

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY (TAMC)
RAIL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Final Minutes of June 1, 2015
 Transportation Agency for Monterey County
 55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas

	JUNE 14	AUG 14	SEP 14	OCT 14	NOV 14	JAN 15	FEB 15	MAR 15	APR 15	MAY 15	JUNE 15
F. Armenta, Dist. 1 (J. Martinez)	P	P(A)	C	P	C	P	C	P(A)	C	P	P
J. Phillips, Dist. 2 (J. Stratton)	P(A)	P(A)	A	P(A)	A	P(A)	A	P(A)	A	P(A)	P(A)
J. Parker, Dist. 4 (K. Markey)	P(A)	P(A)	N	P(A)	N	P(A)	N	P(A)	N	E	P(A)
D. Potter, Dist. 5, Chair (K. Lee , J. Mohammadi)	P	P(A)	C	P(A)	C	P	C	P	C	P	P
B. Delgado, Marina (F. O'Connell)	P	P	E	E	E	-	E	P(A)	E	P	-
E. Smith, Monterey (R. Deal)	P	P	L	E	L	P	L	P	L	E	P
K. Craig, Salinas, Vice Chair (R. Russell , J. Serrano)	P	P	L	P(A)	L	P	L	E	L	P	P
T. Bodem, Sand City (L. Gomez)	P(A)	P	E	P	E	P	E	-	E	P	-
R. Rubio, Seaside (I. Oglesby)	P	P	D	P	D	P	D	P	D	P	E
A. Chavez, Soledad (F. Ledesma)	P	-		E		P		P		P	E
M. Twomey, AMBAG (H. Adamson)	P(A)	-		E		-		-		-	P(A)
O. Monroy-Ochoa, Caltrans District 5	-	-		-		P		-		-	-
C. Sedoryk, MST (H. Harvath , L. Rheinheimer)	-	-		P(A)		P(A)		P(A)		P(A)	-
B. Sabo, Airport (R. Searle)	-	-		-		-		-		-	-
STAFF											
D. Hale, Exec. Director	P	P		P		P		E		P	E
T. Muck, Deputy Exec. Director	P	P		P		-		P		P	P
C. Watson, Principal Transp. Planner	P	P		P		P		P		P	P
A. Green, Transp. Planner	P	-		P		-		P		E	-
M. Zeller, Sr. Transp. Planner	-	P		E		P		P		P	E
H. Myers, Sr. Transp. Engineer	-	P		E		E		P		-	-
Theresa Wright, Outreach Coordinator		P		-		-		-		-	-
Virginia Murillo, Asst. Transp. Planner				P		P		P		P	P
E – Excused VC – Video Conference P(A) – Alternate TC – Teleconference											

1. **QUORUM CHECK AND CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Potter called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. A quorum was established.

OTHERS PRESENT

Chris Flescher	RailPAC	Don Reynolds	City of Salinas
George Dondero	Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission	Diana Ingersoll	City of Seaside

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

3. **CONSENT AGENDA**

M/S/C Craig/Armenta/unanimous
Committee Member Ed Smith abstained.

3.1 Approved minutes of the May 4, 2015 Rail Policy Committee meeting.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

4. **PASSANGER RAIL FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS FOR SANTA CRUZ COUNTY**

The Committee received an overview of the draft report for the Santa Cruz County Branch Line passenger rail feasibility analysis.

George Dondero, Executive Director, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), provided an overview of the Santa Cruz Branch Line passenger rail feasibility study. He noted the RTC acquired the Santa Cruz Rail Line after over a decade of negotiation with Union Pacific. The Santa Cruz Branch Line is an active rail corridor extending 32 miles from the Pajaro Junction of the Coast Rail Route through Watsonville, Aptos, Capitola, and Santa Cruz to Davenport. Mr. Dondero noted that in 2014, the RTC was awarded a Caltrans Transit Planning grant and initiated an analysis of passenger rail service along the branch line. He noted that the study includes technical analysis of several public transportation service scenarios, developed based on input from the public, and reviews ridership projections, capital and operating cost estimates, train technologies, and funding options.

