

Executive Summary

VISION 2025: San Luis Obispo's Regional Transportation Plan

VISION 2025 is our region's blueprint for a transportation system that enhances our quality of life and meets our mobility needs now and in the future.

In many parts of the country, the abundance of automobile traffic is either a major problem marked by widespread congestion or, in the case of the San Luis Obispo Region, a growing problem in need of attention, planning and investment.

The San Luis Obispo Council of Government's (SLOCOG) Regional Transportation Plan is not expected to solve all of the county's transportation-related problems. Rather, it is expected to

highlight the state of the region's transportation network and address where investment, maintenance and improvements can be made in all modes of transportation while making the best use of increasingly scarce financial resources.

During the next 20 years, we can expect to share our communities with more than 85,000 new neighbors. We will create 70,000 more jobs and need to build 40,000 new housing units. The major appeal is our region's quality of life. While it may mean different things to different people, we can all agree that quality of life encompasses safe and livable communities, housing options, competitive job opportunities, a healthy environment, good schools and community facilities, and a transportation system that provides easy access to work, school, and other activities. **VISION 2025**, San Luis Obispo's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), is our region's blueprint for a transportation system that enhances our quality of life and meets our mobility needs now and in the future.

Goals and Policies

VISION 2025 was developed around eight essential goals. These goals are considered interrelated and of equal importance. Building on the substantial efforts that went into the development of prior RTPs, the revised goals reflect the Region's emphasis on a balanced approach to multimodal transportation planning and programming. They demonstrate the need to balance many priorities described by the policy objectives, in the most cost-effective manner. The Table below presents the goals of **VISION 2025** with their respective policy objectives.

Contents of the Executive Summary

Goals and Policies (v)

Improving Mobility (vi)

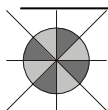
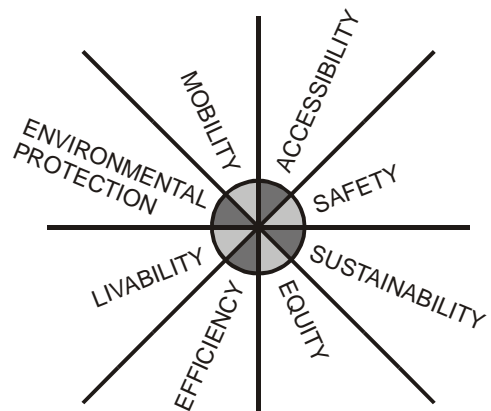
How is the Plan Developed? (vii)

Planned Improvements (vii)

Increasing Access and Mobility (viii)

How do we Implement the Plan (xiii)

SLOCOG's EIGHT ESSENTIAL GOALS



VISION 2025 Goals and Policy Objectives

Goals	Policy Objectives
MOBILITY	Provide reliable, integrated, and flexible travel choices within and through the region.
ACCESSIBILITY	Improve accessibility to goods, services and jobs.
SAFETY	Enhance public safety and security in all modes of travel.
SUSTAINABILITY	Maintain and improve a viable transportation system for current and future users.
EFFICIENCY	Maximize the efficiency of the existing transportation system.
EQUITY	Avoid a disproportionately adverse impact on low-income, minority, elderly or disabled populations.
	Provide equitable levels of funding and transportation services to all areas, communities, and socio-economic groups.
LIVABILITY	Support livable community concepts and efforts.
	Reflect community values while integrating land use and transportation planning
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	Conserve and protect natural and sensitive resources.
	Preserve aesthetic resources and promote environmental enhancements with all transportation projects

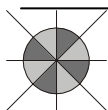
Improving Mobility - *An Intermodal Plan*

The foundation of **VISION 2025** lies in better connecting our highway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, and road networks, to our homes, schools, work, shopping, and other activities. In this era of budget and infrastructure deficits, the ultimate success of this Plan will be measured by how well we implement transportation improvements amid balancing growth as our communities are developed and redeveloped over time. To this end, **VISION 2025** helps strengthen the land use – transportation connection and supports smarter, more sustainable land use. Improving transportation is one component of a much larger vision to sustain and improve our region’s quality of life.

