



Santa Rosa Office
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September 12, 2014

Attn: Kenneth Kao, Senior Planner
Programming and Allocations
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: Jennings Avenue Rail Crossing, Santa Rosa

Dear Mr. Kao:

For over 50 years, Greenbelt Alliance has been the champion of the places that make the San Francisco Bay Area special. We work to protect the region's open spaces and make sure that the right kinds of development happen in the right places. We advocate for the creation of thriving neighborhoods that include a mix of housing, jobs, and transportation options.

Greenbelt Alliance is committed to the implementation of the North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan, which includes the Jennings Avenue bicycle and pedestrian crossing over the SMART tracks. We recognize that the Jennings Avenue crossing is a critical transportation link because students on their way to Helen Lehman Elementary School and adults on their way to work or to shop can often be found crossing the tracks illegally. We appreciate MTC staff recommendations that fund enhancements to support an official and safe crossing through the 2014 Active Transportation Grant Program.

As the Draft Environment Impact Report for the Jennings Crossing has not yet been released for this project, we recommend that the City of Santa Rosa review and weigh the impact of both an at-grade rail crossing and a bridge. An at-grade crossing is more cost effective, but would require the closing of another official crossing with related neighborhood impacts. If the more expensive option of creating a bridge is recommended by the City Council, then we encourage the bridge design to be an L-shaped crossing to help cyclists and pedestrians connect to the multi-use path and station. The bridge should be both aesthetically pleasing and include lighting to encourage people to safely use the bridge.



We hope that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission also recognizes the need for a Community Connector Bridge over Highway 101 between Coddington Mall and the Santa Rosa Junior College, which is a vital east-west connection and is another important implementation piece of the North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan. The City of Santa Rosa cannot afford to build this multi-million dollar bridge without your support.

Greenbelt Alliance wants to ensure that both Santa Rosa SMART Station Area Plans' visions are realized and wants to see improved transportation within the city; creating a safe, healthy, and vibrant community. We appreciate the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's support and consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Lana Russell-Hurd
Regional Representative
Greenbelt Alliance
707-575-3661