

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

From: cjlong3@everyactioncustom.com <cjlong3@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 28, 2020 11:23 AM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

I'm writing to let you know that I support rail transit for the rail corridor. Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction.

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Carol Long
75 Chestnut St Unit 101 Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4977 cjlong3@sbcglobal.net

From: rolandsaher@everyactioncustom.com <rolandsaher@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 28, 2020 12:58 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

I'm writing to let you know that I support rail transit for the rail corridor. Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction.

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

I personally would definitely use a rail connection from Live Oak - I live on Brommer, which is just two blocks away from my home - to downtown and the Westside of SC.
I also support a train for ecological reasons. We need to get our CO2 emissions down soon and for the duration!

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Thank you.
Sincerely, Roland Saher

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Roland Saher
2355 Brommer St Spc 27 Santa Cruz, CA 95062-3557 rolandsaher@gmail.com

From: perplexedprimate@everyactioncustom.com <perplexedprimate@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 29, 2020 1:18 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

I'm writing to let you know that I support rail transit for the rail corridor. Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction.

Some of the most important benefits are reducing local emissions (transportation is Santa Cruz County's top emissions source, contributing to the climate crisis and aggravating respiratory health concerns), encouraging active transportation (and thereby public health), and making transit-oriented development even more viable in our county.

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Michelle Merrill
930 Rosedale Ave Spc 25 Capitola, CA 95010-3601 perplexedprimate@gmail.com

From: lynnfrancis74@everyactioncustom.com <lynnfrancis74@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 29, 2020 4:51 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

I'm writing to let you know that I support rail transit for the rail corridor. Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction.

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone. It would also help to get tourists off the road during summertime. Watsonville could be a new destination and it would be great if the rail could connect with other public transportation as the concepts are developed more.

Thank you for your work.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Lynda Francis
PO Box 1733 Soquel, CA 95073-1733
lynnfrancis74@gmail.com

From: Brian Peoples <brian@trailnow.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 26, 2020 8:09 AM
To: ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; openup@cats.ucsc.edu; dmeyers@cityofsantacruz.com; 'Ed Bottorff (ebottorff167@yahoo.com)' <ebottorff167@yahoo.com>; greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; Andy Schiffrin <Andy.Schiffrin@santacruzcounty.us>; trina.coffman@cityofwatsonville.org
Cc: 'Bruce McPherson (bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us)' <bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; Gine Johnson <Gine.Johnson@santacruzcounty.us>; rlj12@comcast.net; Zach Friend <BDS022@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; Patrick Mulhearn <Patrick.Mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us>; Bertrand, Jacques <jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Guy Preston <gpreston@sccrtc.org>; Matt Machado <Matt.Machado@santacruzcounty.us>; Alex Clifford <AClifford@scmt.com>; Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Open Coastal Trail from Watsonville to Santa Cruz Boardwalk by 2023

RTC Commissioner Train supporters,

According to the Transit Corridor Alternative Analysis (TCAA), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along a section of the coastal corridor with a wide trail is the most effective use of the corridor for mass transit and will have the greatest impact on climate change. We need to open the Coastal Corridor as a temporary dirt/gravel from Watsonville to Santa Cruz Boardwalk by 2023 to alleviate traffic associated with Highway 1 widening.

Please help move our community forward by opening the Coastal Corridor from Watsonville to Santa Cruz Boardwalk by 2023.

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Best regards,

Brian Peoples
Executive Director
Trail Now

From: J. Ben Vernazza <ben@benvcpa.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 11:12 AM
To: bruce.mcperson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org;
jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us; sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com; greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us;
ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; trina.coffman@cityofwatsonville.org;
zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us; ebottorff167@yahoo.com; john.leopold@co.santa-cruz.ca.us;
rlj12@comcast.net; openup@ucsc.edu; Patrick.Mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us
Cc: Guy Preston <gpreston@sccrtc.org>; jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org; BenV@CPA.com
Subject: Comments about ORDINANCE NO.L 2016-01 -- SCCRTC and 1/2% tax to fund transportation.

SCCRTC Commissioners:

My company is active in providing fiduciary opinions regarding investment portfolios. Hence, my propensity to review documents that guide fiduciaries such as trust documents, articles of incorporation, ERISA Pension Plan Guidelines, and in your case ORDINANCE NO.2016-01 adapted by the electorate that same year.

