

Join **Bike Santa Cruz County**
for our Annual Dinner

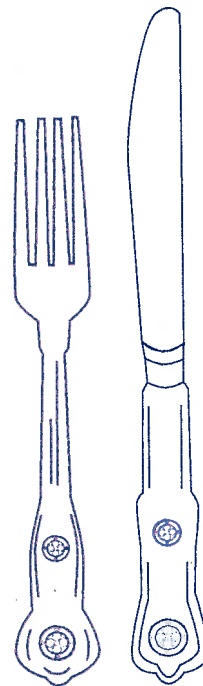
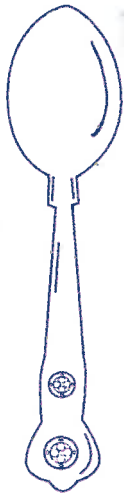
Sunday, December 6, 5-8PM
The Food Lounge
1001 Center Street, downtown Santa Cruz

Purchase tickets at bikesantacruzcounty.org

- Celebrate this year's Transportation Award winners
- Enjoy a locally-sourced dinner by Food Lounge chef Andrea Mollenauer
- Bid on silent auction items from local businesses, artisans and service providers

Free valet bike parking

We're looking for volunteers!
Please contact Amelia at:
director@bikesantacruzcounty.org or 425-0665



BUSINESS + ECONOMY**Why Cars as We Know Them May Disappear by 2050**

By Colin Chilcoat, Oilprice.com
October 29, 2015

We've seen predictions of the death of the automotive industry before; even the death of the car salesman, and, more recently, the death of diesel. To be clear, the automobile isn't going anywhere – on form and function, it has no rival; and as an instrument and symbol of progress, no



single device better combines cutting edge technology with human needs. Rather, the way (and speed) those two inputs conspire to bring about change is the subject of debate.

The world's best-selling carmaker, Toyota, believes the automobile as we know it – gasoline- and diesel-engine powered – will be largely obsolete by 2050. As such, the company – already the hybrid king – is embracing the future and embarking on a large-scale greening strategy.

By the end of the decade, Toyota plans to reduce carbon emissions from new vehicles by more than 22 percent compared to its 2010 average. By 2050, it hopes to cut emissions by as much as 90 percent. Toward that aim, Toyota expects to sell 1.5 million hybrid vehicles annually across the globe by year's end 2020 – or annual growth of about 3 percent. The company will abandon plug-in electric vehicles and instead pursue hydrogen fuel-cell technology. By 2020, Toyota plans to sell 30,000 fuel-cell vehicles per year. Its new Mirai, launched in December 2014, has sold roughly 350 units.

While perhaps not as public – or as optimistic – other companies are positioning themselves for electric-heavy markets in the not too distant future.

Nissan looks to continue its success with battery-electric vehicles as it aims to increase sales to 10 percent of its global total around 2020. Battery-electric sales were 82,602, or just shy of 1 percent in 2014, but a new battery, which should double the range of its popular Leaf model, has the company thinking an electric turning point is on the horizon.

General Motors is also expected to improve the range of its electric fleet before the end of 2016 with the modestly priced Chevrolet Bolt. Moreover, the American automaker has partnered with Korean electronics firm LG Corp to expedite and enhance the development of electric motors and battery cells across its brands. By late 2021, GM expects the partnership to enable reduced energy intensity and industry leading battery cell costs of \$100 per kilowatt-hour.

In the wake of its emissions scandal, Volkswagen plans to cut investment spending by \$1 billion as it refocuses its brand on high-range, plug-in hybrids and high-volume electric vehicles. Volvo is engineering a similar shift away from diesel.

For luxury buyers, BMW appears ready to continue its loose, but ambitious plan of electrification. By 2020, the automaker hopes to sell 100,000 electric vehicles per year, and, within the next decade or so, convert its entire fleet to electric drivetrains (not necessarily full electric).

For its part, Honda will follow its 'Green Path' – a more holistic approach to sustainable production and products.

These widespread movements suggest the alternative vehicle market will be quite competitive in the near future, but companies will be vying for a share of a pie they wish was bigger. The fact is, consumers have been slow to come around to hybrids, EVs, etc, and CAFE standards and tax incentives have failed to manufacture the desired growth.

U.S. auto sales have rebounded since the Great Recession, but, adjusted for population, Americans are buying fewer cars these days – and the cars they're buying aren't electric, or even particularly efficient. After four years of steady year-on-year growth, sales of plug-in electrics in 2015 have failed to match or exceed last year's numbers (European sales look good though). Traditional, gasoline powered cars – midsize, small, and luxury – have also seen sales decline since 2014. Strong auto sales in 2015 have instead been buoyed by significant growth in light-duty truck sales, as well as SUV and cross-over sales.

Low gas prices are the primary culprit for EV's short-term dip, but insufficient infrastructure, inadequate consumer perception, and simple inconvenience are the greatest inhibitors of the impending boom. As those are sorted – and they will be – gasoline will enjoy what may be its last hurrah.

This article originally appeared on OilPrice.com

AGENDA: December 3, 2015

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: George Dondero, Executive Director
RE: Director's Report

THIS ITEM FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Federal Transportation Act

The House-Senate conference committee that gathered to reconcile the respective chambers' transportation bills produced its report on Tuesday with the hope that the House and Senate could approve it by the end of the week, when the current transportation extension expires.

Because we could never let an opportunity for a new acronym to go to waste, the bill has a new name: Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. It is a five-year bill, which will provide some funding certainty for the first time since the SAFETEA-LU bill expired in 2009, but the funding is far from robust. Both highway and transit programs receive annual increase of a little over 2% over the life of the bill – although the increases for both programs from current levels to FY 2016 levels is larger (5% for highways and 8% for transit).

The bill includes a new formula program to states for freight projects, as well as a new discretionary program for large regional highway and freight projects (minimum \$25 million federal contribution). It also eliminates the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), but instead sets-aside funds in the STP program that amounts to about the same as has been spent on TAP in recent years (with 50% of those funds being allocated directly to MPOs). On the transit side, the bill restores some (but not all) of the funding that was cut from the bus capital program and provides a small increase to the Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) program beginning in FY 2019.

The bill includes funding needed to fill the \$75 billion gap between the cost of the bill and expected receipts into the Highway Trust Fund through the gas tax, and since they are all one-time offsets (not related to transportation), we will be having the same funding problems for the next bill in five years. More to come as we plow through the 1300 page bill, but the House Transportation Committee has some highlights as well:

<http://transportation.house.gov/fast-act/>

(thanks to RTC legislative assistant Chris Giglio for this update).

