

Unified Corridor Investment Study – Draft Step 2 Analysis Comments Received

From: Anderson Shepard

Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 11:32 AM

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

Subject: GIS analysis of the ROW and residential properties & comments re UCS scenario selection

Dear RTC commissioners and staff -

My background is in science and geospatial analysis and while I've been a community participant in this corridor planning process over the years, my academic interest was peaked early this summer when news that Commissioner Friend was potentially going to abstain from rail-related decisions due to the fact that he lives 250 feet from the corridor and thus might have a conflict of interest. This incident made me wonder what the data actually shows in regards to the spatial relationship between the rail corridor and residential properties, both County-wide and by District.

Using County-provided spatial data I conducted an analysis in GIS and found that of the ~3,200 land parcels that are within 250 feet of the rail corridor in the County, 89% are residential. In Commissioner Friend's district, District 2, that number is 93%. The distribution of these residential properties in close proximity to the rail ROW is not even across the County. Districts 1 and 2 and the City of Capitola have far more residents living in close proximity to the rail corridor than do Districts 3 and 4 and the Cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville.

Many residential properties are actually much closer to the train tracks than 250 feet. In Chairman Leopold's district, 93% of the parcels that are within 50 feet of the corridor are residential. This should be alarming and should give pause to the RTC, as it goes without saying that heavy gauge diesel trains and people's bedrooms don't exactly go hand in hand. Throughout the County, the impacts of running a train on the ROW would be disproportionately high on residential properties as compared to commercial or industrial properties.

(Attached to this letter is a pdf showing some summary charts and tables from this analysis. I'd be happy to provide the raw data and spreadsheets upon request).

When it comes to deciding on whether or not there should be an active train running through the corridor, decision makers must understand that a whole lot of people live in close proximity to this rail corridor, and that that the negative impacts to residents will be greatest in District 1, District 2, and the City of Capitola. As the representatives of these jurisdictions, Commissioners Friend, Leopold, and Bertrand—but also the Commission as a whole—should take the well-being of their populations into account.

It is essential that the decision makers, and especially the residents and property owners within close proximity to the corridor, understand what is at stake to the property values and quality of life if there were to be an active diesel train running along the corridor. Please, take this analysis and the quantitative data from the UCS phase II into consideration before electing to push forward with any Scenario that includes a train.

Thank you for your time, and for considering my comments.

Sincerely, Anderson Shepard

From: Jean Brocklebank
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 11:29 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@scrtc.org>
Subject: Additional comment on UCS

Dear RTC Commissioners and Staff ~

While at the Live Oak Library this weekend, I perused some documents relevant to transportation planning. Among them was the 2040 SCCRT Plan (Final June 2018).

The following jumped out at me (Chapter 1/Executive Summary, page 1, the very first bullet point under System Preservation):

- Maintenance needs for the existing transportation network are increasing. Roadway, bikeway, sidewalk, bridge and other repairs must be addressed in parallel with capacity and operational enhancements. If ongoing routine maintenance needs are not addressed, the cost of deferred maintenance will grow exponentially, leaving little for new projects.

How very true. True of everything in the County.

I am surprised that we rarely, if ever, here County RTC officials repeat that bullet point.

The push to build new projects continues apace even though there appears to be no catching up with maintenance of existing infrastructure. The excuse given is always lack of funds. So why does the County continue to build new public infrastructure without first demonstrating an ability to take care of what is already built?

Even during the Measure D campaign, my recommendation was for the County to prioritize deferred and regular maintenance of roadway, bikeway and walkway infrastructure for a period of time, to demonstrate that it could be done before new expensive projects were planned or implemented.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Jean Brocklebank

From: Helen Rhodes
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 11:14 AM
To: UCS <UCS@scrtc.org>
Subject: RTC Rail Trail Comment

Thank you for the chance to give input. As a long time Santa Cruz County resident (30 years) and a commuter, currently living in Watsonville, I strongly support moving forward with the Rail-Trail Unified Corridor Scenario 2/Option B. While it may take years to complete and unfortunately, due to the high cost of living in Santa Cruz County when I retire I may need to relocate, I believe a decision for the Unified Corridor rail/trail option is in the public good for the sustainable, livable future of the county. I previously attended a public meeting in Watsonville and in Capitola and I support Scenario 2/Option B as the most viable option. I hope to attend the Watsonville session tomorrow night, but may be late, so again, thank you for this opportunity.

From: Liz Whiteley

Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 11:00 AM

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

Subject: Comments prior to RTC Staff Recommendation to the Commission on 11/15/18

Dear RTC commissioners and staff,

I live in Commissioner Leopold's District, and have been participating in this transportation planning process for the past few years. My neighbors and I were very much looking forward to Phase II of the UCS, as I (and they) strongly value decisions based on *quantitative* data (much more than decisions based on politics and *qualitative* assessments.) As you all know, the scenario selection process was completely qualitative and subjective. I participated in this part of the process nonetheless, but held out hope that the quantitative phase of the analysis would clear up misconceptions and provide an optimal way forward.

