

# Bike path talks reach a dead end

## Bike advocates, beach merchants set to meet again

*Bicycle Path*  
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After an hour-long discussion on a proposed beach-area bike path went nowhere Wednesday, bike advocates and beach merchants will meet again next week to try to find some middle ground.

**SANTA CRUZ**

The proposed Beach Street bike path would connect the river levee bike path to the West Cliff Drive bike path. But in the process, local merchants would lose 91 parking spaces and the path could displace beach shuttle and handicapped parking. City transportation commissioners say the plan allows for the replacement of at least 40 of those spaces in other parts of the beach area and for the handicapped and loading and unloading zones to be moved across the street.

Merchants showed up en masse to protest the plan at Wednesday's Transportation Commission meeting. As a result, the commission voted 4-3 to table the discussion and to hold a study session at Ideal Bar & Grill at 3 p.m. Thursday.

Among other things, they will discuss possible alternatives to the Beach Street route. Among these are constructing a path along the beach or routing bicyclists along Second Street. But the issue may not be resolved easily, as merchants and bicyclists clash over the viability of other routes.

Santa Cruz Seaside Co. spokesman John Robinson, who attended Wednesday's meeting, said he doesn't see any signs that bicyclists may change their view.

"We support the idea of a bike path but they've got to find a place that doesn't create so many conflicts," he said. "This plan will displace hundreds of thousands of people through the summer."

But Peter Beckmann, a bicycle commuter and member of the Transportation Commission who voted against tabling the issue, said the plan's already been two years in the making.

"There's an intrinsic conflict whenever you propose alternative transportation," he said. "Changes are going to be at the cost of cars and we have to balance the desires of the businesses with the needs of other kinds of commuters."

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