

AGENDA: April 6, 2017

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: George Dondero, Executive Director
RE: Director's Report

THIS ITEM FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Leg Day in Sacramento

On March 8 the Central Coast Coalition made the annual Leg Day trek to Sacramento to meet with our delegations to encourage their support for sound legislation and adequate funding for transportation. RTC Chair Zach Friend and I joined the group and made visits to Senator Bill Monning, Assembly members Anna Caballero and Mark Stone. We were joined at lunch by Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty and California Transportation Commission Executive Director Susan Bransen. We also met with Under Secretary Brian Annis of the California State Transportation Agency, and the Chief Consultants to the Senate Transportation & Housing Committee and Assembly Transportation Committee. The theme of the day was to encourage passage of a transportation funding bill during this legislative session.

A bill is now in play which combines elements of SB1 and Governor Brown's budget proposal and would raise \$5.4 Billion annually for transportation purposes. Leadership agreed earlier on a self-imposed deadline of April 6 to pass a bill, before the legislature goes on spring break. As of this writing, the bill has not been passed. A letter from the Coalition was mailed to our representatives on March 14 and is included as Attachment 1.

Regional Leadership Forum

On March 30 RTC Chair Zach Friend and I attended the annual CALCOG Regional Leadership Forum in Monterey. The event brings together elected leaders from transportation agencies, executive directors and staff for informational dialog and presentations and various regional issues including transportation. Presentations on providing affordable housing, messaging and technology used to pass self-help measures; regional governance structure; an update from Federal Highway Administration; designing and rethinking regional grant programs; remixing transit into your community using an innovative software; and understanding security risks when protecting transit and passenger rail.

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March 14, 2017

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Assembly Member, 30th District

The Honorable Jordan Cunningham
Assembly Member, 35th District

The Honorable Anthony Cannella
Senator, 12th District

The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson
Senator, 19th District

The Honorable Monique Limón
Assembly Member, 37th District

The Honorable Bill Monning
Senator, 17th District

The Honorable Mark Stone
Assembly Member, 29th District

RE: Central Coast Coalition Support for State Transportation Package

Dear Central Coast Representatives:

The Central Coast Coalition is very thankful to have met with you and your staff members on March 8, 2017 to discuss the importance of state transportation funding to deliver critical projects in your Senate and Assembly Districts.

The Central Coast Coalition supports AB 1 (Frazier) and SB 1 (Beall), which provide critically needed revenue to maintain and improve state highways, local streets and roads, improve the state's trade corridors, increase safety for bicyclists and pedestrians, and invest in public transportation systems.

Transportation infrastructure has suffered from decades of underinvestment, in part caused by erosion of funding from inflation, increasing vehicle mileage, the emergence of alternative fuel vehicles and the diversion of transportation revenues to repay general fund debt service. AB 1 and SB 1 will begin to address the statewide transportation funding shortfall, by increasing available resources to more closely match increasing needs. If enacted, AB1 and SB1 will provide the Central Coast agencies and other regional agencies and local governments around the state with resources to invest in multi-modal transportation solutions to reduce severe congestion and address diverse mobility needs.

The Coalition strongly recommends several components that will improve the legislation's effectiveness and gain additional support.

First, we request that any funding package include the restoration and indexing of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The availability of STIP funds will allow regional transportation planning agencies to leverage local sales tax and federal grant funding to deliver transportation projects that are critical to meeting national, state, regional and local mandates and priorities. The STIP also provides regions with a reliable and consistent fund source with



Central Coast Coalition

Moving California's Economy

the flexibility to fund state highway projects, local streets and roads, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and other critical projects that have been identified through an open public process.

Second, the Coalition requests AB 1 and SB1 be amended to increase funding for commuter and intercity rail agencies beyond the \$40 million currently specified in the legislation. Additional funding is necessary in order to ensure that recipients are able to obtain a meaningful allocation to provide multi-modal options aimed at increasing mobility, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing congestion on our roads.