Phase II of the UCS has now given us a *quantitative* means to evaluate the entire suite of potential transportation improvement projects. Looking through the lens of the scenarios— i.e. the project groupings assembled in Part I of this UCS process by subjective means—we see that none of scenarios - A,B, C, E - reflect a truly optimal way forward. RTC staff is likely going to recommend Scenario B, but now that we finally have real data and real numbers, **it would be foolish for the RTC not to re-evaluate each improvement project independent of the Scenario into which it is currently grouped. Let's choose to move forward with the specific projects that the data shows to be 1) effective at relieving our transportation problems, 2) fiscally responsible, and 3) efficient to implement.**

I've included a summary chart below, of the data reflected in the [RTC's Performance Dashboard Step 2 Analysis Results](#). Scenario B includes a train and a pathway through the rail ROW. Scenario B also includes buses on the shoulder of Highway 1 (which seems like a reasonable and effective option). Scenario A does *not* include a train or buses on the shoulder of Highway 1 - *and yet the projected overall mode share filled by public transit is less than 2 percentage points higher in Scenario B than Scenario A*. In the "preferred" Scenario B, transit mode-share is still only 6% of the total (as compared to 4.1% in Scenario A where buses on the shoulder of Highway 1 were not even considered). **Is this mere 2% transit advantage worth all of cost and time build out a train and everything that goes with it?** Is it worth the loss of political capital and trust from your constituents? Is it worth sacrificing what could instead be a safe, quiet and beautiful bike and pedestrian path that would connect our community rather than divide it? (Specifically, with a train next to a trail, the ROW will require fencing and will literally divide the county in half along the east/west corridor). Is 2% worth irreversibly altering the quality of life of your constituents that live in close proximity to the rail corridor, who would have diesel trains thundering past their homes from 6 am to 9pm every day? I think it is not.

	Percentage of overall mode share Performance Dashboard Step 2 Analysis Results		
Scenario	Transit	Bike	Walk
A - no train	4.1	4.3	10.9
B - train + bus on Hwy 1	6	4.4	10.7
C	4.8	4.2	10.8
E	5.3	4.4	10.7

Additionally, the study assumes that biking and walking on a path through the ROW would be the same in both Scenario A and B. This seems illogical, especially given that with a train, the path will be much harder to access (because, you know, fences...) Scenario B includes protected bike lanes, while Scenario A does not (which is how the bike mode share is shown to be higher in Scenario B). If we're going to invest in an active transportation path through the ROW, why in the world would we not invest in additional infrastructure to support the use of that path, like protected bike lanes?

Please abstain from lurching forward and selecting any of these subjectively-assembled scenarios at this moment. This is a big deal. We now have *quantitative* data to look at, and the community deserves a **re-examination of which individual projects will truly work best for us.**

Sincerely,
Liz Whiteley

From: Rick Longinotti

Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 10:40 AM

To: George Dondero <gdondero@sccrtc.org>; Ginger Dykaar <gdykaar@sccrtc.org>; Grace Blakeslee <gblakeslee@sccrtc.org>; John Leopold <john.leopold@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; ebottorff167@yahoo.com; Zach Friend <zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us>; Ryan Coonerty <ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us>; Greg Caput <greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; Jacques Bertrand <jbertrand@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Sandy Brown <sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com>; Randy Johnson <rlj12@comcast.net>; trina.coffman@cityofwatsonville.org; Cynthia Chase <cchase@cityofsantacruz.com>; openup@cats.ucsc.edu

Subject: UCS Scenario

Dear Commissioners and RTC Staff,

The Campaign for Sustainable Transportation considers your decision on the Unified Corridors Plan as an opportunity to reduce our community's auto dependency and advance public transit and active transportation. By using this opportunity, you will be lowering transportation costs for low-income community members, reducing our carbon footprint, and encouraging development of walkable communities. In order to take full advantage of this opportunity, we ask that you endorse Scenario B, so long as the projects that increase auto capacity are removed from the Scenario, namely, ramp metering on Highway 1 and Mission St. intersection "improvements", because they prioritize traffic flow over bike and pedestrian safety.

Scenario B includes "Bus Rapid Transit Lite" on Soquel and Freedom Blvd, which appears to be missing in the staff "Preferred Scenario."

Scenario B preserves the tracks on the rail corridor which is the best way to enable a future transit option. We also advocate including freight service on the rail corridor in Scenario B.