Highway 1 DEIR/EA

Just a reminder that the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment and over 20 technical studies for Highway 1 Corridor projects are now available for public review and comment through January 18, 2016. An open-house format meeting will be held tonight, Thursday December 3 from 6:00-8:30 pm at the Live Oak Elementary School at the corner of 17th Avenue and Capitola in Live Oak.

Caltrans, RTC and technical staff will be on hand to explain the three alternatives considered in the Tier 1 overview of the 9 mile highway corridor, and the Tier II project which would be the next set of auxiliary lanes to be constructed between 41st Ave and Soquel Drive. A Spanish-language interpreter will be available at the meeting, in addition to a court reporter to record comments on-site. Copies of the documents are available on the RTC website (sccrtc.org/hwy1eir) and at most local libraries. The project team appreciates local media -- such as the Santa Cruz Sentinel and KSCO radio -- for helping to get information out to the public about the projects and the Dec 3 open house.

About that Rail Trail

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County is hosting a presentation titled **“All About Your Local Rail Trail”** at **Hotel Paradox** next Tuesday, **December 8th from 7-8pm**. Featured speakers will be: Stephen Slade, Deputy Director of the Land Trust; Cory Caletti, RTC's Sr. Planner and Rail Trail Program Manager; and Amelia Conlen, Executive Director of Bike Santa Cruz County. It will be held in the Grand Ballroom at the Hotel Paradox on Ocean Street in Santa Cruz. Registration is required through the Land Trust's website as the venue is expected to fill up.

The Land Trust has committed over \$3.3M for a north coast rail trail project and over \$300K for the Watsonville segment. They are currently in the midst of a campaign to raise \$20M for a number of projects including the rail trail, the Hwy 17 Wildlife Crossing, Watsonville Slough Farm and off-road trails at San Vicente Redwoods. Most exciting to note is that they have two anonymous donors who will double every gift of any size through the end of January with no limit.

Bicycle Advisory Committee recognized

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the RTC's Bicycle Advisory Committee. The Committee was chosen by Bike Santa Cruz County as a nominee for a 2015 Wheelie Award in the Community Member category, in recognition of such a long history of dedicated service. The award winners will be announced at the Bike Santa Cruz County Annual Dinner on Dec. 6th, from 5-8pm at the Food Lounge in Santa Cruz. The Bicycle Committee was created in

1975 in the County Parks Department and two years later, became advisory to the Transportation Commission. In these early days, any cyclist who attended a meeting was considered a member. In 1987 membership was formalized through appointment by Commissioners at 7, then 13, and currently at 11 representatives. Over 100 people have served. It is one of the earliest such committees and has functioned continuously for 40 years advocating for ample and robust cycling facilities, safety education and adequate funding investments.

New Staff

Please welcome Nestor Guevara, recently hired as a Transportation Planner Technician. Nestor was born and raised in Puerto Rico. He completed his undergraduate degree in geography at Penn State, and then went straight to graduate school at the University of Oregon to complete a Masters in Community and Regional Planning.

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC

Add-On: Item 17

From: Bruce Korb
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2015 1:24 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission
Subject: Re: RTC: Final Rail Transit Study Now Available

Given "Based on the revenue estimates, it appears unlikely that costs in excess of \$100 million can be met with funding sources available or potentially available at this time", I think it is fair to say that scenarios are constrained to "B" and "E" at this time. That "J" is rated at \$92M seems hard to understand, given the longer distance. The way-too-low service rate will kill ridership and you still have to pay for capital outlays for track. "J" is dumb. So, "B" and "E" are the only practical ones on the table. They are too short to be of significant help on traffic, and they would siphon away transportation dollars better used elsewhere.

However, the study seems to show that St. Cruz <-> Aptos ridership would be almost as high as having St. Cruz <-> Watsonville service, with the latter increasing ridership by 8%. I think Watsonville is noticeably larger than Aptos. An 8% differential is not credible. Is Watsonville too low, or is Aptos too high? I'd bet on the latter and the latter would hugely affect the apparent viability of "E". The study needs to do a more credible analysis of ridership. The study should find that rail road trains drain away funds from projects that can more readily improve transportation problems. e.g. fund express buses. Also, investigate whether the stability problems of the hybrid road/rail buses have been solved. (I think rubber wheel tracks might have to be welded to the rail tracks, rendering it unaffordable for our little county.)

Regards, Bruce

From: Carey Pico
Sent: Tuesday, December 01, 2015 4:35 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Final Feasibility Study/Dec.3 RTC meeting

I recommend against acceptance of the Final Passenger Rail Feasibility Study because:

- 1) It does not address the incongruencies between the physical space for the train tracks and the pedestrian/biking trail. An easy example is seen at the 41st/rail crossing in the MBSST that shows the path going over O'Neill's Surf shop.
- 2) The construction costs are low and do not reflect the overhead added on by the RTC. It gives a false sense of cost-effectiveness. Further, they would make the Santa Cruz rail line the lowest cost ever in California for a light rail system on fully upgraded rails.
- 3) The cost of operations are underestimated. Its peer in Oceanside is \$15M/yr for nearly identical track lengths and terrain.
- 4) It completely ignores the parking situation and leads to a false sense it is a non-issue as well as free.
- 5) It does not address the cost of the "last mile" in which a new fleet of shuttle buses would be required to bring passengers every 15 minutes to their destinations. This is a sizeable annual cost.
- 6) It does not address the expense of about \$100M that is added to the construction of the proposed trail on the same space.
- 7) It fails to address the blocking of key sections of the corridor with the proposed trail near trestles, causing the trail to reroute, not at the trestle, but far back at the last point of exit (typically 1/2 mile). This adds up to 4 miles alone in the mid-County section.
- 8) It fails to state clearly that it would have no effect on the congestion on Hwy 1 traffic. In its present wording, it suggests it is a solution.
- 9) It does not address the key issue to success of the rail: population densification of 1/2 mile radius areas that are near beaches. These areas represent the very character of the Santa Cruz County.
- 10) It does not address the need to have a stop at La Selva Beach.
- 11) It does not address the effect the guard fence separating the rail from trail on isolating presently connected neighborhoods.
- 12) It does not address blocked beach access at places such as New Brighton and Manresa where surfers go down from the street to the beach.

12/2/2015

To: Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commissioners and Staff

Re: Support for Rail Planning and Inclusion in the Tax Measure

Dear Staff and Commissioners,

We appreciate your work up to date on planning for a modern rail system for Santa Cruz County. We agree with your conclusion that rail service on the Santa Cruz branch line is feasible and we think your ridership projections are suitably conservative. Clearly rail service could provide a transportation alternative not subject to congestion and incrementally affect land use patterns and trip planning so as to address congestion on major roadways. We urge you to look for funding to further your planning efforts and observe that state and federal funding for rail is being made available under the right circumstances. In addition to the other considerations in your report, we hope that you will seriously consider electric trains (in all of their different forms) as a preferred option in moving forward.

