

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: April 2, 2008
SUBJECT: Intercity Rail Update

SUMMARY

This staff report provides a brief update on a variety of passenger rail related topics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff: Information

TTAC/CTAC:

DISCUSSION

\$25 Million for the Coast Daylight! - The California Transportation Commission approved \$25M for capital improvements along the Coast Corridor to upgrade tracks, signals, and sidings. Caltrans is now working closely with the Union Pacific Railroad to specifically identify these projects. Additionally, Caltrans is currently seeking Union Pacific approval in order to access the tracks with an additional passenger train. New equipment is also needed prior to the start-up of the Coast Daylight service. Staff anticipates the service will not begin before April, 2011. Senator Abel Maldonado and his staff are to be commended for their help in securing \$25M for the Coast Daylight.

Coast Starlight Service - A major landslide in Oregon has impacted Coast Starlight service. Many passenger rail advocacy groups had urged Amtrak to offer a segmented service to Sacramento from which to bus rail passengers to Portland, thereby bypassing the slide. Passengers could then re-board and continue on to Seattle. This service is now being operated by Amtrak. Union Pacific crews estimate the track in Oregon will be repaired by the end of April.

Intercity Rail Day - Staff participated with other state-supported corridors to raise awareness of the huge success that California's intercity rail passenger program has become and to urge support for a stable capital funding program in the future. The statewide need is approximately \$160M per year, split evenly between \$80M for operating and \$80M for capital. The event included the unveiling of a new intercity rail video to help educate the public about intercity rail (See pages E-8-2 and E-8-3).

Platform Message Signs - Staff has been working with Amtrak to ensure platform message signs are operable at unstaffed stations along the "Surfliner Corridor." The signs are now installed to show estimated arrival/departure times for Surfliner trains.

Grover Beach Train Station Study - Currently, Amtrak motorcoaches serve one side of the Grover Beach Train Station tracks, and train service on the other. The only feasible solution to get the buses on the west side of the tracks is an expansion of the station to the south. Tentatively, the County appears willing to accommodate additional train station uses in conjunction with a possible campground area expansion.

National Train Day - Amtrak is coordinating a nationwide celebration of rail transportation on May 10th. For more information go to: www.NationalTrainDay.com.

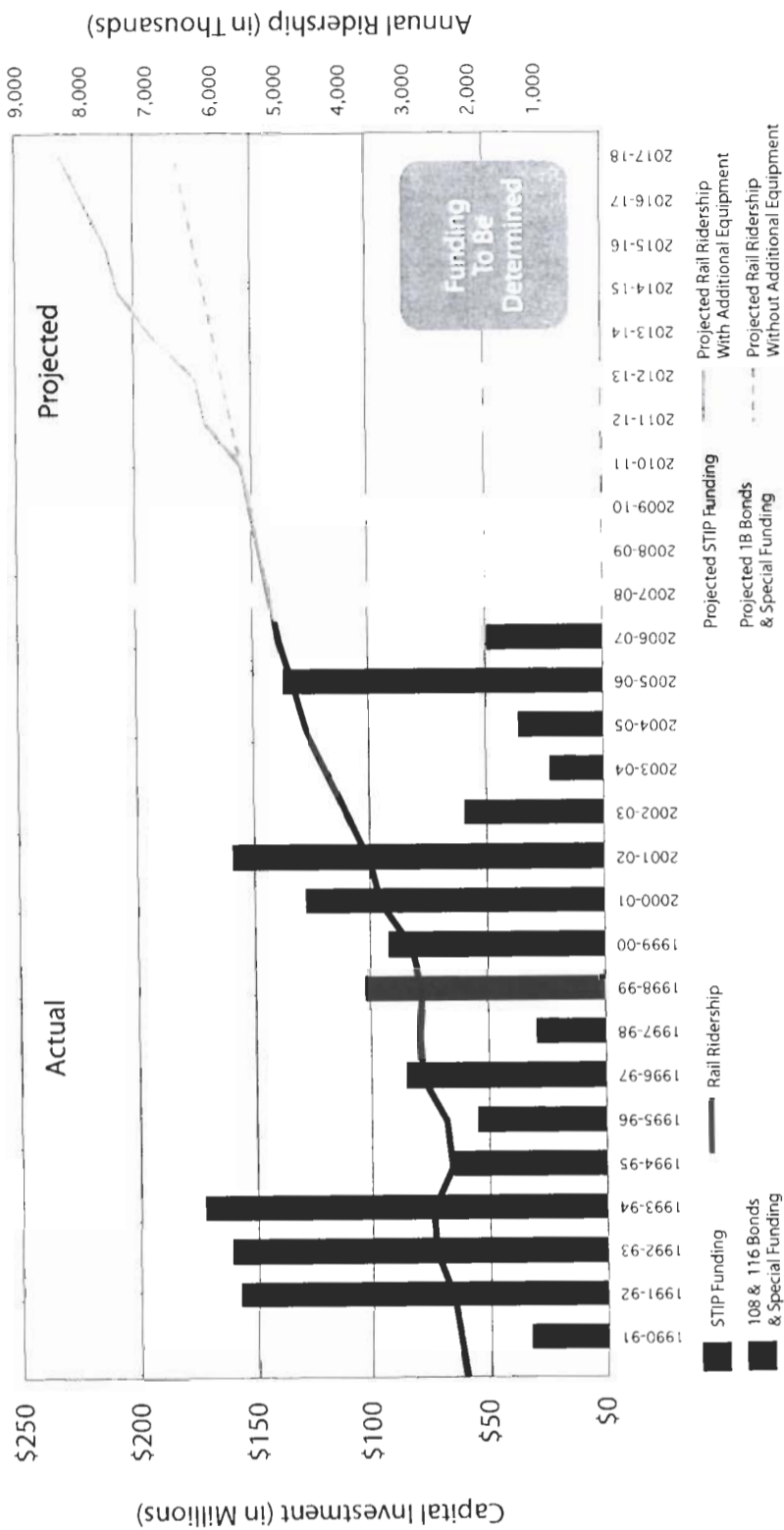
SLO Train Station Platform Lighting - The SLOCOG Board approved \$60K which will be matched with \$60K by Caltrans to replace the platform lights. About half of the lights are currently operable.

