

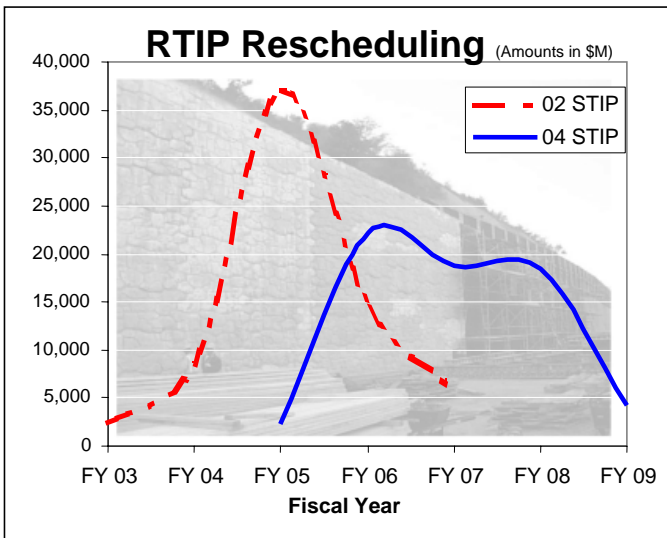
THE COORDINATOR

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

Tight Funding Still Yields “Green Light Go” for Transportation Projects

The SLOCOG Board was faced with the daunting task of adopting a regional transportation capital improvement program (RTIP) without the benefit of any new state funding. In fact, a significant funding shortfall exists for projects already in the pipeline in San Luis Obispo County to the tune of \$14.3 million. Important highway projects such as the reconstruction of the Route 41/U.S. 101 interchange in Atascadero and the extension of Price Street in Pismo Beach were at risk of being delayed indefinitely without additional funding. SLOCOG staff presented a funding scenario to the Board minimizing delays and cuts to major regional and local projects.

In normal funding years, the SLOCOG Board is able to commit \$15 million a year for a five-year capital program. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) prepared a fund estimate for the 2004 five year capital program directing SLOCOG to shift the 2002 five year capital program out three fiscal years (see chart below). Only \$143k was added to the 2004 program. This forced SLOCOG to shift projects totaling \$43 million from the 03, 04, and 05 fiscal years out to the 07, 08, and 09 fiscal years.



The SLOCOG Board was able to provide additional funding capacity to the 2004 capital program by: 1) committing 2 years of much anticipated federal transportation funding; 2) reducing previously committed RTIP funds for the Highway 46 East Corridor Improvements without causing delay or changing the scope of the project; 3) deferring the programming of \$3.9 million for operational improvements on Highway 166; and 4) removing currently programmed “transportation enhancement” eligible projects from the RTIP and funding them with new federal Transportation Enhancement funds. For more information, go to SLOCOG’s web site to review the staff report outlining the funding and project schedules. http://www.slocog.org/agendas/February_2004_pdf/B-2_Regional_Capital_Transportation_Improvement_Program.pdf

Name	Description	\$1,000M	Fiscal year
Los Altos Turnouts	Construct turnouts on W. S.R. 41	1,472	04/05
Route 41/101 Interchange Reconstruction	In Atascadero, reconstruct interchange at S.R 41/ U.S. 101	14233	05/06
Cottonwood Truck Climbing Lane	On S.R. 41 East, construct climbing lane	857	05/06
Halcyon/Route 1 Improvements	Construct bridge, align intersections and widen shoulders	2,000	05/06
Price Street Extension	In Pismo Beach, extend local street and construct bridges	13,396	06/07
S.R. 101 Operational Improvements	Construct climbing lane and interchange improvements	4,700	06/07
Route 46 Corridor Improvements (Airport Rd. to Shandon Rest Stop)	Convert 2 lane highway to 4 lane expressway	18,960	06/07
Route 46E/101 Operational Improvements -	Project development work only	400	05/06
Route 166 Operational Imps	Right of way activities only	153	05/06

