

From: [Donald Schwartz](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Agenda Items 30 and 31
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 7:24:00 PM

Please approve these Agenda items.

Donald Charles Schwartz, MBA, JD
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From: [Gina Colfer](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Bike Trail Now
Date: Monday, May 31, 2021 8:42:59 AM

Good Morning RTC Staff,
I would like to lend my support for you to rail bank the tracks and build a bike trail now.
Please support items 30 and 31 on your agenda on June 3.
Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
Gina Colfer
Lifelong Aptos resident

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Lawrence Kaplan](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#); [Aurelio Gonzalez](#); [Sandy Brown](#); [Jacques Bertrand](#); [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Greg Caput](#); [Coonerty Ryan](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Zach Friend](#); [Kristen Petersen](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Randy Johnson](#); [Michael Rotkin](#); [Donna Lind](#); [Larry Pageler](#); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [Renee Golder](#); [Sam Storey](#); [Lowell Hurst](#); [Felipe Hernandez](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [Gine Johnson](#); [Patrick Mulhearn](#); [Derek Timm](#); [Amy Miyakusu](#); [Guy Preston](#)
Subject: Comments on Interim Trail June 3, 2021 Agenda items 30 and 31
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 9:25:01 PM

Dear Chair Gonzalez, Commissioners & Commissioner Alternates,

It gives me great pleasure to give credit where credit is due. In this case, I'd like to thank you in advance for your consideration and approval of your Staff's recommendations concerning the interim trail alternative, and a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of railbanking.

To be as succinct as possible, I'd also like to point out the utter absurdity of FORT'S "position paper" which demands that the RTC implement a "full triple-bottom-line cost-benefit analysis" of a multitude of issues, including, but not limited to, "the costs of any litigation associated with this choice" of an interim trail use of the rail corridor. What are the details of this terrible, scary litigation? How in the world could the RTC follow FORT'S hollow directive to analyze the costs and benefits of an illusion?

With kind regards,
Lawrence Kaplan,
Watsonville

From: [Board Chair Friends of the Rail Trail](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Cc: [Guy Preston](#); [Aurelio Gonzalez](#); [Sandy Brown](#); [Jacques Bertrand](#); [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Greg Caput](#); [Coonerty Ryan](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Zach Friend](#); [Kristen Petersen](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Randy Johnson](#); [Michael Rotkin](#); [Donna Lind](#); [Larry Pageler](#); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [Renee Golder](#); [Sam Storey](#); [Lowell Hurst](#); [Felipe Hernandez](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [Gine Johnson](#); [Patrick Mulhearn](#); [Derek Timm](#); [Amy Miyakusu](#)
Subject: FORT Comments on Interim Trail June 3rd Agenda Items 30 & 31
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 2:32:53 PM
Attachments: [FORTLetterREItems30&31onJune3Agenda.pdf](#)

Dear Chair Gonzalez, Commissioners, and Commissioner Alternates,

We are writing today in regards to items 30 and 31. We see that the Executive Director is proposing to study more alternatives for the RR trestles over Highway 1 in the Aptos highway project and for the Capitola Trestle.

Please find our comments attached.

Sincerely,

Faina Segal

Faina Segal
Board Chair
Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail
P.O.Box 1652, Capitola, CA 95010-1652
www.railandtrail.org and coastconnect.org
Cell: 831-331-6432



Santa Cruz RTC
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

June 1, 2021

Dear Chair Gonzalez, Commissioners, and Commissioner Alternates,

We are writing today in regards to items 30 and 31. We see that the Executive Director is proposing to study more alternatives for the RR trestles over Highway 1 in the Aptos highway project and for the Capitola Trestle. We reject that these items should be up for consideration at all. An interim trail use of the rail line has already been considered and rejected by the RTC on multiple occasions. However, we understand the importance of gathering as much relevant information as possible to meet the demands of CEQA and to help make the best decisions for our county.

In the spirit of having all the information necessary for these projects, any study of an “interim trail” use of the rail corridor must include the full costs and fundability of the temporary removal of the rail line, construction of the interim trail, restoration of the rail line and reconstruction of a permanent trail. Additionally, all bridges, trestles, and other rail related infrastructure must remain capable to meet the freight standard as required by the railbanking legislation.

As is required by RTC policy, if an interim trail use alternative is added to the EIR, the scope of work should include the full triple-bottom-line cost-benefit analysis of such an alternative. These include (but are not limited to):

- all the costs involved in pursuing and obtaining Surface Transportation Board (STB) approval of abandoning and railbanking the corridor
- the full costs of removing the tracks, constructing an interim trail, removing the interim trail, restoring the rail line, and then rebuilding the trail in its final location
- the costs of any likely litigation associated with this choice
- the cost of repaying the many millions of dollars allocated from California State Proposition 116 to purchase the rail line, for failing to fulfill the terms of the agreement including using the rail line for passenger rail.
- the likelihood of finding funding sources willing to finance these expenses for a temporary project
- the potential risk of reducing, if not completely eliminating, opportunities for outside grant funding of the permanent rail trail itself.

Full triple-bottom-line analysis also means the study of an interim trail use alternative must address impacts on social equity, the environment and the economy. Such an analysis should assume that removing the existing tracks and constructing an interim paved trail in their place will make any future use of the rail line for passenger service between Watsonville and Santa Cruz prohibitively expensive or infeasible. Since “railbanking” statutes became law some 50 years ago, tracks that have been removed have never been restored and rail service restarted. The commission needs to fully face this reality as they consider any “interim” projects that are clearly inconsistent with current policy.

The RTC, local governments, Caltrans, METRO, and other agency and community partners have engaged in countless public processes over the years, including passing Measure D, to agree on regional transportation policy and projects. It is alarming to now face seemingly ad-hoc proposals of unrealistic and infeasible alternatives.

FORT looks forward to continuing to work with the RTC and others in our community toward comprehensive solutions that will address the real challenge of reducing greenhouse gasses and offer alternatives to car travel and traffic congestion.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Faina Segal
Board Chair
Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail

Cc: RTC Commissioners and Commissioner Alternates
METRO Board Members
Guy Preston

From: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: FW: Letter in support of items 30 and 31 on the June Agenda
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 9:12:01 AM

From: Jack Brown <jack.b.brown@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 8:59 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>; aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org; sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com; Bertrand, Jacques <jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us>; eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org; greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us; Bruce McPherson <bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; Gine Johnson <Gine.Johnson@santacruzcounty.us>; Patrick Mulhearn <Patrick.Mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us>; Zach Friend <Zach.Friend@santacruzcounty.us>; Andy Schiffrin <andy.schiffrin@santacruzcounty.us>; ladykpetersen@gmail.com; Manu Koenig <manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us>; Randy Johnson <rlj12@comcast.net>; openup@cats.ucsc.edu
Subject: Letter in support of items 30 and 31 on the June Agenda

Dear RTC Commissioners,

I would like to express my support for Items 30 and 31 on the upcoming June Agenda supporting the executive director's recommendation to research on an interim trail for portions of the coastal corridor.

It is great to see that the RTC staff is finally looking into a realistic approach to using this valuable resource. For too long, the corridor has been held hostage by the special interest group Friends of the Rail and Trail who are pretending to be a 501(c)(3) charitable organization when in fact they are acting as a political lobbyist organization with no transparency on where their funding is coming from and spending a majority of their time pressuring the commission. If they are going to continue with their dark money lobbying, then they should properly register as such an organization.

FORTs' demands on the study of the interim trail are disingenuous. They have failed to show where funding would come from for their suburban commuter trolley that would provide an impact to traffic and hence provide no relief from the climate crisis. I also feel they are doing a disservice by lying about the reasons for rail banking and how the county would be responsible to pay back prop 116 funds. I believe the RTC has done it's due diligence in multiple studies to research rail per the requirements of prop 116 and that even, if for some weird reason we would have to pay back the money, the cost of trying to squeeze a trail in next to an unused railroad track is so expensive we can make the cost back in less than a mile of trail only construction vs rail with a trail construction.