We also appreciate your proposal to make some progress on this important project via a significant funding allocation in your draft sales tax measure. We think that a modern rail system should be a priority for any tax measure or other public funding source. We feel confident that rail is an excellent option for regional transportation in the County of Santa Cruz which well deserves the tax increase necessary to fund it. We are committed to working with you to do the education and outreach that is necessary when a public entity takes on a major project.

With great respect for your work so far,

Coastal Rail Santa Cruz



Bruce Sawhill

From: Donna Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, December 02, 2015 11:57 AM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: rail

I would like to voice my support for continuing to support the passenger rail service in Santa Cruz. It just seems like with climate change and expanding populations, this is our most valuable asset.

please do not proceed with funding highway widening. Studies show that this is only a temporary solution to congestion.

BUILD THE RAIL/TRAIL!!!

Donna Thomas
Santa Cruz

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC

Add-On: Item 18

From: Rick Hyman

Sent: Monday, November 30, 2015 11:45 AM

To: info@scrtc.org

Subject: comments on draft expenditure plan pertaining to cycling RTC 12.3.15 meeting Item 18

Dear Commissioners: I am appreciative and pleased that the proposed expenditure plan contains some money for improving bicycle travel. However, some of the details of how the money will actually be spent should be revised to ensure adequacy and flexibility, as follows:

1. For the bike/pedestrian projects subcategory in the Neighborhood Projects allocation, add a minimum percentage that must be spent on bicycle projects;
2. For the local street/road and operational improvements subcategories in the Neighborhood Projects allocation, add a requirement that they must comply with complete streets requirements;
3. For the specific Highway 9 corridor improvements, ensure that bicycle travel is accommodated in any project and that priority is given to a safe route from Felton to San Lorenzo Elementary, Middle and High Schools;
4. For the subcategory of 2 bicycle/pedestrian overcrossings in the Highway Corridors allocation, allow for flexibility as to the number, type and location of the crossings and allow these to be freestanding projects in case highway widening does not occur.

My reasoning is as follows:

1. For local roads, bike projects are shown as one of several categories eligible to be funded based on a determination by the local government. Once the money is turned over to the local governments, the RTC would otherwise not have a say in how it is used. Given other considerations, adequate money to fulfill the RTC's objectives to enhance the multi-modal system expressed in the *Regional Transportation Plan* may not be achieved unless there is a specific mandate to spend some money on bicycle projects.
2. For local road and operational projects, while there is one subcategory available for complete streets, all projects should be analyzed for complete streets and any feasible and desirable components should be added in, again to be consistent with RTC objectives and state law and goals. As examples, even just repaving may offer an opportunity to add bike lanes or just signal improvements could ensure that bikes are detected and have ample time to pass safely through the intersection.
3. For Highway 9, Felton residents have been lobbying for years and developed specific ideas for bicycle and pedestrian access improvement to the San Lorenzo Valley schools, but have been stymied as to a responsible funding source. More generally, although widening the shoulders along the whole length of Highway 9 for standard bike lanes might not be feasible, any improvement project should include a bicycle (and pedestrian) component to accomplish what is possible, for the same reasons as stated above,.
4. For the highway crossings, planning is far along for Chanticleer, but not for the Mar Vista location, so some flexibility is desirable in order not to be tied down to a site prematurely. Also, cyclists had advocated for improving the problematic Morrissey Avenue crossing as part of the earlier auxiliary project and told to wait until the whole interchange was rebuilt as part of the HOV lane project, which may never occur. Then further planning determined the crossing should be at Trevethan, which may or may not be the best location. Anyway, this crossing or improvements to Morrissey should also be eligible for funding as should any other possible crossings, above or below the freeway. These may turn out to be more feasible, cost effective or desirable. Recall, that as part of the Highway One/17 interchange project, an undercrossing was added along Branciforte Creek. Similar opportunities may arise and should be eligible for funding.

These comments are my own and not the bicycle committee's of which I am a member. The bike committee as a whole has not yet had a chance to provide comments. As the 5th district representative to the committee however, I do want to thank you for finally including Highway 9 improvements, which I and others have advocated for over many years.

Rick Hyman
Santa Cruz



November 19, 2015

Re: Letter of Support of RTC Ballot Measure

Dear RTC Board:

We are writing to inform you that Community Bridges and its Board of Directors have voted to officially endorse the RTC ballot measure to strengthen and invest in our community's transportation infrastructure and future. This measure would ensure not only that we invest in our system's future but that we invest in our current system with its various significantly different maintenance projects, and that we prioritize additional funds for the growing specialized transportation needs in our community.

As a social service organization with a consolidated transportation program, we see firsthand the value of investment in meeting the specialized transportation needs of our community. We know that specialized transportation services are one of the most requested support services for seniors; we also understand that societal integration is a proven tool to prevent early institutionalization and more expensive solutions. The emerging trend of the growing senior populations or the "Grey Tsunami" coupled with our community's minimal urban density will result in a need for increased transportation options for those in our community. We know the effects of isolation on the bodies and minds of seniors and people with disabilities, and we know what having limited access to the community does to the body, mind and spirit as well as the cost of society by limiting its potential diversity.

Community Bridges values the investment in transportation as it will impact the economical effectiveness of our region, provide resources for specialized transportation and allow us an opportunity to meet the increasing needs recently created by the Metro service reductions. We are committed to serving the most isolated and most in need of our services and will continue to work together with you to build a more inclusive community through transportation. As an organization that spans from the Redwoods, through the valleys and to the sea, we are excited to support an effort that covers a large section of the population we serve. We are therefore proud to endorse the November 2016 Regional Transportation Commission Ballot Measure.

In community,

Raymon Cancino,
Chief Executive Officer
Community Bridges



As approved by the Board of Directors on 11/18/2015

cc: County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors
RTC Board of Trustees

RTC Staff: Executive Director George Dondero, Grace Blakeslee, Karena Pushnik

OUR FAMILY OF PROGRAMS ■ Elderday ■ Lift Line ■ Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County ■ La Manzanita Community Resources
■ Live Oak Community Resources ■ Mountain Community Resources ■ Nueva Vista Community Resources
■ Child and Adult Care Food Program ■ Child Development Division ■ Women, Infants & Children (WIC)



November 23, 2015

Re: Specialized Transportation Needs in RTC Ballot Measure

Dear RTC Board:

I am writing you in support of the need to invest in specialized transportation needs in our community. We see firsthand the value of the investment in meeting the specialized transportation needs of our community. We understand the effects that isolation can have on the bodies and minds of seniors and people with disabilities and we know what having limited access to the community does to the body, mind and spirit. We also know how providing this specialized transportation can provide them with truly inclusive access to the community they have helped weave. There is of course the more practical application of great importance as well with participants having easier access to much needed medical needs and ongoing preventative medical procedures.

