South County Transit Plan

Final Report

Prepared for the

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments

Prepared by

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANTS, INC.

PMC

March 2011

South County Transit Plan

Fiscal Years 2010-11 to 2017-18

Final Report

Prepared for the

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
1114 Marsh Street
San Luis Obispo, California 93401
805 ♦ 781-4219

Prepared by

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
2690 Lake Forest Road, Suite C
P.O. Box 5875
Tahoe City, California 96145
530 ♦ 583-4053

March 2, 2011

LSC Ref. 107130

South County Transit Plan Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The South County Transit Plan was commissioned by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) to ensure that future improvements in public transit services will reasonably meet the needs of area residents and visitors. The plan is based upon a detailed analysis of transit demand and existing public transportation services in the Five Cities area. This analysis was used as the basis of an extensive series of alternatives, which were in turn used to develop the financially-constrained seven-year transit plan. Listed below is a summary of the findings and recommendations resulting from this study. San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and the South County Area Transit (SCAT) staffs will use this Transit Plan as a guide to implement the recommended improvements over the course of the next seven years.

This Transit Plan is developed to…

- Identify issues in the community regarding transit
- Determine the public's need for service
- Consider the strengths and weaknesses of the current transit service
- Define solutions to improve transit
- Provide a course of action for implementing improvements

Working with the RTA, SCAT, SLOCOG and Focus Groups (composed of public agency, social service, and business community leaders), the consultant team…

- Evaluated existing conditions for the area, including an on-board passenger survey
- Evaluated existing transit services and identified strengths and weaknesses
- Evaluated alternatives to improve services and address issues
- Facilitated selection of the preferred alternatives and developed an implementation plan

Along each step of the way, *Technical Memoranda* were produced to summarize findings and analyses of the project process. In all, ten Technical Memoranda were produced, and this Draft Final Report is a compilation of all ten documents. Below is a brief description of the findings and plan elements.

EXISTING CONDITIONS IN THE PLAN AREA

The project area includes the South County portion of San Luis Obispo County, focusing on the Five Cities area (Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Oceano, Pismo Beach, and Shell Beach), as well as Avila Beach. The economy is service-based, reflecting the tourism of the area. Though the area is multi-jurisdictional, the cities and County have successfully worked together to provide transit services to residents and visitors alike. The demographics of the area can be summarized as:

- The population of the South San Luis Obispo County area as a whole was just over 70,000 in the US 2000 Census. Growth since then has been strongest in Nipomo and Oceano.

- The "transit dependent" population is relatively high:

  - An estimated 21.5 percent of the South County population is aged 5 to 16, compared to 13.8 percent in the entire County, indicating a higher than average youth population.

  - The percentage of elderly is slightly higher in the South County area than in the county as a whole (16.3 versus 14.5). Arroyo Grande has the highest proportion of elderly, followed by unincorporated areas in South County and Pismo Beach.

  - The number of households without access to an operable vehicle is a significant indicator of a potential transit dependent group. A total of 4.9 percent of households in the South County had no vehicle available, but this was particularly high in Oceano where nearly 7 percent of all households did not have a vehicle.

  - Over 20 percent of residents identified themselves as Latino or Hispanic in the 2000 Census, with numbers as high as 45 percent in Oceano and 35 percent in Nipomo.

Avila Beach and Nipomo are some distance away from the population and service centers, making them more difficult to serve with transit. Furthermore, the geography of the project area is somewhat constrained by the railroad (east of Grover Beach) and Highway 101 which bisects the area, somewhat limiting bus routing options.

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSIT SYSTEM

The South County Area Transit program operates under contract with the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA). SCAT currently provides three fixed-routes on a year-round basis and a tripper route operated during the school year, as well as the Avila Beach Trolley operated during the summer and on weekends and holiday Mondays year-round.

Operating and Financial Characteristics

SCAT services were evaluated by reviewing operating characteristics and financial data of the past several years. The following observations were made.

- **Travel times** on the SCAT fixed routes were found to be relatively long, particularly on Route 23 in Oceano. For example, traveling by bus from Arroyo Grande High School to Pismo Beach requires 56 minutes.

- The **base fare** is $1.25, which is in line with peer systems. The multi-fare media generally offer deep discounts. A high percentage of passengers (43 percent) pay cash. The **farebox return ratio** has been approximately 14 percent, which meets minimum Transportation Development Act (TDA) regulations requirements of 10 percent.

- SCAT experienced strong **ridership** growth from 2005-06 (174,124 one-way passenger-trips) to 2008-09 (226,486). Ridership dropped in 2009-10 to 199,000, though Trolley ridership remained steady.

- The **subsidy per passenger-trip** (calculated by subtracting fare revenues from the costs of each route and dividing by the number of passenger-trips) directly relates the key public input to a public transit program (subsidy funding) with the key "output" (passenger-trips). The most effective services have been the fixed-routes with relatively low subsidies per passenger-trip of $3.30 to $3.97. Donations are accepted on the Avila Trolley, which slightly reduces the cost per passenger-trip requiring subsidies between $8.07 and $9.85 in 2008-09.