Third, the Coalition requests that any funding package include the reform proposals to streamline and increase the effectiveness of the programming and project delivery process as outlined in AB1 and SB1.

For these reasons, the Central Coast Coalition supports SB1 and AB1 and urges your consideration of our proposed amendments. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact Marjie Kirn, Central Coast Coalition Chair, at (805) 961-8900 if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Marjie Kirn in blue ink.

Marjie Kirn, Executive Director
Ron DeCarli, Executive Director
Santa Barbara Association of Governments

Handwritten signature of Ron DeCarli in blue ink.

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments

Handwritten signature of Debra L. Hale in blue ink.

Debra L. Hale, Executive Director
Transportation Agency for Monterey County

Handwritten signature of George Dondero in blue ink.

George Dondero, Executive Director
Santa Cruz Co. Regional Transportation Commission

Handwritten signature of Mary Gilbert in blue ink.

Mary Gilbert, Executive Director
San Benito Council of Governments

Handwritten signature of Maura Twomey in blue ink.

Maura Twomey, Executive Director
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

Cc: The Honorable Jim Beall, Senator, 15th District
The Honorable Jim Frazier, Assembly Member, 11th District
Mr. Brian Kelly, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency
Ms. Fran Inman, Chair, California Transportation Commission



Central Coast Coalition

Moving California's Economy

Commissioners, California Transportation Commission

Ms. Susan Bransen, Executive Director, California Transportation Commission

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty, Director, California Department of Transportation

Comments from the Public on Agenda Item 13

From: Brian Peoples
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 5:48 AM
To: gdondero@sccrtc.org
Cc: Zach Friend; [Cynthia Chase](#); info@sccrtc.org; [Randy Johnson](#); John Leopold; [Ryan Coonerty](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [Greg Caput](#)
Subject: Rail Conference

Mr. Dondero,
Before you ask taxpayers to fund your trip to the rail conference, we ask you to first answer the question "do you plan to recommend a new tax measure to build a train in Santa Cruz?" Currently, there is no funding for a passenger train along the Coastal Corridor. For a passenger train, there will be a need for a new tax measure. Do you plan to ask the public to support a new tax measure for a train? Before taxpayers pay for your rail conference, please answer this question.

Best regards,
Brian Peoples, Executive Director, Trail Now

From: Sawhill Bruce
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 9:17 AM
To: Regional Transportation Commission
Cc: Sawhill Bruce
Subject: Rail Conference

Dear RTC Staff and Commissioners:
We at Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail and Trail support your decision to send someone to the 2017 Rail Conference. This is a time of rapidly evolving technology in the rail sector, in particular with solutions scaled for smaller markets with less infrastructure like our county.

Sincerely,
Bruce Sawhill, PhD, Chair, FORT

From: Barry Scott
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 5:34 PM
To: gdondero@sccrtc.org; info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Support for Director Dondero trip to 2017 APTA rail conference.

Dear Director Dondero, staff, commissioners,
My family and friends join me in expressing support for your travel to and participation in the 2017 APTA Rail Conference. I attend numerous energy and education conferences and know that conference attendance is not all fun; it's work, but it is one of the best ways stay abreast of the latest developments, emerging trends and technologies in the industry and to build relationships. Like Monterey and Santa Clara, our county is a rail county. Monterey is expanding it's rail network and our branch line connect with theirs and to other networks beyond, and we're delighted that be part of a community that embraces the future with bold vision.
We wish you safe travels and hope you returned armed with good news and resources.

Barry Scott
Coastal Rail Santa Cruz
A not for profit organization
CoastalRail.org
Facebook.com/CoastalRail

Comments from the Public on Agenda Item 17

From: Brian Peoples
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2017 4:57 PM
To: Scrtc Info; Zach Friend; Patrick Mulhearn; Cynthia Chase; George Dondero; Luis Mendez
Cc: Randy Johnson
Subject: Fw: Trail Now Newsletter

Absolutely embarrassing to our community the way RTC Staff is misusing our tax dollars. Proposing FEMA funds is really an ethical issue. We need funds to fix our roads, not for an amusement park ride.

