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and Posting of Meeting Book

Meeting
Handout

LETTERS

OF

SUPPORT

SAM FARR
17TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0517

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701 OCEAN STREET
ROOM 318
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
(831) 429-1976

www.farr.house.gov

June 25, 2010

James Earp, Chair
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition

Dear Mr. Chairman:

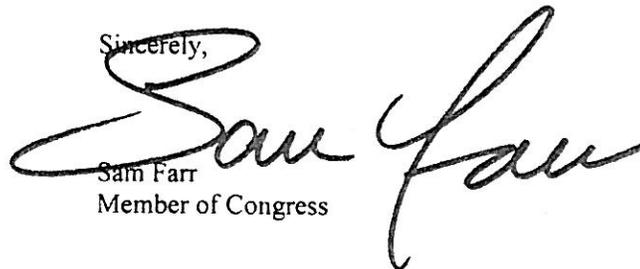
I am writing to express my strong support for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's (SCCRTC) efforts to acquire the *Santa Cruz Branch Line*. I therefore urge the CTC to approve their request for Proposition 116 and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds for purchase of the branch line right-of-way.

The acquisition of this 32 mile coastal rail corridor is a vital element of the Central California Coast region's efforts to provide multi-modal solutions to its significant transportation problems. Acquisition of the rail line has been a priority for SCCRTC since the completion of the *1998 Major Transportation Investment Study for the Watsonville-Santa Cruz-UCSC Corridor*. The SCCRTC's goal to acquire this underutilized right-of-way offers a unique opportunity to provide vastly improved access to all primary destinations in Santa Cruz County including the downtowns of Santa Cruz, Capitola and Watsonville; urban, residential and industrial zones; schools and colleges; and much of Santa Cruz County's 29 miles of beaches, state parks and other visitor attractions fronting on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

The planned recreational rail service between Santa Cruz and Davenport would enhance economic activity associated with the local tourism industry, a key sector of the local economy which has suffered recently due to world events and economic conditions beyond local control. In addition, planned improvements to the structures and the rail line will generate desperately needed jobs to help our economy rebound from the current economic slump.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important project. Please direct any correspondence regarding this matter to Alec Arago in my Salinas District Office.

Sincerely,



Sam Farr
Member of Congress

SF/aa



Sam
<sbertuca@calcentral.com>
06/18/2010 11:02 AM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>
cc
s bcc
Subject Santa Cruz rail line purchase

Dear California Transportation Commission,

Please be informed that as a resident and property owner in the city of Santa Cruz, that I fully support the purchase of the rail line from Union Pacific with Proposition 16 funds. This has been studied extensively and it would be a great benefit to our county as a rail/trail.

Thank you for your consideration,
Salvatore Bertuca

Meeting Handout



<pleasure_point_1@yahoo.com>

06/17/2010 05:58 PM

To "California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov"
<California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Rail line, Santa Cruz

I support the full funding for the purchase and improvements of the 32 mile corridor from Watsonville to Davenport in Santa Cruz Co.

The preservation of this resource along the Monterrey Bay will show strong support for Smart Growth.

The price is less then the mile extension of Hwy 1 from Morrissey to Soquel Dr.

Please continue your forward looking approach and spend the money allocated for this wonderful project.

Thank you

Charles Paulden

Meeting Handout



Kendra Dorfan
<kdorfan@hotmail.com>
06/24/2010 09:13 AM

To <california.transportation.commission@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject RE: Santa Cruz County Rail/Trail Project

Dear CTC Representative:

Thank you for reading my attached letter in support of the Santa Cruz County Rail/Trail Project.

Sincerely,
Kendra Dorfan

The New Busy is not the too busy. Combine all your e-mail accounts with Hotmail. [Get busy.](#)



CTC623.odt

Meeting Handout

June 23, 2010

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street
Room 2221 MS-52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear CTC Representatives:

I think the rail/trail is a fantastic idea and would like to take this opportunity to write to you with some of the positive aspects that the rail/trail will bring to our community. We live in a world that is increasingly crowded. The more crowded people are, the angrier and more aggressive they become. A rail/trail will give more people a chance to get out into some open space during their day. The rail/trail can be a gift to ourselves to stretch our limbs and get away from the continual rat-race of our congested highways and the vague constant low-grade worry of our modern life. It isn't going to solve all of our problems but can offer us many lovely hours of recreation and healthful activity, even an amazing solution to getting to work or school without depending on a dirty, (polluting), expensive car.

I was visiting Ojai, CA recently and my husband and I used the rail/trail there to take a 30 mile round trip bike ride from the Ojai Valley down to Ventura. The trail used to be a rail line but is now paved with natural and very beautiful landscaping. People use the trail for biking and walking and jogging. The train is long gone. There are picnic areas all along the way. I noticed that different community groups have adopted portions of the trail and invest in keeping their area clean and landscaped. I think that this idea of community adopting portions of the trail would be very popular here in Santa Cruz County and dispells the myth that we can't afford a rail/trail. For example, I can envision the pride of our students who's school adopts a section of the trail because they are directly responsible for its up keep. Experiences like this help to create responsible, empowered young people.

Santa Cruz County will be an even more attractive destination for visitors if we have a rail/trail. Visitors who come here to enjoy the rail/trail will eat in our restaurants and shop in our boutiques and stay in our hotels—all positive additions to our local economy. And a rail/trail in Santa Cruz County positioned along the Highway 1 corridor will be much more practical than the Ojai rail/trail. The Ojai rail/trail is parallel to the main road from Hwy. 101 into the Ojai Valley. That drive is largely out in the middle of nowhere. But in Santa Cruz County the rail/trail will be parallel to our city and our schools, jobs, shops, restaurants, beaches and homes. When I compare the two communities and the rail/trails, the Santa Cruz rail/trail makes so much more sense in terms of being practical. The one in Ojai is good for recreation but much of it is limited in terms of being close to urban businesses and residential areas. The Santa Cruz Rail/Trail will travel through highly populated and multiple urban neighborhoods. The portion from Davenport to town will be similar to the Ojai rail/trail—recreational/rural in general. But, once it passes into town, the communities keep on going most of the way down through Watsonville. There is West Santa Cruz, Downtown Santa Cruz, UCSC, Seabright, the Yacht Harbor, East Side Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz Medical Foundation area, Capitola, Soquel, Aptos, Cabrillo College, New Brighton, Seacliff, and on down to Watsonville, and our beautiful beaches—all convenient from the rail/trail to our residents.

I have been a bike commuter in the past when my work was within a 5 mile radius, each way, to my home. I found my bike commute to enhance my life in terms of my energy level and health, not to mention, one less car on the road. Once I was in the habit of getting up to ride to work I enjoyed it to no end. I was conditioned and couldn't wait to jump on the bike in the morning. I also discovered that our climate is bike friendly all year long with a few exceptions—say a heavy rain storm. On a cold winter morning I would bundle up with some layers. By the time I had traveled a couple of miles combined with some mild hills, I would pull over at a certain spot along the way and shed the extra clothing into my panniers and continue on my way to work. With the rail/trail, this bike friendly commute would become safe and available to many more people and students. I know that biking to work or school isn't for everyone but if you try it, you just might become a fan. It will be especially attractive once there is a safe trail for bikers to be separate from autos. Oh yes, at the end of the day you don't have to hit the gym. You have already done your workout!

Shall we forget the train and just have the trail like Ojai did? Will the train bring in a lot of hidden complications and expense? This is another area that is being looked at. I don't have much expertise about the operation of a train and whether it is economically feasible or not but I'm interested in hearing from those who do. I'm keeping an open mind

In conclusion, I don't see how the residents of Santa Cruz County can afford to not take advantage of the rail/trail and the money the State of California has given to us to bring this project forward. We can make it work because it is a practical solution to our quality of life here on the Central Coast. Keep in mind that Ojai has made their rail/trail a success with input from the local community who have adopted it. In Santa Cruz County we can make a rail/trail an even bigger success because we have a greater population along the rail/trail who will benefit from it. There is potential here for ourselves, our children and for generations to come and we need to get on board now to make this priceless project a reality. A rail/trail in Santa Cruz County will be accessible to thousands of people for traveling to school, work or leisure time activity. Communities around the country are creating similar types of projects to improve quality of life to the people they serve. There is so much promise here for the rail/trail.

Thank you for reading my letter. I welcome any communication you may want to send my way. I urge you to consider all the benefits of this project has to offer. We can't afford to lose this opportunity. It is our future.

Sincerely,

Kendra Dorfan

169 Hollywood Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
kdorfan@hotmail.com
(831) 426-3917



John Beran
<stumblingbuffalo@gmail.com>

06/27/2010 08:42 AM

To: juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject: PURCHASE THE RAIL LINE

Juan Guzman
Associate Deputy Director

It is treasure for Santa Cruz. Future generations will be thankful that we did not miss this opportunity.

Once it is gone we will never have another chance.

John and Susan Beran
63 Leawood St.
Aptos, CA 95003

831.684.1007

Meeting Handout



"Katharine P. Minott"
<kpminott@gmail.com>
06/27/2010 03:38 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc ellen.pirie@co.santa-cruz.ca.us,
stumblingbuffalo@gmail.com, Mona Daniels
<monadaniels@sbcglobal.net>, "Terry L. Winston"
bcc

Subject I Support the Purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail
right-of-way

Katharine P. Minott, MUP
745 Oak Hill Road • Aptos CA 95003
kpminott@gmail.com

TO: California Transportation Commission
c/o Juan Guzman, Associate Deputy Director
(916) 653-2072

Re: Yes on the Purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail right-of-way

June 27, 2010

Dear California Transportation Commissioners,

During the California Transportation Commission (CTC) meeting to be held June 30 - July 1, 2010, you will be considering whether to grant the request from the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) for the funding (\$14.2 million) to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail right-of-way (ROW) from Union Pacific (UP).

I am strenuously in favor of the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line's right off way by the SCCRTC and I request that your Commission approve the funding and the purchase.

Sincerely,

Katharine P. Minott

Katharine P. Minott

*Master of Urban and Regional Planning
San José State University*



Steve Lustgarden
<slustgarden@gmail.com>
06/27/2010 07:54 PM

To: juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject: I support the purchase

Dear CTC,

I support the purchase of the rail line from Davenport to Watsonville, CA by the County of Santa Cruz. The purchase of this line will make possible a variety of train possibilities from freight, to excursion, to passenger service.

As a 15-year resident of Santa Cruz County, I fully support this purchase, as do all the members of my family. When this purchase was the subject of a public meeting, hundreds of people spoke in favor of the purchase, and only 3 individuals spoke against it. This meeting was representative of the huge public support for this purchase.

Thank you for your support of this rail line purchase.

Steve Lustgarden
Susan Kauffman
28 Hanover Court
Santa Cruz, CA 95062



Tawn Kennedy
<greenways@peoplepowersc.org>
Sent by:
cyclerevolution@gmail.com

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line acquisition

06/28/2010 03:26 PM

Juan Guzman
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street
Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in regards to the proposed purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way from Union Pacific. I am in full support of the purchase and believe that it will create a powerful transit alternative as well as support existing usage. I urge the commission to unanimously approve the acquisition and invest in our future. as a life long resident of Santa Cruz County and a local educator, I am deeply concerned with the economic sustainability of our community. The acquisition of the UP right-of-way will open up the possibility of more jobs through freight, transit and other services such as dinner trains. Additionally, a passenger rail service would have far reaching positive economic impact, supporting existing and new businesses at each of the rail stops and stations.

I see this acquisition as a huge win-win for local business, commuters, the environment and the state at large.

Sincerely,

--

Tawn Kennedy

Green Ways to School
greenways@peoplepowersc.org
(831) 425 0667

LETTERS

OF

OPPOSITION

Juan
Guzman/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
v

06/29/2010 03:10 PM

To Caltrans Comments
cc
bcc
Subject re: teleconf w/SCCRTC consultants

Judy Downer/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov

Matthew George/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov

Matthew
George/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
06/28/2010 01:39 PM

To Judy Downer/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT
cc
Subject Re: teleconf w/RTC consultants

Hi Judy- Best I can do, on short notice:

Information Gap

- The draft agreements available for consultation were somewhat dated. For the most part, the terms in early drafts suffice, but some unsettled terms may have a material effect on valuation. For example, one of the items identified was the exclusivity of passenger service on the line. The final term will almost certainly affect the income stream. The effect on the income may prove to be unquantifiable or minimal but is presently incomplete.
- Union Pacific has resisted requests for disclosure of substantive terms which is perfectly within their rights as a private party, but which prejudices public entities such as RTC in presenting complete information to the Commission. Pre-existing property rights and compensation for them complicate the valuation of the real property and the RTC's ability to convey it.

RTC Agreements are structured to satisfy federal requirements but provide little protection with respect to state disposition remedies in the event of default.

Master Agreements typically provide an election of remedies in the event of default. The choices usually available to the CTC are all legally adequate but present practical enforcement problems.

In addition to making the State whole in the event of default, there is a potential for multiple lawsuits to settle title. If the 32 mile corridor ceases to be used for railroad or transportation purposes, it is probable that reversionary clauses in title documents in grants to the Railroad would be activated. To determine the extent of the liability exposure, it would be necessary to scrutinize the title documents for each parcel to see what terms and conditions were imposed at the time of conveyance to the railroads (probably mid nineteenth century handwritten records in the county recorder's office).

Union Pacific would not be responsible for such a complication since it conveys only a quitclaim deed, leaving only the public entities as potential parties to the lawsuits to determine title.

For this reason, the simplest disposition in the event of default would be repayment of the funds. The

record presented, however, does not indicate that the RTC has sufficient available funds to repay and for reasons of title and Surface Transportation Board proceedings, RTC could not reasonably be expected to liquidate the subject properties without significant lead time.

If the State were to elect to take title to the property, it would be placed in RTC's stead, but with an additional hurdle: the state could not operate the line directly (GC § 14039: "The Department shall have no authority to operate railroads.") It would therefore have to seek an operator for a proven-to-be-unprofitable line. Given the prospect and magnitude of the potential title problem raised above,

Matthew B. George
State of California
Department of Transportation
Legal Division
Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 654-2630

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Judy Downer/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov



Judy
Downer/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov

06/28/2010 01:16 PM

To Juan Guzman/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT

cc Wayne Harrold/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT, Matthew
George/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT

Subject teleconf w/RTC consultants

Matt George and I spend about an hour talking w/both attys for RTC, Trost, and EricHockey. Good discussion, illuminated for me the reasons for some of the agreement language.

Reinforced for me that RTC cannot abandon at will, with freight easements in place, so value is overstated for that reason (and others w/regard to the appraisal itself).

