

From: [Brian Peoples](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RTC ITEM #21 Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 & 9 and 10 & 11 Project Delivery
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 8:20:15 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

RTC,

As the steward of state funding for Santa Cruz Coastal Trail Segments 8–11, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) has a duty to safeguard the California Transportation Commission (CTC) grant funds designated for our community. The three options currently proposed by RTC staff are unacceptable because they would reduce trail construction and jeopardize CTC grant funding. To prevent delays and protect these funds, the RTC must act decisively by adopting **Option D (Optional Interim Trail)**—a solution that provides the same connectivity at a much lower cost without risking the loss of any CTC funds. This option has already been analyzed in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Segments 8–11, is eligible for CTC funds and delivers full trail functionality at a fraction of the original cost. It is also important to emphasize that Surface Transportation Board (STB) data show decisions on railbanking requests typically take only 4 to 17 months, with an average of 6.5 months. Given that Progressive Rail requested abandonment in 2018 and Roaring Camp currently operates only a tourist train between Felton and Santa Cruz, there is no legal basis for delaying railbanking implementation.

Trail Now urges the RTC to approve the Optional Interim Trail immediately to preserve this critical funding and keep the Coastal Trail moving forward without costly delays.

Sincerely,

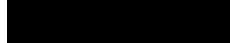
Brian Peoples



From: [Jim Cumming](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Abandon the rail
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 8:49:31 AM

Please don't let the visions of a passenger train wreck a world class trail that will actually happen in our lifetime. Yes I believe that a trail will be so successful that citizens will forget about the train dream and embrace alternative ways to get across town. PLEASE STOP SPENDING OUR MONEY ON FURTHER STUDIES FOR TRAIN! The Interim trail needs to happen now.

Thank you
Jim Cumming



Santa Cruz.

From: [Tom Kellogg](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [Brian Peoples](#)
Subject: Approve the Optional Interim Trail Immediately
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 11:32:13 AM

RTC,

Bicycling and walking are very important in opening up connections within our community. I strongly support the approval of the Optional Interim Trail Immediately. Stop waisting money and time and get the trail opened for use.

My personal experiences of walking and bicycling for over 70 years:

- Personal health
- Environmentally responsible
- Socially beneficial
- Inexpensive
- About equal time to get around
- RR right of way has gentile slopes

Tom Kellogg
Aptos

From: [Brian Peoples](#)
To: [Andy Schiffrin](#); [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Item #21 / Schiffrin poor public policy of Coastal Trail Plans
Date: Wednesday, October 1, 2025 6:43:55 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

RTC Alternative Commissioner Andy Schiffrin,

We strongly oppose your proposal to delay Federal Railbanking discussions until December 2025. Railbanking is entirely separate from the Rail Study, and your attempt to link the two is misleading. These discussions are urgent because they determine whether we can meet California Transportation Commission (CTC) deadlines and protect millions in grant funding.

At the September 4th RTC meeting, Executive Director Sarah Christensen warned that our community risks losing CTC funds due to delays in addressing cost overruns on Segments 8–11 of the Ultimate Trail. She stated: *“We disclosed over a year ago that these projects are over budget and need costs under control. We did value engineering and pursued grants as directed. But we no longer have the luxury of time or multiple grant cycles to secure \$72 million. We are running out of time.”*

The Ultimate Trail is financially infeasible and would require relocating if there was ever a future rail system. Staff already know they must pivot to the Optional Interim Trail, which offers the same connectivity at far lower cost and remains fully eligible for CTC funds since it was analyzed in the Environmental Impact Report and meets all functional goals.

Your claim that railbanking takes years is flat-out false. Surface Transportation Board (STB) data show **railbanking requests are resolved in 4–17 months, with an average of just 6.5 months**. Since Progressive Rail requested abandonment in 2018 and Roaring Camp only operates a tourist line from Felton to Santa Cruz, there is no legal barrier to moving forward now. **Most importantly, the railbanking process for Segments 8-11 would be a parallel activity to the design of the Optional Interim Trail, resulting in it not being part of the critical path to meeting CTC Grant funding deadline requirement of June/2027.**

Finally, you are the only Commissioner (or Alternate) who sat on the RTC in 2018 when the disastrous Progressive Rail contract was approved. We always hear “there’s no time to railbank,” yet if you had acted in 2018 and properly protected our public rights to this valuable transportation corridor, we would already have a completed trail from Watsonville to Santa Cruz. It’s time you take responsibility for those wrong decisions and stop obstructing progress on the Coastal Trail.

