

July 15, 2004

Chair Mardi Wormhoudt  
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors  
701 Ocean St. Room 500  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Proposed Expenditure Plan

Dear Chair Wormhoudt:

I am writing on behalf of the Bicycle Committee of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission to comment on the Proposed Expenditure Plan Project List for a Local Transportation Sales Tax Ballot Measure.

On May 20, 2004 the Bicycle Committee sent a letter with our comments to the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission. This letter is included for you reference. One of our comments was to remove the footnote from the Coastal Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail that up to 50% of the proposed allocation for construction be used for the acquisition of the rail line. This footnote has since been removed. However, the current language does not specify if the \$23 million will be used for construction of the trail or acquisition of the rail line.

We urge you to clarify Plan language to state that the \$23 million allocated to the rail/trail be used only and specifically for construction. The SCCRTC currently has other funds available for the purchase of this rail corridor.

Sincerely,

Kem Akol,  
Chair, SCCRTC Bicycle Committee

May 20, 2004

Chair Jan Beautz  
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
1523 Pacific Ave  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Proposed Expenditure Plan

Dear Chair Beautz:

I am writing on behalf of the Bicycle Committee of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission to provide comments on the Proposed Expenditure Plan Project List for a Local Transportation Sales Tax Ballot Measure.

At the May 10, 2004 Bicycle Committee meeting, Committee members discussed the proposed list of projects and passed a unanimous motion to submit the following comments for your consideration:

1. We believe that the \$21 million proposed to construct the Coastal Pedestrian/Bike Trail adjacent to the rail line should be increased to \$31 million. The SCCRTC committed to constructing the rail trail along with widening Highway One as a result of its Master Transportation Study. Just as the expenditure plan is structured to ensure that the highway widening will be adequately funded; so too should the expenditure plan ensure that there is sufficient money for the construction of the rail trail. This is even of greater importance because bicycle projects compete with highway projects for alternate funding sources.
2. Please remove the footnote from the Coastal Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail that up to 50% of the proposed allocation for construction be used for the acquisition of the rail line. \$11 million in Prop. 116 funds are currently available for the purchase of this rail corridor. All the funds allocated to construction need to be reserved for construction as no other fund sources are identified for the trail.
3. The \$108 million allocated to Local City and County Transportation Improvements identifies maintenance and improvement projects for road projects, including bikeways. However, this allocation gives no guarantee these funds will be used for bike projects. We would like to see 20% of these funds allocated specifically for bike projects. This would guarantee that \$21.6 million is available to bike projects all across the county.

There are over 100 outstanding bicycle projects listed in the RTP estimated to cost over \$700,000,000. For most projects there is no other funding source other than the proposed sales tax measure. Many of these projects would help to close gaps in the bicycle network. In contrast to the road network for motor vehicles, the bicycle network remains incomplete and is a barrier to moving towards a safe and efficient network as outlined in the goals and policies of the RTP. Although only a small percentage of trips are currently made by bicycle, many residents have bikes and cycle at some time and hence will benefit from money specifically allocated to bicycle facilities. Without such an allocation, it is possible that not one penny from this allocation will be spent on bicycling. This amount is only 6% of the projected \$333 million cost of the Highway 1 widening. The Environmental Impact Report may well find that a mitigation measure for the increased volume of auto trips may be to spend more money on bicycle projects. Even \$21.6 million is a small, inadequate price to pay for potentially an improved and more balanced transportation system.

4. We appreciate the identification for the need for bicycle overcrossings; however the locations of these crossings need to be researched to see if they adequately address safety, fill gaps in the system, and are along bicycle corridors. The bridge to Cabrillo College Drive seems to be unnecessary as there are no residential neighborhoods at the south end of the proposed bridge and appears duplicate of the other bridge close by to Mar Vista Drive. A key crossing that has been identified as a high priority project by the committee is the crossing at Morrissey Boulevard, where cyclists cannot cross safely to the north end of Highway 1. The locations for the crossings need to be researched in more detail and not be restricted to a particular type of bridge or crossing. We will be happy to provide input about where to locate these crossings.

Thank you for considering our recommendations. We understand that public input is an important part of this process and we try to represent the interests of bicyclists in the community.

Sincerely,

Kem Akol,  
Chair, SCCRTC Bicycle Committee