

THE COORDINATOR

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511 Workshop



In the fall 2006, SLO Regional Rideshare received a Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC) in the amount of \$65,000 for the 511 system for the Central Coast. With a local match of \$16,250, the \$81,250 project will facilitate implementation of 511 for San Luis Obispo County, promote brand consistency, incorporate human services agencies, municipalities, transit agencies, and State Department of Transportation to provide identified standards in the level of user services, data quality and data availability and identify and incorporate institutional and technical functionality into new system.

The 511 system was designated in July 2000 by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The SAFETEA-LU goal for 511 ensures that a national interoperable 511 system, alone with a national traffic information system includes a comprehensive website and is fully implemented for use by travelers throughout the United States by 2010. To date in California, the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento and San Diego have deployed 511. Rideshare worked with Caltrans District 5 and Headquarters staff, SLOCOG staff to develop a two day statewide 511 Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Customer Information Technology workshop. This workshop was held March 29 and 30. The information gained from the workshop will assist SLO Regional Rideshare to develop a Request for Proposals for the Central Coast 511 system. The RFP is due out in August 2007. Close to 60 people registered for the workshop held at RRM Design Group. Presenters from throughout the country spoke on deployment plans, challenges and strategies of the 511 system.

The new 511 "infostructure" will support traveler information in San Luis Obispo County. The touch-tone/voice recognition will allow the user to easily plan their trip whether need transit, rideshare, biking or traffic information. The 511 system will interface with the 211 human services telephone number to be launched in July 2007 and reach to a population underserved. The mobility management of the two numbers 511 and 211 will create a cohesive program to assist clients with their transportation needs.

Signal Preemption Improvements

Signal preemption devices exist in all jurisdictions and their usage promotes a faster and safer response for emergency services personnel. Unfortunately, compatibility issues exist and illegal usage of preemption devices are increasing. Traffic signal preemption is a practice used in many cities through which traffic lights -equipped with special infrared receiving devices - can be prompted when a signal is sent from a special transmitter in a vehicle. In most applications, traffic signal preemption is limited to emergency vehicles. In some areas Transit buses have been given special accommodations to allow either preemption or 'priority' (which holds a green longer than normal). Normally, a vehicle equipped with a preemption emitter will use it when approaching a red signal to hurriedly change the signal to green.



Signal preemption devices have become an issue in some cities because the transmitting devices have been openly available through the Internet and other means for purchase by anyone, not just by entities that have authority to use them under local or state laws. Since the traffic signal mounted receivers do not generally distinguish the vehicle transmitting the preemption signal, any vehicle that has one can change the signal. This causes both safety and traffic congestion problems. A fine of \$5,000 can be imposed for the improper use of these transmitting devices; however, identifying the offending vehicle emitting an infrared light is not typically within enforcement efforts. Additionally, improper usage can also result in traffic snarls as the signal timing may be, sometimes repeatedly, affected. In at least one location, the recurring effect upon timing through illegal usage has forced Caltrans to turn-off this signal's preemption devices. In addition to illegal usage, existing compatibility issues hinder inter-jurisdictional response. In order to achieve full functionality, vehicle transmitters and receiver units should be encoded to restrict usage to those agencies with authorization only. However, two different systems of this technology are currently installed within our region. Either system, alone, could be encoded, but the two systems are not completely compatible.

A grant request has been submitted to the State for funding to achieve a region-wide signal preemption system that removes incompatibilities, provides seamless integration, and prohibits illegal usage through encodability. Support for this effort was received from the Fire Chiefs, the SLOCOG Board, TTAC, and Caltrans. For more information, contact James Worthley at SLOCOG.

Call Box Upgrade Completed

Roadside Call Boxes Made More Accessible for Motorists with Speech or Hearing Impairments

Motorist-aid call boxes along all of the San Luis Obispo roadways have been outfitted with a Teletypewriter (TTY) device to make it easier for drivers with speech or hearing impairments to get help in case of an accident or car trouble, or to report a road hazard.

The TTY devices have been installed in all 168 of the existing call boxes throughout the region which began in last October. The devices fit neatly into the existing bright yellow call boxes and are operated by two buttons. Motorists can select the button indicating the voice option – or simply lift the receiver – to be connected to an operator. Those with speech or hearing disabilities press a second button which activates the fully functional TTY keyboard inside the call box.

Until now, drivers with speech or hearing impairments have had only one option when trying to use a call box. The call boxes are equipped with a “call-connected” light; the motorist lifts the telephone receiver and taps on the mouthpiece to alert the operator. The “call-connected” light lets the user know that the call has been received and that assistance is forthcoming.