- SCAT derives its **revenues** from a number of sources, the largest being Local Transportation Fund (LTF) monies apportioned to the jurisdictions in the Five Cities area. LTF accounts for nearly 62 percent of the 2009-10 budget, which totaled $937,208. After LTF, the largest revenue source is fares. In FY 2009-10, fare revenue accounted 14.1 percent of the annual revenue.

- SCAT **expenses** were in the range of $900,000 for the past two fiscal years (excluding capital outlay). Salaries and benefits account for approximately 40 to 45 percent of the budget, with fuel as the next largest expense (19 percent of expenses), followed by maintenance (15 to 16 percent).

- SCAT has a **fleet** of five 35-foot buses and a trolley replica vehicle. The peak vehicle requirement is four buses and a trolley, which leaves only one vehicle as a back-up. The current back up is the hybrid vehicle which continually fails mechanically and should be retired as soon as possible. Based on industry standards, four of the vehicles will warrant replacement in 2013, with one warranting replacement in 2016. An additional trolley has recently been added to the fleet.

- The SCAT **operations and maintenance facility** is a leased space located in Grover Beach. The facility has one maintenance bay, a small administrative space, and a small space for drivers. The facility is small and run-down, with inadequate space and parking, but is centrally located.

Survey Results

In addition, SCAT services were evaluated through onboard passenger surveys, on-time performance surveys and boarding and alighting counts. The following observations were made:

- Onboard passenger surveys were conducted in May, 2010. A total of 212 forms were completed on the fixed routes (20 percent in Spanish) and 28 were completed on the Avila Trolley (with just one in Spanish). Key findings included:

  - 78 percent of survey respondents walked to the bus.
  - 36 percent of survey respondents used the bus to get to work, and 32 percent used it to get to school or college.

- 65 percent of respondents use the bus 4 or more days per week.
- Of those paying for their fare (non-transfer), 62 percent paid cash.
- Passengers were asked to rank service quality factors on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent. Overall service quality was ranked 3.3. The highest ranked service factors were bus cleanliness and safety, driver courtesy and convenience of transferring. The lowest performing service factor was the cost of fares, followed by service frequency, trip duration and crowding.
- 67 percent of survey respondents said they did not have a drivers license, and 86 percent did not have a vehicle available for the trip.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents (63 percent) indicated their household income was less than $20,000.

The boarding and alighting data collected by SCAT for a week in April provides detailed data regarding which stops received the highest and lowest activity. The busiest fixed-route stops (20 or more boardings/alightings on a weekday) were observed at:

- Ramona Gardens Transfer Center
- Prime Outlets
- Wal-Mart
- Arroyo Grande High School
- Grand Avenue at 16th Street
- Grand Avenue at 21st Street
- Dolliver at Pomeroy
- Wilmar and 19th Street

On the other hand, six stops recorded no passenger activity over the week.

Service Gaps

An area is typically considered well served by transit if it is within a quarter mile of a transit stop. Some input suggested coverage is very good in South County, while others felt walking distance to stops was too far. An evaluation of areas within a quarter-mile perimeter of the existing bus stops indicates the Five Cities area is predominantly well served, but with notable gaps in service:

- The area of Grover Beach north of Newport Avenue, between North 4th Street on the west and Alder Street on the east, focused on Atlantic Avenue.
- The northeast area of Arroyo Grande, focused on James Way.
- The southern area of Arroyo Grande along Valley Road.
- The Pier Avenue area of Oceano.

In particular, the neighborhood north of Grand Avenue along Atlantic City Drive is not well served by transit, yet this area has a high concentration of mobility-limited and low income persons, and a moderate number of households without a car available.

SERVICE PLAN

Based on the evaluation of a wide range of potential service alternatives, vetting through public outreach efforts, and discussions with RTA and SCAT staff, a number of service modifications are included in the South County Transit Plan, as shown in Figure A:

- Revise **Route 23 to Two-Route Service (Option B)**, with transfers at the high school. This strategy uses the existing Route 23 resources to operate two shorter routes (on an hourly headway) in a way that substantially reduces in-vehicle travel times (particularly for Oceano residents) and encourages additional ridership.
- **Revise Route 24** to eliminate service to Strother Park and to Dinosaur Caves, add service to Oceano Lagoon, and provide a transfer point at Arroyo Grande High School. This will shift bus service away from low performing areas to an area with higher ridership needs, and will improve on-time dependability.
- Minor **rescheduling** to reduce early departures.
- Operate **Avila Trolley on an hourly schedule** in busy traffic periods (summer) and **extend to Pismo Beach**, turning around at Bay Street. This will both address serious on-time performance problems during peak traffic periods, and will also expand the area of Trolley service.
- Start a **Rideshare vanpool** service to Avila Beach to address commuter needs of service employees.