CUESTA GRADE RECREATIONAL TRAIL NOW OPEN

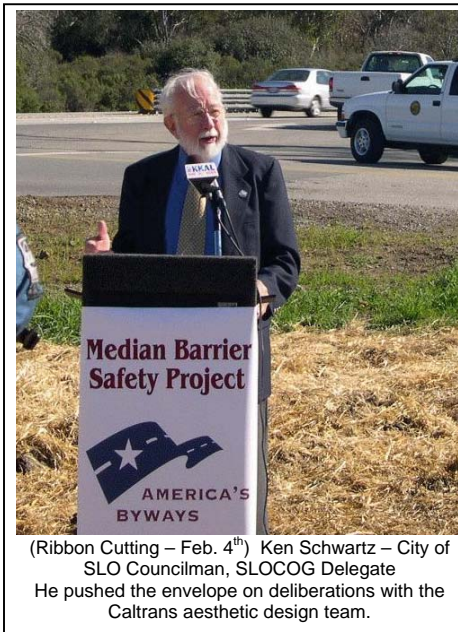
The construction on the Cuesta Grade Recreational Trail was completed Friday, February 6. This much needed safety project allows northbound bicyclists, pedestrians, etc. to access Old Stagecoach Road from the right shoulder of Highway 101 by crossing under the highway. The undercrossing is one-way, intended for northbound travel only. Happy commuting!

San Luis Obispo County Sports a "One of a Kind" Median Barrier



textured, and molded median barrier that blends into the landscape of San Luis Obispo County. No where else in the United States has the slip-stone median barrier method been used. We suspect you'll be seeing much more of these around the country soon. This aesthetic jewel should not overshadow the importance of this 6.5-mile safety project. With 26,000 vehicles traveling the corridor daily and a significant cross median fatality rate, this safety project was pushed forward almost an entire year. The resolve of Caltrans and the community truly developed a project that is "in context" with all of the community needs. SLOCOG is very grateful to Caltrans and the community leaders for their work on this project.

Partnership, partnership, partnership! Without an effective partnership between Caltrans and the local community, projects such as this wouldn't happen. Community leaders, working with a receptive and open-minded project design team from Caltrans, spent considerable time developing a unique solution to the traditional concrete median barrier that so often hardens scenic corridors. The result - a one of a kind, low cost,



Caltrans 2004 SHOPP Approved

Caltrans District 5 was allocated nearly \$224 million for State Highway Operations and Protection Plan (SHOPP) projects in its five counties, of which over \$81 million is for the San Luis Obispo region. There are 14 projects in the San Luis Obispo region, five are safety or bridge related, six are rehabilitation, and three are mitigations. The most costly project is \$27 million for rehabilitation of ten miles of Route 101 from the Cuesta Grade overhead to north of Traffic Way in Atascadero. SLOCOG recommendations to Caltrans on the Plan included coordination with SLOCOG and local agency staff to address various issues such as median design, landscape preservation, and provision of bike and pedestrian facilities.

The State Highway Operations and Protection Plan (SHOPP) is Caltrans most basic core program for the maintenance and rehabilitation of the State Highway system. It is a four-year program with projects programmed between 2004 and 2008. Safety improvements have the highest priority, followed by pavement and facility rehabilitation, and operational projects.

A very high value was given to the SHOPP in planning the 2004 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) due to the serious shortfall in funding as a result of the State budget deficit. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) voted to keep it nearly fully funded while virtually eliminating funding for Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs).

For more information on the 2004 SHOPP call Mike Harmon at 805-781-5724.

2004 Federal and State Legislative Programs Approved

On February 4th the SLOCOG Board approved its 2004 Federal and State Legislative Programs, which will provide policy direction to staff when evaluating legislative proposals and developing recommended positions for adoption by the SLOCOG Board.

As this year is the second of a "Two-year Session" for both the United States Congress and California Legislature, the objectives and policies in the new programs are nearly unchanged from 2003 except for additions needed to address high priority issues.

At the federal level, the major effort on transportation will be the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), which expired in November. Several priorities were added in support of the policy to seek assurance that the entire California Congressional Delegation effectively supports provisions in the new Transportation Act that are consistent with the Consensus Principles for Reauthorization.

At the state level, transportation programming was set back significantly due to the diversion of over \$2

billion of dedicated transportation funding to help reduce the State General Fund deficit. Several policies were added that are primarily related to the repayment of borrowed funding, the maintenance of existing state cash exchange programs, and protection of local funding from future taking by the state government without local agency approval or a vote of the public.

