

**From:** [Heidy](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** 2022 Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs List and the 2016 Measure D five-year spending plans  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 1:35:12 PM

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Dear RTC,

Your May 5 hearing offers a unique opportunity to consider a request I have made previously and will again here. I am a resident along Section 11 and have muscular dystrophy. My medical and transportation needs differ from able-bodied individuals.

If you were to meet me, you would not see my disability. Disease progression is mercifully slow. I also devote about 20 hours a week doing everything I can to remain as healthy as possible. Topping my medical interventions are sleep (essential medicine for all people, but non-negotiable for me) and safety. The outcome of the latest Measure D, and any decision about the corridor, will likely have direct consequences on my health. I haven't taken a formal position, however, because informed decision-making is not possible due to the lack of information. This impacts you, too.

We need a public safety evaluation for all options. Designs lacking basic public safety strategies waste time and money and increase constituent stress. As it stands, any plan that comes forward will have deep shortcomings, especially for some of the very people RTC is trying to serve. Ease of moving around the county is certainly desirable, but if I can't be healthy at home, it doesn't make a bit of difference.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with our police chief. He has not been engaged by the RTC to assess impacts to the department. Why?

Have any public safety experts been consulted?

When local municipal budgets will be impacted, getting ahead of this and bringing on trained experts makes sense. Please do so.

Best Regards,

Heidy Kellison

Capitola



**From:** [Veronica Elsea](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Measure D funding of coastal rail trail segments 7-12 for May 5 meeting.  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:39:10 PM

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Comment on Measure D funding for coastal rail and trail, Segments 7-12

From: Veronica Elsea, Santa Cruz resident, who is blind.

[REDACTED] Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear commissioners,

If you insist on taking this vote now, I urge you to vote for the ultimate trail. Please do not vote to fund the "interim" trail. I do not believe this will actually be an interim project. If it is, it's a terrible mismanagement of Measure D funding to build what we already have, tear it out, replace it with something else which removes tracks, then planning to tear that out and put back what most of us wanted in the first place. Rail banking ends any hope of finishing the rail studies, as well as breaking your promise of continuing rail freight in this county. Given that so many people who participated in the initial research, the unified corridor studies, and in discussions at your advisory body meetings have expressed a preference for light rail for in-county travelers, this is a slap in the face to all the hard work people have done and money that has been spent.

As a blind resident, I will not ride a bike from Santa Cruz to Watsonville, but I really would use a train to get around in areas currently not served by our fine bus system, especially for reaching Amtrak and businesses in Monterey county.

Second, please don't do this right as this deceptive ballot measure is reaching voters. At best, having these two tracks occur simultaneously is confusing to those not in the loop. At worst, it gives the appearance of being a flagrant, disingenuous, shameful political maneuver by Greenway. Remember, you are here to meet the transportation needs of all county residents.

With the ultimate trail, the bicyclists still get their playground, but those of us who need to get from place to place also would benefit from this funding.

I fear that should you vote for the interim trail, it would only further Greenway's campaign rhetoric and that this alliance will destroy the RTC's credibility or rules of impartiality with respect to election campaigns organized by private groups.

Please just let us defeat the ballot measure first. Then you can go ahead and vote for the "ultimate" trail. Save Santa Cruz County's public transit and let me have an easy trip from my house to the Simpkins Swim Center, the shoe store in Watsonville I like or to get to the Apple Store in Monterey County.

Thank you for listening and coming to your senses, continuing to meet the needs of disabled and low-income residents of this county.

Veronica Elsea

**From:** [Jacob Wysocki](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for RTC meeting 5/5/2022  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:45:49 AM

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As a staunch rail and trail supporter and someone that has never supported a direct vote on this complex issue, I find the staff recommendation to vote on the interim or ultimate trail option at this time to be extremely illuminating. First, it demonstrates to me that the staff who prepared this report do not consider Measure D to be a valid demonstration of the will of the people. Depending on the votes given by commissioners, it will also demonstrate whether or not the former Greenway board members and current commissioners are being truthful when they say that they consider Measure D to be a barometer of the public's opinion that they will respect.

If the RTC insists on voting on this issue now, I support a vote of directly pursuing the "ultimate" trail configuration, which is the current plan of record produced by decades of work by local elected officials and staff in consultation with the public. However, if the RTC chooses to ignore that work and vote now for the "interim" trail option, the likely rejection of adverse abandonment and railbanking by the Surface Transportation Board will demonstrate the importance of the US Congress granting them "exclusive and plenary jurisdiction over rail abandonments to protect the public from an unnecessary discontinuance, cessation, interruption, or obstruction of available rail service."

Jacob Wysocki

**From:** [ROBERT STEPHENS](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Agenda Items for you 5/5 Meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:38:27 AM

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Dear Commissioners:

I don't think anyone in our community wants to kill a train or not have mass transit, but we do have to deal with reality. What is doable and what can we afford should be the way forward. Here are my comments on two of your agenda items:

Agenda Item #11: It appears the cost to repair this important bridge is 522% over cost. Where will the money come from? Maybe funding for an overly expensive rail/trail in Santa Cruz should pay for this or drop the project for a while.

Agenda Item #28: It is finally time to look at rail banking and an interim trail. Please vote for Scenario 1. Again no one is trying to kill a train, we just want to start looking at other options to start using the wonderful resource our county purchased 10 years ago.

I appreciate all the time and effort each one of you has put into this issue. It is time to move our county forward.

Sincerely,

Robert Stephens



Aptos, CA

**From:** [Laurence Gathy](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Laurence Gathy](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on items 11 and 28 on the May 5th Agenda  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:20:17 AM

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Dear RTC Commissioners,

My name is Laurence Gathy and I am a Felton resident. I am writing to you to comment on items 11 and 28 on the May 5th agenda.

*1. Item 11 [Approve rejection of Bid for the Pajaro River Bridge Rehabilitation Project along the Santa Cruz Branch Line]*

I object to this item. This bridge is actively in use by Watsonville freight rail customers served by Roaring Camp. It is my understanding that the commission agreed to take on repairs to the bridge when it purchase the rail corridor in 2012. Staff should be redirected to pursue other bids or figure out how to leverage the \$500,000 grant budget funding to get the most critical bridge repairs done ASAP.

*2. Item 28 [in which staff asks the Commission to decide between the 'Interim Trail' and the 'Ultimate Trail' ]*

This item is very confusing to me! Are we not voting on Measure D and this issue in the June elections? Is this a strategy on the part of the commission to influence the outcome of the upcoming election? Perhaps someone on the commission can explain why this is on the agenda in advance of the June 7 vote?

For the record, I am a strong supporter the "Ultimate Trail" plan with continued completion of the trail, and I am in STRONG Opposition to the Interim Trail.

More than 50% of greenhouse gas emissions in our county are from the transportation sector. We need to reduce emissions urgently to meet the state's goals of net zero emissions by 2045 and to avoid the most catastrophic consequences of climate change. We will not have enough ZEV (Zero Emission Vehicle) infrastructure and ZEV vehicles adoption by 2045 to meet the greenhouse gas reduction necessary to achieve the net zero goal. Rail transit is a viable option and must be part of the solution.

Laurence Gathy

**From:** [David Schonbrunn](#)  
**To:** [Krista Corwin](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on upcoming Agenda  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 4:43:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [Santa Cruz RTC 5-5 Comments.pdf](#)

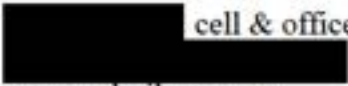
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Please distribute the attached to Commissioners. An email indicating receipt would be much appreciated.

Thank you,

--David

David Schonbrunn, President  
Train Riders Association of California (TRAC)  
P.O. Box 151439  
San Rafael, CA 94915-1439

 cell & office  
[www.calrailnews.org](http://www.calrailnews.org)



**Officers**

David Schonbrunn  
President  
Marin County

Susan MacAdams  
Vice-President  
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Madera County

William F. McGeehan III  
Contra Contra County

May 3, 2022

Sandy Brown, Chair  
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
1101 Pacific Avenue Suite 250  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Comments on May 5 RTC Agenda Items 11 and 28

Dear Chair Brown:

The Train Riders Association of California, TRAC, advocates on behalf of rail passenger service. We publish *California Rail News*, whose new issue is all about Santa Cruz Measure D. We invite Commissioners to review it:  
<http://www.calrailnews.org/current/>

We were shocked to find that staff has agendized the controversial issue of interim vs. ultimate trail as Item 28 of the May 5 Regional Transportation Commission Agenda. Given that this matter will be brought before the public in an expensive election, this strikes us as unnecessary, divisive, and highly unwise. There is no need for the RTC to consider this item now when the voters will definitively express their preferences in only a few weeks. Please table this matter until after the election.

We disagree with the Staff Recommendation on Consent Agenda Item 11. We are disappointed that the bid needs to be rejected, but understand. We believe that rather than merely cancelling the project, a better approach would be to secure a second engineering opinion (we can recommend an appropriate bridge expert). That would give the RTC the option to either extend the life of the existing structure, or replace it more cost-effectively, using available funds.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ DAVID SCHONBRUNN

David Schonbrunn, President

**From:** [Mark Mesiti-Miller](#)  
**To:** [Sandy Brown](#); [Greg Caput](#); [Ryan Coonerty](#); [Zach Friend](#); [Renee Golder](#); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [Felipe Hernandez](#); [Gine Johnson](#); [Randy Johnson](#); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Donna Lind](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Larry Pageler](#); [Kristen Brown](#); [Dr. Rob Paul Quinn](#); [Mike Rotkin](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [Sam Storey](#); [Jacques Bertrand](#); [Lowell Hurst](#); [jdilles@scottsvally.org](mailto:jdilles@scottsvally.org)  
**Cc:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [Guy Preston](#); [Tim Gibbons](#)  
**Subject:** Commission Agenda Item 28 - 2022 05 05  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 2:02:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [LTR to RTC - Agenda Item 28 - 2022 05 03 .pdf](#)

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Greetings,

Please consider my attached letter regarding Agenda Item 28 - Measure D-2016 Highway Corridors and Active Transportation - Five-Year Program of Projects.

Thank you,

Mark

Mark Mesiti-Miller

May 3, 2022

**Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission**

1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Re: 5/5/22 Agenda Item 28 - Measure D - 2016 Highway Corridors and Active Transportation - Five-Year Program of Projects**

Chair Brown, Commissioners and Commissioner Alternates,

You should be appalled that you are effectively being asked to vote now on Measure D, one month before the voters of Santa Cruz County will weigh in on this very issue.

Selecting Scenario 1, the Interim Trail is equivalent to voting Yes on Greenway's Measure D: remove the tracks, railbank the corridor and build an interim trail where the tracks once were.

Selecting Scenario 2, the Ultimate Trail is equivalent to voting No on Measure D and staying the course: complete the already approved multi-use trail alongside the existing railroad tracks and keep the tracks in place for the future.

**The appropriate response to this request from staff is to simply table this item until after the voters have made their voices heard next month.**

If you feel compelled to make a choice, I urge you to choose Scenario 2, the Ultimate Trail, as the Ultimate Trail is actually the already approved and underway MBSST Coastal Rail Trail. Staying the course keeps all the options open.

To make the most informed decision possible. Consider the following:

Opposition to Greenway's Measure D, equivalent to Scenario 1, the Interim Trail is strong clear across the board and growing stronger every day. As of today, more than 30 organizations have publicly stated their opposition to Measure D including:

**Democratic Clubs:** Santa Cruz County Democratic Club; Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club; Democratic Club of North Santa Cruz County; Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County; People's Democratic Club; College Democrats at UCSC.

**Political Groups:** League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County; Valley Women's Club of San Lorenzo Valley; Indivisible Santa Cruz County; Santa Cruz for Bernie.

**Business:** Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce; San Lorenzo Valley Chamber of Commerce; Roaring Camp; Nonprofits Insurance Alliance of California; Liberty Bank; Santa Cruz Mountain Brewing; Shanty Shack Brewing; Swenson Builders.



**Labor:** Monterey Bay Central Labor Council; Monterey/Santa Cruz Building and Construction Trades Council; Cabrillo College Federation of Teachers; Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers.

**Environment:** Sierra Club; Regeneración Pajaro Valley Climate Action; Santa Cruz Climate Action Network; Sunrise Movement to Stop Climate Change; Youth for Climate Justice.

**Other Groups:** Equity Transit; Friends of the Rail & Trail; GLBT Alliance of SC County; Coastal Rail Santa Cruz; Campaign for Sustainable Transportation; Santa Cruz YIMBY.

The latest most up-to-date list can be found here: [www.nowaygreenway.com/opposed](http://www.nowaygreenway.com/opposed)

It is not just community groups that are opposed to Scenario 1, the Interim Trail - Greenway's Measure D. Many community leaders have stood up and voiced their opposition, including:

**Sam Farr**, Former US Congressman: "Greenway's harebrained idea should be soundly rejected. It's not green and it's not a way to move forward."

**Mark Stone**, CA Assembly Member: "Tearing up the rail line does not set us up for success and makes us vulnerable to future disasters. Vote NO on Measure D"

**Fred Keeley**, Former CA Assembly Member and County Supervisor: "It must be said that Measure D-Greenway contains elements of race and class. Please join me in rejecting this backward and deceptive Measure D-Greenway."

**Greg Caput**, County Supervisor: It does nothing to address Highway 1 gridlock for Pajaro Valley residents traveling north in the morning to work in Santa Cruz. Measure D is bad for the environment. It will also lead to Santa Cruz County losing millions of dollars in freight and public rail transportation funding opportunities."

**Ryan Coonerty**, County Supervisor: "Measure D is incredibly divisive... We need solutions that bring us together, rather than tear us apart."

