


From: [Board Chair Friends of the Rail Trail](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Friends of the Rail and Trail Comments on Agenda Item 27: Segment 1 and Highway 1
Date: Monday, November 4, 2024 2:38:43 PM
Attachments: [Nov 7 RTC Letter re Item 27 SB1 Cycle 4 Project Splitting Segment 12 and Highway.docx](#)

Friends of the Rail and Trail has several questions regarding the staff report for the Measure D 5 year project program report, which discusses the Senate Bill 1 Cycle 4 Project application, Highway 1 between State Park and Freedom, and Rail Trail Segment 12.

Our concerns are listed in the letter which I have attached.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Best,

Matt Farrell
Chair
Friends of the Rail and Trail




November 4, 2024

RE: November 7, 2024 Agenda Item 27: Measure D Five-Year Programs of Projects for Regional Projects and Lift Line, and Senate Bill 1 Cycle 4 Project Update

Dear Members of the Regional Transportation Commission and Staff

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on RTC Agenda Item 27. Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail would like to comment on the inclusion of the *Senate Bill 1 Cycle 4 Project Update* in Agenda Item 27.

The Agenda Item 27 Public Hearing is indicated in this staff report, on the RTC website, and in local advertising, as pertaining to the 2016 Measure D Five-year Programs of Projects (5-Year Plans). The published staff report, however, contains an additional topic, the “SB1 Cycle 4 Project Update”. This Update refers to the Highway 1 State Park Drive - Freedom Auxiliary Lanes and Bus on Shoulder Project and Coastal Rail Trail Segment 12 - a project that was amended into Measure D in 2020. Review of the current Measure D Five-Year Program by RTC Committees in October 2024 was conducted prior to the addition of this SB1 Cycle 4 Project Update.

The Senate Bill 1 Cycle 4 Project Update is in fact a significant recommendation to “***split construction implementing agency duties - with the Department [Caltrans District 5] administering construction for improvement based on the SHS [State Highway System] and the RTC administering construction for improvements centered on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.***” (p. 27-18 of the agenda packet). Following approval of the Project EIR/EIS in February 2024, to date, no information about the current project development phase of this project has been made available to the Commission or to the public. Therefore, the above recommendation is being proposed absent Commission, public, and RTC committee review of the project’s overall construction plan and project details (“PS&E” as referred to on p. 27-18 and 27-19).

Of particular concern to Friends of the Rail & Trail is the lack of clarity in **Exhibit G**, an October 30, 2024 Memorandum co-authored by the Caltrans District 5 Director and the RTC Executive Director, about who will be responsible for what, should this project “split” move forward (p. 27-18,19). We therefore have the following, specific questions:

1. How will current grants and revenues that have already been awarded for various aspects of the project be shared/divided, and are assurances already in place that the proposed project severance is acceptable to grantors?
2. Which entity is currently assumed by this Memorandum to be responsible for ensuring replacement of the existing and functionally-sound railroad bridges?
3. Which entity is currently assumed by this Memorandum to be responsible for additional project development costs associated with severing the project, for administrative cost increases due to the impacts of severing, and for possible challenges at the Federal Surface Transportation Board due to potential unmitigated impacts on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line that project severing may cause?
4. When do RTC staff and Caltrans intend to return to the Commission for approval of the results of the Project Development Team’s review of project severance (Action Plan Item B, p. 27-19)?
5. When will the SB 1 Cycle 4 application, as amended by this recommendation, for the project “presented as true to the full project” be approved by the RTC? (Action Plan Item A, p. 27-19)

Friends of the Rail & Trail will appreciate discussion of these concerns by RTC Commissioners, RTC staff, Caltrans representatives, and members of the public prior to acting on this unusual combined staff report and recommendation.

