

**From:** [Linda Wilshusen](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Guy Preston](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on RTC August 3, 2023 Agenda Item 27, Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail Project Contracts  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 2, 2023 8:38:11 AM

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August 2, 2023

Dear Commissioners -

I'm writing in support of the staff recommendations for Item 27 regarding contract approvals for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail Project.

I urge the Commission to approve additional direction authorizing the Executive Director to submit a project application for the balance of funds needed for the Project Concept Phase, as part of the upcoming *Regional Transportation Improvement Program* funding cycle. I would expect that this project would score well under the criteria proposed in Agenda Item 28, and would advance a range of regional transportation and climate action priorities.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

- Linda Wilshusen  
SCCRTC Executive Director 1985-2005

**From:** [Jensen Maass](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Item #27  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 8:52:39 PM

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My email below to Manu Koenig

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jensen Maass [REDACTED]  
**Date:** August 1, 2023 at 4:12:31 PM PDT  
**To:** Manu Koenig <Manu.Koenig@santacruzcounty.us>  
**Subject:** Item #27

Hello Manu,  
I'm requesting that you vote YES on Item #27, to approve the contract with HDR Engineering Inc. The Rail Concept Design Report. As District 1's Supervisor it's imperative that you listen to your constituents.

Thank You,  
Valerie Jensen Maass

**From:** [Trician Comings](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item # 27  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 8:06:22 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

I urge you to vote yes on the staff recommended proposal – item #27.  
We are so excited to see the Rail & Trail project moving forward!  
Keep it on track!

Trician Comings

**From:** [Tina Andreatta](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [thekristenbrown@gmail.com](mailto:thekristenbrown@gmail.com); [vanessa.quiroz@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:vanessa.quiroz@cityofwatsonville.org); [apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us); [felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us); [bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us); [rj12@comcast.net](mailto:rj12@comcast.net); [manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us); [sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com); [eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org); [Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us); [zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us); [openup@ucsc.edu](mailto:openup@ucsc.edu)  
**Subject:** Item #27 - Please vote YES and approve the contract with HDR Engineering Inc. The Rail Concept Design Report  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 10:44:08 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

Please move forward on a contract with HDR Engineering, Inc which would include the whole Concept Report for Electric Rail Service.

Please note the amended contract also includes the CalTrans required stipulations for using the \$4.3Million Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant recently awarded to the RTC for the design of rail service.

Please approve and vote yes on this contract with HDR as it is the next step towards designing a future rail system serving residents of Santa Cruz County and beyond our county.

Sincerely,

Tina Andreatta  
Aptos, CA 95003

**From:** [Jensen Maass](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item #27  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 4:20:10 PM

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Hello,

I'm requesting that the SCCRTC votes YES on item #27 and approve the contract with HDR Engineering Inc. The Rail Concept Design Report. The people in the County of Santa Cruz voted in favor of the Rail/Trail and we are now depending on you to move forward with the process to achieve what we voted for.

Thank You,  
Valerie Jensen Maass

**From:** [Matt Farrell](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** RTC Agenda Item 27: TIRCP Master Agreement and HDR Professional Engineering and Environmental Services Agreement  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 12:30:23 PM  
**Attachments:** [FORT Letter Supporting TIRCP and HDR Agreements 08032023 RTC Agenda.docx](#)

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Attached is our letter supporting approval of the Item 27 staff recommendation and requesting that the RTC direct staff to submit an application for the remaining funds to support this work in the upcoming STIP/STBG/RSTPX funding cycle.

Matt Farrell  
Board Chair  
FORT



August 1, 2023

RE: Item 27 Approval of Entering into a Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Grant Funding Master Agreement, and of a Contract Award for Professional Engineering and Environmental Services by HDR

To: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail and Trail (FORT), a volunteer organization that has advocated and supported both the rail and trail on the Santa Cruz Branch Line Corridor for over 20 years, thanks RTC staff for bringing this item forward for the Commission's approval.

Approving the TIRCP Master Agreement allows the RTC to enter into a professional engineering and environmental services agreement with HDR for the full Project Concept Report for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail Project between the Pajero Junction and Santa Cruz along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. This is a landmark step in moving forward with the rail and trail project.

There is still a portion of this work, which is unfunded: \$1.63 million. Staff has stated that if the Commission wishes, staff could return and recommend programming from currently available funding sources (STIP, STBG, RSTPX) towards the rail and trail project to reduce the burden on Measure D, reduce or avoid the need for inter-program loans, and/or to serve as a match for future grants to fully fund the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis.

FORT wholeheartedly supports the Commission taking this action and requests that the RTC authorize staff to develop an application for the balance needed for this project, \$1.63M, for consideration during the upcoming STIP/STBG/RSTPX funding cycle.

We are thrilled and excited that the Project Concept Report is moving forward. Thanks to all who worked to make this happen.

Matt Farrell  
Board Chair

**From:** [Saladin Sale](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Saladin Sale](#)  
**Subject:** RTC Mtg 8/3/2023 - Agenda Item 27 – VOTE YES on Five (5) Staff Recommendations as Submitted  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 2:05:36 PM

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Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Re: RTC Mtg 8/3/2023 - Agenda Item 27 – VOTE YES on Five (5) Staff Recommendations as Submitted

Dear Commissioners and Alternates:

We have an obligation to the people of the future as well as the present.

The voters of this county know climate change is real. We ignore this fact at our peril. Many of us realize we are presently living in the closing days of a brief period of opportunity after which course change will be enormously more difficult and painful than today. There is tremendous urgency that we act now. The risks of acting too early are miniscule when compared to the risks of failing to act early enough.