Committee Alternate Markey asked about freight integration on the Santa Cruz Branch Line. Mr. Dondero said that Iowa Pacific currently uses the Branch Line for freight. He noted that the RTC is examining the coordination and investments required to operate freight and passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Line.

Chair Potter asked if the Federal Railroad Administration would regulate the Branch Line. Mr. Dondero said that this depends on the RTC's preferred service scenario.

Committee Member Smith asked about criteria for the station locations. Mr. Dondero noted that rail can be a redevelopment tool that can help communities develop around rail stations, and mentioned that future development projects were a criterion for station location, along with demographic information.

Committee Member Armenta asked about cap and trade funding for transportation projects. AMBAG Alternate Heather Adamson responded that in the first grant cycle, most of the “Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities” funding went to affordable housing projects. Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, noted that there are other pots of cap and trade funding for rail projects that have yet to be allocated, and that the Governor’s revised budget included more cap and trade funding than what was in the January budget.

Chair Potter said that the Committee is most interested in Santa Cruz Branch Line passenger rail connectivity to the Pajaro Station. Mr. Dondero mentioned that the RTC is working with TAMC on coordination opportunities for the proposed commuter rail station in Pajaro/Watsonville, which would primarily serve residents of southern Santa Cruz County, and which could eventually provide a connection with future potential passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz branch line.

5. COAST DAYLIGHT PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the status of the planned Coast Daylight train service between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that the progress since the last update to the Committee about the Coast Daylight includes meetings of the Coast Rail Coordinating Council Technical Committee; a meeting with King City on the environmental review; and with Amtrak regarding the feasibility study. Ms. Watson noted that the next step is for the TAMC Board to approve a Request for Proposals for the environmental review of the Salinas-San Jose corridor.

Ms. Watson also reported that Chair Potter testified at a joint hearing of the State Senate Select Committee on Passenger Rail and the Assembly Select Committee on Rail on May 14 in Sacramento.

Chair Potter expressed the need for sustainable intercity rail funding, and the need for the State to be more involved in negotiations with the host railroads. He noted that much of the discussion at the joint hearing centered on rail safety and new federal positive train control requirements. Ms. Watson noted that the federal government has set a 2015 deadline for positive train control implementation. She noted that the Capitol Corridor is in charge of installation of positive train control technologies on its equipment, which is complete, but that Union Pacific is responsible for implementing positive train control on the rail line, which has been deferred. Ms. Watson mentioned that another hearing will be scheduled in the fall.

6. SALINAS RAIL EXTENSIONS PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the Salinas Rail Extension project.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that progress since the last update to the Committee about the project includes meetings with the Salinas City Council Rail Subcommittee, the First Mayor’s House Board of Directors, and the Watsonville City Council. She noted that staff is preparing an application for federal funding for the Pajaro/Watsonville station project, due on June 5. Ms. Watson added that staff will be presenting a project update to the Salinas City Council on June 9 and to the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors on June 17.

Committee Member Armenta asked about concerns about left turns at the Salinas train station. Ms. Watson noted that the Lincoln Avenue extension will provide signalized access.

Ms. Watson reported that Salinas is proposing a Community Benefit Assessment District; if it is approved, TAMC would be assessed a yearly fee, based on property at the train station, that will be used for the beautification of the district.

Committee Member Armenta asked about the boundary of the Community Benefit Assessment District, and asked if the District includes Chinatown. Don Reynolds, City of Salinas, noted that the City's Vibrancy Plan expands the District to include the Salinas train station, but that Chinatown has its own plan.

Committee Member Smith asked about community outreach in developing the new District. Vice-Chair Craig noted that there was an extensive community outreach effort in the development of the proposed District, and that there is community support.

7. **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND/OR COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

None.

8. **ADJOURN**

Chair Potter adjourned the meeting at 4:03 p.m.