This is not the agreement made when we supported Measure D. Good luck on getting any support for future transportation taxes.

Brian

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

From: Trail Now <info@trailnow.org>
To: brian_peoples
Sent: Saturday, April 1, 2017 4:49 PM
Subject: Trail Now Newsletter

TAX DOLLARS PROVIDED FOR TOURIST TRAIN OPERATOR

Stop the insanity! This coming Thursday (April 6th, 9 am at 701 Ocean Street, County Bldg, 5th Floor), the RTC is voting to provide FEMA disaster relief funding for Iowa Pacific (Agenda Item 17). Storm damage along the rail corridor is estimated at \$1.0 million. The intent is to use PUBLIC money to essentially subsidize a PRIVATE company. All this is being done under the guise of "fulfilling commitments" made with the RTC's decision to purchase the line. However, the only near-term benefactor of this public assistance is Iowa Pacific, a privately held, for-profit railroad company. You see, Iowa Pacific (IP) is in a period of financial distress. Among other things, they are being sued for \$3 million by the Polar Express license holder and they owe the Texas State Railroad \$1.9 million. Since IP apparently does not have the money to fix the line themselves, the RTC seems prepared to help this failing company in an effort to keep the railroad charade going. The agreement with IP clearly outlines maintenance responsibility. Ultimately, repairing storm damage is a part of normal railroad business operations and is the responsibility of Iowa Pacific. Just ask Roaring Camp. Think Roaring Camp Railroads received any financial assistance for recent repairs? Nope, Roaring Camp knows how to run a business and performed repairs themselves. While IP may not be obligated to pay for these fixes, neither is the RTC. Ultimately, if IP can't afford to maintain the line, they must vacate the corridor. Only then should the RTC consider using public funds to pay for the repairs.



So, what can you do? First, share this post with everyone you know. Next, email your RTC commissioner. Be sure to

reference Agenda Item 17. Next, contact Congressman Panetta and let him know you do not support using FEMA funds to subsidize a private company. Lastly, come to the RTC meeting, speak out, and stop this insanity!

The commissioners: <https://sccrtc.org/about/commission-members/>

Congressman Panetta: <https://panetta.house.gov/>

RTC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOCUSED ON RAIL FOR SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Executive Director George Dondero is asking us taxpayers to fund his trip to a rail conference in June. The question we are asking Mr. Dondero: "since there is no funding for rail as part of Measure D and the road damage to our community from the recent storms has added even greater need for infrastructure improvements, is intent to recommend a new tax to build a train in Santa Cruz?"

Why would we spend thousands for his trip for a rail conference when there is no money for a passenger train? We believe that question needs to be answered before we pay for his rail conference. You can ask George with email to gdondero@sccrtc.org.

SIGN THE PETITION!

Have you signed the petition? Please sign and ask your friends.

<https://www.change.org/p/santa-cruz-county-rtc-help-build-a-world-class-rail-trail-in-santa-cruz-county-by-removing-train-tracks>

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Here are some easy things you can do to help build a world-class rail-trail NOW:

1. Donate to Trail Now (<http://www.trailnow.org/donate>) to help stop the train and build a trail NOW.
2. On Facebook, "LIKE", and ask your friends to "LIKE" Trail Now. This is not just sharing, but inviting your friends to like.
3. Sign up and invite your friends to sign up for our Trail Now Newsletter.
4. Sign the petition and ask your friends to sign for a Trail Only <https://www.change.org/p/santa-cruz-county-rtc-help-build-a-world-class-rail-trail-in-santa-cruz-county-by-removing-train-tracks>

From: Robert Jones
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2017 5:04 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Rail Line repairs

Commissioners,

You all should be ashamed at yourselves for engaging in a PUBLIC subsidy, via FEMA, for storm damage. It is clearly the Iowa Pacific Railroad's responsibility for right-of-way maintenance. You pledged no subsidies when you purchased the UP rail corridor .. now you are going back on that pledge. If the IP cannot afford to do the repair due to its poor financial condition then maybe you should have selected a solvent contractor. Stop the charade and face the facts .. the rail line should be converted into a biking, walking, running trail PERIOD. No more thoughts of trains.