Temperatures are rising dramatically everywhere, except for coastal zones like ours.

For its climate alone, Santa Cruz County will continue to grow – both in terms of residents and visitors, even if our proximity to the San Francisco Bay area and the overheating interior valleys were not a reality. In the face of this population growth we need to also be proactive about preserving our local quality of life.

We know that cars account for a huge portion of greenhouse gas emissions.

Our country's current addiction to going everywhere by car (including electric ride-hailing and autonomous vehicles) clogs our streets and highways, denies us health-giving exercise we now seek in health clubs and contributes to our discomfort in the presence of others to whom we have not been introduced. Removing precious land space to widen existing streets and highways for more cars simply doesn't work, for "if you build it, they will come".

We need to act with concern for what life here will be like over the next fifty and even one hundred years.

In the near future, who will be coming to Santa Cruz, the San Lorenzo Valley, Capitola, Watsonville, Aptos and the North Coast? To live? To recreate? How will they get here? Where will they want to go? How will they get around?

Firm commitment to building a multi-modal transportation system with a steel spine for zero-emission light rail transit is what is required. Connecting to the light rail spine, buses, e-bike sharing, walking, ride-hailing, wheelchairs and paratransit are all components of the system we need.

This is how big infrastructure projects are built; by patient execution of a sequence of incremental steps; solving problems and removing obstacles as they arise. Literally, this is how we get there.

Today, Commissioners need to continue moving by taking the next step, which is to approve all five staff recommendations on this item regarding the master agreement and others to develop detailed plans for the continued positive evolution of transportation in our county. Plans are real; they are *actionable*. Enough of the rhetoric – let's produce the *design* and the voters will make it happen.

Respectfully,

Saladin Sale  
Santa Cruz



**From:** [Neil Waldhauer](#)  
**Subject:** Rail Concept Design Report  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 7:42:35 PM

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To RTC Commisioners:

Please vote to support this design report for passenger rail service in Santa Cruz County. If you believe that rail is impractical, this study will make that clear to people by creating a good estimate of the cost. If you believe rail is practical, a finished report is the next step towards designing a future rail system for our county.

best regards,

Neil

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Neil Waldhauer Santa Cruz, California

**From:** [Iwalani Faulkner](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission; sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com; vanessa.quiroz@cityofwatsonville.org; apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us; eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org; openup@ucsc.edu; bruce.mcpherson@santacruzcounty.us; Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us; Felipe.Hernandez@santacruzcounty.us; rjj12@comcast.net; thekristenbrown@gmail.com](#)  
**Subject:** SCCRTC Agenda Item #27 for August 4, 2023 RTC Meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 2, 2023 8:59:27 AM  
**Attachments:** [2023-08-02\\_EquityTransitLetterItem27.pdf](#)

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Dear Commissioners and SCCRTC Staff,

Please include our letter on this week's agenda in support of Item# 27. Thank you!

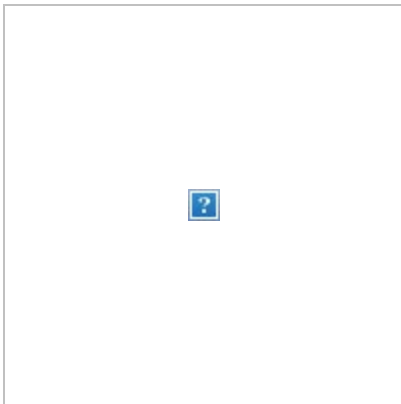
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Best regards,

Lani Faulkner, Director  
Equity Transit - Tránsito de Equidad  
[www.EquityTransit.org](http://www.EquityTransit.org)



Lani Faulkner, Candidate for Santa Cruz County 1st District Supervisor 2024  
[www.laniforsupervisor.org](http://www.laniforsupervisor.org)





1840 41<sup>st</sup> Ave, Ste 102, #227  
Capitola, CA 95010  
831-278-1007

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
June 15, 2022

**Re:** Agenda Item #27:: Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Grant Funding Master Agreement, Contract Award for Professional Engineering and Environmental Services, and Amendment to the Measure D rail Category 5-Year Program of Projects for the Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail Project between Pajaro Junction and Santa Cruz along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Dear Commissioners, Commissioner Alternates, and Staff:

We are very excited the RTC Staff is proposing to take steps forward with the TIRCP Master Agreement, ZE Passenger Rail and a rail contract. The CAPTI (Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure) clearly identifies rail and a future integrated state rail network as a priority of the state. Electric rail is the most energy efficient and least environmentally destructive form of transportation to move large numbers of people ever invented. Our Santa Cruz Coastal Rail Branchline can be found in the California Transportation Commission/ DOT's plans to be a functioning passenger rail within 10 years. We support the SCCRTC in aligning with environmentally wise transportation policies and actions and well as respecting the voting majority in this county and the State of California in prioritizing ZE passenger rail for our community.

The community has been active participants alongside the RTC with respect to developing passenger service on the Santa Cruz Branchline for over two decades, prior to its purchase and through the years and myriad of steps and studies. The RTC's approval of the Trans Corridor Alternative Analysis (TCAA) identifying electric passenger rail as the preferred choice for our passenger rail service in February 2021. Studies and surveys as well as the nearly 74% opposition to Greenway's ballot Measure D show consistent, ongoing, vigorous public majority support for passenger rail and a trail along the Santa Cruz Branchline. We hope that as commissioners your vote on this item will reflect the vote of the public majority and sentiment of the state CAPTI.

We look forward to ongoing engagement with the RTC staff and Commissioners and appreciate your support towards strengthening and growing an equitable robust environmentally wise public transit system throughout Santa Cruz County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lani Faulkner, Director