

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY (TAMC)

RAIL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Final Minutes of May 4, 2026

55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, California 93901 - Transportation Agency Conference Room

	MAY 25	JUN 25	JUL 25	AUG 25	SEP 25	OCT 25	NOV 25	JAN 26	FEB 26	MAR 26	APR 26	MAY 26
L. Alejo, Dist. 1 (L. Gonzalez, J. Gomez)	P(A) (VC)	P	N	P	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P	P	C	P	P	P(A) (VC)
G. Church, Dist. 2 (M. Vierra , L. Gray)	P(VC)	P(A) (VC)	O	P	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)	A	P (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)
W. Askew, Dist. 4 (Y. Anderson , K. Panni)	P(VC)	P(A) (VC)	M	P(A)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	N	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)
K. Daniels, Dist. 5, (K. Craig)	P(VC)	P(VC)	E	P	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)	C	P	P (VC)	P (VC)
M. LeBarre, King City, Chair (C. DeLeon)	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P
B. Delgado, Marina (J. McAdams L. Visscher)	P(VC)	A	T	P	P(A) (VC)	P (VC)	A	P(A) (VC)	L	P (VC)	P (VC)	A
E. Smith, Monterey (G. Garcia, M. Garcia , A. Easterling)	P	P	I	P	P	P	A	P	L	E	P	P(A) (VC)
D. Donohue, Salinas, (M. D'Arrigo)	P	A	N	P	P	P	A	P	E	P	P	P
M. Carbone, Sand City (J. Blackwelder)	P	P	G	P	E	P (VC)	P(A) (VC)	E	D	P (VC)	P	P
I. Oglesby, Seaside (D. Pacheco)	P	P		P	P	P	A	P		P	P	P
A. Velazquez, Soledad (F. Ansaldo-Sanchez)	P(VC)	A		P	P (VC)	E	A	P (VC)		P (VC)	P (VC)	E
M. Twomey, AMBAG (H. Adamson, P. Hierling)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)		A	P(A)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)		A	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)
A. Fukushima, Caltrans District 5	A	A		P (VC)	A	A	A	A		A	A	P*
C. Sedoryk, MST (L. Rheinheimer/ M. Overmeyer)	P(A) (VC)	A		P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)		A	P(A) (VC)	P(A) (VC)
STAFF	MAY 25	JUN 25	JUL 25	AUG 25	SEP 25	OCT 25	NOV 25	JAN 26	FEB 26	MAR 26	APR 26	MAY 26
O. Barajas, Transportation Planner	-	-	N	-	-	-	-	-	C	P*	A	A
R. Bigelow, Contracts and Grants	-	-	O	-	P* (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)	A	A	P (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)
D. Bilse, Principal Engineer	P (VC)	P (VC)	M	A	A	P (VC)	A	A	N	A	A	A
A. Cook, Principal Planner	-	-	E	-	-	-	-	-	C	-	P*	P
A. Guther, Assoc. Transp. Planner	P	P (VC)	E	P	A	P	P	P	E	P	E	E

A. Hernandez, Transp. Planner	A	A	T	A	A	A	A	P (VC)	L	A	A	A
J. Kise, Director of Finance and Admin	A	A	I	A	P (VC)	P (VC)	A	A	L	P (VC)	A	P
M. Montiel Admin Assistant	P	P	N	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	P	P
S. Linnevers Transp. Planner	-	-	G	-	-	-	-	-	D	-	P*	A
T. Muck, Executive Director	P	P		P	P	P	P	P		P	A	P
M. Park, Finance Officer/ Analyst	A	P (VC)		P (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)	A		A	P (VC)	P (VC)
M. Sheehan, Accounting Assistant	-	-		-	-	-	-	-		-	-	P (VC)
J. Strause, Senior Transp. Planner	P (VC)	A		P (VC)	A	A	P (VC)	P (VC)		P (VC)	P (VC)	P (VC)
C. Watson, Director of Planning	P	P		P (VC)	P	P	P	P		P	P	P
L. Williamson, Senior Engineer	A	P		P	P	E	P	P (VC)		A	P	P
M. Zeller, Director of Programming & Project Delivery	P (VC)	P (VC)		P	P	P	P	P (VC)		P (VC)	E	P

P = Present A = Absent P(A) = Alternate Present E = Excused (VC) = Video Conference * = New representative

1. QUORUM CHECK AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair LeBarre called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Maria Montiel, Administrative Assistant, called the roll and confirmed a quorum was established.

OTHERS PRESENT

Dominic Dursa	Speaker Rivas office	Leonie Gray	District 3 office
Javier Gomez	District 1 office	Michael Groves	Sand City Consultant
Vibeke Norgaard	Sand City staff	Nick McIlroy	Sand City staff
Paul Dyson	Public	Matt Johnson	Public
Roland LeBrun	Public		

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Paul Dyson, resident, noted that he is in strong support for rail service plans and happy to write letters of support.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

M/S/C Carbone/ Church/ unanimous

3.1 Approved minutes of April 6, 2026, Rail Policy Committee meeting.

3.2 Received update on the Pajaro/Watsonville Multimodal Station Project.

3.3 Received update on the Highway 1 Elkhorn Slough Corridor Climate Resiliency project activities.

3.4 Received media clippings attached online.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

4. ALLOWABLE USES WITHIN THE MONTEREY BRANCH LINE RIGHT-OF-WAY

The Committee provided directions to staff on whether TAMC should maintain its long-standing policy prohibiting development within the rail alignment of the Monterey Branch Line or allow greater flexibility for interim uses, while ensuring long-term preservation of future passenger rail services.