Matt had questions w/regard to protections to the State and the Master Agreement came up. Matt (privately, afterward) suggested that while legal protections are in place via the Master Agreement, practically speaking, there is no simple resolution should RTC not deliver a project. He said he could write a short analysis based on our discussion, (if this w/b helpful?) and asked for a copy of the master agreement.
Can you send a pdf copy to him?

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street
Room 2221 MS-52
Sacramento Ca. 95814

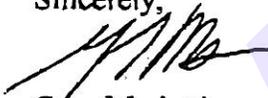
June 16 2010

Re: Rail Line purchase Santa Cruz County from Watsonville to Davenport.

I would like to say that it is fiscally irresponsible for an insolvent state government to give money to an insolvent County government for a rail line that has not been maintained, will cost taxpayers more money to repair and maintain, and police. The idea of a restaurant train to Davenport is ludicrous, that it would be profitable. Also the compatabilty of an occasional train along with bikers and walker along a very narrow passage way is dangerous.

Please do not approve of this purchase.

Sincerely,



Gary Marietti
128 English Dr.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95065

Susan
Bransen/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
06/15/2010 04:58 PM

To Juan Guzman/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
cc
bcc
Subject Fw: No on Santa Cruz rail purchase

History:  This message has been replied to.

Juan,

Are you transmitting these notes to the Commissioners at the meeting? I have not yet responded.

Susan

----- Forwarded by Susan Bransen/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov on 06/15/2010 04:57 PM -----



lou <lou3d@yahoo.com>
06/15/2010 03:56 PM

To susan.bransen@dot.ca.gov
cc
Subject No on Santa Cruz rail purchase

Please forward my comment to the CTC. I wish that the commission would consider to not purchase the rail line from Davenport to Pajaro. I believe it would be a misuse of funds and would become one of the largest local boondoggles.

Sincerely,
L. DeLucia

Susan
Bransen/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
06/16/2010 04:34 PM

To Juan Guzman/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
cc
bcc
Subject Fw: No to Santa Cruz County Rail Purchase

For the Commissioners.

From: mike speviak [mikespeviak@yahoo.com]
Sent: 06/16/2010 03:43 PM MST
To: Susan Bransen
Subject: No to Santa Cruz County Rail Purchase

Please forward message to the CTC.

I believe that the purchase of the rail line from Pajaro to Davenport in Santa Cruz County would be the decade's top example of pork barrel spending and only benefiting very special interest groups. The line is up for purchase because it is not feasible to operate it in the black. It would entail much more than the purchase price to upgrade and maintain. The money allotted should be used for more needed improvements in this county.

Mike Speviak



Joseph MacDonell
<joemacdonell@hotmail.com
>

06/17/2010 09:17 AM

To <california_transportation_commission@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Santa Cruz County Rail Line Funding

California Transportation Commission

June 17, 2010

Re: Santa Cruz County Rail Line Funding

Dear Commissioners,

I believe it is foolhardy for the State of California to allocate funding to enable the County of Santa Cruz to purchase the run-down railroad line that runs through our county. The County is in terrible financial condition and cannot afford to put up other funds that would be necessary for the major renovations of the line. Furthermore, as you must know, the State is financially strapped and cannot afford to fund wish-for projects. Both State and County money would be better spent on our roads and highways that are falling into disrepair.

Sincerely,

Joseph W. MacDonell
551 Santa Margarita Dr.
Aptos, Santa Cruz County, CA 95003

The New Busy is not the too busy. Combine all your e-mail accounts with Hotmail. [Get busy.](#)



Gramihelen@aol.com
06/17/2010 08:15 AM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject re: railroad extention

I do NOT agree with spending money on this project we have too many other NEEDS which are much greater, ie roads in need of repair and or replacement.. this is not a necessity and we are at bare bones in this State..

Helen giblin

**225 Mt Hermon Rd 141
Scotts Valley, CA 95066
831 438 8880**

gramihelen@aol.com

Thank you for your consideration.



"Ward Surveying"
<surveyor@cruzio.com>
06/17/2010 07:29 AM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz County Rail line purchase

June 17, 2010

CTC
1120 N. Street
Room 2221
(M.S.-52)
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Re: Purchase of the Santa Cruz County Rail Line.

I wish to argue against the proposed funding for the purchase of the Santa Cruz Rail line. While mass transit funding is being cut for trains, and busses around the state including bus service in Santa Cruz County, the request to fund the purchase of a rail line in this County should be considered carefully.

The proponents of purchasing the train line argue that they qualify for funding and offer as an example of train service a proposed "Dinner Train" This would be a train service that would take mainly tourists, on a short ride from Santa Cruz to Davenport and serve them dinner! Proposition 116, from which the money would come states the funding is "to provide funds principally for passenger and commuter rail systems". The intent of the tax payers funded proposition 116 was to relieve congestion and fund alternative transportation. Taking tourists on a sunset train ride hardly meet those criteria.

Santa Cruz County residents are far from united on the idea of this purchase. When funding for the purchase of the rail line was included in a ballot initiative several years ago it was rejected. Aside from funds for the purchase of the line millions more will be needed to have a viable passenger line. Will the County be able to raise those funds? Given the current financial crisis it is doubtful that tax payers will shoulder the burden required to pay for repairs and additional on-going maintenance.

Existing commuter train service in our large cities is currently running in the red. Our bus services, state wide, are being cut and curtailed. It seems not only wasteful but selfish and irresponsible for our County to request funding for such a silly venture.

Joseph Ward

624 7th Avenue
Santa Cruz, California

Meeting
Handout



Bankheadsteve@aol.com
06/16/2010 01:26 PM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz County rail line purchase

Dear Commissioners,

I wish to express my strong opposition to the acquisition of the rail line from Watsonville to Davenport by Santa Cruz County. Though advocates attempt saying the millions of dollars "won't cost us anything" because it's a state grant, that ignores the fact that the grant money comes from taxpayers. Besides, the purchase would transfer the land from private tax producing to a public tax consuming status.

With Santa Cruz County reeling in debt, even if purchase money is provided I see no way it can properly maintain and police the rail line and the trails planned for it, much less take proper care of trestles and other rail infrastructure. And the notion of satisfying any rail use mandate by provided a dinner train to Davenport is quite frankly laughable.

Neither the state nor Santa Cruz County can afford this boondoggle, and I strongly urge you to deny the application for funding.

Steve Bankhead
18 Kilburn Street
Watsonville, CA 95076



Barbara Ellis
<brellis2608@att.net>
06/17/2010 04:11 PM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Reject the silly rail line purchase

TO: Members of the California Transportation Commission

FROM: Barbara Ellis
144 Bay Heights
Soquel, CA 95073

I strongly urge you to reject the proposal to purchase the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport in Santa Cruz County. This is a foolish and wasteful plan and will bring far more costs than benefits to the county. During these times of financial meltdown in our state, the very idea of spending public money on this indulgent boondoggle makes one despair of the intelligence of those leaders who propose it. Ideally these funds would be used to help pay off the state's catastrophic deficit, but if they must be spent on "transportation", at least find a worthy and sensible project, not a "railroad to nowhere".

Meeting Handout



Barbara Sorensen
<b.sorensen@comcast.net>
06/17/2010 11:32 AM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject Santa Cruz County Rail Purchase

To the commission,
I have lived and paid taxes in Santa Cruz County since 1970. I am writing to voice my displeasure with the purchase of the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport. I find this purchase both silly and wasteful.

In the present economy the county of Santa Cruz often states that it cannot afford to repair existing roadways. Where are they planning to find the cash to maintain a rail line? Add to the mix the necessary repairs of the line and trestles and it becomes even more foolish. Then there's the addition of both bike and walking paths. It's a huge project that will not be adequately funded by a dinner train.

In my mind, the commission yielded to the strong bicycle lobby that speaks loudly in this county. Why wasn't an issue of such importance put to a vote?
Barbara Sorensen
Aptos, CA

Meeting Handout



"Dwyer, Daniel [MSB-PVTC]"
<daniel.dwyer@morganstanle
ysmithbarney.com>

06/17/2010 12:41 PM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Santa Cruz Country Rail Line Purchase

The purchase of the Union Pacific rail line by Santa Cruz County is an abuse of transportation funding. An argument could be made that this should be purchased with funds for parks or recreation but not transportation funds. The general public is not aware of the true long-term cost of this acquisition either; they are not aware of the millions that will be required to bring the line up to public use standards.

The activists that run the county don't speak for the average resident on this issue, so please don't ignore your fiduciary responsibility just because it seems "that's what they want".

I am a resident of Santa Cruz county. My address is:
23435 Sunset Drive
Los Gatos, CA 95033

Thank you,

Daniel H. Dwyer

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MARCIA WHITE
<whiteme@sbcglobal.net>

06/17/2010 06:09 PM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Santa Cruz rail line purchase

As a 30 year resident of Santa Cruz County, I am appalled by the county's subterfuge to use rail passenger funds to buy a rail line for a dinner train! It is a wild stretch of imagination to say that this supports rail passenger service and/or would alleviate highway traffic. Please look very hard at the Santa Cruz proposal - put this money to use where it will best serve the state. The Santa Cruz proposal is a great land grab, but will do nothing to improve transportation as the funds are supposed to do. Thank you.

Marcia White
PO Box 3060
Santa Cruz, Ca 95063
408 891-2999

Meetings
Handdout



Peter Yaninek
<yaninek@comcast.net>
06/18/2010 08:47 AM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject Rail line purchase in Santa Cruz County

As a state tax payer and Santa Cruz County resident, I am against the purchase of the rail line in Santa Cruz County. There are a number of reasons I do not support this purchase. First, the State's fiscal condition does not warrant such expenditures. Second, this line will never be a viable passenger line service. One only has to look over the hill, the Cal Train running through the Bay Area is heavily subsidized and is still on the brink of folding because of lack of riders. To not belabor the point, I'll make one other comment. The third reason is, the community who has raised most of the support of this purchase in Santa Cruz hopes to have a rail trail. But, the right of way is not adequate for both in much of the thirty mile length of the line.

Thank you for considering my input,

Peter Yaninek
162 Molly Way
Santa Cruz, CA 95065
(831) 429-9167

Meeting Handout



cselvidge@comcast.net
06/18/2010 08:19 AM

To "Commission, California"
<California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>
cc info <info@sccrtc.org>

bcc

Subject Reject PURchase of Santa Cruz Rail Line

Following are letters that I have written against this poor stewardship of public money:

No consensus on rail line

On May 24, the Sentinel article on "Leaders anxious about rail line funding" gave some ray of hope that good stewardship of taxpayer money will prevail at higher levels and kill funding for the rail purchase. It included a one-sided comment by David Wright that "We have consensus at the local level that the rail line should be bought." I note in the comments to this article there is no such consensus. One commenter took the words from my mouth. Consensus? Everyone I've discussed the issue with thinks it's a bonehead idea. Of course I don't hang out a lot with the transportation commissioners, David Wright or Micah Posner. And though the state budget might be divided into different compartments, it's still one big pot. Money spent by the state and local government on the rail line purchase and maintenance will eventually come from that big pot, and reduce funds available for public safety, highways, street maintenance, education, health and welfare budgets, etc.

Bill Selvidge, Santa Cruz

I also summarized the excellent arguments against this purchase in the following letter:

The SCCRTC should not purchase the 32 mile rail line from Union Pacific for the following reasons:

The state of California is running a large deficit in its spending. Because of this, non-essential expenditures should not be made unless there are compelling reasons for loading this debt on the shoulders of California tax payers.

The proposed benefits for this purchase are not compelling reasons for this purchase and for loading more debt on the shoulders of California tax payers.

No short term biking and hiking benefit can be realized because there are no funds to build a bike trail that is compatible with a rail line. There is no idea of when, if ever, such funds will be available, meanwhile other truly beautiful parks are closed for lack of state money.

This one track rail line cannot provide a public transportation service that is meaningful to county residents. We read where even CalTrain, with its two line system in the heavily populated Bay Peninsula, is struggling with bankruptcy. Public transportation and its attendant conservation of precious resources are best served by supporting the struggling, existing Metro system, and not providing an inefficient and enormously costly redundant alternative.

There is talk of a tourist train to Davenport. Presumably this service will dodge the tank cars that were reported by the Sentinel to be parked along this route. This line's tiny income from tank car storage is one of its main income sources.

The \$20 MM cost vastly exceeds the value of benefits that might ever be derived by this purchase; and the future costs for repairs and maintenance of an ageing system are unknown and a continuing burden on taxpayers beyond the cost of purchase. It has been represented to the public that money is set aside for the purchase, which is not true; and if it were, it should go back to the state for essential services.

It is hoped that the Commissioners will make their decision based on the judgment of the majority of Santa Cruz County taxpayers. In the Sentinel's on line addition the comments against this purchase far exceed the comments in favor of this project; and in the absence of an actual vote this strongly indicates that this purchase is not supported by the majority of Santa Cruz County tax payers; and you can be certain it would not be supported by the majority of California tax payers who are being asked to pay for most of it.

In the note above I suggest there be a "vote" by tax payers on this purchase.

One of the most infuriating responses that was in support of this purchase was by Leopold, the Supervisor from Live Oak. He stated in the public meeting on this purchase that this project was voted for by the public. He failed to note that he was referring to a ballot that occurred 20 years ago relevant to providing meaningful rail service in California counties. He may be such a fool to believe that California voters would approve this specific purchase today, but I am certain that California voters would send this purchase to a crushing defeat if they were permitted to vote on it today.

I hope that you all realize that this is not a good way to spend precious public money. Please look at this decrepit railroad and understand that there is no way that it can provide meaningful rail service; and it screams out money pit. Even the relatively excellent Cal Train operation along the highly populated peninsula struggles. Compare this with the relatively small population that could be ineffectively serviced by the Santa Cruz line. Passengers would only be cannibalized from the meaningful bus service that is now offered. It should be obvious that no meaningful passenger service will ever be provided by this purchase so to use the voted on funds for this purchase amounts to a sham.

Bill Selvidge
34 Josefa Way
Santa Cruz, Ca
cselvidge@comcast.net
831-454-8557



"Charles Bruffey"
<cbruffey@salinasimaging.com>

06/18/2010 10:41 AM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Santa Cruz Rail Line Purchase

Please do not fund the Santa Cruz rail line purchase!

This plan is a complete fraud and is not supported by the citizens of Santa Cruz who were not allowed to vote on this proposal. There will never be passenger transportation so there is no way the CTC can legally approve this deal. The "Dinner Train" idea was thrown in at the last minute when the CEMEX plant closed for good basically rendering the line obsolete. This is not the time for California to be funding the crazy liberal agenda of Santa Cruz and we who live here do not want all of our transportation dollars siphoned away to maintain the rail line. There are much more deserving projects in this state like BART to San Jose that you can use the \$21 million on that will actually be used by people. The real plan for the Santa Cruz rail line is for a walking and bike trail which of course would never be legal to have next to a rail line so look at the testimony from the hearings for the truth.