The installation of the TTY devices was part of a six month-long systemwide upgrade of the regional network of call boxes. Other upgrades included digital GSM cellular hardware and replacement of the bright yellow call boxes along Highway 1 (from San Luis Obispo to Monterey County) with the new approved Scenic Byway call box color scheme (green call box with brown pole)

For additional information contact Philip Chu, Call Box Program Coordinator at 805-781-4223.



Update on Plans to Improve Passenger Rail Service

At its April meeting the Board heard a presentation on plans to improve intercity passenger rail service in California, along the Central Coast and in San Luis Obispo County. The presentation addressed the entire range of services and related issues, including the following:

Los Angeles-San Diego North (LOSSAN) Corridor Strategic Plan – Proposed improvement projects for passenger and freight trains, including “commuter rail” opportunities and constraints.

Pacific Surfliner Performance - The causes of delays, which include train interference, trespassers, equipment failures, and poor information dissemination.

State-Supported Trains - Status of the three state-supported train services operating in California: the Pacific Surfliners, the Capitols, and San Joaquins.

LOSSAN Corridor Definition - The ongoing effort to amend the current definition which in Federal law is defined as “San Diego to Del Mar” due to a capital improvement “earmark” several years ago.

Amtrak Reauthorization – The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2007 (S.294) would provide Amtrak with ~\$3.9 billion/year for six years; operating grants would vary between \$455-600 million; capital grants would range between \$813 million to \$1.23 billion/year. Introduction of S.294 is just one step in the process of reauthorizing Amtrak. Companion legislation is needed in the House of Representatives, along with the creation of a funding mechanism.

Federal-State 80:20 Capital Match - There is no federal capital grant program for intercity rail improvements, as exists for local roads, highways, public transit, airport, harbors. LOSSAN, the CRCC and several other groups around the state and country are advocating a new capital grant program with the 80:20 match.

Coast Daylight Train - The Coast Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC) has advocated the return of the Coast Daylight train since the early 1990’s. As proposed, one train would leave from both downtown LA and downtown SF every day at 8 am and arrive in the other city at about 7 pm. The CRCC is facilitating discussions between Caltrans, UP, and Amtrak to initiate this service. Three key obstacles exist; equipment, approval from the railroad (s) and operating support from the state.

For more information on these issues call Pete Rodgers at 781-5712

Commuter Corner

COMMUTER BIKE CHALLENGE

Teams shift to cycling in May

May is Bike Month. SLO Regional Rideshare along with its planning committee consisting of, APCD, the City of San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly and the County are showcasing over 15 bike-related events in May. Bike Month is a San Luis Obispo County and national celebration of human-powered vehicle transportation encouraging people of all ages and abilities to ride bicycles to their destinations instead of driving. This year's Bike Month theme is "**Shift Gears**". May is the time to shift away from air pollution and traffic and shift into a healthy lifestyle.

SLO Regional Rideshare encourages individuals to **shift gears** from driving alone during May by joining the "Commuter Bike Challenge". The 2nd annual Commuter Bike Challenge has expanded from one week to the entire month of May. Team captains can register their teams consisting of 4-10 people. The **commuter bike challenge** is an exciting way to encourage more people to shift from driving to cycling—which keeps our road ways clear, our air clean and is an effective way to reduce global warming.

Beginning in May, each team member cycles to work, to the store or even to the gym will daily record their miles and trips. Last year close to 40 executives throughout the county took the Executive Commuter Bike Challenge. These executives rode once during Bike Week. "This year we are looking to have over 50 executives join a team," stated Lisa Quinn, Program Coordinator for SLO Regional Rideshare. Executives who sign the commitment to be a part of a team will be recognized in the Tribune on Sunday, April 29th. All executives and public officials will be invited to the **Shifter Mixer on May 9th from 5:30-8pm** at Firestone Walker Ales in Paso Robles. Top teams and participating executives will be recognized at Bike Fest on May 31st on Morro Street during Farmers' Market in San Luis Obispo.

SLO Regional Rideshare is also continuing the popular tradition of partnering with local coffee houses to provide free Bike Month T-shirts and cup of coffee during Bike Week May 14-18. Register for the Commuter Bike Challenge by visiting www.rideshare.org/bikemonth



SLO Regional Rideshare Budget Approved

On April 4, 2007 the SLOCOG Board approved the 2007/08 SLO Regional Rideshare Strategic Plan and \$519,492 budget. The Rideshare strategic work plan identifies six components:

- Public Outreach
- Commuter Trip Focus
- Non-Work Trip Focus (Seniors, Visitors, Community & K-12 and Safe Routes to School)
- Bicycle Programs
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Administration