My short presentation this Thursday November 3, 2020 SCCRTC meeting is the attached cover page statement without any verbal statements about the 23 pages attached for reference – THE ORDINANCE ITSELF and a two-page explanation of RailBanking (also attached). I have taken a deep dive, so to speak, into the details of the ordinance which defines what the commission can and cannot do as well as how the commission might alter what is outlined in the ordinance.

I am sending it to you separately from the agenda attachments because it is the guiding document for you and is well worth re-reading at this critical time for the RTC.

Ben

-DIVERSITY CREATES A BETTER WORLD-



J. Ben Vernazza CPA/PFS TEP emeritus, Managing Director
Aptos CA – BenV@CPA.com 831-239-6000

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

From: spaceunicorn3000@everyactioncustom.com <spaceunicorn3000@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 3:34 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

I'm writing to let you know that I support rail transit for the rail corridor. Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

I DO NOT support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and TO NOT connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction BECAUSE IT IS SIMPLY TOO EXPENSIVE AND NON-SUSTAINABLE

The ARE NO benefits BY providing passenger rail alongside the trail BECAUSE THEY SIMPLY CANNOT FIT ATTEMPTING TO transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone BY USING A SCHEDULE OR CHARGING A FARE AND A TAX IS THE LAST WAY IN MAKING OUR COUNTY AS SUCH. STOP BEING PURSUADED BY SPECIAL INTEREST THAT CREATE ROBO EMAILS SUCH AS THIS AND RESPECT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. WORK TO A TRAIL ONLY SOLUTION WITH BUS ON SHOULDER/BUS RAPID TRANSIT AND STOP OVERSPENDING BY BUILDING FOR A TRAIN THAT WILL NEVER EXIST.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jack Brown
spaceunicorn3000@gmail.com

From: Adam <adam@worldofsebastian.com>
Sent: Monday, December 14, 2020 4:23 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: RE: Input on draft Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study Report. I write as a former transportation consultant and an associate professor of Environmental Studies at UCSC.

I appreciate the RTC team studying various alternatives in depth. I write to comment on the lack of a true Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alternative.

Four BRT routes are studied in the draft. Their estimated travel time from Pajaro to Natural Bridges is 80-88 mins, compared to 45-55 mins for light rail (p 5-12), and the faster light rail travel time is a key

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reason why it emerges as the recommended locally preferred alternative.

But the BRT studied is not Bus Rapid Transit. It emerges as a straw man alternative that is slower than the current bus! Traveling on 3 buses from Pajaro to Natural Bridges is currently scheduled to take 71 minutes, excluding transfer time - up to 17 minutes faster than the "BRT" alternative. See <https://goo.gl/maps/6KWiWRDPF3DYhnJf8>

This brings up three main points:

1. Why does the BRT option not use more of the rail corridor, for example using guideway technology? This would have several advantages, not least:

- avoiding Highway 1 congestion and the Boardwalk bottleneck (see below)
- allowing routing flexibility to serve key destinations, especially UCSC which accounts for nearly half of the county's total ridership. A guided bus could leave the rail alignment at Bay and head up to campus, rather than having all service extend to Natural Bridges with minimal ridership
- allowing design flexibility through removing the tracks and replacing them with concrete guideways, enabling more of the corridor's width to be effectively used, whether for passing places or a wider bike/pedestrian path

Of course, there would be challenges in scheduling vehicles traveling in opposite directions to meet in passing places, but exactly the same challenges would be faced with rail. Why is a single-track width a problem for BRT but not for rail? The report does not explain.

Indeed, guided buses run effectively, including with single-track sections on former rail lines, in places like the UK. See the Cambridge example here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10UY3WC4nDY>

All buses will need to be electric by the time that the rail corridor opens for service. The only major downside of BRT over light rail is that freight would not be accommodated in the rail corridor.

2. The travel times for light rail do not appear to consider the Boardwalk bottleneck.

Unless roadways are radically reconfigured, traveling past the Boardwalk and along Beach St against traffic would be at walking pace, slowing service down considerably. I do not see any concept-level designs that would allow rail to avoid these challenges. BRT, in contrast, could more easily use a contraflow lane or alternate routing.

3. The broader point is that the draft report focuses too much on technology, and not enough on routes and service quality.

Utilizing the rail corridor for transit, in order to get transit out of congestion, is a key conclusion of the draft report. That makes sense. What doesn't make sense is restricting consideration of the rail corridor to rail-based technologies.