Again, I fully support the decision to give the proper research to an interim trail. Since the funding simply does not exist to create a train system in the next several decades,

we really need to concentrate on revitalizing Metro, Lift and Paracruz, look at more solutions to eliminate commutes between South County and points north (e.g. more county offices being located in south county) and opening the unused rail corridor to inner and inter-community active transportation.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Jack Brown
Aptos, CA

From: [E. Hansen](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Cc: [Railandtrail Info](#)
Subject: Highway 1 – State Park to Freedom Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project & Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Professional Engineering Services Contract Award & Addition of Interim Trail Alternative
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 6:58:46 PM

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
May 28th, 2021

RE: Highway 1 – State Park to Freedom Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project & Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 Professional Engineering Services Contract Award & Addition of Interim Trail Alternative.

Commissioners, the Rail Corridor right-of-way includes significant and costly challenges to both a Rail with Trail and an Interim Trail, yet some are specific to an Interim Trail and must be accounted for by the Professional Engineering Study.

The Reversionary Clauses under the Shifting Public Use Doctrine asserts that an Interim Trail may be enough to avoid property reversion to Landowners adjacent to the Rail Corridor, but the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment has been successfully litigated with rulings in which just compensation has been awarded to Plaintiffs. Any study of an Interim Trail must contain contingency funds for both litigation and compensation.

Recent transportation studies by the State of California emphasize Multimodal Transportation Systems as critical to reducing Green House Gas Emissions. It is unlikely that Federal or State Grant Funding would therefore be provided for an Interim Trail that benefits local interests at the cost to a Statewide Rail Network. Sustainable local funding for Interim trail Construction, Operations, and Maintenance would therefore be required and this too must be considered and accounted for.

There are Environmental Constraints associated with an Interim Trail that are only encountered if the Rail Line is repurposed. The testing and discovery of unknown Hazardous Materials will require Environmental Remediation and therefore contingency funding must be included in any study of an Interim Trail.

The actual cost of an Interim Trail is variable and will change depending on details of the project design, environmental remediation requirements, and market rate of construction materials. A project of this magnitude and funding constraints will proceed well into the future and so therefore escalation contingency projections should be quantifiably addressed. In fairness to the selection process, an Interim Rail design and construction must be equal in all ways to a trail adjacent to the existing rail line.

The Rail Corridor contains significant feasibility challenges in many locations, particularly in remote segments where Temporary Haul Roads may be required for access and in some cases Temporary Easements across Private Property may be required as well. The presence of wetlands and special-status species in the Rail

Corridor may take considerable time and extensive permitting or compensatory mitigation. An Interim Trail replacing the Rail Infrastructure should not be diverted onto City or County Roads due to this or any other constraint. A cross regional Interim Trail must be of consistently Equal and Equitable Design across the entire Rail Corridor and that costing reflect these important criteria.

The principal justification for an Interim Rail by the Railbanking Statute, and that upon which the entire process depends, is that preservation of the intact corridor constitutes a continuing railroad purpose. Key to the preservation purpose is that ultimately the Rail Corridor be reactivated for Passenger Rail as per the Terms of Sale. Without the right to reestablish the rail line, the preservation purpose of the corridor would be jeopardized. To that end, the cost of an Interim Trail must include the complete and equal restoration of the existing Infrastructure and the escalating costs that will be incurred to do so.

Erik Hansen
Santa Cruz County Resident

From: [Peter Goodman](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: I am in support of next meetings Items 30 & 31 for the Interim Coastal Trail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 4:00:14 PM

Please railbank so we can start using the trail. I am hoping things keep moving in this positive direction. We simply do not have the density or money to have a passenger train. We would get more people moving with electric bikes on a level trail from Watsonville to Santa Cruz and less bike/car accidents if we can keep the bikes off the street.

Kind Regards,
Peter
Peter Goodman Consulting LLC
831.247.2656

From: [Mary Hesketh](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Interim Trail Alternatives
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 2:13:35 PM

To SCCRTC members:

We write to express our support for interim trail alternative studies, as described in items 30 and 31 of your June 3rd, 2021 agenda.

It's about time that actual costs of alternatives to a train are investigated.

Mary and Tony Hesketh

From: [Ames](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Interim Trail. I am in favor of railbanking and building an interim trail on the Capitola Trestles and Aptos Trestles. Thanks!
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 4:47:22 PM

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is proposing to develop plans to railbank and build an interim trail on the Capitola Trestles and Aptos Trestles. I am in full support. Thanks!

From: [Ron Compton](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Interim trail on the Capitola Trestle
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 8:16:08 AM

I live in Capitola and have for over 40 years. I support the proposed interim trail on the Capitola Trestle. It would greatly benefit people walking through the area and reduce congestion in Capitola Village. Please vote in favor of it.

John Ronald Compton Jr.

Brookvale Terrace

Capitola, CA

From: [Mark Mesiti-Miller](#)
To: [Aurelio Gonzalez](#); [Sandy Brown](#); [Jacques Bertrand](#); [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Greg Caput](#); [Coonerty Ryan](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Zach Friend](#); [Kristen Petersen](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Randy Johnson](#); [Michael Rotkin](#)
Cc: [Donna Lind](#); [Larry Pageler](#); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [Renee Golder](#); [Sam Storey](#); [Lowell Hurst](#); [Felipe Hernandez](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [Gine Johnson](#); [Derek Timm](#); [Amy Miyakusu](#); [Guy Preston](#); [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Item 30 on your 6/2 agenda - Interim Trail Use of Segment 12
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 9:00:50 AM

Re: Highway 1 – State Park to Freedom Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 - Professional Engineering Services Contract Award & Addition of Interim Trail Alternative

Chair Gonzalez, Commissioners and Commissioner Alternates:

I strongly urge you to reject staff's recommendation at this time for the many reasons delineated below but especially because insufficient time was provided to review, analyze and comment upon two key documents: the Draft Resolution and the Draft Contract, Scope of Services, Project Schedule, and Cost Proposal.

However, should the Commission decide to go ahead and include an interim trail use alternative in the EIR, then in keeping with the 2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan and similar regional and state level documents the scope of work should be expanded to include an analysis of the **full triple-bottom line impact** of such an alternative including all the costs involved in pursuing and obtaining Surface Transportation Board (STB) approval of abandoning and railbanking the corridor plus the full costs of removing the tracks, constructing an interim trail, removing the interim trail, restoring the rail line, and then rebuilding the trail in its final location including the costs of any likely litigation associated therewith and the cost of paying the state back for failing to fulfill the terms of the agreement under which the RTC received state funding to purchase the rail line.

Full triple-bottom line means the analysis of an interim trail use alternative must address impacts on equity, the environment and the economy. Under the reasonable assumption that removing the existing tracks and constructing an interim paved trail in their place will effectively end any use of the rail line for passenger service between Watsonville and Santa Cruz for decades maybe forever, the analysis must also consider the triple bottom line impact of delaying implementation of passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line for a minimum of 50 years. Consider that since “railbanking” became law some 50 years ago, never have tracks been removed, a paved “interim” trail constructed in their place, the “interim” trail removed, the tracks put back and rail transit service restarted. Never, not even once.

Furthermore, you should oppose the proposed addition of an “interim trail alternative” to the scope of the proposed Hwy 1 / BOS / Segment 12 projects for all additional reasons included below:

- The RTC has ZERO policies in any of its adopted plans, including the long range Regional Transportation Plan and the short range Regional Transportation Improvement Program, for including an interim trail use in any project, either proposed or currently under development. In fact, this proposed interim trail use is 100% contrary to the last 20+ years of adopted RTC and California State transportation policy.
- The RTC has not provided evidence that it has a full understanding of railbanking given the various operational and funding agreements already in place. No steps to study an interim trail use (requiring a substantial expenditure of taxpayer funds and staff resources) should be taken until the research and legal analysis is undertaken on the the

step-by-step process, full cost and feasibility of railbanking action. Additionally, that research should be shared with the taxpayers and deliberated holistically by the RTC since what happens in terms of studying an interim trail use for Segment 12 will also impact other segments that are presently in the preliminary development, final design or permitting phase.