The new structure takes an aggressive multimodal approach to deliver its mission. SLO Regional Rideshare anticipates leveraging external forces—gas prices, climate change, job housing imbalance to effectively take advantage of transportation choices. SLO Regional Rideshare will continue to work closely with Ride-On and the Air Pollution Control District to increase the number of employers participating in the Transportation Choices Program. The involvement of businesses will help influence employees commute behavior and keep our air clean, roads clear and minimize our demand on our resources. Additionally, SLO Regional Rideshare will continue to work on expanding the Safe Routes to School program and is part of the parent led program at Hawthorne Elementary School in San Luis Obispo. This program starts its first Walking School Bus on May 11th running every Friday through June 8th. For more information on the Safe Routes to School program contact Jessica Berry, Bicycle Programs Coordinator by calling 781-1385 or jberry@rideshare.org



Planning for a Region Through Regional Blueprint Planning



In 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger made \$5 million available to Metropolitan Planning Organizations, such as the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, to build the

capacity for regional collaborative planning. This effort would become what is known as Regional Blueprint Planning. Regional Blueprint Planning efforts are taking place all across the state from San Diego to Shasta County and are attempting to better address transportation, land use, and environmental planning from a broad regional scale. One of the unique aspects of Regional Blueprint Planning is the incorporation of scenario

planning. Scenario planning utilizes comprehensive computer models to examine alternative scenarios for the future. This brings an unprecedented ability to view and analyze the effects of our decisions. For example, through scenario planning, we can look at how alternative growth patterns will impact our roadways, open spaces, and other performance measures.

The development of these scenarios has proven to be quite a task. In order to get to our scenarios, we first had to build our model from the ground up. The Community 2050 working group has committed itself to using the best available data from across the region and refined this data with considerable input from local government staff. What we have now is a picture of our current planning practices carried forward into the next 30+ years for the entire region. Soon, we will have alternative scenarios that show how our projected future impacts may be altered by the changes we make today. Once complete, this tool will be shared with our community stakeholders to see where and how we might address our concerns and ideas for a collective regional vision. For more, see our website at www.Community2050.org

UPCOMING EVENTS: Smart Growth Leadership Meetings

On May 19th and June 2nd, Community 2050 will be hosting two half-day meetings to investigate our opportunities and identifying strategies for implementing smart growth throughout the region. City Council Members, City and County Planning Commissioners, County Supervisors, School Board Members, CSD Directors, and Area Advisory Council Chairs are among those invited. The guest speakers invited are Parris Glendening (May 19th) and Stefanos Polyzoides (June 2nd) two national experts on smart growth.

FY 2007/08 Unmet Transit Needs Findings and Recommendations in Review



At the April 4th SLOCOG Board meeting, staff presented findings on those Unmet Transit Needs requested for the 2007/2008 cycle. A total of 451 individual requests were submitted for transit improvements in 100 specific categories. Of those received, 95 requests were referred to transit operators for written comments prior to the April Board meeting. The remaining five were found to meet the approved “unmet needs” criteria and subsequently analyzed for “reasonableness to meet.” Another 372 bike-related requests for 46 specific improvements (not subject to the Unmet Needs review) were sent to local jurisdictions and written responses received prior to the April meeting. Staff’s recommendations on the five transit requests found to be “unmet needs” and tested for “reasonableness to meet” are as follows:

1. Expanding weekend evening service on four SLO Transit routes was found “not reasonable” to meet based on low ridership and lack of TDA funds. The City stated they will address the request with pending Short Range Transit Plan update.
2. Expanding weekday evening service on two SLO Transit routes was found “not reasonable to meet” due to the lack of TDA funds. SLOCOG addressed this request in February 2007 by awarding SLO Transit \$205K in discretionary regional STA funds for evening service on selected routes (beginning in April and fall 2007).
3. Extending SCAT local route 22 or 24 to serve the Oceano Senior Center may be found “reasonable to meet” subject to further operational review and evaluation of a possible expansion of the Five Cities Shuttle (senior only).
4. Providing a new shuttle service from Cambria to Paso Robles along Highway 46 was found “not reasonable to meet” due to the lack of comparable services in the County and poor cost-effectiveness.
5. Increasing RTA Route 12 coverage (early evening) at Cuesta College campus may be found “reasonable to meet.”

The Board took the following actions:

§ **Service to Oceano Senior Center** – The extension of South County Area Transit Routes 22 or 24 to serve the Oceano Senior Center may be “reasonable to meet” subject to further operational review and targeted public input; rescheduled for June 2007 meeting.

§ **Shuttle Service from Cambria to North County** – Determined the coastal/inland request requires additional analysis; rescheduled for June 2007 meeting.

