

RESOLUTION NO. _____ (CM)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE URGING THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO ACCEPT THE DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN FOR ELECTRIC PASSENGER RAIL ON THE SANTA CRUZ BRANCH RAIL LINE PREPARED AS PART OF THE ANALYSIS/RAIL NETWORK INTEGRATION STUDY

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is the owner of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line; and

WHEREAS, the RTC in partnership with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) is currently conducting a Transportation Corridor Alternatives Analysis/Rail Network Integration Study (TCAA/RNIS) to determine the best high-capacity public transit to implement in the existing rail corridor; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the TCAA/RNIS, the RTC formally adopted Electric Passenger Rail as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to provide more travel options for Santa Cruz County residents, businesses and visitors; and

WHEREAS, as an integral part of the TCAA/RNIS, a draft Business Plan was prepared to guide implementation of the LPA as funding becomes available; and

WHEREAS, the draft Business Plan recommends the RTC take the next step in the process of implementing the LPA by completing Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Documentation (PE/ED) at an estimated cost of \$17.1M; and

WHEREAS, the draft Business Plan indicates that the \$17.1M cost of the PE/ED work is expected to be fully funded without a requirement for local matching funds through the Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transit (DRMT), using SB1 State Rail Assistance funds, and/or Caltrans planning funding, and/or similar funds available through the California State Transportation Agency; and

WHEREAS, according to the US Census Bureau, the population of Watsonville, which many commute to Santa Cruz for work and school, is over 80% majority Latinx and the per capita income of Watsonville is less than half the per capita income of the majority white population of the three north county cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola and Scotts Valley; and

WHEREAS, developing, operating and maintaining passenger rail service between north and south Santa Cruz County and connecting to Monterey County and the rest of the state and national rail network will:

- Provide a fast, reliable and comfortable travel option to the slow and stressful traffic congestion on State Route 1 and existing County and City roadways;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce vehicle miles travelled, both of which have been identified as key factors in fighting climate change and reducing the adverse impacts of global warming. Increase commute options for all County residents including lower-income workers and students living in the south county and beyond;
- Improve access to higher paying jobs and higher education opportunities located in north county for south county residents;
- Facilitate a decrease in the longstanding and substantial per capita income gap between the majority Latinx Watsonville residents and the majority white north county cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola and Scotts Valley;
- Increase opportunities for citizen mobility among cities, ultimately increasing opportunities for cultural exchange between cities within our County and improving regional relationships between all residents;

WHEREAS, it is in the community's best interest to encourage sustainable long-range transportation planning along this important transportation corridor; and

WHEREAS, developing the proposed Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan also known as the Coastal Rail Trail in a manner that is compatible with passenger rail service is supported by the Watsonville City Council

through adoption of Resolution No. 141-14 (CM) approved on October 14, 2014; and

WHEREAS, completing environmental studies and engineering for passenger rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Line is supported by the Watsonville City Council through adoption of Resolution No. 141-14 (CM) approved on October 14, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the City of Watsonville joins a diverse group of organizations in support of implementing passenger rail, some of which include the California Coastal Commission, Caltrans, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Bike Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz Group of the Sierra Club, the Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce and Regeneración Pájaro Valley.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the City Council urges the RTC to accept the draft Business Plan for Electric Passenger Rail on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line prepared as part of the TCAA/RNIS.

2. That the City Council urges the RTC to seek the funding needed to complete the PE/ED as outlined in the TCAA/RNIS from state and federal sources as they are or become available.
