

**From:** [MARY DELAVEGA](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Building a Trail for All  
**Date:** Saturday, March 28, 2026 2:52:45 PM

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Members of RTC:

Thank you for staying grounded in facts and responsible planning as you proceed with building the coastal trail. I urge you to continue advancing the trail while preserving future rail options. My top priority as one who lives close to the rail in south county is to see a trail as soon as possible to provide access to services, retail, and recreation without having to get in my car.

Respectfully,  
Mary de la Vega  
La Selva Beach

**From:** [Tom Livingston](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Coastal train NOW.  
**Date:** Sunday, March 29, 2026 1:15:42 PM

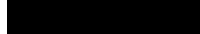
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Hello,

I support the Coastal trail NOW proposal. Freight trains from Watsonville to Santa Cruz, carrying what? Nothing! Roaring Camp is just trying to keep the rails for their own financial gain, not for the good of the community. This has gone on way too long! Move forward with the trail, NOW.

Thanks,

Tom Livingston



Aptos

**From:** [Leslie Nielsen](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** De Risk future grants and execute decisions made  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 31, 2026 10:22:18 AM

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Dear SCC RTC,

Government Granting Agencies do have discretion.

I am on the Finance Advisory Committee for the City of Capitola, and have a professional background in Finance. I participate in and watch many of the SCC meetings including RTC meetings. From an outsiders view looking in, we may be risking future funding that we all know we need desperately in SCC. The granting authorities have discretion on who they award grant funds to. They are watching us now. We need to demonstrate our ability to properly manage and EXECUTE awarded projects. At the December RTC meeting, you all acknowledged this risk and agreed to move forward with the interim trail for a portion of the rail trail project to avoid losing valuable funding that has already been awarded.

I appreciate "politics" and the challenges the RTC staff faces. Please direct the Staff with clarity to respond in a timely fashion to alternate Shiffrin's request regarding a study to leave the existing tracks in place under an interim trail. If the trail is interim, cover the tracks and move on. My sensibilities are to make the best financial decision and do as much work early ( think inflation ) as possible. Since the existing tracks cannot be used for the future train solution, take them out now and build a safe trail ; and have the rail bed ready for when the train project makes sense.

Regarding the Roaring Camp matter, sometimes those of us who only know what we read and not the "real story" have good instincts. Any solution on this will be met with criticism. It would be confidence building if their passion for freight reactivation were met with some balanced cost sharing discussions. Taxpayers are exhausted at funding "everything" instead of the things that truly make sense. THEY have rights, but when we make decisions to NOT fund roads, please realize we don't suffer fools, and are not going to feel good about funding speculative freight needs. Funding is common way to delay in politics. Let's not let this cost us the ATP Grant and progress, public trust and confidence, and most of all, our reputation as a county with the granting authorities.

Best regards,  
Leslie Nielsen

**From:** [Cynthia Dzendzel](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Do not support a plan that will put Roaring Camp Railroads out of business!  
**Date:** Sunday, March 29, 2026 3:39:58 PM

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Roaring Camp Railroads has provided much value to the Santa Cruz County tourism industry. It attracts visitors from around the world, who then have a chance to appreciate the beauty of our area and spend money here and at the Boardwalk. They fall in love with this area and the welcome they receive here, which contributes to good international relations.

Roaring Camp Railroads provides educational opportunities for many schools and organizations, cooperating with Mt. Hermon and Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park.

They also provide many services to our community during disasters. Those who try to slander Roaring Camp Railroads by painting it as publicly subsidized have not read history, and should educate themselves about this community treasure.

Please do not make another attempt to overturn the original agreement, which allowed the City to pave around the tracks, as long as they did not interrupt service to the Boardwalk.