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Riders do not care whether they are on a train or a bus. They care about speed, frequency, cost, and other aspects of the service. Whether the vehicle has rubber tires or steel wheels is almost immaterial. See, for example, Jarrett Walker's comments here: <https://humantransit.org/2011/03/rail-bus-differences-contd.html>

I urge the RTC to make its decision in a technology-neutral manner, and instead decide on key aspects of the service, such as route and stop spacing. If the rail corridor is selected as the route, then decisions on technologies (bus, guided bus, light rail) can be studied in detail as a next step.

Thank you for your consideration.

Adam Millard-Ball

Santa Cruz

From: annlkaplan@everyactioncustom.com <annlkaplan@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Monday, December 14, 2020 5:48 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

Please DO NOT choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative for transit in the rail corridor. Indeed, this is a terrible idea that, once and for all, should be put to a vote on a County-wide basis.

I DO NOT support using Electric Passenger Rail between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and for a myriad of reasons which have been repeatedly expressed, neither should you! This is a boondoggle--a gigantic waste of time and money.

Thank you for taking an open mind and shutting down this ill-advised plan.
Ann L Kaplan, annlkaplan@gmail.com

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Ann Kaplan
100 Estrella Ave La Selva Beach, CA 95076-1721 annlkaplan@gmail.com

From: Mark Mesiti-Miller <markmesitimiller@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 17, 2020 3:14 PM
To: 'Randy Johnson' <rlj12@comcast.net>
Cc: dtimm@scottsvally.org; Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>; 'Sally Arnold' <sallya@cruzio.com>
Subject: TCAA - Support For Passenger Rail Transit is Overwhelming

Greetings Councilmember and Regional Transportation Commissioner Johnson,

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In reviewing the public comments received by the RTC during milestone 3 of the TCAA, you probably noticed the overwhelming number of comments in support of selecting electric passenger rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

The Friends of the Rail & Trail also noticed and we decided to analyze the comments. We found that 83% of people who stated a preference expressed support for passenger rail transit between Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Of the 255 people who expressed a preference, 212 (83%) preferred rail transit; 1.6% preferred bus transit; 1.6% preferred some other type of transit system; 2.4% were opposed to rail transit but didn't state a preference for anything else; 11.4% wanted a trail only. Furthermore, 100% of the community stakeholder groups submitting comments expressed support for passenger rail transit in the corridor.

Not surprisingly, public support was widespread extending from one end of the county to the other. Here are a few quotes selected from the many supportive comments:

From Tom Purdy in Ben Lomond:

Living the the [sic] San Lorenzo Valley, I recognize what a unique resource the rail corridor from Watsonville to Davenport is. I wish citizens had had the foresight to purchase the corridor from Santa Cruz to Boulder Creek, as it would make it easier to develop a walking / biking trail in the valley. In addition, having a rail line would add an important public transportation option for the valley. So I think it is critical to preserve the corridor from Watsonville to Davenport not only for biking and hiking, but equally important, for light rail service. I only hope that we can build on this project to someday expand the concept into the San Lorenzo Valley.

From Jeb Bishop in Santa Cruz:

Please pursue electric trains on the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Pujari Junction. Rail transit is the most efficient means of mass transit, from the perspective of combatting global warming and moving people fast without having to deal with rush hour traffic and ever expanding freeways.

From Saladin Sale in Santa Cruz:

Santa Cruz County is going to continue to grow in population - we can't ignore that reality so we must plan for it. Rail is the technology that will allow simply adding more connected units to match demand without adding the cost of additional operators. Rail has the capacity to allow many, many passenger to take their bikes with them, not just 3 or 4 on a bus. This will be a big part of the first mile / last mile solution.

I want to be able to reliably take my bike with me to Watsonville, Capitola, Monterey, Salinas and the SF Bay Area and ride when I get to my destination. I want to comfortably sit with personal space while I access the internet and work remotely. Rail will let me do both smoothly, at street level and without the limitations of buses.

Big projects take determination, time and patience. Keep listening to public transit experts who have the credentials and experience behind the positions they recommend. **YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK!** Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA Study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

From Ellen Davidson in Live Oak:

I've been a Live Oak resident for 49 years and worked at the National Marine Fisheries Service way out on the west side until I retired. Passenger rail would have connected me directly with my job at NMFS saving me the commute and the environment. I believe the rail trail has extraordinary benefits for the Santa Cruz community that we won't really understand until it is completed.

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From Paula Bradley in Capitola:

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

Let's move forward and complete the project without further delays.

