

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

Chair LeBarre called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was established, and self-introductions were made.

OTHERS PRESENT

Brad Tarp Salinas Resident Ginger Daakar Santa Cruz County RTC

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

3. **CONSENT AGENDA**

M/S/C Anderson/Davis/unanimous

3.1 Approved minutes of the October 7, 2019 Rail Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Tarp, member of the public, noted that he spoke at length during that meeting about arsenic cleanup on his property.

3.2 Approved 2020 schedule of Rail Policy Committee meetings.

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

3.4 Received update on the Monterey Bay Area Rail Network Integration Study.

3.5 Received update on the Salinas Rail Kick Start project.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

4. **SANTA CRUZ RAIL LINE UPDATE**

The Committee received an update from Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) on their rail corridor study.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, introduced Ginger Dykaar, Senior Transportation Planner, who presented an update on the planning efforts related to the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail corridor. Ms. Watson noted that Transportation Agency staff and SCCRTC staff have a joint interest in a rail station at Pajaro/ Watsonville to provide alternative transportation to residents of southern Santa Cruz County and northern Monterey County.

Ms. Dykaar presented the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail corridor. She noted that the 32-mile Santa Cruz Branch Line is a continuous transportation corridor offering tremendous potential for new mobility options for residents and visitors alike. The rail line is designated as active and spans the county from Davenport to Watsonville, running parallel to the Highway 1 corridor and the coast, and connecting into state and other regional rail lines in Pajaro. She noted that on October 3, 2019, the RTC approved a contract with HDR to perform an Alternatives Analysis for high capacity public transit on the rail right of way. The Alternatives Analysis will evaluate public transit investment options that provide an integrated transit network for Santa Cruz County utilizing all of part of the length of the rail right-of-way between the Pajaro/Watsonville train Station and Shaffer Road as a dedicated transit facility,

adjacent to the proposed Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail. Transit alternatives will be compared to define a viable project that will provide the greatest benefit to the Santa Cruz County residents, business and visitors in terms of equity, environment and economy. In conclusion, Ms. Dykaar noted that proposed future inter-county and inter-regional connections to the Bay Area, Monterey, Gilroy and beyond will be considered. She noted that HDR's proposal for the Alternatives Analysis is available online. They are aiming to finalize the Alternatives Analysis on January 2021.

Committee alternate Askew expressed the need to look at all funding options.

5. ELKHORN SLOUGH SEA LEVEL RISE STUDY UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the Elkhorn Slough Sea Level Rise Study.

Christina Watson, Principal Transportation Planner, introduced Heather Adamson, Director of Planning, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), and noted that the results of the study could recommend further analysis of elevating or relocating the Highway 1 and rail corridors, which could have large price tags for construction.

Ms. Adamson reported that AMBAG received a grant awards for a study combining transportation and environmental elements. She noted that the Central Coast Highway 1 Climate Resiliency study is looking at the impacts of climate change and sea level rise to transportation corridors through the Elkhorn Slough, including the Union Pacific-owned Coast Mainline tracks. She noted that this multi-agency effort will identify transportation improvements and sea level rise adaptation strategies that can improve transportation mobility, safety and efficiency, protect the environment, and provide economic security and benefits to the local community. In conclusion, Ms. Adams noted that five segments on Highway 1 in the study area are expected to be flooded by 2040. She noted that they are working on outreach and community engagement now, and that the document will go to the AMBAG Board for adoption with the recommended adaptation strategies in June 2020.

Committee member Davis asked if Union Pacific will be providing funding to improve the rail line. Ms. Adamson noted that the study will include analysis of funding sources, and that AMBAG has invited Union Pacific to participate in the study.

Committee alternate Anderson asked how the Transportation Agency will be involved. Ms. Adamson noted that some projects identified might end up in TAMC's regional project list.

Committee alternate Stratton noted that there are multiple sea level rise studies completed or underway and asked if AMBAG can make sure this study incorporates and/or overrides the old studies.

Committee member LeBarre asked if anyone has reached out to the power plant. Ms. Adamson noted that they have been invited.

6. 2020 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The Committee received and commented on draft 2020 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. She noted that the draft 2020 legislative program continues to focus on transportation funding and is limited to priorities that are likely to come up in the 2020 legislative session. In conclusion, Ms. Watson highlighted the issues on the draft program of key interest to the committee.

Committee member LeBarre asked whether federal priority 1F (2) might be amended to add consideration of an wholesale energy tax.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND/OR COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee member Davis mentioned that tomorrow at the City of Salinas City Council meeting Monterey-Salinas-Transit (MST) is scheduled to present on the proposed relocation of the transit center to the train station. Lisa Rheinheimer, MST, noted that MST is applying for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) planning grant.

Madilyn Jacobsen, Transportation Planner, announced that TAMC is seeking public input to help define the goals, policy objectives, and performance measures of the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan. The deadline for public input is November 29, 2019.

ADJOURN

Chair LeBarre adjourned the meeting at 4:13 p.m.