

THE COORDINATOR

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SLOCOG says Farewell to Dave Romero, Elects New Vice President

The SLOCOG Board presented a resolution of appreciation to Dave Romero who served as either a delegate or alternate for most of the past 11 years with SLOCOG. Mr. Romero served as Vice-President between July 1998 and January 2000, as President from February 2000 to December 2000, and served on the Executive Committee from July 1998 to December 2000.

Dave Romero has been a dedicated and effective advocate for the development of pragmatic and efficient plans for the improvement of the region's transportation system and has been a consistent and successful advocate for the establishment of a balanced, multi-modal transportation system in the San Luis Obispo region, including the provision of passenger rail service, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, major State, highway and local road improvements, and improved aviation facilities. Dave will continue to serve as an alternate on the Board.



The SLOCOG Board also retained John Shoals as president for the 2009 calendar year and elected a New Vice President, Tom O'Malley from the City of Atascadero, and welcomed Jan Howell Marx as the new City of San Luis Obispo representative.

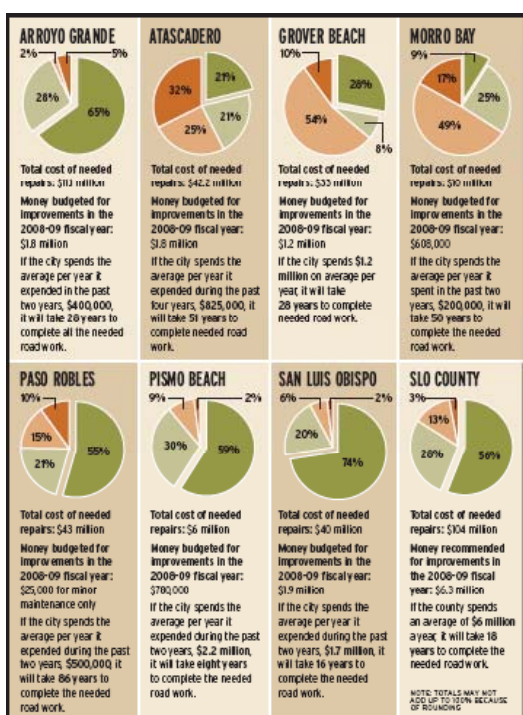
Unmet Transit and Bikeway Needs Hearing

The SLOCOG Board held its annual Unmet Transit & Bikeway Needs Hearing on Wednesday, February 4th. Prior to the hearing, staff received 139 requests for funding of the Ride-On Senior Shuttles. In response to the overwhelming public support to continue the Senior Shuttle program, the SLOCOG Board approved \$25K to help fund this service through the end of the fiscal year (June 30th). Support was also shown for continued funding of the Community Interaction Program (CIP). As a result, the Board took action to increase CIP funding by \$5K to retain existing service levels for this program. Additional testimony included keeping evening and Sunday Service on the regional and SLO Transit systems at their current levels, and providing more bus stop amenities countywide. A list of unmet bicycle-related needs was also presented by numerous advocacy groups requesting further development of bikeway connectors throughout the region, and continued bike lane and road maintenance. Funding for the completion of the Railroad Safety Trail and Bob Jones City to Sea Trail was also requested.

SLOCOG staff will evaluate the unmet transit needs requests received; determine which requests meet the adopted "unmet transit needs" and "reasonable to meet" criteria using Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds. All unmet transit needs identified will be presented for SLOCOG Board consideration at the April 8th meeting. Those requests not meeting the adopted unmet transit needs criteria will be forwarded to the appropriate jurisdiction for comment and planning purposes, along with all bicycle-related requests.

For additional information, please contact Tim Gillham at (805) 781-1520 or tgillham@slocog.org.

Countywide Pavement Report



SLOCOG staff prepared the biennial update on the condition of local streets and roads throughout the region. Major Overall Findings include the following:

- **Pavement Condition** - In general, from 2006 to 2008 the overall condition of all (city and county) streets and roads in the region has declined, as follows:
 - + Total miles rated "bad" increased by 9 miles (8.6%) from 105 to 114 miles.
 - + Total miles rated "poor" increased by 108 miles (70%) from 155 to 263 miles.
 - + Total miles rated "fair" declined by 43 miles (9%) from 479 to 436 miles.
 - + Total miles rated "good or /best" declined by 105 miles (10.5%) from 1,000 to 895 miles.
- **Improvement Costs** - The estimated cost of all currently identified road maintenance, rehabilitation or reconstruction is about \$293 million, an overall increase of about \$84 million since 2006. The increased cost can be primarily attributed to several factors, including: more accurate estimates of the needed work and the increased cost of materials and labor. The large size of the cost can be attributed to the exponential increase in costs due to long term deferral of needed maintenance.
- **Funding Budgeted** - During the past few years local agencies have provided a higher level of funding for road maintenance, rehabilitation and reconstruction projects than has ever been provided. The County provided significantly more funding than in previous years, and several of the cities provided much more, including: the City of Arroyo Grande, City of Atascadero, City of Pismo Beach and City of San Luis Obispo.
- **Funding Needs** - Total funding available from all sources, including State subventions, Local Transportation Funding, Proposition 1B Local Street and Road funding, and Proposition 42 funding, is still not adequate to pay for all currently identified road maintenance and rehabilitation.

While there was a decline in the condition of many miles of roads, progress has been made by local agencies in documenting local road conditions and creating a long term improvement strategy and budget to accomplish adopted goals. For more information contact Mike Harmon at mharmon@slocog.org or call at 781-5724.

The above table was created by and for a SLO Tribune article, published on January 7, 2008.

Legislative Updates...

The 2009 SLOCOG State Legislative Program addresses includes the following three policy recommendations:

1. Bring fiscal discipline and predictability to the State budget: During the past several years the California budget process been slowed in part by the super-majority vote required by the Legislature to approve its budget. To address this issue the 2009 program calls for State budget approval with a 55% vote of the legislature.
2. Protect public transportation from General Fund diversion: When California voters voted for Proposition 42 in 2002 they made it clear that they wanted all transportation related revenue to be used for transportation purposes. To address this issue the program calls for the legislature to support and pursue a constitutional amendment to fully dedicate all diesel and gasoline excise and sales tax revenue once and all to transportation, eliminating the Spillover formula, and providing constitutional protection for transit funding from the Public Transportation Account (PTA).
3. Provide new revenue to address local and regional needs: A significant increase in transportation revenue and/or revenue-raising authority will be needed to maintain existing and new infrastructure. To address this issue the program calls for the legislature to support an increase in the traditional fuel tax, an increase on vehicle license fee, and a reduction in the public vote required to approve a new or extended local option sales tax for transportation purposes from two-thirds to 55%.

The 2009 SLOCOG Federal Legislative Program is focused on development of policies to address the following:

1. SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization – Support legislation for reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU that is based on principles included in California Consensus Principles for Authorization.
2. Economic Stimulus (Recovery) Plan - Support legislation enacting Federal Economic Stimulus (Recovery) Program that is based on goals included in California Consensus Principles.
3. Climate Change & Energy Policy – Support legislation designed to help California and the region achieve adopted greenhouse gas reduction and mobility goals, and which provides funding for sustainable transportation projects that reduce greenhouse gases.
4. Existing Funding Sources - Seek a more equitable appropriation of highway trust funds for donor states (including California) as well as a fair share for San Luis Obispo County of any Federal funding made available for transportation programs and projects
5. Amtrak, High Speed Rail & Intercity Passenger Rail – Expand the national commitment to AMTRAK, and support allocation of funding necessary to assist efforts by California to support and expand intercity passenger rail service and develop a high-speed rail corridor.

Contact Michael Harmon at mharmon@slocog.org or call 781-5724.