**Rachel Kippen**, Ocean/Climate Sustainability Leader: "I'm disappointed we're even considering Greenway at this point in the climate crisis. Greenway fails to take the crisis head-on to reduce our deadly emissions. We can say yes to a livable future for generations to come - if we say NO to Greenway."

For a full list of all community leaders opposed: [www.nowaygreenway.com/opposed](http://www.nowaygreenway.com/opposed)

If you are still wondering where the community really stands on Scenario 1, the Interim Trail represented by Greenway's Measure D, take a quick look at the county's official ballot arguments and rebuttals. Asterisks next to a person's name indicate the person is authorized to sign on behalf of that organization. Count how many asterisks are next to names supporting Measure D (zero). Count how many asterisks are next to names opposing Measure D (all ten). The Elections Department deliberately adds or omits asterisks to inform voters whether an organization stands behind the signature or not. To access the County's Official Elections Department website for Measure D, go here: <https://www.votescount.us/Home/Elections/June2022CaliforniaPrimaryElection/LocalMeasuresJune2022/D-CountyGreenway.aspx>

**The only prudent response to this request from staff is to table this item until after the voters have made their voices heard next month. To do otherwise is to risk wasting taxpayer dollars, precious time and losing the trust of the community. Do the right thing, wait until after the June election.**

Thank you,

Mark Mesiti-Miller  
39 year resident of Santa Cruz

**From:** [david van brink](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Continue Towards Greatness: MBSST  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 5:07:50 PM

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Dear Esteemed Commissioners and Scrrtc Staff,

Stay the course. We've been on target to build Rail With Trail since the start. It's a good plan, it's been identified repeatedly as the best and "preferred" plan.


Sticker shock? Well. You know when you've been researching a major purchase, and you start getting ads for the "Perfect Thing" at "One Tenth the Price!" ? We know how that works out.

Don't go cheap. In the long run, slow is fast.

And anyway, the costs are not so very surprisingly different from the other, funded trail segments.

Stay on target, please!

Warmly & Best Regards,  
David Van Brink

david van brink / 

**From:** [Ted R](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Follow the award winning Final Master Plan. No Railbanking.  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 10:21:59 PM

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I want to voice my support for following the award winning Final Master Plan from 2013, the cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville have already built out multiple sections of the rail trail as it was originally proposed and proven how successfully it can be done. Railbanking is just a way to waste time and money. All of the environmental impact reports have been done with rail and trail. There are multiple sections of the rail trail that are either partially or fully funded and ready for construction or funded for the design. There are planned segments that are budgeted for 2023 and 2024 to begin construction. Changing the plan now would be a terrible mistake, an abuse of power and of all the trust placed in all the RTC since the beginning of the project.

In 2013 and 2014 the public, cities, county and RTC all signed on with one goal and vision. Please have the integrity, strength and commitment to follow the vision that was originally agreed upon and worked on so hard for years by multiple workers and agencies. The future of the county depends on using the rail line for transportation. This could be a life changing improvement for multiple community members.

Thank you for your time,  
Ted Rossiter

**From:** [REDACTED] on behalf of [Robin Belkin](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Fund The Approved Rail and Trail Plan RE: Items 28 and 11, Repair the Tracks, Build the Ultimate Trail for The Common Good  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 1:09:36 PM

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Dear SCCRTC Commissioner,

Items 28 and 11 on the May 5th agenda have a substantial impact on my life, my community, and generations to come.

Infrastructure is supposed to serve our community wellbeing and the common good. Thus, our infrastructure development ought to address the pressing issues of green house gas emissions from cars that contribute to global warming, energy dependence that threatens our national security, traffic congestion that adds to the aforementioned issues as well as interfering with our productivity, health, and wellbeing. Further, our infrastructure development must address transportation equity and accessibility. The Interim Trail is a senseless diversion from the Ultimate Trail chosen specifically to best address the aforementioned issues.

Recently, the RTC seems to have become distracted by a wealthy special interest group and oddly influential hobby bike enthusiasts. Neither of these groups ought to hijack our community's long-standing, hard-won achievements toward building the chosen Ultimate Trail to best serve everyone for our entire community wellbeing, now and for generations to come.

Agenda Item 28 seems designed to bypass the will of the voters and the common good on the issue of the Rail and Trail. Former (2016) tax Measure D won super-majority voter approval in part to maintain and preserve our railroad (purchased pursuant to majority voter-approved Prop. 116) via a 30-year, 1/2 cent, sales tax increase until 2045. Now, your timing of doing an end-run around the upcoming election to decide between the Ultimate Trail and the Interim Trail seems ill-advised. Seems you ought to table this item until after the election unless you are planning to finally act on the mandate you received in the 2016 tax Measure, and in order not to be diverted by a vote on the intrinsically contradictory, poorly designed, and very deceptive upcoming ballot Measure D.

If the commission acts on Item 28 instead of tabling it, I strongly urge you to choose the Ultimate Trail. The Interim Trail lacks common sense, and further institutionalizes foot-dragging on some of the most pressing issues we face. The Interim Trail would increase the cost of building the trail by approximately \$12 Million per mile. It would require the Commission to engage in a drawn-out, forced-abandonment railbanking attack on Roaring Camp, which likely will fail in the end. But, if successful, abandonment and railbanking would be a betrayal of our promise when we bought the rail line. Tearing out tracks would hurt our community's and the RTC's ability to implement Electric Passenger Rail with the Trail, which the RTC chose as our Locally Preferred Alternative--because the data show it would best serve the transportation needs of everyone in the county both locally and as an essential connection to our Statewide, high-speed rail network. Finally, If the RTC succeeded in forced abandonment and track demolition it would hurt Roaring Camp's business.

For all these reasons, I strongly support sticking with the Ultimate Trail design and keeping both our tracks and trail.

Regarding consent agenda Item 11, staff is asking you to cancel the planned repairs of the Pajaro Bridge, despite the availability of a \$500,000 grant budget for repairs. This bridge is actively in use by Watsonville freight rail customers served by Roaring Camp. The Commission took legal responsibility for repairs when it purchased the line. I urge you to pull this item off the consent agenda and direct staff to figure out how to leverage the grant funding to get the most critical bridge repairs done ASAP.


Thank you very much for your careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Robin Belkin

The Interim Trail plan would harm Roaring Camp and harm our progress towards building the Locally Preferred Alternative of trail and electric passenger rail together. I support the Ultimate Trail plan. I do NOT support the Interim Trail plan.

Sincerely,  
Robin Belkin

 Soquel, CA 95073-9401

**From:** [Tina Andreatta](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [Guy Preston](#)  
**Cc:** [manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us](#); [ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us](#); [bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us](#); [rlj12@comcast.net](#); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](#); [jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us](#); [greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us](#); [thekristenbrown@gmail.com](#); [tim.gubbins@dot.ca.gov](#); S Brown; [Michael Rotkin](#); [eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org](#); [zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us](#)  
**Subject:** Fund and Repair the Tracks, Build the "Ultimate Trail" for The Common Good  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 3:40:48 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

In recent times, the RTC seems to have become distracted by a wealthy special interest group and oddly an influential hobby bike enthusiast's group. Neither of these groups ought to hijack our community's long-standing, hard-won achievements toward building the chosen "Ultimate Trail" to best serve everyone.

It seems this wealthy special interest group would rather spend money on big signs, online paid ads and trolling, tv ads and full page sentinel ads; rather than to continue moving forward with completing the Coastal Rail AND Trail.

Items #11 and #28 on the May 5, 2022 agenda have a substantial impact on my family and my life, my neighborhood, my community, and future generations.

Hard infrastructure is roadways, bridges, railways not trails. Infrastructure is supposed to serve our community's well-being and the common good. Thus, our infrastructure development ought to address the pressing issues of green house gas emissions from cars that contribute to global warming, energy dependence that threatens our national security, traffic congestion that adds gridlock and stresses the physical, mental, productivity and financial well-being of our community and south county commuters.

Further, our infrastructure development must address transportation equity and accessibility.

Our neighbors in Monterey are working on their Branch Line, and encourages the Santa Cruz Transit Commission to continue completing the Coastal Rail AND Trail (as we promised).

What about our connections to the California State Rail Plan? The "Interim Trail" is a trail to no where.

The "Ultimate Trail" connects Davenport, Santa Cruz, Capitola, Aptos, La Selva Beach, Watsonville to the Pajaro/Watsonville Train Station then to Salinas, Gilroy and the rest of the state.

The "Interim Trail" is a senseless diversion from the "Ultimate Trail."

The "Interim Trail" would increase the cost of building the trail by approximately \$12Million per mile.

I strongly support the "Ultimate Plan" and continued completion of the trail.

I am in STRONG Opposition to the "Interim trail."

I object to **consent agenda Item 11**, canceling the planned repairs of the Pajaro bridge.

I object to **Item 28**, - staff asks the Commission to decide between the 'Interim Trail,' basically Measure D requiring railbanking and tearing out the tracks through Mid-County, and the 'Ultimate Trail,'

Agenda Item #28 seems designed to bypass the will of the voters and the common good on the issue of the Rail AND Trail.

Former (2016) tax Measure D won super-majority voter approval in part to maintain and preserve our railroad (purchased pursuant to majority voter-approved Prop. 116) via a 30-year, 1/2 cent, sales tax increase until 2045.

Now, your timing of doing an end-run around the upcoming election to decide between the "Ultimate Trail" and the "Interim Trail" seems ill-advised.

Table this item until after the election unless you are planning to finally act on the mandate you received in the 2016 tax Measure, perhaps to best avoid ill-conceived diversions by a vote on the intrinsically contradictory, poorly designed, and very deceptive upcoming ballot Measure D.

If the commission acts on Item #28 instead of tabling it, I strongly urge you to choose the "Ultimate Trail."

The "Interim Trail" lacks common sense, and further institutionalizes foot-dragging on some of the most pressing issues we face.

The "Interim Trail" would increase the cost of building the trail by approximately \$12 Million per mile. It would require the Commission to engage in a drawn-out, forced-abandonment railbanking attack on Roaring Camp, which likely will fail in the end. But, if successful, abandonment and railbanking would be a betrayal of our promise when we bought the rail line.

Tearing out tracks would hurt our community's and the RTC's ability to implement Electric Passenger Rail with the Trail, which the RTC chose as our Locally Preferred Alternative-- because the data show it would best serve the transportation needs of everyone in the County-- both locally and as an essential connection to our Statewide, high-speed rail network.

If the RTC succeeded in forced abandonment and track demolition it would hurt Roaring Camp's business.

For all these reasons, I strongly support sticking with the "Ultimate Trail" design and keeping both our tracks and trail.

Regarding consent agenda Item #11, staff is asking you to cancel the planned repairs of the Pajaro Bridge, despite the availability of a \$500,000 grant budget for repairs. This bridge is actively in use by Watsonville freight rail customers served by Roaring Camp.

The Commission took legal responsibility for repairs when it purchased the line. I urge you to

pull this item off the consent agenda and direct staff to figure out how to leverage the grant funding to get the most critical bridge repairs done ASAP.

Protect the Tracks, Respect the Community, Build the “Ultimate Trail.”

Don't allow politics to rule the public process.

Thank you very much for your careful consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,

Tina Andreatta  
Aptos, CA 95003

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Andree LeBourveau](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** I support Ultimate Trail plan, Rail & Trail  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 1:55:12 PM

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Regional Transportation Commission,

I have been meaning to email ever since I rode the Costa Futura back in Oct 2021. I loved it and I want to encourage a electronic train in Santa Cruz county. I enjoyed the big windows, the quiet, green energy use, and the easy access for the disabled.

**I want you all to support the Ultimate Trail plan to keep the rail tracks and the trail.** I work at Cabrillo and I would love to take a train to and from Cabrillo as well as up and down the coast and eventually connect with the bullet train. I lived in Europe and the train was my main use of transportation.

**Please continue to repair the Pajaro Bridge to keep our area connected and safe.**

Thank you  
Andree

--  
Andrée LeBourveau  
Visual Resource Curator  
Visual, Applied, & Performing Arts  
Cabrillo College  
VAPA 1005  
[REDACTED]  
M-Th: 8-12pm, F: 7:30-11:30am

~~~~~  
Library Resource Specialist  
Robert E. Swenson Library  
Cabrillo College  
1020  
[REDACTED]  
M-Th: 1-5pm, F: 12-4pm

**From:** [Phillip Rupp](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Interim trail is way to go  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:38:39 AM

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I support YES on Greenway and ask RTC to vote for and build the interim trail with rail banking.

Thank you,

Phil Rupp  
Capitola

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [Casey KirkHart](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item #28 - Please apply for Scenario 1 grants and build the interim trail  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 12:11:32 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

Please accept these written comments in place of verbal comments at your May 5th meeting as I am unable to attend due to work at my medical practice.

THANK YOU for the incredible work you and your staff have done to present options for the rail corridor. Your work is important and meaningful to the people of Santa Cruz County.

When my family, neighbors and I IMAGINE using the rail corridor to travel to work and school, to shop and exercise, we imagine the "INTERIM" trail - a wide, safe, continuous path that uses our existing infrastructure and preserves the beauty of the corridor.

Thanks to your and your staff's work, we can now SEE that the "interim" trail is not only possible, it is more affordable and quicker and easier to build than the "ultimate" trail. And it preserves the right of way for future rail should we decide, as a community, to build it.

The "interim" trail is the solution we need - it builds what we all want and can afford now and it preserves future rail options.

Once again, THANK YOU for your tireless work to help our community and CONGRATULATIONS on your application for grants for Scenario 1. Let's build the interim trail!

Dr Casey KirkHart

--

~~~~~  
Casey KirkHart, D.O.