Other, more extensive expansions of transit services (such as half-hourly service or evening service) were found to not be cost-effective. In total, this service plan will not change the number of vehicles needed to operate the SCAT service.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Extensive public outreach efforts were conducted to gain feedback on the service strategies that were developed for the plan. Outreach efforts were aimed at passengers through information tables and onboard surveys, at community leaders through focus groups, and at the public through an online web survey. Early outreach sought input regarding transit conditions and desired improvements, while later efforts sought feedback on study products and service alternatives.

The major reoccurring themes that emerged from this series of public outreach include:

- A strong preference for the proposed Route 23 two-route scenario.
- Route 24 should be re-aligned in conjunction with Route 23 to eliminate low demand areas and offer better coverage.
- A preference for the Avila Trolley to extend to Pismo Beach and convert to an hourly schedule in summer.
- A desire for better service between residential services in Oceano and shopping north of US 101.
- Extending trolley service to the greatest extent possible (within financial resources).

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The capital plan over the next seven years consists of the following:

Vehicle Purchases

- Five replacement buses
- One Trolley
- One staff vehicle

Miscellaneous Capital

- Bus Stop Improvements
- Security Camera and monitoring service/maintenance
- AVL Equipment for each vehicle

Other Miscellaneous Capital:

- New or leased operations and maintenance facility
- AVL implementation (SCAT's portion of RTA program)

Costs and implementation schedule for these improvements are shown in Table A, attached.

BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)

An initial review of BRT options is provided in the South County Transit Plan. "Full" BRT strategies (with separated bus travel lanes) was found to not be warranted, nor were signal pre-emption and/or transit "jump queue" lanes found to be warranted under current traffic/transit levels. If construction of new interchanges (or modifications to existing interchanges) occurs, consideration should be given to designs that aid operations of RTA Route 10. A follow-up study of BRT and park-and-ride strategies in South County will cover the topic in more detail.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

The South County Area Transit program founding document is a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) signed by The Cities of Arroyo Grande, Grover City, Pismo Beach and the County of San Luis Obispo. Actual operation of SCAT services is overseen by RTA, which provides a Regional Transit Administrator, dispatching services, maintenance and financial management. The discussion on institutional review and strategies centers on the existing institutional framework (under which SCAT is operated under a joint powers agreement with administrative and operational support from RTA) versus elimination of SCAT as an independent organization and provision of the current SCAT services directly by RTA. Note that the funding agreement included in the current JPA could remain. It should also be noted that there is already a high level of coordination between the programs.

Advantages

- Provides an opportunity for personnel costs to decline. Differences in benefits and work rules between SCAT and RTA employees result in per-hour costs that are approximately 10 to 15 percent higher than for SCAT employees. Providing SCAT services as part of RTA would increase general staff costs by a minimum of 10 percent. However, it would also allow for an existing Operating Supervisor to be eliminated through reorganization, and for an existing Lead Driver position be converted to a Driver position. Overall, this could result in an annual estimated cost savings of approximately $53,000 per year, or 6 percent of total annual operating budget.
- Reduces existing RTA administrative staff time needed for the four SCAT Board and four SCAT Executive Committee meetings each year, though overall administrative staffing levels would not change (replaced by staffing for RTA South County committee).
- Allows potential for through-routing (though the current service plan does not lend itself to through-routing between local routes and Route 10).
- Provides the potential for reduced facility overhead, as there would be no need for any maintenance area or equipment (though bus parking in South County is still needed to minimize "deadhead" costs.
- Allows for the use of both fleets where best needed in the region.
- Reduces reporting needs, audit needs, CHP inspections, etc.
- Simplifies coordination of drug and alcohol testing, rules and regulations, policies, uniforms etc.

Disadvantages

- Could potentially somewhat reduce the level of control of transit services in the Five Cities area currently held by the SCAT JPA signatories.
- Would disrupt current work assignments, and probably result in a requirement for some existing SCAT drivers to report for shifts in San Luis Obispo.
- Could potentially increase the need for future service reductions and/or fare increases in RTA services to achieve the higher minimum farebox return ratio (though at present adequate farebox return ratio can be provided without changes).

Overall, it is LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc's opinion that dissolving SCAT and providing South County fixed route services directly as part of RTA would provide long-term benefits to the region, so long as an appropriate level of control over South County transit service decisionmaking can be retained (such as through establishment of a South County subcommittee). However, this issue is best addressed as part of a broader assessment of consolidation of services throughout the region, and is not a specific recommendation of this sub-area plan. This discussion should also be brought in front of the South County Efficiency Committee of the SLOCOG Board for further consideration.

MARKETING STRATEGIES

The South County Transit Plan provides an assessment of current marketing efforts, which have been extensive in the past year, and provides strategies for improving marketing. Some of the highlights of the strategies include:

- **Riders Guides:** These are being updated, and will need to be renewed with service changes or potential re-branding. The Plan includes tips for developing successful guides.
- **Web Site:** The web site can be improved with better color-schemes and graphics which will make it easier to navigate.
- **Vehicles:** The transit vehicles should be instantly recognized as a positive statement of transit in the community. The Plan offers tips for making the vehicles attractive and recognizable.
- **Passenger Facilities:** Because these are provided throughout the community (there are over 100 stops), passenger amenities are a great tool to convey transit information as well as provide a positive image. Bus stop signs should be converted from one-sided to two-sided.
- **Outreach:** There are regularly scheduled outreach efforts and plans for developing a "How to Ride" video. Further efforts are needed to reach the Latino community.
- **Branding:** The current identity of the SCAT system is confused with the RTA identity, and the name could be improved. If SCAT remains a separate entity from RTA, it will be important to brand the system with its own identity.
- **Service Monitoring:** This is an important part of marketing and includes conducting onboard surveys.

