

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY (TAMC)

RAIL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

DRAFT Minutes of October 5, 2020

Transportation Agency for Monterey County

ZOOM REMOTE VIDEO/PHONE CONFERENCE ONLY

	NOV 19	DEC 19	JAN 20	FEB 20	MAR 20	APR 20	MAY 20	JUN 20	JUL 20	AUG 20	SEP 20	OCT 20
L. Alejo, Dist. 1 (L. Gonzalez, J. Gomez)	P(A)	N	-	P(A)	P(A)	C	-	-	N	P(A)	C	P(A)
J. Phillips, Dist. 2 (J. Stratton, C. Link)	P(A)	O	P(A)	P(A)	-	A	P(A)	P(A)	O	P(A)	A	P(A)
J. Parker, Dist. 4 (W. Askew)	P(A)		P(A)	P(A)	-	N	P(A)	P(A)		P(A)	N	P(A)
M. Adams, Dist. 5, (Y. Anderson)	P(A)	M	P(A)	P(A)	E	C	P(A)	P(A)	M	P(A)	C	P(A)
M. LeBarre, King City, Chair (C. DeLeon)	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	E	P
B. Delgado, Marina, Vice Chair (F. O'Connell)	-	E	P	P	P	L	P	P	E	-	L	-
E. Smith, Monterey (A. Renny)	-	T	P	P	P	L	P	P	T	E	L	P
S. Davis, Salinas, (C. Cromeenes)	P	I	P	P	P	E	P	P	I	P	E	P
G. Hawthorne, Sand City (J. Blackwelder , K. Cruz)	P(A)	N	P(A)	P(A)	P(A)	D	P(A)	P(A)	N	P(A)	D	-
I. Oglesby, Seaside (D. Pacheco)	P	G	P	-	P		P	P	G	P		-
A. Chavez, Soledad (F. Ledesma)	P		-	P	-		P	P		P		-
D. Potter, At Large Member	E		P	P	P		P	P		P		P
M. Twomey, AMBAG (H. Adamson , P. Hierling)	P(A)		P(A)	-	P(A)		P(A)	P(A)		P(A)		P(A)
O. Monroy-Ochoa, Caltrans District 5	-		-	-	-		P	-		-		-
C. Sedoryk, MST (L. Rheinheimer)	P(A)		P(A)	P(A)	P(A)		-	P(A)		P(A)		P(A)
STAFF												
D. Hale, Exec. Director	E		E	P	E		P	P		P		P
T. Muck, Deputy Exec. Director	P		P	P	P		P	P		P		P
C. Watson, Principal Transp. Planner	P		P	P	P		P	P		P		P
M. Zeller, Principal Transp. Planner	P		P	P	P		P	P		P		P
T. Wright, Outreach Coordinator	P		-	-	P		P	P		P		-
M. Montiel Admin Assistant	P		P	P	P		P	P		P		P
L. Williamson, Senior Engineer	E		P	E	P		E	P		P		P
M. Jacobsen, Transportation Planner	P			P	P		P	P		P		P

1. QUORUM CHECK AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair LeBarre called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. A quorum was established, and self-introductions were made.

OTHERS PRESENT

Bill Sabo	Monterey Airport	Andy Cook	Caltrans
Ryan Park	AECOM	Shannon Simonds	Caltrans
Justin C Fox	AECOM	Josh Pulverman	Caltrans
Lukas Yanni	AECOM	Tarah Brady	Caltrans
Michael Cornfield	Deutsche Bahn	Lauren Jumanan	Kimley-Horn
Grant Leonard	City of Monterey	Peter Meyerhofer	Kimley-Horn

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

3. CONSENT AGENDA

M/S/C Potter/Anderson/unanimous

Committee Alternate Josh Stratton pulled item 3.3 for discussion.

3.1 Approved minutes of the August 3, 2020 Rail Policy Committee meeting.

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

M/S/C Stratton/Potter/unanimous

3.3 Received report on the final Central Coast Highway 1 Elkhorn Slough Resiliency Study. Committee Alternate Stratton pulled item 3.3 for discussion: Mr. Stratton thanked the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) for completing the study. He asked what the next steps are to see the recommended projects constructed. Madilyn Jacobsen, Transportation Planner, noted that Caltrans has asked for the projects to be included in the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as an unfunded project. Executive Director Debbie Hale noted that of the many steps to get a project from concept to construction, and getting it in the RTP is the first step to secure funding and move it to the constrained list. Committee Member Potter noted that the County would also need to update its Local Coastal Program.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

4. CALTRANS 2022 STATE RAIL PLAN

The Committee received a presentation from Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transportation staff and provided feedback to guide the development the 2022 State Rail Plan.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, introduced Andy Cook, Josh Pulverman, Tarah Brady, and Shannon Simonds from Caltrans Division of Rail & Mass Transportation.

Josh Pulverman reported that the Rail Plan establishes a strategic vision for prioritizing state investment in the passenger and freight rail network statewide. He noted that it provides a framework for coordination between planning partners, rail operators, rail owners and the state to develop a rail network with a strategic vision in mind. The plan will build upon the regional rail network integration studies that are being conducted in Monterey County and throughout the state.