Santa Cruz is not worthy of these funds and you will be setting a dangerous precedent if you go along with their scheme.

Respectfully, Chuck Bruffey
Soquel, CA

CHARLES H. BRUFFEY, MHA

Salinas Valley Radiologists, Inc.

Chief Administrative Officer

627 Brunken Avenue, Suite A

Salinas, CA 93901

(831) 796-3740, X123

(831) 770-1675 (FAX)

(831) 234-7997 (Cell)

cbruffey@salinasimaging.com



"Noelan Steed"
<steedn@sbcglobal.net>
06/18/2010 11:12 AM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc

Subject Purchase of rail line in Santa Cruz California.

I have been a resident of Santa Cruz California for over 30 years. Our Transportation Board is in the process of securing State funds to acquire a rail branch line. As I understand the use of these funds is to establish passenger rail to counter other modes of transportation. The truth of the matter here in Santa Cruz, is that this particular line does not go where people in this community go. Yes, there will be a veiled effort to establish some passenger traffic, mainly tourist, for part of the year, but it will not make a difference in auto traffic, nor will it actually fund itself.

The line is also not in a great state of repair, \$5 million has been set aside make repairs. A trivial amount given the wooden trestles, the need for more crossing gates, and other problems, not to mention the polluted ground under the rails from over a hundred years of use.

Those who live here know that the primary driving force behind the acquisition is to establish a bike and hiking trail, not rail traffic. A hiking trail is incompatible with rail service of any kind.

I and many others, feel the purchase of the branch line will severely impact this region's transportation budget while not providing any significant transportation benefit.

So if your commission were able to waive the use of the line for passenger traffic, then I would say fine. Buy it, rip out the rails and make the trail.

Unfortunately you cannot do that.

I believe if you have an independent analysis of the line and it's potential for passenger traffic, you will agree with me that this project is doomed to failure and a waste of state and local money.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Noelan Steed



Lorenzo Rota
<lorenzo@lorenzorota.com>
06/18/2010 11:50 AM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Opposition to funding of Santa Cruz County Rail Line
Purchase

Dear California Transportation Commission Chairman and members:

As a citizen of Santa Cruz, I am opposed to any funding to purchase the local rail line.

I do not believe there is any economically feasible plan in place to support passenger service and the proposed dinner train does not seem likely to generate sufficient revenue to pay for track/trestle repairs and maintenance along the entire line.

Furthermore, I am reading in the local paper that there is possibility of funds being taken from local road maintenance and road widening projects.

There seems to be a small vocal minority in Santa Cruz County that is pushing the purchase of the rail line in hopes of later creating a bike/walking trail but they are supporting this without regard to the financial impact on local transportation.

For these reasons, I oppose any funding to purchase this rail line.

Regards

Lorenzo Rota
PO Box 2711
Santa Cruz, CA 95063



Eric Rowland
<eric_rowland@yahoo.com>
06/18/2010 12:32 PM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject Santa Cruz rail line purchase

It's been said that the commission believes that the public supports this purchase due to the proponents' contact with the commission. Please consider this as evidence that the taxpayers do not see this purchase as wise nor beneficial. There is no rational passenger rail plan, which is required for the use of Prop 116 funds. Given that, we face the consequence of having to reimburse the State for the \$11M in Prop funds in addition to the deferred and future maintenance costs. This taxpayer believes those *highway* funds are better used on our existing roadways, which have been seriously neglected.

Regards,
Eric Rowland
951 Windsor Street
Santa Cruz, CA

Meetings
Handout



waltspichtig@aol.com
06/19/2010 11:59 AM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz County Rail Trail

To Whom It May Concern,

We are responding to an appeal from a fellow Santa Cruz County citizen in regard to the upcoming purchase of the rail line that the Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission is proposing.

We feel that this is going to be a huge money pit that the county can't afford. The county can't pay for the repairs and upkeep that they are responsible for now. The addition of the rail line isn't even for rail transportation that would relieve some of the commute problems that exist in the county. The intent is to make a rail trail, that they can't afford, and will be coming to the tax payers for a tax increase to support repairs and upkeep.

They are talking about taking money from the county transportation funds, meant for road repairs, to pay for part of the cost of purchase. The roads in this county, as in most counties, are in dire need of repair.

If they really wanted to relieve our transportation problems, they should increase the bus service, instead of the reductions being considered due to short funding.

The rail trail is for a special interest group only and won't serve the majority of the county residents.

Sincerely,
Walt & Jan Spichtig
waltspichtig@aol.com



CJ Wirth
<cjwww@sbcglobal.net>
06/20/2010 05:53 PM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject Santa Cruz County Rail Line Purchase

Please deny funding to Santa Cruz County for the purchase of the Union Pacific rail line between Moss Landing and Davenport. Operation of this line for passenger service is very impractical and extremely unlikely. There must be many more deserving projects than this one for State funds allocated to public transportation.

Sincerely,
CJ Wirth
Aptos, CA

cjwww@sbcglobal.net

Meeting Handout



"Jennifer Shaw"
<jshaw@cruzio.com>
06/20/2010 05:30 PM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc

Subject Rail/Trail project in Santa Cruz Co

I have lived in this county for 33 years. I am VIOLENTLY opposed to you allowing this project to proceed. I can almost guarantee that rail service will NOT happen on this line. The cement plant has closed, the tourist restaurant cars hoped for are already in doubt (and should that truly count as 'passenger rail?'). There is no other user in sight.

How can you justify releasing the funds for a project whose REAL purpose is to create a county-wide bike/walk lane? It is that contingency that have been pushing this project from the start. Their voice is VERY loud and persistent here and they NEVER give up. Their motive makes railroad use a sham. Please don't be fooled.

Furthermore, this county has NO available funds to repair and maintain this line. As it is, our roads are falling apart and all motorists are suffering trying to use Hwy 1 which desperately needs to be enlarged. If this project goes forward, it will only send the county into further budget crisis.

I hope you take these comments seriously.

Sincerely, Jennifer Shaw 300 Plum St. #76 Capitola Ca 95010 831-588-7409

To the C.T.C.

This is in regards to the purchase of the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport in Santa Cruz County.

I strongly disapprove of this project; the line is not set up for commute transportation and too expensive for a bike and hike trail.

The county should use this money to repair the roads and bridges that need so badly.

Please do not approve this project.

Eugene Panelli
331 Majors St.
Santa Cruz Calif.

Meeting
Handout

Mary Lou Weidlich
101 Burton Drive
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95065

June 21, 2010

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street 2221
MS-52
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

Comissioners:

Please consider this a letter of disapproval of the proposed purchase of the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport in Santa Cruz county. It simply sets us our county with more maintenance costs and will most likely never be self sustaining. Just as AMTRAK , with it's huge ridership, is still unable to support itself, so would this tiny line with no current ridership and little projected without a huge expenditure of funds, be unable to sustain itself.

Our county is already deep in a financial hole, so money is not available for the improvements necessary and the state of California is also in a huge financial deficit. Any money from the state should be used to maintain our already existent bus line, which is threatened with cuts, and our decrepit county roads, which keep getting short shrift of funds for repair.

Please do not allocate money for this frivolous rail purchase. If a company takes over the Davenport cement plant and needs transportation, they can purchase it.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou Weidlich

June 15, 2010

This is in regard to the
Santa Cruz rail line purchase. In
this period of recession it is
completely frivolous to even
consider giving money for this
project.

The bond money was meant
for transportation of the masses,
not for an elite group of
hikers & bikers. There is no way the
County has the ability to run a
railroad, (nor do I believe they
have any intention to) They don't
do too well on managing the
County.

This is my tax money, as
well as millions of other tax payers.

who would feel as I do about this
park. Use your heads, if you have
the money & must spend it, put
it where it will do some good.

Sincerely

Audrey Twisselman
630 Rio Del Mar Blvd
Lptos, CA 95003

6/15/10

I STRONGLY DISAPPROVE
OF THE PURCHASE OF THE
RAIL LINE BETWEEN
PATARO + DAVENPORT.

Thank you
A.P. Murphy

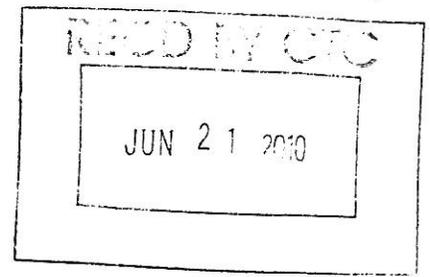
MURPHY 95010 CA 951
P.O. Box 482
Capitola, CA 95010



CTB
1120 N. STREET
RM 2221 (MS-52)
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



CTC
1120 N Street, room 2221(MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

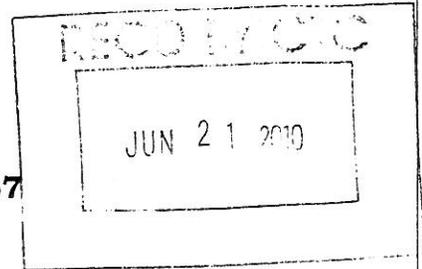


Al Herman
2155 Penasquitas Drive
Aptos, CA 95003

Please add our names to those opposed to the purchase of the Rail Line
from Pajaro to Davenport.
Now is not the time to buy a rail road that will need to be subsidized by tax
payers.

Al and Lyudmila Herman
Aptos

REED MIKE ARCHER
8 Morgan Court,
Scotts Valley, California 95006-4767
831-461-1606 cell: 408-315-6474
Email: mikearcher8@comcast.net



Wednesday, June 16, 2010

California Transportation Commission

1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)
SACRAMENTO California 95814

Re: Purchase of railway from Watsonville to Davenport

Good Morning:

It is the opinion of my family that the purchase and development of this railway from the Watsonville area to the end of the line at Davenport is a complete waste of money, money that the State and County does not have.

The State is broke, the County is broke and it is most likely that just repairing all the bridges and crossings will run into the tens of millions of dollars – which they do not have.

A local “lawmaker” has generously promised millions of dollars for this project. However this earmark has not been attached to any particular bill that I know of, and in these tight money times, is not likely to be funded.

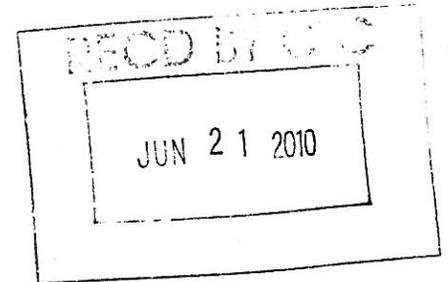
We just cannot afford to proceed with this project.

Sincerely,

REED MIKE ARCHER

491 Canon del Sol Drive
La Selva Beach, CA 95076
16 June 2010

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814



Subject: Santa Cruz Union Pacific Rail Purchase

Dear Members of the Commission:

The California Transportation Commission should derail and stop the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) administrators from their ill-advised and self-serving grandiose plan to purchase the money-losing Union Pacific short-line railroad. We are opposed to the purchase of the Union Pacific right-of-way by the State of California and the County of Santa Cruz for the following rational reasons.

The unrealistic initial "investment," or inflated purchase price of \$19.2 million would be close to a \$38 million burden for the California taxpayers when interest on the bond money is calculated into the initial purchase price.

The California taxpayers cannot afford more frivolous fiscal deficits. Currently, this Union Pacific line is losing over a half-million dollars annually just in operating expenses, with little revenue. Santa Cruz County has no tax funds to help with this annual deficit.

A hiking and biking rail trail? Forget that. The cost of retrofitting the twenty-nine high bridges, plus nine trestles, for pedestrians and bike use would cost over \$10 million, including bond interest. Most of them are over 80 years or more old, constructed then of timbers and raw steel--now rust infected. None of the bridges or trestles is earthquake resistant (cost \$9.6 million each to retrofit). That is more than the initial rail-trail purchase price itself!

A passenger train from Watsonville to Santa Cruz would be unsafe at any speed across the decayed wooden and rusted-out bridges. Currently, the freight trains operate at a slow speed for good reason.

The Santa Cruz RTC itself estimates a minimum of \$32 million for a pedestrian/bike trail only. Plans for combining a rail train and a pedestrian/bike path, multi-modal corridor from Pajaro Valley to Santa Cruz has been estimated at over \$100 million and would still have significant "problems" to expand the right of way. The Union Pacific right-of-way is too narrow for a fourth of the 32 miles to accommodate a train/bike trail combination.

There is no land included in the initial purchase for parking on either end or along the trail itself. Additional land would have to be purchased/leased and parking lots built. Rail and bike crossing signals and barriers are lacking

and all would require retrofitting. No tax funds are available for these necessities.

The annual cost of just maintaining a pedestrian/bike trail for the 32 miles would be a minimum of \$90,000 annually (based on costs elsewhere in California). There are no tax funds available for this expense.

The Santa Cruz RTC has no experience in railroad transport of freight or passengers. It will have to hire specialized management and staff, provide added office spaces, and maintain the railroad line itself. There is no tax money for these ongoing expenses.

The proposed dinner train from Santa Cruz to Davenport would be seasonal (five months at most), and the long-term profitability of the venture is suspect. Sierra Northern Railroad can close the dinner train line if not profitable. The RTC would only receive \$15,000 annually from this venture (15,000 passengers @ \$1 each).

The current business of parking empty (?) hazmat railroad tank cars on a sidetrack in Davenport for added revenue is a poorly thought-out idea by the RTC and Sierra Northern.

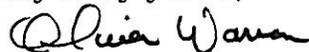
The County of Monterey purchased 16 miles of rail bed in 2003. The estimated cost to pay for a light-rail transit system will be between \$114 and \$128 million for trains and track repair only. Monterey County projects passenger fares will only pay for 30% of the cost to operate. The taxpayers pay the balance.

The "TRAIN DRAIN" by the RTC will undoubtedly reduce future funding of bus transportation, road and bike lane improvements, and emergency medical transportation. You can also rest assured the taxpayers and voters of Santa Cruz County will not bail out the RTC and this county with increased taxes or bonds if the Union Pacific railroad purchase is completed. Santa Cruz County is currently in the process of closing libraries and schools in the county because of lack of tax revenues. Should taxpayers fund a money-losing, unnecessary railroad line in their place?

Please reject the Santa Cruz County RTC plans to railroad the citizens of California.

"Everyone pays so a few can ride." Henry D. Thoreau

Very truly yours,



Oliver and Mary Warren

P.S. All facts and figures were taken from local news-media sources.



"George and Deanna Smiley"
<smileyhere@sbcglobal.net>

06/22/2010 04:23 PM

To <California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Rail Line between Pajaro and Davenport

Dear Commission Members,

I wish to express my **disapproval** with the purchase of the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport. To me this appears to be a mis-use of the Bond money, which I voted for. Santa Cruz County etc. is in no financial means to provide the expenses which will be needed now or in the future to maintain and administer such an undertaking.