The staff recommended "Preferred Scenario" is very similar to Scenario E since it includes more highway expansion and aims for an HOV Lane project post-2035. This scenario fails to acknowledge four features of highway widening:

1. The HOV Lane Project is financially infeasible

The Unified Corridors Study states, "Full implementation of HOV lanes on Highway 1 will require seeking a significant level of funding at a time when state and federal funding for highway capacity increasing projects is extremely limited." According to the Unified Corridors Study only 8% of the funding for the HOV lane project would be available from state and federal sources. (The earlier draft indicated that zero grant money would be forthcoming.)

In 2011 the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) wrote to the RTC, "FHWA has determined the Highway 1 HOV Project does not have sufficient funds to cover the \$503 Million HOV Lane Alternative." Since that time, the estimated cost for building the HOV Lane project has increased. But the prospects for winning state and federal funding have decreased.

2. Highway expansion projects are ineffective at reducing congestion beyond the short run (induced travel impact)

"Numerous studies...consistently show that adding capacity to roadways fails to alleviate congestion for long because it actually increases vehicle miles traveled (VMT)." - Handy, [Increasing Highway Capacity Unlikely to Relieve Traffic Congestion](#)

The Highway 1 Draft EIR estimates that vehicle miles traveled on Hwy 1 after HOV lane expansion will increase by 54% in the northbound morning commute hour and 69% in the southbound evening commute hour. Actual congestion would most likely be worse, given that the Draft EIR did not account for induced travel. Neither does the Unified Corridors Study account for induced travel, which means it will need to be revised in order make our county eligible to apply for grants that require "comprehensive multimodal corridor plans".

In the competition for state Congested Corridors Program grants, our County would sabotage its application for funding by submitting a corridor plan that includes a goal for highway expansion that would increase vehicle miles traveled by such large amounts.

3. Projects that increase VMT increase Greenhouse Gases

Hence the proposed highway expansion projects violate our County's climate goals.

4. Projects that improve highway traffic flow in the short run also reduce transit ridership, undermining the financial viability of our transit system.

We ask you to support Scenario B without the auto projects.

Thank you!

For the Campaign for Sustainable Transportation,
Rick Longinotti, co-chair

From: Jeff Singer
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 9:12 AM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Trail Now, No Train...

The fact that is even a discussion is mind blowing and goes to show the big money special interests have gotten their way with the RTC. It brings the motives of every member who votes for the train into question.

Use Coastal Corridor NOW for alternatives to the car TODAY. There should be no train through our community.

A trail would be so much nicer, and so much more useful. Who is going to pay \$26 dollar, or more, to ride a train from Watsonville to Santa Cruz? Not many, that's for certain.

Do what is right for the community, not for your wallets.

Jeff

From: Keith Otto
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 7:43 AM
To: SCC-RTC-UCS <ucs@sccrtc.org>
Subject: UCIS Questions - Passenger Rail - Trains Per Day - Headway - Revenue Hours Per Day

Hello!

A few UCIS questions regarding passenger rail service which I did not find explained in the study or the FAQ (maybe they are there, but I missed them?).

1) How many trains are expected to pass through the rail corridor each weekday?

Is it 60?

Daily weekday service is listed as 6am to 9pm, so 15 hours/day. Headway means how frequently a train would depart, correct? Headway is listed as 30 minutes. So if a train is departing every 30 minutes for 15 hours, that would be 30 trains. Those would be in one direction, so add the 30 return trips and the total is 60 (30 one direction, and 30 the other). Is

this correct?

2) What are 'revenue hours per day'?

Is it the number of hours that a train is in service carrying passengers? So if 3 trains are operating on the corridor each weekday from 6am to 9pm, that would be 45 revenue service hours per day (3 trains x 15 hours = 45 revenue service hours), correct?

How was the number of 42 service hours derived?

... Provide forty-two hours of passenger rail transit revenue hours per day ...

See also reference below.

Thank you!

Regards,
Keith

Reference:

Unified Corridor Investment Study
Step 2 Analysis Results with Preferred Scenario
DRAFT November 2018

<https://sccrtc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/UCS-Step%202%20Analysis-%20Draft-20181111.pdf>

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(emphasis added)

Table B-10: Passenger Rail Service

Description

Passenger rail transit service provided between the Westside of Santa Cruz and Pajaro Station just south of the Santa Cruz County border in Monterey County. The costs for a diesel multiple unit (DMU) vehicle train service and the cost to electrify rail service are both evaluated.

Scope

Replacement of all rail on portions of the line between Santa Cruz with continuously welded rail using good-quality second-hand rail. Replacement of 2/3 of rail ties, improve or replace turnouts and switches. Implement new signal and positive train control system to monitor and control train movements. Install new active warning devices at nineteen crossings and quiet zones at all thirty-three public at grade crossings. Construct stations with platforms, ticketing machines, parking, bicycle racks and lockers and shelter similar to a bus shelter. Implement recommended improvements to structures as identified in 2012 JL Patterson Report. **Provide forty-two hours of passenger rail transit revenue hours per day with thirty-minute**

headway during the weekday from 6am to 9pm and weekends serving ten primary stations (Westside Santa Cruz, Bay Street/California, Downtown Santa Cruz, Seabright, 17th, 41st, Monterey Avenue, Aptos Village and Downtown Watsonville in Santa Cruz County) and one station at Pajaro in Monterey County. The Passenger Rail Service project adds 163 new weekday and 102.5 new weekend revenue hours of bus transit service connecting to rail stations.