email: [REDACTED]

cell: [REDACTED]  
~~~~~

**From:** [REDACTED] on behalf of [Elizabeth Schilling](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Keep and repair the tracks  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:24:06 AM

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Dear SCCRTC Commissioner,

Please delay your vote on item 28 till after the next election. The public's decision on Measure D should guide future action in this area.

Also urgent is item 11. Please pursue all available funds and possibilities to repair the Pajaro bridge. Freight rail is currently moved on this line and it is part of our national transport/supply line.

In all actions preserve the Ultimate Trail plan to develop trail and electric passenger rail together.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Schilling

The Interim Trail plan would harm Roaring Camp and harm our progress towards building the Locally Preferred Alternative of trail and electric passenger rail together. I support the Ultimate Trail plan. I do NOT support the Interim Trail plan.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Schilling  
[REDACTED] Santa Cruz, CA 95062-1849

**From:** [Denise Ryan](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Keep the RAIL and Build the Trail  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 11:19:12 AM

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Please do not negate the county voters choice to sustain both the development of the trail AND the RAIL! There is a feasible plan already in place. The drive to upend this panders to the desire of a few who have bought their way to serve their special interests, not the good of the whole. Please do NOT be bought. Remember our votes.

Denise Ryan  
[REDACTED] Capitola, CA 95010  
33 year resident, voter and taxpayer

Denise Ryan

**From:** [James Weller](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [Sandy Brown](#); [jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us);  
[eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org); [greg.caput@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:greg.caput@santacruzcounty.us); [ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us);  
[bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us); [zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us); [thekristenbrown@gmail.com](mailto:thekristenbrown@gmail.com); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us); [rj12@comcast.net](mailto:rj12@comcast.net); [Michael Rotkin](#);  
[tim.gubbins@dot.ca.gov](mailto:tim.gubbins@dot.ca.gov)  
**Subject:** May 5, 2022 SCCRTC meeting agenda  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 7:16:34 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter to RTC 050222.docx](#)

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Honorable Commissioners, Executive Director, and staff:

Attached is my public testimony and input for your meeting this Thursday.

Please take heed.

Respectfully,

Jim Weller



Capitola

May 2, 2022

TO: RTC Commissioners, Executive Director, and staff

FROM: Jim Weller, Capitola resident

Concerning Item 11 on the consent Agenda, “Approve rejection of Bid for the Pájaro River Bridge Rehabilitation Project along the Santa Cruz Branch Line,” THIS MATTER MUST BE PULLED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA AND DISCUSSED FULLY AND OPENLY AND PUBLICLY.

Speaking for myself and the general public, we need to participate in a full and open hearing of the RTC staff’s considerations in this regard, and of all relevant circumstances surrounding the matter. My understanding is that staff intends to delay needed bridge repairs indefinitely, even though at least \$500,000 of grant funding is available for the project. Is it not the case that the RTC is obligated under the terms of the present ACL with Saint Paul & Pacific Railroad to make those repairs?

Many of us fear that hidden in the subject matter of Item 11 is a subrosa agenda that would attempt to set up some basis for an argument in favor of an application to the Federal Surface Transportation Board for adverse abandonment of the SCBRL and the Felton Branch, and for railbanking that, if approved, would make possible the removal of the railroad tracks. Such an outcome would severely damage Roaring Camp Railroads’ business options and seemingly would prevent continuing freight rail operations to and from Watsonville.

We demand that the RTC commissioners reject staff’s proposal in Item 11, and instead direct staff to proceed with all deliberate speed to accomplish whatever repairs are needed to the Pájaro River railroad crossing infrastructure.

Concerning Agenda Item 28, the present is not the time to choose between the RTC staff’s very recently disclosed so-called “Ultimate” and “Interim” Coastal Rail Trail scenarios. Much more study and public consideration of the potential adverse consequences of a premature commitment to the so-called “Interim” scenario is needed.

THE RTC COMMISSIONERS MUST NOT TAKE ANY ACTION TOWARD PREFERRING OR PRIVILEGING THE SO-CALLED “INTERIM” SCENARIO NOW OR IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

**From:** [Joe Martinez](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** May 5th RTC Meeting - Item #28  
**Date:** Monday, May 2, 2022 12:00:43 PM

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RTC Commissioners,

Item #28 on the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)  
May 5th meeting,

I recommend Scenario 1 for Segments 8 - 12. Scenario 1 is the most  
affordable, the safest and  
the most expeditious path forward to building the Coastal Trail and  
preserving the Coastal  
Corridor right-of-way for future transit options.

I do not support providing an additional \$1.15 million in Measure D funds  
for the 0.8-mile trail  
Segment 7 Phase 2 (Bay Avenue to Pacific Avenue). The \$12.2 million for the  
0.8-mile Segment 7  
Phase 2 is a waste of our tax dollars.

Jose Martinez  
Aptos

**From:** [Della Davis](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** May 5th RTC meeting, regarding item 28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:33:23 AM

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Regarding Item 28, which may determine which plan the RTC uses on Segments 7 - 12. Please proceed with the interim trail, or even, just a nice paved 3- lane trail. There is no reason to plan and spend for a rail to nowhere, when our local buses provide express service to major employers and educational institutions. RTC's own studies have indicated that the cost is prohibitive for a train or light rail for our small population, and ridership will not impact traffic.

Thank you,  
Della Davis

**From:** [Hannah Schultz](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** May 5th agenda public comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:58:51 AM

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I am writing in support of the Interim Trail option. Please support a safe and healthy trail through the middle of town that children and adults alike will benefit from. The train is neither cost effective or practical for now, so let's use the corridor now for environmentally friendly transportation!

Thank you,  
Hannah  
[Hannah Wilson](#)

**From:** [S.C. Lou](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Measure D Input  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 4:59:55 PM

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Hello,

My input is for the RTC to please fully fund both the Highway 1 improvements & the Coastal Rail Trail ASAP.

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*Thanks, Lou Cole*

**From:** [Teresa Leopold](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Measure D comment AND Unmet Transit Needs  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 11:11:28 AM

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RTC Commissioners,

I will be brief. As a transportation planner in this community for thirty years, working towards the most sustainable and equitable transportation options for our community, **I am in FULL support of what you are calling the ULTIMATE Rail AND Trail design option for our rail corridor and support Measure D funding for this project.** The public will vote in June for how to develop this corridor and this action of yours today, especially should you support the Interim Trail option, seems premature and disrespectful to the community. In addition, the Interim Trail option, when fully developed back into a rail and trail, will cost the community far more money than just doing the right thing now. **Build the Trail as planned, Keep the Rail.**

Also, and related, you are ironically having a public hearing on unmet transit needs for the elderly and those living with disabilities. Having the current rail-trail developed and moving forward and keeping the rail corridor for FUTURE PUBLIC TRANSIT for the entire community is critical, especially for those traveling the distance between north and south counties.

Thank you,  
Teresa Buika

**From:** [Vicki Miller](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Measure D funds Agenda items 11 and 28  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 10:13:31 PM

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Guy Preston, Executive Director and SCCRTC Commission

Mr. Preston and Commissioners,

I definitely am not in favor of the Interim Trail plan.

**I do not see a benefit fiscally or environmentally for our community either short term or long term:**

- Rail banking will not happen in six months – this will be fought legally and in the public sector
- Rail banking for an “Interim Trail” will result in further delay of the proposed multi-modal trail
- Rail banking will add costs to a rail project that is long due
- Rail banking will bisect our continuous rail track into two sections that will not serve the County to its fullest potential
- Removing rails and paving over the pathway will not solve our transportation needs for everyone; it will only serve a few
- Rail banking and removal of tracks will not reduce vehicle miles traveled
- Rail banking and track removal will not bring development along the corridor as there will be no confidence that the trail will remain at its projected width or that a mass transportation system will ever be established
- The Interim Trail will remove the only other transportation corridor that we currently have that can move large amounts of people and freight outside of Highway 1
- Rail banking will preclude further development of passenger rail and freight on the corridor
- Rail banking, rail removal and paving with asphalt will result in additional environmental damage upon removal for any rail projects
- Would there be any return on investment for an Interim Trail – no.

**Ultimate Trail has benefits for our county fiscally and environmentally:**

- Funding for the Ultimate Trail spent today will save us money in the future
- An Ultimate Trail moves us closer to passenger rail and freight on the rails thus moving toward reducing VMT
- An Ultimate Trail will have a return on investment as additional housing and business develops along the line
- Freight will be able to move from north to south without adding to the congestion on Highway 1

- Micro-business will develop to move people from rail stations to ultimate destination

I urge the Commission to direct the RTC Staff to move forward with planning for the Ultimate Trail and progress toward passenger rail as quickly as funding can be located.

Regarding the rejection of the bid for the Pajaro River Bridge: I believe it is foolish for the RTC to forego the funding received to repair this bridge. It would be best if the RTC re-advertised this project in the hopes of attracting additional interest, perhaps using a different platform to attract new bidders. This bridge is important for freight and passenger rail travel and links our system to the rest of the California rail system. As an asset of the County, this bridge should be repaired as quickly as is possible with whatever additional funds necessary.

Sincerely,

Vicki Miller  
District One Resident

**From:** [paul.peterson](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Measure D funds should be used to repair the roads  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:51:08 AM

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The Measure D funds should primarily be used to repair and maintain the existing road system. The average PCI for Santa Cruz County is now around 45. Industry standard is 70 or higher. When the PCI is in the lower range, the roads deteriorate faster. It has been estimated that every \$1 spent on road maintenance saves about \$10 in road reconstruction costs. Better roads will prompt more people to get out on bikes, which will help relieve congestion and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Focusing on building the rail trail will result in more tourists arriving with their bikes in their pickups and large SUV's. Pickups and SUV's emit the most greenhouse gases, and have the highest carbon footprints during their manufacture. They are also the heaviest vehicles, therefore they speed up the road deterioration.

Paul Peterson  
Aptos

**From:** [Contact Request Form](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Form  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:09:59 AM

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

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| <b>Name</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| John Benito                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Email</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| [REDACTED]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Subject</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Agenda Item 28 on 5-May-2022 agenda                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Your Message</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p>I am writing today to voice my total frustration and opposition to the myopic agenda item 28 on the 5-May-2022 agenda. With just 5 weeks until the county votes on Measure D, why is RTC even talking about this misguided "interim" trial notion, and railbanking? Without a clear definition of "interim", it is misleading and dishonest. Why not let the people vote once again on the direction the RTC should be taking? Maybe the forth time will be a charm! The last time this ill-considered scheme was floated (January 2022) the public outcry was loud and clear, is the RTC really that tone deaf?</p> <p>Please remove this item from agenda 28. Stopping the only non-automobile large capacity transit mode available to Santa Cruz County seems to be just about the opposite of the RTC Charter.</p> |

**From:** [Contact Request Form](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Form  
**Date:** Monday, May 2, 2022 9:39:11 PM

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

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| Vicki Miller                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Email</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| May 5 Meeting Agenda Item 28                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Your Message</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>Guy Preston, Executive Director</p> <p>Mr. Preston,</p> <p>Within this disingenuous agenda item you have indicated the sudden need to submit grant requests in the month of June, 2022, yet you do not make it clear when exactly they would need to be submitted. Suddenly, you wish to seek funding when we have a June 7th county wide vote to decide if the people of this county even want to continue forward with continuous rail service or if we want a bisected useless system that will not serve the County to its fullest potential.</p> <p>Your statement that rail banking can be done in 6 months if there is "cooperation of effected parties" (28-7) is also disingenuous. Why would you even suggest this process? Were 7,000 letters in opposition to rail banking not enough to convince you that there would be opposition? Why would you suggest this process when you know full well that it would in fact preclude further passenger and freight rail development? Is not your charter to provide the best possible transportation options for public transit that removes greenhouse gases and removes as many vehicles as possible from our roads? And please define "interim"? Does it mean 6 months, 1 year, 5 years, never? This is not made clear. Also please explain how the RTC would progress with the rail corridor transformation if the vote is for an interim trail. Would you do a removal of the rails, ties and base and do mitigation on any possible contaminates or would you be paving directly over the rail bed? Would you do the least environmentally harmless method to create this interim trail and use road base and gravel to create this temporary trail? What would be the cost of maintenance for this interim trail? What would be our return on investment of an interim trail, or would there be any at all? Would this interim trail benefit the community by drawing business and housing development along side?</p> <p>Mr. Preston, you point out that the Ultimate trail along side of the rail would cost us more, requiring more investment; that is logical. But what would be the benefits to creating a permanent, usable trail compared to an interim trail that could possibly be removed/reduced in size in the future? Would not business and developers find this much more attractive? Wouldn't the permanent trail along with a rail system be the ultimate way to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gases? Wouldn't the permanent trail and rail fulfill your charter better and be more advantageous for our county then the interim model you outline in this agenda?</p> <p>As we have a vote fast approaching, I am requesting that you remove this Agenda item from your May 5 meeting and table it until the public has a chance to voice their desire for rail and trail or strictly trail. Then you will have your direction.</p> <p>Sincerely,<br/>Vicki Miller<br/>District One Resident</p> |

**From:** [Forest Martinez-mckinney](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** No track removal  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 6:37:00 PM

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To Whom it may Concern,

