

Irwin Ortiz <irwin.ortiz@cityofwatsonville.org>

Please support today's resolution, supporting the SCCRTC's Transit Corridor Analysis Alternatives Business Plan

1 message

Gina Cole <director@bikesantacruzcounty.org> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 2:08 PM
To: rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Council Member Garcia,

Bike Santa Cruz County urges you to support the resolution in support of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's Transit Corridor Analysis Alternatives Business Plan.

I know that you have specific concerns about the future of rail in the County, and I am sure that many other folks have offered you facts and figures that support the multiple facets of this complex project. Dismissing the Business Plan as folly, however, is not going to result in a win for Watsonville in terms of improving mobility access options for residents here.

We all understand that reaching the goal of completing the Coastal Rail Trail is not going to be quick, easy, or cheap. We all understand that funding for the entire cost will not fall from the sky, will not be available in one grant opportunity, will instead, be pieced together from different buckets, from a multitude of funding streams, over several years.

We also understand that times and trends change. The County residents of 2031 may not have the luxury of living in a house with a yard, away from the density of our cities' downtown centers, they may not have space to park more than one car, they may intentionally choose NOT to drive to work, but rather take public transportation across the county.

Looking at the ideas being brought forward by the Consultants for the Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan, it is clear that they have a vision of a more walkable, bikeable City of Watsonville, which includes access to the Transit Corridor as a means of travel. Keeping the option of rail, as recommended by the RTC, lined out in the Business Plan, and endorsed by AMBAG, the California Coastal Commission, and CalTrans, supports a connected Watsonville of the future.

Approving the Business Plan is a way to continue the conversation and continue the opportunity to seek and find funding, to continue a consideration of cross county mobility for a wide range of users, of different ages, abilities and economic means. A cleaner, greener mode of public transportation that can be accessed by folks with bikes, folks with wheelchairs, folks with strollers, that will also be a hub in a larger, regional and statewide system.

Please vote to approve today's resolution and please support the RTC Representatives from our end of the County as they continue to advocate for approving the Business Plan.

Kind Regards,

Gina Cole

Gina Gallino Cole
Bike Santa Cruz County
PO Box 5485
Santa Cruz, CA 95063-5485
(831) 425-0665 work
(831) 840-1884 cell
bikesantacruzcounty.org


BIKE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Rail Trail Business Plan Resolution

1 message

John Speyer <spyguy@cruzio.com> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 12:17 PM
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Hon. City of Watsonville Council Members,

I am writing to urge you pass a resolution today supporting the Rail Trail Business Plan.

This is the smart, visionary plan for transportation in our County. For the residents of Watsonville, such as myself, it's a no-brainer for essential commuting and leisure activities between our increasingly densely populated region.

This plan has been in the works for many years, is supported by the majority of Watsonville residents, and will receive funding by the State. Please do not let the very recent movement by a few NIMBYs prevent this effort from moving forward.

Please vote YES to show support Rail Trail Business Plan resolution. Thank you.

Sincerely,
John Speyer

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Thank you Watsonville for supporting transportation and the Coastal Rail Trail!

1 message

Paula Bradley <pbradley2004@sbcglobal.net> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 12:00 PM
Reply-To: Paula Bradley <pbradley2004@sbcglobal.net>
To: Aurelio Gonzalez <aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org>, "eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org" <eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org>, "lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org" <lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org>, "francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org" <francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org>, "rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org" <rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org>, "jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org" <jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org>, "ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org" <ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org>
Cc: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Dear Watsonville City Council;

I read the Sentinel article "Watsonville's City Council unanimously approved five years' worth of transportation road upgrade projects, giving stakeholders the green light to further work on the trail that will link to the Coastal Rail Trail." (April 15, 2021).

I am urging the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) members to approve the TCAA/RNIS Business Plan on May 6th, to continue to explore costs and funding for a future rail option - an electric train from Watsonville to Santa Cruz. At the last meeting the vote was 6-6 with City of Watsonville and Santa Cruz members approving. The majority of Watsonville residents would like an option other than a 1.5 to 2-hour drive or ride on Highway 1 to get to Santa Cruz. The Coastal Rail Trail is an approved 32-mile rail and trail from Davenport to Watsonville - it is funded (as much as a major long-term capital improvements project is funding at this point), it is under construction with two segments complete and one in Watsonville under construction. This rail and trail is widely supported and took 10-20 years through a public approval process. Recently a vocal, well-funded minority is trying to stop any rail option on the trail. Without the rail option there will be **no trail** for 10-20 more years. There is no alternative trail approved and not everyone can ride a bike. We need this multi-use trail (in addition to the levee trail!) for a safe, fun way for residents to get to school, work, recreation, and for health and fitness.

The SCCRTC is trustworthy, and their experts should not be ignored. Caltrans is funding $17 million towards the initial design and environmental review approved rail and trail, and 57% of the project is funded.

- This week Santa Cruz City Council unanimously adopted a resolution supporting passenger rail, urging the RTC to accept the business plan and to seek the funding needed to take the next step in implementing passenger rail.
- Don't turn away from the Benefits to METRO from adding passenger rail transit. Ridership will increase to 250% of current ridership. Fare revenue will increase to 310% of current revenue as a result of adding light rail service to the existing METRO Public Transit System. (Based on public information.) Urge the Metro RTC representatives on the RTC to approve the Business plan!
- The California Coastal Commission - supporting "wide range of equitable access that can be provided to users of all ages and abilities through the combination of rail transit and bike and pedestrian uses within the Santa Cruz Branch Line Corridor." (February 3, 2021.)
- The Department of Transportation: Division of Rail & Mass Transportation - "Caltrans stresses that it is vital for SCCRTC to preserve rail rights of way for rail service, particularly where there has been a public investment to purchase rail lines for this purpose, as is the case with the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and conditions established under Proposition 116." (1990) (January 4, 2021)
- The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) - "The Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study recognizes that electric commuter or light rail will provide superior service from Santa Cruz through Watsonville to Pajaro in Monterey County, which will eventually be a stop on the rail service to Salinas." (December 18, 2020)
- The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) - governed by a 24-member Board of Directors comprised of elected officials from each city and county within the region. Elected officials from 18 cities and two supervisors from each county make up the AMBAG Board. The AMBAG region includes Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz County. AMBAG serves as both a federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Council of Governments (COG). Required to follow the Brown Act." (April 14, 2021)
- The "California Transportation Plan 2050 (CTP 2050)" aims to advance social equity by actively directing support, resources, and protections to disadvantaged communities, and ensuring that the highest quality transportation