Cynthia Dzendzel  
Felton resident

**From:** [Andrea Ratto](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Interim trail  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 10:21:21 AM

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In 2016 I supported Measure D, improving roads, bicycle routes and rail trail. There was no specific language for constructing a train with all of its impending costs, difficulty in construction and gross inefficiency. Why are we even wasting money exploring the potential problems with removing the rails? It's a done deal that the tracks are in such disrepair that they will need to be removed and replaced even if a train could run there. Please Mr Shifrin do not waste any more of our time and money on this potential study. It's been done ad infinitum with too many "studies". Let's move ahead and create a wonderful path for community and tourists alike. I'd love to experience this before I do. And as a south county member who deals with gridlock I am under no illusion that a train as currently envisioned would ever relieve this problem which keeps mushrooming. We're screwed in Santa Cruz county, excessive building and limited infrastructure. The cost of living in paradise  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Peter Fannion](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** NO RAILS TO TRAILS  
**Date:** Saturday, March 28, 2026 3:55:37 PM

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As a concerned citizen, I am writing to express my staunch opposition to the Santa Cruz "Trail Now" initiative. I would like to petition this project not to go through.

Best

**From:** [Tom Brady](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please move forward with the Coastal Trail  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 11:49:45 AM

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Dear SCCRTC,

Please move forward with the construction of trail. Please make it safer for families and commuters to cross Santa Cruz County by bike and foot.

Thank you!

Tom Bady  
[REDACTED] Soquel, CA 95073

**From:** [Brunelli, Brian T](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please move forward with the Interim Trail  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 10:48:43 AM

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Dear Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Members,

I am writing to express strong support for the immediate construction of the interim trail along the rail corridor and to urge the Commission to reconsider its continued evaluation of freight rail north of Watsonville.

The interim trail represents a practical, cost-effective, and urgently needed improvement to our transportation network. It can be delivered in a reasonable timeframe, provides immediate public benefit, and aligns with the growing demand for safe, accessible, non-motorized transportation. Residents have waited years for meaningful progress, and the interim trail is a realistic way to deliver that progress now.

In contrast, the proposed ultimate trail configuration remains financially uncertain and, based on current projections, increasingly infeasible. Escalating construction costs, engineering complexities, and long-term maintenance obligations make it unlikely that the ultimate vision will be realized in full. Continuing to delay near-term improvements in pursuit of a project that may never materialize does a disservice to the community.

Additionally, I urge the Commission to discontinue further evaluation of freight rail use north of Watsonville. There has been no compelling evidence of sustained or future demand for freight service in this area of the county. Maintaining this possibility imposes unnecessary planning constraints, increases costs, and delays implementation of more beneficial uses of the corridor. Public resources should be directed toward projects with clear and demonstrated need.

In summary:

- The interim trail should be prioritized and built without further delay.
- The ultimate trail, as currently envisioned, is unlikely to be financially viable and should not impede near-term action.
- Freight rail north of Watsonville lacks demonstrated demand and should no longer be a planning consideration.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the community. I encourage you to take decisive action that reflects current realities and delivers tangible benefits to Santa Cruz County residents.

Sincerely,

Brian Brunelli  
Aptos, CA

**From:** [david van brink](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment Regarding 2026 Apr 2 Item 14-D  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 9:58:26 AM

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Dear Esteemed Transportation Commission --


It is possible that consent agenda item 14-D "*March 18, 2026 Letter to Senator John Laird, Re: State Budget Appropriation Request for the Environmental Component of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail Project*" merits deeper discussion.

I'm given to believe that the Environmental Component can be ~80% funded via Step 3 of the Corridor ID program after Step 2 (Service Development Plan) is completed

Further -- again if I'm understanding rightly -- the RTC request includes a provision to use this rail earmark, should it arrive, for trail work under some circumstances. If we're ultimately asking for an extra \$15M for trail work, *it should not be a back-door ask.*

**It may be valuable to extract this item for further discussion and clarification of what it means within the context of the Corridor ID Program.**

Many thanks -- David Van Brink

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david van brink / 

**From:** [Walter J Smith](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Public interest vs Private interest  
**Date:** Sunday, March 29, 2026 2:51:41 PM

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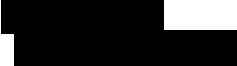
Please do stick with the plan to serve the public interest rather than caving to one company's private interest.

