Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF) Meeting Minutes

Date: October 9, 2026
Time: 12:00 PM
Location: Caltrans Headquarters, Directors Board Room (Room 2116), and virtual

A. Introductions

Presenter: All

Chair Heather Adamson called the meeting to order, welcomed participants, and thanked Caltrans for hosting the RCTF meeting. Attendees provided brief introductions.

B. Approval of Minutes

Presenter: Heather Adamson

The minutes from the July 17, 2026 meeting were presented for approval and were approved unanimously.

C. Information Sharing / Topics of Significance

Presenter: All

No topics were brought up during this item.

D. RPA Carryover

Presenter: Heather Adamson / Erin Thompson

Chair Adamson explained that when there is Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) carryover, the typical process is for the group to ask whether any RCTF members are able to use the funds. Caltrans reported that there is $271,000 in excess RPA carryover, of which approximately $16,000 to $19,000 will be used for scholarships to the California Academy for Regional Leaders (CARL) program.

El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC) presented its request for $60,000 to $90,000 in carryover funds for two efforts. The first is evacuation planning for the community of Volcanoville, which was affected by the Mosquito Fire and has limited road access and emergency evacuation routes. El Dorado County was awarded $7.8 million in PG&E settlement funds, and EDCTC believes a plan is needed to determine how best to spend these funds on evacuation projects. EDCTC has already committed $26,000 and requested up to $60,000, but no less than $30,000. The second request was for $30,000 to expand outreach efforts on the Trip to Green project on US 50, which was awarded Local Transportation Climate Adaptation Program (LTCAP) funds for PA&ED and design. If the EDCTC request is approved,

approximately $161,000 in carryover would remain and would go toward a call for projects administered by Caltrans. Members were asked to consider whether their agencies have needs for the remaining carryover funds, and a group consensus may be requested by email.

A motion was made by Del Norte and seconded by Mariposa to approve $90,000 in carryover funds for EDCTC and $20,000 for the CARL scholarships. The motion was approved unanimously, with John Clerici abstaining as he is an EDCTC Board member in his capacity as a Placerville City Councilmember. The group also noted that there will be further discussions about advocating for an annual inflationary increase to RPA funds in the state budget. Chair Adamson agreed to send a letter to Caltrans to initiate the discussion for additional funding.

E. Governor's Transit Executive Order EO N-7-26

Presenter: Joshua Pulverman, Caltrans Division of Mass Transportation

Josh Pulverman provided an overview of Executive Order N-7-26, which directs efforts to accelerate new technologies and project delivery for transit statewide. The Executive Order is primarily directed at state agencies and is intended to leverage state capacity to streamline the design and delivery of public transportation. A Transit Priority Project List will be developed from the District Transit Plans, which are underway in 11 of the 12 Caltrans districts, as well as from projects listed in regional, MPO, COG, and RTPA plans. The list is intended to provide statewide visibility of high-need locations and streamline project development.

F. State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (SBPP) Update

Presenter: Juven Alvarez, Caltrans

Juven Alvarez provided an overview of the update to the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (SBPP), a high-level policy document that supports travel by bicycle and walking, documents Caltrans actions, and supports the update of the California Transportation Plan. Outreach is being conducted with Caltrans districts, MPOs and RTPAs, disadvantaged communities, and others, with engagement occurring in 2026, a draft plan in 2027, and a final plan in 2028. More information is available on the SBPP engagement webpage at https://engage.dot.ca.gov/hq-sbpp. The group was asked about the biggest safety issues on or near the state highway system and what types of coordination they would like to see between Caltrans, local agencies, and the public. Members commented that Caltrans districts should work more closely with local agencies to implement projects that RTPAs have already developed through public outreach, rather than bringing forward their own ideas, and that SHOPP projects should be coordinated with planned multimodal projects.

