

SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT

METRO PUBLIC MEETING

FORMAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

May 9, 2016

Watsonville Public Library

275 Main Street, #100, Watsonville, CA 95076

1 BARBARA FERNANDEZ: I ride the 69A mostly, and
2 I like the way it goes and I like the fact that it goes
3 between Santa Cruz -- or Watsonville and Santa Cruz,
4 because that's what I do a lot. I go to Santa Cruz. In
5 fact, I'm hoping to move back there. I'm pretty okay
6 with the way they're going to change it, but yet not. I
7 think it's going to be pretty inconvenient when they
8 change. And that kind of surprises me because it's
9 always full. That bus is always full. So I'm a little
10 surprised that they're going to stop.

11 And 71 isn't really as full as 69, you know.
12 And it runs in a different way.

13 But I hope that they don't change it too much.
14 But whatever happens, as long as they keep it, I'll
15 still be happy with that. As long as they keep it. So
16 I'm willing to deal with that.

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1 DALE FLOWERS: My name is Dale Flowers. I'm
2 going to pull the senior card on you. I'm 78 years old.
3 I'm a senior, okay? And I don't have a car, and I use
4 public transportation in Santa Cruz for everything.

5 Number 55 bus is where my recommendation is.
6 Right now, there are ten 55 runs every day. How do you
7 say that? It's 20 -- ten scheduled buses every day.
8 How do they say that? Departures. There's ten
9 departures.

10 My proposal is they be reduced to eight, and
11 they be coordinated with the 69W to get to Cabrillo.
12 Okay?

13 Keep the -- the proposal now is to eliminate
14 the bus going down Aptos Beach Drive to the beach, going
15 into the Rio Flats and up to Rio Del Mar shopping
16 center. Deluxe Food. The proposal now is to eliminate
17 that portion of the route.

18 My recommendation is they keep that portion of
19 the route, because there are at least a half a dozen
20 seniors that use that bus to get up to Safeway, the
21 library, the barbershop, the post office. And we use
22 that bus more than once during the day. It's kind of
23 like our local way to get to the shopping mall.

24 Then there's several -- this morning I counted
25 four -- college student going to Cabrillo from that area

1 on the particular portion of the route. Plus, there was
2 something like 22 people on the bus this morning. Half
3 of them are the disabled kids who come down and use the
4 beach. Sometimes they get off at Center Street and --
5 yeah, Center Street and State Park and go down to the
6 beach, and then they get back on the bus over at Aptos
7 Beach Drive and Rio Del Mar Boulevard.

8 But the most important thing to me is to keep
9 that portion of the bus that's there now, that goes from
10 Center Street down to the beach on Aptos Beach Drive,
11 and then up to the Deluxe Foods, the Rio Del Mar
12 shopping center, and then gets on the freeway and goes
13 back. That's really important to keep that portion of
14 the bus.

15 Now, I also recommend that instead of having --
16 they -- the proposal now is to send three of the 55s out
17 to Via Pacifica. Okay? My recommendation is just two.
18 There's only been two going in the past, and those two
19 have been a problem. They've discontinued that bus.
20 And because there's only, in your own material, four or
21 five people who ride that bus. And frankly, a couple of
22 those are people who live, who do ride the 55 as well,
23 so they're not going to be lost.

24 The number of -- that's four or five that get
25 on the bus. Of the four or five that get on, I don't

1 know how many go to this Via Pacifica stop, but here's
2 my concern about Via Pacifica stop: The proposal is
3 there's three now, proposed. Let's go back to two.
4 Okay?

5 This seems to be ridiculous. There's a bus
6 stop at Via Pacifica, and there's a bus stop up on
7 Seascape. One-tenth of a mile between bus stops. So
8 the bus come there is, goes around a circle, goes
9 through another circle and for what purpose? There's
10 knob there. I rode that bus this weekend and one person
11 was there on the weekend. And he -- he was a fellow in
12 a wheelchair. And so he has an option of using a
13 ParaCruz if he wants. I just never seen anybody get on
14 the bus there and it seems like it's a ridiculous --
15 doesn't seem like it's a necessary stop. Especially
16 when they can get off up here.