options are available to those who need them most. The disparities that disadvantaged communities experience today are due in part to exclusion from transportation planning, engagement, and the decision-making processes.

Does a bike path to work sound like a high quality transportation option for South County residents?

More buses or BRT on the congested roadways and Highway 1 is not a solution to alleviate gridlock, too slow!

Rail with Trail is an equitable and environmentally positive solution for th future out Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,

Paula Bradley
P. O. Box 1146 Capitola, CA 95010
mobile (831) 345-5482

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Please Support the Rail and Trail

1 message

Donna Maurillo <donna@maurillo.com> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 11:29 AM
Reply-To: Donna Maurillo <donna@maurillo.com>
To: "aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org" <aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org>, "lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org" <lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org>, "francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org" <francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org>, "rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org" <rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org>, "jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org" <jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org>, "ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org" <ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org>, "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, "eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org" <eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org>, "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

To the Watsonville City Council...

Please continue to support the proposed rail and trail.

As I would drive over Highway 17 to my jobs in Silicon Valley, I would wish that the rail line under the mountains was still available. But when it was shut down, who would have imagined the amount of traffic that would traverse the mountains in the future? **But there I was, stuck in an endless line of cars because of someone's shortsighted view of the future.**

We have a chance for a do-over. Not on the same rail line, but on a new one. **Today, traffic between Watsonville and Santa Cruz is growing.** We all know to avoid the highway during certain times of day. We all know the effect on surface streets when cars try to circumvent Highway One. Throw in an accident or a stalled car, and the backup multiplies.

It's unfortunate that many in Santa Cruz County think of Watsonville as "less than" the rest of the county. You're the people who pick our vegetables and clean our houses and mow our lawns, they think. Why should we put in rail for that? Can't you use your bikes or use your feet to walk along the trail? Many don't see this as an elitist position. We have many trails in our county. But we have no passenger rail.

In a far-sighted view, Watsonville has a chance to become a central part of a rail line connecting Santa Cruz County to the rest of the world. Eventually, it will connect us to Santa Clara County without driving over dangerous Hecker Pass or Pacheco Pass. It will connect us to Monterey County and points south. It will connect us to major rail lines in California.

Watsonville has a chance to become pivotal. Long ago, Santa Cruz gave up that chance by closing the rail line and choosing Highway 17 instead. **Today, Watsonville can show Santa Cruz how to do it the right way.**

Respectfully,

Donna Maurillo

Master of Science, Transportation Management
Scotts Valley, California 95066 USA

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Please support Rail - connect our county and invest in our future

1 message

Stephanie Wells <swells939@gmail.com> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 10:17 AM
To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org, lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org, francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org, rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org, jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org, ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org
Cc: cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org, citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Watsonville City Council,

Please vote yes today to pass the resolution supporting rail and trail. We must invest in clean public transportation solutions; it is a critical step for the well-being of our people and our planet.

I am a bicyclist and am very much looking forward to using the trail, but I recognize that a trail alone is *not* a realistic solution for reducing car dependency (and thus GHG emissions) or traffic in our county. A trail alone is *not* a feasible mode of transportation for daily commutes between north and south county. We need rail. We *must* invest in clean public transportation, for the well-being of residents who sit for 1+ hours each way in bumper-to-bumper traffic between south and north county, and for our planet and future.

Now is the time to act in order to keep up with the changes in the country and access the funding sources available. According to a recent study, METRO can access State Rail Funding grants for public transportation with an increase of 250% pre-pandemic as a direct result of adding light rail. Let's link METRO and our local rail transit together for federal public transportation funds. Additionally, Caltrans' 2018 State Rail Plan funding predicts $140 billion for the next 20 years through federal, state, regional and private sourcing; if it goes unused by Santa Cruz County, it will be used by other interested counties. Furthermore, with the Biden administration's infrastructure plan and climate action goals, now is the time to invest in clean transportation and access federal funding. If we do not act now, our county will be left behind.

Please vote to support clean rail. It is good for our whole community. It's good for the environment. Constituents across the county support it.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Wells
Santa Cruz, CA

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Fwd: Letter of support.

1 message

Manny Pinheiro <Manny@mscbctc.com> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 10:08 AM
To: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Manny Pinheiro <Manny@mscbctc.com>
Date: April 29, 2021 at 8:12:00 PM PDT
To: aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org, sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com, bertrand@ci.capitola, eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, greg.caput@co.santa-cruz.ca.us, ryan.coonerty@co.santa-cruz.ca.us, bruce.mcpherson@co.santa-cruz.ca.us, zach.friend@co.santa-cruz.ca.us, ladykpetersen@gmail.com, manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us, rlj12@comcast.net, openup@ucsc.edu
Cc: dlindslind@earthlink.net, larry.pageler@gmail.com, skalantari-johnson@cityofsantacruz.com, rgolder@cityofsantacruz.com, samforcapitola@yahoo.com, lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org, hernandezdistrict1@gmail.com, andy.schiffrin@santacruzcounty.us, gine.johnson@santacuzcounty.us, patrick.mulhearn@santacruzcounty.us, dtimm@scottsvalley.org, amy.miyakusu@santacruzcounty.us, gpreston@sccrtc.org
Subject: Letter of support.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

In Solidarity Manny Pinheiro.

