

RCWD  
12/16/10

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Humboldt County Planning Commission  
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12-15-10

Dear Planning Commission Members:

I am writing to express my support for maintaining the railroads as well as development of a commuter trail for bikes. I am by no means an expert in this subject. I have attended General Plan Update informational meetings, informational forums regarding this issue, and have watched the coverage of this issue in the news, but as I said I am no expert.

What I am is a hard working, socially conscious, educated, environmentalist, wife, and long-term resident of Humboldt County who is looking at starting a family and the long term reality of raising children in this area. Because of this, I am concerned about our economic future as well as the health of the region, the environment, and its inhabitants.

I am in favor of a developed trail but NOT at the expense of the rail-lines and railways. It is my hope that there can be a tourist train and, in an ideal world, that I could catch a train to work from my home in Rio Dell instead of relying on the bus system or having to drive.

I believe that we would be remiss if we did not look at the long term benefits of maintaining the railways. Public opinion, as exhibited in recent legislation and voter outcomes, is shifting towards support of trains as freight liners, transportation, and as sources of tourist income both because of the dependable nature and also due to their being truly more environmental than the systems currently in place. With subsidization of roads and other public services recognized as socially necessary it is only a matter of time before that same view is taken with railways.

While it would be fantastic if this region could be completely self-sufficient this is simply not feasible. The potential for income that can be generated by a tourist train and responsible use of our harbor would positively benefit this entire region instead of a select few.

Again, I would like to urge you, when working on the General Plan Update as well as other issue, to include provisions for trail development but not at the expense of the rail-lines and future use of these. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah Reid