SLOCOG last updated the Regional Transportation Plan in 2001. Since then, public policy discussions have helped shape a new and evolving vision for the San Luis Obispo region’s future. Primarily an update and repackage of the 2001 RTP, **VISION 2025** is intended to be streamlined, more user friendly and better organized than the previous RTP while still maintaining the goal of “A *fully integrated and intermodal transportation system which facilitates the safe movement of people, goods, and information within and through the region.*”

The foundation of **VISION 2025** lies in better connecting highways, transit, and road networks, to our homes, schools, work, shopping, and other activities.

This update continues to implement the programs and projects contained under the *Intermodal Systems Emphasis* mix of projects and policies adopted in the 2001 Regional Transportation Plan. These policies and programs seek to develop a coordinated, integrated and balanced transportation system that meets the current and long-term transportation needs of all the cities, unincorporated communities, socioeconomic classes, businesses and industries in the region. **VISION 2025** commits to further these efforts.



At the heart of **VISION 2025** are three transportation-planning programs:

- The Highway, Streets, and Roads Program,
- Non-Motorized Transportation Program, and
- The Public Transportation Program.

Together, these programs address the multimodal needs of the region. The Highway, Streets, and Roads Program places an emphasis on the State Highway system as well as major arterials and collectors. The State Highway system is closely tied to major arterial facilities and is examined at the corridor level in **VISION 2025**. The Public Transportation Program develops a strategy for accessible public transit services to meet the mobility needs of County residents for access to goods and services. There are 5 subsections under the Public Transportation Program including Transit, Rail, Aviation, Harbors, and Commodity Movement. The Non Motorized Transportation Program develops a strategy to maintain a safe, efficient and interconnected regional bikeway system and aims to support a comprehensive pedestrian system to promote walking as a viable transportation mode. **VISION 2025** examines each of these transportation programs and assesses the current and future ability to accommodate multiple modes of travel, provide for the interconnection of these modes, and meet mobility needs of the region.

How is the Plan Developed?

In development for the last 12 months, **VISION 2025** is the product of collaboration between SLOCOG's professional transportation planning staff, our governing Board with representatives from all 7 City Councils and the County Board of Supervisors, and our transportation partners – the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA), the Air Pollution Control District (APCD), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), transportation/public works engineers representing each jurisdiction of the county – along with a wide range of interest groups and citizen input.

VISION 2025 also looks beyond the San Luis Obispo region to link transportation and land use planning across our county borders with Santa Barbara, Monterey, and Kern Counties. The last several years have seen a steady increase in interregional and intraregional commuting, as more people are choosing to live in Santa Barbara County or at the north/south ends of the county while keeping their jobs in the central part of the county. Furthermore, tourism has been a staple industry of the region and it is expected to continue to expand. With miles of Pacific beaches, acres of vineyards, a Mediterranean climate and unique shopping opportunities, the region will grow as a destination. In **VISION 2025**, the 2025 Regional Growth Forecast recognizes these travel trends and accounts for future housing needs throughout the region.

SLOCOG Public Input Received

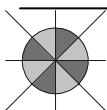
- 👤 15 Advisory Body Meetings
- 👤 5 SLOCOG Board Meetings
- 👤 2 Formal Public Hearings
- 👤 2 Formal Public Workshops
- 👤 Web postings, Email
- 👤 Televised Presentations
- 👤 Newsletter Publications
- 👤 Library Availability

Planned Improvements

VISION 2025 builds upon the existing transportation system in place today and the major projects in progress from the 2001 RTP. Below is a list of some ongoing projects. Complete project listings can be found in Chapter 5.

Several major highway improvements are currently programmed and in the project development phase. These include:

- 📄 State Route 46 widening to four lanes from Airport Road to Whitley Gardens.
- 📄 US Highway 101 auxiliary lanes in Arroyo Grande and Pismo Beach.
- 📄 State Route 41/US 101 Interchange expansion in Atascadero.
- 📄 State Route 41 passing lanes west of Atascadero and east of Shandon.