We are grateful that the ballot measure has selected a small percentage to help ensure we are meeting the growing demand for services. With the Metro service reduction in ADA services, it is imperative that investment in providing this service to our community is not only invested in but also addressed. We hope that the RTC board looks to ensure that they invest this potential new amount in cost effective programs and services such as Lift Line. As a transportation agency with the largest geographical service area, we understand the importance of transportation to families, seniors and people beyond the ADA minimum requirements and we also know the difficulty in providing the service. We hope that this investment will also help us to expand service hours beyond our current capacity and will help us to pick up those recently ineligible because of the service changes to Metro and those not yet eligible as the fixed route system is adjusted.

Community Bridges is committed to serving the most isolated and those most needing our services. We will continue to work together with you to build a more inclusive community through transportation. As the only organization that spans from the Redwoods, through the valleys and to the sea, we are excited to support an effort that covers a large section of the population we serve. We thank you for your partnership, trust and commitment to transportation for our community.

In community,

Raymon Cancino,
Chief Executive Officer
Community Bridges



cc: RTC Board of Trustees

RTC Staff: Executive Director George Dondero, Grace Blakeslee, Karena Pushnik

From: Micah Posner
Sent: Tuesday, December 01, 2015 3:00 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: opposition letter to sales tax

Dear SCCRTC staff,

Please share this with staff and Commissioners.

Thank you,
Micah Posner

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

I want to begin with the comment that I continue to have a lot of respect for your work as staff and as a Commission. This makes it difficult for me to write this letter.

I have lost a fair amount of sleep and gained a few grey hairs considering your proposed sales tax measure. I will not be supporting a sales tax measure similar to the one you are currently considering. First of all, without a commitment to a rail system, it is hard to figure out exactly what the effect of the measure would be on regional mobility. In my opinion, which largely agrees with the projections in your Environmental Impact Report, the auxiliary lane project would encourage a small amount of additional car trips and auto-oriented development. The significant portion of rail trail that the measure would build would do the converse. But without a commitment to rail service as a part of the sales tax measure, it's hard to figure out what the net impact on county wide growth and traffic patterns would be over the long term. Because traffic and growth patterns are at the root of our local climate gas emissions, this makes it difficult to figure out how the sales tax measure would affect our contribution to that most important problem, global warming. Many Commissioners and staff who I respect will argue that the proposed sales tax measure would have a net positive effect on alternative transportation and greenhouse gasses. I certainly think that is possible. But even if I presume that to be the case, a different problem with supporting the sales tax measure has risen to the forefront with the timely release of the Environment Impact Report.

While I never thought that building auxiliary lanes would reduce congestion on Highway One, I find myself in a different situation faced with an Environmental Impact Report created by the agencies to supervise the project (Caltrans and the SCCRTC) which states that the project will not significantly reduce congestion. Under these new circumstances how can I support a project based in part (a quarter part) on a false pretense- that widening the Highway will "solve the problem"? If we as leaders support the tax measure, will we tell the voters the truth- that the Highway Widening Project's primary purpose is to increase capacity so as to subsidize a type of economic growth dependent on expanding the use of the automobile? That is hard to imagine, and it certainly would not pass a vote of the people. My assumption, therefore, is that the campaign to pass the proposed sales tax measure would feed into a widespread misperception that the auxiliary lane project would decrease congestion and, that if I participated in it, I would be participating in public communications based partly on a false pretense (literally, feel free to look it up in the dictionary) so as to achieve a bike path and other projects I support. I am not willing to do that. I am not willing to communicate to voters under those terms.

Part of my personal difficulty with this decision is that I know that politicians, especially at higher levels of government, do at times support deals based partly on false pretenses. I do not claim that my way of being a public figure is the only way that one can communicate with the public. In fact, I do not claim that it is even necessarily the best way. But it is the only way for me to live with myself.

As I said in my last letter to you, I will continue to consider tax measures of all types that include projects which I do not view as high priorities but which are based on sound research and best practices. I do firmly agree with the idea of incremental progress via compromise and look forward to working with the Commission on a variety of projects including, someday, on a way to tax residents for the escalating costs of providing transportation.

With all due respect,
Micah Posner

From: Jim Dixon
Sent: Tuesday, December 01, 2015 3:55 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: New submission from Contact Form

Subject

Comments on proposed sales tax measure

Your Message

Dear RTC Commissioners:

My wife and I will not support a ½ % sales tax ballot measure with the current Expenditure Plan as included in the agenda for the 12/3/15 RTC Meeting.

We have three objections:

1. We have always disapproved of the rail purchase as we believe a train is not economically viable and does little or nothing to improve the transportation needs of the County. We will not support wasting further money on it.

2. The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (to use the description is the Expenditure Plan), is not a transportation alternative for the vast majority of Santa Cruz County residents. Therefore it should not receive such a large percentage of the sales tax revenue.

3. Since the Rail Corridor and the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail are essentially one in the same, any money allocated to them should be combined. The current combined allocation of 30 % is way out of order.

In our opinion, improving the Highway 1 corridor with a goal of widening to 3 lanes all the way to Larkin Valley with the addition of HOV/bus lanes, and expanding bus service with Express buses from key locations, will greatly reduce the congestion and improve travel times. If this is not done, we believe surface street congestion will only worsen and with it negatively impact pedestrian and cyclist safety.

With a \$ 250 million backlog of road maintenance County wide, 30 % to neighborhood projects is just not enough.

We think a better allocation of the revenue from a ½ % sales tax would be as follows:

Neighborhood Projects: 35 %

Highway Corridors: 30 %

Mobility Access: 25 %

Rail Corridor: 0 %

Active Transportation: 10 %

Respectfully,
James Dixon & Patricia McGlynn
Aptos, CA

12/2/2015

To: Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commissioners and Staff

Re: Support for Rail Planning and Inclusion in the Tax Measure

Dear Staff and Commissioners,

We appreciate your work up to date on planning for a modern rail system for Santa Cruz County. We agree with your conclusion that rail service on the Santa Cruz branch line is feasible and we think your ridership projections are suitably conservative. Clearly rail service could provide a transportation alternative not subject to congestion and incrementally affect land use patterns and trip planning so as to address congestion on major roadways. We urge you to look for funding to further your planning efforts and observe that state and federal funding for rail is being made available under the right circumstances. In addition to the other considerations in your report, we hope that you will seriously consider electric trains (in all of their different forms) as a preferred option in moving forward.

