

THE COORDINATOR

December 2004 * 1150 Osos Street, Suite 202, SLO, CA 93401 * Phone 805-781-4219 * Fax 805-781-570

Regional Transportation Plan - Vision 2025

Vision 2025, San Luis Obispo County's blueprint for transportation, specifies how anticipated federal, state, and local transportation funds will be spent in this county's seven-cities and nine unincorporated communities during the next 20 years. Funding revenues and projections have declined significantly since the region's transportation plan was last adopted in 2001, and the greatest challenge facing the SLOCOG Board with this update is to balance policies supporting supplemental funding sources with delaying important transportation projects.

The SLOCOG Board and its advisory committees have provided input on the development of the plan, providing comments on regional growth, land use, transportation demand and system management strategies, transportation system performance, and capital needs. Early comments on the plan are welcome and administrative draft chapters can be found at www.slocog.org (2004 RTP Update).

A detailed discussion on twenty year funding projections will be provided to the Board at their February 2, 2005 meeting with a complete draft of Vision 2025 made available to the public shortly thereafter.

CALTRANS District 5 Wins "Wheel of Rideshare" Award

Caltrans District 5 was the recipient of SLO Regional Rideshare's "Wheel of Rideshare" award for winning the large employer competition during Rideshare Week held in October.

The award was presented to Caltrans staff at the San Luis Obispo Council of Government's meeting on December 8th.

"The Wheel of Rideshare is intended to be emblematic of mankind's inexorable march to reliance on the automobile ever since it invented the wheel in the Stone Age" said John Donovan, program manager at SLO Rideshare. "We find it especially gratifying that Caltrans, the state agency responsible for building and maintaining our State highways and freeways, has taken such a leadership role in helping reduce the demand on those road systems.

Out of Caltrans' 300 employees in San Luis Obispo County, 19% pledged to rideshare during Rideshare Week.



Pictured left to right – Rich Krumholz, Caltrans District 5 Deputy District Director; John Donovan, Rideshare Program Manager; Marsha Rogers, Caltrans Development Review and Employee Transportation Coordinator; and David Murray, Caltrans Chief of Regional Planning

Unmet Needs Hearing Scheduled

The annual unmet transit needs public hearing is scheduled for the SLOCOG Board meeting of February 2, 2005, at 8:30 a.m. in the SLO County Board of Supervisors' Chambers in San Luis Obispo.

SLOCOG is now accepting public comments by mail, telephone, fax, and e-mail. Send written comments to 1150 Osos St., Suite 202, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Call Philip Chu at 805-781-4223. Fax requests to 805-781-5703; e-mail requests to Unmet_needs@slocog.org, or visit our website at www.slocog.org.

State Transportation Funding Crisis Reviewed

At its December 8th meeting, the SLOCOG Board heard that the Transportation Funding Crisis is much more severe than in the prior fiscal year. In total, \$5.5 billion has been lost to transportation over the past two years. Factors contributing to this shortfall include: lower than expected federal revenues, borrowing of transportation funds to pay for State general fund budget deficits, and the lack of a federal ethanol tax fix.

As a result, no programming capacity currently exists in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), nor is there expected to be much capacity in the near future. The State has additionally postponed all allocations of

programmed funding indefinitely. Last year, SLOCOG was required to delay the start date for approximately \$43 million worth of projects programmed from Fiscal Years 2003-05 back to 2006-09.

Of immediate concern is the continued suspension by the Legislature of Proposition 42 funding, which was passed by the electorate overwhelmingly in 1999. If that happens, local agencies in San Luis Obispo County will lose another \$5.2 million:

- **\$1.38 million** to the County for road maintenance and rehabilitation.
- **\$606,000** to cities for road maintenance and rehabilitation.
- **\$3 million** to SLOCOG in the Transportation Improvement Program.
- **\$228,000** to SLOCOG for allocation to transit operators.

In January 2005, discussions will be held by transportation interests around the State on what to do to protect existing and increase transportation revenues to address escalating needs. For more information call Mike Harmon at 781-5724.

Public Workshop March 3rd Will Discuss Upgrading the Rail Corridor

Why does the train take so long and how can we make it more reliable?