Committee Member Smith asked for a link to the 2018 rail plan. Mr. Pulverman replied that it can be found online. Shannon Simonds shared the link to the plan.

5. RAIL NETWORK INTEGRATION STUDY UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the Monterey Bay Area Rail Network Integration Study.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, introduced Ryan Park, Lukas Yanni and Justin Fox with AECOM and Michael Cornfield with Deutsche Bahn. Mr. Park provided an update on work to date. Mr. Yanni reported on the final survey results, noting a total of 800 people took the survey, with results showing generally positive interest in rail service on the Central Coast.

Committee Alternate Askew was pleased to see more respondents after the last Committee meeting. She asked whether the memo will explain where people live and want to travel by rail. Mr. Yanni responded that the memo will explain travel patterns and what amenities people want on the train and at the stations.

Mr. Park noted that there will be an open house on the draft study to gather more input and try to target audiences that were underrepresented in the survey.

Mr. Cornfield reviewed the draft governance memo outlining the administrative, jurisdictional, contracting, and funding powers needed to scale and deliver the Monterey Bay Regional Network.

Executive Director Debbie Hale noted that the key difference between governance options is whether an entity can levy taxes.

Chair LeBarre noted that another aspect that should be included is whether the entity has eminent domain authority.

Committee Member Smith noted that policy questions need to be answered before a decision can be made as to governance, such as the terminals of the rail line and type of service to be provided. Ms. Hale responded that the governance question is most important for the round-the-bay Santa Cruz to Monterey regional service, and that the timing is good to initiate those discussions as it can take many years to form a new governmental entity. Mr. Smith suggested a coordinating meeting between TAMC and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission to further this discussion.

6. SURF! BUSWAY UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the SURF! Busway and Rapid Transit project along the Monterey Branch Line from Marina to Sand City.

Madilyn Jacobsen, Transportation Planner, reported that Monterey-Salinas Transit initiated the environmental analysis and preliminary engineering for the SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit project in November 2019. The SURF! Busway and Bus Rapid Transit project completed 15% design. She noted that as part of the outreach, the project team has developed a video simulation. The simulation was presented at the meeting.

Peter Meyerhofer, Kimley-Horn, reviewed the 15% plans, noting that the Busway enters the Monterey Branch Line right-of-way at Del Monte Boulevard and Palm Avenue in Marina and exits the rail right-of-way at California Avenue and Fremont Street in Sand City. The busway parallels Highway 1 for approximately six miles. The majority of the busway runs on the east side of the rail right-of-way, with minimal crossing points over the rail tracks. There are three proposed crossings over the rail line due to physical and geographic constraints in the corridor, and to minimize project costs.

Committee Alternate Askew noted that land at Palm Avenue and Marina Drive is owned by school district and they have plans for housing in the future. She also asked TAMC staff to remove a fence at that intersection. Executive Director Debbie Hale noted she would talk to Dave Delfino of TAMC staff about the fence.

Committee Member Smith asked who addresses pedestrian crossings and potential conflicts between the bus system and the future rail line plans. Mr. Meyerhofer replied that we are hoping the bus network will grow ridership that will enable us to evolve into future rail service.

Committee Alternate Anderson asked if the busway will be one direction in the AM, one direction in the PM. Lisa Rheinheimer, Monterey-Salinas Transit, replied that MST is proposing two-way travel as most flexible solution to congestion on the highway.

Committee Member Smith requested that the project team add more bikes and pedestrian to the 5th Street Station element of the video simulation.

7. SALINAS RAIL KICK START PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the Salinas Rail Kick Start project.

Laurie Williamson, Senior Engineer, reported that the construction team continues to make progress on Package 1. She noted that in August, TAMC approved four change orders relating to sidewalk and drainage pipe elevations, bus shelter pads, tree removal, and unsuitable material removal. The construction team continues to work on Railroad Avenue and the transit plaza. The construction work is now 69% complete per the amendment budget and 88% percent complete per the schedule. The team currently anticipates completion of the project in Mid-November 2020. TAMC is organizing a ribbon cutting ceremony, with the option for virtual participation, for December 7, 2020 at 3 pm at the train station.

Mike Zeller, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that staff and consultants continue to oversee the right-of-way to further negotiations and finalize the acquisition. He noted that the cases have been filled with the superior court and we are in contact with property owners.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that Caltrain provided the final feasibility study to TAMC to share with the committee. The study is focused on answering critical due diligence questions around operations, governance, and legal consideration of the near term service scenario of extending existing weekday service from Gilroy to Salinas. The found central principles of the report are:

1. Service must be cost-neutral for JBP.
2. No changes to Caltrain mainline service.
3. TAMC, working with the State, will address all risks and liabilities of the new service.
4. No changes to the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) governance structure.

She noted that assuming these principles are achieved, Caltrain did not find any significant operational, legal, or design roadblocks and concluded that an extension to Salinas is feasible. The study outlines steps to initiate service, including a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the goal of developing a fee for service arrangement.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND/OR COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, announced that Transportation Agency has a new website. She noted that it is streamlined and ADA accessible. Staff is still working on posting old agendas and minutes.

9. ADJOURN

Chair LeBarre adjourned the meeting at 4:50p.m.