

Agenda: September 16, 2004

To: Regional Transportation Commission/Rail/Trail Authority – Transportation Policy Workshop

From: Linda Wilshusen, Executive Director

RE: Presentation on Draft *Santa Cruz Branch Line Business Plan*

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission accept a presentation on the draft *Santa Cruz Branch Line Business Plan* and provide time for members of the public to comment on the Draft Business Plan.

BACKGROUND

Acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line is one the projects included in the 15-year program of projects to which the Commission committed future funding in 1999, after the completion of the *Major Transportation Investment Study of the Watsonville to Santa Cruz to UCSC Corridor*. The rail line acquisition project is included in the *2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)*, and the project is consistent with the following RTP policies:

- 2.5.2 Encourage private transit service for visitor-serving trips
- 2.5.3 Use the existing rail line for recreational/coastal access to minimize visitor impact on local streets and highways.

The Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition project has been included in the *Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)* since 2000.

The Commission is implementing its intent to acquire the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line through a negotiations contract, which includes the production of several reports. One of those reports is a business plan for the rail line. At its August 5, 2004 closed session the Commission received an administrative draft (Review Draft 4.0) of the *Business Plan* for a two week review period. At its August 19, 2004 closed session, the Commission decided to release this same draft *Business Plan* to the public. The draft *Business Plan* was released on August 26, 2004 as an information item on the September 2, 2004 agenda packet. The written staff report for that item is included as [Attachment 1](#).

DISCUSSION

In addition to releasing the draft *Business Plan*, the Commission scheduled a presentation on the draft *Business Plan* at its September 16, 2004 Transportation Policy Workshop (TPW), to be held at 9 am in the County Government Center, 5th Floor, 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz; the meeting will be televised by Community Television. The presentation will be made by Kirk

Trost of Miller, Owen and Trost and Paul Sullivan of Systra Consulting. The Commission will accept comments on the draft *Business Plan* after the presentation. Written or emailed comments and questions on the draft *Business Plan* will be compiled and provided to the Commission as information items in regular agenda packets, consistent with all public communications with the RTC.

SUMMARY

The draft *Santa Cruz Branch Line Business Plan* has been completed. The Commission has reviewed the draft *Business Plan*, released it for public comment and scheduled a televised presentation by Systra Consulting at this meeting. The draft *Business Plan* will be updated as information is provided by Union Pacific and other sources.

Attachments:

1. September 2, 2004 Staff Report on draft *Santa Cruz Branch Line Business Plan*

Prepared by Luis Pavel Mendez, Senior Transportation Planner
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