FINANCIAL PLAN

Tables B through D, attached, present the operating costs, farebox revenue estimates, and overall financial plan. It is recommended the program be funded through the following sources:

- Local Transportation Fund
- State Transit Assistance (STA)
- Rural Transit Fund (RTF)
- City of Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo County Contributions for Trolley
- Prop 1b PTMISEA
- Prop 1b CTSPG Security Grants
- Bus Fares
- Advertising

- No increase in the base transit fare level ($1.25 per one-way trip for general public riders, and $0.60 for seniors, persons with disabilities, and Medicare card holders) is recommended. However, current pass costs provide much greater discounts from the base fare than is typical for similar transit systems, which contributes to a low overall fare revenue per passenger-trip ($0.57). It is therefore recommended that pass fares be increased as follows:

  General Public 31-day Pass – Increase from $30 to $44
  Elderly/Disabled 31-day Pass – Increase from $15 to $22

General Public 20-Ride Pass – Increase from $20 to $22
Elderly/Disabled 20-Ride Pass – Increase from $8 to $11

- Overall, annual operating costs under this plan increase from $928,700 in FY 2010-2011 to $1,073,100 in FY 2017-2018 (reflecting the cost impacts of the service plan, as well as an assumed 2 percent annual inflation rate). The specific impacts of the service plan are forecast to increase annual operating costs by a modest $3,500 to $3,900 per year, while marketing improvements are forecast to cost $2,300 to $9,500 per year.

- Overall annual operating costs are forecast to increase by 13 percent, while ridership increases by 14 percent. Between the ridership increase associated with the plan and the additional multiride pass revenues, farebox revenues are forecast to increase by $17,400 to $19,200 per year.

- Overall, the plan will result in a net *reduction* in operating subsidy requirements ranging from $4,900 to $13,000 per year (approximately 1 percent).

- The operating budget is balanced over the planning period; the ending fund balance is $365,600 in the last year of the plan (FY 2017-2018). This provides a reasonable fund balance to cash flow purposes, to address unforeseen capital costs, and to provide local funding for bus purchases beyond this plan period.

- SCAT and RTA funding structures could be significantly changed if the Five Cities area is designated as "urbanized" based on the results of the 2010 Census. This would make the area eligible for FTA 5307 funding, would reduce countywide FTA 5311 funding shares, and would change the minimum farebox return ratios for the transit programs. While specific funding impacts cannot be made, overall designation as urbanized would expand funding availability for transit services in South County.