Robert Jones, Aptos

From: Nicky Stenton
Date: April 1, 2017 at 6:30:01 PM PDT
To: Zach Friend
Subject: April 6th RTC Input on Agenda Item 17 (FEMA funding to Iowa Pacific)

To: Zach Friend and all RTC Members
Subject: Input on Agenda 17 item of April 6th RTC Agenda

As a concerned resident of Santa Cruz County I would like to add my recommendation that the RTC not approve the funding request for FEMA disaster relief to Iowa Pacific Railway for the same reasons outlined by Dr Carey Pico in the attached letter.

Sincerely,
Nicola Stenton, Watsonville, CA 95076

Letter "Avoidance of Misuse of Public Funds" received via email on 04/01/17 from Carey Pico

[Already included in April 6, 2017 RTC meeting Agenda Item 21 - Comments from the Public](#)

From: Susan Reddington
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2017 7:08 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Using FEMA Disaster Relief Funds

Please let the RTC know that it is wrong to use FEMA Disaster Relief Funds to subsidize Iowa Pacific and make storm damage repairs. NO MORE MONEY should go into the train in Santa Cruz. It is loud, intrusive and not a good method of public transportation.

Thank you,
Susan Reddington

From: Fay Levinson
Date: April 2, 2017 at 11:28:05 AM PDT
To: Zach Friend
Subject: RTC Meeting on April 6

Dear Zach:

The web states that you are currently chair of the RTC Commission. Therefore please see that my comments reach the Commission members prior to their meeting on April 6, which I am unable to attend. Thank you. Fay Levinson

The idea of funding Iowa Pacific with County Funds, either out of the County Budget or Measure D funds, for any track/trestle repairs is completely unreasonable and unnecessary. Iowa Pacific took on the responsibilities of maintaining and repairing the tracks when they contracted to provide a service to our County. In addition, Iowa Pacific has yet to pay the County any funds due us for using the County owned tracks. Santa Cruz County taxpayers cannot afford to subsidize Iowa Pacific's operations and responsibilities. We need our own county funds for road repairs and maintenance.

Fay Levinson, Aptos, Ca. 95003

From: Brian Peoples
Date: April 2, 2017 at 5:22:54 AM PDT
To: Zach Friend
Cc: [Cynthia Chase](#), [Randy Johnson](#), [Patrick Mulhearns](#)
Subject: FEMA legal challenge

Zach,

I will not be at the RTC meeting Thursday, mountain bike race in Austin next weekend. We are very serious about the issue of RTC using FEMA disaster relief funding to repair the railroad for the tourist train. I am the one that recommended Pam Silkwood (Horan Legal) to North Coast Farmers (Rodoni). We will hire Pam if RTC moves forward with using FEMA funding to support a tourist train. It will be a big public debate.

Honestly, we are all amazed at what RTC Staff is doing - especially after we supported Measure D. Definitely would not have supported it if we had known RTC Staff plans to keep trying to build a train and be wasteful of our tax dollars. It is going to be a long 2 years for all RTC Board members.