From Cindy Rubin in Aptos:

I am writing because I would like to see electric passenger rail service connect Santa Cruz to Watsonville. We need an alternative to automobiles and our bus service. People who cannot afford cars or cannot drive should have alternatives. I believe when we invest in rail transportation infrastructure, our county will be able to attract better paying jobs and help people in our community commute to work, at the same time providing a means for people to more efficiently move within the county, thereby making this a more attractive community to live and work.

From Maryjane Slade in Aptos:

Having travelled throughout Europe, what a joy to use their rail. Having international clients, they are stunned at our lack of good rail. Let us join the 21st century and make life easier for us all. We don't all need to be on the highways. We need to have good, safe, alternative travel options. What a beautiful train ride to go from Davenport to Watsonville. Why not show off our beautiful coast....safely, with less impact on the environment.

From Hector Melgoza in Freedom:

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pujari Junction.

From Amy Morake, a teacher at Watsonville High School:

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

I'm a teacher at Watsonville High, and I think a lot of our students would benefit from having an easier way to commute to Santa Cruz for a variety of job, cultural, and educational opportunities available in Santa Cruz.

Clearly, the evidence indicates that adding efficient, quiet, comfortable passenger rail alongside the rail trail is widely supported and not really as controversial as the few anti-rail, trail-only folks continually claim. If you want to check the correspondence yourself, here is a link to the RTC website where you can find the correspondence: <https://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/transitcorridoraa/> Look under the Milestone 3 heading for "Public Comments received via email by Nov. 27, 2020" and, for "Stakeholder Comments received by Nov. 27, 2020".

You should also know, support for passenger rail transit is not limited to our county. Our neighbors, the Transit Agency of Monterey County (TAMC) solicited public input on their "Monterey Bay Area Rail Network Integration Study" via an online survey that was open over this last summer. The results of their outreach can be found in the [Public Sentiment Survey Memo](#) posted to their website. Not surprisingly, some of the insights gleaned from the public input were "Sentiment is overwhelmingly positive, with 87% of respondents indicating that access to passenger rail service would "very much" or "somewhat" directly affect their lives in a positive way. Similarly, 64% of respondents are interested in

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both living or working near a rail station.” Here is a link to the TAMC study website:
<https://www.tamcmonterey.org/monterey-bay-area-rail-network-integration-study>

As always, should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me anytime.

Thanks for your time and consideration,

Mark

Mark Mesiti-Miller, P.E.

(831) 818-3660

Vice Chair, Friends of the Rail & Trail - www.railandtrail.org

Husband, father, grandfather and champion for social, environmental, and economic justice

From: Bud Colligan <bud@colligans.com>

Sent: Sunday, December 20, 2020 2:00 PM

To: Bruce McPherson <Bruce.McPherson@santacruzcounty.us>; AURELIO Gonzalez <aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org>; Bertrand, Jacques <jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Sandy Brown <sandybrown1972@gmail.com>; Greg Caput (<greg.caput@santacruzcounty.us> <greg.caput@santacruzcounty.us>; Ryan Coonerty <ryan@ryancoonerty.com>; Zach Friend <zach.friend@gmail.com>; Randy Johnson <Rlj1200@gmail.com>; Mike Rotkin <openup@cats.ucsc.edu>; Manu Koenig <manuforsupervisor@gmail.com>

Cc: Guy Preston <gpreston@sccrtc.org>; Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>

Subject: TCAA and what to do next

Dear Commissioners,

As you receive the latest skewed information from the train lobby regarding the Transit Corridors Alternatives Analysis (TCAA), it is important to set the record straight and call out Friends of the Rail and Trail (FORT) for their continued attempts to confuse the community.

In a recent email, FORT tells you that 83% of 255 people who provided input to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) regarding the TCAA preferred rail transit. One can distort reality with statistics and this email is a case in point. The sample size of 255 represents 9/100s of 1% (.0009) of the county population of 273,213. Not only is the sample size infinitesimal, but the large majority of the “public input” was generated by FORT itself, urging everyone on its email list to send a pre-written FORT-authored letter to the RTC. This is the same type of “public process” which has led to flawed conclusions, wasteful spending, and no transportation improvement of the corridor in the last 8 years.

As elected officials, I’m confident you feel that actual votes of the people are the best indicator of preference. In 2018, the people of Capitola voted to reject the RTC train plan and preserve the Capitola trestle for bikes and pedestrians. And in November of this year, the people of the 1st District voted decisively for the former Executive Director of Greenway, Manu Koenig, and ousted the 12 year incumbent and ardent train supporter. Koenig received more votes than any Supervisor in the history of Santa Cruz County, a total of 17,967 or 57% of the vote. Compare the input of 255 residents actively solicited by FORT with an objective vote count of 17,967!