Regionally significant transportation projects in the development phase include:

- ⇒ Extension of Price Street (frontage road) from Old Town Pismo Beach to Five Cities Drive.
- ⇒ Orcutt Road widening, railroad crossing improvements and the realignment of Bullock Road in the City of San Luis Obispo.
- ⇒ 13th Street Bridge in the City of Paso Robles.
- ⇒ Quintana and Morro Bay Boulevard roundabout in the City of Morro Bay.
- ⇒ Mid Higuera Street Widening in the City of San Luis Obispo.
- ⇒ A Regional Long Range Transit Plan and Short Range Transit Plans for several jurisdictions.

In addition, design and environmental work are underway on:

- 🚲 Morro Bay – Cayucos Bicycle/Pedestrian Connector.
- 🚲 Morro Bay waterfront boardwalk.
- 🚲 The Bob Jones Trail in the County of San Luis Obispo.
- 🚲 Railroad Safety Trail and the Bob Jones Trail in the City of San Luis Obispo.

United States Highway 101 planning strategy:

VISION 2025 recognizes the eventual need for widening US 101 from the current four-lane configuration to a six-lane facility. However, given the current levels of highway service and constrained funding resources, the Plan recommends deferring six-laning beyond 2025 and devoting available funds toward operational improvements, parallel route development, transit investments and multimodal improvements.

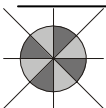
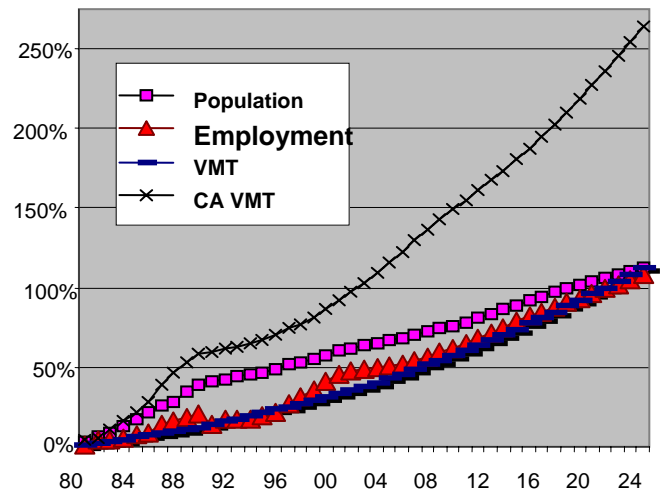
A Plan to Increase Access and Mobility

VISION 2025 is developed around five main components: Regional Growth, Land Use, Systems Efficiency, Systems Development, and Transportation Funding. Each of these components comprises one of the chapters of **VISION 2025**. Each component has a unique, yet interdependent, role in improving mobility and travel in the San Luis Obispo Region through 2025.

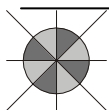
- ✳ **Regional Growth** outlines where and how many new people and jobs the region expects to accommodate. In 2004, the San Luis Obispo region's population is estimated at 258,500 people, averaging 50,000 new residents in each of the last three decades. The 2025 population is expected to be 343,000.

Growth and change will continue in the region over the next several decades, and all local jurisdictions can make positive contributions toward preparing for that change. Statewide trends of increasing Vehicle Miles of Travel were taken into consideration along with local development patterns and likely growth scenarios. Demographic analyses available from local, state and federal sources were also used to develop population, housing and employment projections.

Observed and Projected Growth Since 1980 - VMT, Population, Employment



Transportation planners and traffic engineers agree that even with all the necessary funding and investments into our transportation infrastructure, increased travel demand between 2004 and 2025 in the San Luis Obispo region will cause marked elevations in congestion on our highways, arterials and local roads. **VISION 2025** seeks to lead the region in a direction that makes the most of limited resources by investing in our most critical travel ways and maximizing transportation alternatives. The map below depicts levels of service in 2025 after implementation of the transportation strategies defined in this Plan.



- **Land Use** determines where our homes, schools, work, shopping, and other activities are located and can profoundly affect the way in which we move around the region and within our communities.

