisory Committee
   b. August 11, 2026 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
   c. August 20, 2026 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee

POLICY ITEMS

No items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

6. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to take necessary steps for distribution of the Senate Bill 1 State of Good Repair funds to Programmed projects (**Resolution 78-26**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

7. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues

8. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

9. Approved Executive Director Employment Agreement amendment (**Resolution 79-26**)

10. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to amend the contract with Mitch Weiss Consulting, LLC for term and increase compensation by $52,800 for a not-to-exceed value of $112,800 (**Resolution 80-26**)

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

11. Accepted monthly meeting schedule

12. Accept letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies – *none*

13. Accept information items - *none*

REGULAR AGENDA

14. Commissioner Reports – oral reports

    Commissioner Downing reported that Week Without Driving will take place October 1–8, 2026. She explained the origins of the event and noted that it is intended to raise awareness of the challenges faced by individuals who are unable to drive. She also noted that the RTC's GoSantaCruz County program will sponsor a contest in conjunction with the event. Commissioner Downing invited everyone to attend the event at Capitola Mall on October 2,2026.

15. Director's Report – oral report

Executive Director Sarah Christensen provided an update on Measure D bond issuance and welcomed the RTC's new freight operator- Chicago Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, which will operate on the Watsonville Line Branch. She also announced that Luis Mendez, Director of Planning, Programming & Transportation Services, will retire after more than 32 years of service with the RTC. His last day with the RTC will be November 30, 2026.

Commissioner Montesino thanked Luis for his service and congratulated him on his retirement.

16. Caltrans Report

Kyle Birch, Office Chief for Design, Caltrans District 5, announced that Caltrans is currently accepting applications for the Sustainable Transportation Planning grants. Deadline for these grants is October 9, 2026 at 5 pm. Awards will be announced in Spring 2027. Kyle Birch gave a construction update on highways in Santa Cruz County. The community is encouraged to visit Caltrans social media platform to stay up to date.

17. Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury Report Response

Executive Director Sarah Christensen delivered the staff report. Mrs. Christensen noted that the responses to the Grand Jury Report are due September 28, 2026 and must be formally approved by the Commission. She noted that the responses address all 17 findings and 8 recommendations. She reported that 5 of 8 recommendations had already been implemented through existing practices, processes, and recent changes to the organization.

Commissioners thanked staff and the ad hoc committee for their thoughtful process and collaborative work.

<u>Received public comment from</u>
Brian Peoples
Saladin Sale
Sally Arnold
Michael Sain
Barry Scott

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

1. Submit the approved responses to the Presiding Judge of the Santa Cruz County Superior Court and the Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury prior to the statutory deadline of September 28, 2026; and
2. Make the approved responses available to the public, consistent with the requirements of Penal Code §933(c).

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Jensen, Clark, Montesino, Keeley, DeSerpa, Martinez and Commissioner Alternates Hurst, Ritter and Schiffrin voting "aye."

Commissioner Downing recused herself from this item.

20. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 1, 2026 at 9:00a.m. at the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, Room 500B, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

Respectfully submitted,
Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

Attendees
Brian Peoples
Saladin Sale
Sally Arnold
Michael Sain
Barry Scott
Brendan Quirk
Michael Saint