- An interim trail use of the rail line has already been considered and rejected by the RTC on multiple occasions and spending hundreds of thousands of Measure D funds “studying” yet again an interim trail use of the rail line, is clearly an irresponsible use of hard-earned taxpayer funds, risks further delay in constructing the much desired rail trail and, will certainly reduce if not completely eliminate, opportunities for outside grant funding of the rail trail itself.
- An interim trail use of the rail line would further delay and certainly and substantially increase the cost of implementing electric passenger rail service which the RTC selected as the locally preferred alternative for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line at its Feb 4, 2021 meeting. Not acting to offer Santa Cruz County residents and businesses an alternative to Highway 1 will lead to an increase in GHG emissions inconsistent with the urgent and imperative goals of local, regional, state, federal, and worldwide climate action plans. Additionally, an interim trail use of the rail line inherently promises to be a temporary facility that would be reverted back at a doubled cost with no concluding trail.
- Estimated project costs are clearly a concern with a number of the RTC’s regional projects, including electric passenger rail service, Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder, and the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (a.k.a. the Rail Trail). A more useful process would be to consider these projects and costs together, and to craft a reasonable plan for future implementation of all these projects as outlined in the Unified Corridor Investment Study based on approved policy positions, advancing rail technology and the likelihood of dramatically increased funding for public transit.
- Any interim trail use of the existing rail corridor is essentially infeasible as an interim trail use would require the Federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) to approve abandoning the rail line and railbanking the corridor. With Progressive Rail formally withdrawing its notice of intent to abandon the rail line and Roaring Camp subcontracting the freight business in Watsonville, it appears that any opportunity to abandon the rail line and railbank the corridor is at least seven years away as the current Administration, Coordination and License Agreement for the rail line does not end until July 16, 2028. With Roaring Camp, a federally recognized freight rail operator, committed to fighting any attempt to abandon the rail line and insisting on access to freight rail business to or from the national rail network, it's unlikely that the STB will allow the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) to be abandoned or railbanked. Summarizing, any interim trail use of the rail line is certainly infeasible for at least a decade and will most likely remain infeasible indefinitely.
- The RTC purchased the SCBRL with many millions of dollars allocated from California State Proposition 116 and in so doing accepted several conditions including using the rail line for passenger rail service as delineated in the following excerpts from California Transportation Commission Resolution PA-08-01 approving the allocation of Prop 116 funds to the RTC:
 - *intercity passenger rail projects connecting the City of Santa Cruz with the Watsonville Junction; or*
 - *other rail projects within Santa Cruz County which facilitate recreational,*

commuter, intercity and intercounty travel;

- Removing the existing railroad tracks and constructing a paved trail in their place for an interim trail use is inconsistent with the Measure D expenditure plan approved by more than two thirds of county-wide voters which includes the following language requiring funds be used for “preservation of the Rail Corridor infrastructure... and maintaining and repairing the publicly-owned Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line”.
- Removing the existing railroad tracks and constructing a paved trail in their place for an interim trail use is inconsistent with the resolution adopted by the RTC in January 2019 that stipulated the rail corridor be used for both a multi-purpose trail and high capacity public transit.
- Removing the existing railroad tracks and constructing a paved trail in their place for an interim trail use is inconsistent with the resolution adopted by the RTC in February of 2021 that stipulated electric passenger rail was the locally preferred alternative for providing high capacity public transit in the rail corridor.

The RTC, local governments, Caltrans, METRO, and other agency and community partners have engaged in countless public processes over the years, including passing Measure D, to agree on regional transportation policy and projects. It is disheartening to now face seemingly ad-hoc proposals of unrealistic and infeasible alternatives. The RTC should be working with agencies, community organizations and the public toward comprehensive solutions that will address the real challenge of improving social equity, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and offering alternatives to being trapped in an endless traffic jam of cars, cars and more cars.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Mark Mesiti-Miller
Professional Civil Engineer, State of CA - C40945
37 year resident of Santa Cruz

From: [Mark Mesiti-Miller](#)
To: [Aurelio Gonzalez](#); [Sandy Brown](#); [Jacques Bertrand](#); [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Greg Caput](#); [Coonerty Ryan](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Zach Friend](#); [Kristen Petersen](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Randy Johnson](#); [Michael Rotkin](#)
Cc: [Donna Lind](#); [Larry Pageler](#); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [Renee Golder](#); [Sam Storey](#); [Lowell Hurst](#); [Felipe Hernandez](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [Gine Johnson](#); [Derek Timm](#); [Amy Miyakusu](#); [Guy Preston](#); [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Item 31 on your 6/2 agenda - Interim Trail Use of the Capitola Trestle
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 9:07:05 AM

Re: Capitola Trestle Update, Interim Trail Alternative, and Amendment to Professional Engineering Services Agreement with RailPros, Inc.

Dear Chair Aurelio Gonzalez, Commissioners and Commissioner Alternates:

As a professional engineer and long time county resident, I urge you to **reject staff's recommendation** on this item for all the reasons delineated below.

However, should a decision be made to analyze an interim trail use of the Capitola Trestle, then in keeping with the 2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan and similar regional and state level legislation and policies, the scope of work should include an analysis of the **full triple-bottom line impact** of such an alternative use including all the costs involved in pursuing and obtaining Surface Transportation Board (STB) approval of abandoning and railbanking the corridor plus the full costs of removing the tracks, constructing an interim trail, removing the interim trail, restoring the rail line, and then rebuilding the trail in its final location including the costs of any likely litigation associated therewith and the cost of paying the state back for failing to fulfill the terms of the agreement under which the RTC received state funding to purchase the rail line.

Full triple-bottom line means the analysis of an interim trail use alternative must address impacts on equity, the environment and the economy. Under the reasonable assumption that removing the existing tracks and constructing an interim paved trail in their place will effectively end any use of the rail line for passenger service between Watsonville and Santa Cruz for decades maybe forever, the analysis must also consider the triple bottom line impact of delaying implementation of passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line for a minimum of 50 years. Consider that since "railbanking" became law some 50 years ago, never have tracks been removed, a paved "interim" trail constructed in their place, the "interim" trail removed, the tracks put back and rail transit service restarted. Never, not even once.

I further recommend that if taxpayer funds are to be spent on what is essentially an infeasible idea, the RTC should also fund an engineering analysis of the the Capitola Trestle that would explore the feasibility of using the Capitola Trestle for supporting an interim use of the rail line for use by an ultra-light rail vehicle such as the TIG/m vehicle for which the RTC has received a technically feasible, if not also, financially feasible proposal. Because the loads imposed on the Capitola Trestle by an ultra-light rail vehicle will only be about 10% of the load imposed by a freight rail locomotive the trestle should be analyzed for this type of loading. Should use of the Capitola trestle prove feasible for use by an ultralight rail vehicle, the Capitola trestle should then also be evaluated for use by an ultralight rail vehicle and a multi-use trail in a configuration similar to that successfully used across the San Lorenzo River.

The substantial reasons you should reject and/or modify staff's recommendation include the following:

- The RTC has ZERO policies in any of its adopted plans, including the long range

Regional Transportation Plan and the short range Regional Transportation Improvement Program, for including an interim trail use in any project, either proposed or currently under development. In fact, this proposed interim trail use is 100% contrary to the last 20+ years of adopted RTC and California State transportation policy.