From: Michael Kaye
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 7:19 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Feedback on the UCS

Dear RTC Commissioners:

You have an opportunity to build a world class multi-use trail that preserves the train corridor for future transportation uses or an overly expensive rail that will most likely never be built due to horrendous expenses. Vote instead to spend the money on our busses and highway 1 improvements. I've been on many trail only paths recently in cities like Bend and Boise and Monterey and,

Bayshore Bikeway is a 25-mile loop
Marvin Braude Bike Trail—Greater Los Angeles
American River Bike Trail—Sacramento

They all share a few things in common. They're used a lot both for fun and commuting. They act as a happy gathering place for community members and they get people to exercise.

The current boom in eBikes (e.g. Jump) surely demonstrates the viability of just how popular this form of transportation can be in Santa Cruz County.

Please vote on Dec 6th to provide us with a truly safe way to hike and bike throughout our community and vote no on an overly expensive rail that will never be built.

Sincerely,

Michael Kaye

From: Kyle Carter
Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 9:16 PM
To: ucs@sccrtc.org
Subject: November 15th meeting input

I live in Aptos and use my car on our roadways and highway 1 for transportation. Please stop wasting your time and our money on the idea of using a train for transportation. My family would not be able to use it to commute for work or school or grocery store. The train would not stop at large use areas, such as Cabrillo college, UCSC, Capitola mall and Dominican hospital, thus it would not alleviate traffic on highway 1. What we need is highway 1 widened to 4 lanes in each direction from Santa Cruz to Watsonville with a carpool lane.

Thank you, Kyle Carter

From: Tom
Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 4:25 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: No train

Hello,

We have owned a condo in Aptos for the last 37 year on Sea Ridge Rd, right next to the railroad tracks. The Davenport train carrying coal in the morning and cement in the evening was never a bother. But the idea of numerous, up to 60 trains a day, going 45 mph hour within feet of our condo is very distressing. It would absoluteion destroy the tranquility of being on the coast. Besides destroying our property value. Please, NO TRAIN THROUGH OUR COMMUNITY!

A trail would be so much nicer, and so much more useful. Besides keeping the regional charm of the existing and historic old trestles that are perfectly fine for a trail. A trail could be built and open for use with months, not decades, without destroying those beautiful old trestles. With the amount of cyclists, skateboarders, rollerbladers... let alone walkers a trail would be an immediate success. Who is going to pay \$26 dollar, or more, to ride a train from Watsonville to Santa Cruz? Nobody!

Don't let the bureaucratic money blind you. Vote for the community. Please vote Trail Now, No train.

Sincerely,
Tom Livingston

From: Larry Bercovich
Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 3:53 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: NO TRAIN!

I live in Aptos. My children and I have no safe place to ride our bikes.
Please, no train. Do the right thing ... think about what will make this community better - 10, 20, 40 years from now. Larry Bercovich

From: Mike Ransom
Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 1:50 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: No Train Through Our Community

To RTC Members,

I'm writing to voice my opinion not to have a train service through our county. My reasons are listed below.

1. Cost - Let's use the money to fix problems in the county rather than to use on old technology that would move a small group of people around town. The amount of money

poured into fixing tracks, providing trains, and subsidizing passengers could be used for many other worthy programs (ie. widening Highway 1 and improving the bus system).

2. Timing - We can not wait around twenty years for a train system to be built under the traffic crisis situation we have at this time.

3. Technology - Santa Cruz County/ the RTC has a wonderful opportunity to show case a means of transportation that is economically feasible and environmentally sound. Trails would cost substantially less to build and could be used by walkers, runners, bicyclists, and many different types of electric vehicles.

I believe residents of this County prefer to be out of their cars when trying to get to places. I believe this would impact the traffic congestion in a very positive big way. I also believe this approach would be something that other Counties would look at as a model on how to be fiscally responsible while reducing the traffic grid lock.

Thank you for your time,

Mike Ransom
Seacliff Resident

From: Bob Fifield

Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 12:12 PM

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

Subject: All those who seek to truly improve the Quality of Life in Santa Cruz County

I hope the voice for removing the need for an obsolete freight track will be heard over that of a profit-seeking outside organization with no concern for the quality of life in our county.

Millions can be saved and schedules significantly expedited by removing the need for such a track and instead relying on the use of existing buses and infrastructures. This also gives flexibility to allow adjustments to be made much sooner and saving of even more money. The following arrangement allows all uses of the corridor and relief to HWY1 congestion as soon as the lowest-cost version is implemented. It then allows worthwhile enhancement in a variety of aspects as more and more funding comes in.