Brian

From: Judith Kinst
Date: April 3, 2017 at 3:31:06 PM PDT
To: [Zach Friend](#), [Ryan Coonerty](#), [Bruce McPherson](#), [Randy Johnson](#), [Oscar Rios](#), [Ed Bottorff](#), [Tim Gubbins](#), [Cynthia Chase](#), [Greg Caput](#), [John Leopold](#), [Jacques Bertrand](#), [Sandy Brown](#), [Norm Hagen](#)
Subject: Re:April 6th meeting, Agenda item #17 Rail repair

Dear SC RTC,

I recently learned that the RTC is considering using FEMA disaster relief money to repair the rail corridor. With all of the people impacted by the recent storms and the great need for road repair, a decision to use public money in this way makes absolutely no sense. According to all I have been able to ascertain, we are not obligated to pay for these repairs. In fact the major damage done to the line by recent storms only shows more clearly how expensive the rail option will be over time. *Stop now. Don't use any funds to repair the storm damage to the rail corridor.* I appreciate your public service and your attention to this important matter.

Yours,
Judith Kinst, Capitola

From: Dean Morrow
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2017 8:22 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Iowa Pacific - rail corridor repairs

1) The RTC says the repairs need to be completed irrespective of the current use, and that the repairs represent a clear public benefit. Here's the problem. The current ACL agreement with Iowa Pacific has essentially rendered the corridor PRIVATE property. As a member of the PUBLIC, you can be cited for trespassing if you walk along the tracks. This is unlike any other public asset. Ultimately, the only benefactor in this case is really Iowa Pacific.

2) The RTC says Iowa Pacific is not "obligated" to pay for the repairs. However, neither is the public. If Iowa Pacific wants to enjoy the rights and exclusivity that come with operating a railroad on our corridor - they need to pay for it. Otherwise, they should vacate. Only then would it make sense to use public funds to repair the corridor.

3) There's already a precedence for how this is handled in Santa Cruz County. The vast majority of Roaring Camp track is located on public land (Henry Cowell). Yet, they have never received a dime of public money to make repairs. Why is Iowa Pacific different?

4) There was a washout in Aptos that occurred in 2011. At that time, the occupant (Sierra Northern Railroad) paid to have that fixed on their own accord with no public assistance. Somehow, now that the RTC is owner, that EXACT same fix now must be paid for with public funds. If you combine the well documented financial difficulties of Iowa Pacific with the historical precedence of other railroads paying for their own repairs, the FEMA relief becomes nothing short of a hand-out.

If the RTC does not use FEMA funds to pay for these repairs, it's very likely Iowa Pacific would have to abandon the corridor. This would be disastrous for a pro-train agenda. So, what's the alternative? Have folks like us pay for it.

This is simply unacceptable. I am strongly against any public/FEMA/Measure D funds being spent to repair that rail line. Let IP abandon the rail corridor. A passenger train through the corridor is unfeasible anyway according to your own studies. Let's build a beautiful world class trail at a fraction of the cost of a rail-with-trail.

Dean Morrow,
Capitola

From: Nathan York
Sent: Tuesday, April 04, 2017 2:04 PM
To: info@scrtc.org
Cc: rlj12@comcast.net; bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us
Subject: Tourist trains are not a "public benefit"

Dear SCCRTC,

I'm a long time resident of Santa Cruz County and Scotts Valley. I'm writing this email to express my opposition to SCCRTC Agenda item 17 on the April 6 meeting (*Approve resolution authorizing the Executive Director to submit claims for Public Assistance for storm damage repair to the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line*).

A private company (Iowa Pacific) running a for-profit holiday themed train (Polar Express) does not constitute a public benefit. And as SCCRTC Sr. Transportation Planner Karena Pushnik so eloquently stated it in correspondence with Tom Haid on March 3, 2017:

The Unified Corridors Study is implementing this voter mandate in the Rail Corridor category to perform an "environmental and economic analysis to answer important community questions about possible future transit and other transportation uses of the corridor through an open, transparent public process." Following that analysis, the RTC will make decisions about rail services or other transportation uses of the corridor.