I am writing to voice my opposition to all options that remove any of the rail line. Simply put, if it is removed it will never be brought back. In the interest of not belaboring all the infrastructure losses and possible future transit options, I will leave it at that. Please do not remove the any if the rail line.

Respectfully

Forest

**From:** [Marilyn Calciano](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please accept Scenario 1  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 10:44:03 PM

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Dear RTC Commissioners,

Thank you so much for your service! It saddens me that the Rail and Trail issue has become so hostile. I have been a Yes Greenway volunteer for several months, and I know the key Greenway leaders here have tried to present the facts, with supporting documentation, to the voters in a respectful manner. I imagine that you are caught in the cross-hairs, and I so appreciate your calm, reasoned approach to understanding and acting on the complex issues before you.

After studying the issue, and reading your analysis of the risks associated with the 2 scenarios, I urge you to move forward with the Interim trail (Scenario 1) as soon as possible. My understanding is that we have to railbank the SC branch line regardless of how the corridor is ultimately used. It makes sense to me that we should focus on railbanking and building the simpler, more affordable trail (the “interim trail”) now so that we can get the people of SC County moving which will improve health outcomes as well as have immediate positive environmental impact.

With gratitude,  
Marilyn Calciano  
Soquel  
Community Volunteer

**From:** [J Lighthill](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please choose scenario 1  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:56:28 AM

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Dear RTC,

Please choose scenario 1.

Sincerely,  
Johanna Lighthill

**From:** [REDACTED] on behalf of [Ros Munro](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please think of the futureItems 28 and 11: Repair the Tracks, Build the Ultimate Trail  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 2:24:02 PM

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Dear SCCRTC Commissioner,

I am writing to comment on Items 28 and 11 on the May 5 agenda.

Item 28 seems designed to bypass the will of the voters on the issue of the Rail and Trail. It's not right to do an end-run around the election by deciding now between the Ultimate Trail and the Interim Trail when this issue is going to the polls in just a few weeks. Please table it until after the election.

If the commission acts on Item 28 instead of tabling it, please choose the Ultimate Trail. The Interim Trail is bad planning. It would increase the cost of building the trail by approximately \$12 Million per mile. It would require the Commission to engage in a messy, drawn-out forced-abandonment railbanking attack on Roaring Camp, which very possibly might fail in the end. If successful, abandonment and railbanking would be a betrayal of our promise when we bought the rail line. Tearing out tracks would hurt the RTC's ability to implement Electric Passenger Rail with the trail, which the RTC chose as our Locally Preferred Alternative because the data showed it would best serve the transportation needs of everyone in the county. Finally, If the RTC succeeded in forced abandonment and track demolition it would hurt Roaring Camp's business.

For all these reasons, I strongly support sticking with the Ultimate Trail design and keeping our tracks and trail both. However, I urge you to table this item until after the election. Making the decision now, when the public is about to vote on this issue, would be unethical and undemocratic.

Regarding consent agenda Item 11, staff is asking you to cancel the planned repairs of the Pajaro bridge, despite the availability of a \$500,000 grant budget for repairs. This bridge is actively in use by Watsonville freight rail customers served by Roaring Camp. The Commission took legal responsibility for repairs when it purchased the line. I urge you to pull this item off the consent agenda and direct staff to figure out how to leverage the grant funding to get the most critical bridge repairs done ASAP.

The Interim Trail plan would harm Roaring Camp and harm our progress towards building the Locally Preferred Alternative of trail and electric passenger rail together. I support the Ultimate Trail plan. I do NOT support the Interim Trail plan.

Sincerely,  
Ros Munro

[REDACTED] Santa Cruz, CA 95062-4805  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Bob Montague](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:03:04 AM

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I support the interim trail plan. In our business, we found that potential workers from the city of Watsonville, who do not own a car, would not take an evening job with us because they could not reliably get home using the bus service because it ends by 10 pm. That has been true since later bus service was cut years ago and remains true today.

Thank you,  
Bob Montague  
Cafe Sparrow  
Aptos

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Trink Praxel](#)  
**To:** [Sandy Brown](#); [Greg Caput](#); [Ryan Coonerty](#); [Zach Friend](#); [Renee Golder](#); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [Felipe Hernandez](#); [Gine Johnson](#); [Randy Johnson](#); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Donna Lind](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Eduardo Montesino](#); [Larry Pageler](#); [Kristen Brown](#); [Dr. Rob Paul Quinn](#); [Mike Rotkin](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [Sam Storey](#); [Jacques Bertrand](#); [Lowell Hurst](#); [jdilles@scottsvally.org](mailto:jdilles@scottsvally.org)  
**Cc:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [Guy Preston](#); [Tim Gibbons](#); [Melani Clark](#)  
**Subject:** RTC 5/5/22 Meeting Agenda Items 28 and 11  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 4:58:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [5.5.22 RTC Mtng FORT Ltr.docx](#)

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Please consider the attached letter from the Friends of Rail and Trail regarding Agenda Items 28 and 11.

Thank you,  
Trink Praxel

**Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission**

1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Sent via email

RE: May 5, 2022 RTC Meeting, Items 28 and 11

Dear Chair Brown, Commissioners and Commissioner Alternates,

**The Friends of Rail and Trail are very surprised that RTC staff would bring agenda item 28 to you prior to the scheduled vote on Measure D "Greenway" on June 7, 2022.** Asking the Commission to choose between the Plan of Record for the Coastal Rail Trail/Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail MBSST project ("Ultimate") and the Greenway-proposed roadway ("Interim"), before the County voters take a similar vote, completely separates the Commissioners from the public you are appointed to serve. This is in direct conflict with key RTC, regional and State planning documents (specifically the Regional Transportation Plan and Public Participation Plan) that all commit to facilitate, value and enhance public participation in governmental decision-making. While FORT did not and does not support Measure D "Greenway" being brought before the public in the contorted manner that we now face, we believe that the public discussion it has engendered deserves to be completed BEFORE the Commission takes any vote on the Coastal Rail Trail.

We understand that the only partial explanation for the timing of this staff request is that both the City of Santa Cruz and County of Santa Cruz are planning on applying for Caltrans Active Transportation Program (ATP) grants in June. The City of Santa Cruz has already decided to submit the MBSST/Coastal Rail Trail (Plan of Record) for this funding and the County may choose otherwise; **but a vote from the RTC is not needed for either grant application to be submitted in June or to be successful.** In addition, the CEQA process for both won't be completed (per RTC staff) until later this calendar year. As we understand the proposed financing uses 2016 Measure D as a local match source, the RTC can also move forward with agreeing to bond against 2016 Measure D revenues without making this choice between trail options.

**FORT asks that commissioners table this agenda item until after the June 7 vote, when you will be able to make a more informed decision about the preferences of County voters inasmuch as they were able to understand the consequences of 2022 Measure D.** Of course, if you decide to move forward with a vote on this agenda item, we recommend that you vote for Scenario 2, the Ultimate Trail - the approved and under construction MBSST/Coastal Rail Trail alongside the existing rail tracks, because it is the RTC's current Plan of Record and the only option that continues to keep our rail line active. The railbanking process required by the Greenway proposal is opposed by Roaring Camp and many in the public, and will most likely take many years, cost a great deal, and ultimately not be successful.

**We also ask the Commissioners to continue Item 11 regarding the Pajaro River Bridge Rehabilitation Bid.** This will allow time for the RTC to fully consult with its freight operators and contractors about the best way forward.

We are certain that you will hear from MANY members of the public on this agenda and hope you will listen to their opinions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barry Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue shadow effect behind the text.

Barry Scott  
Boardmember  
Friends of the Rail and Trail

Cc: All Commissioners and Alternates, and Roaring Camp

**From:** [Tanya and Tony Bennett](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** RTC Item #28  
**Date:** Saturday, April 30, 2022 11:06:15 AM

---

To RTC,

I am in support of Scenario 1 in building the Santa Cruz Coastal Trail Now

Thank you,

Tanya Bennett  
[REDACTED]  
Aptos, CA 95003

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Brian Peoples](#)  
**To:** [Guy Preston](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Gine Johnson](#); [jacques.bertrand@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jacques.bertrand@sbcglobal.net); [rj12@comcast.net](mailto:rj12@comcast.net); [greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us](mailto:greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [rpquinn@pacbell.net](mailto:rpquinn@pacbell.net); [eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org); [Zach Friend](#); [Ryan Coonerty](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [openup@cats.ucsc.edu](mailto:openup@cats.ucsc.edu); [ladykpetersen@gmail.com](mailto:ladykpetersen@gmail.com); [sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com); [tim.gubbins@dot.ca.gov](mailto:tim.gubbins@dot.ca.gov); [Drabinski, Kevin@DOT](#)  
**Cc:** [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [Sonja Brunner](#); [mwatkins@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:mwatkins@cityofsantacruz.com); [sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com); [Justin Cummings](#); [rgolder@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:rgolder@cityofsantacruz.com); [dmevers@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:dmevers@cityofsantacruz.com); [REDACTED]; ["jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org"](mailto:jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org); [Nathan Nguyen](#); [Shannon Munz](#); [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [Rachel Moriconi](#); [Matt Machado](#); [Sarah Christensen](#)  
**Subject:** RTC May 5th Statement: Scenario 1 / No Funding Segment 7 Phase 2 / No on Measure F (City Tax)  
**Date:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 2:02:35 PM

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RTC Commissioners,

For item #28 on the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, we recommend Scenario 1 for Segments 8 – 12. Scenario 1 is the most affordable, the safest and the most expeditious path forward to building the Coastal Trail and preserving the Coastal Corridor right-of-way for future transit options.

When Trail Now supported the 2016 Measure D, we believed that the RTC would be fiscally responsible in how the tax dollars would be allocated for transportation investments.

We do not support providing an additional \$1.15 million in Measure D funds for the 0.8-mile trail Segment 7 Phase 2 (Bay Avenue to Pacific Avenue). Simply stated, \$12.2 million for the 0.8-mile Segment 7 Phase 2 is a waste of tax dollars. Rather than spending \$12.2 million on a trail that requires major excavation, 30 foot retaining walls, and destroying 40 heritage trees, we request that a trail be built on the existing railroad bed which would have a cost of approximately \$2 million based on the estimates for a similar trail on Segment 9-12.

We support Scenario 1 for Segments 8 to 12 and oppose additional funding for Segment 7 Phase 2. In addition, we request that the federal railbanking process be applied to the entire Santa Cruz Coastal Corridor from Watsonville to Davenport. **We request the removal of all rails and ties from Davenport to Watsonville** be included in the Measure D-2016 Highway Corridors and Active Transportation – 5-year Program of Projects. All rails & ties should be removed within the next 5 years.

Finally, the City of Santa Cruz has placed Measure F, a half-cent sales tax measure, on the upcoming June 7 ballot. This new tax is supposed to raise an additional \$6 million per year for the City. There are limited tax dollars available and it is critical that our public officials invest those limited funds in a cost-effective matter. If Scenario 1—the most affordable, the safest and the most expeditious path forward to building the Coastal Trail—was implemented and the trail was built on the railroad bed, the public might believe that our public officials are being judicious with our tax dollars. And as a result, the public might be more accepting to support additional taxes. But unfortunately, public officials seem to want to continue to waste our tax dollars.

We are therefore recommending voting NO on Measure F.

Best regards,

Brian Peoples  
Trail Now

**From:** [christy.martin](mailto:christy.martin@cityofsc.org)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission; citycouncil@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:citycouncil@cityofsantacruz.com)  
**Subject:** Rail Trail Segment 7 Phase 2  
**Date:** Monday, May 2, 2022 9:21:15 AM

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I am writing to voice support for removing the existing rail ties and building Segment 7 Phase 2 on top of the railway bed. I do not support providing an additional \$1.15 million in Measure D funds for the 0.8-mile trail Segment 7 Phase 2. **Spending \$12.2 million to construct the 0.8-mile Segment 7 Phase 2 is a waste of tax dollars, especially when the city is proposing another 1/2 cent sales tax increase.** Rather than spending \$12.2 million on a trail that requires major excavation, 30 foot retaining walls, and destroys 40 heritage trees that are a monarch butterfly habitat, I request that a trail be built on the existing railroad bed which would have a cost of approximately \$2 million based on the estimates for a similar trail on Segment 9-12.

**I also support Scenario 1 for Segments 8 to 12 and request that the federal railbanking process be applied to the entire Santa Cruz Coastal Corridor from Watsonville to Davenport.**

Given that the 2022 Measure D initiative is on the June ballot, any further work on Segment 7 Phase 2 should wait for the results of the vote that could potentially save over \$10m in public funds.

Thank you for your consideration,  
—Christy Martin

**From:** [Mike Waller](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Rail funding  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:38:56 AM

---

Please keep the option open for rail in Santa Cruz County. Freight is viable to SC and Watsonville to serve the three concrete readi-mix plants along the rail line. Granite Rock ships rocks, sand and cement to there SF peninsula operations, why not here? The county landfill is about played out, instead of adding trucks to haul trash and recycles use the rail service to move this,the rail runs by the landfill site. Keep the option open by repairing the Pajaro River Bridge and not closing down rail.

Thanks for your consideration, Mike Waller. Santa Cruz

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Kathleen Tyger Wright](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Input  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 2:48:57 PM

---

Go forward with the rail line next to the trail. I am 73 years old. I do not have a bike nor do I want one. I gave up my car because of climate change 12 years ago. I live on the westside of Santa Cruz. Compared to buses, in many instances train service would be much more direct for me to access points south and north. It would also alleviate car dependence, which is very important personally and to us all. It would also be a boon to economic development, and that makes the town stronger.

Yours sincerely,  
Kathleen Wright

On Tue, May 3, 2022 at 2:42 PM Kathleen Tyger Wright [REDACTED] wrote:

Go forward with the rail line next to the trail. I am 73 years old. I do not have a bike nor do I want one. I gave up my car because of climate change 12 years ago. I live on the westside of Santa Cruz. Compared to buses, in many instances train service would be much more direct for me to access points south and north. It would also alleviate car dependence, which is very important personally and to us all. It would also be a boon to economic development, and that makes the town stronger.

Yours sincerely,  
Kathleen Wright

**From:** [Debbie Bulger](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Re: RTC: May 05, 2022 Meeting Agenda Materials  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 11:01:06 AM

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To the RTC Commissioners