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There are five Supervisorial districts in the county and we welcome hearing from the voters of them all. In its December 6 editorial, the Santa Cruz Sentinel joined Supervisor-elect Koenig in calling for a county-wide vote on the use of the rail corridor. We believe in effective transportation solutions for all the residents of the county. There are many initiatives that are funded or can be undertaken on Hwy 1, Freedom Blvd/Soquel Ave, and the rail corridor which we can afford, move people effectively, and provide social equity. As we have discovered from the voters, an unfunded \$1.3 billion train plan is not one of them. It's time to recognize reality and stop the circular nonsense promoted by FORT. It's time for a vote.

Regards,

Bud Colligan
Co-Founder, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership
Co-Founder, Santa Cruz Works
Board Member, Santa Cruz County Greenway
Community Activist and Philanthropist

From: fiddletwin@everyactioncustom.com <fiddletwin@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 24, 2020 1:51 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative for transit in the rail corridor.

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction.

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Darren Davison
Soquel, CA 95073
fiddletwin@yahoo.com

From: larrydick@everyactioncustom.com <larrydick@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 27, 2020 4:14 PM
To: Transit Corridor <transitcorridoraa@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative for transit in the rail corridor.

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction.

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

As an active senior citizen I very much support a rail alternative to driving to Santa Cruz. I also support bike paths that isolate bikes from cars. I would love to see class I bike trails from Santa Cruz to Monterey

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Larry Dick

16470 Twin Lakes Dr Royal Oaks, CA 95076-9068 larrydick@sbcglobal.net

From: Jeff Traugott <jeff@traugottguitars.com>

Sent: Monday, December 28, 2020 11:57 AM

To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>

Subject: New Rail Trail Thanks!

Dear Commissioners,

I just wanted to say thank you for your efforts on the new rail trail, I work along the rail line north of Swift street and I had a first hand view of the construction and completion of the path.

Since being done it has been amazing to see how many people are using it in so many different ways, families, skaters, walkers, bicycles and the few crazy folks that live in this part of the city.

I enjoy watching and listening to people as they cruise by in one direction then back in the other, the common theme is happiness and I've seen how quickly having a traffic free path has become normal and loved. Just the freedom to get somewhere by any mode without the stress of motor vehicles is incredibly special!!

Just wanted to let someone know that we who work along the rail line truly appreciate our new path and can't wait for more, including the new electric train idea, haha!!

Congratulations on a great start to an honestly useful and healing community project!!

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All the best, Jeff

Jeff Traugott
Jeff Traugott Guitars
2553-B Mission Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
831-426-2313
www.traugottguitars.com

From: dnworks@everyactioncustom.com <dnworks@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 29, 2020 11:00 AM
To: transitcorridora@scrtc.org
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

I am a strong proponent of public transportation and even though my house is right next to the tracks and I would be inconvenienced by the noise of commuter rail, I am 100% in favor of it. My only concern: Establishing commuter rail service is a very expensive proposition and I have seen no research that shows there would be enough ridership (at the necessarily modest cost) to pay for the service ... the service would need to be continuously subsidized by county/city taxes.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
DIMITRIOS DOUROS
440 Bellevue St Santa Cruz, CA 95060-5338 dnworks@yahoo.com

From: philipkain@everyactioncustom.com <philipkain@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 30, 2020 5:03 PM
To: transitcorridora@scrtc.org
Subject: Choose Rail for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff,

Please follow the recommendation of the TCAA study and choose rail transit as the locally preferred alternative for transit in the rail corridor.

I support using Electric Passenger Rail to connect everyone along the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and connect our county to the regional and state rail network at the Watsonville Pajaro Junction.

The many benefits of providing passenger rail alongside the trail make it clear that choosing passenger rail is the best way to transform our county into a more equitable, more sustainable, more prosperous community for everyone.

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Thank you.

Sincerely,
Philip Kain
1292 Mount Hermon Rd Scotts Valley, CA 95066-2929 philipkain@yahoo.com

From: Brian Peoples <brian@trailnow.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 31, 2020 5:18 AM
To: Shannon Munz <smunz@sccrtc.org>
Cc: Guy Preston <gpreston@sccrtc.org>
Subject: survey configuration management?

Hi Shannon,

In the Sentinel, there is a letter stating that the RTC did not control the survey to "locals only" and "one vote". Is this true?