FIGURE A

Recommended South County Service Plan

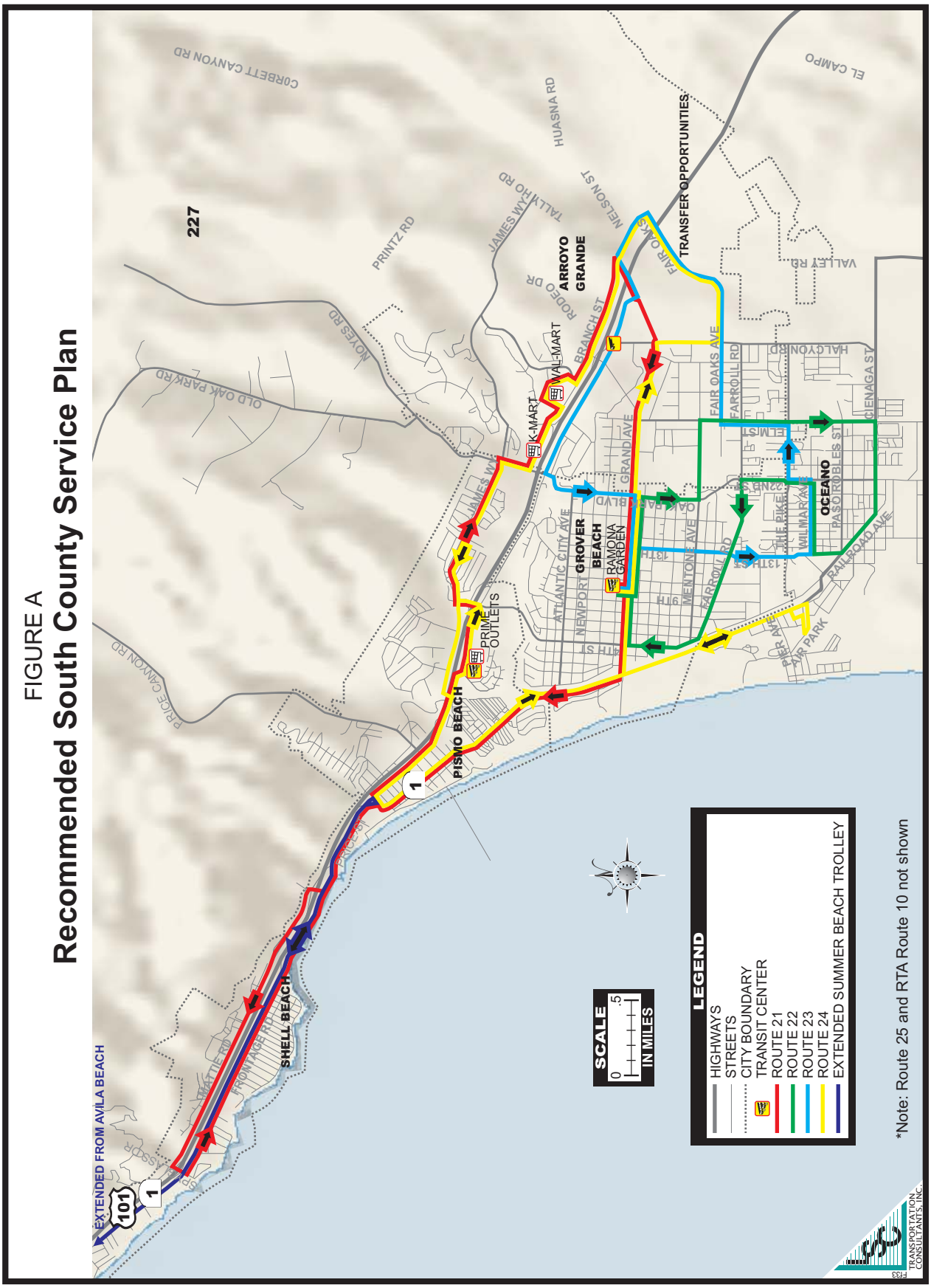


TABLE A: South County Transit Capital Plan

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Current Capital Costs	Projected FY11-12 [1]	Projected FY12-13 [1]	Projected FY13-14 [1]	Projected FY14-15 [1]	Projected FY15-16 [1]	Projected FY16-17 [1]	Projected FY17-18 [1]	**7-Year Total**
SCAT Replacement Vehicles									
Number of Buses Needed [2]		1	2	2	-	-	-	-	**5**
Cost	$380.0	$391.4	$806.3	$830.5	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	**$2,028.2**
Number of Trolleys Needed		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Cost	$175.0	$180.3	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	**$180.3**
Total Number of Vehicles		2	2	2	-	-	-	-	**6**
Total Replacement Vehicle Cost		***$571.7***	***$806.3***	***$830.5***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$2,208.4***
SCAT Additional Vehicles [3]									
Number of Staff Vehicles Needed		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Cost	$23.0	$23.7	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	**$23.7**
Total Number of Vehicles		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Total Additional Vehicle Cost		**$23.7**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$ 23.7**
Miscellanous Capital Equipment									
Bus Stop Improvements		$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	**$7.0**
Operations Facility Security Improvements		$1.0	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	**$3.4**
New Operations and Maintenance Facility		***To be determined***							
AVL Equipment for Vehicle Fleet [4]		$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$105.0	$0.0	$0.5	$0.5	**$105.5**
Total Miscellaneous Capital Equipment Cost		***$2.0***	***$1.4***	***$1.4***	***$106.4***	***$1.4***	***$1.9***	***$1.9***	***$115.9***
Total South County Capital Costs		***$597.3***	***$807.7***	***$831.9***	***$106.4***	***$1.4***	***$1.9***	***$1.9***	***$2,348.0***

Note 1: Assumes a 3 percent annual inflation rate for the cost of vehicles.

Note 2: The Hybrid Bus should be retired as soon as possible due to service issues.

Note 3: A staff vehicle is recommended for optimal supervision.

Note 4: Assumes $15,000 per vehicle for AVL equipment. Does not include additonal program costs shared with SLORTA, yet to be determined.

Source: SCAT and LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE B: South County Transit Plan - Estimated Operating Cost