We also appreciate your proposal to make some progress on this important project via a significant funding allocation in your draft sales tax measure. We think that a modern rail system should be a priority for any tax measure or other public funding source. We feel confident that rail is an excellent option for regional transportation in the County of Santa Cruz which well deserves the tax increase necessary to fund it. We are committed to working with you to do the education and outreach that is necessary when a public entity takes on a major project.

With great respect for your work so far,

Coastal Rail Santa Cruz



Bruce Sawhill

From: paula barsamian

Sent: Wednesday, December 02, 2015 12:02 PM

To: info@scrtc.org

Subject: funding for transportation

As a resident here I see two problems in traffic density, one to San Jose and the other to Watsonville. Research shows that any adjustment to the highway will only increase traffic and be obsolete by the time it is finished.

It's time to invest in light rail to both places with adequate parking. the parking would enable those users to get to the rail without terrible inconvenience. Please start thinking along these lines,.

Paula Barsamian

Santa Cruz

TDA & Tax Measure Allocations for SC METRO and Community Bridges

	Percentage of all TDA Allocations	Relative % of TDA going to transit	Annual % Share of Tax Measure	Annual Amount of Tax Measure*
SC METRO	85.50%	91.05%	13.66%	2,048,722
Comm Bridges	8.40%	8.95%	1.34%	201,278
Total	93.90%	100.00%	15.00%	2,250,000

* assumes \$15M/year in tax receipts

Neighborhood Projects 28% \$126

Local Jurisdictions

**(cities and county)
for eligible projects**

Eligible Projects:

Local Street/Road - Maintenance and Repair

School Traffic Safety Projects

Bike/Pedestrian Projects

Neighborhood Safety - reduce speeding and cut-through traffic

Operational Improvements (signal timing, intersection design,
etc.)

Specific Designated Projects:

Highway 9 Corridor Improvements

Wildlife Undercrossing on Hwy 17

Highway Corridors 25% \$113 Regional

Highway 1 Corridor

- 3 Auxiliary Lane projects: 41st Ave-Soquel Dr; Bay/Porter-Park;
State Park-Park

- 2 Bicycle/Pedestrian over-crossings

Traveler Information and Transportation Demand Management -
Cruz511; Carpool/Vanpool Programs

Safe on 17 Program and Freeway Service Patrol

Mobility Access 19% \$85.5 Service Providers

Elderly/Disabled/Veterans Paratransit

Local Bus Service

Rail Corridor 14% \$63 Regional

Rail Corridor Maintenance and Repair - track, structures

Environmental analysis of passenger train options

Watsonville Junction/Pajaro Train Station

Conduit for future Internet and/or utility lines

Property Management

Active Transportation 14% \$63 Regional

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail - capital

Operations & Maintenance

Total 100% \$450

proposed amendment from Commissioner Bottorff

The Regional Transportation Commission needs to consider
Alternatives to Widening Highway 1



There are other strategies besides highway widening that the RTC is studying---but they aren't yet included in the EIR. The Unified Corridors Plan will prioritize transportation projects along Highway 1, Soquel Dr., and the rail corridor based on modeling of performance. We urge the Commission to get results from the modeling before spending on an ineffectual strategy. Some possible projects include:

Transit on the rail corridor

The Rail Transit Feasibility Study estimates 6800 trips per day on the Santa Cruz -Watsonville line.



Bus on shoulder

This strategy has been implemented in the Twin Cities for over 20 years. Santa Cruz Metro is exploring its feasibility & cost.



Safer streets for bikes and peds

Most trips during commute hours are less than 3 miles. Bicycling and walking need to be made safe and convenient.



Other projects to reduce congestion include *Transportation Demand Management*, in which government partners with employers and parking districts to incentivize telecommuting, carpooling, transit, cycling and walking.

SensibleTransportation.org

What does Caltrans' Environmental Impact Report say about widening Highway 1?

Negligible Congestion Relief

"The Tier 1 Corridor TSM Alternative [auxiliary lanes, etc] would result in a very slight improvement in traffic congestion when compared to the No Build Alternative".

Continued traffic on local streets

Building auxiliary lanes "would not achieve sufficient congestion relief to attract any substantial number of vehicles that had diverted to the local street system back to the freeway."

No safety improvement

"The total accident rates overall and by segment in 2035 for the Tier 1 Corridor TSM Alternative would be the same as the accident rates for the No Build Alternative."

More greenhouse gases

Auxiliary lanes would result in a 25% annual increase in greenhouse gas emissions compared to the No Build Alternative

With such negligible benefits to widening Highway 1, and substantial environmental impact, isn't it time to examine alternatives? The Draft EIR only examines highway widening and "No Build".

Contact the Campaign for Sensible Transportation
SensibleTransportation.org



The Campaign for Sensible Transportation

P.O. Box 7927, Santa Cruz, CA 95061

831-688-2304

www.SensibleTransportation.org

December 2, 2015

Regional Transportation Commission

Dear Commissioners,

The Campaign for Sensible Transportation strongly supports most of the measures proposed to be funded by a sales tax ballot measure in 2016. If the tax allocation proposal is amended to eliminate funds for the auxiliary lanes, we would anticipate endorsing the measure.

The Draft EIR's finding of "very slight improvement in traffic congestion" after completion of auxiliary lanes should be an eye-opener for all of us. Clearly, a ballot measure that describes funding auxiliary lanes for purported "congestion relief" would be seriously misleading.

Because of this new situation we ask that you postpone the decision on allocation of funding for auxiliary lanes until such time as your constituents have had a chance to absorb the significance of the EIR's findings and other methods of congestion relief on Highway 1 can be evaluated. We note that the RTC is currently engaged in evaluating alternatives in its Unified Corridors Plan.

The Campaign urges you to include in the tax measure funding for congestion relief that can meet the criteria of significant *congestion relief* and *greenhouse gas reduction*, two goals of the *2014 Regional Transportation Plan*. We also urge you to include in your public opinion polling a question regarding support of auxiliary lanes in which respondents are informed of its "very slight improvement in congestion" and a substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

The Campaign for Sensible Transportation will continue to educate our community about the ineffectiveness of auxiliary lanes in addressing congestion as long as that strategy is under consideration for the sales tax measure.