Sincerely,

Matt Farrell, Chair
Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail and Trail

Cc:
Corey Aldridge, Santa Cruz Metro
Scott Eades, California Department of Transportation
Chair, California Transportation Commission

November 04, 2024

Sarah Christensen, Executive Director
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Av.
Santa Cruz, CA. 95060

Bruce McPherson, Supervisor District 5
701 Ocean Street, Room 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

On behalf of the Ben Lomond Village Association (BLVA), a newly formed non-profit organization of residents and business owners we are responding to the Commission's request for written comments on how to invest voter-approved measure D revenues. BLVA's vision is to make the village of Ben Lomond even a greater place to live, work and play than it is today. We already have projects underway working with the County Parks Department and strongly desire to initiate the planning and project process with the Commission, State and County for improvements on our public roadways.

Many of us were active in the development of the Highway 9 Complete Streets Plan and have been pleased to hear of Measure D dollars appropriated for sidewalks in Felton, a walkway from Felton to the SLV campus and complete streets in Boulder Creek. As advocates for a safer Highway 9, local streets and walkways in Ben Lomond, we ask the Commission to undertake the necessary project studies or development reports so that Ben Lomond can obtain its share of Measure D funds. A key objective of BLVA is to implement modifications and improvements to make traveling safer for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

We point to the fact that unlike downtown Felton and Boulder Creek that serve somewhat as terminus points for daily auto trips, Ben Lomond falls between those two towns and the vast majority of the 15,000 vehicles per day on Highway 9 in our village are transitory. These high volumes coupled with a higher posted speed limit of 30mph subjects Ben Lomond residents walking or cycling, or motorists entering or exiting driveways at a higher degree of risk. In addition, unlike Felton and Boulder Creek where Highway 9 is straight and flat, Ben Lomond has sweeping curves at each end and a hill in the center of our business district which limits sight distance to crossing pedestrians, driveways and even the traffic signal.

We understand that the Commission is limiting its input to four regional projects, one of which is the Highway 9 Complete Streets Corridor. We have three requests at this time, and look forward to advancing them with the Commission and County.

- That the RTC take the necessary actions and identify funding to include that section of Highway 9 from South Glen Arbor Road to California Drive to advance this segment to the engineering and environmental phases, with our highest priority being that section in the Ben Lomond business district.
- That the RTC and County prioritize identification of the remaining funds in Measure D or from outside sources for the already approved and partially funded sidewalk project on the North side of Glen Arbor Road from Highway 9 to Pine Street. (Glen Arbor Road is regularly used as the sole detour route to Highway 9 due to natural disasters between Ben Lomond and Felton)

- That the RTC and County add to the Regional Transportation Plan project list construction of a sidewalk on the East side of main Street from Highway 9 to the U.S. Post Office (two blocks). This is one of the most heavily used walking routes in downtown with no formal walking areas which forces pedestrians to use the vehicle lanes to access the Post Office.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on transportation projects in San Lorenzo Valley. The BLVA and its members look forward to working with the Commission, County and State to make Ben Lomond a safer, cleaner, climate friendlier and economically vibrant community.

Sincerely,

Heidi Castagna, Board President, BLVA

Cc: Blake Holiday, Executive Director, BLVA

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of [Jocelyn Wolf](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: 5-year Measure D expenditure plan solicited input
Date: Wednesday, November 6, 2024 12:48:44 AM

Dear RTC staff,

I'm a Santa Cruz resident and I care deeply about transportation in this county. Looking to a future that is more sustainable, I would strongly prefer that these funds be used for public transit and active transportation.

I am thrilled with the funding that is going towards the Rail Corridor. I am in favor of the funds for the Coastal Rail Trail. I am also glad to see an emphasis on Complete Streets in for Highway 9/SLV - these improvements will help keep pedestrians safer.

However, while I am in favor of the new bicycle/pedestrian bridges over Highway 1, I am against the auxiliary lanes linking on and off ramps and bus-on-shoulder facilities between Soquel Avenue and Freedom Boulevard. The EIR for that segment states that morning northbound congestion will get worse after the project is built. I would like to see the RTC put the State Park to Freedom project on hold while it makes an assessment of the 2015 EIR's prediction for "very slight" improvement in congestion.