- The RTC has not provided evidence that it has a full understanding of railbanking given the various operational and funding agreements already in place. No steps to study an interim trail use (requiring a substantial expenditure of taxpayer funds and staff resources) should be taken until the research and legal analysis is undertaken on the the step-by-step process, full cost and feasibility of railbanking action. Additionally, that research should be shared with the taxpayers and deliberated holistically by the RTC since what happens in terms of studying an interim trail use for the Capitola Trestle will also impact other segments that are presently in the preliminary development, final design or permitting phase.
- An interim trail use of the rail line has already been considered and rejected by the RTC on multiple occasions and spending \$37,531 of Measure D funds to “study” yet again an interim trail use of the rail line, is clearly an irresponsible use of hard-earned taxpayer funds, risks further delay in constructing the much desired rail trail and, will certainly reduce, if not completely eliminate, opportunities for outside grant funding of the rail trail itself.
- An interim trail use of the rail line would further delay and certainly and substantially increase the cost of implementing electric passenger rail service which the RTC selected as the locally preferred alternative for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line at its Feb 4, 2021 meeting. Not acting to offer Santa Cruz County residents and businesses an alternative to Highway 1 will lead to an increase in GHG emissions inconsistent with the urgent and imperative goals of local, regional, state, federal, and worldwide climate action plans.
- Estimated project costs are clearly a concern with a number of the RTC’s regional projects, including the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (a.k.a. the Rail Trail), electric passenger rail service, Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder projects. A more useful process would be to consider these projects and costs together, and to craft a reasonable plan for future implementation of all these projects as outlined in the Unified Corridor Investment Study based on approved policy positions, advancing rail technology, projected Measure D funds and the likelihood of dramatically increased state and federal funding for public transit.
- Any interim trail use of the existing rail corridor is essentially infeasible as an interim trail use would require the Federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) to approve abandoning the rail line and railbanking the corridor. With Progressive Rail formally withdrawing its notice of intent to abandon the rail line and Roaring Camp subcontracting the freight business in Watsonville, it appears that any opportunity to abandon the rail line and railbank the corridor is at least seven years away as the current Administration, Coordination and License Agreement for the rail line does not end until July 16, 2028. With Roaring Camp, a federally recognized freight rail operator, committed to fighting any attempt to abandon the rail line and insisting on access to freight rail business to or from the national rail network, it's unlikely that the STB will allow the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) to be abandoned or railbanked. Summarizing, any interim trail use of the rail line is certainly infeasible for at least a decade and will most likely remain infeasible indefinitely.
- The RTC purchased the SCBRL with many millions of dollars allocated from California State Proposition 116 and in so doing accepted several conditions including using the

rail line for passenger rail service as delineated in the following excerpts from California Transportation Commission Resolution PA-08-01 approving the allocation of Prop 116 funds to the RTC:

- *intercity passenger rail projects connecting the City of Santa Cruz with the Watsonville Junction; or*
- *other rail projects within Santa Cruz County which facilitate recreational, commuter, intercity and intercounty travel;*
- Removing the existing railroad tracks and constructing a paved trail in their place for an interim trail use is inconsistent with the Measure D expenditure plan approved by more than two thirds of county-wide voters which includes the following language requiring funds be used for “preservation of the Rail Corridor infrastructure... and maintaining and repairing the publicly-owned Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line”.
- Removing the existing railroad tracks and constructing a paved trail in their place for an interim trail use is inconsistent with the resolution adopted by the RTC in January 2019 that stipulated the rail corridor be used for both a multi-purpose trail and high capacity public transit.
- Removing the existing railroad tracks and constructing a paved trail in their place for an interim trail use is inconsistent with the resolution adopted by the RTC in February of 2021 that stipulated electric passenger rail was the locally preferred alternative for providing high capacity public transit in the rail corridor.

The RTC, local governments, Caltrans, METRO, and other agency and community partners have engaged in countless public processes over the years, including passing Measure D, to agree on regional transportation policy and projects. It is disheartening to now face seemingly ad-hoc proposals of unrealistic and infeasible alternatives. The RTC should be working with agencies, community organizations and the public toward comprehensive solutions that will address the real challenge of improving social equity, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and offering alternatives to being trapped in an endless traffic jam of cars, cars and more cars.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Mark Mesiti-Miller
Professional CA Civil Engineer, C040945
37 year resident of Santa Cruz

From: [Jessica Middour](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: June 3 RTC Meeting
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 10:12:24 AM

To the RTC Commission

To Whom It May Concern,

Please be sure that any study of interim use of the rail corridor as a trail include the full costs or temporary removal of the line, construction of interim trail, restoration of the rail line and reconstruction of a permanent trail.

Please be sure that the bridges, trestles, and other rail related infrastructure are maintained to the freight-capable standard as required by the railbanking legislation as you study the interim trail alternative.

If an interim trail only is an alternative, you should also include study of a Light Rail or streetcar alternative per page 13 of the Electric Rail Transit Business Plan. This would be more consistent with county and regional long range transportation plans.

Thank you for your time and work.

Sincerely,

Jessica Middour
Santa Cruz Resident

--

Jessica Middour

From: [J Lighthill](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: June 3 agenda Items 30 & 31
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 8:22:34 AM

Dear Commissioners,

Please approve items 30 and 31, interim trail alternative analyses for segment 12 and Capitola Trestle.

Thank you for considering an affordable and efficient use of the corridor until a day rail may be deemed financially feasible and acceptable to the community.

Regards,

Johanna Lighthill

From: [Marie Wegrich](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: June 3 vote
Date: Sunday, May 30, 2021 12:22:45 PM

RTC,

Please pass/approve agenda items 30 and 31 on June 3rd, so we can have a safe and scenic and affordable pedestrian/bike trail built soon!

Thank you,
Marie Wegrich

From: [Joe Martinez](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Cc: ["Joe Martinez"](#)
Subject: June 3rd RTC Meeting Agenda Items 30 & 31
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 10:28:44 AM

Support and approval of agenda items 30 will improve transportation throughout the county by keeping mass transit on the Hwy 1 corridor. Support and approval of item 31 will increase individual mobility by making the old rail corridor a safe path for all members of the community by starting with the Capitola Trestle.

From: [Buck Sampson](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Date: Saturday, May 29, 2021 5:26:21 PM

I support 30 and 31.

From: [Barry Scott](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Opposition to Agenda Items #30, #31, "Interim Trail" Alternatives
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 4:17:47 PM

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

Railbanking sounds nice but never includes the costs or difficulties involved in restoring a working rail line. This is why there is only one example in which a railbanked line has been converted into a trail and later restored to service, and that case is still incomplete and uncertain (Purple Line, Maryland). As you consider whether or not to approve the resolutions, please be sure that any study of interim use of the rail corridor as a trail includes the full costs of temporary removal of the line, construction of interim trail, and restoration of the rail line and reconstruction of a permanent trail with restored rail. Failure to include these additional costs will result in an incomplete and misleading assessment of the risks and benefits of an interim trail project.

Please be sure that the bridges, trestles, and other rail related infrastructure are maintained to the freight-capable standard as required by the railbanking legislation as you study the interim trail alternative, consistent with Measure D funding to maintain the rail corridor infrastructure.

If an interim trail only is an alternative, you should also include study of a Light Rail or streetcar alternative per page 13 of the Electric Rail Transit Business Plan. This would be more consistent with county and regional long range transportation plans and our own Commissions' findings that Rail Transit is the Locally Preferred Alternative.

Please reject the Interim Trail resolutions unless they are modified to be reflective of the true costs and risks of railbanking and removal of the line, even temporarily.

Thank you,

Barry

Barry Scott

Battery-electric streetcar service is available today: coastfutura.org

Coastal Rail Santa Cruz

A not for profit organization

831-612-6574

From: [Barry Scott](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#); [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Opposition to Item #31 Proposed Amendment to 5-Year Measure D Plan
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 4:38:00 PM

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

During the [June 2018 RTC meeting held in Watsonville](#), "Commissioner Rotkin made a friendly amendment to the motion, which was accepted by the maker and the second of the motion to take \$50,000 from the railroad bridge rehabilitation line in the Rail Corridor Plan to do additional railroad bridge analysis on the feasibility of replacing the bridge through the Capitola Village with one that can accommodate both rail and trail.