Since the corridor is not used at present for public benefit, and since future use of the corridor is unknown at this time pending completion of said analysis, it is unclear to me how SCCRTC can justify requesting FEMA funds for these repairs.

Per the ACL 5.5.3, Iowa Pacific should either fund the repairs themselves or abandon the line.

Sincerely,
Nathan York

From: Howard Cohen
Sent: Tuesday, April 04, 2017 3:35 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Cc: gdondero@sccrtc.org; lmendez@sccrtc.org; kpushnik@sccrtc.org; yparra@sccrtc.org
Subject: Public Assistance for Storm Damage Repair to the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Dear Commissioners,

Trail Now has launched a campaign to stop the RTC from seeking federal and other storm damage financial assistance to be used to repair the rail corridor that suffered significant damage from the recent storms. The following is from their recent post on their Facebook page.

1) TRAIL NOW STATES: The RTC says the repairs need to be completed irrespective of the current use, and that the repairs represent a clear public benefit. Here's the problem. The current ACL agreement with Iowa Pacific has essentially rendered the corridor PRIVATE property. As a member of the PUBLIC, you can be cited for trespassing if you walk along the tracks. This is unlike any other public asset. Ultimately, the only benefactor in this case is really Iowa Pacific.

NOT TRUE: Try walking down the middle of the public highways or any public utility corridor. I guarantee you will be cited.

2) TRAIL NOW STATES: The RTC says Iowa Pacific is not "obligated" to pay for the repairs. However, neither is the public. If Iowa Pacific wants to enjoy the rights and exclusivity that come with operating a railroad on our corridor - they need to pay for it. Otherwise, they should vacate. Only then would it make sense to use public funds to repair the corridor.

NOT TRUE: Anyone can run rail events on the branch line tracks if they comply with the ACL. Roaring Camp moves thousand of passengers on RTC owned tracks in Santa Cruz every year and they are not required to pay the RTC for this use. They have also run trains to Wilder Ranch and one train all the way to Seascapes. In addition, Motor Car Operators West has run semiannual motorcar excursions over the entire branch line since 2013.

3) TRAIL NOW STATES: There's already a precedence for how this is handled in Santa Cruz County. The vast majority of Roaring Camp track is located on public land (Henry Cowell). Yet, they have never received a dime of public money to make repairs. Why is Iowa Pacific different?

NOT TRUE: Roaring Camp owns all the land under their tracks. I confirmed this last night with a Roaring Camp corporate officer. Regarding SC&MB (Iowa Pacific), like Roaring Camp, they have never received any public funds from the RTC.

4) See the image in our post? That was a washout in Aptos that occurred in 2011. At that time, the occupant (Sierra Northern Railroad) paid to have that fixed on their own accord with no public assistance. Somehow, now that the RTC is owner, that EXACT same fix now must be paid for with public funds.

If you combine the well documented financial difficulties of Iowa Pacific, with the historical precedence of other railroads paying for their own repairs, the FEMA relief becomes nothing short of a hand-out.

NOT TRUE: Sierra Northern, a privately owned company was not an occupant, but a common carrier which leased the branch line from Union Pacific, a publically owned company. Their agreement with UP required them to pay for the washout repair. The operating agreement between the SC&MB (railroad), a privately owned company and the RTC, a government agency, does not require the railroad to pay for acts of God or circumstances beyond the railroad's control. In the case of the recent washout in Harkins Slough the washout was a direct result of the adjacent farm operation and the farmer is liable for the damages.

TRAIL NOW STATES: Think about this, if the RTC does not use FEMA funds to pay for these repairs, it's very likely Iowa Pacific would have to abandon the corridor. This would be disastrous for a pro-train agenda. So, what's the alternative? Have folks like you pay for it.

NOT TRUE: The Santa Cruz & Monterey Bay Railway is the common carrier and they are responsible for the four customers in Watsonville. Any attempt by the railroad to vacate without the approval of the STB would be an illegal abandonment and the STB would force them to stay to service the existing customers. The only way the railroad can legally be relieved of the common carrier responsibility is if another railroad operator is found to take on the responsibility of common carrier for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. The new operator would have to be approved by the STB and RTC which would be a very long process.

