

TO: Surface Transportation Board

CC: All Parties of Record

RE: Docket No. AB-1351X

ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
July 8, 2026
Part of
Public Record

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As a resident of Santa Cruz County, and Santa Cruz city, I urge the STB to support Docket No. AB-1351X. This discontinuance is critical to our use of the Coastal rail corridor that was purchased by the County over 15 years ago. Although comprehensive planning with engineering analysis has been absent for most of those years, the recently completed Santa Cruz RTC 2025 Zero-Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Concept Report estimated approximately **\$4.3 billion** for implementation, with higher scenarios approaching **\$6.4 billion**. That is an extraordinary amount for a county of approximately 260,000 residents. Even supporters acknowledge that environmental review alone could require another \$25 million before a single mile of rail is built. No committed funding source exists for construction. No federal grant exists. No state appropriation exists. No local revenue source comes remotely close without a mega sales tax increase. The proposal has become a planning exercise rather than an achievable transportation project.

On the other hand, the application for discontinuance will allow current planning and grant usage to fund a cross-county bicycle and multi-use trail without precluding future rail transportation and within existing budget. This trail can be as successful as the similar trail in Monterey County, and a number of segments have already been completed, others are in either construction or design/planning stages.

As a further note, my statements and opinion is also backed by the Santa Cruz County 2025-26 Grand Jury report on this:

<https://www.santacruzcountyca.gov/Departments/GrandJury/2025-2026GrandJuryReportsandResponses.aspx>