I understand that item #28 on your agenda calls for a resolution choosing either the Interim or Ultimate Trail configuration.

**I urge you to delay your vote on this issue until after the public vote in a few weeks. I believe it is disrespectful to voters to decide before the public has had a chance to weigh in.**

A premature vote would only add fuel to distrust in government in today's politically contentious atmosphere.

**Delay your vote until after the June vote on Measure D.**

Debbie Bulger  
Santa Cruz

On 4/28/22 2:38 PM, Regional Transportation Commission wrote:



|  |
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|  |
|  |

Hello Debbie,

The next RTC meeting agenda has been posted to the [RTC website](#). Find links to all packet materials and regular agenda items listed below.

### May 05, 2022 RTC Meeting

**Community TV Zoom**  
**Dial-in number (US): +1-669-900-6833**  
**Webinar ID: 812 9626 2340**

**Regular Agenda Items Include:**

- **PUBLIC HEARING 9:30 a.m.:** 2022 Unmet Transit and

Paratransit Needs List

- Presentation from the City of Capitola Department of Public Works
- **PUBLIC HEARING 10:30 a.m.:** Measure D-2016 Highway Corridors and Active Transportation - Five-Year Program of Projects

[Packet materials for the next RTC meeting](#)

[\*www.sccrtc.org\*](http://www.sccrtc.org)

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
email: [info\[at\]sccrtc.org](mailto:info@sccrtc.org)

[Website](#) [Funding & Planning](#) [Projects](#) [Services](#) [About the RTC](#)



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**From:** [Crissa Kentavr](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Ultimate trail  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 11:52:54 AM

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This letter is in support of the Ultimate Trail item.

Don't waste our money with railbanking. Build the trail along side the rail. We need the rail to meet the other agenda item: to meet unmet paratransit needs. Being able to go from walkable, accessible village to village on rail would give more access to recreation and free up paratransit from those commuting demands.

-Stacey Croft-Patterson  
Ben Lomond

**From:** [Mark Woodhead](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Segment 7 trail  
**Date:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 7:36:11 PM

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I would like to voice my concern over the huge waste of money that is the current Segment 7 trail plan. It is unacceptable to spend 12+ million dollars on a substandard trail when it is becoming more and more clear every day that rail will never happen on this former train line. The recent 9-0 vote by the California Coastal Commission to deny the RCT's repair proposal for the heavily damaged section of the ROW near La Selva Beach due to erosion, and to direct the RTC not to execute that plan, is a death knell to the future of train service along this corridor. That was further proven when the CCC said that all industrial development should be moved further inland. There is no way to detour around this roadblock. It is time to move beyond rail planning and accept that our best path forward is to go with Greeway's plan for a separated bike and pedestrian corridor on the former rail line. Active transportation is our path forward. It's time to stop looking backwards.

Mark Woodhead  
Santa Cruz Resident

**From:** [Pacific Door](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Segment 7, Phase 2 trail  
**Date:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 2:30:13 PM

---

SCCRTC,

Please replace the overly expensive Segment 7, Phase 2 trail plan on the westside of Santa Cruz with a more cost-effective and environmental-friendly trail plan on the existing railroad bed. This will help to maintain the health and well-being of both our immediate environment and of our human community.

Thank you,  
Philip Purpuri  
Pacific Door  
CA Lic #769674

**From:** [Frank "Ted" Remde](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Summit Road "ByWay"  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 11:28:35 AM

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An extension of Summit Road to Hecker Pass/ aka Highway 152 could redirect traffic going to South Santa Cruz County and North Monterey County and alleviate excess traffic on Highway 17 and Highway 1. This is not an original suggestion but to my knowledge no studies or recommendations have been conducted to determine the feasibility of undertaking this proposed project.

Highway 152 was at one time proposed to be a 4- lane Highway and some easements on properties designated for that purpose still exist. Our family owns property adjacent to Highway 152 including some at the 6.43 Milemarker which is used as a turnout. I would like to suggest a "Round About" be installed thereas there is no safe way to exit our property if heading north. As a matter of fact there is no passing Lane in the Santa Cruz Mountains on Highway 152 in Santa Cruz County or Santa Clara County.

CalTrans does a nice job of maintaining the Highway in the Mountains and major improvements have been made on the Santa Clara County side. Not so much on the the Santa Cruz side.

I would appreciate a response . Thank you for your consideration. Frank Remde

**From:** [Sean Abbey](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Ultimate Trail Configuration, object to Item 11  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:50:12 PM

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For the May 5, 2022 meeting, I would ask the commissioners to Table Item 28 until after the June ballot. It seems premature to make a decision on the interim or ultimate configuration while measure D is essentially asking that question of the voters. If the Commission chooses to move forward with a direction, I do believe the Ultimate trail should be supported, as I hope to see reflected in the June ballot. It is irresponsible to add significant costs to the locally preferred alternative of electric rail on the corridor for some short-lived trail use.

As for Item 11, I do not support canceling the repair of the Pajaro Bridge. The freight rail line should continue to be maintained for the businesses currently using it and for future rail programs.

Thank you for taking this comment.  
Sean Abbey

**From:** [William Martin](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** TRAIL  
**Date:** Monday, May 2, 2022 9:42:52 PM

---

I support Scenario 1 - less expensive and easier to build. Thnx - William A Martin, MD

**From:** [walks dogs herds cats](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** The 1st 6 miles of Hwy 9  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 4:12:18 PM

---

If there would be weekend shuttle busses from parking in town to Felton, it would greatly reduce the blocking of Hwy 9 by those that seek parking and just drive up and down Hwy 9, until they do, at great risk of especially bicyclists and pedestrians. Many also cause fender benders by double parking into the road. And broken windows of thieves seeking wallets would be avoided, and less oil of leaking vehicles would soak into the ground.

The parks have just spend a great deal of money to repair damage, and cart off polluted soil and garbage, and the Pulse app shows that the Felton Volunteer Fire Dept. has to respond with alarming frequency to fires by car campers.

More than a 1000 families live off side roads, for whom those only exit now is that stretch of Hwy 9. Previous fire roads and exits now have been crammed full with entire subdivisions on and around these easements, easements still held by us old timers down hill. But because us, elderly old timers, lack the deep pockets for legal action, and tax revenue always trumps wise land use....., protest fell on deaf ears. Many 2nd exit roads cannot be repaired due to \$M+ of bigger bridges and upgrades required for permits without thought of funds available and ability of residents to pay. FVFD needs a passible Hwy 9 at all times.

The cost of SSC shuttles can easily be paid for, by having rustic log and rock enclosures with turnstiles, and a fee slightly greater than down town parking garages. And marking the up hill side turn outs, or other 1 car pull outs, for emergency use only. The added benefit would be, that no cars would have to do the blind backing into traffic that has caused so much grief, ending family holiday fun.

Thank You, Christina Baraukas

**From:** [Scott Walecka](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Trail on Rail  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 12:35:10 PM

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I continue to be concerned about the lack of good communication/executive summaries from the RTC with regard to the train.

More often than not train proposals cost way more than originally estimated with ridership way less than originally estimated. The county cannot afford to spend billions on a train system that has a high chance of not meeting the needs of the county and creating an unreasonable debt burden on the county. Seems safer to invest in south county so south county residents would have quality jobs there and not have significant commute needs to North county. Sonoma-Marín does not seem like it was a good investment. Even the commuter train from Ventura to Santa Barbara seems to have problems. They already had the infrastructure in place and only have a first mile problem since the train station is right downtown. Santa Barbara is almost 2X our size. Chance of success for a Santa Cruz train seems small. Santa Barbara seems to have similar HW 1 bottleneck problems. No two situations are the same but lack of successful references is a deal killer.

Thus trail on the rail makes the most sense.

In addition I have talked to multiple folks living in Watsonville that live within about 15 miles of the work in Santa Cruz and would ebike if the roads were not so dangerous.

Leaving the rail apparently forces the trail to the other side of 1 which they say would add about 15 minutes to their commute. That would be a bummer.

Scott Walecka

**From:** [frankline3](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Trail only  
**Date:** Monday, May 2, 2022 8:17:44 AM

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We support Scenario 1, trail only!  
Mary and Frank Kline

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

**From:** [Rose Marie McNair](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** VOTE "NO" ON D  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 4:54:45 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Honorable RTC Commissioners:

Regarding Items 28 and 11 on the May 5 agenda, it is important that we maintain our rail lines in a fashion that benefits the future of our community.

We must vote with a RESOUNDING "NO" against Measure D. It is vital that we retain our railway system--the most effective transportation and shipping mechanism in our country! We MUST retain the plans to make repairs of the Pajaro Bridge so that freight traffic is not disturbed.

The Bottom Line will save the line:

1. Support the "Ultimate Trail" plan, with continued completion of the trail.
2. Strongly oppose the Interim Trail.
3. Object to Agenda Item 11, and continue to make the planned repairs of the Pajaro Bridge.

The Interim Trail plan would harm Roaring Camp as well as hinder progress towards building the Locally Preferred Alternative of trail and electric passenger rail together. I urge the Commission to support the Ultimate Trail plan and please do NOT support the Interim Trail plan.

With warm regards,  
Rose Marie McNair, Broker



**Rose Marie McNair, Broker**  
**McNair Real Properties**  
**1715-42<sup>nd</sup> Ave. "B"**  
**Capitola, CA 95010**

**DRE#00547533**  
**SCCAR Lifetime Achievement 2020**  
**REALTOR of the Year SCCAR 1995**  
**REALTOR of the YEAR PVAOR 2017, 2018**  
**MEMBER of the YEAR WCR 2012**



**From:** [Ellen Vogt](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** We support Scenario 1 for the Coastal Trail  
**Date:** Saturday, April 30, 2022 3:55:48 PM

---

Dear Commissioners:

Our family wholeheartedly supports Scenario #1 for the Santa Cruz Coastal Trail.

It is the wider, safer, and more affordable option.

Regards,

The Milward Family  
Aptos

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Carey Pico](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Why is Seg. 8 & 9 so expensive for interim trail????  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:24:20 AM

---

To All:

I have a terrible sense that RRM Design grossly overestimated the cost of constructing the interim trail for Seg. 8 & 9. One has to wonder if RRM had a personal mission to make the interim trail look bad. Here is my reasoning:

The \$7.8M/mile construction cost is far higher than the \$2M-3M/mile range of simple rail-trails. Below I give my reasoning and follow with a few comparable rail-trail costs recently constructed on flat terrain (as opposed to needing extensive excavation that may or may not affect the ultimate trail construction). Note: it is difficult to track down trail construction costs.

#### Analysis

As you know Seg. 8 & 9 trail construction is a 2.3-mile section from the Pacific Ave. to 17th Ave. At \$18M, this results in \$7.8M/mile for the interim trail. The price per trail mile is understated because Seg. 8 does not include any trail construction. The MBSST has it as painting/improving the bike lanes - cost of \$40k for this. Given the San Lorenzo River bridge is already completed, the only other work on Seg. 8 are road/train barriers and path crossings that the MBSST lists at \$350k. Together, these costs add up to under \$500k. Knowing the terrible cost underestimation history of the MBSST, I'll guess \$1M would cover the cost. That leaves \$17M for the remaining 1.53-miles of Seg.9 or \$11.1M/mile - an excessively high construction cost for a trail built on the existing rail foundation and that this does not include the income from the scrap iron. There are three bridges to retrofit for pedestrian safety, but these costs are quite low (I don't have comparable examples).

A Few Comparable Examples (references available):

1) MBSST: Seg. 7, Phase 1: \$6.4M/1.2 miles = \$5.3M/mile

This cost should be high given the seven (7) or so street crossings for this section compared to the three (3) crossings for Seg.9. Regardless, it is substantially less than \$11.1M/mile.

2) SMART rail-trail segments (these are trail-next-to-rail, but flat terrain throughout)

a) Golf Course to Cotati station (2 street crossings): \$4.2M/2.4 mile = \$1.75M/mile

b) Payran to Southpoint (Petaluma), no street crossings: \$3.3M/1.2mile = \$2.8M/mile

c) SMART stated it cost \$57M to finished 21 miles of trail or \$2.7M/mile

As you see, the cost is in the \$2M-\$3M/mile range for simple trails and \$5M/mile for Seg.7, Phase 1. Something is extremely wrong with the \$11M/mile for Seg. 9.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this.

Carey Pico  


**From:** [LEONARD FOREMAN](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** email from Leonard Foreman  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:00:42 AM

---

Hello RTC members,

I am in favor of the 'interim' plan. The interim option would allow the trail project to move forward without putting the trail on surface streets. The trail needs to be built now and the rail 'rail banked'.

Thank you,

Leonard Foreman

**From:** [mark wegrich](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** item 28/5/5  
**Date:** Monday, May 2, 2022 7:55:02 PM

---

Your attention please,

We are writing in support of scenario 1 in item 28 for the May 5 th meeting of the RTC.

A simple bike path is all thats needed snd will save some serious money for us the taxpayers.

Sincerely

Mark & Marie Wegrich

**From:** [Grace Voss](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** letter concerning items #28 and #11 for 5/5/22 meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 4:08:17 PM

---

Dear RTC Commissioners,

According to items #28 and #11 on the agenda for your May 5th meeting, you are changing horses in the middle of the stream! By choosing a trail now, before voters in the June election may decide on either the ultimate or the interim trail, you are ignoring the democratic process! You are casting aside all the hard work and expense of campaigning by your voters during the past months!

Remember, if you make this decision prematurely, your voters may cast you aside when it comes time for your re-election!

Why are you doing this? It's bad enough that the "Yes on D" folks ignore the fact that the interim trail is way more expensive than the ultimate trail. It's bad enough to know that tearing up the RR tracks will lead to all kinds of land title controversies once the RTC surrenders its right to the rail line, thus delaying the ultimate trail from resuming construction that is already under way!

It is undemocratic to toss this crumb of an idea out to voters who have supported you in the past and who would like to support you in the future! Shame on you!

Let the democratic process proceed according to the will of the people! Isn't that what distinguishes this country from a dictatorship like Russia?

Sincerely,  
Grace Voss (Live Oak)

**From:** [LIZ EMAIL](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** rail/trail  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:45:42 AM

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RTC

Shame on you.

County residents made it very clear in 2016 that there is widespread support for rail and trail. The current rush to remove all rail by accepting the "interim" trail plan over the "ultimate" trail plan is clearly a deceptive way of destroying any possibility of light rail on the current rail corridor. What is going on? We made our wishes clear in 2016, and the vast majority of voters still support the goals of the 2016 Measure D. Stop pandering to a minority of county residents who who want trail only and get back to the job of fulfilling your duties to the voters.

Elizabeth Lipton  
Aptos