Please consider the following that should appease all (except representatives of Progressive Rail). This concept is being circulated among residents of Santa Cruz County..

Bob Fifield

Aptos 95003

The future of Passenger Train service in Santa Cruz County

A Novelty Train can run once a year and call itself the "Polar Express". (Passengers may or may not get on-board.)

A genuine High-Speed Train may be able to run only once an hour and yet serve a useful purpose.

A "Commuter Train" running only once a half-hour is a stretch and even every 15 minutes may be on the edge of acceptability. Such infrequency obviously deters interest in public transportation, so a goal should always be to do better. Properly providing strategic bursts of every 5 minutes, would seem very desirable.

Such a Passenger Commuter Train traveling through Santa Cruz County on a single track (intended only for slow moving freight) isn't going to happen! Introducing the possibility of head-on collisions will discourage anyone from ever risking such catastrophes. A simple solution that should satisfy all, is to replace the obsolete freight track with a low-cost, multi-use arrangement that would safely accommodate bus passengers, bicyclists, pedestrians, families and genuinely improve HWY1 traffic during rush hours as soon as it gets implemented, which is dependent upon the speed of our local government.

Briefly ...

<1> The existing single railroad track could be covered with a surface that is drivable by existing buses

<2> During morning commutes, buses depart the Watsonville bus terminal to pick-up this single lane corridor (only accessible by buses, emergency vehicles, pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles) at the most convenient spot and travel westward unimpeded through the corridor to the Santa Cruz bus terminal and then return via the free-moving (at this time) eastbound HWY1, back to the Watsonville bus terminal to repeat the process for hours.

<3> During evening commutes, the flow reverses.

<4> Without bus activity on weekends, family activities could safely take place.

All this can be accomplished within the schedule of the present RTC "Approved Plan" along the corridor for the "Freight Train to Nowhere".

Please use common sense and help everyone to take part in improving the Quality of Life for those in Santa Cruz County! Don't be deceived by others with no concern for your well-being, telling only half-truths. Please let your government representatives know that you do not want obsolete freight train service. (The spacious Industrial area of Watsonville could retain freight lines that do not extend into residential areas to the west).

From: Neil Waldhauer

Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 11:28 AM

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

Subject: Rail corridor

I'm writing to express my support to the RTC for Passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz branch line. I live in Santa Cruz and I would use this service instead of driving. I also favor a multi-use trail as I would use that for shorter trips.

best regards,

Neil

From: Natalie Dean
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 11:48 PM
To: UCS <UCS@scrtc.org>
Subject: Corridor Study input

Hi RTC staff,

I'd like to provide some last-minute input on the United Corridor Investment Study after reading it through. I think most people in Santa Cruz share similar goals and values; for the most part we'd all like to see improved transit, bike and pedestrian safety and accessibility, and less auto traffic. In accomplishing these goals and more, it appears to me that Scenario B is our best option. The study considers many important factors, though I urge RTC to think even bigger picture and longer term. I'm sure you all know already how investing in bus, bike, and pedestrian improvements can have an outsize positive impact. I wanted to point out a couple things I didn't see fully addressed in the study that I hope will be factors in your recommendation:

-Role of transit and bike routes in access to jobs and opportunities and escaping poverty and homelessness.

-Transportation trends among young people: car ownership is declining; demand for transit and bike options is on the rise.

-Potential for Santa Cruz to maintain and/or build its identity:

- a) Peaceful "small town" vibe; getaway for locals and visitors alike
- b) Environmental stewardship and access to natural resources
- c) Inclusivity
- d) Boldness and creativity

-Likelihood of public involvement: Establishing a sense of community ownership is key to public infrastructure projects succeeding. People of Santa Cruz investing in their corridor, in various ways, seems more likely with a bike and pedestrian path than with rail- or auto-oriented improvements, which will continue to be controversial.

-Necessity of investing in buses. Ridership is low because people only bus in Santa Cruz if they have no other option. Please invest in the democratic, humble bus. We need BRT.

I think the RTC has a very important and exciting decision to make about the future of our county. I hope staff keep in mind their vision for Santa Cruz and have the courage to get behind the most forward-thinking solution.

Best wishes,
Natalie Dean

From: Kelly Menehan
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 10:22 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@scrtc.org>
Subject: Trail Only!

To: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

I am writing to express my absolute opposition to using the existing rail corridor for trains and also to express my opposition to replacing our trestles. Instead, please build a world class multi-use trail. We all know that not enough people commute from Santa Cruz to Watsonville to justify trains. The trains are too costly and inefficient as proposed. Please reject rail-trail in favor of trail only.

Thank you.

Kelly Menehan

From: f o l e y
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 5:40 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@scrtc.org>
Subject: Fw: Train versus Trail

Trail only.