G. CTC Updates

1. Legislative Update

Presenter: Sasha Linker

It was reported that the Legislature adjourned on September 1, and the Governor had until September 30 to sign bills. AB 2168 makes changes to the Active Transportation Program (ATP), SB 1087 alters rules for Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS), and SB 113 added funds to the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. At the federal level, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) has been extended by continuing resolution through December 11, 2026.

2. Active Transportation Program (ATP)

Presenter: Anja Aulenbacher

Anja Aulenbacher reported that the ATP Cycle 8 evaluation process is complete and funding recommendations are being prepared. The program received 317 applications, with the amount requested five times greater than the funding available. Recommendations will be posted on November 2, 2026 and adopted at the December CTC meeting. An ATP status report will be presented at the October CTC meeting. Agencies with completed ATP projects were reminded to submit a Completed Project Form.

3. SB 1 Programs / Local Streets and Roads

Presenter: Matthew Yosgott

Matthew Yosgott reported that the SB 1 Cycle 5 call for projects is currently open, with applications due later this fall on varying dates. The competitive programs have a combined $1.7 billion available, and recommendations will be adopted at the June 2027 CTC meeting. For Local Streets and Roads, every city and county in the state achieved eligibility. CTC staff recently held expenditure reporting open houses, and expenditure reports are due December 1st.

4. Delegated Authority to Allocate Funds to Respond to Emergencies

Presenter: Laurie Waters

Laurie Waters reported that CTC staff will present at the October CTC meeting on delegating authority to allocate funding to areas with a declared disaster. Under the proposal, the CTC Executive Director could allocate these funds without Commission approval if certain steps are followed, and the delegated authority would not be limited to programmed projects. The item also addresses the timely use of funds policy for declared emergencies for the ATP, SCCP, LPP, and TCEP programs. A future

training on federal Emergency Relief funds is planned.

H. Caltrans Updates

1. Local Assistance

Presenter: Mark Samuelson

Mark Samuelson provided a brief update on staffing changes in the Division of Local Assistance. He also noted that there will be increased attention on inactive projects in the future, with a goal of reducing the statewide inactive rate from 8% to 2%.

2. Obligation Authority Status

Presenter: Robert Nguyen

Robert Nguyen reported that California has delivered $1.7 billion in federally funded projects and that the current Obligation Authority (OA) status is very good, with 110% delivery this year. The state received $185 million in additional OA, and $850 million of OA is available under the continuing resolution, of which $300 million is for local projects.

3. State and Federal Budget Update

Presenter: Keith Duncan

It was reported that the federal continuing resolution includes funding at the same levels as previous years, except for Highway Bridge Program (HBP) funding and the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program. Unused allocations could potentially be rescinded. At the state level, the Zero-Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP) was only approved for one more year, with further negotiations to come, and Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funding is higher than originally budgeted but lower than in previous years.

4. Planning

Presenter: Erin Thompson / Brenda Caruso

Caltrans Planning staff shared that Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant (STPG) applications were due the day of the meeting, with awards to be announced in Spring 2027. Caltrans will be updating its planning and programming MOUs with all RTPAs, which were last updated in 2012. Agencies were reminded to submit final invoices and final products for FY 25-26 OWPs, as reconciliation letters are starting to go out. FY 26-27 OWP quarterly progress reports are due October 15th. The statewide OWP meeting will be held on October 29th. Other updates included that the final draft of the California Transportation Plan (CTP) is expected to be approved and released in the next couple of months, the California Freight Advisory Committee will hold an in-

person meeting with an update on the Freight Mobility Plan on November 3rd in Sacramento, a response letter on the ITSP was sent to the RCTF, and the FSTIP will be released for public comment soon.

5. Division of Mass Transportation

Presenter: Joshua Pulverman

Josh Pulverman reported that TIRCP awards are expected in late October and that the first meeting of the California Transit Advisory Committee (CalTAC) has been held. LCTOP Cycle B allocation requests are due October 30th, and activity reports are due November 15th.

I. Miscellaneous

Presenter: All

No items presented.

J. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the RCTF is scheduled for November 20, 2026.

K. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 PM.