For the members of the Campaign for Sensible Transportation,

Paul Elerick, co-chair

Jack Nelson, co-chair

Liz Levy
Rick Longinotti
Bill Malone
Richard Nolthenius

Barry Scott
Peter Scott
Pauline Seales
Bruce Van Allen

CFST's Initial Comments on the Draft EIR for Highway 1 Projects

Comment 1: The TSM Alternative (auxiliary lanes, ramp metering, etc.) has a negligible effect on achieving the 3 main purposes of the project, which are to “reduce congestion; improve safety; promote the use of alternative transportation modes as means to increase transportation system capacity.”¹

Auxiliary lanes would have a negligible effect in reducing congestion by year 2035

- Building the auxiliary lanes “would result in a very slight improvement in traffic congestion when compared to the No Build Alternative”.²
- The EIR predicts “severe breakdown of State Route 1 by year 2035” following completion of the auxiliary lanes project.³
- “The Tier I Corridor TSM Alternative would not achieve sufficient congestion relief to attract any substantial number of vehicles that had diverted to the local street system back to the freeway. Local access to, and circulation around, community facilities near these intersections would not improve relative to no-build conditions.”⁴
- “Compared to no-build conditions, traffic operations at study intersections with Tier I Corridor TSM Alternative improvements would worsen marginally.”⁵

Project does not improve safety

- “The total accident rates overall and by segment in 2035 under the Tier I Corridor TSM Alternative would be the same as the accident rates for the No Build Alternative.”⁶

Project's promotion of auto-centered travel outweighs its promotion of alternative transportation modes

The justification for considering the TSM Alternative as promoting alternative transportation modes is that the project includes construction of three new pedestrian/ bicycle overcrossings over Route 1 and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities on several existing overcrossings. However, the main expenditure in the TSM Alternative is for auxiliary lanes on Highway 1. For the amount of funding proposed to construct the auxiliary lanes, a far greater promotion of alternative transportation could be achieved.

Comment 2: The Draft EIR does not acknowledge that increased greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the TSM Alternative is a project impact.

The Draft EIR estimates a 25% increase in greenhouse gases resulting from the TSM Alternative relative to the No Build Alternative at year 2035.⁷ However, the Draft EIR does not list greenhouse gas

¹ Draft EIR, page S-iii

² page 2.1.5-16

³ page 2.1.5-14

⁴ page 2.1.5-17

⁵ page 2.1.5-17

⁶ page 2.1.5-17



emissions as a project impact. Nor does the Draft mention that the project would contribute to cumulative greenhouse gas impacts. The Draft EIR notes:

“In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project’s incremental effect is ‘cumulatively considerable.’”

However, the Draft EIR excuses itself from making such a determination:

“To make this determination, the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. To gather sufficient information on a global scale of all past, current, and future projects to make this determination is a difficult, if not impossible, task.”⁸

Since the Draft EIR does not acknowledge any impact of project greenhouse gas emissions, neither does it suggest any mitigation measures.

Comment 3: The project runs counter to the 2014 *Regional Transportation Plan* goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled.

Consistent with state policy, the 2014 *Regional Transportation Plan* seeks to reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as a strategy for greenhouse gas reduction. The *Plan* estimates that vehicle miles traveled (miles/work day/capita) will decline by 17.1% by 2035.⁹

Yet the Draft EIR estimates that the project will result in a substantial increase in total vehicle miles traveled on Highway 1 over the No Build Alternative.¹⁰ For example, in the “peak period” from 2pm-8pm the estimate increase in VMT on southbound Highway 1 is 29%. The Draft EIR does not reconcile this increase in VMT with the goal of the 2014 *Regional Transportation Plan*.

Comment 4: The Draft does not acknowledge irreversible commitment of non-renewable resources

Section 15126.2(c) of the *CEQA Guidelines* states: “Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or irreversible nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts... generally commit future generations to similar uses...Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.”

The auxiliary lane expansion project (in TSM Alternative) is exemplary of a project that commits future generations to use of fossil fuels. However, the Draft EIR does not evaluate this impact, or propose a justification for incurring the impact.

Comment 5: The Draft EIR fails to adequately evaluate alternatives to the project.

The Draft EIR evaluates two highway widening projects, HOV lanes and the TSM Alternative (auxiliary lanes, ramp metering, etc.) The Regional Transportation Commission has acknowledged that the HOV lanes is not considered financially feasible in the years through

⁷ Table 3-2, page 3-14

⁸ page 3-12

⁹ 2014 *Regional Transportation Plan* (2014) page c-16

¹⁰ *Draft EIR* Table 2.1.5-7

2035:

“The cost of completing the entire HOV lanes project on Highway 1 (approximately \$600 million) is beyond the amount of discretionary funding that can be used for highway projects in our county through 2035. Additional Highway 1 Corridor projects, including several new interchanges, that would need to be designed and constructed in advance of HOV lanes are identified in the unconstrained project list as needs that are not currently financially feasible with revenues projected through 2035.¹¹

This means that the only remaining financially feasible alternatives considered by the Draft EIR are the TSM Alternative and the No Build Alternative. The EIR needs to consider other alternatives to the project that could work towards fulfilling the goals of the project and of the 2014 RTP.

The Regional Transportation Commission is studying other alternatives to the project. Here is the description of the RTC’s Unified Corridors Plan:

Highway 1, Soquel Avenue/Drive, and the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line are parallel transportation routes in Santa Cruz County between downtown Santa Cruz and Freedom Boulevard. The Unified Corridors Plan will identify transportation projects that make the most effective use of these three parallel routes as one unified corridor to provide vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation services for Santa Cruz County residents and visitors. Using a performance based approach, the Unified Corridors Plan will prioritize projects for each transportation route based on sustainability targets, the community’s transportation needs, characteristics of each route, and cost of transportation improvements.¹²

Phase 1 of the Unified Corridors Plan is underway and results should be included in the EIR’s treatment of alternatives to the project.

Besides the Unified Corridors Plan leading to possible alternatives, the EIR should include a true TSM only alternative (with bike-ped bridges). The bike-ped bridges can be considered as mitigation for past freeway construction that bisected roads that peds and cyclists could use or as alternative transportation enhancements that can proceed independently of any of the remainder of the projects under each alternative. A true bike/ped corridor measure would be a bike-ped path within the freeway right of way or possibly enhanced bike lanes along immediate parallel roads connected by bike paths where there are not parallel roads.