17 So there's a stop up on Seascape boulevard and
18 there's a stop at Via Pacifica and Cabo Court.

19 The distance between Cabo court and the stop up
20 on Seascape boulevard is one-tenth of a mile. It's
21 little over a block. To me, people can walk that one
22 block and save us a little bit of time there.

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1 ROXANNE KIRKLAND: My main concern was that the
2 69A was being cut completely. And it seems like they've
3 addressed that issue, which I'm thankful for. And then
4 it looks like they also addressed some issues where
5 there's service to the hospital and also the social
6 security office. So I'm very pleased with that.

7 The other thing that I'm interested in is up in
8 the 35 route, there's a rule where if the bus doesn't go
9 up there, the school buses -- the METRO doesn't go up to
10 a certain point, then the school buses can't stop at the
11 stops. And I guess up Country Club Road by Tiehl Road,
12 I'm not quite sure where that is, but there's five
13 elderly and at least 15 school kids that ride the bus.
14 And I'm worried about their transportation.

15 So that's the main thing I really want to get
16 on the record is for them to investigate that.

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1 FELIPA DELEON: I use the 74 on the weekends to
2 go see my family. I don't use my electric wheelchair to
3 go up to my family's because they have stairs. I use
4 the -- I use a manual chair. And if they cut the 74, I
5 would have to take the 69W or another bus. And then go
6 all the way to my sister's house on La Salle Street.
7 And that's the only bus that goes, takes me to my
8 sister's house.

9 And the 72, people need that. There's people
10 that work in the fields that need the 72. That maybe if
11 they can -- the 75 or the 72 can do a big route, a big
12 turn around that area, where Corralitos and Pinto Lake
13 is. Maybe one bus can go that way and make a turn.

14 That's the only two that I'm not happy with.
15 And hopefully, maybe the 69A can go back to going to
16 Cabrillo College. Because there's people in Freedom
17 that need that, students that live that way that go to
18 Cabrillo, too.

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1 GUADELUPE GUIZAR: You know, because I work for
2 Goodwill for 33 years, and I take the bus. These years
3 I take the bus 33 years. Because I depend on my
4 wheelchair, I not have a family for myself, and I have
5 transportation only for my work and my wheelchair, and I
6 need the bus. I ride the bus 71 and 68. And when I go
7 home, I need that same buses, 71 and 68 -- 69A.

8 You know, for example, okay. They live in
9 these passes. They put them ahead of time. Anyway, I
10 lost it because my work, I go home at the same time.
11 They don't change my schedule. See? And because, you
12 know, it doesn't -- for example, the guys goes to the
13 school and people work, we leave the same time because
14 we know the schedule for work and for the school. And
15 they change the buses. I don't think so they change the
16 school and work to the time. That's why I hope so they
17 have a -- the same time. Maybe 71 or only one bus or
18 two.

19 Yeah, because we need it.

20 Maybe longer hours on the 71 in Crestview,
21 because a lot of people take Crestview, because they go
22 to shopping in the town. And sometimes we have our
23 meetings d meetings. With our doctors and we take 71 to
24 go to Santa Cruz, to the hospital. And 69, we take it
25 to the hospital to Watsonville. This is easy for us in

1 case they cut it, we need to come in to take a 71 to go
2 to downtown, and then wait another bus to go to the
3 hospital, and then we wait another bus. And then take a
4 71 to go home. That's only four. And this is hard for
5 us.

6 And that's reason why now it's 69 goes to the
7 Crestview, this way, and they go to the hospital easy.
8 They leave you over there and only we need to wait the
9 same 69A when I go back. That's only two. In case they
10 cut it, we need to take four buses. And this is . . .

11 Especially when it's raining or too dark for us
12 in the wheelchair. This is not good safety in the
13 streets. See? And that's . . .

14 I hope so they do something.

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1 VICTOR PACHECO: I was talking to the lady
2 here. In Pajaro, that has areas that are not being
3 covered presently. The METRO is not servicing two areas
4 of Pajaro. That is the one to the left, as soon as you
5 come across the bridge, there is a community that goes
6 on San Juan Road. That area is not being covered by the
7 buses.

8 And also, the area where the mission is,
9 there's several houses and apartments where the mission
10 is. The kids from high school, they go to the Pajaro
11 School District, high school, they're having to walk all
12 the way from the mission all the way to -- it's like two
13 and a half miles. And it's not fair.

