Stuck in Traffic—Will More Lanes Help?

Saturday, May 14th, 10:30am-noon
Louden Nelson Center, 301 Center St., Santa Cruz

with Susan Handy, Ph.D., Director of the National Center for Sustainable Transportation at UC Davis.
Commissioned by the California Air Resources Board to study the impacts of increasing highway capacity on relieving traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

Transportation Justice
Voters Will Decide Transportation Priorities Affecting
• Mobility
• Cost of Living
• Environment

Thursday, May 26th, 7-8:30pm
First United Methodist Church, 229 Stanford St., Watsonville

with Chris Lepe, Silicon Valley Senior Community Planner for California’s leading transportation advocacy organization, TransForm. A graduate of UC Santa Cruz in Environmental Studies and Latin American/Latino Studies, Chris received a Masters in Urban Planning at San Jose State University.

Background

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is drafting a transportation sales tax for the November, 2016 ballot. The current draft of the measure proposes $100 million to widen Highway 1. The Caltrans Environmental Impact Report says the widening will not prevent the highway from "severe breakdown by year 2035".
Meanwhile Metro bus service is being cut due to reduced revenues and higher costs. This 30-year sales tax measure could be a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fund alternatives to auto dependency. These events are for people who are interested in the measure's effectiveness, and its social and environmental consequences.

Sponsoring Organizations:
Campaign for Sensible Transportation

http://sensibletransportation.org
Highway Widening Doesn’t Work

The California Environmental
Protection Agency’s report on
the State’s Audits for
Environmental
Protection

There are sensible solutions to traffic

What can we do?

Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) report
on the

Join the Campaign for Sensible Transportation’s advocacy

The public supports comprehensive, not highway widening.

The ELR project is built—traffic and a 25% increase in

By year 2033, even more traffic will result in a failure of the project.

The ELR project will have a wider highway.

The ELR project will have a very slight improvement in traffic.

The project will result in a very slight improvement in traffic.

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Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission

April 7, 2016

Dear Commissioners,

Today the staff reports that it has authorized the expenditure of an additional $250,000 to update the Environmental Impact Report on Highway 1. This expenditure would be unwise at this time.

If the Commission had the chance to review the public comments on the Draft EIR, Commissioners might conclude that the Draft is deeply flawed. For example, the comment from the law firm, Wittwer and Parkin, representing the Campaign for Sensible Transportation, says, “The Draft EIR violates the California Environmental Quality Act, because it does not consider other multi-modal transportation options to reduce congestion, such as the Regional Transportation Commission’s intended use of the Santa Cruz Branch Line for rail transit and bike lanes… The fact that other transportation options are available, and the fact that the RTC is seeking funding to implement some of those options, requires the DEIR to examine rail as an alternative to the Tier I and Tier II projects.”

This suggests to me that the EIR will be fatally flawed if it is not revised to include a consideration of more alternatives than widening the highway or the No Build Alternative. To spend more money on the EIR without understanding what needs to be done to correct its deficiencies could easily be a waste of taxpayer money.

I don’t know of another way for the RTC to understand the deficiencies in the Draft EIR other than to consider them during time on a meeting agenda devoted to that purpose.

Thank you,

[Signature]