

*Handouts from March 17<sup>th</sup> 2005  
evening Public Hearing*

March 15, 2005

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission  
1523 Pacific Avenue  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060-3911

Re: Comment on the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report for Recreational Rail Service between Capitola and Aptos with an Extension to Seascape.

Dear Commission:

This comment is from Seacliff Park, Inc. An Improvement Association (SIA). The SIA represents all the members that either reside in, own property, or a business within the Seacliff Park area. The idea of a tourist trolley running between Capitola and Aptos has alarmed many of our members because much of the Seacliff area is in close proximity to the railroad tracks. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the SIA voted to conduct a survey to determine our particular concerns and to submit these concerns to you in this comment. This survey was conducted at our General Membership meeting on February 16, 2005.

At the meeting thirty-one SIA members completed the survey. A sample survey is attached for your information. In addition, a tally of the results in spreadsheet form is attached for your review. The spreadsheet breaks out the responses according to the individual's closeness to the railroad tracks. Ten of the thirty-one individuals live next to the track. This group of individuals are the most alarmed about the proposed tourist trolley as it will affect them more than those individuals living further away. However, the idea of the tourist trolley was generally disapproved of among the SIA members surveyed. Of these 31 members, 71% are against it. The group nearest the track is 90% against the tourist trolley. The biggest concerns of this group of individuals are the possibility of an increase in air pollution, noxious fumes, and traffic congestion followed closely by a worry about the increased noise, vibrations, interference with the quiet enjoyment of their home, increase in additional train runs during the day, and concern about possible train derailments and damage to life and property. If a train, tourist or otherwise, is to run by these homes in addition to the freight train that now runs six times a week, this Commission needs to properly address these concerns by eliminating or nearly eliminating them. Reducing the intervals of the train run does not address these concerns or sufficiently move toward eliminating them.

It is generally understood that the reason this Commission is considering a tourist trolley is to access Proposition 116 money to purchase the rail right of way in order to put in a trail for walking and biking. Because the SIA anticipates a future walking and bike trail along the railroad tracks which will be in close proximity of many of these member's

homes, an additional set of questions was posed in this survey regarding these concerns. We hope you will take the time to review these responses also. While 61% of those surveyed are in favor of the trail, those who will be closest to it are the most concerned the trail will be used improperly by motorized vehicles, scooters, etc., and also that the trail will not be adequately maintained or patrolled. The next issues of concern are that there will be increased noise and a possible increase in property taxes to build the trail, maintain, and patrol it. Additionally, many worry that there will not be a curfew on trail use, that privacy in their yards and homes will be lost, that the rail corridor is too narrow and the terrain is too steep for a trail, and finally, that any fencing separating the trail from the train track will be an eyesore. We hope this Commission will address these concerns adequately by incorporating solutions to these concerns in any future proposals for this walking and bike trail.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rebecca Downing  
SIA PRESIDENT

And by

Terry-Lynn Winston  
SIA BOARD MEMBER

CC: SIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ATTACHMENTS: Sample Survey and Spreadsheet Tally

**Seacliff Resident's Rail-Trail Survey**  
*Concerning the Proposed Recreational Rail/Trolley and the  
Idea of a Trail Next to The Track for Walking and Biking*

**Preliminary Information**

Name(optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Seacliff Address \_\_\_\_\_

How close is your home to the railroad tracks? Please check the description that applies:

Next to tracks \_\_\_ 1 Block away \_\_\_ 2 Blocks away \_\_\_ 3 Blocks away or more \_\_\_

Are you able to see the train tracks from your home or yard? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Survey Questions**

1. Do you favor a Recreational Rail Service between Aptos and Capitola? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

➤ If yes, please explain why \_\_\_\_\_

➤ If no, what are your concerns? Please check all items that apply:

a. Does not meet the needs of either the Aptos or Capitola residents \_\_\_\_\_

b. Increased noise \_\_\_\_\_

c. Increased vibrations \_\_\_\_\_

d. Lack of privacy \_\_\_\_\_

e. Interference with the quiet enjoyment of your home \_\_\_\_\_

f. Increase in air pollution and noxious fumes \_\_\_\_\_

g. Increase in Recreational or Freight train runs during the day \_\_\_\_\_

h. Added Recreational or Freight train runs at night \_\_\_\_\_

i. Traffic congestion at rail stops \_\_\_\_\_

j. Loss of property value \_\_\_\_\_

k. Increase in property taxes to pay for operating losses & improvements \_\_\_\_\_

l. The possibility of an added tax to repay the State Prop. 116 money should the Recreational Rail fail \_\_\_\_\_

m. Concern about train derailments and damage to life and property \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you favor the idea of a bike and walking trail beside the current tracks? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