Sincerely,

Brian Peoples



From: [Doug](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Option D
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 8:46:22 AM

Hi,

I'm writing in support of the Optional Interim Trail. It's time to stop wasting time and money on a train that is, to most of us, obviously doomed at this point. Please begin the railbanking process so that we can have a trail built at a fraction of the cost--in our lifetime!

Thank you,

Doug and Genna Mann

Aptos

From: [Peter Cook](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Please Build the Interim Trail
Date: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:22:28 AM

Dear RTC,

Please build the interim trail ASAP!!!! We love our trail on the Westside. The rest of the county is paying their fair share of Measure D funds. It is not fair that only the Westside is getting not only a very nice trail, but also a recreational trail all the way to Davenport.

We also badly need a bike lane along Graham Hill road so that SLV and Scotts Valley can have bike/e-bike connectivity to the rest of the county.

Sincerely,



From: [David Giannini](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Please adopt Option D (Optional Interim Trail)
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 12:08:10 PM

Railbank the right of way for future use. Implement the interim trail. Save and preserve the CTC grant dollars for the future. Give us something cost effective that we can use sooner rather than decades from now!

Sincerely,

David Giannini
Santa Cruz Resident

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: kimberly.deserpa@santacruzcountyca.gov
Subject: RTC Item #21 Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8, 9 and 10, 11 Project Delivery
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 12:14:52 PM

Esteemed RTC Supervisors and Staff,

As the steward of state funding for Santa Cruz Coastal Trail Segments 8-11, the RTC has a responsibility to safeguard the CTC grant funds designated for our community. The 3 options currently proposed by RTC staff are unacceptable as they would reduce trail construction and jeopardize CTC grant funding. To protect these funds, the RTC must act quickly and decisively and adopt Option D (Optional Interim Trail). Option D has already been analyzed in the EIR for Segments 8-11 and delivers full trail functionality at a fraction of the original cost.

Surface Transportation Board data shows that decisions on railbanking requests typically take 4-17 months, with an average of 6.5 months. Since Progressive Rail requested abandonment in 2018 and Roaring Camp currently operates only a tourist train between Felton and Santa Cruz, please realize that there is no legal basis for delaying railbanking implementation.

I urge the RTC to approve the Optional Interim Trail immediately to preserve critical funding. Please keep the Coastal Trail project moving without costly delays.

Sincerely,

Ellen Martinez

25 year full time resident of Aptos

From: [Joe Martinez](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: ["Kimberly De Serpa"](#)
Subject: RTC Item #21 Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8, 9 and 10, 11 Project Delivery
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 5:30:42 PM

RTC Commissioners and Staff,

As the steward of state funding for Santa Cruz Coastal Trail Segments 8–11, the RTC has a clear duty to protect CTC grant funds allocated to our community. The three options currently proposed by RTC staff would reduce trail construction and put CTC funding at risk.

The RTC must adopt **Option D — Optional Interim Trail**. Option D was analyzed in the Segments 8–11 EIR and provides full trail functionality at a fraction of the original cost, preserving project benefits while minimizing fiscal exposure.

Surface Transportation Board precedent shows railbanking decisions are typically resolved within months, not years, and there is no legal basis to delay railbanking implementation now that Progressive Rail requested abandonment in 2018 and Roaring Camp operates only a tourist service between Felton and Santa Cruz.

Approve the Optional Interim Trail immediately to protect critical grant funding and keep the Coastal Trail project moving without costly delays.

Sincerely,

Joe Martinez

From: [Carey Pico](#)
To: [Sarah Christensen](#); [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RTC agenda Item 21 Capitola Properties and more.
Date: Friday, September 26, 2025 8:14:11 AM

The Honorable Ms. Christensen

I would like to draw your attention to property issues of ownership affecting MBSST Segments 8-11 as well as Segments 12-20. While your attention has been focused on encroachments into the ROW, missing is whether the RTC owns most or all of the ROW property obtained by Santa Cruz Railroad Co. post-operation.

