

County Isn't Interested In Rail Line

By PAUL BEATTY
Sentinel Staff Writer

It is feasible to reconstruct a railroad line from San Jose to Santa Cruz, officials from three counties were told this morning by Caltrans representatives — but Santa Cruz County officials say they don't want it.

Caltrans spokesmen officially revealed their department's study on rail service from the heavily populated San Jose area to recreational Santa Cruz and offered three alternatives:

— An over-the-hill route at \$36.9 million, which follows the earlier Suntan Special Route through San Lorenzo Valley.

— An around-the-hill route from San Jose to Watsonville at \$22.8 million.

— The modern idea of running electric trains down the middle of Highway 17 at a cost \$84.6 million, including \$48.8 million for widening the highway.

Santa Cruz County Supervisors Gary Patton and Ed Borovatz reminded Caltrans and representatives from the city of Los Gatos and county of Santa Clara that this county's Board of Supervisors is on record opposing an "over-the-hill" rail service, fearing it will increase growth.

Santa Clara County Supervisor Dan McCorquodale commented that Santa Cruz County "is one of the most inaccessible counties now, and yet it is one of the fastest growing."

He pointed out the same conditions were true of Morgan Hill in his county.

McCorquodale told Patton and Borovatz that growth is based on "land use."

Borovatz said the burden of an over-the-hill line would be too much for "a county that is the second smallest county in the state to bear." He said this area would be expected to aid in the \$36.8 million funding and then "take care of deficits."

Borovatz also said that two earlier studies on the Sun Tan Special route showed it would cost up to \$50 million "and at today's dollar that would be \$60 to \$70 million."

He and Patton said Santa Cruz county is interested in the "around-the-hill" line (the Delmonte Special into Watsonville that has a go-ahead, except for negotiations with Southern Pacific) because it would be used for recreational travel.

Both Santa Cruz County supervisors spoke against any mass transit rail system that could provide added services to com-

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U.N. trucks carrying Iranian

Wednesday had held up the main
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Two hundred French para-
troopers arrived in Beirut from

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muters, saying it would increase this county's use as a bedroom community.

Los Gatos Mayor Mardi Gualtieri asked if this county would be willing to put a proposition on the ballot to allow use of highway funds for mass transit, as Santa Clara County has done.

Assemblyman Henry Mello, D-Watsonville, who chaired the meeting, said that in the June 6 primary local voters will determine if a one-half cent sales tax should be added to pay for bus services "and that may give an indication of local support to transit systems," Mello said.

Caltrans Division Chief George Gray said that his department was now through with the study, except if called on for advisory assistance. McCorquodale urged the three counties involved to get together and work out a "political feasibility" for a possible rail service.

Gray said that a number of state funding possibilities would have to be looked at "and even if we began today, it would be three to four years before we have a system."

It was brought out that reports estimate it would cost \$118 million to build Highway 17 into a full freeway — as the fourth alternative.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Charles C. Diggs Jr., a Democratic congressman from Michigan for more than 23 years was indicted today on charges of padding his office pay taking kickbacks and having the government pay employees of his Detroit funeral home.

The 35-count indictment by a federal grand jury charges he defrauded the United States of more than \$101,000. The count carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison. If convicted, Diggs could also be fined up to \$224,000.

Diggs, contacted today by Maputo, Mozambique where he is in the middle of an African tour, said: "I'm aware there has been an investigation for over a year and it's rather odd that it would wait until I leave the country on official business knowing what my scheme was."

Diggs said he couldn't respond to the charges because he hadn't seen the indictment noted that under the American

Begin Talks

WASHINGTON (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, acknowledged that his talks with President Jimmy Carter have been "difficult" nonetheless said today peace talks between Israel and Egypt should continue.

Begin said "the world needs some patience" as the sides try to reach agreement. "We've only started to negotiate. I don't think any peace treaty was concluded in days," he said.

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