

California Rural Counties Task Force
May 19, 2023
Zoom/Teleconference

Draft Minutes

A. Introductions (All)

Chair Nephele Barrett, Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), called the meeting to order.

New or infrequent members introduced themselves: Dylan Stone, Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), Garrett Franklin, and Robin Van Valkenburgh, Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC).

B. CSIS 2.0 (R. Abboud)

Chair Barrett announced that Mr. Abboud was unable to attend today's meeting and this item will be pushed to the next RCTF meeting.

C. Approve Minutes (N. Barrett)

There were no comments on the meeting minutes. The March 17, 2023 meeting minutes were approved.

D. Information Sharing/Topics of Significance (All)

Tamera Leighton, Del Norte LTC, stated that she has had difficulties programming COVID STIP funds and wondered if anyone else was having any problems with programming these funds? Kacey Ruggerio, CTC, suggested that she forward the email chain to her.

Robin Van Valkenburgh, NCTC, announced that the California Transit Association (CTA) had recently released a letter regarding the allocation of additional funding for transit agencies to bridge the funding gap that many transit agencies are experiencing. He wanted to make sure that other RCTF members were aware of this.

E. Committee Assignments (N. Barrett)

Chair Barrett announced that the RCTF Committee assignments need to be updated. RCTF members provided information on assignments. Chair Barrett will continue to update the assignments and bring them back to the RCTF at the next meeting.

F. Rural Planning Assistance (E. Thompson/N. Barrett)

Ms. Thompson announced that there is roughly \$240,000 in RPA carryover. The CARL Program provides \$25,000 for scholarships and travel expenses and is administered by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC). Caltrans is proposing not to do a discretionary program next year and that the funding would be split among the agencies. Ms. Thompson asked what is the RCTF preference? RCTF members indicated that they support the CARL Program and would like the discretionary program to continue as it has in past years.

G. CTC Updates

1. Legislative Update/IIJA (Z. Taylor)

Zach Taylor, CTC, gave a legislative update. He highlighted a few bills of interest that CTC is monitoring:

- AB 630 (Ramos) – CTC recently adopted a support position. This bill would repeal a requirement that federally recognized tribal governments adopt a limited waiver of sovereignty when contracting with Caltrans.
- AB 251 (Ward) – Requires the CTC to convene a task force to study the relationship between vehicle weight and injuries to vulnerable road users.
- AB 744 (Carrillo) – Requires CTC to acquire data and modeling tools for use by local agencies.
- SB 258 (Roth) – Requires CTC to conduct a needs assessment for the state’s general aviation airports.

Mike Woodman, NCTC, asked if any of the VMT related bills (AB 6 & 7) advanced? Mr. Taylor responded that the Friedman bills are in the floor process and are likely to go to the Senate for hearings.

2. Active Transportation Program (B. Newman-Burckhard)

Beverly Newman-Burckhard, CTC, reported that staff are working their way through the MPO component for Cycle 6. CTC adopted some of the projects at the May CTC meeting and the remainder will be going to the June CTC meeting. Following that, they will start on Cycle 7, with workshops starting in late August/early September 2023.

Rachel Moriconi, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC), asked if the May Revise included any additional funds for ATP. Ms. Newman-Burckhard responded that there have been no changes since January. Aaron Hoyt, NCTC, asked why CTC staff was starting Cycle 7 early? Ms. Newman-Burckhard responded that there are some additional CTC processes that need to be incorporated into this upcoming funding cycle that requires more time as well as the potential reduction of funds due to the state budget.

3. SB 1 Programs (N. Habib)

Naveen Habib, CTC, reported that SB 1 Competitive Programs are under review and CTC staff is preparing staff recommendations which will be released on June 8, 2023. CTC is scheduled to adopt all SB 1 Competitive Program recommendations at its June 2023 meeting.

4. Local Streets and Roads (C. Aceves)

Celeste Aceves, CTC, provided a quick update for the LSR Program. As a reminder, the FY23-24 Annual Project Lists are due by July 1, 2023 for initial eligibility. If local jurisdictions are unable to meet this, there is a subsequent eligibility deadline of September 2023.