A full survey of the deeds included in the RTC's title report by First American Title (2006 Appraisal Report, Vol.2, pp 264-294 or that included in the US Superior Court 10/2/23 filing of RTC vs. Trout Gulch Crossing et al, policy pages 5-32 of the 112 properties thereof enumerated in Tract I: (The Main Track)) finds nearly three-quarters (73%) of the properties were obtained post-Santa Cruz Railroad Co. (SCRC) Operation. Most were obtained after May 1876 when SCRC was running full service or earlier in sections where SCRC was running partial service. In other words, in those properties the SCRC entered the properties without deed, constructed its track way without deed, and entered into full railroad operation without deed. The deeds were then obtained under duress of the property owners. At that time, California legal code was in its infancy and evolving. It is likely that contracts forcing sale under duress were still a standard of practice with little or no recourse to the property owner. It has yet to be determined whether these contracts remain valid regardless of the statute of limitations as the law did not apply during those times (pre-1880 or so). Further, one could argue strongly that the properties granted should be considered as easements instead of fee title.

In addition, those property owners that did not sell under duress to SCRC later had their properties obtained through court order. Under California Civil Code properties obtained by non-government agencies through court order are granted as easements to the grantee. Many of the deeds listed within the First American Title report were obtained as such. These include multiple properties in Capitola (which is what has prompted this writing). Therefore, many of the properties claimed to be owned as fee title by the RTC are, in fact, railroad easements.

I also remind you that the Arano deed affecting Aptos Village and the UW Thompson deed affecting properties between Rodeo Gulch and 38th Ave. including the two mobile home parks were also created post-SCRC operation. While presumably drawn under duress, those deeds include language that shows the intent of the grantors of railroad easements only, not fee title.

I strongly recommend the RTC review the above point of view. I would also ask you and the RTC the courtesy of providing me with the RTC's findings on this matter.

Regards
Carey Pico, Ph.D.

From: [Maria Gitin](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [Victor Kimura](#)
Subject: Rail-Trail 8-11
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 1:48:17 PM

Dear Commissioners: While I strongly support building both rail and trail South of Freedom Blvd, I urge you to vote for *Option D: Optional Interim Trail* now, in order to preserve funding and move on to the more feasible sections of the Rail-Trail Plan.

Thank you!

Maria Gitin Torres
[REDACTED]
Capitola, CA 95010

Residence (no mail): [REDACTED] Aptos, CA 95003

This Bright Light of Ours: Stories from the Voting Rights Fight

www.thisbrightlightofours.com

From: [Marion Krause](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Re: RTC Item #21 Please approve Option D
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 12:40:43 PM

To Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

As a property owner in Santa Cruz county, I urge the RTC to adopt Option D, the Optional Interim Trail. It prevents delays, protects funds and provides the same connectivity at a much lower cost.

Most ardently,
Marion Krause
Aptos, CA

From: [frank wessels](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: trail
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 9:06:05 AM

To whom it may concern: Residents in the south of the county are desperate for a trail option that would be easier and safer and usable for transportation by bicycle and walking. The north county already has a safe train free trail for commute and recreation, and residents from aptos to Watsonville deserve the same. Please consider option D, and let us ride and walk safely.

Thanks,
Frank Wessels

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From: [MARK WEGRICH](#)
To: [Regional Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: trail
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 12:36:21 PM

Your attention please,

I urge you to support option D at the upcoming meeting of the RTC. It is unrealistic to proceed with a rail line when the County is in such a dire financial situation. The trail will provide a great recreational asset for the County at a fraction of the cost and can be built in a few years. Many businesses will benefit and a trail will provide opportunities for new businesses

to come in. A trail will be a great recreational and commuting asset for the public health, safety and welfare. Please study the Burke Gilman trail in Seattle as a similar project in terms of neighborhoods served as well as a economical design.

Sincerely,

Mark Wegrich

Aptos