Because auxiliary lanes get congested during peak commutes, it seems counterproductive to build these lanes for the express purpose of using them as bus-on-shoulder lanes. Additionally, adding lanes does not decrease congestion in the long term. If the Measure D funding is intended to make bus travel easier, there are alternative uses to which the it could be put. I would like the RTC to study the issue further and in concert with metropolitan transit experts before spending taxpayer dollars to increase car travel on Highway 1.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I appreciate your hard work in service of the future of Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,
Jocelyn Wolf

From: [Erica Stanojevic](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: 5-year Measure D expenditure plan
Date: Friday, November 1, 2024 10:34:55 AM

Please focus on transit and active transportation for the 5-year Measure D expenditure plan. This will support our communities while actually decreasing congestion!

Blessings,
Erica Stanojevic
Santa Cruz Resident

From: [Paula Bradley](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item #27 Measure D funds and trail trail funding - public comment
Date: Wednesday, November 6, 2024 8:33:02 AM

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you and staff for the great job you have been doing - especially securing funds for the rail and trail project.

I am concerned that the Commission's decisions continue to move forward with the rail and trail project. If there is discussion concerning separating the rail bridges from the Highway 1 auxiliary lanes highway widening project, the railroad bridges need to be replaced as part of the highway project. Don't use Measure D funds for development of the rail project.

Continue to maximize leveraging available funds to move forward with the rail trail project including trail maintenance funds that might not be needed at this stage of the rail trail project.

The rail project is for the future benefit of all residents in the County as is connecting to the regional and state rail network. I am 100% for the trail, but the trail won't continue to be constructed unless it is part of the multi-modal transportation project.

Build the trail keep the rail

Thank you

Paula Bradley (she/her)
[REDACTED] Capitola CA 95010
mobile [REDACTED]

From: [Debbie Bulger](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Aux Lane Project from State Park Drive to Freedom Blvd.
Date: Saturday, November 2, 2024 3:56:04 PM

RE: Public Hearing, Measure D

This comment pertains to the Aux Lane Project from State Park Drive to Freedom Blvd.

Table 2-19 on p. 104 of the Draft EIR notes that average speed (mph) of vehicles during the northbound am commute will decrease compared to the NO BUILD OPTION rather than increase and will continue to decrease as we reach year 2045!

Why are we planning to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a project giving us no congestion relief? Can you explain this?

It appears that the money would be better spent on something else.

Debbie Bulger
Santa Cruz

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Comments on Investments for Ben Lomond Transportation Improvements
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 9:16:17 PM
Attachments: [Letter to RTC 11-2024.docx](#)

Hello,

Please find attached a letter from the Ben Lomond Village Association (BLVA), a new local nonprofit dedicated to enhancing the safety, accessibility, and vibrancy of our community. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide input on how to invest revenues to benefit transportation projects in San Lorenzo Valley.

In the attached letter, we outline three key requests related to the Highway 9 Complete Streets Plan and other local improvements to better serve the residents, businesses, and visitors of Ben Lomond. We hope to work closely with the Commission, County, and State to advance these initiatives and make Ben Lomond safer and more accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to collaborating on these projects and would be pleased to provide any additional information you may need.

Warm regards,
Blake

Blake Holiday
Executive Director
Ben Lomond Village Alliance
[REDACTED]

From: [Dianne](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Comments on Measure D Funding Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 3:16:39 PM

TO: RTC Commissioners and Staff

Here are my comments on the Measure D Funding Plan:

More funding should be used now for repairing the rail line and bridges, in preparation for passenger rail service. And could be used for matching funds to do that.

Large amounts of funding for trail maintenance should be postponed until more of the trail is nearly finished. Instead, the available money should be used now for matching grants for near term engineering and construction of the trail.

I strongly support passenger rail service!

Dianne Dyer
Thurber Lane
Santa Cruz

From: [Trician Comings](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Comments on Measure D expenditures
Date: Sunday, November 3, 2024 7:57:19 AM

Regional Transportation Commission:

I wanted to respond to your request for input. You know the pros and cons so I won't go into them.

Two of the project are tied in my opinion as TOP priorities:

Completing the Coastal Rail Trail and furthering passenger Rail transit on our rail corridor.

I believe that any further work on Highway 1 beyond State Park Drive should be paused until we get proof that highway widening actually relieves traffic congestion.