§ **Evening Service to Cuesta College** – The addition of Route 12 transit runs for early evening (6:25–9:25 pm; M-TH) may be “reasonable to meet” subject to higher funding from Cuesta College and more extensive stakeholders’ input; rescheduled for June 2007 meeting.

For more information contact Tim Gillham at tgillham@slocog.org or call (805)781-1520.

2007/2008 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Fund Apportionment

At the April 4th meeting, the SLOCOG Board apportioned over \$13m in TDA Funding for 2007/2008. TDA consists of two sources of funding – Local Transportation Fund (LTF) and State Transit Assistance (STA). LTF is derived from one-fourth cent of each 7.25 cents collected in retail sales taxes. STA is derived from the statewide sales tax on vehicle fuel. Both of these funds are distributed to the region by the state and allocated by SLOCOG to each of the seen cities, the County, SLOCOG, and Ride-On – the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency for the San Luis Obispo region. LTF estimates increased by 13% from 2006/2007 and STA estimates decreased by 34% from 2006/2007

Table A
Local Transportation Funds (LTF) 2007/2008

			LTF 2006/2007	LTF 2007/2008	CHANGE
REVENUE DEPOSITED					
			\$10,464,000	\$11,176,000	\$712,000
			\$0	\$651,000	\$651,000
			\$10,464,000	\$11,827,000	\$1,363,000
Subtotal					
			(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)	\$0
Fund Reserve					
			\$10,364,000	\$11,727,000	\$1,363,000
Total Available for Distribution					
			\$550,429	\$629,022	\$78,593
			\$100,000	\$110,000	\$10,000
			\$9,614	\$10,992	\$1,378
			\$423,958	\$511,154	\$87,196
			\$1,084,001	\$1,257,168	\$173,167
Total Off-the-Top Allocation					
			\$9,279,999	\$10,469,832	\$1,189,833
TOTAL AVAILABLE TO APPORTION					
			\$182,657	\$219,840	
Bikeway Allocation included in Total Available to Apportion (Note 3)					
	Population	CA Dept. of Finance 2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	CHANGE
ARROYO GRANDE	16,599	6.31%	\$582,255	\$660,186	\$77,931
ATASCADERO (Note 4)	28,659	10.89%	\$1,006,879	\$1,139,844	\$132,965
GROVER BEACH	13,213	5.02%	\$465,748	\$525,516	\$59,768
MORRO BAY	10,491	3.99%	\$370,084	\$417,255	\$47,171
PASO ROBLES	28,969	11.00%	\$984,591	\$1,152,174	\$167,583
PISMO BEACH	8,617	3.27%	\$304,349	\$342,721	\$38,372
SAN LUIS OBISPO (Note 5)	48,018	18.24%	\$1,694,409	\$1,909,803	\$215,394
SLO COUNTY (Note 5)	108,676	41.28%	\$3,771,684	\$4,322,333	\$550,649
Total Apportioned	263,242	100.00%	\$9,179,999	\$10,469,832	\$1,289,833

1. Per Overall Work Program and Budgets recommended for approval in Agenda Item C-1.
 2. Bikeway Safety Education is 9% of Total Bikeway Allocation.
 3. Bikeway Apportionment is 2% of the balance (after Admin/Planning and Reserve).
 4. Atascadero pop. increased by 1,001 (\$39,812) and SLO County pop. decreased by 1,001 (\$39,812) per agreement (State Hospital pop. in Atascadero).
 5. SLO City's population increased by Cal Poly residents (3,579 - \$142,346). SLO County's population decreased by Cal Poly resident (3,579 - \$142,346).



Down the Road...

The next scheduled meeting of the SLOCOG Board will be held in the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors' Chambers Wednesday, June 6th, 2007. The Board meetings are broadcast live and replayed on Channel 21 (Charter communications Cable TV)

Individuals wishing accessibility accommodations at this meeting, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), may request such accommodations to aid hearing, visual, or mobility impairment by contacting SLOCOG offices at 781-4219. -Please note that 48 hours advance notice will be necessary to honor your request.

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 federal-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 and their designated representatives are listed below:

President – James Patterson, District 5 Supervisor
Vice President – John Shoals, Grover Beach Council member

Paso Robles – Fred Strong, Council member
Atascadero – Tom O'Malley, Council member
Arroyo Grande – Tony Ferrara, Mayor
Morro Bay – Janice Peters, Mayor
Pismo Beach – Mary Ann Reiss, Mayor
Ex-Officio, Richard Krumholz –Director, Caltrans District 5

San Luis Obispo – Dave Romero, Mayor
District 1 Supervisor – Harry Ovitt
District 3 Supervisor – Jerry Lenthall
District 4 Supervisor – Katcho Achadjian
District 2 Supervisor – Bruce Gibson
Executive Director – Ronald De Carli



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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