**From:** [John Kevin Rothwell](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** spending voter-approved 2016 Measure D revenues on Active Transportation/Coastal Rail Trail  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 12:15:10 PM

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Please vote NO on rainbanking, and focus exclusively on the Ultimate Trail option! An excursion train from Watsonville to Davenport will draw thousands of new visitors to Santa Cruz every year and give our local economy a big shot in the arm!

Thank you, John Kevin Rothwell

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Regional Transportation Commission <[info@sccrtc.org](mailto:info@sccrtc.org)>  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 10:50:20 AM PDT  
**Subject:** RTC Seeking Input on Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs and on 2016 Measure D Spending Plans for Highway 1 and the Coastal Rail Trail



RTC logo



**Public Input Sought on Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs and on 2016 Measure D Spending Plans for Highway 1 and the Coastal Rail Trail**

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is holding two public hearings at its Thursday, May 5, 2022 meeting via Zoom (*see [meeting agenda](#) for login details*) to receive public input on the [2022 Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs List](#) and to receive public input on options for spending voter-approved **2016 Measure D revenues** on Highway Corridor projects and Active Transportation/Coastal Rail Trail interim trail or ultimate trail scenarios.

The hearing to receive input on the [2022 Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs List](#) will begin no sooner than 9:30 a.m. and will be preceded by a staff presentation. The focus of the list is on

transit and paratransit needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and/or people with limited means. Unmet transit and paratransit needs are those which are not being met by the current public transit system, have community support, and do not duplicate transit services provided publicly or privately. The Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs List is a tool to identify transit and paratransit needs, services, and project funding priorities for future State Transit Assistance (STA), Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP), Transportation Development Act (TDA), State of Good Repair (SGR), Federal Transit Administration 5310 (FTA5310), Transportation Network Company (TNC) Access for All, greenhouse gas reduction grants, and other funds.

The hearing to receive input on options for using [2016 voter-approved Measure D](#) revenues will begin no sooner than 10:30 a.m. and will be preceded by a staff presentation. The RTC will consider using revenues for Coastal Rail Trail, Highway 1, and traveler assistance projects, including possible financing to expedite project delivery. Measure D revenues are expected to be used to leverage state and federal grants.

The RTC will consider programming additional Measure D funds for the following:

- **Highway Corridor:** Highway 1 Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder facilities
- **Active Transportation/Coastal Rail Trail:** Segments 7-12 from the City of Santa Cruz to Rio Del Mar Boulevard in Aptos for either the Interim Trail (trail on the rail line) option or Ultimate Trail (trail next to the rail line) option. Should the Commission decide to program Measure D funds for an Interim Trail, a process called "railbanking" would be required to remove the railroad tracks.

The deadline for written comments on the 2022 Unmet Transit and Paratransit Needs List and the 2016 Measure D five-year spending plans is **noon** on Wednesday, May 4, 2022. Comments can be emailed to [info@sccrtc.org](mailto:info@sccrtc.org), or mailed to 1101 Pacific Ave., Ste. 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. Oral comments may also be provided to the RTC board during the public hearing. Staff reports and login details are available in the meeting [agenda](#).

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
email: info[at]sccrtc.org

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**From:** [Contact Request Form](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Form  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 7:56:40 AM

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| <b>Name</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Neil Waldhauer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Email</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| [REDACTED]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Subject</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| A Rail Vision for Santa Cruz                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Your Message</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p>I'm a pro-rail person. I will admit that from the beginning. I want to present a vision of passenger rail for Santa Cruz five years from <i>now</i>.</p> <p>First, the tracks are repaired all the way to Davenport. The entire line is capable of Freight or Passenger service.</p> <p>Second, operators for both Freight and Passenger have been selected and service is running or scheduled to start. Operators will provide service for tourists to come to Santa Cruz via CalTrain or via Amtrack service. A local passenger service should be running and ready to expand.</p> <p>Expansion plans should be in place for fewer at-grade crossings and improvements to the remaining at-grade crossings. GPS should be planned on the line to facilitate a higher service density.</p> <p>An improved ticketing process should make it easy for people to use the passenger-rail service.</p> <p>Shipping companies, like Fed Ex and UPS should be encouraged to use rail service for their shipments.</p> <p>An extension of track to UCSC would provide the long promised East Entrance to the campus.</p> |

**From:** [Contact Request Form](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Form  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 7:40:08 PM

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

**Name**

Joseph Pruss

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Subject**

Measure D

**Your Message**

Dear RTC Commissioners,  
I am writing to comment on Items 28 and 11 on the May 5 agenda.

Item 28 seems designed to bypass the will of the voters on the issue of the Rail and Trail. It's not right to do an end-run around the election by deciding now between the Ultimate Trail and the Interim Trail when this issue is going to the polls in just a few weeks. Please table it until after the election.

If the commission acts on Item 28 instead of tabling it, please choose the Ultimate Trail. The Interim Trail is bad planning. It would increase the cost of building the trail by approximately \$12 Million per mile. It would require the Commission to engage in a messy, drawn-out forced-abandonment railbanking attack on Roaring Camp, which very possibly might fail in the end. If successful, abandonment and railbanking would be a betrayal of our promise when we bought the rail line. Tearing out tracks would hurt the RTC's ability to implement Electric Passenger Rail with the trail, which the RTC chose as our Locally Preferred Alternative because the data showed it would best serve the transportation needs of everyone in the county. Finally, if the RTC succeeded in forced abandonment and track demolition it would hurt Roaring Camp's business.

For all these reasons, I strongly support sticking with the Ultimate Trail design and keeping our tracks and trail both. However, I urge you to table this item until after the election. Making the decision now, when the public is about to vote on this issue, would be unethical and undemocratic.

Regarding consent agenda Item 11, staff is asking you to cancel the planned repairs of the Pajaro bridge, despite the availability of a \$500,000 grant budget for repairs. This bridge is actively in use by Watsonville freight rail customers served by Roaring Camp. The Commission took legal responsibility for repairs when it purchased the line. I urge you to pull this item off the consent agenda and direct staff to figure out how to leverage the grant funding to get the most critical bridge repairs done ASAP.

Finally, I would like to say I consider the Rail and Trail solution one way to provide for additional employment of Watsonville residents in Santa Cruz. I am aware of the worker shortage, causing temporary or permanent closure of restaurants and other employers that employ entry level workers in Santa Cruz. Surely a rail alternative from Watsonville, would bring additional employees to Santa Cruz, which is a win-win : good for Santa Cruz business and good for Watsonville employment.

Sincerely,  
Joseph Pruss

**From:** [Contact Request Form](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Form  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 6:10:15 PM

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| <b>Name</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Linda Garfield                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Email</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| [REDACTED]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Subject</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| No railbanking/fix Pajaro River bridge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Your Message</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <p>Re: Agenda items 11 and 28 on Thursday, May 5th RTC meeting.</p> <p>I reside in the San Lorenzo Valley and support the Ultimate Trail Plan. I don't support railbanking. Please do not tear out the rails. I support a trail alongside the rail--maintaining the federally protected rail right-of-way with tracks intact for future public transportation.</p> <p>I recently visited Tehachapi, Ca. which is known for it's freight rail line that bisects the city. They have a weekly community newspaper called "The Loop". Ed Gordon writes a column entitled "Train Talk". His article, "Let's Hit the Rails", in the April 2-16, 2022 issue focused on rails and tracks. Please take the time to read this short article, as it's very educational about this topic.</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/theloopnewspaper/posts/10159134806273208">https://www.facebook.com/theloopnewspaper/posts/10159134806273208</a></p> <p>My take away is that rails, tracks, and ties were and are highly engineered to sustain heavy loads, to provide solid stability, and the steel is some of the strongest made. Mainline rails can also be reclaimed to be used again. Our County should be finding ways to maximize the use of the existing rail line, including these highly engineered tracks, rather than tearing them out.</p> <p>Regarding the Pajaro River Bridge. Please use the grant funding to repair the bridge. We need a reliable connection to rail lines outside our county.</p> <p>In closing, I would like to someday ride a train from Felton to Watsonville. My sister lives there. We don't see enough of each other because the drive from Boulder Creek to Watsonville is often bumper to bumper on Hwy 1. We're both senior citizens and won't be riding bikes that length of distance on a bike trail. Remember, the trail/rail line is meant to be used by everyone. And not everyone is a bike user.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Linda Garfield</p> |

**From:** [Contact Request Form](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Form  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 8:47:39 AM

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| <b>Name</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| frank rimicci                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Email</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| <b>Subject</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| use of measure D funds                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Your Message</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <p>I am appalled that the RTC is not actively pursuing more funding to revamp Our rail line. Instead of using the measure d funds to repair existing roads You are adding more lanes to highway 1. This is very much maligned with what Our county needs for relief from the jammed highway. Not to mention what Our atmosphere needs. Lets see You fix the damned potholes, rehab the rail line for freight and passenger service and keep building Our trail. Quit pussyfooting around and truly move Us forward with that rail corridor and ignore the land grabber greenway millionaires Who couldn't care less about a trail, or the thousands Who suffer daily from an inadequate transportation corridor.</p> |

**From:** [Lawrence Kaplan](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** 5/5/22 Agenda, Item #28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:48:32 AM

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To the Commissioners of the RTC,

Thank you for tackling the critical issue of whether to adopt a resolution for an "Interim Trail" or an "Ultimate Trail". It is time for clarity.

From this concerned citizen's point of view, your votes ought to be in favor of the Interim Trail. From various perspectives, including safety, prudent financial planning and the tremendous community value of ending this divisive and polarizing soap opera, the Interim Trail option is the only sensible decision.

But I don't vote, you do. I don't have the direct responsibility of wisely guiding our County's transportation policy. That's your important job.

I appreciate your commitment and look forward to the meeting tomorrow and to hearing your voices and votes.

Sincerely,  
Lawrence Kaplan, Watsonville

**From:** [Jean Brocklebank](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item #28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:48:17 AM

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Dear RTC Commissioners ~

I urge you to choose to use funds generated by the 2016 voter-approved Measure D for the **Scenario 1 (Interim)** option for Segments 8 - 12 in the upcoming 5 year plan.

I have reviewed the risks associated with both scenarios and find the risks with Scenario 2 to be so much greater than for Scenario 1. Especially because there is a good possibility that, as stated, "*with cooperation of effected parties, railbanking could be completed in as short as 6-months.*" ***Let's try that first!***

I think it is well worth the effort to try this approach, since Scenario 2 is estimated to cost twice as much as Scenario 1 -- and there is no guarantee that there will even be enough funding to complete the Ultimate trail, once started. Meanwhile, there will be no train. With Scenario 1 the people could begin to use a better multi-use active transportation trail.

As an environmentalist, I know that the engineering challenges and environmental impacts of Scenario 2 **will absolutely be real**, rather than simply a risk. One very real impact will be the displacement of low income housing in Segment 10, as explained previously. Scenario 1 will allow a multi-use active transportation trail without hardship to these low income residents.

Please err on the side of caution, on the side of fiscal conservatism, on the side of the environment, on the side of residents whose housing may be jeopardized.

**Vote for Scenario 1.**

Sincerely,  
Jean Brocklebank

**From:** [Dianne](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda item #28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:03:13 AM

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To: Commissioners and Staff, Regional Transportation Commission

After years of study, public input, and a determination that our rail corridor should be used for both a trail and rail transit, I am shocked to hear today that you are about to vote tomorrow on whether to replace all of that with a very new, controversial and risky proposal for only a trail. I strongly oppose that proposal!

Stay on track....continue building the trail next to the rail and plan for clean energy transit and freight for the sake of all residents, businesses and the climate!!!

Dianne Dryer  
Live Oak

**From:** [Lin Marelick](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Use of Funds  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:53:13 AM

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After reading the story in the Sentinel this morning titled “Community input sought on needs for transportation” I was confused and especially concerned about what was written in the section “Measure D.” I find that it is disingenuous to state that the interim plan would require removal of the tracks. Actually, both options will require removal of the tracks. The tracks are over 100 years old, any new technology that is considered would most certainly require that the current tracks be removed and replaced with a state-of-the-art system. Another piece of information that is missing in the article is that the steel rails are certainly worth something in the metal recycling market. Wouldn’t the recycling of those rails generate funds to help pay for the trail project?

As for my comments on the funding for the “ultimate trail” vs “interim trail,” I am not in favor of using the funds for the rail on trail. This project has been misguided from the beginning. Anyone living along the corridor where the “Train to Christmas Town” operated can tell you that the train snarled traffic, was unsafe as it crossed larger streets without a crossing guard and was so annoyingly loud. Is this what we can expect if there is a new train system, light rail or otherwise, that will snake through our neighborhoods and along our coastline? I hope not.

I personally use the mile of trail on the westside almost daily. I would be happy to see a separation between pedestrian and biking but nonetheless it is a well used and appreciated corridor.

From Marina to Monterey a multiuse trail is one of the jewels of the Monterey Peninsula. Why is our community not worthy of such an asset? Please forget about this ill-founded idea of a train. Beef up the bus system that is in place to make it even more efficient. Express busses from Watsonville to Santa Cruz and from Santa Cruz to Davenport would be a much better and more easily accessible system for those in the community who can’t or don’t drive. Please don’t waste anymore money on this rail idea.

