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California State Senate

SENATOR
JOHN LAIRD

SEVENTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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December 2, 2022

Tab 17

California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street MS 52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Support for Six Santa Cruz County Transportation Program Projects

Dear Commissioners,

This letter expresses my excitement and gratitude for the Active Transportation Program staff recommendations that propose funding six essential projects in Santa Cruz County. As the State Senator for Senate District 17, I know firsthand the profound positive impact these projects will have in our community. As the former Secretary of the CA Natural Resources Agency, I understand the threats we face from climate change and how these projects will help us strive towards a cleaner and greener future.

Coastal Rail Trail Segments 8 and 9 and Segments 10 and 11 in particular will be transformational for our region. These two projects will construct over 6.3-miles of separated ADA-accessible bicycle/pedestrian path extending from Pacific Ave in Santa Cruz to State Park Drive in Seacliff. These two projects further the goals of the Active Transportation Program by advancing equity, multimodal safety, mode shift, and community engagement.

The *Safe Routes to Downtown Watsonville* and *Safe Routes for Watsonville School Families and Community* will build critical bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in downtown Watsonville and provide bicycle and pedestrian safety training and education at schools and in the community. These two projects will dramatically improve the safety of children and families walking and biking in the heart of Watsonville, providing more equitable access to key services. In the city of Santa Cruz, the *Swanton Delaware Multimodal Path* and UCSC "*SlugBikeLife*" *Bike Safety and Education Program Phase 2* will improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and access to important community destinations and provide necessary safety training to UCSC students, many of whom walk and bike to campus.

We humbly request that you adopt the staff recommendation and support these six valuable projects. Together, they will transform the active transportation landscape and dramatically increase the number and safety of people walking and biking in our community. If we are to meet our climate goals we need to truly change our communities for the better and that is exactly what these projects will do. I respectfully ask for your support of these crucial projects.

Sincerely,

John Laird
State Senator, 17th District