George Smiley

Meeting Handout

June 23, 2010

CTC
1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

Gentlemen:

I wanted to express our concern and dismay over your intention to buy the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport, Ca.

The millions of dollars spent on this project will just be another waste of taxpayer money. Instead of spending money we do not have, why not try and cut some expenses and balance the budget. The initial purchase is just the beginning. The railroad runs at a deficit now and has never made any money. They are talking about cutting train service in the bay area to S.F. because it does not cover expenses. Why do you think this silly short line will accomplish anything or be profitable?



Mary and Bob Montonye
4265 Opal Cliff Drive
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95062



libonpv@aol.com
06/24/2010 11:14 AM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz County purchase of UP Railroad ROW

Please forward to every CTC commissioner ASAP:

Dear CTC Commissioners:

I have written extensively over the years to you and the SCCRTC concerning this ridiculous rail purchase the County wants to do. It has been corrupt from the beginning, and it still is. I have attended numerous meetings at the SCCRTC and they have no concept of running a business. No joke. When a few of us attacked their business plan, they just responded with "we are working on that"... They have no concept of how much it will cost to repair just one of those trestles. They have no concept that a ridiculous plan to provide rail service to Davenport (a mere 5 miles at most) will have NO RIDERSHIP. It is a boondoggle!

I do not live near the railroad. I personally would like to see the Parks and Rec purchase the rail and turn it into a permanent bike trail, like in many other parts of the country. And the tourist dollars that would bring would solve any budget dilemmas.

Anyway, I applaud you for applying common sense here and asking the hard questions like, "where's the money"??!!

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,
Libby Huyck
2947 Pleasant Valley Road
Aptos, CA 95003
(831) 239-1221

Susan
Bransen/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
06/23/2010 07:02 PM

To "Michelle Spevy" <mspevy@hotmail.com>
cc Juan Guzman/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov
bcc
Subject Re: No to Santa Cruz County Rail Purchase 

Ms. Spevy,

Thank you for your note. We will provide your comments to the Commissioners.

Sincerely,

Susan Bransen

From: Michelle Spevy [mspevy@hotmail.com]
Sent: 06/23/2010 05:09 PM MST
To: Susan Bransen
Subject: No to Santa Cruz County Rail Purchase

Please inform the CTC of my belief that a "No" is the appropriate decision on the rail line purchase in Santa Cruz County. We could never upgrade, maintain, or sustain such an action. We could never guarantee the requirement that it would be used as a rail line in order to receive this disbursement. The funds are desperately needed elsewhere.

Sincerely,
Michelle Spevy

The New Busy is not the too busy. Combine all your e-mail accounts with Hotmail. [Get busy.](#)



gerrynospam0-0@yahoo.com

06/25/2010 09:51 AM

Please respond to
gerrynospam0-0@yahoo.com

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov

cc Gerry <gerrynospam0-0@yahoo.com>

bcc

Subject SC Rail Purchase- No actual viable passenger service -->
Not eligible for funding

Please see below and/or attached

William Swinton
2-3515 East Cliff Drive
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Honorable Alan S. Lowenthal, Ex. Officio Commissioner
Mr. James Earp, Chairman

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street
Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814
California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov

June 25, 2010

Mr. Chairman and Commissioners:

As a citizen of Santa Cruz and a long-time California taxpayer, **I am opposed to any funding to purchase of the local Santa Cruz County rail line.**

I do not believe there is any economically feasible plan in place to support passenger service. The proposed dinner train does not seem likely to EVER generate sufficient revenue to pay for track/trestle repairs and maintenance along the entire line, and, as such, the "dinner passenger service" is not sustainable and thus does not meet the Code funding requirements.

Additionally, and most importantly, while a dinner train is a passenger train, **it is not public transportation, in the commonly accepted sense.** It is a private enterprise designed around a novelty attraction, catering a small group of people that want to dine on a train.

It does not cater to those ordinary citizens simply wanting to get from point A to point B. In fact, patrons of such a "dinner train" would after completing their passage be right back at their embarkation point --- having in fact been transported 0 overall miles.

In contrast, in my view, public buses or rail services such as Caltrain, Amtrak or BART, are public transportation.

Furthermore, I am reading in the local paper that there is possibility of funds being taken from local road maintenance and road widening projects. **Keep road funds allocated to road projects as they are intended.**

You may hear from what appears to be a small vocal minority in Santa Cruz County that is pushing the purchase of the rail line in hopes of later creating a bike/walking trail. However, they are supporting this without regard to the financial impact on local transportation, or, more importantly, **WITHOUT REGARDS TO WHETHER THE PROPOSAL WILL EVEN RESULT IN VIABLE PASSENGER SERVICE.** In their own words, they look forward to the day when the rail line is decommissioned, the tracks are removed, and a "trail" is established.

In my opinion, after analysis of the SCCRTC's documents and first hand verification of the state of the spur line's disrepair, I do not see that the SCCRTC's plan is viable.

For these reasons, I oppose any funding to purchase this rail line. The current state budget deficit problems amplify my opposition.

Sincerely,

William Swinton



William Swinton
2-3515 East Cliff Drive
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Honorable Alan S. Lowenthal, Ex. Officio Commissioner
Mr. James Earp, Chairman

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street
Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814
California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov

June 25, 2010

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You may hear from what appears to be a small vocal minority in Santa Cruz County that is pushing the purchase of the rail line in hopes of later creating a bike/walking trail. However, they are supporting this without regard to the financial impact on local transportation, or, more importantly, **WITHOUT REGARDS TO WHETHER THE PROPOSAL WILL EVEN RESULT IN VIABLE PASSENGER SERVICE.** In their own words, they look forward to the day when the rail line is decommissioned, the tracks are removed, and a "trail" is established.

In my opinion, after analysis of the SCCRTC's documents and first hand verification of the state of the spur line's disrepair, I do not see that the SCCRTC's plan is viable.

For these reasons, I oppose any funding to purchase this rail line. The current state budget deficit problems amplify my opposition.

Sincerely,

William Swinton



Terry L <terry@cruzio.com>

06/25/2010 06:35 PM

Please respond to
terry@cruzio.com

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Please - No purchase of the rail line Pajaro to Davenport

Dear California Transportation Commission,

I urge you not to put any money toward the purchase of rail lines between Pajaro and Davenport in Santa Cruz county.

I was born in Santa Cruz and have lived here continuously for 58 years. From my perspective neither Santa Cruz nor California will benefit from this expensive purchase.

- 1) Please consider that this line does not run from Santa Cruz to the San Jose area which would help with the large commute of daily traffic.
- 2) Everyday large numbers of cars are stuck, near grid lock, in traffic on Highway 1 because more freeway lanes are needed. If you live here or visit here you would plainly see this daily problem. The railroad is not going to solve this problem and will just take money away the the badly needed expansion to three lanes of highway from Santa Cruz to Monterey. The cars sit in traffic and burn more gas. The surface roads nearby are also congested and this only adds to the community problems.
- 3) The train, track, and old trestles along this line will be expensive to maintain. Who is going to pay for all this? Some propose that a dining car on this train will bring in revenue. I feel that will never pay off. Some critics say the most restaurants have trouble making a profit and this one will probably not even make enough money to pay fuel costs.
- 4) The train lines have no easy parking lot along the route to take on passengers.
- 5) The thought of having bicycles and walking pathways along the route is just ridiculous. At many spots that I commonly see, the right of way is very narrow and goes through neighborhoods of housing. This is not going to work well at all.
- 6) The state is low on money. Santa Cruz needs road repair and expansion, not a train. The state would be better off spending money on issues of higher priority.

Thanks you for hearing my concerns.

Terence Leonard
623 Cabrillo Avenue
Santa Cruz, California 95065



Dave49mars@aol.com
06/27/2010 09:58 PM

To California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject Purchase of rail line from Pajaro to Davenport

I am writing in opposition to the proposed purchase of the rail line from Watsonville to Davenport. This is another "pie in the sky" project that will benefit a small segment of the local population.

This county has projects purchased 15 years ago that still sit as vacant ground.

I would assume that, in these tough financial times, the Commission should fund those projects which benefit as large a segment of the local population as possible. Rail trail will only benefit a very small segment of the population.

A much more beneficial expenditure of funds would be the widening of highway 1 between Santa Cruz and Larkin Valley. This would not only ensure a more efficient (both in time and air pollution) flow of traffic, it would provide greater ease of access for emergency vehicles on the highway.

Another worthy project would be additional funding for the Metropolitan Bus System so more buses and routes could be added providing access to transportation for senior's and low income residents.

The only way I could support this project is if it mandated a light rail system from Watsonville, through Santa Cruz, through Pogonip up to UCSC. Now that would get cars off the road. Especially if UCSC mandated that off campus students could not park on campus. You should see the difference on the freeways when the schools are closed.

But of course the "not in my backyard" crowd will never let that happen. I grew up on the east coast where mass transit was utilized and accepted as the preferred method of travel.

Sincerely

David Marsh
PO Box 191
Aptos, CA 95001
Resident for 41 years.



Pat Mitchell
<patmitchell@hotmail.com>
06/26/2010 11:18 AM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Purchase of rail line

Money is in short supply and should not be used for the purchase of a rail line. Enticing as the idea may be, and I do like it, nevertheless it is a luxury and we cannot afford it.

Money should be used for necessities such as new ways to collect rain water for storage for later use and/or recharging of aquifers. We already are threatened by the salt water intrusion at the La Selva Beach aquifer. This would not have happened if money had been properly allocated in the past. Improvements should be made for future needs.

*Pat Mitchell Carrick
240 Meadowlark Lane
Aptos, CA 95003
Phone: 831-688-4864*

Hotmail: Trusted email with Microsoft's powerful SPAM protection. [Sign up now.](#)



paul carrick
<carrick95003@yahoo.com>
06/26/2010 12:17 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject Purchase of rail line by county.

I am against the purchase by the county of the rail line. The funding is a patchwork of partly related or historically unrelated state and federal sources. The subsequent maintenance and operating cost to the county appears problematic at best.

Meeting
Handout



"Rich Persoff"
<mimulus@charter.net>
06/26/2010 05:57 PM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz Ral Trail

Dear CTC Commissioners,

While I personally ride railroads and busses whenever remotely convenient, I request that you vote against funding the purchase of the Watsonville - Davenport line by the SCCRTC.

1. This project is unworkable in any of the many variations proposed by the Commission and its paid consultants.
2. Other areas and projects in California are much more likely to benefit from the use of public funds to develop or upgrade existing rail transit.

Than you for your interest!

Best regards,

Rich Persoff

Meeting Handout

P.O. Box 1750
Aptos, CA 95001-1750
w.comfort@att.net

June 26, 2010

Mr. James Earp
Chair, CA Transportation Commission
928 Second Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Items 19 and 115, Opposition to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line, CTC Meeting Agenda June 30-July 1, 2010

Dear Commissioner Earp and Commissioners,

I oppose the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail-right-of-way (ROW). I believe that this purchase is a poor investment of public (our) funds and is likely to have major negative impact on our transportation infrastructure. Our roads are crumbling and many need improvement. A portion of the funding intended to be used for the purchase would likely come from our highway funding. RTC ownership costs will include: maintenance, insurance, repairs to existing structures, the contracted operation of the ROW, and oversight. These are likely to be a continuing drain on our transportation funds, based on recent reports¹ contracted by the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). In addition to the \$14.2 million purchase "price" paid to Union Pacific (UP), the contract of sale requires that the RTC spend an additional \$5 million to repair structures.

The CTC has recently stipulated that the RTC pay back the State the "greater of either the amount allocated" (currently \$14.2 million) "or the then fair market value as determined by the STATE"..."in the event the SCCRTC ceases to utilize the Branch Line for the original purpose as approved by the Commission" (CTC). The "original purpose" as defined in the document is "initiating recreational passenger rail service" and "to be responsible for continuing freight service for as long as would be required by the Surface Transportation Board". The duration of operation required for freight service is thus unknown and increases uncertainty of ongoing costs.

Rail operations provide no benefit to the County. With the loss of CEMEX, freight hauling is minimal and would not significantly impact our roads if diverted to trucking. Recreational rail service has no public value, except to meet the CTC requirements of funding of the purchase.

Future benefits of ownership of the ROW, other than a bicycle/pedestrian path, are highly speculative and many decades in the future. Public passenger service was shown to be ineffective in reducing traffic on Highway 1 in the RTC-contracted Parsons-Brinkerhoff *Major Transportation Investment Study*². Further, the capital cost would exceed adding HOV lanes to Highway 1, and the operating cost would be equivalent to more than a ½ percent sales tax.

While I would support a bicycle/pedestrian path ON the ROW with no rail, the CTC (and the RTC) are demanding that the rails stay, be improved, and be used. A useful bicycle/pedestrian path with minimal grade changes is only achievable on the ROW by replacing the rails with a path. In the presence of rail operations, trail users (bicycles, pedestrians, and wheelchairs) would find significant grade changes and many deviations from the ROW to public streets—some of these streets are already quite narrow. In order that the trail stay on the ROW with rail, additional ROW will likely have to be purchased from adjacent homeowners and retaining walls constructed in narrow areas, to take advantage of what width exists, and trail bridges must be built, separately or cantilevered from existing railroad structures, at most of the 37 bridges and trestles. Also, there are 41 at-grade crossings where trail users, would intersect roads with cars on them. Safety of trail users would require signals and controls at many of these at-grade crossings. All of this will make for a very expensive trail, far in excess of the RTC estimate of \$1 million per mile.

From the viewpoint of the value to the State, there must be many more important projects that truly address transportation and will benefit a far larger number of Californians.

-
1. Business and Management Plan Analysis, Renaissance Rail, 2010:
<http://www.sccrtc.org/pdf/RAIL%20ACQUISITION/EconDocs/BizPlanAnalysis0310.pdf>
 2. Major Transportation Investment Study, Parsons Brinkerhoff, 1998:
Parts 1, 2, and 3: <http://www.sccrtc.org/pdf/mtis/mtispart1.pdf>;
<http://www.sccrtc.org/pdf/mtis/mtispart2.pdf>; <http://www.sccrtc.org/pdf/mtis/mtispart3.pdf>
The MTIS is the only reliable report on passenger rail service on the ROW because it studied improvements to our total transportation system: pedestrian, bicycles, cars, buses, and trains and their interrelationship. Detailed simulations of our complete transportation system predicted County-wide traffic flow (and congestion) and reflected County resident's choices of transportation modes and routes to travel at various times of the day. Finally, extensive modeling and analyses were used to predict both capital and operating costs on a variety of transportation strategies.