TRAIL NOW ASKS ITS FOLLOWERS: Be sure to forward this to your RTC Commissioner, and see what they say.

The above statements from Trail Now are outright fabrications. I am providing this information so you will have the facts when you are bombarded with e-mails from residents who have been intentionally misled by Trail Now.

The rail corridor that is owned by the RTC suffered significant damage due to recent winter storms. I ask that you support the RTC staff's resolutions to seek federal and other storm damage financial assistance and find that repair of storm damage to the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line serves a public purpose.

Sincerely,
Howard Cohen, Aptos, Resident

Comments from the Public on Agenda Item 27

From: julia
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 8:22 AM
To: Luis Mendez
Subject: Keep Davenport branch train tracks!

Please put me down as a Santa Cruz County resident who would like the tracks for the Davenport Branch rail line to remain in place. It is important we keep our rail corridor intact.

Thank you,
Julia Sauer, Boulder Creek, CA 95006

From: Paul Nolan
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 11:33 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Do not remove the tracks

Please do not remove the railroad tracks. They are a valuable asset that we must consider using for the future. The perfect opportunity for a commuter rail system lies right before us, so let's use it! -Thanks

From: Jim McGowan
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2017 3:09 AM
To: Luis Mendez
Subject: Branch Line Tracks

I have been a resident at 423 Laurent Street, Santa Cruz, CA since 1976 and I would like to see the rail line preserved for future use. Once the tracks are removed there is no turning back. There is plenty of room for a bike path along most of the branch line.

Sincerely, James C. McGowan

From: Stephen Slade
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2017 3:59 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: North Coast April 6 agenda item

Dear Commissioners,

Having committed \$4 million to building the North Coast Rail Trail, the Land Trust is a highly invested partner in the decision before you. We have reviewed the options presented to you by RTC staff and encourage you to support Option 1 – the Coastal Side of the Tracks. While we appreciate the many issues outlined by staff, the most compelling reason to favor option 1 is that it is the fastest route to building the trail and, for that reason, the option most likely to retain Federal funding. Given that the Land Trust has committed \$3.3 million to match the \$6.3 million FLAP grant, there is \$9.6 million that could be lost if RTC pursues either of the other two options. And if the FLAP grant goes, so probably will \$950,000 from the Coastal Conservancy. And at that point, why would the Land Trust invest \$700,000 on the phase 2 effort to design the last two miles to Davenport? Add it all up and you have \$11.55 million at risk. The Land Trust committed to supporting RTC's Rail Trail project because we wanted to speed up what we feel is a transformative project. The way to do that now, under these circumstances, is to support option 1 on the North Coast. Thank you for considering our position on this matter.

Stephen Slade, Executive Director, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

From: David Lieby
Sent: Tuesday, April 04, 2017 10:47 AM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: Our support for the Rail Trail

Dear Members of the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission,

My wife and I live near the rail way near Depot Park. We enjoy when the trains come down from Felton during the Summer and the various seasonal train excursions.

We also ride a tandem bicycle for pleasure and to do our shopping and run errands (as long as it is not raining). My wife no longer rides by herself on the streets of Santa Cruz because of the traffic. The Rail Trail will be of great use to us.

We both have been longtime supporters of the Rail Trail and are disturbed by groups who want to rip up the rails. I am writing to express our opinion that the rails should stay in the plan.