No trains

The future is bright. Don't make it loud and dirty as well.

From: Anne Bell
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 5:16 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@scrtc.org>
Subject: Rail to trail project

Please put a walking/bike path in on the rail line. It makes so much sense and encourages healthy living for us and our earth. There are countless examples of successful rail to trail conversions. San Ramon all the way to Concord CA is a great example. People exercise, commute and socialize on the trail. Portland OR also has a very much used commuter bike path.

Honestly it is an embarrassment that our community does not have viable biking options for commuting.

Furthermore with the advent of autonomous vehicles, we may find a train system obsolete. Certainly one that does not have the infrastructure of parking lots and easy access for commuters seem like a waste of investment.

Thank you for considering my input.

Anne Bell

From: Donna Thomas
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 4:00 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Yes to rail and trail!!

Thanks for supporting the rail and trail option.

Donna 🌸

From: Ranell Durgan
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 3:52 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>;
Subject: No Rail, trail only!

Please accept my strenuous objection to a rail / and or bus system. Trail only.

Ranell Durgan

Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 3:12 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>

Name
Thomas Falcon
Subject
Rail Trail - Roads
Your Message
<p>Sounds like a rail trail with some type of freight service is still needed. Lets make sure that the highway 1 corridor is the number one priority. Highway 1 should of already been started with it's on a off ramp lanes.</p> <p>Lets stop talking and get going on highway one if you every want my vote for any future funding for trails and rails</p>

From: Buzz & Jennie Anderson
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 3:06 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Letter to the commission

Commissioners,

If the commission continues to back the flawed rail-trail plan by choosing the UCIS scenario B, the results for the county will be disappointing to say the least. True, the Westside may get a 12 foot wide trail and a 4.5 foot high fence, but from the San Lorenzo Bridge to Aptos what will come to be (at best) is a fragmented, non-continuous, overly expensive and little used trail. A passenger train is not suited for a county our size, and realistically its price tag is way out of reach. Low ridership will ensure our highways and surface roads remain in gridlock. Tax dollars which could be used for better things will go to subsidize the few passengers. We implore you to stop wasting money and trust your own UCS report which states that a world class trail would have over fifteen thousand users a day, a third of which would be non-recreational users (commuters). The voters of Capitola just passed Measure L. Let the other citizens of the county vote as well on the future of the corridor. It's the right thing to do.

Sincerely, Buzz

and Jennie Anderson

From: Karen Menehan
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 12:38 PM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Public opinion on trains versus trail

I am opposed to using the corridor for trains and opposed to replacing our trestles. Please build a world class trail. We all know that not enough people commute from SC to Watsonville to justify trains. Trail only please.

Karen Menehan

From: Stanley Sokolow
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 11:34 AM
To: UCS <UCS@sccrtc.org>
Cc: sensibletransportation@googlegroups.com
Subject: A comment on the draft proposed scenario in the staff report for 11/15/18

Dear RTC and staff:

I have this observation about the draft preferred scenario in Attachment 1 of the 11/15/18 RTC agenda.

- Table 1 showing the new preferred and the 4 other scenarios doesn't indicate anything would be done on Soquel Ave/Dr -- Freedom Blvd except buffered/protected bike lanes and intersection improvements for bike/pedestrians. However, the text of the staff report on Attachment 1 page 4-8 says about that route: "Where feasible, transit signal priority and bypass lanes at intersections on Soquel/Freedom will be provided." Those improvements for bus service should be expressly shown in Table 1 or they may be ignored when it comes time to implement the preferred scenario. BRT Lite on that arterial corridor, which would have included these features, has been omitted in the preferred scenario.

Sincerely,

Stanley M. Sokolow
Santa Cruz

From: Andrea Miller
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 10:49 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Use Trail Now for alternatives to CAR! NO TRAIN!

Hello,

Thank you for all of the hard work you are doing to investigate alternatives for the 32 mile branch line.

I, and most of my neighbors, are only interested in a wide, world class trail,
NO TRAIN.

I live in Seacliff. I could easily use the trail to bike to most of my local errands north and south.

Right now, biking around here is scary. Soquel Drive and McGregor are death traps.

Do the right thing and skip the train and focus on a wide, world class trail only.
Please, I'm 55, build it in my life time.

I'll see you all in Watsonville on Thursday,

Best regards,

Andrea Miller

From: Jean Mahoney
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 8:15 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Trail needed for commuters

The UCS reported that a world-class trail would have over 15,000 users, with 5,000 utilitarian users (commute, school, shop) a day. This world-class trail would be built decades sooner than a trail next to the tracks and would have a greater impact on Highway 1 traffic congestion.

The trail on our corridor is the most practical use of this valuable commuter land. Many more including myself would use this corridor to safely commute from Live Oak to Watsonville, Capitola and Santa Cruz.

Implement plans for the safe and sane commuter Trail Only.