Survey results (regarding support for rail service) presented in a Dec. 18 letter are invalid as rail fans around the world were given access to RTC's survey and repeated voting was not blocked. The mid-November online edition of Trains magazine included a link to the survey. RTC has not responded to my query as to whether those responses had been identified and excluded from the results.

— Bill Delaney, Capitol

[Letter | RTC survey did not exclude access from outside – Santa Cruz Sentinel](#)

Brian

From: Saladin Sale
Sent: Thursday, December 31, 2020 1:07 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Rail Trail

Dear Commissioners:

My wife and I love the new Westside rail trail - riding our e-bikes along with skaters, runners and walkers between Natural Bridges Drive and Bay Street and on to the wharf, downtown, river levee paths, the Eastside and beyond. We totally support continuing to build the trail while completing the steps for eventual electric light rail transit. The trail with rail plan has been subjected to deep scrutiny by credentialed transit experts who have publicly concluded this is the right combination for this unused transit corridor. The financial interests in opposition appear to have no real alternative transit plan – only vaporous “world’s first” possibilities. My concern is that the big money interests opposed actually want neither transit nor trail in their backyards. Removal of the tracks would only open the doors to years of litigation by property owners challenging their rail easements and thereby stopping any further progress on trail OR transit.

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

From: Mark Mesiti-Miller <markmesitimiller@gmail.com>
Date: December 31, 2020 at 10:40:46 AM PST
To: Aurelio Gonzalez <aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org>, Sandy Brown <sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com>, bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us, Greg Caput <greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>, ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us, Zach Friend <Zach.Friend@santacruzcounty.us>, manuforsupervisor@gmail.com, rlj12@comcast.net, Michael Rotkin <openup@ucsc.edu>, jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us
Cc: dindsind@earthlink.net, Donna Meyers <dmeyers@cityofsantacruz.com>, Dan Rothwell <darothwe@cabrillo.edu>, Gine Johnson <Gine.Johnson@santacruzcounty.us>, Andy Schiffrin <Andy.Schiffrin@santacruzcounty.us>, tony.gregorio@santacruzcounty.us, Patrick Mulhearn <Patrick.Mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us>, dtimm@scottsvally.org, Guy Preston <gpreston@scrtc.org>, Regional Transportation Commission <info@scrtc.org>
Subject: Financing Public Transportation

Greetings Chair Gonzalez, Regional Transportation Commissioners and Commissioner Alternates:

I am writing to share some ideas and an approach about financing the desired improvements to our public transportation system such as adding passenger rail to our current bus system.

For a variety of reasons, the majority of citizens realize the importance of improving public transportation to give folks a meaningful alternative to driving, allowing us to reduce our collective Vehicle Miles Travelled, fight the devastating effects of climate change, reduce social inequity and improve the quality of life for everyone. While improvements to public transportation offer many tangible benefits to social equity and environmental sustainability, these benefits are difficult to monetize. As a result, many folks jump to the economic costs and from there jump to the idea that a dreaded sales tax measure will be required to fund the local share of the cost.

While sales taxes are one method, there are many other mechanisms for financing public transportation. Consider this example:

Seattle has demonstrated that a thriving metropolitan region with a growing economy and population does not have to be synonymous with more driving and more emissions. Between 2006 and 2017, Seattle's population increased by 23 percent, yet daily traffic volumes declined slightly, by 5 percent. Transit ridership increased 46 percent over that time. Seattle's rate of driving alone to work fell nine percentage points between 2010 and 2019 at the same time that employment boomed and downtown Seattle added over 90,000 jobs.

Seattle has significantly expanded both bus and rail transit over that time period, leading to a 20 percent increase in transit boardings over that time, even as many other cities have seen declining ridership. The city raised funds to expand bus service in 2014 through a voter-approved \$60 vehicle registration fee and a 0.1-percent sales tax hike, adding 270,000 additional service hours. As a result, Seattle has been able to drastically increase the percentage of householders within a ten-minute walk of relatively high frequency transit service (running at least every ten minutes) from 25 percent in 2015 to 70 percent in 2019.