Passenger Rail Integration Study (So. Cal) - Orange County Transportation Commission (OCTA) has taken the lead on trying to better space Amtrak, Metrolink and the Coaster train services along the corridor. Staff is monitoring this project in an effort to ensure that Amtrak's longer distance intercity trains are not burdened with station stops that are too closely spaced and thereby increasing total travel time.

Peter Rodgers prepared this staff report

Intercity Passenger Rail

California Intercity Passenger Rail Capital Investment and Ridership



2-8-E

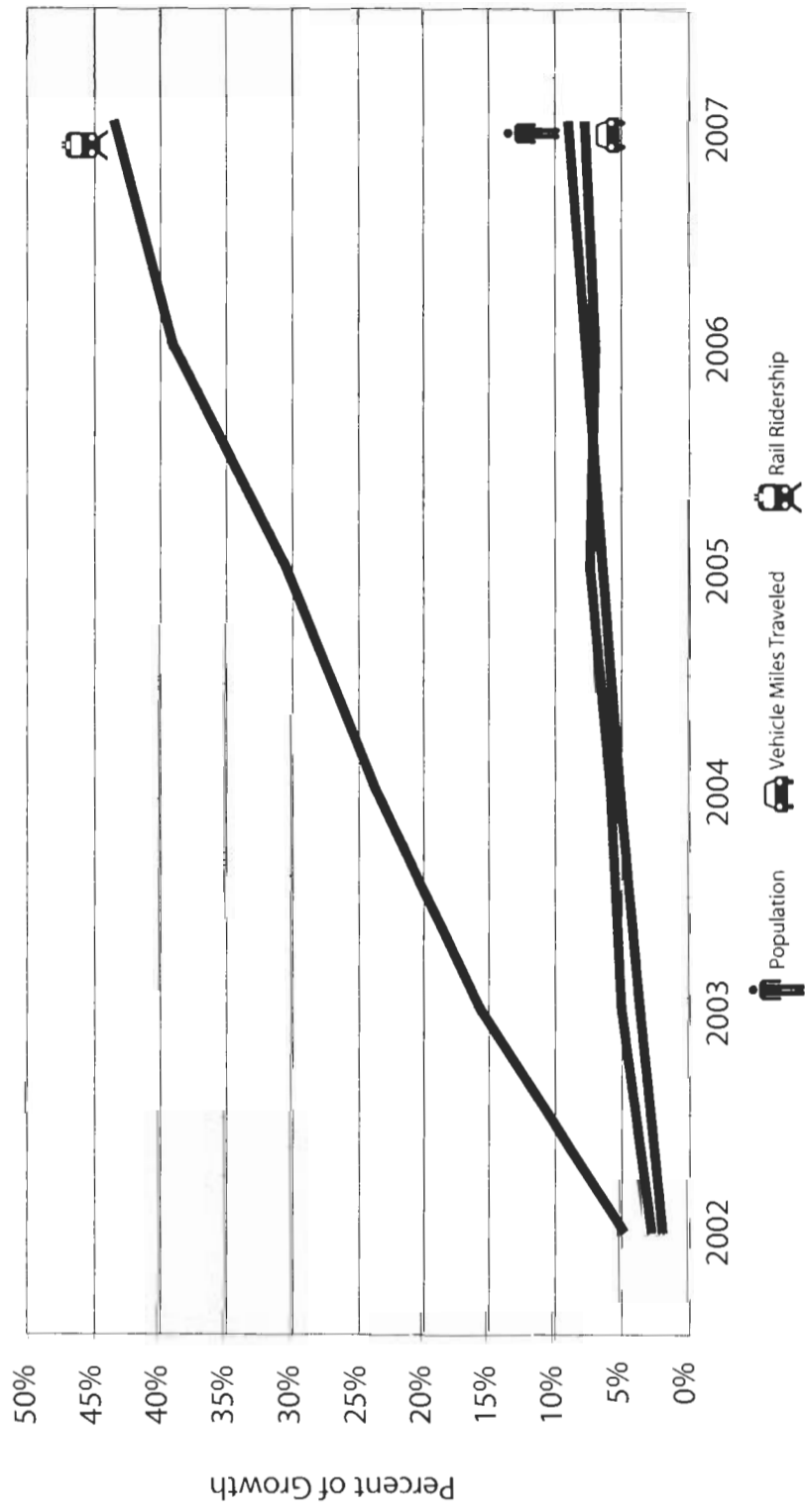
Intercity Passenger Rail Day 2008



Intercity Passenger Rail

California Growth

Population, Vehicle Miles Traveled and Rail Ridership



Intercity Passenger Rail Day 2008



Amtrak California