A disproportionate amount of money is being spent on Highway 1 when really important sustainable and earth friendly transportation projects are underfunded.

Sincerely,

Trician Comings

From: [David Fairchild](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Comments to RTC on use of Measure D
Date: Wednesday, October 30, 2024 5:57:09 PM

1. I recommend study, with or without Measure D funds, of the Watsonville <-> StaCruz rail line for ANY passenger transit use, not just “zero emission” use.
2. If the prior state grant used by RTC to obtain use of this line prevents RTC from implementing NON steel rail transit use of said line, then:
 - 2a. Use Measure D funds to overcome that limitation and thus enable RTC to implement any transit use on that line.
 - 2b. Use Measure D funds to study or otherwise implement all forms of transit passenger service on that line.
 - 2c. Stop using any Measure D funds for transit improvements on Highway 1.

thanks.

David Fairchild

[REDACTED]
Corralitos CA 95076

[REDACTED]

From: [Bill Gray](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Feedback on use of Measure D funds
Date: Wednesday, October 30, 2024 12:35:16 PM

Please use funding to complete trail system and railbank tracks for future use.

Bill Gray



Capitola

From: [leeseve](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Hwy 1 Expenditures Comments
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 9:45:55 PM
Attachments: [Nov 2024 RTC Comments.docx](#)

To the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission:

I am commenting on the following:

"RTC proposes to use Measure D revenues to leverage state and federal grants and deliver the following regional projects. No new projects are proposed this year:

"Highway 1: Auxiliary lanes linking on and off ramps and bus-on-shoulder facilities between Soquel Avenue and Freedom Boulevard...", especially as described in 27-12, Exhibit B items 2 - 4

This project is antithetical to good planning, true consideration of the environment, and local aesthetic values. A treeless concrete corridor ruining what is special about this area for no true, sustainable traffic relief is inexcusable. Specifically:

- Why should the outcome of this widening be any different from all the other highway widenings that simply ended up inducing more traffic? RTC's own EIR shows negligible long-term improvement in traffic relief in most commute directions, even less relief in one commute.
- RTC persists in calling the mixed-use auxiliary lanes "bus on shoulder." Bus on shoulder refers to lanes dedicated to buses only. These are not. Mislabeling them over and over, intentionally, does not make the label true.
- Even RTC's wording above, "Auxiliary lanes linking on and off ramps and bus-on-shoulder facilities," implies these are two separate entities. In the RTC plan, they are not.

- The over 1100 trees CalTrans and the RTC feel compelled to cut between State Park and Freedom Blvd are literally a breath of fresh air – carbon sequesters and oxygen producers that they are. Driving by those towering redwoods, oaks, cypresses, pines brings a sigh of relief, especially driving south after the tumult of deconstruction and the graveyard of cut trees.

- The EIR says in the long term of the whole widening project greenhouse gas emissions will decrease slightly but does this take into account the considerable loss of carbon sinks from killing so many mature trees?

Clearly trees can live without humans – but can humans live without trees, or even fewer trees?

When we become accepting of degraded environments, we are robbed because we no longer know what has been lost.

- And what about the multitude of organisms dependent on these trees? Such as raccoons, bobcats, deer, woodpeckers, sparrows, blackbirds, marbled murrelet, salamanders, snakes, lizards. We humans often have a choice where we live, but once an animal/reptile/amphibian/bird/ insect loses its home, do you think it can easily

fine another? And when they do – like raccoons disrupting garbage bins, deer grazing on our gardens – then we blame them.

- According to the EIR, County policy requires that such projects recognize our unique environment and the project be evaluated in this context. They acknowledge that cutting tall trees to build sound walls and retaining walls and widen will have a “visual impact” – that is, be ugly.

- Instead, the RTC will offer metal “misty redwoods-inspired privacy panels” or “misty redwood metal cutouts on concrete sound walls” to replace actual redwoods. These have a theme: “Bridging the kelp forest to the terrestrial forest.” They assert these “create an appealing visual for the drivers.”