Responses to this question, among others will be discussed at a public workshop on March 3rd, from 4:30-6:30 at the City/County Library in San Luis Obispo. Similar meetings will be held in Santa Barbara and Ventura to focus on the San Luis Obispo to Los Angeles section of the rail corridor. Transportation agencies want your input on the plans and strategies being prepared to make "travel time" on trains more competitive with automobiles. Comments received at this workshop will help shape a "LOSSAN North Corridor Strategic Plan," scheduled for release in summer, 2005. Contact: Peter Rodgers 781-5712.

Outgoing Board Members to be Honored

On January 27th, the SLOCOG and Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Board will hold a reception at the Dairy Creek Golf Course Club House. Six outgoing Board members will be presented with resolutions of appreciation. Those honored include: District 3 County Supervisor and past COG President Peg Pinard; District 5 County Supervisor Mike Ryan; Atascadero City Councilmember Wendy Scalise; Morro Bay City Councilmember and past COG President Dave Elliot; Pismo Beach City Councilmember Rudy Natoli; and San Luis Obispo City Councilmember Ken Schwartz. The reception (6 to 8 p.m.) will include a catered buffet and no host bar. Invitations are being provided to SLOCOG and SLORTA delegates, Committee Members and staff.

End of 2004 State Legislative Report Presented

At its December 8th meeting, the SLOCOG Board was presented with the end of 2004 State Legislative Report. There has been little progress made during the past year to address the state's critical transportation funding problems. Over the past three years, the Governor and State Legislature have taken over \$5.5 billion dollars from transportation accounts to help balance the State budget. There were several legislative attempts to address this problem. Five Constitutional Amendment bills were introduced to protect Proposition 42 transportation funding, but failed (ACA 21, 24, 29 and SCA 7 and 20). Two bills that would have boosted transportation funding (AB 2847 and SB 1614) by imposing a statewide five or ten cent "user fee" on gas and diesel fuel also failed. Four other Constitutional Amendments to change the voter threshold for increasing local option sales taxes also failed. The failure of these bills is serious as transportation revenues continue to decline dramatically, while costs and the number of needed projects continue to escalate. For more specific information, call Mike Harmon at 781-5724.

Transit Plan for North County Unveiled

Regional buses should concentrate on hourly services and more express runs, and local buses should be combined to serve more local trips, if local

governments concur with suggestions made to the SLOCOG Board on December 8th.

The North County Transit Study includes 19 recommendations; ranging from routing changes, fare changes and joint marketing to purchasing low-floor buses. The study was prepared in conjunction with transit representatives from the City of Atascadero, City of Paso Robles, the County and the Regional Transit Authority. Nearly 700 transit riders were surveyed on all systems over a 2-day period. The 10-Year transit study is available for review at www.slocog.org/reports/NC_TS.pdf. The Atascadero City Council will discuss the draft study on January 11th, and SLOCOG will consider the final study at its April 6th meeting. Contact: Peter Rodgers 781-5712.

Transit Needs Deficiencies and Improvements

At the December Board meeting, COG staff gave an update on 2004 transit deficiencies, improvements and ridership levels. Overall the report found the region has good transit coverage but could be improved in a number of areas:

- a) More consistent fare policies and compatible start/end times.
- b) Increased evening and weekend options.
- c) Additional signage and passenger amenities at transfer points.

d) Provision of permanent transit centers in South and North County.

There have been noticeable local and regional transit improvements since November 2003. These include increased RTA frequency in South County, direct weekday trips from the North Coast to San Luis Obispo, and improved local routes and schedules (SLO Transit and South County Area Transit (SCAT)), plus re-alignment of some base fares to \$1.00.

Overall, annual public transit ridership decreased by 11 percent from FY 2000-01 (1.893 Million riders) to FY 2003-04 (1.682 Million riders). Yet, without the SLO Transit downward trend, the net trend was a 6 percent growth from FY 2000/01 to FY 2003/04. Contact: Peter Rodger at 781-5712.

