

August 5, 2005

Susan Harris
City of Santa Cruz
Parks and Recreation Department
323 Church Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Scope of Arana Gulch Park Master Plan EIR

Dear Ms. Harris,

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) staff would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scope of the Environmental Impact Report for the Arana Gulch Park Master Plan.

Please include in the EIR the positive environmental effects this path will have on transportation and air quality. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Connection proposed in the Arana Gulch Park Master Plan will help fill a critical gap in the regional east-west bicycle and pedestrian network and will increase the ease and safety of bicycle and pedestrian trips for transportation purposes in and between our communities.

Please also address in the EIR that the need for this bicycle and pedestrian path does not duplicate or obviate the need for any other existing or potential bicycle or pedestrian facility in the area. Providing a complete and convenient regional bicycle and pedestrian network increases the opportunity and attractiveness of bicycle and pedestrian trips for transportation purposes which can have positive, cumulative environmental impacts.

The Broadway-Brommer Bicycle/Pedestrian Connection will also provide “universal access” to and through Arana Gulch. “Universal access” is the goal of enabling all people, including young, old and disabled persons who may have diminished perceptual or ambulatory abilities, to travel safely to destinations served by our public street and pathway system. Achieving universal access to and through Arana Gulch should be addressed in the EIR.

RTC staff encourage the Santa Cruz City Council to design the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path in a way that will minimize the environmental impacts of the project. We recognize that some modifications in the current design may be warranted to respond to environmental concerns

while keeping the other goals of the project in mind. We also encourage the Santa Cruz City Public Works staff to continue to work with the RTC's Bicycle Committee and Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee to review the design plans and concepts for the project, at appropriate times.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions about the above comments, please contact Grace Blakeslee of my staff at (831) 460-3219.

Sincerely,

Pat Dellin
Acting Executive Director

cc: Commissioner Reilly
Commissioner Wormhoudt
SCCRTC Bicycle Committee
SCCRTC E&DTAC Committee
SCCRTC