The MTIS results showed that passenger rail on the branch line between Watsonville and Santa Cruz would not reduce congestion even after committing *as much funding as necessary* to upgrade tracks, rebuild trestles, buy rail vehicle equipment, and install safety devices. Some of the most significant rail findings were:

- Few people chose to use rail [fewer than six in one thousand trips used rail]; Highway 1 currently carries about 28 times as many people each day as the MTIS-projected rail boardings.
- Even after improving the rail and operating at speeds up to 45 mph, over an hour was required for the train trip from UCSC to Watsonville
- 80 percent of rail boardings would occur between UCSC and Capitola
- More than 80 percent of all public transit trips were carried by buses, in all alternatives that featured passenger rail.
- Annual operating and maintenance costs for each of the rail alternatives were between \$14- and \$19-million, or the equivalent of the annual proceeds from a ½ percent sales tax.
- Capital costs were very large; higher than adding HOV lanes to Hwy 1.

I have been following RTC for the past 15 years. I am a mechanical engineer. I have been an Alternate on the RTC for two different County Supervisors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William J. Comfort III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

William J. Comfort III, D.Engr.

Attachments:

1. A guest editorial in the Sentinel by Ron Marquez, a past Executive Director of the Regional Transportation Commission, a transportation planner by profession.
2. A guest editorial in the Sentinel by Ed Davidson, a planner by profession.
3. A PDF of a full-page advertisement from the May 6 Sentinel that was paid for by the Santa Cruz County Business Council.

Attachment 1

Ron Marquez: Debunking Santa Cruz County transportation myths

Posted: 11/08/2009 01:30:14 AM PST

Ron Marquez

A number of myths regarding transportation have developed over the years which affect community thinking and even local policy decisions. Debunking these myths is important for good transportation decisions in Santa Cruz.

Myth 1: Congestion on Route 1 is due in large part to commuters over the hill

If you drive to Santa Cruz with any regularity on Route 1 you will notice that, as you approach the "Fishhook," more cars continue on Route 1 into Santa Cruz than take Route 17. This anecdotal evidence is supported by the actual measurements of traffic volumes on Route 17 and Route 1. It can be said that the increase in traffic on Route 1 is primarily related to the increase in employment and commercial activity in the city of Santa Cruz.

The population of the city grew by less than 2,000 non-UCSC residents for the 20 years from 1985 to the year 2005. During that same time period job growth was 12,000 new jobs. The end result is that 60 percent of the jobs in the city of Santa Cruz are filled by commuters. This imbalance between jobs and resident workers has resulted in significant growth in commute traffic into Santa Cruz.

Myth 2: Rail transportation is a realistic alternative to adding lanes on Route 1

For rail to be a comparable alternative in terms of moving people along the Route 1 urban corridor at least 2,000 people per hour would have to be served during evening commute hours. The 20 light rail trains per hour needed to move this number of passengers is not feasible without double tracks along a significant portion of the right-of-way.

Sales tax sources provide nearly 50 percent of the Transit District budget, but sales tax growth has not kept pace with the increasing costs of transit service. There are too many competing interests to rely on a sales tax increase for transit. There is also no evidence that sales tax revenues will increase enough to cover anything more than increasing transit district operating costs. The Santa Cruz community would have to find a new source of revenue to pay for the local share of the \$5 subsidy per passenger on transit. A new tax being supported in the county for

transit is unlikely. Realistically, local money would have to be diverted from bus service to pay for rail transit.

Myth 3: The rail line can become a multi-purpose transportation corridor

The operation of freight trains, or passenger trains, or the implementation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities along the length of the existing rail line are mutually exclusive options. Where freight and transit operations must share the rail, freight operations are typically relegated to the late evening and early morning hours. It is unlikely that local decision makers would impose the noise impacts of late-hour freight operations on the residents along the rail line.

The rail line right-of-way is not wide enough along its entire length to accommodate rail service and a shared pedestrian-bike trail. The 30-foot wide segment in the critical central section between 30th Avenue to 47th Avenue is not wide enough for rail service and a shared pathway. The most likely use of the rail line right-of-way would be exclusively for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Ron Marquez is the past executive director of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission.

Attachment 2:

Ed Davidson: Rail-trail plan fails for both uses

Posted: 05/30/2010 01:30:33 AM PDT

The proposed purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line is the biggest waste of taxpayer funds I have seen since I arrived in Santa Cruz 40 years ago. Its main purpose was to justify the delay in the widening of Highway 1 in the 8-mile bottleneck between Santa Cruz and Larkin Valley. What have we got for the millions already spent?

- A money-losing freight line which continues to lose freight-car loadings;
- No feasible future passenger rail development. With over \$1 million spent on studies, why none on light-rail or commuter rail feasibility? A dinner train to Davenport is not passenger rail and needs to show a workable business plan;
- A bicycle/recreation trail which is not particularly scenic nor useful in getting commuters out of their cars;
- Every-worsening Highway 1 congestion as working families seek affordable housing in South County and beyond. Without carpool lanes, the daily commuter wastes an extra 10 minutes per commute, burning an extra \$500 worth of gas a year, and cumulatively emitting tons of pollutants and greenhouse gasses.

The Sentinel's February editorial support of the purchase was based largely on the benefits of a hiking and biking trail along the tracks. But those benefits are illusory. The route does not serve home-to-school or home-to-work commuters and a not very scenic route for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary scenic trail.

UC Santa Cruz, Cabrillo and the area's six high schools are either too distant from the tracks or, for Santa Cruz and Watsonville highs, on the wrong side of the tracks for bicycle commuters.

There are few work sites near the route. Residents west of 41st Avenue are better off using the existing bike route network to get to work. With the inability to share trestles over Soquel Creek Capitola Village and in and out of Aptos, residents of Seacliff and Rio Del Mar should use State Park Drive to Soquel Drive for home-to-work trips.

A scenic trail for Monterey Bay must include West Cliff and East Cliff drives rather than the backyards of the Westside and Live Oak. From the Monterey County coast and Zmudowski State Beach, Thurwatcher Road Bridge to San Andreas Road to Sunset and Manresa State Beaches is far more scenic than the tracks from Watsonville's warehouse district and between the two Buena Vista landfills. It would be nice to incorporate Beach Drive between Manresa and Seacliff State Beaches,

although stretches of track alongside Sumner and Park Avenues would still be required into Capitola.

Given the state's budget crisis, the State Transportation Commission should deny issuing passenger rail bond funds for projects without a valid passenger component. For all we know, SP may some day give it away rather than running up continuing losses.

Ed Davidson lives in Santa Cruz.

Meeting
Handout



OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY PROPOSED UNION PACIFIC RAIL PURCHASE

In contrast to the actions of other organizations in the county, the Santa Cruz County Business Council (SCCBC) is not taking an official position on the proposed purchase of the Union Pacific Rail Line. The Regional Transportation Commission (TRC), has taken several years and many consultants to study and deliberate the complexities of the proposed purchase in closed session, yet has allowed only a few weeks for public comment and review. That is hardly sufficient time for a thorough public review. The Santa Cruz community rightly expects the Business Council's opinion on any matter, especially one that involves a potentially huge public financial investment, to include a thorough review. This review would require sufficient time for experts to validate or dispute assumptions and claims, as well as, to identify and then estimate any future costs to the residents of Santa Cruz County. Regrettably, this cannot be accomplished in the short time allocated before a final vote is scheduled to be taken. We can only assume that it is coincidental, that the timing of the RTC's only release of a business plan and financial projections, which may very well obligate the county to a substantial commitment for generations, comes just 30-days before it bumps up against a June deadline to qualify for partial state funding.

For many, the dream of a train that would transport tourists from Santa Cruz to Davenport a few days a week during peak tourism months and/or a future walk and bikeway for county residents is worth consideration. The SCCBC agrees that this "dream" is worthy of consideration. However, the entire Santa Cruz community should be given the opportunity to decide if the proposed rail line purchase is worth the huge expense that such a "dream" will cost. Moreover, is the purchase and related ongoing commitment worth a possible reduction of other transportation services such as bus service, maintenance of local roads and streets and long overdue freeway improvements? There is a limited amount of transportation dollars that can be spent and the entire community must prioritize where these dollars will be allocated.

Like many things we all personally desire, there is a cost that comes along with them. The cost is not only in scarce dollars, but also in what we have to give up to afford not only the initial purchase but also the ongoing maintenance of our desires.

What the SCCBC hopes to convey to the public in this letter is our "Observations and Considerations" regarding the proposed purchase and our belief that these are worthy of additional exploration and further explanation.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1. Total purchase price is \$19.2 million for a property that was appraised several times and valued from a low of \$6.5 million to a high of \$14.3 million.**
- 2. Estimated 5-year cost of improvements to the 32 bridges and 9 culverts is between \$3.9 million and \$5.4 million and does not include the cost for needed improvements to any of the rail crossings.**
- 3. The most recent RTC business plan reflects a deficit of \$433 thousand in year one to a deficit of \$131 thousand in the fifth year for the rail line**

operator. These projected deficits do not include maintenance costs to the rail line.

4. The cost to the RTC reflects an overall five year deficit of \$93 thousand not including maintenance costs to the rail line.

5. Continued operation of a rail freight service on the branch line diminished considerably with the closure of the CEMEX plant, which eliminated 85% of the freight carried on the line.

6. Even if the tracks were in good shape, passenger service does not appear viable due to the lack of critical mass. Public transportation is seldom self sustaining. BART, serving some five million people in the greater S.F. Bay area requires a taxpayer subsidy. Caltrain is currently in serious financial trouble.

7. Significant portions of the rail right-of-way between Santa Cruz and Watsonville will not accommodate a 10 foot bicycle pedestrian path adjacent to the rail line. A portion of the right-of-way from Santa Cruz to Capitola is only 30 feet wide. This section will not accommodate an adjacent trail with any sort of rail service in operation.

8. 20% of the rail corridor from Santa Cruz to La Selva will not accommodate a trail with rail operation.

9. The business plan assumes that 15,000 dinner and excursion passengers per year will be served in the first year of operation with this number increasing to 30,000 per year. These numbers translate into 30,000 to 60,000 new auto trips on weekends in peak summer months and will require parking.

10. Not providing any rail service would allow a lower cost of developing a bike and walking path, but will federal rail authorities allow that to happen and would the state then demand its money back?

Based on these observations, the most likely use of the rail right-of-way in the foreseeable future is for bicycle and pedestrian use only. This could be construed as the RTC purchasing a pathway for a local bike community using the State's railroad funds. Perhaps the state will allow this, however, the state will not be there when a huge dollar commitment will be needed to develop and maintain this 32 mile pathway. The business plan does not address the initial cost of developing a trail adjacent to the rail line. The RTC has estimated that a minimum of \$32 million would be needed. Seven million dollars has been secured for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail, some of which could be used for this project, but there still remains a shortfall of at least \$25 million. The projected cost of paving and fencing a trail is \$1 million per mile. This estimate does not include structural modifications on bridges, retaining walls or significant grading. The public should not be surprised when it is obligated to "foot this bill" and a very expensive bill it will be.

Sincerely,

Judy Doering Nielsen
Executive Director, SCCBC



"Harold Raphael"
<haroldr@cruzio.com>
06/26/2010 07:42 PM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject rail purchase

Juan,

Please save yourself and fellow commissioners of CTC much potential embarrassment by cancelling the foolishness of any rail purchase in Santa Cruz County.

*Harold Raphael
2619 La Paloma Lane
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
831-464-8861
haroldr@cruzio.com*

Meeting Handout



ROY LOHR
<tlshr1@sbcglobal.net>
06/26/2010 08:53 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz Rail Line Purchase

Dear CTC Commissioners:

I am totally against purchase of the present Santa Cruz Rail Line. Upgrade to the line for passenger service is costly; will not relieve traffic on Hwy 1 or surface streets. Being that California is in hugh budget trouble, it would be better to spend the existing funds to better serve all of California where greater needs exist, than a local run down, useless rail line.

R.T. Lohr
V.J. Miller

Meetings
Handout



"Ann Bornstein "
<annstitcher@charter.net>
06/27/2010 02:17 AM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz Rail Line

Dear CTC Commissioners

Please do not approve or provide funding for the Santa Cruz Branch line. I feel it would be a major error which will turn out to be very expensive and wasteful for our county

Sincerely

Ann Bornstein
Watsonville

Meeting Handout



ravallerga@comcast.net
06/27/2010 09:55 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz County Railroad purchase

Dear CTC Members,

I served on a Santa Cruz County Transportation Task Force for a year and a half. The consensus opinion of that body was clearly against buying the railroad. But political manipulation forced a distorted report.

I am strongly opposed to the purchase of this white elephant which has no earthly possibility to provide any viable transportation options. Please deny Santa Cruz County's request for funds.
Thank you.

Robert Vallerga
5 Del Rio Circle
Soquel, CA 95073

(831) 477-0195



Vicki Hendin
<vhendin@pacbell.net>
06/27/2010 09:59 AM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail right-of-way
(ROW) from Union Pacific (UP)

Please OPPOSE the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail right-of-way (ROW) from Union Pacific (UP). It sounds like a costly plan that our county can't afford to maintain.

**Vicki Hendin
745 Escalona Dr.
Santa Cruz 95060**

Meeting Handout



doree
<tvdoree@sbcglobal.net>
06/27/2010 11:49 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject RTC

Bought my condo on Park Avenue overlooking the bay, twenty years ago and was told that the railroad only ran twice a week. We enjoyed looking at it from our deck from then on, but did not expect a passenger train to be put there! If there was one, it would have to be fenced where we walk down to the beach from Coronado Avenue and therefore we would have to walk around to the entrance to the park to enjoy OUR beach, a long way for us Seniors and all the other people who live in the houses around us! We would love to have a bike path or walk INSTEAD of the RR however, if that was possible. Thank you, Doree Steinmann

465-5629

Meetings
Handout



"Al Stevens"
<stevens1000@juno.com>
06/27/2010 04:39 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Dear CTC Commissioners,

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding. This project is not a practical alternative to other means of transportation, and in these times of fiscal turmoil a waste of much needed funds.

The tax payers of Santa Cruz County can not afford the continual upkeep and maintenance of the line.

Sincerely, Al and Joan Stevens
117 Miramonte Dr.
Santa Cruz, CA



harry mayo
<mistymayo@yahoo.com>
06/27/2010 08:30 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz Rail Line

Dear sir:

I phoned in my feeling about the Rail Line, but they don't take phone calls for that kind of thing.
So here is my letter not for the purchase of the rail line, it's nuts, we don't have the money to keep it up & it's going to cost millions of dollars.

Harry Mayo
251 Mamell Ave.
Santa Cruz, Ca 95062

mistymayo@yahoo.com

Meeting Handout



Harvey Segall
<harveysegall@sbcglobal.net
>

06/27/2010 10:35 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject I oppose purchase of the Santa Cuz Branch RR Line

Please do not approve funding or purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line.