After all it is public property and public policy we are thinking of here.

Thank you for remaining loyal to the public interest.

--

Walter J Smith  
4778 Soquel Creek Road  
Soquel, CA, 95073



**From:** [Richard](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Rail Trail  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 1:50:59 PM

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Hi.

I have been astounded by the continued attempts by Roaring Camp and other rail advocates who think it makes a lick of sense to hold hostage the current plans for the coastal bike/hike trail to Watsonville/Monterey. It is economically unfeasible and will NEVER happen. let's move on and get the trail built so that our community can enjoy something that works, is funded, and will be here forever for all to enjoy.

Get the Coastal Trail built NOW!

Stop the shenanigans.

Regards,

Rich Gallivan  
Pleasure Point, Santa Cruz.

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Chris Jones](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Rail Trail  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 1:28:57 PM

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Hello Commisioners,

I'm writing to encourage you to absolutely not lose state funding for the rail trail and if that means countering somehow the Shiffrin amendment that seeks to implement further delaying action, please consider all options.

As an 80 year old biking homeowner in Capitola, I am riding daily on traffic burdened streets to get to Santa Cruz or Aptos. I very much appreciate the Santa Cruz completed portion of the trail and long for its extension while I'm still able to ride.

As you all get up toward my age, I dare say your efforts to continue getting exercise will be impacted and the option of bicycling can overcome physical limitations which otherwise might limit you, as they have me. Doing so safely on city streets takes on outsize importance and the rail trail addresses that directly.

I'm currently vacationing in Portland, OR and they really have recognized the importance of bicycling up here, making it much safer to coexist with automotive traffic. Our rail trail will be huge asset for Santa Cruz Country residents, especially as e-biking continues it's upward surge. Thanks!

-Chris Jones  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [David Montgomery](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Rail trail  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 1, 2026 6:39:28 AM

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Hello,

Please move forward with the bike trail and get it done! So much money has been wasted on study after study when common sense told us all along that a train to nowhere was never going to happen. You now have an opportunity to right the ship and make it happen. And that can be a real legacy!

Sincerely, David J Montgomery DDS

**From:** [Mitchell Bramlett](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Stop Roaring Camp from damaging our communities  
**Date:** Saturday, March 28, 2026 11:02:55 AM

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Dear Commissioners of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for the RTC's direction as outlined in your April agenda, Item 14, regarding the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and related corridor management actions.

I appreciate the Commission's continued commitment to a balanced, fact-based approach that preserves the rail corridor for future use while advancing the Coastal Trail in a phased and responsible manner. This approach reflects both the current realities on the ground and the long-term transportation needs of Santa Cruz County.

As documented in Ms. Christensen's response to recent correspondence from Melani Clark , there has been no active freight demand north of Watsonville for many years, and no rail movements between key segments of the line since approximately 2010. At the same time, restoring freight service would require substantial infrastructure investment—well in excess of \$100 million with no identified funding sources or committed shippers. Under these conditions, it is both prudent and responsible for the RTC to avoid committing scarce public resources to speculative freight reactivation.

I also appreciate the RTC's clear statement that it is not pursuing abandonment of the corridor and remains committed to preserving it for future passenger rail service. This long-term vision, integrating rail with a multimodal trail, strikes the right balance between near-term community benefits and future transportation opportunities.

The Coastal Trail represents a critical investment in safe, accessible, and sustainable transportation. Advancing trail segments now provides immediate value to residents and visitors, supports climate and mobility goals, and enhances quality of life, without precluding future rail service.