Respectfully,  
Lin Marelick

**From:** [Vivian Vargas](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Community Input on Allocation of Funds Raised From 2016 Measure D.  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:36:08 AM

---

May 4, 2022

Dear Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission,

I have lived in Santa Cruz City for over twenty-five years and for twenty years I commuted to work by bus, carpool and (mostly) by private car from Santa Cruz City to Watsonville.

I am writing in regards to the issue of the allocation of funds raised from the 2016 voter-approved Measure D.

I support using the funds to move forward with Coastal Rail Trail Hwy 1 development with the "ultimate trail" option. Yes, the rail is costly and will probably not be a moneymaker in and of itself. But in the context of the costs of climate change and health, this option makes sense because commuter rail is a necessity. The costs will only increase, the longer this issue is delayed.

During my years of commuting, I saw every morning the parking lot on Hwy 1 from Santa Cruz City limits to rural Aptos. I saw the lines of cars entering the freeway from Rio del Mar, San Andreas Road, and Freedom Blvd. The challenge I believe will be to direct commuters from the car to the train. In Los Angeles, it was done by building parking lots at strategic metro hubs, something that should be considered for the rural/suburban Aptos region, the southern border of the traffic jam.

I am also dismayed that I only found out about the call for community input while reading the Sentinel this morning. Had I waited to read the newspaper in the afternoon, I would have missed the deadline.

Sincerely,

Vivian Vargas

[REDACTED]

Santa Cruz

**From:** [Glenn SaltzMD](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Concerning Item 28 at today's meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:58:14 AM

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To RTC:

Re: the agenda for the May 5, 2022 options:

Scenario 2 is problematic, has environmental concerns and extensive cost risks.

The cost of trail only vs quadruple cost for train + trail. Why spend more for less with a train + rail? Segments 10 and 11 illustrate the trail only option as the correct one.

NO on Segment 7, phase 2; YES on Scenario 1.

Please, please let's have a trail only, gorgeous greenway in Santa Cruz.

Glenn Saltz

  
Aptos, Ca 95003

**From:** [Debby Molina](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Greenway  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:25:30 AM

---

Dear RTC Members-

After reading the agenda for the May 5, 2022 meeting, it is crystal clear which is the better option.

Scenario 2 requires extra grant awards, which may or may not be won, thereby jeopardizing the completion of the 32 mile trail. Scenario 2 requires very significant environmental impacts, requiring major structural projects. The tracks may need to be relocated due to extensive erosion issues along the coast. Scenario 2 requires land purchases to build sidings and possibly trail.

The cost estimates between trail only and train plus trail of the various segments make this a clear decision. Segments 10 and 11 - \$2.9 million for trail only versus \$12.8 million for train plus trail is just one of the segments that show how to save the county money to create a better end result! Each trail only segment listed saves taxpayers significant amounts to create an incredible community asset.

Segment 7, phase 2 should be scratched from the planning altogether! This is an outrageous amount of money for a short amount of trail. There is an empty RR corridor that could be used at a small fraction of the cost. Please use our tax dollars wisely and reconsider this environmentally bad, unsightly, expensive waste and put the trail on the tracks!

Scenario 1 is the clear winner! It can provide a CONTINUOUS, safe, environmentally friendly, cost effective trail, that will become one of the best things about Santa Cruz! You have an amazing opportunity now to build Greenway trail. Please let's move toward that realistic and practical vision now.

Thank you.

Deb Molina

 Santa Cruz

[Sent from Yahoo for iPad](#)

**From:** [jdb](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Input for rail/trail funding  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:24:04 AM

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Dear SCCRTC, I support funding continuous rail service on the Santa Cruz branch line. We need to maximize our green transportation capacity and nothing is more energy efficient than steel wheels on iron rail. We don't need another bike lane as much as we need a functioning rail line and once rail banked it's hard to replace tracks. Our goal should be to work toward intra county/ intra state passenger rail and intermodal freight. The more freight we can get onto rail the fewer trucks will be clogging and damaging our freeways. I would suggest improving our existing bike lanes and adding new ones where needed so the bike path along the rail line can be eliminated. This would greatly cut the costs for rehabilitation and improvement of the rail line and would let us have rail service much sooner. I'd also like to see the county and city work with existing and new businesses to promote using the rail line to ship and receive their products. This would be best for our environment as well as our economic growth. Nothing would be greener than an E bike manufacturer shipping product cross country or across sea on modern light weight intermodal trains. Taking the easy route now to pacify a few recreational bike enthusiasts doesn't seem like the best path for our future. A modern rail line would be more expensive now but save money over the long haul.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Dave Branum , Live Oak.

**From:** [Lisa Sheridan](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item #28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:43:55 AM

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Dear RTC Commissioners,

I appreciate the measured approach the RTC is trying to take with the trail and train. However climate change is upon us now and we must make immediate and equitable changes in our transportation policies now.

An interim trail is expected to have 8 to 10,000 walkers and bikers a day. It will immediately connect our neighborhoods, businesses and schools in a sustainable way by lowering CO2 emissions by getting people off the roads and out of cars safely and affordably.

Thank you for consideration of item number #28. Please vote for scenario #1. To rail bank and create an interim trail.

Taking on the climate crises now rather at an unknown future date (in approximately 20 years), is a positive action we may hopefully live to appreciate.

Best Regards,  
Lisa Sheridan



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item 28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:55:33 AM

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Dear commissioners:

It has been a long and thorough look that has been taken by you at the best use of the rail corridor. The INTERIM TRAIL is clearly the

only feasible option at half the cost. It would be the only level road in the county making it also the only truly accessible one for all

users and by far of the most benefit to our all our communities. By the City of Santa Cruz's count the path on the side of the San Lorenzo

bridge gets 3-4 thousand users per day on a dead end piece. Monterey gets 8,000. I expect much more with a continuous, affordable, all ready

funded INTERIM TRAIL. Please vote for that.

Thank You

Bill Cook

**From:** [Gregory Becker](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Gregory Becker](#)  
**Subject:** Item 28, May 5 2022 Agenda  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:52:24 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

In 2018 the Regional Transportation Commission sponsored a speaker series called “Innovations in Transportation.” One of the speakers was Kurt Triplett, the City Manager of Kirkland WA. Kirkland had recently converted an unused rail line through railbanking to a greenway trail as an interim transportation solution. It is beloved by the community and embraced by the politicians.

In the question period following the presentation, RTC Commissioner Mike Rotkin opined that in order to preserve the transit option here we should “just leave the rusty old track that’s not going anywhere”. Triplett replied: “The wonderful thing about the interim solution is that it’s cheap and it’s cost effective and it’s quick. We did it really fast, and in fact, on the salvage part of the ties and the rails you actually make some money on the thing”.

“Just leave the rusty old track that’s not going anywhere” is continued expensive inaction. It is a complete locally-originated climate cop-out. Railbanking, while it sounds passive, is our most assertive action to preserve our public transit options. If we do not railbank we threaten the integrity of the rail right-of-way and its continued public ownership.

We can wait even longer for a “someday” solution, or we can act on the immediately possible. The adage “don’t let the perfect be the enemy of the good” is our way forward now.

Thank you for your vote on item 28, scenario 1, to railbank and pursue an interim trail.

Sincerely,

Greg Becker

La Selva

**From:** [Ted Burke](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item 28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:30:02 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

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There is enough fantasy in the world today. Please don't add to it.  
Support "Interim trail" as the only realistic and effective approach for use of the dormant rail line.

*Ted*

**Ted Burke**  
Shadowbrook Restaurant, Co-Owner  
P.O. Box 65, Capitola, CA 95010



[www.shadowbrook-capitola.com](http://www.shadowbrook-capitola.com)

**From:** [Karen Greenleaf](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Measure D Hearing Thursday 5/5/22  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:51:10 AM

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Greetings members of the Santa Cruz County RTC,


I reside in south County and am delighted you are receiving public comments re: the use of Measure D funds. I am tired of the tirade by the Greenway folk with lots of money being all we hear and see.

I STRONGLY support the ULTIMATE TRAIL. I lived for many years in Germany and am very aware of what a well-integrated transportation system can be. At almost 80 years old, I am not riding my bike to Santa Cruz, nor am I walking there from the Buena Vista Dr. area between Watsonville and LaSelva, where I live. I would HAPPILY use a light rail system. I will probably not personally see such a system (unless the federal gov't starts putting more money into public transit), but my fellow residents are as tired of being stuck in traffic on Hwy 1 as I am. If I am dead and gone, I trust they will enjoy quiet, efficient transport.

I taught at Harbor High School and the Ark (when located on Swift St.) for many years. I know the realities of commuting from south County. I had 3 accidents over the years, one my fault and the other two not. My son came close to being decapitated in one accident. I have on-going neck and back injuries from that accident. Safe transportation in this county would be a joy and wonder!

Sincerely,

Karen Greenleaf

  
Watsonville, CA

**From:** [Fred Thoits](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Measure D Revenue Allocation  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:59:23 AM

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I support using as much of the Measure D revenue including any additional funds to be used for Highway Corridor auxiliary lanes and bus on shoulder facilities as possible and as little as possible toward the Coastal Trail segments.

Fred Thoits

The hearing to receive input on options for using [2016 voter-approved Measure D](#) revenues will begin no sooner than 10:30 a.m. and will be preceded by a staff presentation. The RTC will consider using revenues for Coastal Rail Trail, Highway 1, and traveler assistance projects, including possible financing to expedite project delivery. Measure D revenues are expected to be used to leverage state and federal grants.

The RTC will consider programming additional Measure D funds for the following:

- **Highway Corridor:** Highway 1 Freedom Boulevard to State Park Drive auxiliary lanes and bus-on-shoulder facilities
- **Active Transportation/Coastal Rail Trail:** Segments 7-12 from the City of Santa Cruz to Rio Del Mar Boulevard in Aptos for either the Interim Trail (trail on the rail line) option or Ultimate Trail (trail next to the rail line) option. Should the Commission decide to program Measure D funds for an Interim Trail, a process called “railbanking” would be required to remove the railroad tracks.

**From:** [Monique Kremer](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please read and consider: Comments on Interim v. Ultimate Trail Use  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 9:58:58 AM

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To Whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge you to re-think the idea of a rail with trail use of the rail corridor and to adopt the "interim" trail plan. There are multiple shortcomings in the overall Rail with Trail plan itself having to do with true cost, actual width of the corridor, safety issues, noise, and, most importantly, actual effect on traffic congestion.

An acceptance of the compromised trail project (the "ultimate trail" plan) also continues to use up a tremendous amount of better-spent energy by us all; it perpetuates the misguided notion that a commuter rail in Santa Cruz county, or frankly any use of this antiquated rail technology, would have any measurable effect on traffic, the environment or our quality of life.

Moving forward with the "ultimate" rail/trail plan has a few unacceptable consequences:

- It leaves us with a substandard narrow trail which is dangerous. Have you tried to share any portion of this trail with the wheeled users (bikes, skateboards, scooters)? Anecdotally, I have almost been hit by extremely fast moving e-bikes multiple times. This is a REAL problem and one that could be immediately ameliorated by having a separate trail for wheeled conveyances v. pedestrians/wheelchair users, strollers etc....
- This is a narrow corridor, if an actual train was sharing it with the trail, they would be practically on top of each other.
- Additionally, leaving the antiquated track technology also feeds the notion (in the face of all evidence to the contrary) that a commuter rail is some kind of sustainable solution to Santa Cruz's traffic problems. I think we all know that is not true. The tracks do not go anywhere people need to ultimately get to: they are nowhere near, UCSC, San Jose, Downtown Santa Cruz, Dominican or Sutter Hospital, most businesses etc.... While we may have some areas of density along this corridor (which to my mind is more reason NOT to support a fast moving, loud train that bifurcates our neighborhoods), it is a density of people not businesses so I fail to see how this density would encourage ridership. Let's face it, the bulk of ridership on Highway one is heading to San Jose.
- Federal law requires that locomotive engineers must begin to sound train horns at least 15 seconds, and no more than 20 seconds, in advance of all public grade crossings. These are neighborhoods. There are multiple intersections throughout these areas and ongoing horn noise can be heard for miles. (Does ANYONE remember the Christmas train debacle on the westside?)
- The rail is antiquated technology. If we want a train (and again, I think this corridor is somewhat useless for a "fixed" transportation option) then let's spend our money on an electric elevated train. Riders would still need to organize a secondary form of transportation from the train to their ultimate destination (because, again, this rail corridor doesn't go anywhere anyone needs to get to as a final destination), but at least it wouldn't drag down the entire city with what the "ultimate" plan engenders: a half-sized trail, a dangerous trail, a loud trail.
- The costs involved in what is being proposed are already huge and will, no doubt, like every other rail project, run far above what is being proposed. I urge you to review what has happened to ridership since Covid and that is on commuter lines in big

population cities that had decades of ridership history.  
<https://www.bart.gov/news/articles/2020/news20200225>

The argument that we've already put so much energy into this that we just have to keep going is specious and dangerous. If this is the model we use to make our decisions, we run the risk of burying ourselves in all kinds of unsound choices.

The truth is that committing Santa Cruz's limited transportation monies to this unfortunate idea has the potential to do the opposite of what it purports to do. Even at the highest ridership estimates (which, as you know, would require trains running every 15 minutes from 6 a.m. to 9p.m.), the effect on Highway 1 traffic would be almost undetectable and the street congestion would increase due to train-crossing delays. Directing money toward a fixed rail system that by design will carry very few people almost nowhere they want or need to go pulls transportation money from truly useful and effective projects that genuinely could have an effect on greenhouse gases and traffic congestion--Bus Rapid Transit, the metro system in general or even HOV lanes and, most importantly of all, an actual functional, wide, multi-use trail that would/could be utilized by everyone.

