

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY (TAMC)

RAIL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Draft Minutes of November 5, 2018

Transportation Agency for Monterey County

55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA

[illegible]

1. QUORUM CHECK AND CALL TO ORDER

Past Chair Delgado called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. A quorum was established, and self-introductions were made. Chair Craig arrived during the end of item 4.

OTHERS PRESENT

Mark Sala	Aurora Express Intermodal	Kevin Dayton	Salinas City Center
Amme Salomon	Aurora Express Intermodal	Andy Myrick	City of Salinas
Gus	Caltrans District 5	Don Reynolds	City of Salinas
Brad Tarp	Salinas resident	Cheryl Ku	Monterey County
Paul Powers	Salinas resident	Paul Hierling	AMBAG
Jerome Landesman	Salinas resident	Jennifer Russell	MNS Engineers

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jerome Landesman, Salinas resident, noted that this month marks 20 years that the Coast Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC) has been planning and working on the Coast Corridor passenger rail and asked if there was a timeline for initiating service.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

M/S/C Delgado/ LeBarre /unanimous

3.1 Approved minutes of the September 10, 2018 Rail Policy Committee meeting.

3.2 Approved 2019 schedule of Rail Policy Committee meetings.

3.3 Received the call for nominations for the 18th annual Transportation Excellence awards to honor individuals, businesses, groups or projects for their efforts to improve the transportation system in Monterey County.

3.4 Received update on the planned increase in passenger rail service along the coast corridor between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

4. SALINAS FREIGHT RAIL TERMINAL PROJECT

The Committee received a presentation on the Salinas Valley Perishable Freight Rail Terminal Project.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, introduced Andy Myrick, Economic Development Manager for the City of Salinas. Mr. Myrick noted that the City as the lead in federal grant submittals for the freight rail terminal project and introduced Amme Salomon of Aurora Express Intermodal (AEI). Ms. Salomon stated that AEI is a commercial developer working closely with the City of Salinas, Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), and the grower-shipper community on the plan to rehabilitate and develop the existing 25-acre UPRR yard into a new Perishable Freight Rail terminal. She noted that discussions started back in 2014, and that the concept of the intermodal center would be to bring produce from processing/packing facilities to the intermodal rail facility by truck, and then load onto a train by crane. Ms. Salomon noted that AEI has continued their due diligence and has adjusted the estimated project cost from \$101 million to \$118 million. This is mostly due to increased construction costs at the site, along with some increased equipment and professional/ engineering costs. As a result of these increased costs, the amount being requested in the federal grant applications increased from \$25 million to \$40 million.

Ms. Salomon noted that due to changes in the rail and trucking industries, AEI believes they can reduce the cost that it takes to ship produce across the country. She noted that the desired site for this location would be on the north side of the main rail line, across from the Salinas Train Station and south of West Lake Street. The proposed project would include installation of a large electric crane and some minor administrative buildings. The business anticipates up to three train trips per week. Ms. Salomon noted that the business represents that they have secured a lease from Union Pacific on the site, and have completed project design documents, and are now trying to secure financing for the project.

Committee Alternate Stratton asked about how AEI would handle the increase in traffic to the site on City streets. Mark Sala, AEI founder, stated that trucks would not be idling on City streets, as they would have room inside the facility for the trucks while the wares are being transferred. Ms. Salomon noted that each train could carry up to 180 truckloads, but that they would stagger loading so that only about 30 trucks would be using the facility at a time.

Committee Member Delgado asked about the role of TAMC in the project and the potential for AEI to coordinate with TAMC on the Passenger Rail Service to Salinas project. Mr. Sala said that he does not see any conflicts with the passenger service on the main line. Ms. Salomon noted that UPRR has a 12-step process for developing new rail facilities and promised to send that information to Ms. Watson.

Committee Member Alejo asked whether the project was exempt from California environmental laws regarding impacts to residential areas such as noise and trucking increases. Mr. Sala responded that the project mainly involved a wide-span electric crane and that the project would control the truck access by time and by route. Mr. Myrick noted that the City was also concerned about potential impacts and that the railroad is exempt from all environmental rules if the project is within an existing footprint.