Mike Zeller, Director of Programming & Project Delivery, reported that Sand City is proposing to construct a multi-use trail and parking within the Monterey Branch Line right-of-way and has submitted a draft Use Agreement requesting long-term, exclusive rights to use portion of the corridor. The current proposal requires building parts of the trail and parking projects on top of the current track's alignment. He noted that the goal has been to maintain flexibility for long-term mass transit planning, generate revenue to cover Monterey-Branch Line maintenance costs, avoid costly future removal of improvements, and ensure the corridor remains intact as a unified transportation asset.

The Committee had the following input and comments related to the policies for the use of the Monterey Branch Line corridor by others:

- Consensus that agreements could have 20-year terms with extensions, but the policy should consider that term may be shorter for future agreements when we are closer to beginning a mass transit project.
- Consider preserving enough width and space
- Sand City understands that if rail is coming, they'll move their trail
- The draft use agreements will stipulate rail is primary use of corridor
- Board can consider changing leasing rates
- Consider the draft agreement considers trail a transportation use and parking is treated separately as non-transportation use
- Consider memorializing in agreement instead of policy
- Concerns about institutional rail memory
- Consider incorporating committee input into real property policies
- Consider clear definition of preferred alignment within the corridor and clear deadlines, to prevent future conflicts over the use of the corridor

Public comment:

Roland LeBrun, member of public asked Agency staff to post maps for the Monterey Branch Line and the engineering standards.

Vibeke Norgaard, City of Sand City, noted that the city would prep for rail, clean it up and remove the tracks.

Michael Groves, City of Sand City consultant, mentioned that the project proponents support the rail project and will leave some signage that is a reminder of the history and the planned future rail service.

Executive Director Todd Muck highlighted that staff would bring back the Real Property Policies and the Use Agreement. He noted that the Active Transportation Plan deadline is June 22.

5. SALINAS RAIL KICK START PROJECT UPDATE

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

Christina Watson, Director of Planning, reported on the Monterey County Rail Extension Project. She noted that the 30% Salinas layover facility track, and structure plans were submitted to Union Pacific in April. She mentioned that the final tenant on TAMC-owned property in Salinas has vacated the property and staff are preparing for demolition of that structure to allow for utility relocation along New Street. She noted that Amtrak's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Platform upgrades at the Salinas train station are anticipated to begin construction this summer and is scheduled for a 12-month construction timeline. Ms. Watson noted that Monterey-Salinas Transit and the City of Salinas are collaborating on redesigning the Salinas train station parking lot to accommodate 12 MST buses.

6. COAST CORRIDOR RAIL PROJECT UPDATE

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

Andy Cook, Principal Transportation Planner, reported staff is coordinating with King City staff to transfer the existing design contract with RailPros to TAMC advance design review activities with Union Pacific Railroad, and execute a contract for environmental review. He noted that based on the design requirements, TAMC and King City staff directed RailPros to complete and resubmit 25% of design updates incorporating Union Pacific Railroad comments with Transportation Agency moves forwards to execute arrangements need to assume the lead agency role.

Mr. Cook noted that the Coast Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC) working group met virtually on April 17 and discussed proposed pilot passenger rail device on the Coast Route between San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles for the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, among other interagency reports and legislative updates. He noted that the next CRCC Policy meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2026, in Oakland.

Committee Member Daniels asked about the proposed pilot train for the Olympics. Mr. Cook replied that the frequency and operations have not been determined and the operators could be Capitol Corridor or the Pacific Surfliner. He noted one goal is for the service to show support for long-term operations scenarios to Salinas and San Luis Obispo.

7. CALIFORNIA PASSENGER RAIL SUMMIT

The Committee received an update on the 2026 Passenger Rail Summit.

Christina Watson, Director of Planning, reported that Transportation Agency staff and TAMC Board members attended the 2026 California Passenger Rail Summit in Sacramento April 29-May 1, 2026. The summit was a three-day, in person convening of intercity passenger rail professionals from across California.

Committee Member Daniels noted that it was a great Rail Summit. She noted that it was exciting to hear about the growth in intercity passenger rail connecting cities and with our extension, we would be connected to services to the North. Ms. Daniels mentioned that she was thinking about plans for service and the opportunity to acquire old trains when other agencies are retiring fleet in the process of upgrading their fleet technology.

Executive Director Todd Muck noted that it focused on California passenger rail and attendees were able to have one-on-one conversations with staff from existing operators.

Chair LeBarre noted that the increase in rail passenger ridership during the weekends is going gangbusters on all routes. He also noted that the state is making structural changes to support rail efforts. He noted that Shannon Simonds at Caltrans has been an amazing advocate for the Central Coast.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND/OR COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee Member Carbone announced that she attended the American Public Transit Association (APTA) Legislative Conference in Washington DC and was disappointed to hear that federal funds were taken from California's high-speed rail project.

9. ADJOURN

Chair LeBarre adjourned the meeting at 3:24 p.m.