The motion with one friendly amendment for a feasibility study for the railroad bridge in Capitola Village was approved with Commissioners Bertrand, Bottorff, Chase, Coffman-Gomez, Coonerty, Leopold, Rotkin and Commissioner Alternates Virginia Johnson, Mulhearn, and Noroyan voting "aye", and Commissioners Caput and Johnson voting "nay."

The June 2021 agenda under Items 31d and 31e includes a recommendation to reallocate that \$50,000 to cover a different investigation: "Proposal to Study Conversion of Capitola Rail Bridge for Pedestrian and Bicycle Use". Details in budget change found here: [Agenda page 428](#)

This is plainly a bait and switch; study to explore use as a trail only and not rail and trail is in direct violation of the intent of the original motion and contradicts the stated goals of the Commission to honor Measure D guidelines, Regional Transportation Plan goals and objectives, and years of study.

This proposed reallocation should be rejected and the original purpose to study the feasibility of rail transit and trail should be honored and fulfilled. If the Commission wishes to study both trail only and rail and trail, that might be a different matter but to exclude one and replace it with another is unacceptable.

Many thanks,

Barry

Barry Scott

Battery-electric streetcar service is available today: coastfutura.org

Coastal Rail Santa Cruz

A not for profit organization

831-612-6574

From: [Susan Moen Penprase](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Pedestrian trail!
Date: Saturday, May 29, 2021 8:36:11 AM

Yes to a walking and biking trail!!
Please and thank you!
Yes , yes, yes!
No train!

Susan Moen Penprase

From: [Woutje Swets](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Railbanking
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 8:56:36 AM

Dear RTC Commissioners,

Please support items 30 and 31 of the Interim Coastal Trail. Building the interim trail on the trestles will be fabulous.

Thank you,
Woutje Swets

From: [Kelly Shafsky](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: SUPPORT ITEMS 30 and 31!!
Date: Saturday, May 29, 2021 4:11:04 PM

RTC Members,

As a Santa Cruz county resident and voter, I am writing to you to urge you to vote to support items 30 and 31 on the agenda for the June 3 meeting and move forward with plans to railbak and build an interim trail on the Capitola and Aptos trestles. The faster we can move forward with steps like these, the more quickly we can have a beautiful, highly-used, affordable and **safe** bike/run/walk trail through Santa Cruz county.

Thank you,
Kelly Shafsky
Santa Cruz

From: [TMA Kellogg](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Support Interim Coastal Trail
Date: Saturday, May 29, 2021 8:43:28 PM

Please speak in favor of building the coastal trail now. I am fully in favor of items 30 & 31 at the SCC-RTC meeting June 3, 2021. It is very frustrating to see the railroad unused for decades.

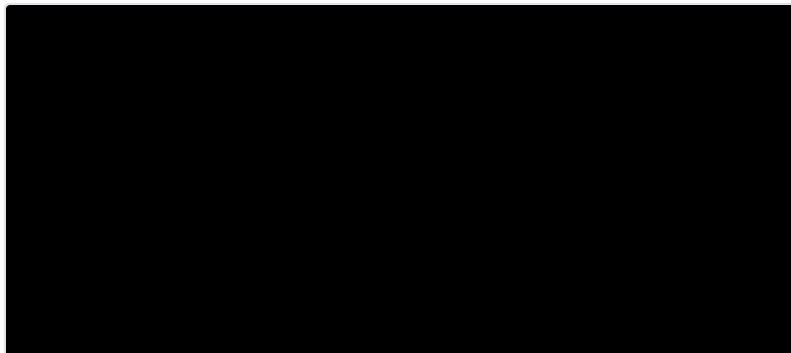
It is now time to improve options for bicyclists and walkers.

This is important for safety, efficiency, beauty, connecting communities, reducing greenhouse emissions, improving life, ...

Sincerely,
Tom Kellogg
Aptos, bicyclist for 62 years, member of rails to trails for over 30 years.

<https://sccrtc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2021-06-03-RTC-agenda-packet-reducedfilesize.pdf>

[Building a nation connected by trails | Rails-to-Trails Conservancy](#)



Building a nation connected by trails | Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

At Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, we are building a nation connected by trails. We reimagine public spaces to crea...

From: [Patrick Mottram](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Support for Interim trail
Date: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 10:46:42 PM

Dear RTC members,

I am a resident of Rio Del Mar in Aptos and I am writing to support the consideration of an interim trail particularly across highway 1 in Aptos.

I often see people walking across the two railway bridges that connect into Aptos from Seacliff and Rio del Mar and it's such a shame that it is so unsafe to preclude even more people doing it.

I did it with my two young daughters and vowed not to do it again as the creek crossings have minimal railings and unsafe boards.

I am convinced that building a trail would reduce the traffic congestion in Aptos and provide a welcome and needed community corridor for navigating safely by bike in the area.

I really hope you can move on this and don't get blocked by the misinformation that seems to be surrounding rail banking.

Let's do it. Let's build something now that we can all use now!

Thanks for reading

Patrick Mottram

St Andrews Drive, Aptos, CA, 95003

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Matthew Harris](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Support of items 30 and 31
Date: Monday, May 31, 2021 4:10:51 PM

Hello,

I am in support of rail banking and the building of an interim trail. I live on Pine Street in Aptos and a rail trail would be a huge asset to our community allowing people to easily commute by bicycle or use it for recreational needs. Please vote yes on 30 and 31.

Matt Harris (home owner)
530 Pine Street
Aptos, CA 95003

From: [William Martin](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: TRAIL
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 4:03:29 PM

I support items 30 & 31 to start building a trail over the Aptos & Capitola trestles. Thnx - wam

From: [MARY DELAVEGA](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: YES ON BUILDING INTERIM COASTAL TRAIL NOW!
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 6:20:22 PM

I am in favor of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) developing plans to railbank and build an interim trail on the Capitola Trestle and Aptos Trestles. I am writing in support of Items 30 & 31 (Interim Coastal Trail) on the agenda for the meeting June 2, 2021.

Regards,
Mary de la Vega
La Selva Beach

From: [Gayle Salvucci](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Yes on 30 & 31
Date: Monday, May 31, 2021 8:41:37 AM

As property owners at 313 Sea Ridge Road #A, Aptos, CA, we support both agenda items #30 and #31, at the upcoming SCCRTC meeting, June 3, 2021.

Thank you!

Gayle Salvucci
313 Sea Ridge Road #A
Aptos, CA 95003
650-483-5577

From: [Peoples, Brian C](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Yes on 30 and 31 (interim trails)
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 6:15:36 AM

I support approval of Items 30 and 31 for Thursday RTC meeting.

Best regards,

Brian Peoples

From: [Jack Carroll](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Yes on Agenda Items 30 & 31
Date: Monday, May 31, 2021 4:49:17 PM

I am completely in favor of lower cost steps to advance bicycling on our Santa Cruz branch rail corridor. Taxpayers paid a million dollars to have an unnecessary shoulder added to the San Lorenzo River bridge. Let's not make the exact same mistake with the Highway 1 bridges. And the possibility that you would route a bicycle trail down off the Capitola trestle and back up again is just ignorant public policy.

--

Jack Carroll
cell 408-234-7583

From: [Brian Peoples](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Yes on Item #30 and #31 - Interim Trail
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 5:49:18 AM

We support a yes vote on Item #30 and #31.

Best regards,

Brian Peoples
Trail Now

YES ON 30 & 31

Railbank & Build Interim Coastal Trail NOW



From: [Tanya and Tony Bennett](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Yes on Items 30 & 31
Date: Sunday, May 30, 2021 6:00:04 PM

RTC,

I am a resident of Aptos and in favor of placing a trail in lieu of the railroad tracks. I am in favor of Items 30 & 31 on you upcoming June 3 agenda.

Thank you for exploring this very viable, affordable option.