¹¹ 2014 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan page 6-4

¹² <http://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/unified-corridors-plan/>



Initial Comments on the Draft EIR for Highway 1 projects

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⁸ page 3-12

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The Campaign for Sensible Transportation

P.O. Box 7927, Santa Cruz, CA 95061

831-688-2304

www.SensibleTransportation.org

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¹² <http://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/unified-corridors-plan/>

Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Committee

30 November 2015

Interagency Technical Advisory Committee

1523 Pacific Avenue

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: RTIP PROJECT #30: ROUTE 1 BIKE/PEDESTRIAN OVERCROSSING

Dear ITAC members,

In support of Supervisor Friend's November 19th letter to your Committee, Seacliff Improvement Association (SIA) Board of Directors voted to communicate with your Committee, requesting you to maintain the scheduled construction of RTIP PROJECT #30: ROUTE 1 BIKE/PEDESTRIAN OVERCROSSING, for numerous reasons.

SIA represents some 350 households in the southwest portion of Aptos, set off from greater Aptos geographically by Aptos Creek, Monterey Bay and Borregas Creek. Highway 1 is the unnatural boundary, detaching Seacliff from easy walking distance to a neighborhood school, district firehouse, community college, senior housing, redwoods and shopping. As well, our neighborhood roads carry millions of State Park visitors annually.

While many folks in our neighborhood embrace walking or bicycling for errands and/or for pleasure, the highway overpass at State Park (with 2 highway on-ramps to negotiate) can be daunting. Parents rightly do not consider this an option for grade school kids. As well, Seacliff's access to public transportation declined quite a few years ago when bus routes in the western part of the neighborhood were cut. At this time, residents do not have a lot of choices about getting kids to school or errands done without jumping in the car, very often to travel less than a mile as the crow flies. Hence, this project is ideal for reducing vehicle miles travelled; surely, that is the greatest good for all of us. Lowered carbon emissions, less traffic, improved public safety and neighborhood vitality would be among the immediate, long- and short-term benefits of building this ped/cycle bridge on schedule.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our neighborhood viewpoint. Numerous factors no doubt weigh on your priorities as you face the decisions you must make. We urge you to weigh heavily the huge potential for realizing your core goals, by maintaining project schedule on this overcrossing; that potential surely deserves the very highest significance in your decision.

Sincerely,



Will Roblin, President

Seacliff Improvement Association

P.O. Box 533 / Aptos, CA 95001





December 1, 2015

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE : Santa Cruz County 2016 STIP Proposal, RTIP Project # RTC 30 Highway One Bicycle Pedestrian Overcrossing

Dear Commissioners:

Please imagine that you live in the Seacliff neighborhood of Aptos and that you have children enrolled in Mar Vista Elementary School. Every weekday you drive your children to school and you are part of a huge traffic problem during the morning and evening commute times through every intersection along State Park Drive, through the hugely impacted intersection at Soquel Drive and State Park, and along Soquel Drive which is the Highway One detour/bypass and Cabrillo College feeder corridor. You are also part of the massive influx of cars and busses trying to navigate the entrance to the school.

If you grew up in Seacliff, your parents were promised a pedestrian bridge over Highway One three decades ago. We are aware that state cuts to local transportation funds make it necessary to revise some transportation projects. The Highway One Bicycle Pedestrian Overcrossing should not be one of them. This is a key component in Safe Routes to Schools and will have a significant impact in reducing congestion in Aptos.

Unfortunately, the Aptos area always seems to be last on the list of proposed transportation improvements. Aptos will be the last community in the county to experience Highway One widening improvements. Aptos will be the last phase of the planned Rail Trail improvements. The Highway One Bicycle Pedestrian Overcrossing is one project that needs to be completed now and will have a significant impact on traffic and children's ability to walk or ride bicycles to Mar Vista School.

You can be part of the solution. Please maintain the current timeline for this project.

Sincerely,

Co-Executive Director
Aptos Chamber of Commerce

7605-A Old Dominion Court, Aptos CA 95003
PH: 831.688.1467 FAX: 831.688.6961
www.aptoschamber.com - info@aptoschamber.com

From: larry laurent

Sent: Tuesday, December 01, 2015 4:49 PM

To: info@sccrtc.org

Subject: Item 19. Adoption of the 2016 Regional Transportation Improvement Program - Mar Vista Pedestrian Bridge RTIP# RTC 30

Dear Commissioners,

This is an email to express my frustration with the lack of movement on the Mar Vista Pedestrian Bridge. This is a project that has been funded since 2007 and yet in eight plus years all we have heard why it needs to be pushed back and can't be done at this time. And now the commission is proposing to push it

back again? I just do think this is acceptable anymore. This is going to take a number of years to get completed and now that the Highway 1 Tier I/Tier II Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment is available for review, there should be nothing in the way of finally starting this project. The community has patiently waited for this critical piece of safety infrastructure to be built and I think it is time to get this going.

This is a project that will allow people, especially children, to safely access resources on the opposite side of Highway One without the use of a car, including schools, libraries, churches and parks. The current pedestrian access via State Park Drive or Park Avenue is not safe. This project would be a winner for the SCCRTC. It is not a automotive project and quite possibly could reduce the number of vehicle trips in this already congested area of the county. I ask you to please get this project going. There is absolutely no reason to delay this decades old vision any longer.

Thank you,

Larry Laurent
Mar Vista Elementary School Parent



December 2nd, 2015

Dear Regional Transportation Commission members,

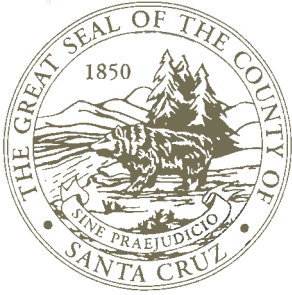
I am writing in regards to Item 19 on your 12/3 agenda, the proposed 2016 Regional Transportation Improvement Program. Bike Santa Cruz County appreciates staff prioritization of the Santa Cruz and Watsonville Rail Trail segments, and I urge you to continue to prioritize those projects and maintain their current construction schedule.

I also urge you to prioritize the Mar Vista Bike/Ped Bridge project. This project is funded but has languished under years of delays, and has broad support from the Aptos community. In fact, this project has been promised since the 1960's, when the freeway was constructed. The bridge will provide a vital connection from the Seacliff neighborhood to Mar Vista Elementary, and provide a safe bike/ped alternative to the State Park Drive interchange, where there has been a cyclist fatality.

Please do everything in your power to ensure that this project moves forward as quickly as possible. The Aptos area is lacking in safe and comfortable places to bike and walk, and the Mar Vista Bridge will be an important step to address this.