Rail Trail Santa Cruz Couty April 29th 2021 .pdf
157K

Monterey/Santa Cruz Counties
Building & Construction Trades Council

11445 Commercial Parkway, Castroville, CA 95012
Phone 831.884-8413
Email: Office@MSCBCTC.com
www.MSCBCTC.com
FPPC No. 850048

John Papa
President

Mark Van Den Heuvel
Vice President

Rod Smalley
Treasurer

Steve MacArthur
Recording Secretary

Manuel Pinheiro
CEO

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Bricklayers #3
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Carpenters #605
Carpet, Lin. & Soft Tile #12
Elevator Constructors #8
Glaziers #1621
IBEW #234
Insulators & Asbestos #16
Ironworkers #155
Ironworkers #377
Laborers #270
Millwrights #102
OP & CMIA #300
Operating Engineers #3
Painters & Tapers #272
Plumbers & Steamfitters #62
Roofers & Waterproofers #95
Sheet Metal Workers #104
Sprinklerfitters #669
Teamsters #890
UA #355

April 29, 2021

Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA, 95060

In Strong Support of Rail and Trail Project

Dear Commissioners,

The Rail and Trail Project for an equitable public transportation system serving Santa Cruz County, includes the 32-mile Coastal Rail Trail from Watsonville to Davenport, clean energy light rail between Watsonville and Santa Cruz, synchronized bus connections, and safe streets for biking and walking. Everyone benefits from having better transportation choices: commuters, neighbors, visitors, and people of all ages and abilities.

As a result of a robust study called the TCAA/RNIS, electric passenger rail was selected by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) as the best high-capacity public transit to implement between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. The RTC is now considering a business plan to guide the addition of this new rail service to the existing public transit system operated by the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO). Adding passenger rail will benefit labor in many ways from including:

- 5,000 Construction Jobs
- 270 Permanent O&M Jobs
- Fast, Reliable Access to Jobs
- Reduced Cost of Living

5,000 Construction Jobs
According to Table 5.5 in the TCAA/RNIS, between 4,900 and 5,100 jobs will be created during the 8-10 years this $470M public works infrastructure project will be under construction.

270 Permanent Operations & Maintenance Jobs
The TCAA/RNIS predicts that adding passenger rail will increase county-wide ridership on the public transit system from 5,000,000 to 12,500,000 annual boarding. To operate and maintain this expanded system, will create 270 permanent jobs (Table 5.5)

Fast, Reliable Access to Jobs
The TCAA/RNIS predicts end-to-end rail system travel times during peak commute hours will be about half that of typical automobile travel times. Because rail will be operating in a dedicated corridor, rail service will be on time, every time offering unparalleled reliability to commuting workers.

Reduced Cost of Living
The speed, reliability and low cost of an all-access transit pass will allow many families to give a car reducing living costs by as much as $500 per month, $6,000 per year. Money that will go along way to improving the quality of life for many working families.

Lastly, the benefits listed above are those for Santa Cruz County only. It is important to remember that adding rail transit in SCC will be integrated with adding rail transit in Monterey County to create a Monterey Bay Area Regional Rail Network. Our regional rail network will in turn be part of the State Rail Plan with benefits to every part of our state. The benefits to labor in our region and across our state will be many times those listed above.

Sincerely,



Manuel R. Pinheiro C.E.O

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Please Pass Resolution to support RTC business plan today

1 message

kjsullivan@charter.net <kjsullivan@charter.net> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 9:33 AM
To: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Hello and Good Day Esteemed Watsonville City Council Members,

(This below letter is also attached :))

We are writing to ask that you pass the Resolution to support the RTC business plan today April 30th. The Rail and Trail synchronizes our collective values and with the three legs of sustainability: equity, environmental, & economic:

1) **We collectively value rail public transportation and it is a public good**- This is a public good, it is right for the community now and in the future, positive transformations are occurring and ought to happen in the 21st Century, and we collectively value vibrant rail and trail communities!
2) **There is wide-ranging support for the Rail and Trail**- The Rail and Trail is supported by: Santa Cruz City Council (Also, the Council just unanimously passed a resolution to support the SCCRTC's business plan), Watsonville City Council, all technical advisory committees of the RTC, 70% of all public comment to RTC, Bike Santa Cruz County, Regeneration Pajaro Vally Climate Action, a plethora of environmental groups, Roaring Camp, Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Caltrans (also, please see their equity statement), California Coastal Commission, California State Rail Plan, AMBAG. Since the project's beginning ~20 years ago, there has been wide-ranging and consistent support from public agencies, established general advisory groups, organizations, and individuals. Also, according to reliable and valid surveys, ~75% of active Santa Cruz County voters support the Rail and Trail, and for People of Color (used in survey) and Watsonville residents that number goes up to ~ 85% in support of the Rail and Trail.
3) **Integration with regional and state rail networks and METRO opportunities**- This is a major benefit as California is officially moving from funding highways to funding railways in accordance with the State Rail Plan. Voters have and will continue to support public investments in improving public transportation. Also, there are concomitant benefits to METRO because with adding this rail route, METRO could access state rail funding grants for public transportation capital improvements. These grants would add a new dedicated transportation corridor with funds METRO is not currently eligible for that greatly increases both usage and service levels in the County. It is projected that the rail would increase daily boardings by more than 20,000 passengers per day. The decision to implement passenger rail on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line will advance the transportation system in Santa Cruz County in sync with the rest of the state. Also, federal monies from the proposed infrastructure act may be forthcoming.
4) **Equity, Environmental, and Social benefits of the electric passenger rail**- The Rail and Trail will increase equity, especially amongst low income South County (i.e., Watsonville) residents; there is a huge public transportation need and paying for autos, gas, and maintenance is expensive. California residents and visitors who lack access, cannot afford autos, or choose not to drive will benefit. Rail and Trail ensures a multi-modal inclusive approach that is important for ALL uses for ALL citizens; many, including those getting to work and/or with disabilities, would benefit by rail accommodations—the trail-only option is not inclusive! Rail will be a positive solution toward climate change and energy efficiency. For example, the electric passenger rail is predicted to reduce GHG emissions to the equivalent of planting ~25,000 one inch diameter tree seedlings and growing them for ten years, every year; sequestering a significant amount of carbon each year!