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Status Quo FY10-11 [1]	Projected FY11-12	Projected FY12-13	Projected FY13-14	Projected FY14-15	Projected FY15-16	Projected FY16-17	Projected FY17-18	**7-Year Total**
SCAT Route Services									
Route 21 (no changes)	$226.9	$231.5	$236.1	$240.8	$245.6	$250.6	$255.6	$260.7	$1,720.8
Route 23 (with changes) [2]	$248.4	$277.0	$282.6	$288.2	$294.0	$299.8	$305.8	$312.0	$2,059.4
Route 24 (with changes) [3]	$237.5	$225.3	$229.8	$234.4	$239.1	$243.9	$248.8	$253.7	$1,675.0
Route 25 (no changes)	$9.7	$9.9	$10.1	$10.3	$10.5	$10.7	$10.9	$11.1	$73.5
Total SCAT Marginal Operating Costs [1]	$722.5	$743.7	$758.6	$773.7	$789.2	$805.0	$821.1	$837.5	$5,528.8
Trolley Services									
Avila Beach Trolley (with changes) [4]	$64.8	$62.8	$64.1	$65.4	$66.7	$68.0	$69.4	$70.8	$467.1
Total Route Marginal Operating Costs	$787.3	$806.5	$822.6	$839.1	$855.9	$873.0	$890.5	$908.3	$5,995.8
Impact of Operating Plan	--	*$3.5*	*$3.5*	*$3.6*	*$3.7*	*$3.7*	*$3.8*	*$3.9*	
SCAT Fixed Costs	$141.4	$144.3	$147.1	$150.1	$153.1	$156.1	$159.3	$162.5	$1,072.4
Additional Marketing Costs [5]	--	$3.1	$7.4	$9.5	$3.5	$3.3	$6.7	$2.3	$35.8
Total SCAT Operating Costs	$928.7	$953.9	$977.2	$998.6	$1,012.4	$1,032.5	$1,056.4	$1,073.1	$7,104.0

Note 1: This analysis assumes an annual inflation rate of 2 percent. Operating cost is based on the approved 2010-11 budget: marginal operating cost is $24.92 per hour plus $1.87 per mile, plus fixed costs. Fixed costs do not include costs associtated with a new operations facility. Assumes new services begin July 1, 2011.

Note 2: Reflects implementation of *Route 23 Two-Route Alternative Option B* on July 1, 2011

Note 3: Reflects elimination of Strother Park and Dinosaur Caves segments and addition of Oceano Lagoon services on July 1, 2011

Note 4: Avila Beach Trolley route would be extended to one hour in summer. The longer route, served half as often would decrease mileage by 8 percent, slightly reducing cost.

Note 5: From Marketing Cost Table. Does not include Capital Items.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE C: South County Transit Plan - Estimated Ridership and Farebox Revenue

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Status Quo FY10-11 [1]	Projected [2] FY11-12	Projected FY12-13	Projected FY13-14	Projected FY14-15	Projected FY15-16	Projected FY16-17	Projected FY17-18	7-Year Total
RIDERSHIP [2]									
SCAT Route Services									
Route 21 (no changes, without fare increase)	65.6	66.5	67.4	68.3	69.3	70.3	71.3	72.3	485.3
Route 23 (with changes, without fare increase) [3]	67.1	74.6	75.7	76.7	77.8	78.9	80.0	81.1	544.9
Route 24 (with changes, without fare increase) [4]	52.0	57.0	57.8	58.6	59.4	60.3	61.1	62.0	416.2
Route 25 (no changes, without fare increase)	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	52.9
Impact of Multiride Pass Fare Increase	--	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-13.1
Total SCAT Ridership	191.8	203.5	206.3	209.3	212.2	215.2	218.3	223.2	1499.2
Trolley Services									
Avila Beach Trolley (with changes) [5]	7.3	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.3	8.4	56.3
Total Ridership	199.1	211.2	214.2	217.2	220.3	223.4	226.5	231.6	1555.5
FAREBOX REVENUE [6]									
SCAT Route Services									
Route 21 (no changes, without fare increase)	--	*$38.2*	*$38.7*	*$39.3*	*$39.8*	*$40.4*	*$41.0*	*$41.5*	*$279.0*
Route 23 (with changes, without fare increase) [3]	--	*$42.9*	*$43.5*	*$44.1*	*$44.7*	*$45.4*	*$46.0*	*$46.6*	*$313.3*
Route 24 (with changes, without fare increase) [4]	--	*$32.8*	*$33.2*	*$33.7*	*$34.2*	*$34.6*	*$35.1*	*$35.6*	*$239.3*
Route 25 (no changes, without fare increase)	--	*$4.2*	*$4.2*	*$4.3*	*$4.3*	*$4.4*	*$4.5*	*$4.5*	*$30.4*
Impact of Multiride Pass Fare Increase		*$3.6*	*$3.7*	*$3.8*	*$3.9*	*$4.0*	*$4.1*	*$4.2*	*$27.3*
Total SCAT Fare Revenue	--	*$121.7*	*$123.4*	*$125.2*	*$127.0*	*$128.8*	*$130.7*	*$132.5*	*$889.3*
Trolley Services									
Avila Beach Trolley (with changes) [5]	--	*$7.3*	*$7.4*	*$7.5*	*$7.6*	*$7.7*	*$7.8*	*$7.9*	*$53.1*
Total Fare Revenue	*$110.0*	*$128.9*	*$130.8*	*$132.7*	*$134.6*	*$136.5*	*$138.5*	*$140.4*	*$942.3*
Impact of Service Plan and Pass Fare Increase		*$17.4*	*$17.7*	*$18.0*	*$18.3*	*$18.6*	*$18.9*	*$19.2*	
Overall Impact of Plan on Operating Subsidy		*-$10.8*	*-$6.8*	*-$4.9*	*-$11.1*	*-$11.5*	*-$8.4*	*-$13.0*	
Farebox Return Ratio	*14.0%*	*16.0%*	*15.9%*	*15.8%*	*15.7%*	*15.6%*	*15.5%*	*15.5%*	*15.7%*

Note 1: 2010-2011 Ridership based on 2009-10, with 1.4 percent growth (equivalent to population growth and aging in the Five Cities area). Fare revenue for 2010-11 based on adopted budget.