Jean Mahoney
35 year resident of Live Oak
Teacher, Santa Cruz City Schools

From: Kitty Hansen
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 8:14 AM
To: UCS <UCS@sccrtc.org>
Subject: rail trail comment

Hello,

My four grandparents moved to Santa Cruz County in the 1930's. They settled in Soquel and Aptos. I am recently retired and live in Capitola. My husband and I ride our bikes several days a week. We would love to be able to take a 45-minute bike ride to the gym, work out, take a shower, and catch a ride home on the TRAIN!

We would also use the rail trail on weekends. We would put our bicycles on the train in Capitola and take the train to Wilder State Park, and ride our mountain bikes in Wilder. The traffic on Mission Street through the west side of SC is terrible. It is a deterrent to getting up the coast. Other weekends, we would put our bikes on the train, and get off in Aptos near Nicene State Park, and ride our bikes in the Park.

We would also put our bikes on the train and ride the train to south SC county. We would hope to link up with the long bicycle trails that go to Monterey from Watsonville.

The train would give people OPTIONS for transit. Right now, we just have the freeways, which are impacted even on weekends. People who want to go to work without sitting in their cars would be able to take the train.

We know that in Marin and Sonoma counties, businesses sprang up at the train stops, and people started taking the train for recreation. Some people will take the train to go shopping in Santa Cruz. Some will take it to the farmer's market on the West Side. Some will take it to go wine-tasting. Our buses in town will be able to pick people up from the train stations and take them to school, their jobs, or to go shopping.

People are creative and intelligent. They will take the train for many different reasons. I just hope that we have some sort of light rail option when the rails are open! Also, KIDS LOVE TRAINS! It will be a great source of joy for them to get on the train and go to the Boardwalk! I can envision our young people taking the train to go on school field trips: to Natural Bridges to see the butterflies; to downtown Santa Cruz to see the Courthouse and the MAH; to Elkhorn Slough (we hope); to O'Neill Sea Odyssey at the harbor for the educational catamaran adventure; to Wilder Ranch, to participate in the historic days educational tour; and to Ano Nuevo to see the elephant seals when the train continues to San Mateo County!

We also know from the SMART rail line in Sonoma-Marin, that once we have a functioning train, the state and other agencies will grant more funds, because they want to see a network of trains all over California! This is happening up north of San Francisco Bay right now, and we can be part of the state rail network!

I applaud the RTC for all of their thoughtful, difficult work in this area. The people of Santa Cruz County deserve options to our over-packed freeways. Hopefully, there will be a day when commuters can actually go "over the hill" on a train network! It would also be wonderful to be able to take a train up to the City someday!

I hope that the voters of Measure D get to see their dream come true, and have a train in Santa Cruz County that will carry people, wheelchairs, strollers, bicycles, skateboards, surfboards, SUP boards, and maybe even doggies! It will be great to get people out of their cars, and free up valuable parking along the rail line!

I appreciate everything you are doing to advance sane and safe transit in this county!

Kitty Hansen
Capitola

From: Dan
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 7:30 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Train

No taxes for train, No empty trains through my community. Trail now is only sensible alternative. RTC decision to proceed with train will not be accepted!

From: Mary Warren
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 7:13 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Train vs Trail

A train is a very bad idea for the county. No one will ride this very expensive idea that will bankrupt the county. A bike and walking trail will be used by thousands of local people and will be an attraction for tourists. There is no way that a bike/walking trail can be installed along the train tracks. We have visited areas, Ojai to Ventura and the Hyannisport area in Massachusetts, where train tracks have been removed and a trail installed used by everyone.

A train running, besides being expensive and not used, would actually cause more congestion on surface streets.

This idea should be put to a county vote.

Oliver and Mary Warren

From: Mark Moreno
Sent: Sunday, November 11, 2018 10:05 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Feedback on the UCS

Dear RTC Commissioners:

You will be making important decisions regarding the direction of transportation investments in our county in the coming months. Please do not rush these decisions.

You have just hired a new Executive Director (ED), Guy Preston, who starts in his role on December 3. No organization would hire a new ED and hand him a decision covering the next 17 years without getting his input prior to making such a large commitment. We owe it to the new ED and the public to take our time to get these decisions right.

There has been no analysis of the impact on METRO operational funding of choices being considered in various UCS scenarios. METRO is the public transit system providing over FIVE MILLION rides per year in Santa Cruz County. None of the projects in the UCS come even close to this type of volume. The last thing we want is to have a project like passenger rail cannibalize a METRO system which has ALREADY suffered from budget cuts.

There is a group of transportation projects in the UCS on which the community has strong consensus. It's the Commissioners' job to bring the community together. The current RTC staff has demonstrated its hopeless bias towards an unfunded fantasy train over the last four years. Slow down the process and give the new Executive Director time to make his recommendations. After spending over \$4,000 per page for the UCS, let's use the information thoughtfully to make the right decisions.