I encourage the Commission to remain steadfast in this direction:

Continue advancing the Coastal Trail in a phased, implementable manner  
Preserve the rail corridor for future passenger and potential freight use  
Base decisions on demonstrated demand, fiscal responsibility, and community benefit  
Maintain transparency and open communication as plans move forward  
Thank you for your leadership and for grounding your decisions in both practical realities and a forward-looking vision for Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,

Mitch Bramlett  
Santa Cruz, Ca

**From:** [Katrina Rogers](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Coastal Trail  
**Date:** Friday, March 27, 2026 3:28:53 PM

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Greetings,

I wanted to take a moment to thank you all for staying grounded in facts and responsible fiscal planning in moving forward with the interim coastal trail.

Our county has a bleak financial outlook for the next several years as a result of several factors. I urge you to continue moving forward in spending what little financial resources the county has on implementing and building the interim coastal trail.

The interim coastal trail is the obvious choice for getting people moving in a safe and protected corridor throughout the county in a short amount of time and for the least amount of money.

It would be a shame for this incredible resource to continue to go unused while tied up in ongoing political commuter/freight train puffery.

I have read Roaring Camp's latest letter to the RTC. Roaring Camp should take into consideration the greater good of the community and the clear immediate term benefit the interim trail would provide put aside their freight argument.

Katrina Rogers

**From:** [Jack Brown](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Sarah Christensen's letter to Roaring Camp/Big Trees Railroad  
**Date:** Friday, March 27, 2026 2:05:56 PM

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Dear Commissioners of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for the RTC's direction as outlined in your April agenda, Item 14, regarding the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line and related corridor management actions.

I appreciate the Commission's continued commitment to a balanced, fact-based approach that preserves the rail corridor for future use while advancing the Coastal Trail in a phased and responsible manner. This approach reflects both the current realities on the ground and the long-term transportation needs of Santa Cruz County.

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I encourage the Commission to remain steadfast in this direction:

- Continue advancing the Coastal Trail in a phased, implementable manner
- Preserve the rail corridor for future passenger and potential freight use
- Base decisions on demonstrated demand, fiscal responsibility, and community benefit
- Maintain transparency and open communication as plans move forward

Thank you for your leadership and for grounding your decisions in both practical realities and a forward-looking vision for Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,

Jack Brown  
Aptos, CA

**From:** [Jay Ryan](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Support letter  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 12:50:50 PM

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Hi, I support a commuter train on the rails in Santa Cruz. A multi-use trail isn't going to do much for lowering commuter traffic. A train will. There is room for both, ya know.

I commuted by bike from downtown to Aptos for three years. A trail would have been cool, but I would have loved a train. Still would.

**From:** [Doug Huggins](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Trail Now  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 9:17:53 AM

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RTC - Make the trail now. Stop the Train madness. Push back on roaring camp.

Concerned Citizen,

Doug Huggins  
Soquel CA

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Enda Brennan](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Trail  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026 10:50:01 AM

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Please move forward expeditiously to complete the agreement with progressive rail. The \$450,000 settlement fee sucks but it's a necessary part of the real world. Don't let the delay tactics from Shiffrin slow the interim trail realization. the largest state grant ever is in jeopardy. I recently rode part of the new extension from natural bridges State Park towards Davenport and it is great. Keep up the good work. Thanks, Enda Brennan

**From:** [Eileen Zurbriggen](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** recent communication from Roaring Camp  
**Date:** Saturday, March 28, 2026 7:43:06 AM

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I support the decision of the RTC to move forward with the Interim Trail. I appreciate that you are facing the unpleasant financial realities related to the impossibility of rail/trail throughout the segments in question and are acting in the best interests of the entire community to move forward with the interim trail.

I saw a copy of the letter that Roaring Camp sent to you on March 3. I don't fully understand their concerns in regard to their own business (because my understanding is that they have not actually used the rail segments in question any time recently) but, because they are a beloved part of the community, their information campaigns can influence local opinion even if they are spreading misinformation. Please stay strong in remaining grounded in the facts, and doing what is best for the entire community. But if there is anything you can do to understand and mitigate Roaring Camp's concerns, that might help the project to move forward.

I live near the segments in question and am beyond excited to think that we might have a trail there in my lifetime.

Thank you.