Note 2: Projected ridership is based on service changes (estimates from alterantives analysis chapter used) plus a 1.4 percent annual growth and aging factor.

Note 3: Route 23 would be divided into two routes, per *Route 23 Two-Route Alternative Option B*. Increases mileage by 20 percent.

Note 4: Strother Park and Dinosaur Caves segements would be eliminated, and Oceano Lagoon added. Decreases mileage by 13 percent.

Note 5: Avila Beach Trolley route would be extended to one hour and would serve Pismo Beach in summer.

Note 6: Fare revenue based on estimated ridership and an average of $0.57 collected per passenger trip on SCAT and $0.94 collected per passenger trip on Avila Beach Trolley.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE D: South County Financial Plan

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Status Quo FY10-11 [1]	Projected FY11-12	Projected FY12-13	Projected FY13-14	Projected FY14-15	Projected FY15-16	Projected FY16-17	Projected FY17-18	7-Year Total
OPERATING PLAN									
Total Operating Costs (from Table 38)	$928.7	$953.9	$977.2	$998.6	$1,012.4	$1,032.5	$1,056.4	$1,073.1	**$7,104.0**
Operating Revenues									
Passenger Fares	$110.0	$128.9	$130.8	$132.7	$134.6	$136.5	$138.5	$140.4	**$942.3**
State Transit Assistance [2]	$95.0	$95.0	$97.9	$100.8	$103.8	$106.9	$110.1	$113.4	**$727.9**
RTF - Preventative Maintenance [3]	$70.0	$70.0	$71.4	$72.8	$74.3	$75.8	$77.3	$78.8	**$520.4**
Avila Trolley--Pismo Beach Contribution [4]	$0.0	$5.3	$5.4	$5.5	$5.6	$5.7	$5.9	$6.0	**$39.5**
Avila Trolley--SLO County Contribution [4]	$58.9	$57.5	$58.7	$59.8	$61.0	$62.3	$63.5	$64.8	**$427.6**
Total Non-TDA Funds	$333.9	$356.8	$364.1	$371.6	$379.3	$387.2	$395.2	$403.4	**$2,657.7**
Local Transportation Funds [5]	$595.2	$597.1	$613.1	$627.0	$633.1	$645.3	$661.2	$669.6	$4,446.3
Arroyo Grande (36.4%)	$215.5	$217.3	$223.2	$228.2	$230.4	$234.9	$240.7	$243.7	$1,618.4
Grover Beach (28.4%)	$171.4	$169.6	$174.1	$178.1	$179.8	$183.3	$187.8	$190.2	$1,262.7
Pismo Beach (18.6%)	$111.9	$111.1	$114.0	$116.6	$117.8	$120.0	$123.0	$124.5	$827.0
SLO County (16.6%)	$96.4	$99.1	$101.8	$104.1	$105.1	$107.1	$109.8	$111.2	$738.1
Total Operating Revenues	$929.1	$953.9	$977.2	$998.6	$1,012.4	$1,032.5	$1,056.4	$1,073.1	$7,104.0
LTF Balance									
Total Available LTF	$975.2	*$975.2*	*$985.0*	*$994.8*	*$1,004.8*	*$1,014.8*	*$1,025.0*	*$1,035.2*	***$7,034.9***
LTF Used for Transit Operations	$595.2	*$597.1*	*$613.1*	*$627.0*	*$633.1*	*$645.3*	*$661.2*	*$669.6*	***$4,446.3***
Balance	$380.0	$378.1	$371.9	$367.8	$371.7	$369.6	$363.8	$365.6	***$2,588.6***
CAPITAL PLAN									
Capital Costs (From Tables 32 and 36)	--	$597.3	$9,987.7	$831.9	$106.4	$1.4	$1.9	$1.9	**$11,528.5**
Capital Revenues									
Proposition 1B - PTMISEA [6]	--	$476.9	$7,989.7	$665.1	$84.7	$1.0	$1.5	$0.0	**$9,218.9**
Proposition 1B - CTSGP [7]	--	$1.0	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.0	**$3.0**
Rural Transit Fund [8]	$550.0	$119.5	$1,997.5	$166.4	$21.3	$0.0	$0.0	$1.9	**$2,306.6**
Total		$597.3	$9,987.7	$831.9	$106.4	$1.4	$1.9	$1.9	**$11,528.5**
Balance		***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	

Note 1: Based on adopted 2010-11 budget.
Note 2: STA is projected to remain steady the first year, then grow by 3.0% annually.
Note 3: Rural Transit Funds will continue to be used for preventative maintenance, remaining steady in 2011-12, then assuming 2 percent growth.
Note 4: The Avila Beach Trolley is 90 percent funded through San Luis Obispo County. Under new plan, 1/3 of summer service, or 9 percent of annual service will take place in the City of Pismo Beach. It is assumed therefore that SLO will pay 81% of the trolley cost, and Pismo Beach will pay 9 percent.