➤ If no, what are your concerns? Please check all items that apply:

a. Increased criminal activity near and on trail \_\_\_\_\_

b. Increased noise \_\_\_\_\_

c. Lack of curfew \_\_\_\_\_

d. Lack of privacy \_\_\_\_\_

e. Improper trail use by motorized vehicles, scooters, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

f. Interference with the quiet enjoyment of your home \_\_\_\_\_

g. Loss of property value \_\_\_\_\_

h. Increase in property taxes to build trail, maintain, & patrol it \_\_\_\_\_

i. Rail corridor too narrow and terrain too steep for trail \_\_\_\_\_

j. Fencing separating trail from train track will be an eyesore \_\_\_\_\_

k. Trail will not be adequately maintained or patrolled \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you feel it is necessary to accept a Recreational Rail in order to obtain a bike and walking trail? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

4. Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

*If you would like to be reminded to attend the March 17th RTC public hearing on the tourist train environmental impact report please provide your by e-mail or phone #: \_\_\_\_\_*

## Seacliff Resident's Rail-Trail Survey

*Concerning the Proposed Recreational Rail/Trolley and the Idea of a Trail Next to the Track for Walking and Biking*

Questions		House Next to Tracks		1 Block Away		2 Blocks Away		3 Blocks Away or More		Total	
<b>Do you favor the idea of a bike and walking trail beside the current tracks?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	3	30%	2	50%	5	71%	9	90%	19	61%
	<b>No</b>	6	60%	1	25%	2	29%	0	0%	9	29%
	<b>No Opinion</b>	1	10%	1	25%	0	0%	1	10%	3	10%
<b>If yes or no, what are concerns:</b>		<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Increased criminal activity near and on trail.		6	60%	2	50%	2	29%	0	0%	10	32%
Increased noise		7	70%	2	50%	1	14%	1	10%	11	35%
Lack of curfew		6	60%	2	50%	0	0%	1	10%	9	29%
Lack of privacy		6	60%	1	25%	1	14%	0	0%	8	26%
Improper trail use by motorized vehicles, scooters, etc.		8	80%	3	75%	2	29%	0	0%	13	42%
Interference with the quiet enjoyment of home		5	50%	2	50%	1	14%	0	0%	8	26%
Loss of property value		6	60%	1	25%	0	0%	0	0%	7	23%
Increase in property taxes to build trail, maintain, & patrol it		7	70%	2	50%	1	14%	0	0%	10	32%
Rail corridor too narrow and terrain too steep for trail		6	60%	1	25%	0	0%	0	0%	7	23%
Fencing separating trail from train track will be an eyesore		6	60%	1	25%	1	14%	0	0%	8	26%
Trail will not be adequately maintained or patrolled		8	80%	1	25%	1	14%	0	0%	10	32%
<b>Do you feel it is necessary to accept a Recreational Rail in order to obtain a bike and walking trail?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	0	0%	2	50%	0	0%	2	20%	4	13%
	<b>No</b>	9	90%	2	50%	7	100%	6	60%	24	77%
	<b>No Opinion</b>	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%	2	20%	3	10%

23-39

## Seacliff Resident's Rail-Trail Survey

Concerning the Proposed Recreational Rail/Trolley and the Idea of a Trail Next to the Track for Walking and Biking

Questions		House Next to Tracks		1 Block Away		2 Blocks Away		3 Blocks Away or More		Total	
Number of Surveys broken down by location:		10		4		7		10		31	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Are you able to see the train or train tracks from your home? (Yes answers noted)		9	90%	4	100%	1	14%	0	0%	14	45%
Do you favor a Recreational Rail Service between Aptos and Capitola?	Yes	0	0%	1	25%	1	14%	4	40%	6	19%
	No	9	90%	2	50%	6	86%	5	50%	22	71%
	No Opinion	1	10%	1	25%	0	0%	1	10%	3	10%
If yes, please explain why:						It would be fun		For fun For light rail For the children to ride For Prop. 116 money			
If no, what are concerns:											
Does not meet the needs of either the Aptos or Capitola residents.		8	80%	3	75%	4	57%	5	50%	20	65%
Increased noise		9	90%	3	75%	6	86%	5	50%	23	74%
Increased vibrations		9	90%	3	75%	2	29%	3	30%	17	55%
Lack of privacy		6	60%	3	75%	3	43%	2	20%	14	45%
Interference with the quiet enjoyment of home		9	90%	3	75%	4	57%	3	30%	19	61%
Increase in air pollution and noxious fumes		10	100%	3	75%	4	57%	3	30%	20	65%
Increase in Recreational or Freight train runs during the day		9	90%	2	50%	4	57%	3	30%	18	58%
Added Recreational or Freight train runs at night		6	60%	3	75%	3	43%	2	20%	14	45%
Traffic congestion at rail stops		10	100%	3	75%	6	86%	4	40%	23	74%
Loss of property value		8	80%	2	50%	2	29%	1	10%	13	41%
Increase in property taxes to pay for operating losses and improvements		10	100%	1	25%	6	86%	1	10%	18	58%
The possibility of an added tax to repay the State Prop. 116 money should the Recreational Rail fail		8	80%	2	50%	5	71%	3	30%	18	58%
Concern about train derailments and damage to life and property		9	90%	2	50%	3	43%	2	20%	16	52%