

From: [Jack Brown](#)
To: CAPTI@CalSta
Subject: The falsehood of equity with a train in Watsonville
Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 4:25:40 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL. Links/attachments may not be safe.

A fellow resident made a claim to your organization that rail in Watsonville would provide social and transportation equity. I beg to differ and the facts speak for themselves.

After all other arguments failed (e.g. financial, traffic and pollution reduction (tiny), etc.), the pro-train folks are going after "social equity" for Watsonville. Here are the facts:

- 1) Poverty rate: Watsonville: 14.8%; Santa Cruz: 20.9% (source: US Census Bur.)
- 2) Transit to Santa Cruz: The area where a train would be in Watsonville already has an average of 4 Express buses per hour (every 15 min) to Santa Cruz. A train would come twice per hour, reducing the departure time to 10 minutes. I wish I had that service in my area! (source: Santa Cruz Metro)
- 2a) The rest (2/3 majority) of Watsonville has just 2 Express buses per hour (30 minutes). A train would not change that because it's too far to station (source: Cervero of UC Berkeley and other studies)
- 3) The proposed train would serve only 300 of 55,000 Watsonville residents (source: RTC study) Using job data, only half (150) would go to Santa Cruz (US Census: On the Map)
- 4) 76% of employed Watsonville residents commute out of city. 66% of SC employed residents commute out of city. (US Cens.: On the Map)
- 5) 55% of employed Watsonville commuting out of city using Hwy 1N. (US Cens.: On the Map)
- 6) Half (48%) of employed Watsonville residents using Hwy 1N go onto Hwy 17N and to Bay area; 30% to mid-county (most not on rail line); 23% to Santa Cruz including Branciforte, East side, etc. (most not on rail line) (US Cens.: On the Map)
- 7) 50% of all Hwy 1N traffic just north of Watsonville comes from Monterey County.

Are you willing to force 55,000 Watsonville residents to pay \$6.1M every year in added taxes to support 300 commuters? (\$6.1M arrived at using projected train cost minus projected state and federal funding (based on SMART train in Marin fiscal audits) minus \$4.50 fare/ride and ridership from RTC TCAA study)

Yes, we do need to address transportation equity and the climate crisis, but a train was already found to be economically infeasible in Santa Cruz 50 years ago and waiting another 20-25 years to implement rail again with no perceivable impact to GHG emissions and a reduction in carbon sinks with hundreds of heritage trees being cut down to make way for a train makes absolutely no sense. Let's focus on Bus Rapid Transit/Bus on Shoulder and a wide multi-modal trail on the unused rail corridor for inner and inter-community active transportation commuting.

Jack Brown
Resident of Santa Cruz County