Transit Funding Update

- **Cuts in State Transit Assistance (STA)** This program has been extremely volatile over the years. Pending cuts for Fiscal Year 08/09 appear worse than the \$600K originally anticipated. In addition, the STA program is expected to be eliminated next year. This will present a \$1.2 million loss to the region.
- **Cuts to Local Transportation Funds (LTF)** In December all jurisdictions (including SLOCOG) took 10% funding cuts in LTF totaling \$1 million. This funding source is linked to the Unmet Needs process and provides the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) an estimated \$2.6 million annually.
- **Proposition 1B Funds Frozen** As a result of the current State fiscal crisis all Prop 1B transit funds (\$1.2 million) for the 08/09 fiscal year have been suspended. This funding source provides transit operators with the resources needed to fund capital projects.
- **Federal Economic Stimulus (Recovery) Package** Although the final amount going towards public transit is uncertain, staff anticipates anywhere from \$1-\$2 million for the region. It appears transit operations may not be eligible for funding under this program.
- **Federal Transit Administration Grants Awarded** The region was recently awarded funds under four (4) different Federal transit grant sources. They combine capital and operating dollars under the following:
 - + Urbanized Area formula Funds (Section 5307) - \$1.515 M
 - + Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316) - \$641k
 - + Specialized Transit (Section 5310) - \$368k
 - + New Freedom Initiatives (Section 5317) - \$360k
- **Transit Efficiency Funding Committee Formed** Due to the high number of transit systems operating within the region that require independent operators, contracts, studies and audits, the Board approved the formation of a Transit Efficiency Funding Committee to review current practices and consider alternative cost-saving solutions. This committee will be made up of 4-5 Board members, operational staff, and interested members of the public.
- **Uncertain Cuts to Transit Services** Because the timing of transit funding shortfalls coincides with that of the annual Unmet Transit Needs study, any potential cuts in services will be included in this year's analysis and evaluated further.

Please contact Peter Rodgers at 781-5712 or prodgers@slocog.org for more information.

Economic Stimulus Activity

President Obama has previously described his proposal for the Economic Stimulus Plan as the largest infrastructure program in roads and bridges and other traditional infrastructure since the building of the federal highway system in the 1950's.

SLOCOG staff estimate that the region could receive \$5 to \$7 million in formula funds for street and road projects, \$1 to \$2 million in formula transit funding, and approximately \$10 million in funding for Highway projects of regional significance in San Luis Obispo County. Following release of the House and Senate bills, a request was distributed to all states and transportation agencies to develop a list of candidate projects that can be ready for construction to start in 90 days, 180 days, and within one year. SLOCOG staff worked with member agencies to develop a list of projects that could go to construction within these time frames, and identified a total of \$362 million worth of projects that could be ready to begin construction within one year.

During the past month, weekly statewide teleconferences have been held to discuss and clarify how any stimulus funding will be allocated in California. Several options for allocating the funding are being considered. Concurrently, all regional agencies were asked to develop and adopt a regional funding allocation process by mid-February for possible programming as early as March, 2009.

For more information contact Richard Murphy at rmurphy@slocog.org or by calling 781-4219

Rideshare Awarded Two Grants Totaling \$322,580

Rideshare has received an award notice from Caltrans for two grants, one Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and one New Freedom (NF). The awarded JARC Grant will fund a two year Mobility Management function within Rideshare that will:

- Provide regional leadership and promote dialogue between public transit operators and human services agencies or organizations
- Bridge the commonly found “communication gap” between the human services and public transit groups
- Further the dialog and increase coordination among all public transit operators to better serve the trip needs identified by key stakeholders

The awarded New Freedom Grant will help fund the 511 Telephone and Web Service Application, in coordination with the county’s three digit social services telephone service, SLO 211 Hotline. The 511 services will provide a three digit phone number and website that has consolidated and concise information on road conditions, public transportation, rideshare, roadside assistance and 24-hour live Spanish speaking assistance. The project will include:

- Special promotions to reach the transportation disadvantaged population and region wide outreach and marketing about 511/Rideshare services
- Provide a 24-hour link from 511 to SLO 211 Hotline – set up to handle all incoming calls in Spanish with 24-hour coverage
- Training of 211 Operators and social services staff on how to operate the 511/Rideshare website
- Implementation and maintenance of 511 telephone and website system

Rideshare plans to move forward with the grant projects during the fourth quarter, or once the awarded grants are finalized. Major outreach, marketing and county wide coordination efforts are planned to launch in the spring.

Regionwide Fare Study Nears Completion

In January 2009 the SLOCOG Board approved five regional policies consistent with the RTA direction and supportive of the seven study recommendations given below:

1. Implement new Regional Day Pass to replace Regional Transit Transfer and provide unlimited trips on all fixed route buses;
2. Re-design Regional Monthly Pass to reduce its vulnerability to fraud;
3. Eliminate Universal Coupons and replace them with the new Regional Day Pass and/or other fare media to lower administrative costs;
4. Establish Uniform Discount Policies (seniors, children and disability eligibility rules) among systems to treat passengers the same;
5. Provide Consistent Information across systems, including a “one stop shop”;
6. Pursue Uniform Farebox Technology, a regional capital investment to handle more flexible fare media and to integrate fare collection systems; and
7. Expand fare media purchase options (greater availability at outlets, on the web, by phone or by mail).