Kevin Dayton, Salinas City Center Improvement Association (SCCIA), noted that the SCCIA supported transit-oriented development in the area and would like to ensure that the project would not have unintended negative impacts from diesel or noise.

Executive Director Debbie Hale asked if AEI was subject to traffic impact fees. Mr. Myrick noted that the railroad project is exempt from both state environmental laws and zoning laws and would confirm whether the project was required to complete a building permit.

5. SALINAS RAIL EXTENSION PROJECT UPDATE

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

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that activities on the Salinas Rail Extension project since the last update on September 10, 2018, include progress towards structure demolition, resubmittal of various permits for the project, and meetings on utility relocation. The demolition of structures at the Salinas train station has started. She noted that Bowen Engineering, the demolition contractor, originally submitted a Water Pollution Control Program to the State Water Board in August in application for an erosivity waiver but is now working on a full Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. The demolition is expected to be completed by the first week of December. Ms. Watson noted that TAMC is working with City

staff on utility relocation and permits needed to proceed with construction of Package 1. She noted that Agency staff is recommending a reimbursement agreement to the TAMC Board on December 5, so that the City's storm drain relocation project would include elements within Caltrans right-of-way that otherwise would have been connections from the project to the City's relocated storm drain pipes.

6. RAIL NETWORK INTEGRATION STUDY

The Committee received update on the rail network integration study.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that the rail network integration study will lay the groundwork for implementing the State Rail Plan on the Central Coast. On October 18, 2018, the California Transportation Commission awarded TAMC \$500,000 in Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program funds to do a network integration study. She noted that Transportation Agency staff will bring a Request for Proposals (RFP) to the December 5 Board meeting. She noted that this study supports Package 3 of the Monterey County Rail Extension project, for track access rights on the Salinas-Gilroy corridor and preparing for funding applications for stations at Pajaro/Watsonville (for connectivity to Santa Cruz county) and at Castroville (for connectivity to the Monterey Peninsula).

Committee Member LeBarre asked whether the study would also support future funding applications for King City and Soledad, and Ms. Watson agreed she would add those stations to the RFP scope of work for the Board meeting.

7. 2019 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The Committee received and commented on the draft 2019 Legislative Program.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that the purpose of the legislative program is to set general principles to guide staff and Board responses to legislative or budgetary proposals. The program also notifies state representatives of the Transportation Agency's position on issues of key importance to the Agency. She noted that the draft 2019 legislative program continues to focus on transportation funding and is limited to priorities that are likely to come up in the 2019 legislative session. Ms. Watson noted that after an interagency meeting on legislation, the program was edited to include support for federal grant applications for the Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) busway project in the Monterey Branch Line right-of-way.

Jerome Landesman, Salinas resident, asked whether the MST busway project in the Monterey Branch Line right-of-way would enhance and not destroy the long-term opportunity for rail in the corridor. Lisa Rheinheimer, MST, responded that the project is not going to remove the rail line. Todd Muck, Deputy Executive Director, noted that TAMC staff is fully engaged in the project planning effort and that there is room within the Monterey Branch Line corridor to keep the busway to the side of the tracks, and that the key question is how the busway might cross the tracks. He also noted that the tracks are degraded and will need repairs for any future rail service.

8. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION FOR CHAIR KIMBLEY CRAIG

The Committee presented a certificate of Appreciation to Chair Craig.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that the Committee wishes to recognize Chair Kimbley Craig for her eight years on the Committee, including two years as Vice Chair and two years as Chair. She noted that Chair Craig has traveled far and wide to champion expanded passenger rail service in the Monterey Bay Area, representing TAMC at the regional, state and federal levels, and helping to seek and secure funding for rail projects in the region. Recognizing her achievements, the Committee presented Chair Craig with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Chair Craig noted that it has been an honor to serve on the Rail Policy Committee. She expressed that when Mayor Donohue appointed her to represent the City of Salinas to the TAMC Board, she was not sure who or what TAMC was. She is looking forward to the Measure X projects and Rail to Salinas.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND/OR COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None this month.

10. ADJOURN

Chair Craig adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.