14 The problem with the kids that live right
15 across the bridge to the left, the San Juan Road,
16 extremely high traffic in the morning and the kids have
17 to walk all the way from there, which is like a mile and
18 a half, all the way to Watsonville High. And they run
19 chances of getting run over by cars because there's a
20 lot of traffic.

21 A lot of individual work on the fields, And
22 they would come across, either come across the Pajaro to
23 Watsonville or come from Watsonville to San Juan Road,
24 where the fields, berry fields, and lettuce, and all
25 those things, and all those workers have to drive every

1 day from Watsonville out to the fields on the Pajaro
2 area or from Pajaro to Watsonville to work in
3 Watsonville. So we have those kids at risk every day.
4 And it's not fair. It's not just.

5 The changes, they are not taking into
6 consideration those two areas.

7 I also ride the bus. I have my car, but I
8 rather save money by not polluting as much. But I
9 notice the times do not match. Sometimes you have --
10 sometimes some areas are covered a lot more often than
11 otherwise. So sometimes --

12 Like the 71, the route 71, we have the 71
13 covering pretty much the same area. Takes you all the
14 way to Santa Cruz and back, but it's going to the same
15 shopping center is, where the Food Maxx is, and all
16 those things. And we need to bring back the 71 to where
17 used to be the Crestview Shopping Center. That's where
18 it used to be.

19 The bus stop used to be at Crestview Shopping
20 Center. Not before the bus depo here in Watsonville,
21 which by the way, I used to belong to a nonprofit. We
22 used to own the METRO. Used to be a bank, then we took
23 over it and then eventually we give it out to METRO that
24 they get -- make the METRO what it is today.

25 But they stopped servicing Crestview Shopping

1 Center, which a lot of people go shopping there because
2 there's big markets. There's two shopping centers
3 there. The one where the Prinsesa is at. And there's
4 also the one across another shopping center across from
5 la Prinsesa. That's the Mi Pueblo. Mi Pueblo is the
6 other Hispanic shopping market.

7 And a lot of people go from Watsonville
8 downtown or the areas to those two shopping centers.
9 And the bus service does not.

10 And it's also -- a lot of people that live in
11 that area, they commute to Santa Cruz either to go to
12 college or go to work in Santa Cruz. And that's also
13 important that they get -- that the METRO system does
14 take into consideration. They need to put back 71 into
15 the shopping -- the Crestview shopping center.

16 They can get a permit from the owner. They
17 allow them to use the owner to park the buses there, or
18 the stops there. I don't know how they work it out, but
19 that used to be the Metro Center for buses to stop
20 there.

21 Every bus that came through Watsonville, they
22 stopped that the Crestview, and it's no longer happening
23 anymore. And a lot of people that are going again,
24 shopping there, cannot get there with the bus.

25 So that's basically what I wanted to make my

1 comment on those issues.

2 I'm a community advocate for the poor, the
3 needy, the elder, the homeless, the veterans. I used to
4 belong to Pajaro CDC, Pajaro Community Development
5 Corporation.

6 And I used to also belong to the Pajaro Valley
7 Affordable Housing Corporation. I used to be a board
8 member with these two organizations. With one I was
9 involved for 30 years. With the other, I was involved
10 15 years.

11 I was also involved with the Chavez Union, and
12 I was also involved with the CCU. It's another farm
13 labor organization. And I was director for grievances.

14 I'm personally involved with Western Service
15 Workers in Santa Cruz. It's off Mission Street. I've
16 been involved with them for 20 years. And.

17 Off and on I've been involved with nonprofits
18 here in Watsonville for 30 years. And I either
19 translate or I give orientation to the workers and
20 families.

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1 HELEN HINOJOSA: I'm a rider. I ride the bus
2 five times a week to and from work. The one I generally
3 take always is either 69A or 69W. I think it's the 69A
4 that comes early and then I can choose between the W, A,
5 or the 69, because I'm going. So it doesn't matter
6 whichever one comes first, I grab, just to come home.