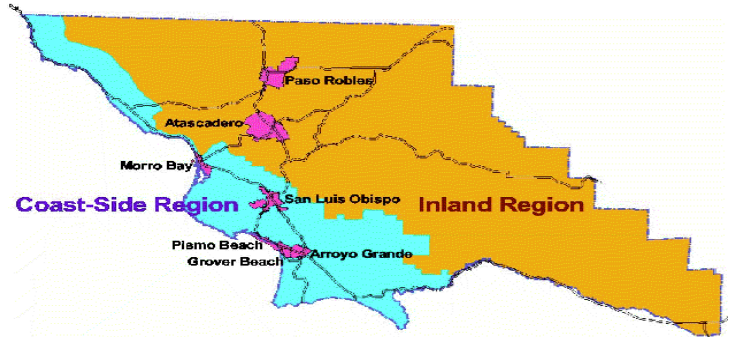
COMMUNITY: 2050

Planning tomorrow's growth today

When does the future become the present?

What is most important to you about the future of San Luis Obispo County? Is it less traffic and congestion? Are job opportunities the top priority? What about more homes, and where will they be built? What do you think would be best for your grandchildren that would provide them both the incentive and ability to live here?

These are the kinds of questions that people from throughout the county will face as they work together at one of a series of Community 2050 workshops set to plan for the next 50 years in San Luis Obispo County.



Mark these Dates:

Coastside Workshop: January 22, 2005

Inland Workshop: February 5, 2005

JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS, COMMUNITY ADVOCATES,
BUSINESS LEADERS, AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO
HELP CREATE A VISION FOR SAN LUIS OBISPO
COUNTY IN THE YEAR 2050.

COMMUNITY: 2050

Planning tomorrow's growth today

Help shape your community

Two regional workshops will be held to address countywide growth challenges for the year 2050.

The **Coastside Regional Workshop**, to be held in **Nipomo**, will address development issues on the coastal side of the Santa Lucia Range. The **Inland Regional Workshop** will be held in **Templeton** to focus on development in the Inland Region of the County. A **Summary Session** is planned on March 11th in **San Luis Obispo** to look at the results of the two subregional workshops.

Participants, working in small groups, will discuss and critique various land use and transportation options. Working together they'll select a preferred option and make refinements, based on computer technology that will immediately enable them to see the affects of their decisions. The immediate feedback will help participants see how their decisions affect job growth, residential development, commercial land use, lifestyle advantages, transportation and more.

Coastside Area

Saturday, Jan 22, 2004
Nipomo High School
8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Inland Area

Saturday, February 5, 2004
Templeton Middle School
8:30 am to 12:00 noon

Summary Session

Friday, March 11 2004
San Luis Obispo
9:00 a.m. to noon

The workshop is free, fun, and hands-on!

Your involvement will be invaluable to the process of exploring the options for our future. Please register today, and help us to plan tomorrow's future today. The workshop is free, fun, and hands-on!

You can register at www.Community2050.org

Or Call **781-4219** to register or get more information.

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS MEMBERSHIP

Down the Road... The next scheduled meeting of the SLOCOG Board will be held in the San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors' Chambers Wednesday, February 2, 2005, at 8:30 a.m. The Board will elect new officers, conduct the unmet transit needs public hearing, receive/adopt the Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP), receive/discuss the draft Transportation and Financial Elements of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), review/discuss the draft Federal and State Legislative Program, review Caltrans' State Highway Operations Protection Program (SHOPP), and review the draft 2005/2006 Overall Work Program (OWP).

If you would like to see the Board meetings, they are broadcast live and replayed on Channel 21 (Charter Communications Cable TV).

The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) is an area wide planning and programming agency for issues of area wide concern. SLOCOG is also the state-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), the Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways (SAFE), and the Census Data Affiliate (CDA) for the San Luis Obispo region. Member Agencies are listed below with designated representatives.

President – Frank Mecham, Mayor, Paso Robles

Vice President – Shirley Bianchi, District 2 Supervisor

Arroyo Grande – Tony Ferrara, Mayor

Atascadero – Wendy Scalise, Council member

Grover Beach – John Shoals, Mayor Pro Tem

New Morro Bay Delegate – Betty Winholtz, Council member

Pismo Beach – Rudy Natoli, Council member

New San Luis Obispo Delegate – Dave Romero, Mayor

District 1 Supervisor – Harry Ovitt

District 3 Supervisor – Peg Pinard

District 4 Supervisor – Katcho Achadjian

District 5 Supervisor – Mike Ryan.

Ex-Officio, Gregg Albright – Director, Caltrans District 5

Ronald De Carli, Executive Director

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