

ALAMO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

SERVING ALAMO SINCE 1955

P.O. BOX 156 • ALAMO, CALIFORNIA 94507

DATE: February 10, 2020

SUBJ: Iron Horse Trail Active Transportation Corridor Study

It is our understanding that in response to the need for alternatives to commuting by automobile or bus along the 680 Corridor, CCCounty is proposing, through the Iron Horse Trail Active Transportation Corridor Study, to modify the existing Iron Horse Trail from its current more recreational use to a more commuter friendly use.

AIA scheduled a 9:00 AM Saturday Conference call for discussion of the study. Comments included concerns about the Community Outreach Process (no property owners in Alamo along the Iron Horse Trail were noticed and Countywide, of the 425,000 people living within 3.0 miles of the trail, only 260 people attended the three 2019 meetings and only 407 responded online with comments); changing the character and nature of the Iron Horse Trail from Suburban Recreational Parklike use to a more Urban Commuter Use will create impacts of cross street traffic/Right of Way changes, lighting, privacy, hours of use, crime/policing needs and pedestrian/equine safety.

In summary, our comments are:

1. The public participation process is fatally flawed. To the best of our knowledge no property owner abutting the trail received any personal notice of the pendency of these studies. The clear thrust of the study is to dramatically change what has been a casual recreational trail used primarily by local residents for walking and biking into a regional transportation facility to include among other things electric vehicles. This increased utilization of the trail, change in the variety of users, lighting, noise and other intrusive behaviors will surely have a direct and demonstrable impact on adjacent residents. They should have been informed of a planning study having direct and perhaps negative consequences to them. AIA was unaware of the study through this organization represents thousands of Alamo residents and again, to the best of our knowledge, the MAC was similarly uninformed as to this matter. *We are asking for a more appropriate notice process to nearby property owners, community and advisory organizations and that there be another comment period of at least 60 days after notices are given.*

2. The inspiration, creation and operation of the Iron Horse Trail for the past thirty years has been to provide casual recreation. Seniors utilize the trail for low impact physical training, animal lovers enjoy walking the trail with their companions, toddlers learn to walk, children learn to bicycle, and nature lovers enjoy the sylvan setting the trail provides through Alamo and Danville. This stealth plan dramatically changes the nature of this facility to a transportation/commute corridor. While we recognize the advantages of offsetting local and freeway vehicle traffic for alternative pedestrian and bicycle commuting to office nodes in Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill and San Ramon, it is essential for matters of public safety and sanity that there be a physical separation between casual recreational users and high speed bikers, electric scooters and electric vehicles. *At least in residential areas and adjacent*

to residential uses, the character of the trail corridor should remain informal, natural and arboreal with a minimum of hardscape to accommodate the uses.

3. This plan is grand in scale but fails to appreciate perhaps the single most critical element of a successful non-automobile corridor, namely grade separations. As currently configured the Iron Horse Trail is severely deficient to serve as even a decent recreational corridor because of the absence of arterial grade separations. Nothing in this plan should be undertaken without the reprioritization of grade separations at key arterials such as Danville/Rudgear, Broadway/ Newell, Crow Canyon and Bollinger Canyon. *Traffic light preemption is a poor and ill-advised idea that leads to more congestion.*

4. Urban style trail amenities such as lighting, artificial landscaping, bollards, rumble strips etc., should be limited to trail segments that traverse zones of multifamily, commercial and office uses. We appreciate the opportunity to offer these comments for the record.

Sincerely,



Roger Smith
President