5) **Creative solutions to concerns with taxes and fares**- There are many ways to fund the local share besides a sales tax. The business plan for the TCAA indicates "Other potential sources of local funds include funds from vehicle levy or registration fees, local fuel tax, property tax, income tax, transient occupancy tax, student fees, vehicle miles traveled charges, and parking fees." We need a public process to determine how best to fairly and equitably share the burden amongst all residents of, and visitors to, Santa Cruz County. Regarding fares, there are many options to accommodate lower income riders such as: income-based pricing for all-access transit passes (free to lowest income residents), affordable housing complexes furnishing transit passes for all residents, parking fees/cities /businesses/associations furnish employees or provide transit passes (METRO is currently doing this in Santa Cruz), and reduced-price transit passes for minors and seniors (METRO is currently providing half-price fares).

We invite you to envision a better world within our County; Rail and Trail reimagined, sustainable, and beautiful!

Once again, please pass the Resolution to support the RTC business plan today April 30th. Thank you for your time and attention, and for considering a positive legacy for our County, and for you!
*Please ensure that this letter becomes part of the public record.

With Much Kindness and Gratitude for your support and work,

Kristin and Mark Sullivan
Social and environmental justice & protection advocates
Capitola Residents and visionaries for a better future with Rail and Trail ☺

Rail & Trail K Letter Wats CC 4 21.docx
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1) **We collectively value rail public transportation and it is a public good**- This is a public good, it is right for the community now and in the future, positive transformations are occurring and ought to happen in the 21st Century, and we collectively value vibrant rail and trail communities!
2) **There is wide-ranging support for the Rail and Trail**- The Rail and Trail is supported by: Santa Cruz City Council (Also, the Council just unanimously passed a resolution to support the SCCRTC's business plan), Watsonville City Council, all technical advisory committees of the RTC, 70% of all public comment to RTC, Bike Santa Cruz County, Regeneration Pajaro Vally Climate Action, a plethora of environmental groups, Roaring Camp, Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Caltrans (also, please see their equity statement), California Coastal Commission, California State Rail Plan, AMBAG. Since the project's beginning ~20 years ago, there has been wide-ranging and consistent support from public agencies, established general advisory groups, organizations, and individuals. Also, according to reliable and valid surveys, ~75% of active Santa Cruz County voters support the Rail and Trail, and for People of Color (used in survey) and Watsonville residents that number goes up to ~ 85% in support of the Rail and Trail.
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*Please ensure that this letter becomes part of the public record.

With Much Kindness and Gratitude for your support and work,

Kristin and Mark Sullivan
Social and environmental justice & protection advocates
Capitola Residents and visionaries for a better future with Rail and Trail ☺

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Faina Segal, 831-331-6432
executive@railandtrail.org

Rail Trail Business Plan Endorsements by Local Democratic Orgs, Labor & Community Leaders Demonstrate Growing Countywide Support

New endorsements include Building & Construction Trades Council, Santa Cruz County Democratic Party, Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club, Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County, College Democrats at UCSC and North County Leaders Nancy Macy, Melani Clark and Donna Maurillo

APRIL 30, 2021—SANTA CRUZ, CA—Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail (FORT) today announced several important, new endorsements of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) business plan for construction and operation of future electric rail service as part of the Rail and Trail project. The key endorsements represent community members, labor and businesses from throughout Santa Cruz County:

- Monterey/Santa Cruz Counties Building & Construction Trades Council
- Santa Cruz County Democratic Party
- Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club
- Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County
- Campus Democrats at UCSC
- Nancy Macy, Chair, Environmental Committee for the SLV Valley Women's Club
- Melani Clark, CEO, Roaring Camp Railroads
- Donna Maurillo, Master of Science in Transportation Management & Scotts Valley resident

The Santa Cruz County Democratic Party, which represents the interests of over 100,000 registered Democrats in Santa Cruz County, passed its endorsement on a vote of 24 to 1, with committee member and RTC Commissioner Kirsten Petersen abstaining.

North County leaders Nancy Macy, Melani Clark and Donna Maurillo provided the following comments:

"It's time to assure a future with alternatives to traffic congestion and fossil fuel pollution: a transportation option without cars – a sleek, modern, quiet rail system to serve the entire community," said Macy.

"As a multi-generational, family-owned rail operator, Roaring Camp is deeply committed to providing rail service in Santa Cruz County, and we strongly support the future of rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Line," said Clark.

"Losing the rail is short-sighted. Once it's gone, it's gone forever," said Maurillo.

These endorsers join a rapidly growing coalition that respects and understands the need to invest in our community to provide essential transportation options throughout the county to address climate change and inequality in transportation services.

