

ARCATA



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1635 Heindon Road Arcata, California 95521
707.822.3619 office www.arcatachamber.com

August 4, 2008

State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Arcata Rail and Trail Connectivity Project

Dear Board of Directors:

The Arcata Chamber of Commerce is committed to supporting and promoting its local businesses and community. In addition to providing traditional chamber networking, the Arcata Chamber of Commerce also provides numerous services to assist our business leadership -- access to networking events, advertising opportunities, and important business issues.

The Arcata Chamber of Commerce also operates one of only 13 California Welcome Centers (CWC) throughout California, collaboratively serving over one million walk-in visitors a year. We pride ourselves on providing a high level of service to visitors, our community, and eco-tourism on the Redwood Coast; which is why the Arcata Chamber of Commerce supports the Arcata Rail and Trail Connectivity Project.

A significant portion of the City of Arcata's funding is derived from the tourism industry. Linking critical tourist destination points such as the local skate park, the Arcata Plaza and the Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary will greatly increase the attraction of Arcata to travelers. The Arcata Rail with Trail Corridor project will provide critical transportation links both for local commuters as well as those accessing the California Coastal Trail.

The City of Arcata has a long commitment to active transportation systems and quality recreation experiences. The City's General Plan has a specific policy that directs the creation of a complete, interconnected bicycle and pedestrian circulation system; increasing the percentages of person trips via walking and bicycling, providing a system which serves commuter as well as recreational travel, and connecting with regional partners to support non-vehicular intercity travel.

In addition, the City of Arcata has provided leadership in trail, safe routes to school, and non-motorized transportation planning and implementation in the region for over 20 years, and is currently providing staff resources to coordinate the Arcata Rail with Trail connectivity project.

Below are just a few of the important components that this project will bring to our community:

- Safe pedestrian / bike routes to local school, including Humboldt State University
- Accessible opportunities for physical activity
- Magnets for the travelers who visit the Northcoast seeking outdoor experiences
- Transportation equity -- access to goods, services using any mode of transport
- Healthy lifestyles
- Quality of life- Recreational enhancements
- Economic development
- Community vitality
- Community development: opportunity to change the paradigm before more build-outs occur
- Climate change/environmental effects

On behalf of the Board of Directors, and the Arcata Chamber of Commerce membership, we support this project, not only for our community, but for visitors alike. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate in contacting us directly.

Sincerely,



Julie Vaissade-Elcock
President



Gene Joyce
First Vice-President



Brenda Bishop
Executive Director