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

From: Brian Peoples <brian@trailnow.org>
Sent: Friday, January 1, 2021 8:37 AM
To: aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org; Zach Friend <BDS022@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; Patrick Mulhearn <Patrick.Mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us>; ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; 'jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org' <jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org>; Manu Koenig <rskoenig@gmail.com>; Andy Schiffrin <Andy.Schiffrin@santacruzcounty.us>; rlj12@comcast.net; 'Bruce McPherson (bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us)' <bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; Gine Johnson <Gine.Johnson@santacruzcounty.us>; dmeyers@cityofsantacruz.com; openup@cats.ucsc.edu; Bertrand, Jacques <jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us>
Cc: Shannon Munz <smunz@sccrtc.org>; Guy Preston <gpreston@sccrtc.org>; Alex Clifford <AClifford@scmt.com>; Matt Machado <Matt.Machado@santacruzcounty.us>; Ginger Dykaar <gdykaar@sccrtc.org>; Yesenia Parra <yparra@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Train Magazine - promoting Santa Cruz Train

RTC Commissioners,

Apparently, the survey conducted for the Transit Corridor Alternative Analysis (TCAA) was posted in Train Magazine to advocate for train fans across the world to support a train in Santa Cruz County. This is a major flaw of the TCAA and RTC Leadership should get the consult to address why they failed to have proper configuration management of the public survey. More importantly, the TCAA survey results should be completely removed as a decision factor on best use of the Coastal Corridor.

[Digest: Comment period in progress for Santa Cruz, Calif., transit proposals | Trains Magazine](#)

Best regards,

Brian Peoples
Executive Director
Trail Now

From: Jack Brown <jack.b.brown@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 31, 2020 7:19 PM
To: bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org; Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>; Zach Friend <Zach.Friend@santacruzcounty.us>; Randy Johnson <rlj12@comcast.net>; sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com; greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; trina.coffman@cityofwatsonville.org; ebottorff167@yahoo.com; Patrick Mulhearn <Patrick.Mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us>; openup@cats.ucsc.edu; tim.gubbins@dot.ca.gov; Manu Koenig <rskoenig@gmail.com>
Subject: We need to right the ship in 2021

Dear RTC Commissioners,

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

As 2020 has drawn to a close, we have learned a great many things. The needs for transportation have seen a major change in the wake of the pandemic and the efforts of the past will simply not work for the future of Santa Cruz. In summary we need to abandon the idea of rail in Santa Cruz and stop the design of the trail on the rail corridor where the emphasis is on a train, not trail safety.

Yes, we still have a need to reduce traffic, provide transportation equity and protect our planet, but we have to have solutions that are the right size for our unique community and that can be implemented quickly. In short, rail is a huge mistake that does not satisfy the basic requirements for what is needed and we need to concentrate on what is really needed for our community.

I also rode the Segment 7, Phase 1 portion of the bike path, or 'rail with a trail' as I call it. What a disappointment that was. Although I thought anything is better than riding on the street, I cannot say as much for this trail. In a 75 foot wide corridor, it is a narrow 12-foot wide ribbon shoved to the side crammed against fences, walls and parking lots. I chronicled my journey on the trail at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCqV_cE1emM. This video showed vehicles that were parked at businesses along the corridor blocking portions of the trail, a vendor in a store parking lot with his equipment in the trail along with shopping carts and other equipment. There was hardly enough space to get around slow moving bikes, pedestrians and dog walkers, but worst of all, the intersections with oncoming traffic. Why these were not setup as 4-way stops is beyond me. Speed and distance perspectives are difficult to perceive on the trail and cars come up quickly as can be seen in the video. Lastly, all the excessive turns, curbs and obstacles including fences with steel posts directly against the path with no runoff room is going to cause some serious injuries. These issues should not have been there. The trail should be in the center of the corridor. Let Segment 7 be a lesson on how NOT to build the rest of the corridor. Let's get serious about trying to reduce traffic, reduce greenhouse gasses and build walkable and bikeable communities. This can be done with Bus on Shoulder (Not Bus on Auxiliary Lanes) and Bus Rapid Transit along Soquel and even on the corridor between Santa Cruz and Capitola if necessary. This will clearly point out to people driving by themselves in vehicles that there is a faster way. A train simply will not do that.

Also, let's please understand that the Tig/M demonstration is not necessary. Tig/M is only experienced in bespoke, hand-crafted mall rides on loops, not commuter rail on a single track. Yes, their technology looks tantalizing, but they are the only provider of this type of vehicle. Their only implementations are a few hundred yards at the Grove in Hollywood, a \$5.5B project in oil rich Qatar through a shopping center and a tourist trolley in Aruba servicing cruise ships. They have no experience in commuter rail, speeds about 9 MPH or virtual coupling. If Tig/M fails, which it easily could. No one will pick up where they left off. A whole new infrastructure would be needed to replace their vehicles. We simply cannot afford to put our transportation future in the hands of such a startup. It is putting too much of the public investment at risk.