Tanya Bennett
609 Townsend Dr
Aptos

Sent from my iPad

From: [frank.wessels](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: rail trail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 6:09:17 PM

Hello, I am a resident of south county, and I am writing to express my interest in a biking and walking trail on the existing train tracks.. I think it is the best idea, that would be the most coast efficient. The folks of south county want to exercise, bike, walk their dogs, etc on a safe scenic trial, just like folks on the west side of Santa Cruz do. It is an issue of equity. To address public transportation needs, we should augment our existing bus system, and explore a future system near Highway 1. The use of the rail line for some new trains is a noisy expensive waste, and I think it is not what working class residents of south county want. Please vote yes on 30 & 31.

thank you,
Frank Wessels

From: [J. Ben Vernazza](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: slide to be shown with my presentation
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 10:06:58 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[IRON ORE .PDF](#)

To Commissioners/Staff/Public

The price of IRON ORE has gone from around \$50/ton to over \$200/ton in the last five years (first chart) and from \$50 to \$100/ton in the last year (second chart). This is up 4 times in five years and 2 times in the past year. It is suggested that staff study a hedging strategy with a professional scrap dealer as soon after the decision might be made to RAIL BANK. The purpose is to be able to hedge a price of scrap steel, whose scrap price will vary depending upon the grade, but can be hedged in the iron ore market at a price to be determined at that time. It is not expected that prices will go up much more as supply has started to meet the demand in the future, so the hedging would be made at the time the decision is made to clear out the trail of rails and ties (which also have scrap value with the price of lumber as high as it is), but the biggest value is in the rails.

Also of note, the proposed federal Infrastructure legislation will increase the demand for IRON STEEL which also means any new rail plan must run on replacement rails and must pay a much higher price than in the past and as may have been, or may have not been, budgeted.

DIVERSITY CREATES A BETTER WORLD

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

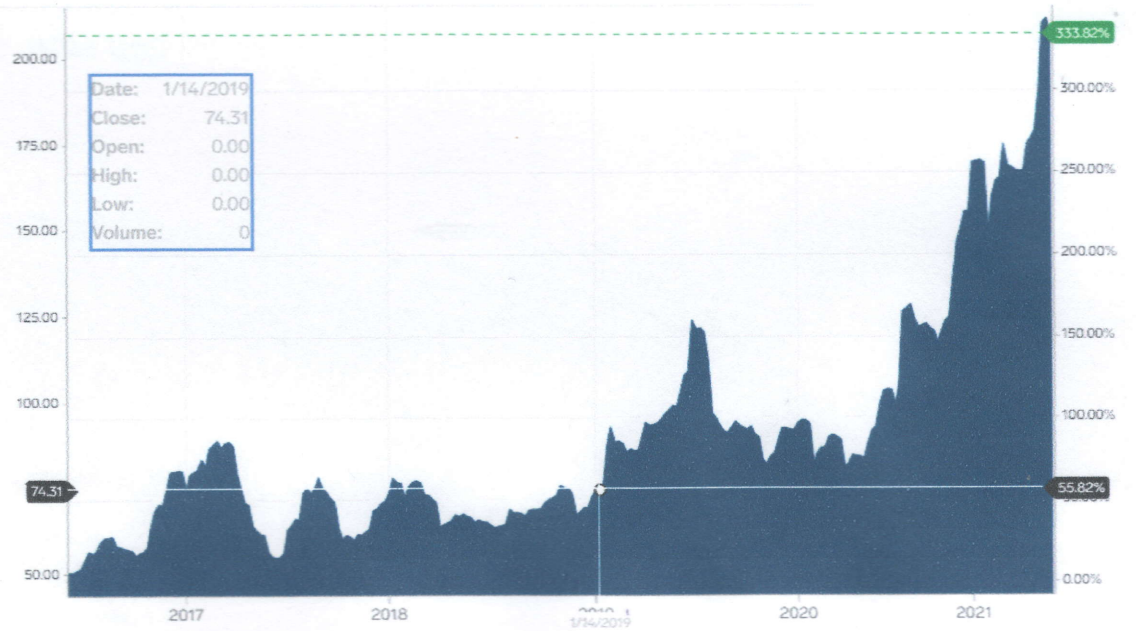


Handout for items 30 and 31

-06/03/2021 RTC Meeting

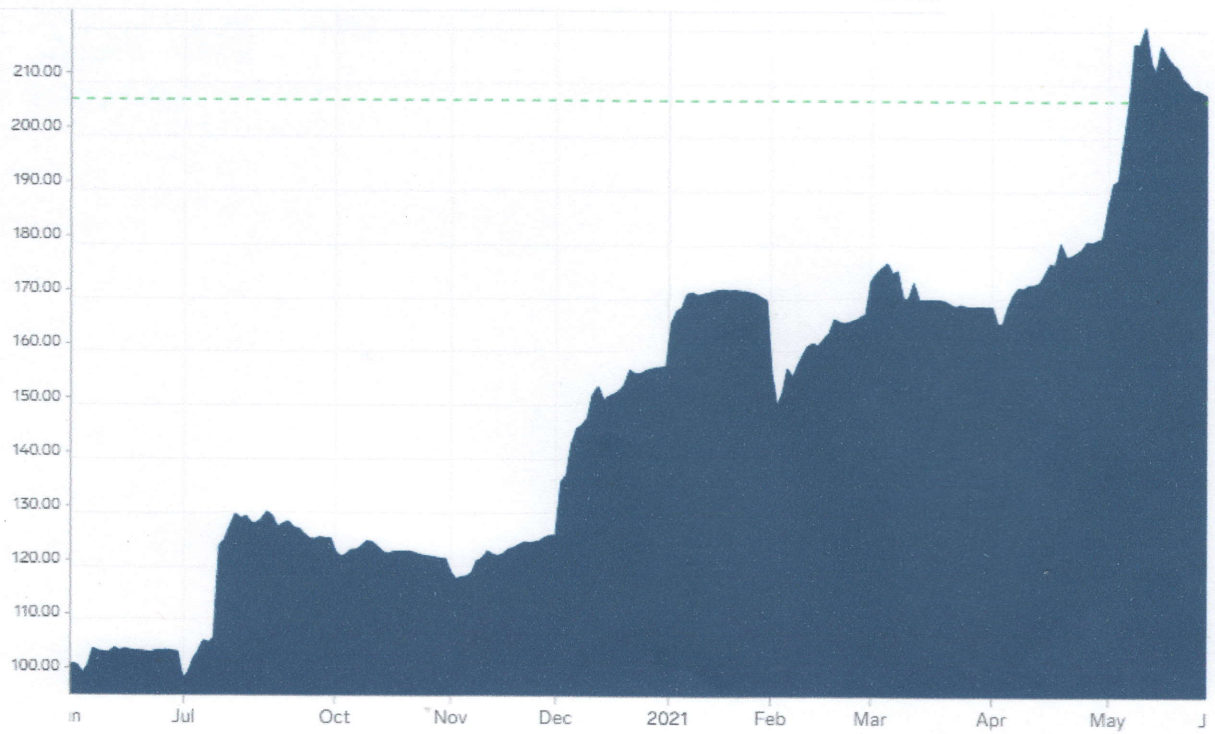
Intraday 1w 1m 6m Ytd 1y 3y 5y Max

Indicators Mountain-Chart



Intraday 1w 1m 6m Ytd 1y 3y 5y Max

Indicators Mountain-Chart



From: [James Schwartz](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Build the Trail!
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 9:32:28 AM

Friends,

I use the Westside trail often, usually every day.

I don't drive my car, since the trail is very bike friendly and walking friendly to lots of places.

PLEASE build the rest of the coastal trail. Rail bank the trestles, etc. and we can do a train if it ever becomes a good idea (which it clearly isn't at present).

If you build the trail it will get used.

Please!