Sincerely,
David Lieby, Geri Lieby, Santa Cruz, CA 95060



MOTORCAR OPERATORS WEST

Dedicated to the restoration and safe, legal operation of railway motorcars

April 5, 2017

Luis Pavel Mendez
Deputy Director
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

On behalf of the members of Motorcar Operators West, I would like to offer some comments regarding the discussion of rail removal from the Davenport Corridor. The national hobby of motorcar preservation and operation was given a wonderful opportunity when the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission saw fit to include recreational railroading as one of the elements of the Coastal Corridor Plan. Two of our west coast clubs have been able to enjoy all that Santa Cruz has to offer in scenery from that special location uniquely situated on the rails. It has quickly become one of the most popular runs in the hobby and everyone looks forward to the opportunity to run these historic rails.

As the process moves forward, we see the potential for great things along the corridor. Surely the bicycle hobby is driven by the same excitement that we enjoy on the corridor with fairly level conditions, direct access, and a get away from the traffic of city and town streets. Where our vision differs, is in regards to the sharing of the corridor vs pulling up the historic rails and having a trail only. This situation is not unique to this line and we have two examples in California where the coexistence has been weaved into the plan. Napa County and the corridor of the Napa Wine Train have worked out a situation where a trail has been created alongside of the railroad right of way. Both of these uses support the economy of the region blending a busy Hwy 29 with rails and a trail. The bicycle signs encouraging autos to share the road comes to mind!

In El Dorado County, the old Southern Pacific Placerville Branch is under review as a corridor of coexistence between bicycle, rail and pedestrian traffic. A rail banked corridor governed by a JPA, careful minds are taking the time to explore options, mindful of how non-reversible the loss of historic track can be. The toil and sweat and tears of laying down a railroad will never be repeated but it can be preserved.

In closing, Motorcar Operators West strongly encourages the fine people of Santa Cruz County too retain the rails on the Davenport Corridor. Santa Cruz County has a large representation of the bumper sticker, "coexist." What a wonderful way to support the principal and show that attitude towards the railroad corridor. And while we are at it, let's heed the message of the sign at the side of the road that we are all encouraged to obey, "Share the Road." It's seems to have application here. Don't we want to see the spandex clad bicyclist or jogger giving the bib overall clad railroad enthusiast a high five while they enjoy a sunset together? The opportunity is there to "coexist" and "share the road." Motorcar Operators West supports the concept of a dual use corridor and look forward to that resolution and outcome for this project!

Jim Culbertson

Jim Culbertson, President, Motorcar Operators West

From: GARY PLOMP
Sent: Wednesday, April 05, 2017 12:31 PM
To: Luis Mendez
Cc: Lowell Hurst
Subject: RE: Davenport Rail Line

Dear Mr. Mendez:

Please put me on record that I support the preservation and restoration of the Davenport branch of the Santa Cruz Rail Line! This line must not be removed and preserved for future transportation be it commuter rail, tourist trains or passenger rail. I urge you to please support it's preservation.

Thank you!
Gary v. Plomp

From: Cara
Sent: Wednesday, April 05, 2017 12:38 PM
To: Luis Mendez
Subject: the Santa Cruz rail line

Dear sir,

I know that there is a group, backed apparently by a lot of money, that wants to seize our rail line, take out the rails, and convert it exclusively to a playground for bicyclists. I recently participated in a phone survey that I assume was their doing, since the wording of the questions was biased, calling a 12-foot- wide trail "narrow," and calling a 25-foot-wide trail "safe," in a way that insinuated that a 12 foot trail was somehow unsafe, and remarking on the lovely view from the 25 foot trail, as though a 12 foot trail would be surrounded by 10-foot sound walls. When they announce the results of this survey, the results will inevitably be biased as well.

I feel strongly that the future of our county depends on our having the train, and that all attempts to remove the rails, and have a trail without providing transportation for the rest of us, would be a huge mistake. As the population grows, as the requirements for reduction of carbon dioxide get stricter, and more of us age, we will need public transit more than ever. The rail corridor is a public treasure we must use for the benefit of all of us.

Please oppose any attempt to remove the rails.

Thank you.
Caroline Lamb, (member of the ED TAC committee)
Santa Cruz
