

Local Government Scorecard

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

March 7, 2019

9 AM

9:30 a.m. PUBLIC HEARING - Consideration of certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Proposed North Coast Rail Trail Project and Selection of the “Proposed Project” (Coastal Side) as the Preferred Alternative

a. Staff report

b. Resolution to certify the North Coast Rail Trail Final EIR and select the

Proposed Project as the Preferred Alternative

c. North Coast Rail Trail Final EIR (to reduce paper use, the full Final

Environmental Impact Report (Volumes 1, 2, and 3) is available at the following locations: RTC office at 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz; the RTC website: <https://sccrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/monterey-bay-sanctuary-scenic-trail/north-coast-rail-trail/>; and the Santa Cruz Public Library Downtown Branch (224 Church Street, Santa Cruz), the Watsonville Public Library (275 Main Street #100, Watsonville), and the Davenport Resource Service Center (150 Church St, Davenport).

d. FEIR Comments from the public received prior to noon on February 27th, 2019

General Description:

The North Coast Rail Trail Project is a 7.5-mile multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail proposed to extend along the railroad corridor from Wilder Ranch State Park in the south to Davenport in the north in unincorporated Santa Cruz County. The project comprises the majority of Segment 5 of the larger Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network, for which a [Master Plan](#) was adopted and a programmatic [EIR](#) was certified in 2013. The Master Plan was revised in 2014, along with an addendum to the EIR.

The RTC is working in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration Central Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA-CFLHD). FHWA-CFLHD is the lead agency for design and construction of this segment of the county-wide Coastal Rail Trail project, which is scheduled for the 2021 calendar year. The RTC is the owner of the railroad right-of-way and is the agency responsible for overall implementation of the rail trail along the 32-mile rail corridor from Watsonville to Davenport.

Funding for design, environmental studies, construction, construction engineering, management, and permitting for this project comes from the Federal Lands Access Program, the California Coastal Conservancy, Measure D and the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. Partners include California State Parks and the County of Santa Cruz.

Chamber's Position: The Chamber supports the The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (Trail Network) merges plans for a bicycle/pedestrian trail along the rail line - including coastal alignments and neighborhood spurs. The trail will serve transportation, recreation and interpretive uses for walkers, joggers, bicyclists, people with mobility impairments, and families. The rail right of way passes within 1 mile of half of the County's population and will provide access to [44 schools and 92 parks \(see map\)](#). The Chamber is an advocate for getting the trail built while preserving the rail for future use.

Action: The Regional Transportation Commission unanimously voted to certify the Final Environmental Impact Report for the proposed North Coast Rail Trail project and selected the Proposed Alternative (coastal side trail alignment) as the preferred alternative.