It is a dream we taxpayers cannot afford. It is a dream to preserve the past unlikley to bloom.

It is like installing horse hitching posts and watering troughs in the the business districts . . . or restoring the the pay telephone booths we all, including Superman, relied upon and loved.

Harvey Segall (taxpayer, voter, business owner in Aptos)

Meetings
Handout



"David P. Rauen"
<gr8rodan@yahoo.com>
06/28/2010 07:08 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Opposition to Santa Cruz RTC purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line .

Dear CTC Commissioners,

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding.

Sincerely,

David P. Rauen
228 Oxford Way Santa Cruz,
CA
95060-6440



"David P. Rauen"
<gr8rodan@yahoo.com>
06/28/2010 07:11 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject Opposition to Santa Cruz Branch line purchase by Santa Cruz RTC

Dear CTC Commissioners,

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding.

This is a bad idea!

Sincerely,

Ann E. Rauen
228 Oxford Way
Santa Cruz,
CA
(831) 426-8517



dodoctor@aol.com
06/28/2010 08:02 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Rail - Trail Purchase

Dear CTC Commissioners,

We wish to register our opposition to the proposed purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch rail line. The notion that we have an opportunity to get a bunch of "free" money for this purchase is absurd. Any and all money that comes from any government agency is provided by the taxpayer/consumer. That means you and me!

I see this project as one which, without the political will or financial support of government agencies, will simply be another expensive, public-supported playground for the homeless and the useless (i.e. Santa Cruz levee project and the Pogonip purchase).

I'm sure that you are aware that the rail line has and will continue to be used by the public regardless of the ownership.

Please **do not** approve the purchase or funding for this fantasy project. We can not afford this kind of project now or in the future. Simply, there are too many existing social and infrastructure problems that need our attention and precious capital.

Sincerely,

Jerome and Marjorie Earls
Aptos, CA



thomasbear@aol.com
06/28/2010 08:25 AM

To: juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject: Opposition to purchase of the Rail Line

Dear CTC Commissioners:

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding. In the current economic climate, this is not the time to be spending this money. The line is in terrible disrepair, and we cannot afford the upkeep, maintenance and insurance on this project.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Pistole

Meeting Handout



"Ted Fab"
<dziadz@sbcglobal.net>

06/28/2010 08:42 AM

Please respond to
"Ted Fab"
<dziadz@sbcglobal.net>

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>

cc <c.c.stumblingbuffalo@gmail.com>

bcc

Subject Rail Line -Santa Cruz

This purchase would be a white elephant. I see no future growth which might support such a purchase in the future. This is a no-growth county and as such, I feel it would not be able to sustain the line.

T. J. Fabiszewski and Barbara Fabiszewski
96 Leawood Street
Aptos, California

Meeting Handout



Mark Vanderwoude
<mark.vanderwoude@coastwire.com>

06/28/2010 08:49 AM

Please respond to
<mark.vanderwoude@coastwire.com>

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Opposition to Purchase Union Pacific Railroad by Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission

Juan Guzman

Associate Deputy Director

(916) 653-2072

Dear Mr.. Guzman,

I oppose the request(s) of the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) for funding (\$14.2 million) to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail right-of-way (ROW) from Union Pacific (UP) for the following reasons:

- There are no economics of any financial return on investment regardless of ridership numbers or years to payback, and the purchase will only burden the tax payers of Santa Cruz County for a frivolous purchase.
- The voters of Santa Cruz County should be allowed to vote on any expenditure of this magnitude, but our Supervisor's don't want that to happen for fear it will not pass by the required two thirds majority needed to make the purchase
- The Union Pacific Railroad openly admits they have been losing money on this line for years so how can the District Supervisors of Santa Cruz County or the Commission who have ZERO experience running a railroad be trusted to select a contractor(s) who can do a better job?
- The entire right-of-way is and should be viewed as an enormous environmental liability as the entire right-of-way has been subjected to large amounts of industrial waste and agricultural wastes in the form of pesticides for decades. The Union Pacific Railroad would be very happy to walk away from such a liability and be paid to do the same.
- The condition of the entire right-of-way has been misrepresented as the infrastructure such as bridges and tressels will cost ten fold more to repair and/or replace than disclosed by the Commission
- The current railroad operator can only operate their Freight Operation at speeds of 10 miles per hour due to the poor condition of the rails. To upgrade to passenger service level the DOT will require the entire rail system to be replaced. This has not been included or presented into any economic review of the purchase
- The purchase of the right-of-way will not reduce traffic congestion, and the width of the right-of-way in certain areas is so narrow that bicyclist and the train cannot co-exist

simultaneously

- The County does not have adequate funds or insurance to pay for accidents that occur along the right-of-way as the current operator pays millions of dollars per year to settle such cases
- Lastly who else is vying for this right-of-way? Why doesn't the County just wait until the Union Pacific Railroad "abandons" the line, cleans up the objectionable environmental issues, and then take it over as has been done in Los Banos, CA and other areas for ZERO dollars? Even if a quick claim deed was given to the County with agreement that they are responsible for the environmental issues I'm sure a ZERO dollar purchase price would be agreeable to both parties.

Sincerely,

Mark Vanderwoude
567 Cuesta Drive
Rio del Mar, CA 95003-550367
831-345-4850

Meeting Handout



Ramona Smith
<ramona.smith-np@sbcglobe
l.net>

06/28/2010 09:54 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject CTC Commission

I am opposed to the purchase and or any funding intended for the rail to trail line in Santa Cruz County.

This will only be a drain on our local tax base. We barely have the sufficient riders to keep our transit system afloat let alone support a train to no where .

Thank you.

Meeting Handout

Juan Guzman

June 28, 2010

Associate Deputy Director

Re : Purchase of Rail Line

Dear Mr. Guzman,

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding.

These are just a couple of my reasons:

- Maintenance costs are an unknown. For example, have you walked under the many trestles that are wooden structures looking like they could tumble if a heavy train exceeded the recommended speed limit?
- Liability costs. Imagine if passengers are allowed in the future use of this rail line and an accident occurred killing or maiming passengers. Insurance to cover such liabilities would be expensive.
- Best use of this Asset? I have yet to hear of a profit generating idea that will at least generate a reserve account much less a profit.

Respectfully,

Millard Phelps

411 St Andrews Drive

Aptos , CA 95003

831 685 9344



Jim Dixon
<jimdixon2002@yahoo.com
>

06/28/2010 11:33 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Re: 6/30/10 - 7/1/10, CTC Meeting Agenda Items 19 & 115

Dear CTC Commissioners,

We are opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and request that you do not approve the purchase or the funding.

There are too many unknown costs associated with this project and in our opinion a considerable amount of uncertainty regarding how Santa Cruz County will pay for the ongoing costs of owning this branch line.

With the current budget crisis, where existing bus service is being threatened, and the backlog of needed and overdue surface street maintenance is growing, we find it unconscionable to consider this purchase. We simply cannot afford it.

Sincerely,

Jim Dixon & Patricia McGlynn
352 Rio Del Mar Blvd.
Aptos, CA 95003

RICHARD L. CROCKER

1530 Prospect Avenue
Capitola, CA 95010
831-763-3620
Fax 831-763-2996

June 27, 2010

Attn: Mr. Juan Guzman
Associate Deputy Director

Dear CTC Commissioners,

RE: Opposition to purchase of the rail line

- The public has not been given adequate time to study the current findings and it appears that the RTC is trying to jam down approval without sufficient public notice.
- For the past several years the RTC has promoted a "Rail Trail" for the community. There have never been any studies done to evaluate the Trail concept as promoted to the public. i.e.; the RTC has not been forthcoming in disclosing the fact that a Bike Trail/Hiking trail is seriously being considered. A gross misrepresentation on the part of the RTC.
- The public has not had sufficient time to study and evaluate the business plan for a passenger rail.
- Much of the underwriting for the business plan took into account that the Cement plant would still be using the rail.
- What are the real costs for upgrading the trail and the trestles? Additionally, the RTC has not considered the true costs for any environment cleanup?
- Who would use the rail service in such a rural thinly populated community?
- UP SHOULD DONATE THE RAIL LINE TO THE RTC AT NO COST!!! Maintaining the rail line is a significant cost for ownership and it has not been demonstrated that the line can pay for itself?
- If UP decides to shut down the rail line or abandons the line, what then????
- My understanding is that there are many areas on the line that pass thru properties that either encroach, or crowd the properties of housing and if the line is deeded over to a new entity, will clear ownership be available to the new owner?? There could be sufficient deed restrictions that would prohibit free passage along the 32 mile corridor for future owners?

The above are my concerns and I strongly oppose the purchase of the rail line based on the foregoing.

Sincerely,
Richard Crocker



Michael Abbett
<mikeabbett@mac.com>
06/28/2010 11:48 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz RTC request for funding for Santa Cruz Branch
Line right-of-way

California Transportation Commission

Dear Commissioners:

We are strongly opposed to the proposed purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail right-of-way (ROW) from Union Pacific (UP) and request that you **not approve** the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission's (RTC's) request for funding. Currently Santa Cruz County is in the midst of a severe fiscal crisis with little indication of remediation on the foreseeable future. The RTC's plan is based on projected use/income which the RTC has not adequately presented to the public, which ultimately will bear the burden of any financial shortfalls. We, the funding public, have not been presented with adequate information to have confidence that the RTC's plan is, in fact, viable; we suspect that it is not.

We have lived in Santa Cruz County for more than 30 years, and we love this community. What little information has been made readily available to the public indicates to us that this is another case of some local politicians attempting to get the State to help fund an ill-conceived program, one which has a high probability of failure resulting in significant financial consequences to the County. Santa Cruz County is not in position to accept such a risky, potentially very expensive obligation, and we plead with the Commission to not approve the RTC's ill-conceived request. The fact that the RTC is up against a deadline to obtain the State funding is no excuse for approval of a plan that has not been adequately vetted.

Sincerely,

Michael Abbett
Grace (Geraldine) Abbett
103 Granada Drive
Aptos, CA 95003



Don Heichel
<kiheidon@sbcglobal.net>
06/28/2010 12:40 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Purchase of RailRoad in Santa Cruz, California

Dear CTC Commissioners,

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding.

This purchase is the wrong decision at the wrong time in a State with huge budget deficits...our County also has deficits that this purchase will add to because of its poor condition, maintenance requirements, etc.

Sincerely, Don Heichel

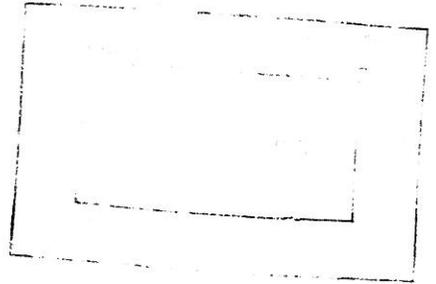
3311 Maplethorpe Lane

Soquel, Ca. 95073

831 239 0419

Geoffrey Ellis
212 Germaine Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95065

June 26, 2010



California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street
Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone: (916) 654-4245

Gentlemen:

I ask for your **NO** vote on the agenda item 2.6d, "**Santa Cruz Branch Line ROW Acquisition**" for the following reasons:

The applicant Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission has likely offered to pay too much for the right-of-way. While their offering price has been a closely guarded secret, figures in excess of \$15 million have been discussed in the press. Documents that I have received through the Public Records Act indicate the unwillingness of the seller, Union Pacific, to allow CalTrans to be involved in these negotiations. CalTrans should have been involved in determination of a fair price for the right-of-way, in order to avoid a waste of public funds.

The applicant has stated publicly that funds requested under Proposition 116 rail bonds would be used in part to construct a hiking/bicycle trail. However that is not a "railroad purpose" for which the money is available.

Your policy requires that, once Proposition 116 funds have been granted, the grantee must meet certain requirements; otherwise the money must be repaid from local funds. However the applicant is a regional transportation planning agency with no taxing power. The sources of such local funds is unclear. Therefore you should deny this request unless the applicant identifies the sources and amounts of local funds which could, if necessary, be used to repay the CTC.

Please vote **NO** on this item. Thank you.

Regards

Geoffrey Ellis



PETER ATKINSON
<peteratk@hotmail.com>

06/28/2010 03:30 PM

Please respond to
<peteratk@bayreal.com>

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Railroad purchase in Santa Cruz County, CA.

Dear Mr. Guzman,

I have been a resident of Santa Cruz for more than 30 years and am very much opposed to the purchase of the local railroad lines for the following reasons:

- 1) Using the lines for passenger use is impractical: The lines were built and designed for freight transportation only. They do not pass through major metropolitan areas suitable for rail stops such as Cabrillo Collage, University of Santa Cruz, town center of Santa Cruz, and the major shopping areas of 41st. Ave.. Where they do pass through populated areas there are no areas left for development that would be suitable for development of a train depot.
- 2) Using the lines for a dining car is ludicrous. Outfitting a dining car and food prep car is and paying for the gas and train maintenance to transport diners up the coast to the small coastal village of Davenport and back is a money losing proposition that no private enterprise would commit funds to.
- 3) After the railroad is taken over by the city and county the cost of maintenance, policing, and improvement with biking trails will put an additional back breaking demand on local funds that we cannot afford.

PLEASE VOTE AGAINST FUNDING THE PURCHASE OF THE SANTA CRUZ RAILROAD LINE. IT IS A WAST OF TAXPAYOR FUNDS THAT COULD BE PUT TO MUCH BETTER USE ELSEWHERE.

Peter Atkinson,
1441 Capitola Rd.,
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
Cell: 831-239-7014



Peter Haworth
<pete@haworths.org>
06/29/2010 09:44 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Santa Cruz Branch Line Purchase

Dear CTC Commissioners,

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding.

Sincerely,

Peter F. Haworth

Meeting Handout



HIEND4@aol.com
06/28/2010 05:26 PM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Stop the Union Pacific Rail Purchase

CTC Commissioners,

I am vehemently opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding. To waste our State Tax dollars on this ridiculous fantasy is incredibly irresponsible at any time especially now that our State is broke. The upkeep/maintenance of such a purchase is another portion of this, that is way out of line! Stop the spending madness of and by those that have no concept of who will be paying for this pipe dream and ultimate liability to our community. We (Santa Cruz Tax payers), can no more afford this than the State.

Sincerely,

Marlene Henderson

Tax Payer

Santa Cruz County



Sue Renner
<suerenner@earthlink.net>
06/28/2010 08:50 PM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Opposition to Santa Cruz Branch Line ROW Purchase

Dear CTC Commissioners,

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding. In addition to numerous opposition letters and opinions documented as part of RTC proceedings over many years since this project has been in consideration, I also refer you to evaluations by the Santa Cruz Business Council and Ron Marquez, former SCCRTC Executive Director (attached).