I’ll leave it to you to ponder the irony of replacing living, breathing redwoods, oaks, pines, cypresses with metal and concrete.

Metal and concrete are no answer to the degradation of the natural aesthetics and environmental values protecting the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander, the evergreens adjoining the highway, and the character of the immediate community. As a very longtime resident here, over 50 years, I am profoundly disillusioned and disappointed with the unreconstructed, retro approach of this project, shocking for an allegedly “progressive” community. This plan is not Aptos, it is not Santa Cruz, it is the mistakes of Los Angeles revisited.

An old Buddhist maxim suggests a solution when problems are encountered. In this case, there are many problems: e.g., the State’s rejection of RTC’s application for adequate funding; the huge costs of reconstructing bridges over Hwy1, widening the bridge over Aptos Creek, reconstructing the Capitola Ave overcrossing; the most recent lawsuit filed against the RTC.

The solution? Pause. Breathe. Do something different.

In this case, pause the furious deconstruction of trees and highway. Take a while to assess if what is done so far will cut traffic congestion. Contribute what revenues there are to true alternatives, seeking even more possibilities than what has been proposed, and contribute much more to repairing and reconstructing our pitted non-highway roads.

Yours sincerely,
Elissa Bilek Wagner


Aptos, CA 95003

From: [Kate Elliott](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Input on Measure D Funds
Date: Wednesday, October 30, 2024 12:37:50 PM

Continued and increased support for the Rail Trail project, particularly as it relates to starting construction of the trail alongside the rail.

Thank you
Kathryn (Kate) Elliott
Santa Cruz County resident
[REDACTED] Watsonville, CA 95076

From: [Bonnie Gutierrez](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Input on use of Measure D Funding
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 10:45:53 PM

11/5/2024

Hello RTC Commission Members,

One of the RTC focuses this year is to preserve the train tracks and complete an environmental study for a zero-emission passenger train. This is very

little action on the RTC's part. Measure D was passed in 2016! We need more than just studies and input sessions!

Please increase all actions and grant writing for preserving, improving, repairing, and replacing train tracks and related infrastructure, and for the purchase of zero-emission passenger trains that will travel from Watsonville to Davenport.

Zero-emission passenger trains should be placed at a higher priority on the RTC focus list.

Thank You.

From: [MFD JR](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Measure D comments
Date: Wednesday, October 30, 2024 12:06:40 PM

Hello,

We still cannot walk to the school bus stops safely in Highway 9 in Felton. The improvements did not go south enough, but residents regularly walk in the road with their children as far south as Glengarry road. Also all the added traffic to the garden of Eden at the Ox trail.

With people getting hurt all the time, can we please get added safety measures? Sidewalks

Sincerely,

Marc F. Derendinger Jr.


<https://www.linkedin.com/in/marcdjr/>

From: [fred geiger](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Measure D expenditures
Date: Friday, November 1, 2024 10:20:48 AM

Stop wasting our money on freeway expansion - in particular the Aptos segment.
The needless cutting of hundreds of trees for minimal improve to to traffic flow (or likely creating induced demand of more cars) is not where priorities should lie.
A PRT link from the Boardwalk parking lot to the University would eliminate thousands of trips on Hwy one and be a much less polluting option once the rail trail is in operation
From Mid- county and beyond.

Fred G.

From: [Pauline Seales](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Measure D fund Allocation
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 1:55:44 PM

Dear Supervisors

I am writing to express strong support for projects 2,3,4 and applaud your support and work for the Zero-emission passenger rail.

But unfortunately auxiliary lanes are a very expensive project which will not in the long term shorten commute times as has been shown in multiple research reports. The funds saved could help accelerate the rail project and other active transportation efforts.

The new bicycle/pedestrian bridges are certainly worthwhile.

Thanks

Pauline Seales for Santa Cruz Climate Action Network - (1949 local members)

scrucclimate.org

Current Projects:

1. Highway 1: Auxiliary lanes linking on and off ramps and bus-on-shoulder facilities between Soquel Avenue and Freedom Boulevard and new bicycle/pedestrian bridges over the highway.
2. Coastal Rail Trail: Bicycle/pedestrian trail between Davenport and Watsonville, and corridor maintenance. Proposing to advance delivery of Segment 18 Phase 2 (Watsonville).
3. Rail Corridor: Rail preservation and environmental study of zero-emission passenger rail.
4. San Lorenzo Valley/Highway 9: multiple improvements.

