

Bruce Jaffe Responses: Questionnaire for Supervisor Candidates

Question 1: Highway 1 Expansion

Do you agree with the CFST in advocating that the Regional Transportation Commission:

- Remove the HOV Lane Project from its Regional Transportation Plan
- Designate the Hwy 1 auxiliary lanes between Santa Cruz and Watsonville as lanes for buses and entering and exiting vehicles only, by use of signage and red paint on the pavement.

I agree that expanding highways does little to reduce congestion and is shortsighted. The real solutions are expansion of bus service and rail, if it is found feasible in the study coming in 2028, as well as an increase in teleworking for those who can effectively do their jobs without commuting 5 days a week. I am open to other solutions when they present.

Background

1. Hwy Expansion a Failed Strategy to Reduce Congestion

The RTC has heard from several speakers in its [Innovators in Transportation Speaker Series](#) (Jarrett Walker, Jeffrey Tumlin, Becky Steckler) that expanding highways in order to reduce congestion is a futile exercise, due to increased traffic induced by the expansion. A study by [Duranton and Turner](#) reports a 1 to 1 ratio of increased traffic to increased lane-miles. Studies observe that the full impact of induced travel occurs within ten years. This means that with HOV Lanes there will be more vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, but no significant improvement in traffic congestion.

2. HOV Project Financially Infeasible

According to the Unified Corridors Investment Study (2018), "Implementation of HOV Lanes on Highway 1 will require seeking a significant level of funding at a time when state and federal funding for highway capacity-increasing projects is extremely limited and therefore will not likely be implemented until after 2035."

3. False Promise of Congestion Relief from Auxiliary Lanes

In 2016, the RTC spent over \$100,000 on a mailer to all voters in the County claiming that its sales tax measure would "ease congestion on Highway 1." This message was inconsistent with the Caltrans Draft EIR (2015) that said that auxiliary lanes "would result in a very slight improvement in traffic congestion when compared to the No Build Alternative". The EIR also estimated no safety benefit from the auxiliary lanes.

Question 2: Supporting the General Plan

No amount of public transportation infrastructure can offset land use decisions that perpetuate auto dependency. The recent proposal for a Kaiser facility with 300 employees, located over a mile from the nearest bus stop, with plans for the largest parking garage in the county, would have added significant traffic on Hwy 1 and local

streets. Kaiser withdrew their proposal, though they had significant support on the Board of Supervisors.

Will you oppose amending the General Plan to allow development that perpetuates auto dependency?

I do support a General Plan that reduces dependency on autos.

Question 3: Public Transit

Do you believe METRO is underfunded? If so, what is your strategy to redress that?

Do you support free transit passes for youth under 18?

Yes

Yes

Background

San Francisco MUNI receives revenue from City parking facilities, private parking lots (including UC Med and SF State) and developer fees. Santa Cruz METRO does not receive any funds from these sources. There is currently discussion on the METRO Board of a sales tax devoted to transit.

Question 4: Rail Corridor

Do you support bringing electric passenger rail to Santa Cruz County and connecting to the State Rail Plan?

At this point in time I do support passenger rail. Connection to the State Rail Plan and my continued support depend on the results of the RTC study that will be completed in 2028.

Background

-2012 the RTC accepted state money to purchase the ROW for the purpose of implementing passenger rail

-2021 the Transportation Corridor Alternative Analysis results led the RTC to unanimously vote that the public transit on the corridor should be electric passenger rail

-2022 73% of the voters rejected Measure D, the "Greenway" proposal to tear out the tracks and replace them with a trail

-2022 the RTC unanimously voted to hire HDR associates to design a general plan for electric passenger rail

Question 5: Safe Streets for Bicyclists and Pedestrians

In 2015 Santa Cruz County ranked #1 of 58 California counties in rate of injuries to bicyclists and #11 in rate of injuries to pedestrians. Will you vote to:

- Redirect developer fees slated for projects that increase vehicle capacity to projects that make streets safer for bicyclists and pedestrians?

Yes

- Adopt Vision Zero as County policy?

Yes

Question 6: Reducing Transportation Demand

Building affordable housing near jobs and amenities is the ultimate strategy for reducing transportation demand. Will you support the following demand reduction strategies that also increase housing affordability?

- Require new multifamily development near transit to unbundle the costs of parking from the costs of renting/purchasing the unit, allowing the consumer to opt out of purchasing parking.

Yes

- Require developers who take advantage of exemptions to parking requirements to provide bus passes to tenants.

Sounds like a good idea.