Sincerely,

Sue Renner
Santa Cruz Resident



SCCBCrail advert.pdf Ron Marquez editorial[1].pdf

Meeting Handout



OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY PROPOSED UNION PACIFIC RAIL PURCHASE

In contrast to the actions of other organizations in the county, the Santa Cruz County Business Council (SCCBC) is not taking an official position on the proposed purchase of the Union Pacific Rail Line. The Regional Transportation Commission (TRC), has taken several years and many consultants to study and deliberate the complexities of the proposed purchase in closed session, yet has allowed only a few weeks for public comment and review. That is hardly sufficient time for a thorough public review. The Santa Cruz community rightly expects the Business Council's opinion on any matter, especially one that involves a potentially huge public financial investment, to include a thorough review. This review would require sufficient time for experts to validate or dispute assumptions and claims, as well as, to identify and then estimate any future costs to the residents of Santa Cruz County. Regrettably, this cannot be accomplished in the short time allocated before a final vote is scheduled to be taken. We can only assume that it is coincidental, that the timing of the RTC's only release of a business plan and financial projections, which may very well obligate the county to a substantial commitment for generations, comes just 30-days before it bumps up against a June deadline to qualify for partial state funding.

For many, the dream of a train that would transport tourists from Santa Cruz to Davenport a few days a week during peak tourism months and/or a future walk and bikeway for county residents is worth consideration. The SCCBC agrees that this "dream" is worthy of consideration. However, the entire Santa Cruz community should be given the opportunity to decide if the proposed rail line purchase is worth the huge expense that such a "dream" will cost. Moreover, is the purchase and related ongoing commitment worth a possible reduction of other transportation services such as bus service, maintenance of local roads and streets and long overdue freeway improvements? There is a limited amount of transportation dollars that can be spent and the entire community must prioritize where these dollars will be allocated.

Like many things we all personally desire, there is a cost that comes along with them. The cost is not only in scarce dollars, but also in what we have to give up to afford not only the initial purchase but also the ongoing maintenance of our desires.

What the SCCBC hopes to convey to the public in this letter is our "Observations and Considerations" regarding the proposed purchase and our belief that these are worthy of additional exploration and further explanation.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Total purchase price is \$19.2 million for a property that was appraised several times and valued from a low of \$6.5 million to a high of \$14.3 million.

2. Estimated 5-year cost of improvements to the 32 bridges and 9 culverts is between \$3.9 million and \$5.4 million and does not include the cost for needed improvements to any of the rail crossings.

3. The most recent RTC business plan reflects a deficit of \$433 thousand in year one to a deficit of \$131 thousand in the fifth year for the rail line

operator. These projected deficits do not include maintenance costs to the rail line.

4. The cost to the RTC reflects an overall five year deficit of \$93 thousand not including maintenance costs to the rail line.

5. Continued operation of a rail freight service on the branch line diminished considerably with the closure of the CEMEX plant, which eliminated 85% of the freight carried on the line.

6. Even if the tracks were in good shape, passenger service does not appear viable due to the lack of critical mass. Public transportation is seldom self sustaining. BART, serving some five million people in the greater S.F. Bay area requires a taxpayer subsidy. Caltrain is currently in serious financial trouble.

7. Significant portions of the rail right-of-way between Santa Cruz and Watsonville will not accommodate a 10 foot bicycle pedestrian path adjacent to the rail line. A portion of the right-of-way from Santa Cruz to Capitola is only 30 feet wide. This section will not accommodate an adjacent trail with any sort of rail service in operation.

8. 20% of the rail corridor from Santa Cruz to La Selva will not accommodate a trail with rail operation.

9. The business plan assumes that 15,000 dinner and excursion passengers per year will be served in the first year of operation with this number increasing to 30,000 per year. These numbers translate into 30,000 to 60,000 new auto trips on weekends in peak summer months and will require parking.

10. Not providing any rail service would allow a lower cost of developing a bike and walking path, but will federal rail authorities allow that to happen and would the state then demand its money back?

Based on these observations, the most likely use of the rail right-of-way in the foreseeable future is for bicycle and pedestrian use only. This could be construed as the RTC purchasing a pathway for a local bike community using the State's railroad funds. Perhaps the state will allow this, however, the state will not be there when a huge dollar commitment will be needed to develop and maintain this 32 mile pathway. The business plan does not address the initial cost of developing a trail adjacent to the rail line. The RTC has estimated that a minimum of \$32 million would be needed. Seven million dollars has been secured for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail, some of which could be used for this project, but there still remains a shortfall of at least \$25 million. The projected cost of paving and fencing a trail is \$1 million per mile. This estimate does not include structural modifications on bridges, retaining walls or significant grading. The public should not be surprised when it is obligated to "foot this bill" and a very expensive bill it will be.

Sincerely,

Judy Doering Nielsen
Executive Director, SCCBC

Ron Marquez: Debunking Santa Cruz County transportation myths

Posted: 11/08/2009 01:30:14 AM PST

Ron Marquez

A number of myths regarding transportation have developed over the years which affect community thinking and even local policy decisions. Debunking these myths is important for good transportation decisions in Santa Cruz.

Myth 1: Congestion on Route 1 is due in large part to commuters over the hill

If you drive to Santa Cruz with any regularity on Route 1 you will notice that, as you approach the "Fishhook," more cars continue on Route 1 into Santa Cruz than take Route 17. This anecdotal evidence is supported by the actual measurements of traffic volumes on Route 17 and Route 1. It can be said that the increase in traffic on Route 1 is primarily related to the increase in employment and commercial activity in the city of Santa Cruz.

The population of the city grew by less than 2,000 non-UCSC residents for the 20 years from 1985 to the year 2005. During that same time period job growth was 12,000 new jobs. The end result is that 60 percent of the jobs in the city of Santa Cruz are filled by commuters. This imbalance between jobs and resident workers has resulted in significant growth in commute traffic into Santa Cruz.

Myth 2: Rail transportation is a realistic alternative to adding lanes on Route 1

For rail to be a comparable alternative in terms of moving people along the Route 1 urban corridor at least 2,000 people per hour would have to be served during evening commute hours. The 20 light rail trains per hour needed to move this number of passengers is not feasible without double tracks along a significant portion of the right-of-way.

Sales tax sources provide nearly 50 percent of the Transit District budget, but sales tax growth has not kept pace with the increasing costs of transit service. There are too many competing interests to rely on a sales tax increase for transit. There is also no evidence that sales tax revenues will increase enough to cover anything more than increasing transit district operating costs. The Santa Cruz community would have to find a new source of revenue to pay for the local share of the \$5 subsidy per passenger on transit. A new tax being supported in the county for transit is unlikely. Realistically, local money would have to be diverted from bus service to pay for rail transit.

Myth 3: The rail line can become a multi-purpose transportation corridor

The operation of freight trains, or passenger trains, or the implementation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities along the length of the existing rail line are mutually exclusive options. Where freight and transit operations must share the rail, freight operations are typically relegated to the late evening and early morning hours. It is unlikely that local decision makers would impose the noise impacts of late-hour freight operations on the residents along the rail line.

The rail line right-of-way is not wide enough along its entire length to accommodate rail service and a shared pedestrian-bike trail. The 30-foot wide segment in the critical central section between 30th Avenue to 47th Avenue is not wide enough for rail service and a shared pathway. The most likely use of the rail line right-of-way would be exclusively for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Ron Marquez is the past executive director of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission.

Meeting Handout

California Transportation Commission (CTC)
1120 N Street
Room 2221 MS-52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Juan Guzman
Associate Deputy Director
(916) 653-2072
juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov

Dear CTC Commissioners,

I request that the CTC does not fund the purchase of the Rail Line between Pajaro and Davenport. It is my understanding that the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) will use these funds (\$14.2 million) to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way (ROW) from Union Pacific (UP). It is also my understanding that the three pillars that justify this purchase are 1) continued freight service, 2) proposed passenger service, manifested by either regular scheduled service or tourist excursions, and 3) 32 miles of biker and hiker trails.

Continued freight and the proposed passenger alternatives are not economically viable now or in the future without tax and government subsidies. The current operator's engines are rust buckets and when is the last time you met anybody who was seriously interested in taking a Dinner Train between Santa Cruz and Davenport. Accordingly, the sole reason and justification for this purchase is another bicycle/pedestrian path, through a less than scenic route; which by any measure does not qualify this purchase for the use of the Prop 116 funds.

In a perfect world there should be bike and hiking trails along every rail right-of-way, with a Starbucks' Kiosk at every rail crossing; Starbucks can neither afford nor justify such an expense, and neither can we, the people of Santa Cruz county and the State of California.

Sincerely,
John T. Shook
427 Sea View Drive
Aptos, CA 95003
(831) 685-8630
ckshook@pacbell.net



"Len Herkomer"
<lherkomer@applied-motion.com>

06/29/2010 09:50 AM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject S.C. branch ROW purchase

Juan Guzman
Associate Deputy Director
California Transportation Commission

Dear Mr. Guzman,

I am a resident of Santa Cruz County and an interested person in the plans to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Line rail right-of-way (ROW) from Union Pacific Railroad. I have not seen any credible evidence that people of the county would use such a line and common sense tells me that commuters would not use transportation that is so removed from major workforce centers. (This is not San Jose). If that is the case, then the large sums of money spent on studies upgrading would be wasteful when times are lean as they now are. I worked for Southern Pacific Railroad for 4 years. One thing I learned was how normal degradation of the rail line occurred when passenger service is eliminated. I think it is likely that it studies have under estimated the amount of money it will take to bring the existing line up to passenger requirements. For the most part, my opinion is based on economics.

With regards and thanks,

Len Herkomer
3020 Mar Vista Dr.
Aptos, CA. 95003



Bill
<william.delaney@gmail.com
>

06/29/2010 10:32 AM

To juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Santa Cruz County Application for Prop 116 Funding

Dear CTC Commissioners:

I am a retired transportation economist who has lived in Santa Cruz County for five years, relocating here from San Jose. My career specialized in evaluation of railroad projects, many dozens involving shortline railroads and rail passenger services. I was employed by three agencies of the federal government, a non-profit think tank, several large corporations and spent my last 23 years with a small Washington DC consulting firm, R.L. Banks & Associates Inc., from which I retired as a Vice President in 2002.

Since coming to Santa Cruz, I have followed the proposed acquisition with great interest and reviewed all studies and consulting reports made public by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). From time to time, I have made public comments to the RTC or its members and in the local press that I have limited to technical issues to improve understanding of what would be involved in a public acquisition of the Union Pacific branch line.

I believe the following conclusions are supported by available due diligence and apply to the proposed project:

- There is no demand for rail passenger service using this right of way nor is there likely to be any in any long term planning horizon. The fundamental reason for this is because of long-term conscious local planning policies that have prevented growth conditions necessary to establish rail markets to develop. The RTC's alternatives analysis concluded the best use of the right of way was as a busway west of Cabrillo College.
- The demand for freight service is insufficient to maintain a shortline operator as a going concern. RTC engaged John Williams, perhaps the leading analyst in the US, to evaluate abandonment issues. He concluded that even with CEMEX at full production, Union Pacific met federal regulatory requirements to abandon the line. The matter is further complicated by local issues that have restricted CEMEX mining on publicly owned land, an activity that should have supported freight service and perhaps continued operation of the Davenport facility. The Sierra Northern

business plan shows continued losses from freight service.

- There is significant confusion and lack of understanding of future financial requirements should RTC acquire the branch line and promote its use. The overall objective of keeping this transportation corridor intact is admirable; but how that asset would be managed and developed for future rail passenger use is not clearly understood by RTC staff and members.
- Public support for the purchase has a strong base in the community that wants the right of way developed into a trail for biking and hiking. The rail-trail advocates recognize that were federal abandonment law and procedures re rails-to-trails followed, there would be no funds available to acquire rights to use the right of way. Only Proposition 116 funds allow continued development of the trail use – a use contrary to the Proposition. To a very great degree public support has been developed based on deception and use of bait-and-switch tactics.
- Others base their support on potential for a wide use of possible rail based activities such as trolley and PRT that ignores economic reality and is purely wishful thinking.
- Proposition 116 as approved by the voters required a rail project offering significant continued rail passenger service in Santa Cruz County. The legislature later recognized the impossibility of that requirement and established “recreational rail” as the minimum service that would qualify for funding. RTC’s application offers possible dinner train service west of the Boardwalk in Santa Cruz, a high priced service of limited local appeal. It seems a valid question as to whether the proposed passenger service meets legislative intent as to minimum requirements.

I would like to note my opinions on the following:

- The proposed dinner train should not be acceptable as meeting the law’s requirements for passenger rail service in Santa Cruz County.
- The RTC has not fully considered nor does it fully understand what impacts purchase of the rail line would have on Santa Cruz County.
- The condition of the transportation infrastructure and limits to mobility in the County merit the conclusion that RTC is not meeting its obligations to the public.
- Elected officials in Santa Cruz County are not accepting fiduciary responsibility for their decisions as to the rail line acquisition.
- The California Transportation Commission has a fiduciary

responsibility to all taxpayers in California that should clearly lead to not approving the application of Santa Cruz County for Proposition 116 financing.

I urge the members of the California Transportation Commission not to approve the application of Santa Cruz County for Proposition 116 financing.

William W Delaney

750 Bay Avenue #4203

Capitola CA 95010

Mailing address: PO Box 595, Capitola CA 95010-0595

Meeting
Handout



"Mike Marr"
<mmarr@westernwaterinc.ne
t>

06/29/2010 02:23 PM

To <juan.guzman@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject opposed to railraod purchse

I am opposed to the purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and I request that you neither approve the purchase nor the funding.

Mike Marr
VP Sales

WESTERN WATER ASSOCIATES, INC.

512 Woodhaven Ct. Aptos CA 95003
USA

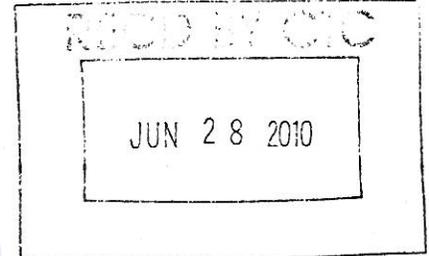
(831) 684-2003 office
(775) 743-2027 fax
(408) 421-2048 mobile

Meeting Handout

Mary Lou Weidlich
101 Burton Drive
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95065

June 21, 2010

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street 2221
MS-52
Sacramento, Ca. 95814



Commissioners:

Please consider this a letter of disapproval of the proposed purchase of the rail line between Pajama and Davenport in Santa Cruz county. It simply sets us our county with more maintenance costs and will most likely never be self sustaining. Just as AMTRAK , with it's huge ridership, is still unable to support itself, so would this tiny line with no current ridership and little projected without a huge expenditure of funds, be unable to sustain itself.