Lastly, I hope you give more of the decision on how to proceed to the public. Mark Mesiti-Miller created a false sense of public support for rail by creating a form letter for his base to send to the RTC at the last meeting and from this created a false sense of support for rail in the RTC study. The 210 responses for rail are only 0.01% of the population of Santa Cruz County. We really need an advisory vote based on the final recommendation of the TCAA, projected cost and timeline against a trail only solution with Bus on Shoulder and Bus Rapid Transit. Of course, I feel the latter is the proper solution for Santa Cruz County and we should actually have the RTC vote immediately to rail bank all rail north

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

of Watsonville and proceed with the trail and Bus on Shoulder and a revitalization of our Metro and ADA transport systems and I hope you can draw the same conclusion as well. A train simply does not provide what we need. If we can get both sides of the issues to focus on the common points of support, we can make things happen. Moving people, reduce traffic, a safe and wide and effective multi-modal path on the corridor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we can really accomplish something in 2021.

Respectfully,

Jack Brown
Aptos, CA

From: lbeyea@cruzio.com <lbeyea@cruzio.com>
Sent: Friday, January 1, 2021 11:22 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: particulate pollution from non-exhaust emissions

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff:

It seems that, when evaluating transportation alternatives, including actions that affect VMT, non-exhaust emissions (NEE) should be included in the evaluation. For further information, see

<https://www.emissionsanalytics.com/news/pollution-tyre-wear-worse-exhaust-emissions>

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Len Beyea
Santa Cruz

From: frank rimicci <frankeej1958@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 1, 2021 9:24 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Rail with trail

Dear Sirs and Ma'ams, I just want to drop a line here to show support for the rail trail plan as it currently exists. Those that oppose rail are being selfish and shortsighted, as a trail only does not suit the needs of all Santa Cruz county residents. While I support trails and am an avid cyclist, I feel there are ample trails and the rail corridor will provide an excellent route through the county and when augmented with rail transport, will be a viable alternative to many People and businesses now and into the future. Thanks for considering all People when considering options for the branch line.

Yours sincerely, Frank Rimicci Jr. Corralitos

Emails received between 11/28/20 – 01/04/20

From: ROBERT STEPHENS <awranch@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 12:35 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Rail Corridor

Dear Commissioners:

I want to make two points: one on current trail cost and the other on a passenger train working in our old freight line.

New York state has undertaken a huge master trail plan to build the Empire State trail. They will end up with over 700 miles of a biking/walking trail. A big percentage of this trail is in old rail lines. Can we stop making a train a priority and actually build a trail? Below is some comments on cost per mile in New York state, which shows a realistic cost per mile. What are you spending per mile to build the easiest section? How are you bench marking your trail cost to other trails?

The recently completed Empire State Trail in New York state added 350 miles of trail at a cost of 266 million dollars. This works out to \$760,000 per mile. Follow this link for more information:

https://www.railstotrails.org/media/667098/infrastructure_empirestatetrail.pdf Here is a quote about cost for a small part of this trail which converted an old electric trolley line that fell out of use to a trail.

“In addition to closing the Rotterdam Junction gap, another recently opened section in the Capital Region is the 36-mile Albany Hudson Electric Trail, which runs from the city of Rensselaer to the city of Hudson in Rensselaer and Columbia counties. The \$45 million trail follows the historic route of an electric trolley.” So this conversation from a trolley line to trail cost \$1.25 million per mile. These are the numbers we should be looking for in our county to build a trail, if you put it in the rail corridor. Your current trail plan is wasting tons of money and ending up with a trail that does not work.

Please follow NewYork’s lead and drop the electric trolley idea and build a world class trail. Everyone in our community wants a trail. The pandemoniac has shown that mass transit is not in favor but biking and active transportation is.

For any mass transportation project to work, it needs to hit on all cylinders. In a sense it is a lot like a retail store: location is critical. Due to the fact that the old freight line does not actually go where people want to go: Downtown Watsonville, Cabrillo, the Capitola Mall, Dominica Hospital, the Pacific Garden Mall and UCSC, any train project will fail. Imagine putting a retail store five blocks off of Pacific avenue, it is not going to fly. Any train in the corridor is doomed. Please stop wasting money on a train and build a world class trail that our community can get behind and afford.

Sincerely,
Robert Stephens
Aptos

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis - Milestone 3

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