James Schwartz
Santa Cruz

From: [Bill Gray](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Capitola Trestle agenda item
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 7:47:30 AM

I fully support rail banking of the Capitola segment of the coastal rr/trail (agenda item 31 as written). This segment is unsafe currently (and for many years prior). It should never again be used again for trains and is ideal for a bike/pedestrian trail. Please proceed with this concept, allowing the community to return focusing on real transportation issues.

Bill Gray
1440 Prospect Ave.
Capitola

509/9919292

From: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: FW: Belated Thank You
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 1:47:49 PM

From: Nadene Thorne <nadenetd@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 12:26 PM
To: ladykpetersen@gmail.com
Cc: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Belated Thank You

Commissioner Peterson,

This is a belated thank you for your remarks and vote at the April RTC meeting on the subject of the TCAA business plan. It is gratifying to know that there are commissioners like yourself who will take into consideration the many voices of the voters, but also adhere to a responsibility to make decisions, especially financial ones, that are in the best interest of the county. I can only imagine how difficult it must be to have the many rail supporters arguing for a plan that the county cannot possibly afford and further, by the RTC's own studies, will not reduce Highway 1 traffic by any significant amount. The lessons of the state bullet train and SMART in Sonoma and Marin should be on all our minds.

I hope you will support the additional study for trail only for the rail corridor segments under consideration for improvements in the near term. In addition to any CEQA requirement, it seems to me that these additional studies will not cost much more or take that much longer at this stage, and will enable us all to compare costs, timing, and benefits. In any case, it would be unfortunate for the rail corridor to remain completely off limits for any longer than necessary, and it's already been 10 years. I have long promoted the notion that the corridor's significant benefit is not that folks will ride their bikes from Watsonville to work in Santa Cruz, but that many of us will ride much shorter distances - because it will be safe and handy - to run errands, eliminating surface vehicle traffic and parking. This is real transit, not simply recreation.

I'm looking forward to increases in METRO service, especially the prospect that one day the bus might again travel down Mission Street. I live 9 houses from Mission but would have to walk 6 blocks to catch the bus - so I drive downtown. It sounds like there are a lot of excellent improvements in the works!

Thank you!

Nadene Thorne
140 Averitt Street
Santa Cruz 95060

From: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: FW: Commissioners, please vote YES on items 30 and 31 on your Thursday agenda
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 3:39:40 PM

From: henry cleveland <henry@baymoon.com>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 2:28 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Commissioners, please vote YES on items 30 and 31 on your Thursday agenda

My main reason for opposing the elite rail service is access. I and most others will need ground transportation to get to the rail stations. If I drive there, I'd need parking. No parking exists. No parking is in the proposed budget for the train. The train is at best a tiny part of a solution for getting around the County.

I do agree with the other cost analyses that show the train would require continue local tax support. It is unfunded.

Another reason I oppose the train is the benefits of a rail trail. I've been to communities that have ditch the train for human power mobility. Much happier for the residents.

Henry Cleveland
126 Rosea Drive
Aptos, CA 95003
(831) 685-1343

From: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: FW: Interim Trail Study
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 1:46:03 PM

From: Nadene Thorne <nadenetd@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Andy Schiffrin <andy.schiffrin@santacruzcounty.us>; Ryan Coonerty <ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us>
Cc: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Interim Trail Study

Commissioner Coonerty and Alternate Schiffrin,

I like the idea of the proposed additional study of trail alone on several segments of the corridor and hope you will support it at this next meeting. We can all compare costs, and the additional study won't take that much longer or cost that much more - in addition to the prospect that CEQA may require these studies. I've commented to you before: a significant benefit of a really viable trail is NOT that folks will ride their bikes to work in Santa Cruz from Watsonville, but that lots of us will use the trail for safe cycling for shorter distances over these segments, thus taking cars off surface streets and reducing parking requirements. This isn't recreational use - this is what we can do to improve transit in running errands, something for which a train would be totally useless.

I'm excited about increased METRO services. Maybe some day a bus will run down Mission Street again and I'll be more disposed to take the bus downtown instead of driving. I live 9 houses from Mission, and yet the closest bus stop is 6 blocks away

Finally, I understand that the county is looking at opening some of its offices in Watsonville. Awesome! The proposed train station nearest the county building on Ocean is at the Boardwalk - not really convenient!! Would either of you be planning on taking the train to county meetings? Running errands?

Thanks,

Nadene Thorne
140 Averitt Street
Santa Cruz 95060

From: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: FW: New submission from Contact Form
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 9:43:12 AM

From: Contact Request Form <admin@sccrtc.org>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 8:44 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: New submission from Contact Form

This Contact Request Form has been submitted by a member of the public to <http://sccrtc.org/contact-us/>.

Name
Joni and Dan Steele
Email
danjobry@aol.com
Subject
Please vote YES on Agenda Items 30 and 31!!
Your Message
Dear RTC Commissioners, Please vote YES on Agenda Items 30 and 31!! It's what our Capitola community wants but more importantly-- needs. Sincerely, Joni and Dan Steele Capitola, California

From: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: FW: Thank you!
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 1:48:23 PM

From: Nadene Thorne <nadenetd@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 12:52 PM
To: Jacques Bertrand <jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Randy Johnson <rlj12@comcast.net>; Manu Koenig <manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us>; Zach Friend <zach.friend@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; Patrick Mulhearn <patrick.mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us>; Bruce McPherson <bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; ladykpetersen@gmail.com
Cc: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Thank you!

This is a belated thank you for your remarks and your vote on the TCAA business plan from the April (and May) RTC meetings. I can only imagine how difficult it must be to have so many voters' voices at maximum pitch throughout these rail corridor studies, and yet sincerely work to separate the noise from the substance in the decisions you must make. My view, of course, is that there's no foreseeable funding for construction or operation of a train in the county, nor will it have the ridership to justify the substantial spending it would require - based on the RTC's own studies. [How a train became the "locally preferred alternative" is still a mystery to me.] Perhaps at some point the train lobby will elucidate how and why they think we can avoid the difficulties of the state bullet train and SMART, but in the meantime I sincerely appreciate your courage in standing for reason over their loud and passionate pleas.

I look forward to trail only studies of the upcoming segments of the corridor in the hopes that the corridor can be opened for public transit of any sort sooner rather than later (already 10 years while we've essentially only studied rail transit!). And enhanced METRO service! Is there any proposal for rail banking in the near term? A reported lawsuit against SMART is concerning for our county's plans.

Again, a heartfelt thank you!

Nadene Thorne
140 Averitt Street
Santa Cruz 95060

From: [Tom Lynch](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: I support the trail!!!
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 7:15:45 AM

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Chris Stallard](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Interim Coastal Trail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 8:46:11 AM

RTC Commission,
I support items 30 and 31 (Interim Coastal Trail) - to develop plans to railbank and build an interim trail on the Capitola and Aptos Trestles.

Regards
Chris Stallard

From: [Josh Stephens](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Cc: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Interim Trail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 9:50:03 AM

SCCRTC,

Please be sure that the bridges, trestles, and other rail related infrastructure are maintained to the freight-capable standard as required by the railbanking legislation as you study the interim trail alternative.

Also ensure that this study is inclusive of costs involve rebuilding the rail ROW or restoring it from the proposed interim use are included in the study. After all, if we're going to add this to the ongoing endless study list, at least get the *full* cost analysis of this proposal.

Perhaps then we won't have to have a follow-up—follow-up study to said alternative to finally get something done with this countywide project.

Josh Stephens
News/Traffic/Weather On-Air Personality
Host of "Flight 1080" Thursdays 4-7p
AM 1080 [KSCO Santa Cruz](#)
office: 831.475.1080 cell: 831.297.3651

Host of "Disco Saturday Night" & "The Sunday Soirée" 10p-midnight
AM 1240 & Mega 95.9 // [KMBY Monterey](#) & [KKDJ Fresno](#)
Request Line: 831.401.KMBY (5629) | Toll Free: 1.800.221.9296

From: [Maria Gitin](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Cc: [Zach Friend](#)
Subject: Interim coastal trail Items 30 & 31
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 12:11:25 PM

I am a mid county homeowner writing in support of trail use on the Capitola and Aptos trestles. Thank you.