Our county is already deep in a financial hole, so money is not available for the improvements necessary and the state of California is also in a huge financial deficit. Any money from the state should be used to maintain our already existent bus line, which is threatened with cuts, and our decrepit county roads, which keep getting short shrift of funds for repair.

Please do not allocate money for this frivolous rail purchase. If a company takes over the Davenport cement plant and needs transportation, they can purchase it.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary Lou Weidlich".

Mary Lou Weidlich



Sylvia Previtali
<sylvia@ix.netcom.com>

06/29/2010 03:26 PM

Please respond to
Sylvia Previtali
<sylvia@ix.netcom.com>

To Commissioners
<California_Transportation_Commission@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Oppose purchase of Union Pacific Rail Line on Agenda June
30-July 1, 2010 Items 19 and 115

To: Honorable Commissioners, California Transportation Commission
From: Sylvia Previtali
Date: June 29, 2010
Re: Item: Oppose purchase of rail line in Santa Cruz County, Item 19 and 115
Meeting of June 30-July 1, 2010

Dear Commissioners,

The purchase of the Union Pacific short line from Watsonville to Davenport in Santa Cruz County is ill-advised.

Our county's other means of transport, such as the bus transit line, are suffering from lack of funds and have had to cut back on routes. Our highways and roads are in severe disrepair and the county states it will take millions of dollars to fix, millions we don't have.

Plus we have no passengers for a "commuter train" here. This line has restrictions in some areas to keep the speed at 10 mph and travels over old trestles, bridges, sloughs, two landfills, steep ravines. Many of these crossings are in need of costly repair.

The rail line is unsafe. The line is largely unfenced yet some people in our community unfortunately encourage school children to use the tracks illegally as a place to walk or bike to and from school.

Thank you.

Sylvia Previtali
611 Cliff Dr.
Aptos CA 95003

6-16-10

JUN 24 2010

To CTC,

As a matter of record
we strongly oppose the
purchase of the rail line
between Pajaro + Davenport in
Santa Cruz County. We voted
against the measure in 2004
as did the majority of voters,
as it failed! There are more
important issues in Santa
Cruz Co. and it is not
supported by the majority
of TAXPAYERS.

Thank You

Carl + Denese Matthes
831-338-3833
PO Box 249
Boulder Creek Ca 95006

June 17, 2010

CTC
1120 N. Street
Room 2221
(M.S.-52)
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Re: Purchase of the Santa Cruz County Rail Line.

I wish to argue against the proposed funding for the purchase of the Santa Cruz Rail line.

While mass transit funding is being cut for trains, and busses around the state including bus service in Santa Cruz County, the request to fund the purchase of a rail line in this County should be considered carefully.

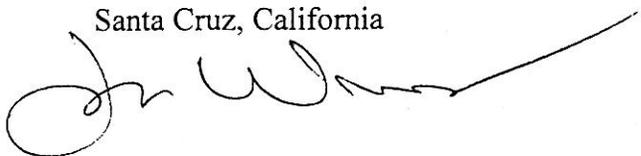
The proponents of purchasing the train line argue that they qualify for funding and offer as an example of train service a proposed "Dinner Train" This would be a train service that would take mainly tourists, on a short ride from Santa Cruz to Davenport and serve them dinner!

Proposition 116, from which the money would come states the funding is "to provide funds principally for passenger and commuter rail systems". The intent of the tax payers funded proposition 116 was to relieve congestion and fund alternative transportation. Taking tourists on a sunset train ride hardly meet those criteria.

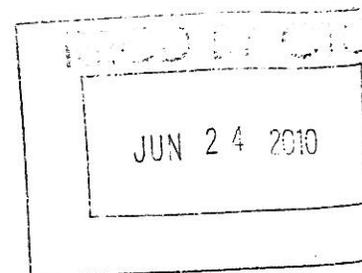
Santa Cruz County residents are far from united on the idea of this purchase. When funding for the purchase of the rail line was included in a ballot initiative several years ago it was rejected. Aside from funds for the purchase of the line millions more will be needed to have a viable passenger line. Will the County be able to raise those funds? Given the current financial crisis it is doubtful that tax payers will shoulder the burden required to pay for repairs and additional on-going maintenance.

Existing commuter train service in our large cities is currently running in the red. Our bus services, state wide, are being cut and curtailed. It seems not only wasteful but selfish and irresponsible for our County to request funding for such a silly venture.

Joseph Ward
624 7th Avenue
Santa Cruz, California



California Transportation Commission
1120 N. Street
Room 2221 MS-52
Sacramento, CA 95814



June 16, 2010

Re: Rail line purchase between Davenport and Watsonville

I would like to let you know as a native Santa Cruzen and a California tax payer for the last 50 years that I completely oppose of the purchase of the rail line. In my opinion it would be a complete waste of money and would never be a successful mode of transportation for tourism, commuters or commercial interests. Considering the financial situations of the State, County of Santa Cruz and the Cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville there must be more worthwhile and needy projects to spend this money on. The maintenance of this rail line is another issue that would greatly and adversely effect the budgets of all those concerned in this project. It will be an expenditure that will never go away.

Please do not approve or fund this purchase

Sincerely,

Jeff Locke
207 Quarry Lane
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 426-3461

REC'D BY CTC

JUN 23 2010

6/19/10

CTC
1120 N Street, Room 2221
Sacramento, CA 95814

To Whom It May Concern:

Please do not approve the purchase the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport. The reasons why I'm totally against the purchase are listed below:

The money spent on the acquisition of the railroad could be better used in repairing the roads and highways in Santa Cruz County.

Purchasing a railroad for passenger service, would mean tremendous additional expense in maintaining the railroad and building depots and parking lots for the depots.

A goal of having a bike and hike trail along the railroad is completely impractical and wasteful. I might add impossible where I live on Nova Dr. in Santa Cruz. The railroad tracks run against the back yards of my neighbors across the street. There is no room for the bike-hike trail. This stretch of railroad runs from 41st Ave. to 47th Ave. And has anyone thought about how expensive it would be to build trails along railroad trestles?

The noise for passenger trains would be unbearable for us property owners who live near the tracts.

According to Don Sturgis, chairman of IntroGo, a transportation-solutions company in Boulder Colorado, "Fifty percent of Americans can't access public transit without a car.

The idea of a "dinner train" to help cover the cost of the railroad is crazy. Very few people can afford that.

Again - please DO NOT approve the purchase of this railroad.

Sincerely,

Catherine Elliott
Catherine Elliott

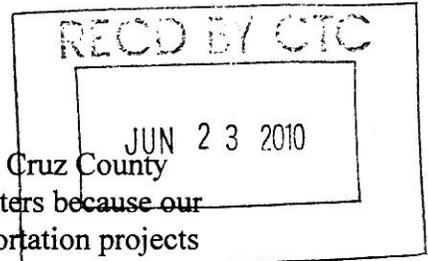
4330 Nova Dr.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

cc: Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

June 12, 2012

Re: Santa Cruz Rail Trail

To the California Transportation Commission,



I am writing to voice my objection to the proposed purchase of the Santa Cruz County Rail Trail Project. This project was voted down by the majority of the voters because our tax dollars can be better used to support many other under funded transportation projects in this community. Santa Cruz highways are at maximum capacity during commute hours with grid lock lasting 2 to 3 hours. I would welcome a light rail system or a more efficient public transportation system. I commute daily to Watsonville and my commute time has grown from 18 minutes to up to 60 minutes since I first moved to Santa Cruz thirty years ago.

There is no pretense that the current proposed Rail Trail project will have any impact at all in alleviating our traffic problems. It will bolster the income of the Canfield Company that owns the majority of the tourist industry and will benefit several other businesses that hope to move more tourists to their front door, however the majority of tourists will still end up crowding our already overcrowded roads including Highway one, Ocean Street and Soquel Drive. Additionally, these businesses all pay the majority of their workers minimum wage which in this expensive community is not enough to support yourself.

There has been a smoke screen cloaking this project in a package of hiking and biking trails which cannot happen within the city limits as the corridor between the tracks and surrounding property is too narrow and dangerous to support a trail. Additionally, any trail that is built outside city limits is redundant, as we already have a public access trail for hikers and bikers from the city limits to Wilder Ranch which is close to Davenport, and the property between Wilder and Davenport has been purchased by the land trust. Constructing a connecting trail between these locations could be done simply and inexpensively, as there are many outdoor enthusiasts in this community (myself included) that would gladly volunteer time to make this trail happen.

Finally, we have one of the highest unemployment rates in California. We may be closing our libraries, and schools and government workers have all been furloughed. There is no extra money in the reserve fund to pay for costly safety and maintenance repairs that will have to occur in order for this project to be viable. The tracks need major repair, the bridges will need to be retrofitted, and public safety will need to be ensured if there is a tourist train running more frequently through our community in residential areas (currently the train comes through town once or twice per week only, as the cement plant in Davenport that previously used it is now shuttered and is not expected to open.)

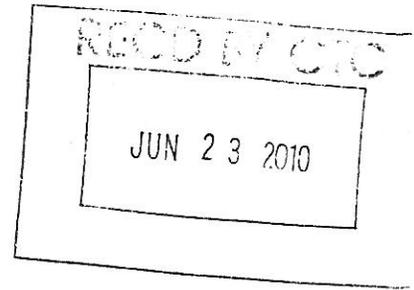
This community does not support this project and there have been multiple letters to the editor of our local paper the Sentinel to that effect. I hope that you will carefully consider all of these issues before you jeopardize the fragile economic well being of our entire community.

Sincerely,

Andrea Ratto

June 16, 2010

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: Purchase of rail line in Santa Cruz County between Pajaro and
Davenport

Dear Commissioners,

You will soon be voting on whether or not to approve funds for the purchase of the above rail line. We would like to express our strong disagreement with this purchase. At this time and for the foreseeable future, our state is in a monetary crisis and spending money on this project makes no sense. Our highways, schools, healthcare, etc. need our support far more than this frivolous project. We have major a concern that hasn't received much attention, the on-going cost that the ownership of this property will require. We are not willing to accept the cost of maintenance of the many dilapidated trestles and their potential liability. There is no way that this rail line can provide much needed public transportation to meet the needs of our community, nor can it be self supporting.

Therefore we strongly urge you not to allocate money for this project.

Dennis and Regina Carney
1829 Cheryl Way,
Aptos, Ca 95003
carneysinaptos@hotmail.com

JUN 23 2010

Dennis Case

3255 Polo Dr. Aptos, Ca. 95003
Tel. (831) 685-1560

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street Rm 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

June 17, 2010

Dear Sirs:

I respectfully object to Santa Cruz County's proposed purchase of the rail line between Pajaro and Davenport. The proposed use of taxpayer money to support public transportation in the form of a dinner train is specious at best. After all, what is to keep the county from calling surfing, sailing, skateboarding and bicycling to be forms of public transport deserving of taxpayer support while they have been dragging their feet for years regarding the widening of the county's freeway?

True public transportation benefits the commonweal by enabling and encouraging commercial enterprises which give the highest number of citizens the largest opportunity to improve their existence. A large portion of Santa Cruz County's wealth is imported from the Silicon Valley counties by freeway commuters whose endeavors benefit not just the county, but the whole world. The county has delayed the commute of these workers for years by refusing to widen Highway 1, and now the county wants to benefit a few locals with their proposed railroad purchase.

Please refuse to indulge the County of Santa Cruz with this frivolity. There are many other productive venues for the use of this money.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Case
Dennis Case

To the California Transportation Commission:

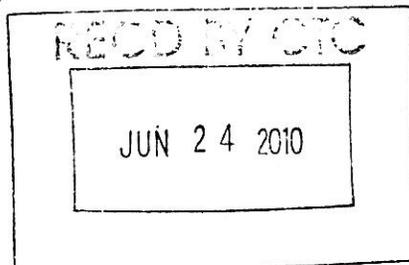
I don't like to beg but
for want of a better entreaty
I beg you to save our local
government from themselves.

against all sensible arguments
our local transportation commission plunges
relentlessly ahead in the purchase of a
31 mile under-maintained railroad.
no longer do they even have one
major revenue generator.

The only reason I can divine for
this folly is the temptation to
grow a new branch of government;
and this in a time of severe economic
turmoil.

you have better uses of the
peoples money in these difficult
times. Please deny the money
for this costly folly.

Thank you
Dennis Webb



116 Tracy Frog Ln,
Santa Cruz CA 95060
June 16, 2010

Calif. Transportation Commission
1120 N St. Rm. 222 (MS-52)
Sacramento CA 95814

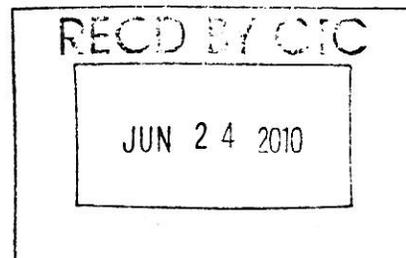
Members:

I am fervently AGAINST purchase of
rail line between Fajardo and Davenport
Santa Cruz^{co.} cities and county itself have
been hit hard by the recession. The
economy is close to going broke, because
they lock out out-of-county corpora-
tions. We have no tax base to support
"Buy Local."

Now the hikers and hikers would
love to acquire railroad right-of-
way, without a prayer of succeeding
in running a train on these tracks.
The biggest customer, a cement plant
in Davenport, has moved out, lock,
stacks and barrel.

Please help us fill pot holes in our
streets.

Sincerely,
Harriet L. Dwyer



June 17, 2010

I am against spending money to purchase the rail line between Payara and Davenport. With our city short of funds & having to lay off personnel, our money would be better spent on repairing our streets & highways.

Until the economy gets better, we can consider the rail purchase at a later date

Sincerely,

Mabel Woo

40.38th Ave, #21

Santa Cruz, CA 95062



All costs today and tomorrow
will be payed for by the taxpayer.
No rail system has ever paid
for itself.

Hi,
I am X you,
Please do not

fund this project

County Geary



etc

JUN 2

we do not fund the rail trail
State (even California). Our state
cannot afford those millions. I would
want a project that is not necessary
when Geary has no money to repair
maintain and take on with a liability
is demand of the people in Santa Geary
government will become a nightmare
for the poor taxpayer in S.C.
Then things less and less
money in their pockets
that is if they have a job



June 16, 2010

Mrs. Charles L. Scherman

104 Geneva Court

Santa Cruz, Cal. 95060

June 16, 2015

California Transportation Commission
Sacramento, CA

My husband and I are 86 and 84 residents of Santa Cruz. We wish the purchase of the UP railway line as a financial disaster. The viability of a freight rail operation is almost nonexistent because of maintenance dream. Beyond maintenance, rampant bureaucracy was related to the more aging track for years.

Track 116 funds should not be spent on this hundreds of an idea. Santa Cruz cannot afford to be in the future to maintain a profitable railroad. I urge you to vote not

Call County Clerk