7 They're taking -- from what I see, they're
8 taking away one of them. From the way he explained it,
9 they're taking one away. And I get out at 7:00, and
10 I'll be stuck there, stranded. So I really need you
11 guys to actually keep it the way it is, or find a -- or
12 get a sweeper for the last, you know, hour or so.
13 Because it's --

14 I'm not talking about me, but I'm talking about
15 other people besides me, the mall, the shoppers, other
16 people who have to commute within that area.

17 There's no other -- I mean, I'd like the route
18 to stay the way it is, you know? Both of them, 69A, W,
19 and 69, because I really need it. I mean, it's to and
20 from work is how I get there.

21 There's no option. I can't take the 71 because
22 it's hard for me to run across in that amount of time to
23 catch it because I've got a bum leg. So that's the
24 reason it's important to keep those two routes. Those
25 two buses at that one area.

1 ROSARIO MENDOZA: I usually take the 69A
2 frequently. I use it to go to doctor's appointments.
3 Sometimes I have to go to the bank to Citibank. They
4 closed the branch here so now I have to go to the one on
5 41st Avenue.

6 I also see a doctor there on 41st Avenue.

7 I also take the 71, but only to go to Cabrillo
8 College. Those are the two buses that I take the most.

9 When I missed the 69, I sometimes I take the
10 77.

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1 DOROTHY ANDERSON: So I'm concerned about the
2 bus routes into and from La Selva Beach. There isn't --
3 there's no -- there are no walkways to get to -- we'd
4 have to walk to Aptos. I mean, that's why you use to
5 bus: To go to Aptos. And if there's -- if you reduce
6 it -- I know it's low ridership, but there's no other
7 way to get in and out of La Selva if you don't have a
8 car.

9 If you were to walk, you would have to walk
10 along traffic. There are no pedestrian walkways along
11 San Andreas Road to -- I'm trying to think. I used to
12 take the bus every day to and from work. Took me two
13 hours. It was what I had to do until I could afford a
14 car. And I was always the last one on the bus. And I
15 still had to walk blocks up the hill to get to my home.
16 No overhead lighting, there's no walkways, and it's
17 dangerous to be trying to do that in the dark, and
18 without proper walkways.

19 I understand everyone is here to beg for their
20 ridership area, but La Selva has a large group of
21 elderly. How do they get to the store? How do they get
22 anywhere to do anything if they don't have a family
23 member living that will take them? That's the bus.

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1 MAURICIO RIVERA: So I'm a student at Cabrillo
2 College. I first will demand, on basis of the Freedom
3 of Information Act, to have the salaries of the director
4 of the METRO, including the CEOs and administrators,
5 such as Barrow, to be publicly displayed at the Web
6 site. This should happen no later than by the time that
7 these cuts are implemented on the county.

8 I would also demand 91X not to be cut as that's
9 the single most effective route for Cabrillo students.
10 And we are aware that the reason they are cutting it is
11 as the way to pressure Cabrillo students to give the
12 full \$2 million that the fee they just implemented,
13 Cabrillo College will be collecting. It is not the
14 responsibility of the poorer students, the community
15 college students, to endure and to subsidize the
16 decisions that come through negligence and corruption
17 that shape the effectiveness of public entities such as
18 the METRO, on which we depend to follow the location in
19 hard times.

20 And also, this is Santa Cruz County. There's
21 enough rich people to subsidize services as these. The
22 poorest people, as I said, shouldn't be responsible to
23 it. It is not through our fault that this has come to
24 historic deficit which it is at this point. And I would
25 like to see the METRO director to actually take input

1 from the students to not cut the 91X.

2 In this regard, they feel they have been pushed
3 for -- given that it is a right of students to receive
4 an education, and these public entities are in place to
5 allow us to follow through those responsibilities we
6 have as citizens and humans in this world.

7 And I think that will be it.
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1 DONALD HAGEN: I want to thank Mr. Emerson,
2 Mr. Clifford, and the staff for listening to various
3 persons in this city and county who've made suggestions
4 and have managed the primary concept of providing
5 service, changing the word "discontinue" to "reduce."
6 And the routes that -- parts of the routes that have
7 been cut, as a board member, I fully support. As parts
8 of the routes that have been adjusted and changed,
9 again, I'm delighted.

10 And I've come in here, and speaking to anyone
11 who will listen about the possible changes. And he'll
12 tell you. I've talked to Alex and Emerson -- Barrow,
13 numerous times about what possibilities could be made,
14 both here, Bonny Doon, whoever, the various parts.