Maria Gitin Torres
PO Box 216
Capitola, CA 95010

(residence Aptos, CA)

From: [B. Fuller](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Interim trail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 11:41:26 AM

Dear SCCRTC,

We are very excited to learn that you are considering a plan for railbanking. This is good news, and we hope you will proceed with this plan.

We think this plan should satisfy all parties and seems like a logical and much-needed solution. As residents of Santa Cruz County since 1973, we fully support Items 30 & 31 (Interim Rail Trail). Let's get this going for our children and grandchildren's sake.

Sincerely,

Brigid Fuller & Jeffrey Schwertley
1200 Pine Flat Road, Bonny Doon, CA 95060

Handout for items 30 and 31

06/03/2021 RTC Meeting

From: [Kristin Tosello](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Items 30 and 31
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 11:37:32 AM

I support Items 30 and 31. Please vote yes!

From: [E. Hansen](#)
To: tnunez@pajaronian.com; [Interim Trail](#); [Railandtrail Info](#)
Subject: Letter to the Editor, The Pajaronian, The South County Shaft
Date: Thursday, May 27, 2021 5:56:30 PM

In a recent about face, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) will now add an alternative to the Highway 1, Bus on Shoulder Project of an Interim Trail in which the rails will be removed (Railbanked).

What I find reprehensible is not only will the possibility of Electric Passenger Rail be eliminated by an Interim Trail, but that South County will have gotten the Shaft, while North County gets the Mine.

In regards to biking and hiking, so far we have a Rail / Trail through an industrial park that parallels two existing trails along Watsonville Slough.

South County Coastal Access is never a priority of Greenway or Trail Now proponents. That's clearly an inequality in the use of Measure D Tax Dollars and points to the self serving interests of an elite group of property owners and bicyclists to our North.

If an Interim Trail is enacted, it's unlikely to go along or through Galligham and Harkins Slough. It will divert off of the rail corridor onto San Andreas Road.

Let's call it what it is

“The South County Shaft”

No Passenger Rail between Watsonville and Santa Cruz.

No Harkins Slough Rail / Trail.

No North Pajaro River Trail.

No West Beach Road Pedestrian and Bicycle Lanes.

If an Interim Trail is constructed, North County will gain a Linear Recreational Park and South County will get a Bicycle Super Highway connecting Santa Cruz to Monterey.

Any consideration of proceeding with an Interim Trail should be after a complete reassessment of all priority bicycle and pedestrian project funding for South County.

The RTC must do a “Complete Reset” in addition to a “Time Out” to asses abandonment of the rail line and take great care in consideration of an Equitable path forward for all County Residents, not just an elite few.

Erik Hansen
South County Resident

From: [JOAN STEELE](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Cc: [Dan Steele](#); [Joni Steele](#)
Subject: Please Vote --YES on Items 30 & 31
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 8:50:22 AM

Dear RTC Commissioners,

Please vote YES on Items #30 & 31. It's what our Capitola community wants but more importantly -- needs.

Thank you,
Joni and Dan Steele
Capitola, California

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Marion Krause](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Please support Items 30 &31 on June 3 agenda
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 9:29:58 AM

Hello RTC members,

I write to encourage you to approve items 30 &31 on the June 3 agenda. We need a safe bike and pedestrian trail from Santa Cruz to Watsonville and the old rail line is the perfect answer to this. Thank you for considering these items for approval on the agenda. It's a great start to a rails to trails option for the old rail line.

Most sincerely,

Marion Krause
623 Seascape Resort Dr.
Aptos

From: [LARRY BERCOVICH](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Please support rail banking and building interim trail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 11:57:29 AM

Let's start using the corridor. This will enhance FREE and OPEN public space.

From: [Eliece Horton](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: RE: Item 30 interim trail alternative of Segment 12 of theCoastal Rail Trail along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail corridor
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:32:36 AM

RE: Item 30 interim trail alternative of Segment 12 of theCoastal Rail Trail along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail corridor

It is VERY important that the Commission includes the full costs of temporary removal of the line, construction of interim trail, restoration of the rail line and reconstruction of a permanent trail after the interim use concludes.

It is imperative that the Commission be sure that the bridges, trestles, and other rail related infrastructure are maintained to the freight-capable standard as required by the railbanking legislation as you study the interim trail alternative.

We are looking forward to taking our bikes on high capacity commuter rail with dedicated bike cars connecting to integrated bike paths in Santa Cruz county.

R E C Y C L E: Ride your Bike again Today!
Eliece Horton

From: [Jeff Singer](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Railbanking & interim Capitola Trail...
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 7:27:33 AM

Please go forward with the plans to build an interim trail on the Capitola Trestles and Aptos Trestles... and while you're at it, let's get it done for the entire rail corridor from Aptos to Santa Cruz.

From: [Tim Brattan](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Support Agenda Items 30 and 31
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:19:38 AM

Dear RTC Staff and Commissioners,

We want to thank you and staff for moving forward to open the Capitola Trestle and Aptos bridge for an interim trail, and encourage you to pass agenda items 30 and 31 at your June 3, 2021 meeting.,

We support any/all decisions to create the world-class Santa Cruz Coastal Trail as soon as possible. Initiating the railbanking process for an interim trail will get our county moving sooner at a cost we can afford with Measure D funding. It will also improve the health and safety of families, children, seniors and the disabled, and maintain our cherished coastal trees, landscape and environment while promoting decarbonizing active transportation options.

Thank you.

Tim Brattan & Suzi Mahler
Santa Cruz

From: [LAURA C MILOSEVICH](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Trail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 9:17:48 AM

I support items 30&31, let's get the trail built.
Laura Milosevich
Capitola

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bruce Mitchell](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: True Railtrail
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:38:08 AM

Greetings,

A true railtrail linking our coastal communities will be a tremendous asset! Please support items 30 & 31 for an interim coastal trail while railbanking the right of way.

Thanks for your consideration,
Bruce D. Mitchell
929 Tower Place
Santa Cruz, CA

From: [Selesa](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Yes on 30 and 31
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 6:44:23 AM

Good morning,

I'm just writing in to register my support for items #30 and 31 for the coastal Trail.

Thanks very much!

~ Selesa Webster

Handout for items 30 and 31

06/03/2021 RTC Meeting

From: [will.cassilly](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: item30 and 31
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 8:51:51 AM

please support item 30 and 31 to support interim coastal trail

thanks, Will Cassilly

From: [caryl.smith](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: trail now
Date: Friday, May 28, 2021 1:03:28 PM

Yes... Pleasee lets get a trail for bikes and foot happening so we don't have to deal with all the cars and traffic ...

Thanks

From: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: FW: Writing in support of 30 and 31.
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 11:14:01 AM

From: David Date <david.p.date@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 11:00 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Writing in support of 30 and 31.

Dear Chair Gonzalez and members of the commission.

A close friend of mine is dead, as a direct consequence of the innactions of this commission in creating pedestrian and bike infrastructure in this County.

Rail Bank the tracks, Build the Trail NOW, and preserve options for your stupid choo choo train fantasy in 30 years.

Sincerely,

David Date

From: [Gillian Worsey](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Interim Trail
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 11:20:54 AM

I am writing in support of items 30 and 31 on the RTC agenda for June 3rd 2021. Since the use of the right of way for light rail seems to be unreasonable at the current time, it makes sense to me to rail bank and use the right of way for the trail only. If a hard surface can be provided without asphalt, I think this would be a good alternative at present,

Gillian Worsey
Aptos

Sent from my iPad

From: [David Giannini](#)
To: [Interim Trail](#)
Subject: Support of Items 30 & 31
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 11:52:22 AM

Please support agenda Items 30 & 31 (Interim Coastal Trail) Thank you,

David