About Friends of the Rail & Trail

Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail (FORT) is a local, all-volunteer, nonprofit organization founded in 2002. FORT was founded to advocate for the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line in order to use it for both an inclusive 32-mile bike and pedestrian trail and a 22-mile passenger rail transit system. Rail and Trail together will serve and connect the entire county, from Watsonville to Davenport, with a variety of transportation modes that meet the needs of the greatest number of residents. In 2020, FORT launched the Coast Connect campaign for a robust, modern, and efficient transportation system in Santa Cruz County. Learn more at www.railandtrail.org and www.coastconnect.org, as well as on social media.

###

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

PRESS RELEASE: Support Grows for TCAA Rail Business Plan

1 message

Board Chair Friends of the Rail Trail <executive@railandtrail.org> Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 9:01 AM
To: Board Chair Friends of the Rail Trail <executive@railandtrail.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Faina Segal, 831-331-6432
executive@railandtrail.org

Rail Trail Business Plan Endorsements by Local Democratic Orgs, Labor & Community Leaders Demonstrate Growing Countywide Support

New endorsements include Building & Construction Trades Council, Santa Cruz County Democratic Party, Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club, Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County, College Democrats at UCSC and North County Leaders Nancy Macy, Melani Clark and Donna Maurillo

APRIL 30, 2021—SANTA CRUZ, CA—Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail (FORT) today announced several important, new endorsements of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) business plan for construction and operation of future electric rail service as part of the Rail and Trail project. The key endorsements represent community members, labor and businesses from throughout Santa Cruz County:

- Monterey/Santa Cruz Counties Building & Construction Trades Council
- Santa Cruz County Democratic Party
- Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club
- Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County
- Campus Democrats at UCSC
- Nancy Macy, Chair, Environmental Committee for the SLV Valley Women's Club
- Melani Clark, CEO, Roaring Camp Railroads
- Donna Maurillo, Master of Science in Transportation Management & Scotts Valley resident

The Santa Cruz County Democratic Party, which represents the interests of over 100,000 registered Democrats in Santa Cruz County, passed its endorsement on a vote of 24 to 1, with committee member and RTC Commissioner Kirsten Petersen abstaining.

North County leaders Nancy Macy, Melani Clark and Donna Maurillo provided the following comments:

"It's time to assure a future with alternatives to traffic congestion and fossil fuel pollution: a transportation option without cars – a sleek, modern, quiet rail system to serve the entire community," said Macy.

"As a multi-generational, family-owned rail operator, Roaring Camp is deeply committed to providing rail service in Santa Cruz County, and we strongly support the future of rail service on the Santa Cruz Branch Line," said Clark.

"Losing the rail is short-sighted. Once it's gone, it's gone forever," said Maurillo.

These endorsers join a rapidly growing coalition that respects and understands the need to invest in our community to provide essential transportation options throughout the county to address climate change and inequality in transportation services.

About Friends of the Rail & Trail
Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail (FORT) is a local, all-volunteer, nonprofit organization founded in 2002. FORT was founded to advocate for the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line in order to use it for both an inclusive 32-mile bike and pedestrian trail and a 22-mile passenger rail transit system. Rail and Trail together will serve and connect the entire county, from Watsonville to Davenport, with a variety of transportation modes that meet the needs

of the greatest number of residents. In 2020, FORT launched the Coast Connect campaign for a robust, modern, and efficient transportation system in Santa Cruz County. Learn more at www.railandtrail.org and www.coastconnect.org, as well as on social media.

Faina Segal
Board Chair
Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail
P.O.Box 1652, Capitola, CA 95010-1652
www.railandtrail.org and coastconnect.org
Cell: 831-331-6432

Support grows for Biz Plan press rls 4.30.21.pdf
97K

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Faina Segal, 831-331-6432
executive@railandtrail.org

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City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Rail transit will bring entertainment revenue and out-of-town tourists that will patronize Watsonville businesses. Accept RTCs Business Plan.

1 message

Sue Kaufmann <suegkaufmann@gmail.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 9:06 PM
To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org, lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org, francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org, rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org, jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org, ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org
Cc: cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org, citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Watsonville City Council,

I have lived on Depot Hill, Capitola for the last 20+ years and the county since 1981. I feel very strongly the rail and trail would be an asset to the entire Santa Cruz County - from Davenport to Watsonville. From Pajaro Station we'd travel south and connect to California's State Rail Plan. Rail transit will bring entertainment tax revenues from tourism, reduce stress to South County and Watsonville community residents that is a majority Latinos. The Watsonville and South County community is too busy working to voice their stressful experiences driving in slow traffic 1+ hours one way - don't forget about them. Their voices matter and their lives matter too.

Rail transit and trail offers safe biking, wheelchair commuters, parents with strollers, disabled and anyone taking rail transit as an alternate from the busy crowded streets.

According to a recent study METRO can access State Rail Funding grants for public transportation with an increase of 250% pre-pandemic as a direct result of adding light rail. Let's link METRO and our local rail transit together for federal government public transportation funds and the rail would have many opportunities as never before, with the Biden Administration as part of the infrastructure.

Our friends and neighbors whom live in the Watsonville and South County areas would be able to ride to work on a light rail versus driving their car. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they could take the rail to work and relax on their way home?

Imagine driving every single day in congested bumper-to-bumper slow moving traffic- to work then going home being exhausted and tired. Value our South County and Watsonville community. Usually 1+ hours each way....add these 2 + hours to an 8 hour work day. Grueling. Frustrating.

Please vote to support rail and trail, offering links between METRO with rail transit. Our precious rail corridor is too important and must NOT be rail-banked. It is the last open corridor linking North County to South County.

Sincerely,

Sue Ginsburg- Kaufmann
Capitola, CA 95010

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Taking the bus to Watsonville....

1 message

Dianne <blueiris@gmail.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 8:16 PM
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Councilmembers,

I tried to take the bus to downtown Watsonville for a cultural event a couple of years ago from the Cabrillo College stop. It took over an hour! The only alternative was to sit in Hwy 1 traffic for an hour.