VISION 2025 fosters the integration of smart growth land uses and transportation facilities in our communities. SLOCOG's efforts to foster sound land use practices focus on facilitating the development of communities in ways that reduce trips and travel distances. These issues are the key to providing the framework for efficient transportation networks. VISION 2025 promotes the enhancement of regional and community livability by enhancing economic vitality, environmental sustainability, one's sense of community, and accessibility to basic services. The following points are the focus of land use in VISION 2025:

- Designing communities, or when practical, retrofitting existing communities to be more multi-modal and less auto dependent;
 - Promoting the use of integrated modes of travel that provide seamless transportation options and reduces environmental impacts;
 - Encouraging the use of bikes and transit, and walking.
 - Enhancing intermodal and multimodal connectivity
 - Providing smart growth principles for future land use development
- **System Efficiency** addresses planning strategies that enhance access and mobility to the greatest extent possible using limited resources and existing infrastructure.

Transportation Demand Management:

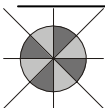
Taking the Pressure Off the System

Steps to reduce peak period travel or change when and how people travel will become increasingly important in the future. Demand Management focuses on encouraging alternatives to driving alone and minimizing demand on the transportation system during peak periods. The strategies in the Plan to manage demand are not new but they are effective. Regional programs offered include a rideshare program, vanpool program, and a bike locker program. A new emphasis exists to expand the Park and Ride lot program and encouraging teleworking and flexible work hours to help manage peak demand.

Intelligent Transportation Systems:

Using Technology to Improve Efficiency

VISION 2025 looks into the future to deliver a new transportation vision. It focuses on providing real-time, competitive travel choices during rush hours when most of our traffic congestion occurs. Since much of this demand is driven by the need to commute to and from work and school, the Plan looks at incentives for encouraging alternative commuter travel choices. This includes making it more convenient, fast, and safe to ride



transit, carpool, or vanpool during peak hours, or bike or walk to work or school. In our fast-paced world, saving time is a very real and powerful incentive for encouraging these more sustainable travel choices.

Systems Management: Making Better Use of What We Have

Millions of dollars have already been invested in roads and transit in the San Luis Obispo region. We need to maximize the return on this significant investment through better management and more efficient operation of the existing networks. A wide range of systems management strategies is included in the Plan. Systems Management helps get the most efficiency out of our existing system, makes travel services more reliable, convenient, and safe, and reduces traffic delays caused by accidents and incidents.

- Systems Development** outlines needed multi modal regional transportation improvements, viable travel choices, and connections to our daily activities. Development is broken into 3 primary modal areas of investment.

Highways, Streets and Roads

The primary goal of the Highways, Streets, and Roads Program is to implement a comprehensive strategy for the maintenance, safety and improvement of San Luis Obispo County’s highways, regional arterials and major collectors.

Non-Motorized Transportation

The Non-Motorized Transportation Program aims to provide a comprehensive strategy to develop and maintain a safe and efficient regional bikeway system that promotes bicycling as a means to decrease auto-dependency, air and noise pollution, and traffic congestion. It also aims to support facilities for pedestrians that promote walking as a viable transportation mode and a critical connection between transportation modes.

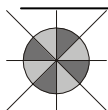
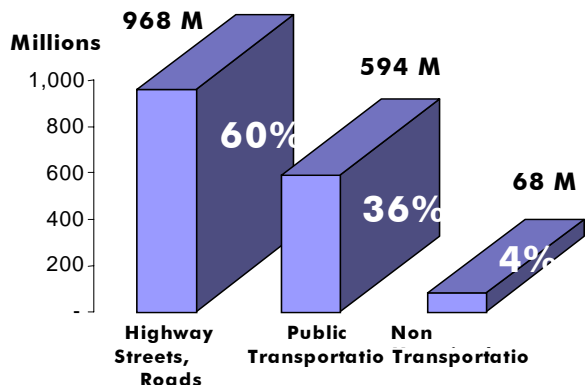
Public Transportation Program

SLOCOG’s **VISION 2025** discusses three separate public transportation programs: Public Transit (buses); Rail Transportation (trains); and Aviation (planes). This chapter also addresses how goods move through the region (commodities movement), both on the roads, over the rails or through pipelines. Finally, we discuss the role that ports and harbors play in the region.

- Funding** the maintenance, safety, capacity and multimodal improvements the region needs may be the greatest challenge of **VISION 2025**.