Related to the first 3 actions, the fixed-route providers are now formalizing an agreement with the RTA on revenue-sharing. The common thread is to improve and modernize fare collection, while dropping the old “regional transfer pass” policy. The Study Executive Summary and full report are posted at www.slocog.org. The full study report is also available by contacting Eliane Guillot at eguillot@slocog.org or 805-781-5711.

Park and Ride Lot Survey Results

In the month of September, Rideshare and SLOCOG staff distributed surveys to all of the formal Park & Ride Lots (P&R) in the county. The purpose of the survey was to determine what modes were used to and from the lot, the start and end points of users and whether the lot location influenced their purchasing behavior at surrounding retail stores. Rideshare received 240 surveys from P&R users. Listed below is a brief snapshot of the survey data:

- A majority of survey respondents used the Las Tablas Lot in Templeton (14.2%) and the Halcyon Lot in Arroyo Grande (25%)
- Reasons why users prefer P&R Lots: 53.6% because it is a designated carpool/vanpool meeting point, 33.5% for close proximity to their starting location and 24.5% because it is close to the freeway
- When asked what improvements they would like to see at their P&R Lot, popular responses included additional spaces (73.5%) and improved lighting (21.4%)
- 90.8% of respondents travel to their P&R Lot by driving alone
- 97.8% of respondents travel to work after leaving their P&R Lot
- The most popular modes of transportation when leaving the P&R Lot were vanpool at 47.4%, carpool with 37.1% and transit with 20.9%
- Most individuals found out about their P&R Lot from vanpool partners (41.4%) and signs (34.7%)

Rideshare and SLOCOG are using this information to determine how to best serve P&R Lot users and support the mode functions that have encouraged them not to drive alone. The information will also be used to determine what shifts in P&R Lot use can be encouraged to accommodate more users. For example, respondents who use the Halcyon P&R Lot in Arroyo Grande for vanpool purposes could be persuaded to use the less impacted Wal-Mart Lot, freeing up spaces for those who use this lot because it is served by transit.



During the 2008 calendar year, 2,753 TripLink users reduced single occupancy travel by 93,314 one way trips, 1,489,446 miles, and 4,731 pounds of harmful emissions. In October, TripLink users had record reductions in vehicle miles traveled, trips and emissions with a reduction of 9,223 trips, 149,688 miles and 474.61 pounds of emissions. This is due to Rideshare Week, an annual Rideshare event that promotes all modes of transportation. In addition, the highest number of website hits (4,907) and new users (200) occurred in May, a directly result of Bike Month, another Rideshare annual event. This event alone resulted in a 9% new user increase.



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

1150 Osos Street, Suite 202
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The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) is an area-wide planning and programming agency for issues of regional 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 – John Shoals (Grover Beach)
Vice President – Tom O'Malley (Atascadero)

District 1 Supervisor – Frank Mecham
District 2 Supervisor – Bruce Gibson
District 3 Supervisor – Adam Hill
District 4 Supervisor – Katcho Achadjian
District 5 Supervisor – James Patterson
Executive Director – Ronald De Carli

Arroyo Grande – Tony Ferrara, Mayor
Morro Bay – Janice Peters, Mayor
Paso Robles – Fred Strong, Council member
Pismo Beach – Mary Ann Reiss, Mayor
San Luis Obispo – Jan Howell Marx, Council member
Ex-Officio, Richard Krumholz –Director, Caltrans District 5

Down the Road....

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 next scheduled meeting of the SLOCOG Board will be held in the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors' Chambers Wednesday, March 4th, 2009. The Board meetings are broadcast live and replayed on Channel 21 (Charter Communications Cable TV)

Public Hearing Notice

The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) notifies the public in advance of Board meetings with items requiring public input.

SLOCOG will hold a Public Hearing to receive public testimony on an amendment to the federally required 2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The 2009 TIP is the region's transportation programming document that contains a comprehensive listing of Surface Transportation projects that receive federal funds or are subject to a federally required action, or are regionally significant. This amendment includes programming projects receiving federal funds from the distribution of Economic Stimulus/Recovery funds, estimated at \$25M within the county as a total.

The Public Hearing will be at the next regularly scheduled SLOCOG Board Meeting on Wednesday March 4th at 11 am (immediately following the SLORTA Board Meeting) in the County Board of Supervisors' Chambers.