Sincerely,

Amelia Conlen, Director
Bike Santa Cruz County
director@bikesantacruzcounty.org



County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 500, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4069
(831) 454-2200 • FAX: (831) 454-3262 TDD: (831) 454-2123

JOHN LEOPOLD
FIRST DISTRICT

ZACH FRIEND
SECOND DISTRICT

RYAN COONERTY
THIRD DISTRICT

GREG CAPUT
FOURTH DISTRICT

BRUCE MCPHERSON
FIFTH DISTRICT

December 1, 2015

RECEIVED

DEC 03 2015

RTC

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: SANTA CRUZ COUNTY 2016 STIP PROPOSAL, RTIP PROJECT
RTC 30: RT 1 MAR VISTA BIKE/PED OVERCROSSING

Dear Commissioners:

As you are aware, state cuts to our local transportation funding have made it necessary to revisit capital projects in the RTC RTIP. One of these projects is a long-promised bike and pedestrian overcrossing at Mar Vista Drive in my district. While I understand the need to consider extending the timelines of some projects, I believe there are many benefits to maintaining our current construction schedule for this project.

A large portion of the traffic burden, both on the highway and local roads, is borne by the mid and southern portions of our county. This burden is especially acute during rush hour and school drop-off and pick-up times - especially within the urban core. One of the areas where this is most noticeable is in the heavily-impacted area of Seacliff to Soquel via State Park. Every day a number of parents drive children to Mar Vista Elementary because there is no safe or accessible walking or biking route to the school. These cars, which stack up on Soquel toward State Park have a ripple effect on traffic all through Aptos Village and the surrounding neighborhoods. Any change in traffic volume to the school should prove effective in diminishing congestion elsewhere within the corridor. This overcrossing plays a critical role in reducing the need for car trips within this corridor.

In addition to the traffic benefits, there is a simple secondary benefit: credibility. This overcrossing has been promised to our community for quite some time. Timelines have come and gone, and RTC credibility on whether this or other projects, will be delivered has been questioned. I've heard from a number of people in my district that this project is not just a priority, but had been promised to be completed by now. I have received questions about this project at every community meeting I have held in Seacliff since I have been in office.

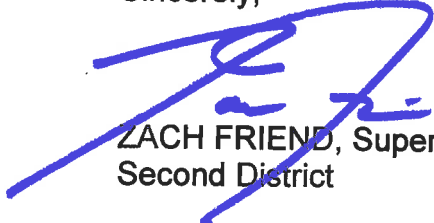
December 1, 2015

Page 2

When I took office, I was told, in no uncertain terms, that we could expect this project to commence in 2016 with completion in 2017. RTC staff and County Public Works staff have both repeated this timeline to residents in my district. Therefore, this is the (already delayed) schedule that we need to maintain. The fact that it is being considered for pushback to FY 2020-21 will understandably make my constituents question future commitments from the RTC and is ill-timed for seeking community support for a potential ballot measure.

I appreciate your serious consideration of maintaining the current timeline for this project.

Sincerely,



ZACH FRIEND, Supervisor
Second District

ZF:fh

2574A2



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1523 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060-3911 • (831) 460-3200 FAX (831) 460-3215 EMAIL info@sccrtc.org

December 2, 2015

Lucy Dunn, Chair
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, MS 52
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: STIP Allocation Plan – Tab 18

Dear Chair Dunn and Commissioners:

As we are too well aware, existing revenues are insufficient to address all of the transportation needs in our state. The decrease in the price based excise tax this fiscal year, compounded with the state's decision to divert transportation revenues to repay General Obligation bond debt, and increases in fuel economy have left transportation agencies at all levels deferring essential maintenance of existing infrastructure, roadways becoming increasingly congested, and delays to important multimodal projects needed to ensure safe access to jobs, schools, services, and the other places we travel. In Santa Cruz County, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is working diligently with the community to place a local measure on the November 2016 ballot to raise funds so that we are less dependent on state gas tax revenues to address our transportation needs. However, the reality is that **the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) remains the most important funding source for addressing our capital infrastructure needs.**

We recognize that the drop in revenues is painful for everyone and greatly appreciate all the work that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is doing to urge the Legislature and Brown Administration to address California's transportation funding crisis; as well as work to implement long term solutions that provide an alternative to the diminishing gas tax.

This fiscal year, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and local project sponsors are able to delay several projects currently programmed in FY15/16, but urge you to ensure that any allocation plan, as well as programming for the 2016 STIP, takes into consideration the following:

1. **Equity:** We ask the CTC to ensure that there is county-level equity in the allocation process. State law establishes regional shares for STIP funds and requires regions to work with our communities to identify needs and establish priorities, but we need state assistance to implement those priorities. We are concerned that the draft allocation plan denies funding to projects in many regions without any consideration of county shares. If these same allocation criteria are used to guide 2016 STIP programming and future allocations, all of the capital projects programmed to receive Santa Cruz County's regional share of STIP funds would be delayed for an uncertain amount of time.
2. **Priorities:** Allow each region to prioritize its own STIP projects. The priorities identified in the CTC staff draft allocation plan are focused on improvements to the highway system and do not

seem to consider special circumstances, regional priorities established through an extensive public process, and statewide goals, policies, and mandates focused on system preservation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Categories such as local roads, transit and active transportation fall below the cut-off line for funding. We appreciate CTC efforts to look more holistically at the transportation network as an integrated, multimodal system that considers the wide range of access and mobility needs in our state. In particular, we can delay or swap around funding for more than half of the projects in our county that are currently programmed in FY15/16, however of the two remaining projects we will be seeking allocations for this fiscal year, one is a roadway preservation project with a very short construction window that is an alternative route to our congested SR 1 (Freedom Blvd – PPNO 2558) and the other a trail project which has secured matching private funding (Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) –PPNO 2552). Delays to the trail project will make it difficult to raise millions in private funding anticipated for future expansion of this trail network.

3. **Creative Solutions:** We encourage the CTC to work with Caltrans to identify creative funding options to delay as few projects as possible. Perhaps short term loans from other programs, reinvesting Proposition 1B bond savings in the STIP, partial STIP allocations, or other solutions may exist for FY15/16. This would give regional agencies and project sponsors time to seek alternative sources for funding projects programmed in future years.

Given that our cities, the County of Santa Cruz, and the RTC depend on the STIP to fund major projects, the severe drop in STIP funds this year and projected for future years is a very serious issue. We recognize that the CTC is facing unprecedented challenges during this fiscal crisis and appreciate the efforts you and your staff have undertaken to communicate with the regions and to ensure that transportation projects continue to be delivered to the public. We are committed to work with the California Transportation Commission (CTC), its staff, our state legislators and our local community to raise funds to operate and maintain our transportation system.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. If you have any questions, please contact me or Rachel Moriconi of my staff at 831-460-3200.

Sincerely,



George Dordero
Executive Director

cc: Will Kempton, CTC Executive Director
SCCRTC Board