

1. QUORUM CHECK AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair LeBarre called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. A quorum was established.

OTHERS PRESENT

Barry Scott	Friends of the Rail-Trail	Andy Myrick	City of Salinas
Tarah Brady	Caltrans HQ	Ryan Park	AECOM
Anna Devers	SLOCOG	Viktor Zhong	AECOM
JD Douglas	HDR	Steven Keeton	Kimley-Horn
Peter Meyerhofer	Kimley-Horn	Marlana Brown	

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Barry Scott announced that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) Board considered the branch line electric rail business plan and directed staff to make certain changes to the plan and bring it back to the May meeting.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

M/S/C Potter/Smith /unanimous

3.1 Approved minutes of the February 1, 2021 Rail Policy Committee meeting.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

4. COAST CORRIDOR RAIL PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee received an update and provided input on the planned increase in passenger rail service along the coast corridor between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Anna Devers, San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), reported that the Coast Rail Service Implementation Plan lays out three scenarios for delivering a through train on the coastline between San Luis Obispo and Salinas, one round trip in a mid-term scenario, and four round trips in a long-term scenario. The study evaluates the relative capital and operating costs and other pros and cons of the three options. In conclusion Ms. Devers noted that Transportation Agency staff provided feedback to SLOCOG that the Pacific Surfliner extension should have San Jose as an endpoint instead of Salinas. The study will go to the SLOCOG Board of Directors in June for adoption.

The Committee provided the following input on the Coast Corridor Rail Project:

- Coordinate with Amtrak and State to accelerate project
- President Biden infrastructure plan a positive indication of his support of rail
- Examine the cost scenario on new equipment compared to existing equipment
- Preference for using existing Joint Powers Authorities or agreements in the near term
- Option A (extending Capitol Corridor from San Jose to San Luis Obispo) appears to have easiest path to implementation
- Support connection to Santa Cruz at Pajaro/Watsonville

Christina Watson noted that the Transportation Agency Network Integration Study has a more ambitious plan for the Coast Rail service and noted that staff has been coordinating with SLOCOG throughout development of each study.

5. RAIL NETWORK INTEGRATION STUDY UPDATE

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

Ryan Park, AECOM presented Monterey Bay Area Rail Network Integration Study ridership estimates and funding, financing and grant information.

The Committee provided the following input on the Network Integration Study:

- Reference the plans for Fort Hunter Liggett to transfer troops by rail at the King City station
- Explain relatively high ridership estimates at stations in smaller population areas such as the Pajaro station, which is anticipated to be a hub station for connections to Santa Cruz County
- Note uncertainty in funding later phases reflecting changing administrations with differing political priorities

6. SALINAS RAIL KICK START PROJECT UPDATE

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

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that Monterey County Rail Extension project funding will be going to the California Transportation Commission's May meeting for extensions.

Laurie Williamson, Senior Engineer, reported that the construction team is wrapping up construction on Package 1. She noted that the construction team is working on closing out permits and wrapping up the contract, and that staff plans to bring the contract for acceptance to the May TAMC Board meeting. Staff continues to coordinate with the City of Salinas and the State on the transfer of the completed project to the City.

Mike Zeller, Principal Transportation Planner, reported that that staff and consultants continue to further negotiations on properties. He noted that a closed session is scheduled for the April TAMC Board meeting.

Committee Member Craig requested that staff provide a written update to members of the Salinas City Council on the rules pertaining to active real estate negotiations for public projects.

Ms. Watson reported that design meetings are going well. She noted that several issues brought to light via design meetings and document review necessitate contract amendment #1 that will be going to the April TAMC board meeting. She said an agreement with Union Pacific Railroad to conduct a rail line capacity analysis will also be on the April TAMC agenda.

7. SURF! BUSWAY UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the SURF! Busway and Bus 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. She noted 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 on TAMC right-of-way.

Peter Meyerhofer, Kimley-Horn, stated that the preliminary engineering design is now 35% complete and the team is continuing to work on refining the geometric layouts. He noted that identifying location for drainage facilities, traffic signal improvements and detailed signage plans are underway.

Lisa Rheinheimer, Monterey-Salinas Transit, reported that MST is the Lead Agency for the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). She noted that Monterey Salinas Transit released a 30-day environmental public review period that is open from March 13, 2021 through April 12, 2021. Ms. Rheinheimer noted that MST is actively coordinating with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to apply for a Capital Investment Grant. MST and TAMC staff have been meeting quarterly with FTA to discuss project development.

Chair LeBarre noted that it is important to consider lighting, seating and water refill stations at major stops.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND/OR COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None

9. ADJOURN

Chair LeBarre adjourned the meeting at 3:43 p.m.