Please **think of the future**! Support light rail so that EVERYONE will someday have better transportation options than Hwy 1.

Please approve the Rail Resolution!

Dianne Dryer
Live Oak resident

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Support Resolution Urging SCCRTC to Accept Business Plan for Electric Rail Transit

1 message

Saladin Sale <saladinssale@gmail.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 7:56 PM
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Councilmembers -

I write to urge you individually and collectively to pass the resolution tomorrow urging the SCCRTC to accept the business plan for passenger electric rail transit on the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail corridor.

Electric passenger rail (light rail) will be a key infrastructure improvement benefiting Watsonville and south county more than any other part of the county. Every day, as the region emerges from Covid stay-at-home orders, the traffic on highway one grows worse. Acceptance of the business plan will allow staff to begin applying for State and Federal grant money to do the necessary environmental and engineering studies necessary to actually apply for grants to build the system.

Opponents of public transit using existing rail infrastructure have offered NOTHING for Watsonville except the idea that South County residents who work in North County "...would be able to ride their e-bikes to work in Santa Cruz". Tell that to a working mother with children who has to make it to her Santa Cruz job on a rainy day. The opponents' proposal is a fantasy linear park for rich people to play with their e-bikes.

The measure recommended by RTC staff and selected as the locally preferred alternative is how major capital projects are built. The studies that some lament are necessary steps to satisfy environmental requirements and develop the nuts and bolts of exactly what the system would look like, how and when it would operate, how much it would cost and what State and Federal funds we are eligible for.

I urge you to resist the calls to delay because answers to important questions lie in the planning steps that outside funding will provide, once the business plan is approved. This is an emergency measure because dark money is funding a small but noisy opposition that clearly does not have Watsonville's interests at heart.

Vote YES on the Resolution.

Respectfully,

Saladin Sale
Santa Cruz

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Rail/Trail

1 message

Jensen Maass <jensen@lastresortsalon.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 7:02 PM
To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org, lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org, francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org, rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org, jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org, ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org, citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Watsonville City Council,
Your YES vote for the rail/trail would be greatly appreciated, not just with your constituents, the residents of this county would greatly appreciate it too. Not only will it help with traffic congestion on highway 1, it would also help people who don't drive. When you cast your vote please think about what a positive impact the rail would have for the people of Santa Cruz county.

Thank You,

Valerie Jensen-Maass
The Last Resort Salon & Spa
831-464-0464
jensen@lastresortsalon.com

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Please Support Rail Transportation

1 message

Jessica Evans <jessevansfiddler@gmail.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 6:12 PM
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Mayor and members of the Watsonville City Council,

I am writing to ask you to please vote to support rail transportation at the special meeting tomorrow.

I live in the city of Santa Cruz and I would love to be able to go to Watsonville in the evening to visit friends and businesses. I also would like my friends in Watsonville to be able to get to their jobs in Santa Cruz, to get to Cabrillo and UCSC, and to visit me! As a past student at both Cabrillo and UCSC I know how hard it was to get across the county, especially for my classmates who live south of Aptos.

Lets not let a few anti-rail voices stop the planned expansion of our public transportation system before we even have a chance to see what it would look like, to see what it would cost, and to see what kind of funding options are available.

Respectfully yours, Jessica Evans
921 Seaside Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Santa Cruz County RTC's consideration of the Branch Rail Line's Business Plan

1 message

Molly Ording <mollyording@yahoo.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 3:28 PM
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Mayor and Watsonville City Council:

We are long time residents of Capitola, involved citizens in our community and our County as a whole. As a former Chairperson of the Capitola Parking and Traffic Commission, I have been watching the painfully slow progress of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line from many perspectives. We have many local grand children, whom we drive all over to participate with, (WOW! Wouldn't it be AMAZING to hop on a light rail to get to Aptos or Santa Cruz to see their games or meets?), we are victims of of our overly crowded and congested freeways and we share deeply in our nation's commitment to reducing greenhouse gases. Additionally, during this past year+ we have unfortunately been spending way too much time in physician's offices. I have often asked the doctor's and lab's staff where they live and if they commute and if they would use some sort of rail transport? TO A ONE, they have replied "YES... eager too save precious daily time with their families as well as commenting on reducing automobile pollution. Their replies were unanimously positive!

Of course, we all are very aware of the many challenges that we as a larger community face in terms of the construction and costs of a rail & trail, but let us definitely not be naysayers at this juncture…funding opportunities are changing, our environment is changing, our work and school patterns are changing, our demographics are changing. I, for one, as an elected representative would definitely not want to foreclose on this amazing opportunity at this juncture…and particularly at the urging of some who have motives that are more personal, myopic and political.

We are a community at large. You were elected to represent your end of our County. Please represent them, and us, in this opportunity for equity, for our environment, for efficient transportation and for the health and welfare of your constituents and all of us! I thank you for your attention.

Most sincerely,

Molly I. Ording
Mickey Ording
218 Monterey Avenue
Capitola, Ca. 95010

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

please note to endorse light rail

1 message

Bruce Sawhill <brucesawhill@gmail.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 3:10 PM
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org
Cc: Sawhill Bruce <brucesawhill@gmail.com>

I am writing to support the Watsonville City Council endorsing light rail transit on the Santa Cruz Branch Line.

This is not a commitment to spend money, but it helps lay the foundation for a thorough understanding of the benefits, costs, and challenges. Caltrans has offered $17M to do a thorough engineering study, on the same level as existing engineering studies about Hwy 1.

In the last few weeks, I have noticed (via Google Maps) that the morning northbound traffic jam on Hwy 1 has changed - Instead of going from State Park Dr. to the Fishhook, it goes from Airport Rd. to State Park Drive, and then ends.