To receive copies of either Legislative Program or to have questions answered, call Mike Harmon at 805-781-5724.

Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing Results

Staff received 22 different requests for Unmet Transit Needs and 6 requests for Unmet Bicycle Needs from 382 citizens by phone, letter, e-mail, or at the public hearing on February 4th. Some of the key requests were to provide:

1. Affordable countywide evening service (using smaller Runabout buses and SLO County Transportation Development Act [TDA] funds);
2. Additional monies for subsidizing regional vanpools;
3. Additional monies for Ride-On's Community Interaction Program and United Cerebral Palsy program;
4. Replacement of the existing transit stop and park-and-ride lot at the Nipomo Community Center serving CCAT and Nipomo Dial-a-Ride;
5. Bicycle improvements at Los Osos Valley Road eastbound lane (east of South Bay Blvd.), Avila Beach Dr. bicycle and pedestrian crossing, Broad St. (between Orcutt Rd. and Santa Barbara St.), and Highway 1 southbound (between CMC and Stenner Creek Rd.)

The deadline to submit unmet transit requests is Feb 13th 2004. The SLOCOG Board directed staff to review the requests and determine which are "unmet transit needs," then determine which unmet transit needs are also "reasonable to meet." Staff will present findings and recommendations at the April 7th SLOCOG Board meeting.

2004/2005 Overall Work Program and Budget

At the February meeting, the Board approved the Overall Work Program (OWP) and budget for 2004/2005. The OWP identifies all work elements, major tasks, staffing levels, and products proposed for the 2004/2005 fiscal year. Federal and state guidelines specify requirements for preparing the OWP. The guidelines include Planning Emphasis Areas that must be addressed in the OWP. They are:

- Safety and security in the planning process;
- Integration of planning and environmental processes;
- Consideration of management and operations with the planning process;
- Consultation with local officials; and
- Enhance the technical capacity of the planning process.

The total approved budget is \$2.37m and retains the same level of staffing as the current year (with one unfilled position). Revenues include Federal Planning (PL) funds (\$452k), Regional State Highway Account Funds (RSHA) (\$440k), Call Box fees (\$381k), Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds (\$657k), and federal transit planning grants.

If you have any questions about the OWP or budget for 2004/2005, please call 805-781-4219.

BOARD MEMBER RECOGNIZED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

At the February meeting, Board Member Peg Pinard, District 3 Supervisor, accepted a plaque of appreciation for her service as President during the 2003 calendar year.



**Regional
Transportation
Plan
Open House**
What will public
transportation be like
in the future?

**What role will public
transit play in 2025?**

**Tuesday March 23rd
6 to 8 PM
San Luis Obispo
Public Library**

**995 Palm Street,
Community Room**

Submit comments by
calling 781-4219 or emailing
eguillot@slocog.org

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS MEMBERSHIP (AS OF 1/7/2004)

Down the Road...The next scheduled meeting of the SLOCOG Board will be held in the San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors' Chambers Wednesday, April 7, 2004. The Board will conduct a public hearing for a Federal Transportation Improvement Program amendment to add transit funding, receive the findings and recommendations on the unmet transit needs, receive the recommended list of Project Study Reports (PSRs) for future State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) cycles, approve the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Urban State Highway Account projects, receive the latest information on the reauthorization of the federal transportation legislation, approve the Transportation Development Act (TDA) fund apportionment for fiscal year 2004/2005, receive an update on performance audit recommendations, and receive the Regional Profile. 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.

New President – Frank Mecham, Mayor, Paso Robles
New Vice President – Mike Ryan, District 5 Supervisor
Arroyo Grande – Tony Ferrara, Mayor
Atascadero – Wendy Scalise, Council member
Grover Beach – John Shoals, Mayor Pro Tem
Morro Bay – Dave Elliott, Council member
Pismo Beach – Rudy Natoli, Council member
San Luis Obispo – Ken Schwartz, Council member
District 1 Supervisor – Harry Ovitt
District 2 Supervisor – Shirley Bianchi.
District 3 Supervisor – Peg Pinard
District 4 Supervisor – Katcho Achadjian
Ex-Officio, Gregg Albright –Director, Caltrans District 5
Ronald De Carli, Executive Director

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