5. STIP (K. Ruggiero)

Kacey Ruggiero, CTC, provided a STIP update. Ms. Ruggiero stated that CTC held their first workshop this week on the 2024 STIP Guidelines. Ms. Ruggiero is planning to have another workshop in two weeks. The recording from the workshops will be posted online. There will be a combined workshop to discuss the draft guidelines/fund estimate and is scheduled for July 19 from 1-3pm. The draft 2024 STIP Guidelines and fund estimate will be presented to the CTC at its June meeting.

Gerry LeFrancois, Mono County LTC, asked if staff could explain the rationale behind Section 24a? Ms. Ruggiero responded that this section is not a policy change and is currently in place. This section means that prior STIP cycles cannot be adjusted.

6. RTP Guidelines (B. Driller)

Brigitte Driller, CTC, provided an update on the RTP Guidelines. Ms. Driller stated that a first draft of the RTP Guidelines for MPOs has been posted for public review and comment. Comments on the first draft are due on June 5, 2023. The RTP Guidelines technical work groups will continue to meet this month and as needed over the summer. The next RTP Guidelines workshop is scheduled for July 12, 2023 at 1pm.

Chair Barrett asked if there was rural representation on the RTP Guidelines technical working groups. Ms. Thompson, Caltrans, responded that there is rural representation on the working groups and encouraged any RCTF members to participate.

7. LTCAP (R. Light)

Rebecca Light, CTC, provided an update on the LTCAP. The LTCAP guidelines were adopted at the CTC meeting and will be posted next week. The call for projects is currently open and closes on July 31, 2023. Ms. Light also stated that she is still gathering information on what the Emergency

Evacuation Notification Process looks like and she will try to get this information out as soon as possible.

H. Caltrans Updates

1. Local Assistance (Felicia Haslem)

Felicia Haslem, Caltrans, provided an update on Obligation Authority (OA) delivery. Caltrans will be setting up meetings with the districts, MPOs, RTPA, etc. to discuss the OA plans, the projects in the OA plans and which projects will be programmed. The deadline for Request for Authorizations is July 14, 2023 in order to conduct August redistributions. Ms. Haslem also provided an brief update on PE>10 and PED Tool Extension Request with links to more information at: <https://www.localassistanceblog.com/2023/04/27/fhwa-repeal-of-the-10-year-preliminary-engineering-rule/> and <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/dd8ec43edae54b8aad35159cacec011a>, respectively.

In addition, Ms. Haslem provided an update on the Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards Pilot Program is expecting a call for communities (similar to a NOFO) at the end of May with application workshops this summer. More info can be found at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/fed-and-state-programs/rc-h2b>. Applications for the Clean CA Local Grant Program Cycle 2 are due on May 31, 2023. More info can be found at: <https://cleancalifornia.dot.ca.gov/local-grants/local-grant-program>.

Robert Peterson, Caltrans, provided an update and key deadlines on various programs, including

- CRRSAA Allocation – Final Allocation & Amendments due by October 2023 CTC meeting. The obligation deadline may be moved up.
- HIP Obligation – The FFY19/20 funding will lapse soon. Regions have until June 30th to obligate funds.
- Carbon Reduction Program – Workshops held in May and updated Cycle 1 & 2 apportionment posted.
- HBP Program – current FFY projects need to come in for obligation.

Chair Barrett asked if there were guidelines for how regions should select projects for CRP funding. Mr. Peterson responded that guidelines are available online, but he encouraged everyone to reach out to Kathleen Hanley.

2. State Budget Update/IIJA/STIP Fund Estimate (G. Franklin)

Garrett Franklin, Caltrans, provided a budget update. The draft allocation capacity for FY23/24 will be provided at the June 2023, including the draft estimate tables with the final allocation

provided in August 2023. The final assumptions for the 2024 STIP fund estimate were provided at the May CTC meeting.

3. Planning (E. Thompson)

Erin Thompson, Caltrans, provided an update on Planning activities. Ms. Thompson announced that the FY24 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants are under evaluation with award announcements expected in late July/early August 2023. Caltrans is not proposing to update the grant guidelines for next year. The FY25 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants are scheduled to be released in September 2023 with applications due in December 2023.

As a reminder, OWPs need to be approved by June 30, 2023.

I. Miscellaneous (All)

There were no miscellaneous items.

J. Adjourn

Chair Barrett adjourned the meeting.