Please understand, I think the RTC did something extremely smart in, effectively, "borrowing" funds in order to purchase the amazing resource that is the rail corridor. **Now let's take that same forward-thinking ability and use it to create a linear park that offers an alternative form of transportation that is actually effective and useful. A multi-use trail would be a choice that enhances our county, increases tourism, encourages community health and beautifies the environment.** I understand why a feasibility study was done, but just because something is possible does not mean it should be attempted. It is long past time to take the considerable resources and brain power of the RTC and put them where they can actually do some good and have some impact.

**The question I urge you to ask yourself is "Why?"** Why do we need this rail? Why would we spend this kind of money for very little positive impact on the environment, highway congestion, ease of travel or county enrichment? Why would we want a substandard 8 foot trail (12 feet with shoulder) that is too narrow to be multi-use and, even if someone wanted to try and use it, why would they want to when a train is barreling past every 15 minutes at 30 mph? **Why are we not joining the over 21,000 miles of rail corridor that does NOT include a rail versus the mere 555 miles that does?**

**What can a train do for our county, that a trail cannot do better?**

I thank you for your service and hard work and ask that you please remember that moving forward with a substandard trail plan implies an acceptance of a narrow, single use trail and a commuter train as a viable choice for our community. It is not.

Respectfully yours,

Monique Kremer

**From:** [david.cooper](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Kathleen Hart](#); [Emily Hart-Cooper](#); [Josh Carver](#); [Robert Carver](#); [Tamara Carver](#); [Nicol Carver](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment on Measure D (both of them)  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:20:16 AM

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Commissioners

Now I know why I have been confused these last few months - there are two Measure D's!

I am writing as an urban planner with over 30 years experience as a consultant with land use, transportation and large infrastructure projects. I settled in Rio del Mar five years ago and have followed the discussion about rail/trail vs. trail with personal and professional interest. Regardless of potential environmental benefits, I do not believe that any rail option will be successful in addressing current and future transportation and land use needs. Moreover, even if implemented, the rail/trail project is way too expensive (\$1B!!!) and will compete for funding with much more cost-effective and technically viable transit projects.

**Regarding the already approved Measure D** - I believe the RTC should prioritize investments which support a lower cost pedestrian/biker corridor rather than the future hope of rail. I read yesterday about the 20 foot high concrete retaining walls in the City of Santa Cruz bid package (\$12M/mile in one segment) and the forecast that half the future rail/trail cost will need to be funded with new taxes. This is a crazy waste of tax money! Better to focus on bus service and pedestrian mobility improvements that are more practical and cost effective.

**Proposed Measure D** - I strongly support the pedestrian Greenway solution with railbanking. SCC land use and population patterns are already established and the trail/rail system (assuming it is implemented) will not change them. The better approach is to work with existing land use patterns and traffic patterns along US-1 and Soquel Drive. I am a fan of buses and have worked on bus/transit projects in Colorado and Latin America. This morning I read about the "Cabrillo Express" bus line which is vastly superior to anything the rail project could provide. That is the beauty of buses over fixed-route transit - it can be adapted easily and operated as needed. Rail tracks and trains stay where they are. We can address our current and future transit needs with a flexible approach as new technology, equipment and funding become available.

Finally, we need to keep in mind that currently Santa Cruz County is not a public transit-riding community. I hope that this changes in the future, but right now people have other ways to get around. The Greenway project will encourage more pedestrian/bike activity and focus transit users on the existing bus/transit corridors, which use existing infrastructure and can be upgraded as demand increases. A billion dollar battery powered train will not change this.

I encourage the RTC to continue making thoughtful, realistic and financially prudent decisions about our public infrastructure and our tax dollars.

David Cooper  
Rio del Mar

*David G. Cooper*



**From:** [Nadene Thorne](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [Guy Preston](#); [Jacques Bertrand](#); [Randy Johnson](#); [Sandy Brown](#); [Manu Koenig](#); [Michael Rotkin](#); [Eduardo Montesino](#); [lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [Bruce McPherson](#); [REDACTED]; [Ryan Coonerty](#); [Andy Schiffrin](#); [REDACTED]; [Greg Caput](#); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#)  
**Subject:** Rail and/or Trail - Explainathon!  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:16:59 AM

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Having followed the discussions and studies about the future of the rail corridor for many years, I wholeheartedly sympathize with the difficult position in which the RTC now finds itself. You have conducted numerous studies affirming the "locally preferred alternative" as some kind of passenger train, in spite of brief commentary on the limited prospective ridership and the necessity for local matching funds, thus the Commission now finds itself in the difficult position of having to - shall we say - 'postpone' pursuing further rail studies and planning. Regrettably, offering exorbitant plans for a trail adjacent to the tracks, for which the county also does not have the funding, seems not to have dissuaded your most avid train supporters. The message that the tracks will have to be replaced in any future train scenario seems not to have been communicated, or understood, or accepted. In this regard, regrettably, the TIG/m demonstration worked against making this point.

I hope you will use all your best efforts to make clear to the community these vital facts. If you don't, I fear that the upcoming Measure D result will not be a definitive vote of thoughtful constituents hoping to create better transportation options for our county, but rather simply an exhibition of angry folks with pitchforks, disappointed that they don't get what they believe was promised, and whose actions will only serve to further postpone your/our ability to move forward now!

Thank you so much for your continued commitment to this work on all our behalves!

Nadene Thorne  
[REDACTED]  
Santa Cruz 95060  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [barbara chamberlain](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission; ypara@sccrtc.org](#)  
**Subject:** Rail trail  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 11:21:36 AM  
**Attachments:** [rail.docx](#)

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Dear Friends,

Attached is a letter with concerns about the future of our county.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. sincerely Barbara Chamberlain

Barbara Chamberlain

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Aptos

Rail Trail Both important

May 4, 2022

Dear RTC,

For the 2002 Olympics Salt Lake City built Trax. Every rail car was full from opening day. No need to park your car when you could ride from the outskirts to downtown. There are convenient stops at stadium s, health centers, and schools. Traffic is eased and everyone benefits.

For the elderly, blind, handicapped who cannot ride a bike we are not future planning for, and even discriminating against many citizens by taking away one chance for alternative transportation off the highway. Is there anyone who loves sitting in commuter traffic? Would you rather sit back, relax, or even nap on your way home from Santa Cruz to Watsonville? The need is crucial to develop alternates for those who are handicapped or unable to afford ever climbing car expenses.

The need for rail service from the Santa Clara area to Watsonville station is crucial to easing the car and truck traffic both on 101 and in Santa Cruz county. Do you want to kill the future or do common sense future planning to benefit ALL citizens?

Many places are using rail lines to cut down on car traffic. Vehicles can be converted to run on rails. Monorails and sky trains are in use now and in the future the efficiency of this type of transportation will improve. Keep the rail lines in place or they will never come back.

Our goal should be building up with our own golden spike.

**From:** [Batya Kagan](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Use of Measure D funds, Rail/ trail  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:15:52 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing about your upcoming agenda item for your meeting this Thursday regarding the use of Measure D funds specifically with respect to the rail trail funding.

While I have heard good arguments on the side of the “interim” use of the trail, I am concerned that pulling out the tracks would limit our options for public transportation. This is especially a justice issue since I have been hearing from leaders in Watsonville that a train is a highly desirable option that also would allow for us to connect seamlessly to Santa Cruz, San Jose and all points in the Bay Area for jobs. It also would allow people in Santa Cruz that kind of transportation hub option for these jobs and for everyone to use train options for transport to visit other parts of the state.

It is obvious to me that improved public transportation systems for our community are sorely needed in the face of climate change since transportation is the county’s number one greenhouse gas emission category. The notion that we all can have electric cars ignores the limits of a finite amount of lithium and other precious minerals and that in mining these minerals, the forests/ fishing villages/ or species dependent habitat in other countries where we will seek to mine are decimated without proper environmental regulation.

This decision is not, therefore, just a local decision but has world wide implications.

I ask you to continue to allocate Measure D funds for the already planned, approved, and implemented trail alongside the train tracks. We can continue to seek out federal/ state funding as we use these tax dollars to show that we are committed to public transportation to help finish this project.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Batya Kagan  
Santa Cruz, CA

**From:** [Harriet Maglin](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Written Comment for RTC Meeting May 5, 2022  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:54:58 AM

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The Guest Commentary from today's Santa Cruz Sentinel exquisitely expresses my views on the future of the Trail Options. I believe the **Interim Trail Plan** and railbanking (Yes on Measure D) is the way to go and Brian Surgue's commentary supports the reasons why, as stated, we have an already underused Express Line that does go to commerce/business/education centers. Not expressed in this commentary is that no funding for parking at the stations has yet been addressed, and again the "commuter train" will not get you to any of the commerce/business/education centers within Santa Cruz County. Has funding possible shuttle transfers to these centers been addressed and are funds available? I thereby support an Interim Trail for Santa Cruz County.

Harriet Maglin



Aptos, CA 95003

### **Santa Cruz Guest Commentary - May 4, 2022**

**By Brian Sugrue**

"For those who need to commute between north and south Santa Cruz County, the proposed Rail Trail already has a valid competitor, other than a car. The Santa Cruz Metro runs an express bus (in both directions at the same time!) between Watsonville and downtown Santa Cruz. It takes 43 minutes for the 91X bus to complete the journey (20 minutes to Cabrillo). It currently costs \$2 each way, \$1 with student ID. The Friends of the Rail & Trail website predicts, optimistically, that the (\$1.3 billion) proposed train could do the same journey in 40 minutes.

This express bus, which travels on the freeway, diverts off at State Park Drive, to the most utilized stop, Cabrillo College, before returning to the freeway at Park Avenue where it continues on to 41st Avenue, and then travels city streets along Soquel Avenue. **The Rail Trail proposal would require a train station at Park Avenue, 1.1 miles from Cabrillo, making necessary either an invigorating walk, or a shuttle transfer, for the students.** The 91X also stops at Dominican Hospital (1.7 miles from the 7th Avenue train station), and several other midpoints in the commercial corridors of Santa Cruz. **The existing train tracks, due to their placement in the 1870s, are mostly closer to the coast in what are now predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods.**

In July of 2019, before the pandemic arrived, the Santa Cruz Metro published a ridership study and survey: [https://www.scmttd.com/images/Onboard\\_Transit\\_Ridership\\_Survey\\_and\\_Ride\\_Check\\_Report\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.scmttd.com/images/Onboard_Transit_Ridership_Survey_and_Ride_Check_Report_-_FINAL.pdf) Included in this research project is the documented average daily usage of this beneficial public transportation resource. The 91X departs from three well placed Watsonville bus stops (the train would have one depot) eight

times a day, and returns from Santa Cruz seven times a day. There are also the much more frequent 69A and 69W buses that are local along their journey, bypassing Highway 1, which also service the full length of this corridor. This SCMTD study was purposely timed while schools were in session to accurately reflect typical usage. The northbound bus averaged 16 people boarding the bus from the three Watsonville bus stops combined, each weekday scheduled trip, and 13 people each southbound trip, from the four stops in the city of Santa Cruz, combined.

Many of the both north and southbound commuters were not traveling the full length of the route, but mostly to Cabrillo College. This is why on the Metro website the 91X is named "The Cabrillo Express." In contrast, the proposed train is a single-track, and therefore the options for optimizing usage in both directions simultaneously at peak times are limited.

There are numerous examples across this country of abandoned railroads converted to trails, as well as many active rail lines adding a trail alongside it. But there are very few examples of an attempt to resurrect an unsuccessful abandoned railway by squeezing in segments of an adjacent desirable trail, in the hope of persuading people to vote for a resuscitation of an obsolescent train corridor, which has failed several times before. It would be heavily subsidized, and assuredly fail again for passenger service, due to our obvious lack of large urban density. This controversy has divided our community. But I feel everyone on both sides has the best of intentions.

Those that advocate for rail, as electric cars and bikes and buses are beginning their inevitable ascendancy, are obviously environmentally altruistic people. But in my opinion, they are not accordingly analytical of the scope and the scale of the true costs (new bridge in Capitola, etc.) and probable usage of a commuter train, vs. our communities' relatively small population. A flight of fancy, end of the rainbow, boondoggle.

To properly bring light rail to Santa Cruz County, the many decades old, undulating rusty roller coaster tracks would have to be replaced regardless. Or maybe we could run it under 20 mph, or just ask the Boardwalk to promote the train as the little sister to The Giant Dipper."

**From:** [Nathaniel James](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Interim Trail  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 9:24:12 AM

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Please focus efforts on the interim trail. Most likely there will never be funding to proceed with ultimate design and any type of rail. The ultimate design is wasting time and money. Breaking up our neighborhoods with walls and fencing is unacceptable, especially for the outside chance that we could have rail by mid century. A rail plan that will be obsolete before it can be implemented. Please choose the option that provides the best environmental policy for our corridor, the interim trail.

Nathaniel James  
Santa Cruz

**From:** [Michael Kaye](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item 28  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 9:19:03 AM

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Please vote yes on the interim trail. Railbank the corridor, remove the tracks and put in a multi-use trail. Santa Cruz had the opportunity to do something impactful on a grand scale. The trail could be one of the best in the country.

Thanks,  
Michael Kaye

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Sandy Brown](#); [Michael Rotkin](#); [Manu Koenig](#)  
**Subject:** please do not make decisions about the rail line at tomorrow's meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 4, 2022 9:06:05 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

As you are well aware, voters will soon be indicating our preference about whether or not to plan for rail transportation on the rail corridor. You should have the results in 40 days or so. I honestly do not have a guess what they will be.

Please respect voters by not making any decisions about the rail line until the vote is in. While I understand that the results of the initiative will largely not be binding on your Commission, voters reasonably expect that you will be guided by our decision on the matter.

Making a decision prior to the results of Measure D would signify to us voters that you don't care what we think and so put another dent in what is left of our local democracy.

I can attest that the decision making process around the rail line has gone on for well over a decade. Showing your respect for democracy by waiting 40 days is not a lot to ask.

Micah Posner