From: [Frank Rimicci Jr.](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Measure D funding
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 10:08:44 AM

I want to compliment the staff for Their excellent work in identifying needs and proposing solutions to Our transit needs and capabilities. Also, I also want to stress My desire for the continued improvement of public transit. With the planning for better METRO service, ZEPRT and trail improvements, We will see an impact in folks transit habits. While You have listened to certain groups and individuals speak against rail with trail for years, the path forward should include all forms of transit. With the housing mandates and continued growth of the county it is important to utilize the measure D funds to help win grants for planning and implementing all transit options. Especially options other than automobile infrastructure. Go RTC!

From: [Tom Kellogg](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Measure D funds input
Date: Thursday, October 31, 2024 6:31:08 PM

RTC Board,

I support bike path without a passenger train.

Bicycling has been my preferred mode of transpiration (clean, efficient, healthy, refreshing, simple, ...) for 65 years and utilizing the 32 miles long rail corridor as a bicycle path would be a dream come true for me and the thousands of bicyclists who ride the country's most popular bicycle path; The Pacific Coast Bike Path. I understand that many millions of dollars have been spent on feasibility studies of putting in a passenger train. The design of squeezing in a bike path alongside a passenger train is unsafe. The train will not reduce traffic on highway 1 and there are sections where the train cannot be built where the tracks are, such as along Manressa Beach. See <https://www.trailnow.org/>

I have been supporting Rails to Trails Conservancy (railstotrails.org) since it was founded in the late 1980s. I encourage you to tune in with them. The best conditions for a bike path are unused railroad tracks which have no steep hills.

I support bike path without a passenger train.

Sincerely,

Thomas Kellogg
Aptos



From: [kristen.osland](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Measure D funds
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 7:11:12 AM

Hello,

I would like to add my input on how to use measure D funds. While it's great that we are getting auxiliary lanes on highway 1, I would appreciate a full third lane for both northbound and southbound highway 1 between Santa Cruz and Watsonville. I would also like to know how many busses there are that can actually take advantage of the bus-on-shoulder? It seems that most busses aren't on the freeway so that passengers can get on/off the bus as close to their destination as possible.

Finally, can we use funds to repave our roads and add sidewalks where we don't have them? The street I live on in Aptos is so rough and torn up my kids can't ride a skateboard, scooter or rollerskate on our street. Additionally, there are no sidewalks in our neighborhood (including down busy Clubhouse Drive) which makes it incredibly unsafe to walk anywhere (including to the nearest bust stop). Due to the lack of sidewalks, I would never consider alternative transportation (such as the bus) because it is too unsafe for me to walk my family to a bus stop.

Sincerely,
Kristen Spencer

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: [Bonnie McDonald](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Measure D funds
Date: Thursday, October 31, 2024 10:16:03 AM

Fix the damn roads before you start another project!
Sent from my iPad

From: [W.B.](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: No to State Park to Freedom Aux. Lane segment
Date: Saturday, November 2, 2024 10:44:20 AM

To whom it may concern,

"Very Slight" is the EIR's description of the improvements to traffic congestion by building an auxiliary lane.

Please consider scrapping the segment from State Park Blvd. to Freedom Ln., as "very slight" is not very compelling support for a multimillion dollar project that will marginally benefit local users and primarily car based commuters.

Let's focus our efforts on meeting sustainable transportation needs for our community while angling away from motonormativity ie. primarily single occupancy automobile traffic. Look at bikes, bike infrastructure, complete streets, complete streets, and compete streets, plus busses.

Thank you and be well,

William E. Bachar

p.s. CalTrans will be implementing "complete streets" starting 1/1/25.

