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For Immediate Release

Calendar listing:

COMMUNITY EVENT

SANTA CRUZ OPEN STREETS: Sunday, October 7, 2012, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz, two-miles of traffic-free street from Lighthouse Field to Natural Bridges State Park. Activities, music and performances. FREE. Family friendly, all ages. www.scopenstreets.org

Santa Cruz Open Streets Debuts October 7 on West Cliff Drive

Santa Cruz Open Streets (SCOS) is a new free public outdoor active recreation event scheduled for Sunday, October 7th, 2012 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on West Cliff Drive. In this unique first-time event West Cliff Drive will be transformed into a giant street park as the road is temporarily blocked to automobile traffic from Lighthouse Field to Natural Bridges State Park. People will have the chance to bike, walk, jog, skate and more through the car-free street.

Participants making their way through the two mile long street park will also have the opportunity to sample free exercise demo classes and activities located along the route, such as Zumba, hula hooping, kickboxing, dog agility training and more. In addition, outreach booths hosted by local businesses and community groups will provide resources for wellness and sustainable living. The atmosphere will be fun and festive with music and performances animating the re-invented public space.

The mission of Santa Cruz Open Streets (SCOS) is: *to foster individual and community health through creative use of public space.* “Our goal is to promote active and sustainable lifestyles,” said Saskia Lucas, program founder and director, “we’re providing community members a very special opportunity to recreate actively on West Cliff Drive in a way that’s normally off-limits to them. The road will temporarily be set aside just for people. Bring your friends and family, it’s going to be a blast!”

The vision is for the non-profit event to be repeated and become an established program. Event organizers aim to eventually bring the active street fun to other parts of Santa Cruz County.

Santa Cruz Open Streets joins a national and international movement of Open Streets events. Currently over 80 US cities, including New York City, San Francisco, Portland, Boulder and Missoula, are among hundreds of cities worldwide that have established on-going and highly popular Open Streets events. The recent surge in cities which are creating temporary street parks is widely credited to Ciclovía, a weekly event in Bogotá, Columbia that opens over 70 of miles of city streets to citizens for outdoor physical activity. This event, which attracts up to 2 million participants, began in the mid-1970s and continues to this day with tremendous success.

For more information on Open Streets events and resources, visit the national clearing house <http://openstreetsproject.org/>.

About Santa Cruz Open Streets

Santa Cruz Open Streets was officially launched in March 2012 by Santa Cruz resident and UC Santa Cruz grad, Saskia Lucas. As the founder and director of Santa Cruz Open Streets, Lucas was inspired by the national and international movement of Open Streets events.

Her personal experiences of the joys and benefits of recreating in traffic-free public spaces provided the impetus to launch the local initiative.

Previously Saskia worked for six years at Ecology Action, a local environmental non-profit, where she developed and ran the Bike Smart! Youth Bicycle Safety Education Program.

SCOS has partnered with a number of organizations to bring this event to the community, including: The Santa Cruz Hub for Sustainable Living, Greenways to School, People Power, Ecology Action and Santa Cruz Neighbors.

Major sponsors include: Cyclists for Cultural Exchange, REI, Palo Alto Medical Foundation Santa Cruz, New Leaf Community Market, Bay Federal Credit Union, the Good Times, KPIG Radio, Moved by Bike, UC Santa Cruz TAPS and the Santa Cruz County Cycling Club.

SCOS is a project of the Hub for Sustainable Transportation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit.

For more information visit www.scopenstreets.org or follow SCOS on Facebook.

Open Streets Video

This video features the Ciclovía event in Bogotá, Colombia, the universally recognized leader in the international Open Streets movement. <http://www.streetfilms.org/ciclovía/>

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