15 And I've taken over 75 runs on different routes
16 on different buses to find out what could be done as a
17 rider. And have come from a point of view as a board
18 member. So I make some comparison of combination
19 between the two.

20 And I can only say my hat's off to the two of
21 them for their trying to make adjustments to save some
22 rider -- some routes for the different riders in this
23 community.

24 And while, yes, there are numerous routes that
25 are poor performing, we are still keeping minimum

1 essential rides there. And that's the thing that's
2 important to me.

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1 WATONKA ADDISON: I have served as the senior
2 outreach coordinator for the Watsonville public library
3 for the last nine years. So I work with a lot of the
4 different retirement communities in Watsonville, and
5 have heard a lot of feedback from the people that we
6 serve in regard to how they may be impacted by the cuts.

7 And the cuts that I'm hearing will be most
8 impactful for them will be specifically the 69A route as
9 it accesses the hospital. And that the majority of the
10 retirement communities in Watsonville, the populations,
11 the residential retirement communities are primarily
12 situated on the east side of town.

13 And that folks that I've spoken with have said
14 that in these proposals, the 69W has been specifically
15 identified as the stronger of the two routes. They feel
16 that that impacts them disproportionately as seniors,
17 being that so many of the residential retirement areas
18 are congregated on the east and north side of town.

19 So you have Independent Square off of
20 Crestview. You have Paloma Del Mar, and Pajaro Vista on
21 Pajaro Lane, among others. There are a few other
22 retirement communities of large size that have a lot of
23 residents expressing concerns.

24 So I wanted to put that comment forth.

25 And also, from my perspective, I actually am a

1 rider of the 69A myself. I take that bus every day to
2 work. So it will negatively impact me. And every day,
3 when I wait for that bus, I -- I'm in the company of
4 several people. Being that a lot of the residential
5 areas are accessed off of Freedom Boulevard, it's such a
6 major thoroughfare. And I believe, in fact, Freedom
7 Boulevard at one point was identified as the busiest
8 street in the county. So that would definitely be
9 something to look at.

10 Now, of course on Main Street, there's a lot of
11 business, but when you look at the ridership patterns,
12 it would seem to me that a lot of people are commuting
13 northbound in the morning from their homes and then
14 south in the evening. So, you know, they're really
15 coming from their homes in Watsonville, then to
16 businesses in Santa Cruz area.

17 So something to look at with that. That the
18 primary residential areas are more congregated on the
19 northeast side.

20 And then I'd also put a plug in for the 91X,
21 which I think is a wonderful, efficient route. The best
22 and most efficient route in the county, especially given
23 that we have such a traffic impact. And getting from
24 one place to another is very time consuming. And for
25 transit to be a viable alternative, I think it needs to

1 have that efficiency.

2 So coming from a big city, myself, it's the
3 most efficient and wonderful route that I think we have.

4 I certainly appreciate the revisions and the
5 way this has all been carefully studied. I can see
6 there's a lot of thought and effort being put into this.
7 So we appreciate that.

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1 RICHARD HERNANDEZ: My comment is I really like
2 to see the weekend service on the 79 bus. I feel
3 there's a lot of people, especially handicapped,
4 wheelchairs on the weekends that are riding that route,
5 and they ride regularly. I ride that bus regularly. I
6 live out off of East Lake. And that is a very important
7 route. It goes to the retirement village.

8 And I see the people out there that are riding
9 almost, you know, daily. They're doctors, drugstores,
10 groceries. So that's very important to me and all those
11 folks that are out there. I'm speaking not just "I."
12 I'm saying "we" as a community, that we need the 79
13 route.

14 Another one that we need is the -- I can see
15 the 77 dropping out. Nobody rides it. I ride it once
16 in awhile. If -- because it does go by East Lake, off
17 of East Beach.

18 71, I don't know if we can afford to make any
19 cuts on the 71. You know, they were talking about from
20 15 minutes to 30-minute time frames. And that bus -- I
21 ride it quite often during the weekdays, early in the
22 morning and it is -- they're packed in the morning. I
23 ride the 6:40 am bus to Aptos. When it leaves the
24 terminal, there's only a couple people on, but by the
25 time we get to Safeway, it's loaded. And it's all the

1 way to Santa Cruz that way. Couple get off, couple get
2 on, but it stays full on Cabrillo.