From: [Kathy Astromoff](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Priorities for Measure D funding
Date: Friday, November 1, 2024 1:29:40 AM

Hi there -
Please prioritize pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders over cars when spending Measure D money.
Our livable climate depends on it.
Thank you -
Kathy Astromoff
Santa Cruz, CA

From: [Alex Vartan](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Measure D funds
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 11:31:15 AM

As a geriatric millennial and homeowner in Live Oak (property tax payer), I am acutely sensitive to the generational inequalities present in our current taxation system and spending priorities. While it is a good strategy to leverage Measure D funds for state and Federal matching grants, we should also be aggressively planning for a future, that will come sooner than most think, where most cars will be self-driving robotaxis.

If we are going to spend millions on yet another rail corridor study, we should be thoroughly studying alternative transportation mediums that have much more advantageous scaling dynamics and cost profiles. Fleets of self-driving robotaxis will resolve much of our congestion and parking issues and the RTC should be aggressively working to secure Santa Cruz as "pilot" region for Waymo or Tesla or Cruise.

We should also be exploring self-propelled gondola systems as a possible replacement for rail. Swyft Cities (<https://swyftcities.com/>) is a Google spinout and we should thoroughly explore options for this modality.

Finally, those who are going to face the burden of paying for a possible rail project should at the minimum be surveyed to get a better handle on what the priorities of people who will be primary taxpayers 10-30 years down the road are.

It is self evident that younger people are all-in on eBikes as a primary mode of transport. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars to assuage a literally dying-off generation so they can fantasize about their care providers coming from Watsonville (not around the corner in affordable housing in their neighborhood) is a grotesque act of intergenerational theft, largely serving an infeasible and economically unsustainable vision of the future that solely exists to relieve Boomers of anxieties about their own mortality. A more appropriate and effective use of a portion of Measure D funds would be paying for 4-days-a-week of intensive psychoanalysis for die-hard train fanatics, so the rest of us can move on and build a future that isn't simply a nostalgic recollection of the past.

Alex Vartan
Live Oak

From: [John Simms](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Public comment 11/7 item 27e
Date: Monday, November 4, 2024 10:44:34 PM

I am writing in support of “Contract 2 - Soquel Drive” as described in the document “Fact Sheet for SB1-Cycle 4 Project”. This is item 27e on the agenda for November 7.

The section of Soquel Drive between Freedom Boulevard and State Park Drive is not welcoming to cyclists. The shoulder is narrow, vegetation encroaches on the shoulder and the overall state of the roadway is not very good. I am writing in support of the planned improvements described in Contract 2. These improvements would make it safer for cyclists and pedestrians that are using this road. I understand that projects of this scale take time, but I wish we could see safety improvements more quickly. Four-plus years is a long time to wait for the safety improvements to described in the Fact Sheet.

Sincerely,
John Simms
Aptos

From: [Rosemary Sarka](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RTC Agenda Item 27
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 3:58:48 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



November 5, 2024

Dear Members of the Regional Transportation Commission:

The Santa Cruz Big Trees & Pacific Railway, a wholly owned subsidiary of Roaring Camp Inc., has reviewed Agenda Item 27 in the RTC’s November 7, 2024 agenda packet and is concerned that the joint Caltrans/RTC Memorandum to the Director of the California Transportation Commission (CTC, Exhibit G) appears to warrant discussion as a separate agenda item.

Exhibit G appears to propose that the Freedom Blvd - State Park Highway 1 Bus/Auxiliary Lanes and Rail/Trail project - which would include removal (by necessity) and replacement (by law) of two serviceable railroad bridges spanning the highway - be “split” into two separate projects, to be managed by Caltrans (the highway) and the RTC (the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line). The Memorandum does not indicate whether Caltrans or the RTC will be the lead agency for the removal and replacement of these bridges, nor how this aspect of the proposed project will be addressed in the RTC’s SB1 funding application. The Memorandum offers a 4-month window to come up with a plan for this project ‘split’, but does not indicate when the RTC will approve this plan.