This chapter documents the financial assumptions that go into the financially constrained element of the **VISION 2025** Plan and identifies how much money is available to address critical transportation needs. This financially constrained element, composed of federal, state, and local revenues, is what the

**Funding Projections:
System Development Needs**

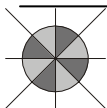


region expects over the next 20 years with currently available revenues. Action items in the form of financial policies are included at the end of this chapter and guide funding shortfalls, strategies, achieve public private partnerships, outline commitments of local funding sources, and identify regional priorities. These policies support our overall financial investment strategy as defined in **VISION 2025**.

Without funding partnerships with member agencies and the California Department of Transportation, major capital projects on the state highway system and other major arterials identified in this Plan will be deferred. This Plan recognizes the twenty year funding projections of \$170 M for local street and road maintenance needs falls short of the \$322M needed, leaving a \$150M funding shortfall. The table below narrates the overall funding projections against the overall system needs.

Funding Projections: System Needs vs Revenue		Reasonably Expected Revenue
Highway, Streets, and Roads		
Revenue (Fed, State, & Local)		968,000,000
Funding Needs *		
Widenings, Operational Imps.		788,000,000
Maintenance (Local Only)		322,010,000
Subtotal		(142,010,000)
Public Transportation		
Revenue (Fed, State, & Local)		594,883,000
Funding Needs *		
Transit, Rail, & Aviation		245,000,000
Operations (Transit only)		349,271,000
Subtotal		612,000
Non Motorized Transportation		
Revenue (Fed, State, & Local)		68,414,000
Funding Needs *		
Improvements		53,200,000
Maintenance		8,000,000
Subtotal		7,214,000
Projected Revenue	Total	1,631,297,000
System Development Needs	Total	1,765,481,000
Surplus/(Shortfall)	Balance	(134,184,000)

(*) Note: Tables 5-20, 5-26, and 5-28 in Chapter 5 provide a listing of additional funding needs beyond the transportation needs identified in this table.



Overall, the Plan is constrained, yielding a \$134 million shortfall. The impact of this shortfall reduces the amount of funding available for local street and road maintenance.

Supplemental funding, additional revenues such as a local option sales tax of ½ cent, will address major capital and long-term maintenance needs, and likely leverage greater shares of state and federal revenues. It is the recommendation of this Plan to pursue supplemental funding to ensure the long term goals of this Plan are ultimately achieved.

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How do we Implement VISION 2025?

Implementing **VISION 2025** requires close cooperation and coordination among all transportation agencies, local jurisdictions, and the traveling public. The Plan relies on efficient and more cost-effective use of our existing transportation funds and expanding sources of transportation revenues to fund the proposed improvements. A new regional approach to transportation planning and project implementation is underway. Two components of this new approach are the Regional Traffic Model and the availability of a land-use planning scenario tool call PLACE3S. Both programs are powerful computer based planning applications which enhance our ability to compare development scenarios and transportation investments.



Funding and Financial Scenarios

VISION 2025 assumes a reasonable level of funding over the 20-year planning period, taking into account limited sources of State funds, moderate increases in Federal funding and escalations to revenues based on historical trends. Local funding, in the form of traffic impact fees, developer fees, or other general fund sources, is critical to the success of this Plan. Two other funding scenarios are also considered. The Financially Constrained funding scenario assumes very little increase in revenues while the Supplemental Funding scenario proposes funds, such as those generated through a local-option sales tax measure, become available during the 20-year planning horizon.

Critical to the implementation of **VISION 2025** is providing sufficient financial resources to fund the Plan’s proposed improvements. **VISION 2025** is based upon a “Reasonably Expected Revenue” scenario totaling more than \$1.6 billion dollars for the development, operation, and maintenance of the transportation facilities and services in the Plan. This assumes both current sources of transportation revenue as well as future revenue sources – such as a \$0.012-cent per year average increase in fuel taxes. It also assumes attracting additional federal funds for major capital projects, and increases in state and federal gas taxes based on historical trends.

Measuring the Plan’s Success

VISION 2025 was developed by examining how different land use and transportation network scenarios meet regional measures of performance. The evaluation of performance measures is the first step in establishing performance standards that will enable us to benchmark our progress toward meeting the Plan’s policy goals and objectives. **VISION 2025** can reduce roadway congestion compared to a “no build” scenario and transportation performance monitoring will gauge progress in meeting agreed upon performance standards.