3 91X, I'm not too familiar with. I used to ride
4 it back from Santa Cruz. But I know that's an important
5 route, along with the 69W. And I don't know if one's
6 getting more ridership than another, I don't know. But
7 it seems like those are important for the Cabrillo
8 students.

9 Another route that I ride quite often, at least
10 three times a week in the mornings, is the 55. The 55,
11 I get on it at State Park Drive, and go to Rio Del Mar.
12 And that segment's going to be dropped off the -- it's
13 going to go to State Park, but I'm not sure exactly
14 where. And is maybe in a couple weeks you'll have an
15 update on where exactly they're going to run that one.
16 But I'd like to see that one, the segment through Rio
17 Del Mar, Rio Del Mar Boulevard, to have at least several
18 trips a day.

19 And I see quite a few college students -- I'm
20 on older person. I'm retired. But I talk to some of
21 these kids that live up that way, and I know they go to
22 Cabrillo. It's important to them to go back and forth
23 to Cabrillo because none of them have cars. And to me,
24 that's important.

25 Even on the weekends, I feel that the 55 needs

1 some service. I don't know if that's possible or not,
2 but I feel 55 needs at least a morning, midday, and
3 evening route. That would suffice for the neighborhood
4 out there. I know there are quite a few people that
5 ride. I know some of them by name that ride that bus.

6 69A. Let's start with 69A. 69A is a
7 completely different route than 69W. And it goes by the
8 hospitals and it goes -- coming from Santa Cruz, it goes
9 on Airport Road and goes down Freedom Boulevard, down
10 Lincoln Street, and into the terminal on East Lake. And
11 I feel that one needs -- that's an important route for
12 the folks that live in Freedom, because the W bus, the
13 69W does not go that way. It's on the highway and the
14 Watsonville, after it leaves Cabrillo, it gets on the
15 highway on State Park and comes into Watsonville on the
16 highway. Comes into Main Street and on the terminal.

17 And the 69A leaves 41st Avenue on the
18 highway -- gets on the highway, and goes to Airport
19 Boulevard, serves the Watsonville Hospital, Airport
20 Boulevard, Freedom Boulevard, and then Lincoln Street
21 and East Lake Avenue into Watsonville. So I feel that's
22 an important route because there are quite a few people
23 that are riding the 69A that get off on Airport and on
24 Freedom Boulevard. There's no other bus that goes out
25 that way from Santa Cruz.

1 Okay. 72 route. 72 route, I see it's been
2 rerouted to fill in for the 74. And that's good. I
3 like that. And it goes out the same route except it's
4 cutting the Corralitos out. And I noticed, talking
5 to -- Mr. Barrow, then, that they're going to cut the
6 Corralitos segment, except on the weekends. There's
7 going to be two or three. That's good for now.

8 During the weekdays, I'm sure we need service
9 out there, but I know it's not a real -- not many people
10 riding out there.

11 Now, 75 is, I think, the backbone of
12 Watsonville. And I don't think we've made any cuts
13 there, which is good. Maybe times, but that's all.
14 That's fine.

15 I want to mention, I've ridden every route that
16 METRO has in the last year. I wanted to make sure that
17 I know where the routes are, where they go. And if I
18 need them, I know how to get on them.

19 So I've made a habit of taking routes. That
20 way, if I need to go somewhere, I can do it. And my
21 doctors -- I go to Palo Alto Medical in Santa Cruz, at
22 Capitola and Soquel. That's my main doctor. And my
23 primary doctor is on Mission Street, Palo Alto Medical
24 in Santa Cruz, also. So it's important for me to have a
25 couple different routes so I can get up that way.

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I believe it's the 16 I ride to Mission Street.

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, CAMMI R. BOWEN, Certified Shorthand Reporter
in and for the State of California, hereby certify:

That said statements were taken down by me in
shorthand, and were thereafter transcribed under my
direction into typewriting; and that the foregoing is a
full, complete, and true record of said proceedings.

I further certify that I am not in any way
interested in the events of this cause, and that I am not
related to any party hereto.





CAMMI R. BOWEN, CSR 13492
5/10/2016