Sincerely,

Mark Moreno

From: Liz
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 1:38 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Please leave our historic trestles as is

Hello,

I am a long time resident of Aptos and have spoken my mind previously but am urging you to please consider doing what the majority of us are asking for - remove the railroad and make it a bike trail already.

The residents of this county DO NOT want our historic trestles removed and replaced by modern train bridges. This is our county and we choose to spend lots and lots of our hard earned money to live here. Please listen to our concerns and wishes. We choose to live in a beach town with historic roots for a reason. Don't push that aside and give up the rights to our railroad tracks to a private company who doesn't even pay their bills.

Thank you and please remember who you work for, US, the residents of Santa Cruz County.

Best,

Liz Ruggles, Aptos CA

From: Manu Koenig
Sent: Saturday, November 10, 2018 9:56 PM
To: Grace Blakeslee <gblakeslee@sccrtc.org>
Subject: Graphs from Capitola City Council Mtg

Hi Grace,

Where can I find the transit speed graph and highway speed graph that were shown at the 11/8 Capitola City Council Mtg? The agenda attachments just have the standard UCS booklet without them.

Thanks!
Manu

From: Doug Huskey
Sent: Saturday, November 10, 2018 8:49 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>; donna4santacruz@gmail.com; larson4santacruz@gmail.com; cummings4citycouncil@gmail.com; Ryan Coonerty <ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us>; David James Terrazas <dterrazas@cityofsantacruz.com>; mwatkins@cityofsantacruz.com; Sandy Brown <sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com>; Cynthia Chase <cchase@cityofsantacruz.com>; ckrohn@cityofsantacruz.com; cmathews@cityofsantacruz.com; rnoroyan@cityofsantacruz.com; Jacob Huskey ; anna huskey
Subject: UCS Step 2 Analysis

Dear RTC, City and County leaders,

I am writing to voice my concern over our transportation priorities. We are facing an immediate and serious crisis in North – South transportation now, today, with Southbound gridlock on Highway 1 from Soquel Ave to Freedom every weekday afternoon. This gridlock has spread to the surface streets in all surrounding communities. In addition each morning shows similar gridlock Northbound over the same portions of Highway 1. I commute daily from my Westside home to Cabrillo College and back and see this gridlock every day.

In reviewing the Draft UCS step 2 Analysis, I find that the only scenario that seriously focuses on this crisis is Scenario A.

We need to adopt Scenario A now as our transportation roadmap for the future. We need to tackle some serious projects to improve the current Highway 1 gridlock. Scenario B only adopts on-ramp metering and buses on shoulders utilizing current auxiliary lanes with improvements at the interchanges to connect the auxiliary lanes. These lanes are likely to be gridlocked too, and do not solve the gridlock from State Park drive to San Andreas Rd. We really need to add HOV/bus lanes to encourage: ride sharing, electric and low emission vehicle use, and most importantly to provide a non-gridlocked solution for Bus transit on the highway. This combined with auxiliary lanes from State Park to San Andreas Rd offers a real solution to the gridlock.

In addition Scenario A addresses seismic safety of the San Lorenzo bridge, something we should do in anycase. The additional lanes on this bridge will reduce backup onto the Fishhook.

Finally, Scenario B makes a number of assumptions on the feasibility of a train on the rail corridor that are questionable and should be explicitly stated or provided by staff to make an educated decision:

1. Costs appear to be low when compared to other train projects such as the Smart train and considering some of the engineering challenges on the corridor.
2. Details of costs for electric train are not provided and are certainly not for light rail which is the expectation of most train supporters. Light rail projects typically cost 2-5 billion and require a much larger population base to be feasible.
3. So far engineering costs, retaining wall costs, setback issues, etc. have caused delay after delay in getting the first segments completed, and these are the easiest. There is no timeline, or source of funding provided for the other segments, making this appear to be a very very long term solution not a solution for 2035 as per the UCS analysis goals.
4. The projected ridership on the train system even if it could be completed in the 2035 timeframe are not enough to significantly reduce gridlock on highway 1.
5. Advent of new transportation modalities such as ride sharing, autonomous vehicles, e-scooters etc. are not supported on the rail corridor even though some of these changes are already happening (e.g. Jump eBikes) in Santa Cruz.

As a result I strongly urge the RTC and our County leaders to support Scenario A as the most timely and efficient use of our transportation dollars.

Sincerely,

Doug Huskey

From: Jeb Bishop
Sent: Friday, November 09, 2018 9:53 PM
To: UCS <UCS@scrtc.org>
Subject: yes for Scenario B

I wish to express my opinion that Scenario B of the Unified Corridor Investment Study is the best. The reality of the future is that highways and cars cannot keep up with increasing congestion. Rail transport is the most efficient way to move large numbers of people.

Jeb Bishop