

**Wyatt, Rosie**

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**From:** Matt Miller <matt.miller@ecoact.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 16, 2025 1:09 PM  
**To:** City Council  
**Subject:** [PDF] Comment on Item B: Park Avenue Alignment  
**Attachments:** City of Capitola - Letter of Support for Park Ave Rail Trail Alignment 4.16.25.pdf

Hello Mayor Clarke and City of Capitola Council,

Please find the attached letter regarding Item B Park Avenue Alignment for tomorrow's special meeting. Thank you for your consideration and leadership on this significant project.

Best,

**Matt Miller** (he/him)  
Director, Mobility Transformation

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4/16/25

City of Capitola City Council  
420 Capitola Avenue  
Capitola, CA 95010  
RE: Item B Park Avenue Alignment

Dear Mayor Clarke and Capitola City Council,

Ecology Action, a California environmental non-profit headquartered in Santa Cruz, supports the investment in active transportation infrastructure with the **Park Avenue Alignment of the Coastal Rail Trail** to construct a continuous Class I bicycle and pedestrian facility that will enhance safety, equity, reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), and improve access to jobs, housing, and recreational opportunities for community members and visitors. The Coastal Rail Trail is part of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network — envisioned over 20 years ago by then-U.S. Congressman Sam Farr—providing a continuous bicycle/pedestrian path through the most densely populated areas of Santa Cruz County.

Ecology Action's mission is to advance equitable climate solutions in high GHG emitting sectors, including transportation and this paved path will significantly enhance safe, convenient and accessible bike and pedestrian transportation in Capitola and points east and west.

We acknowledge that the Park Avenue Alignment deviates from the ultimate trail configuration and therefore represents a departure from the idea of this project that has been promoted and socialized for years. We also appreciate that in the face of all the variables, funding, and timeline at play, this clarifies the needed direction at this moment. Approving Park Avenue offers the city and surrounding community a much more likely and timely project that can materially improve safety, mobility, and quality of life. A no vote would introduce much more uncertainty, higher costs, and put at risk the funding and completion of a beautiful segment of the county-wide network. We need more high-quality active transportation facilities, and this is the way to get there with available funds. Being able to deliver a project with a historic grant amount from the state of California bodes well for momentum and future funding while not delivering it risks this project and potential opportunities down the road.

The project is particularly important for enhancing safety. Santa Cruz County has unacceptably high, and ultimately avoidable, rates of collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians. The project will provide separation for people biking and walking from vehicular traffic, which is one of the most effective strategies for reducing bicycle/ pedestrian and vehicle collisions. Previous community engagement in Capitola has indicated a desire for safety and traffic calming measures on Park Avenue.

The project supports mode shift from single-occupancy vehicles to bicycling and walking and reduces VMT and GHG emissions by providing an attractive, direct, comfortable, and convenient alternative to driving. Residents and visitors will especially choose to bicycle and walk during periods of high car congestion on parallel roadways to reduce travel times and achieve personal health benefits.





Ecology Action supports the Park Avenue alignment, with either design. It will provide a new connection for Santa Cruz County's active transportation network and improve the livability, equity, and quality of life for residents and visitors in Capitola and Santa Cruz County. We hope the City of Capitola can help propel this exciting project forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Miller", with a stylized, cursive script.

Matt Miller  
Director, Mobility Transformation