What this says to me is that working from home is benefiting those in Mid-County but those in S. County still have to sit in traffic because many of their jobs require being there in person. Rail is likely the most cost effective way to give S. County workers reliable mobility within the county.

Again, please support light, clean, efficient electric rail in Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,

Bruce Sawhill

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

adopting a resolution to support rail AND trail

1 message

Grace Voss <gracevoss@sbcglobal.net> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 2:51 PM
Reply-To: Grace Voss <gracevoss@sbcglobal.net>
To: "eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org" <eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org>, "aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org" <aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org>, "lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org" <lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org>, "francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org" <francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org>, "rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org" <rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org>, "jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org" <jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org>, "ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org" <ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org>, "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

dear watsonville city council members...yesterday (april 28th) provided direct evidence that motorists traveling on highway l from santa cruz to watsonville **overwhelmingly support rail with trail**...i was one of the volunteers who helped display a poster on the Highway l overpass at State Park Drive in Aptos...the poster stated: CLEAN LIGHT RAIL: YOU COULD BE HOME BY NOW!...along with the other volunteers, i waved at drivers for two hours between 4 and 6 p.m...the response to the poster was **overwhelming** as many, many drivers either honked their horns or gave us a thumbs up!!!...i believe watsonville residents deserve alternative transportation to and from santa cruz during the week!...rail transit means that a trip by car, which usually takes at least an hour or more, may be done in 40 minutes by light rail...please allow clean, light rail to continue to be part of the conversation to make south county commuting safer and less stressful for its residents! thank you...grace

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Please Pass Resolution Supporting the TCAA Business Plan

1 message

Faina Segal <fainamps@gmail.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 2:14 PM
To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, Aurelio Gonzalez <aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org>, Lowell Hurst <lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org>, francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org, rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org, jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org, ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org, citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org
Cc: cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Watsonville City Council,

Growing-up in Watsonville I used to dream of being able to take the train to Santa Cruz. It would have afforded me many more opportunities and made taking night classes at Cabrillo much more bearable. This project will transform the opportunities our students will have.

I'm also excited at the opportunities that passenger rail will bring to Watsonville, not just for our students and commuters, but for the city. As the hub of easy rail transit that Watsonville will become, there is much more opportunity for the rest of the world to explore, learn and appreciate the amazing vibrancy and culture that Watsonville has to offer.

Thank you for being advocates for this great project! Thank you for thinking of all people who need transit options. Thank you for thinking of ways we can change to be more environmentally friendly and reduce our emissions.

Please pass this resolution to support the TCAA Business Plan.

Sincerely,

Faina Segal
WHS Class of 2006

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Santa Cruz City Council adopts resolution supporting passenger rail. Benefits to METRO if new agency adds light rail service. Please adopt and support RTCs Business Plan.

1 message

Tina Andreatta <tina.marieotr@gmail.com> Thu, Apr 29, 2021 at 1:50 PM
To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org, lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org, francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org, rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org, jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org, ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org, citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org
Cc: cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Watsonville City Council;

Thank you Watsonville; this past April 13, 2021, 'Watsonville's City Council unanimously approved five years' worth of transportation road upgrade projects, giving stakeholders the green light to further work on the trail that will link to the Coastal Rail Trail.' Sentinel- [April 15, 2021]

If the Business Plan isn't approved it sends a clear message to our South County and Watsonville residents their lives do not matter.

The SCCRTC is trustworthy, and their experts should not be ignored.

Please don't turn your back from Caltran's $17Million.

Don't turn away from Santa Cruz City Council unanimously adopted the resolution supporting passenger rail, urging the RTC to accept the business plan and to seek the funding needed to take the next step in implementing passenger rail.

Don't turn away from the Benefits to METRO from adding passenger rail transit. Ridership will increase to 250% of current ridership. Fare revenue will increase to 310% of current revenue as a result of adding light rail service to the existing METRO Public Transit System. (Based on public information.)

Don't turn away from California Coastal Commission - supporting 'wide range of equitable access that can be provided to users of all ages and abilities through the combination of rail transit and bike and pedestrian uses within the Santa Cruz Branch Line Corridor.' [February 3, 2021.]

Don't turn away from Department of Transportation: Division of Rail & Mass Transportation - 'Caltrans stresses that it is vital for SCCRTC to preserve rail rights of way for rail service, particularly where there has been a public investment to purchase rail lines for this purpose, as is the case with the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and conditions established under Proposition 116. (1990) [January 4, 2021]

Don't turn away from Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) - 'The Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis and Rail Network Integration Study recognizes that electric commuter or light rail will provide superior service from Santa Cruz through Watsonville to Pajaro in Monterey County, which will eventually be a stop on the rail service to Salinas.' [December 18, 2020]

Don't turn away from Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) - 'governed by a 24 member Board of Directors comprised of elected officials from each city and county within the region. Elected officials from 18 cities and two supervisors from each county make up the AMBAG Board. The AMBAG region includes Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz County. AMBAG serves as both a federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Council of Governments (COG). Required to follow the Brown Act.' [April 14, 2021]

Don't turn away 'California Transportation Plan 2050 (CTP 2050)' aims to advance social equity by actively directing support, resources, and protections to disadvantaged communities, and ensuring that the highest quality transportation options are available to those who need them most. The disparities that disadvantaged communities experience today are due in part to exclusion from transportation planning, engagement, and the decision-making processes.

Does a bike path to work sound like a high quality transportation option for South County residents?

Do more buses on Highway 1 sound like an answer to alleviating gridlock?

Rail with Trail is an equitable and environmentally positive solution for all.