As you know, Roaring Camp, through its subsidiary, the Santa Cruz, Big Trees and Pacific Railway, operates passenger rail service between Felton and the Santa Cruz Boardwalk, utilizing a portion of the Santa Cruz Branch Line (Line). It also assists the freight operator of the Line, Progressive Rail Inc., with freight operations in the segment of the Line that is currently open for service in the Watsonville area. Roaring Camp has a particular interest in the preservation of the ability to operate rail service on the Line, as it represents the only connection between Roaring Camp and the national rail system.

As an agent of Progressive Rail Inc, the contracted carrier on the SCBRL, Roaring Camp Railroads has a keen interest in the outcome of the potential SB1 projects and requests that we be kept informed of any progress or decisions made in this regard.

Best regards,

Melani Clark
CEO, Roaring Camp Inc.

CC:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Christie Donaldson](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [Christie Donaldson](#)
Subject: RTC Measure D funds
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 11:28:22 AM

Hello-

Casting my vote to PLEASE STOP rail preservation efforts.

I live in the Jewel Box in Capitola and participated in a survey many years ago regarding the usefulness of the rail. I mapped out and calculated my travel time from Capitola to downtown Santa Cruz as well as to Swift Street, and found that it would take me about the same amount of time to ride my non-electric bike. Now that I have an electric bike and my guests can use the B-Cycles (when they are back on the streets), I can easily and quickly transport myself to my exact desired location across the San Lorenzo river in less time that the rail would take. I also would not need to be worried about whether or not there would be space on the rail for my journey. The costs to local taxpayers have already exceeded proposed budgets and the extensive studies are only delaying the ability for pedestrians and bikers to make use of the proposed trail.

Kindly,
Christie Donaldson
[REDACTED] Capitola

From: [Nicole Liebenthal](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Safety concerns along Glen Arbor
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 4:36:14 PM

Dear Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission,

As part of the commission's Regional Transportation Improvement Plan, I am aware that Glen Arbor Rd is positioned for sidewalks in the coming years.

Many neighbors in Ben Lomond use a loop to exercise, walk their dogs, or walk to town. Dozens of people per day use this route. This loop consists of Riverside Ave, Brookside Ave, Whittier Ave, Manzanita Ave, Circle Dr, Hillcrest Ave, Glen Arbor, Madrone Ave, Wentz St and back to Riverside Ave.

This route is one of the larger loops in Ben Lomond as it is mostly lit and on quiet neighborhood streets, save one area along Glen Arbor between Hillcrest Ave and Madrone Ave -- specifically in front of the addresses of 9330 and 9364 Glen Arbor Road where the corner is blind and the shoulder narrows.

In 2023, Glen Arbor Road served as the Highway 9 detour for five months and the heavy volumes of large trucks made the situation even worse. The speed limit on Glen Arbor is 30 mph, however the regular traffic flow is around 40 mph with some driving above 50 mph.

I'd like to request attention and sooner action to make this area safer until sidewalks are installed.

- Remove vegetation especially around the blind corner in front of 9363 Glen Arbor, around the large tree stump and create a safer pathway next to the road between Hillside Ave and Madrone Ave.
- Add a crosswalk on Glen Arbor, near Madrone Ave and Newell Creek.









Thanks so much for your attention,

Nicole Liebenthal

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Kevin Norton](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [Campaign for Sustainable Transportation](#)
Subject: Stop Highway 1 Expansion
Date: Friday, November 1, 2024 10:23:25 AM

Hello:

I hope this email finds you well.

I wanted to let you know that I'm opposed to expanding Highway 1; I think that public tax money should go towards building bicycle, rail, and pedestrian infrastructure instead.

As you know, the law of induced demand states that widening a roadway is counterproductive in the long run. After widening, more drivers take to the highways, and the traffic jams come back within 5-6 years after the new lanes are built.

Eventually we're going to have to shift away from motor vehicles — why not now?

Best regards,

Kevin

From: [Jeff Wagner](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: how to use Measure D funds
Date: Monday, November 4, 2024 12:01:06 PM

You really need to ask how to spend Measure D funds?

Fix the roads.

Fix the roads. If you need suggestions, Eureka Canyon Rd is a good start.

Fix the roads. The county roads are in bad shape and you know it. **Fix the roads.**

Seriously!

Jeff Wagner