Sincerely,

Tina Andreatta
Aptos, CA 95003

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Supporting Electric Passenger Rail Business Plan

1 message

Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com> Wed, Apr 28, 2021 at 11:43 PM
To: Watsonville City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>
Cc: Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>

Dear Watsonville City Council,
I am writing to urge you to vote in support of the RESOLUTION URGING 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.

I feel electric passenger rail linking Watsonville to Capitola as Phase One would really help connect the working force to their jobs and schools, providing a viable alternative to enduring the congestion of Highway One, or taking a bus. Any passenger rail service must connect to Pajaro and the main rail corridor for future CalTrain service to the Bay Area and south, to accomodate commuter and tourist needs.

I feel that there are longer stretches of railroad track between Watsonville and La Selva Beach, Seascape, and Aptos that could accommodate a faster rail speed, slowing once within the more urban areas of Seacliff and Capitola. Until Phase 2 track improvements are built, riders could take a bus to other points.

There is a large municipal parking lot near Capitola City Hall and Depot Hill that could accommodate travellers coming from Santa Cruz. Again, linking to Pajaro and the CalTrain/Amtrak corridor would provide an alternative to commuters and tourists having to travel over Highway 17.

The Capitola trestle seems to need alot of work. The RTC should apply for funding when it is availalbe, but in the near-term, start using the rail lines for passenger service as far as Depot Hill in Capitola.

I also think the RTC should look at guided bus-on-rail conversion kits that would allow existing Metro busses to travel on the railroad tracks as far as certain destinatons, then convert to regular street travel. The conversion kits are rather inexpensive, compared to new electric passenger trains, and would provide greater flexibility in service connection to other Metro routes.
Here is a video of this technology that is already in use: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSkgJXYEEeY
Here is information about the conversion kits: https://www.harscorail.com/equipment/hy-rail.Html

While many in the County may feel that using the rail corridor should be limited to bicycle use, I feel this does a real disservice to those with physical mobility challenges, or families with young children that could not travel from Watsonville to Santa Cruz for school and work daily, especially during the short, wet days of winter, and it is not realistic to expect that they could or would do so.

Metro bus corridors suffer congestion, so there is no time advantage in taking a bus.

I feel that there is room in most areas of the rail corridor to accommodate rail and trail, and having one does not preclude having the other. I support having both.

Therefore, I support either electric passenger rail service or guided bus-on-rail, implemented in phases beginning in Watsonville, with connection to Pajaro, and at least to Capitola's Depot Hill/City Hall and beach area to start.

I hope that the track washouts along San Andreas are quickly repaired so that a pilot project can happen soon.

Thank you for consideration of my thoughts.

Sincerely,
Becky Steinbruner
3441 Redwood Drive
Aptos, CA 95003
.

City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

RESOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE ON THE SANTA CRUZ BRANCH RAIL LINE

1 message

E. Hansen <ephansen1@yahoo.com> Wed, Apr 28, 2021 at 4:43 PM
To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org
Cc: cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org, citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, Regional Transportation Commission <info@sccrtc.org>, "ctp@dot.ca.gov" <ctp@dot.ca.gov>, "capti@calsta.ca.gov" <capti@calsta.ca.gov>, Railandtrail Info <info@railandtrail.org>

Dear Sirs,

As a resident of Southern Santa Cruz County, I want to express my support of multimodal rail and trail on the existing 32 mile rail corridor and that the SCCRTC formally adopted Electric Passenger Rail as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Additionally I ask that Watsonville pass a resolution supporting Passenger Service on the rail corridor similar to the City of Santa Cruz.

In a March 4th press release this year, California State Transportation Agency Secretary David S. Kim stated:

"We must dramatically reduce pollution throughout all aspects of the transportation sector to halt the climate crisis – and there is no time to lose,"

And

"Neighborhoods of color often bear the brunt of pollution and lack access to affordable mobility options."

On March 10 of this year the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) unveiled the draft Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI). The plan details how the state recommends investing billions of discretionary transportation dollars annually to aggressively combat and adapt to climate change while supporting public health, safety and equity.

The plan states that the following:

Transitioning to a cleaner transportation system must reach the most vulnerable Californians. Car ownership has become an expensive necessity for many low- income Californians to access jobs, education, and other opportunities. The transition to a zero- emission transportation system cannot leave these Californians behind.

Strengthening our commitment to social and racial equity by reducing public health and economic harms and maximizing community benefits to disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities, low- income communities, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and involve these communities early in decision-making.

On February 2 of this year the California Transportation Plan 2050 (CTP 2050) was submitted to the Federal Government stating:

California Transportation Plan 2050 (CTP 2050) aims to advance social equity by actively directing support, resources, and protections to disadvantaged communities, and ensuring that the highest quality transportation options are available to those who need them most. The disparities that disadvantaged communities experience today are due in part to exclusion from transportation planning, engagement, and the decision-making processes.

California must strive for a transportation system that is equitable, safe, sustainable, integrated, and efficient for all.

The wealth gap between rich and poor Californians has been growing yearly. Stagnant wages, paired with a rising cost of living, have heightened the economic burden on California's low- and middle-income residents.

Public transportation plays a vital role by providing access to work, school, shopping, and services. These systems help reduce congestion and GHG emissions by providing an affordable alternative to driving. By improving transit systems, and access to transit, we can improve health, quality of life, and access to opportunity across communities.

Yesterday April 27, the City of Santa Cruz approved a resolution in support of the LPA with the following:

The population of Watsonville, our neighbor to the south from 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.

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.

Mr Gonzalez and Montesino,

I respectfully ask that as members of the SCCRTC in addition to the Watsonville City Council, you remind your fellow board and council members that equity in the reduction of green house gases is a state mandate and should be embraced and supported by Santa Cruz County.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Erik Hansen
Resident of Santa Cruz County