Note 5: While no LTF revenue growth is expected in 2011-12, a higher percentage of LTF discretionary funds will be used for transit to pay for increased operating costs. Growth of LTF funds is assumed to be 1 percent thereafter, but each year of the plan slightly more discretionary funds will be used for transit (up to $54,000 more in 2016-17).

Note 6: Near term programing is $2.5 million for the region, with no funding available past 2016-17.

Note 7: Prop 1B funds for security and safety projects will be used for purchase and maintenance of a security camera at the SCAT operations facility.
Note 8: In 2010-11, approximately $550,000 of RTF will be available regionwide. This plan proposes to fund approximately 20 percent of the capital needs with RTF, and the balance with Prop 1B funds.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1	Introduction	1
2	Study Area Characteristics	3
	Study Area	3
	South San Luis Obispo County Background	3
	Population	5
	Employment	15
	Commute Patterns	16
	Review of Existing Plans and Policies	19
3	Transportation Services	27
	South County Area Transit	29
	Other Transit Providers	51
4	Field Data and Survey Results	55
	Passenger Survey Results for Fixed-Routes 21, 23, 24 and 25	57
	Boarding and Alighting Surveys for SCAT Routes 21, 23, and 25	57
	On-Time Performance Survey Results for Routes 21, 23, 24 and 25	57
	Survey Results for the Avila Trolley	57
5	Transit Performance Review	59
6	Review of Goals, Objectives and Standards	63
	Introduction	63
	Review of Existing Goals and Objectives	63
7	Public Outreach	73
	Introduction	73
	Input Summary	73
	South County Transit Plan Focus Groups	78
	SCAT Executive Committee Interviews	82
	Consumer Petition	85
	Bus Driver and Surveyor Observations	85
8	Service Gaps	90
	Summary of Service Gaps	93
9	Service Alternatives	95
	Introduction	95
	Five Cities Alternatives	95
	Span/Frequency of Service Alternatives	96

Route Alternatives 100
Avila Beach Service Alternatives 118
Commute Alternatives 124
Special Event Transportation 125
Route 10 126
Comparison of Service Alternatives 127
Preliminary Recommendations 129

10 Capital Improvement Program 131
Vehicle Plan 131
Passenger and Facility Needs 134
Capital Financial Plan 141

11 Bus Rapid Transit Strategies 143
BRT Service on Separate Facilities 143
BRT in Mixed Travel Lanes 143
Transit Signal Priority 145
Jump Queue Lanes 147
Evaluation of BRT Availability to the South County Area 147

12 Public Outreach 151
Introduction 151

13 Institutional Framework 157
Existing Institutional Form 157

14 Marketing Strategies 163
Introduction 163
Assessment of Current SCAT Marketing Strategies 163
Marketing Improvements 165
Other Marketing Opportunities 170
Marketing Costs 172

15 Transit Funding Sources and Financial Plan 175
Financial Resources 175
Federal Transit Funding sources 175
State Transit Funding Sources 178
Local Transit Funding Sources 179
Financial Plan 183

Appendix A – Survey Instruments and Detailed Survey Results
Appendix B – Example Development Review Checklist
Appendix C – Memo on Route 23 Via Brisco Road
Appendix D – Transportation Choices Program: Vanpool Q & A
Appendix E – Route 10 Straightline Map

LIST OF TABLES

Table **Page**

1 2000 South San Luis Obispo County Population, by Census Block Group 6
2 Historical Population for South San Luis Obispo County 7
3 Population Growth for South San Luis Obispo County....14
4 South SLO County Employment Status, 2000 15
5 South SLO County Commute Pattern Data, 2008 17
6 Commute Mode Data for the South SLO County Area....19
7 Travel Times 31
8 SCAT Operating Data by Year 33
9 SCAT Performance Data by Year....36
10 SCAT Revenues....41
11 San Luis Obispo County Transit Revenues FY 2008-09....43
12 SCAT Expenditures 45
13 SCAT Cost Allocation Model for FY 2008-09....47
14 SCAT Vehicle Fleet....48
15 SCAT Performance Data by Route....57
16 Goal I 64
17 Goals II through IV 67
18 Goal V 69
19 Goal VI....68
20 Adult and Community Leaders Focus Group Alternatives....80
21 South County Span of Service and Service Frequency Alternatives....97
22 Example Pulse Point Operating Schedule....100
23 Travel Times for Pulse Point Route Alternative....102
24 South County SCAT Route Service Alternatives 103
25 Example Route 23 Two-Route Alternative Operating Schedule....108
26 Avila Beach Trolley Actual Surveyed Running Times 119
27 Trolley and Avila Beach Service Alternatives....120
28 Comparison of South County Service Alternatives 128
29 SCAT Vehicle Replacement Needs 131
30 Maximum Passenger Load....132
31 SCAT Maintenance Facility Space Requirements....140
32 South County Transit Capital Plan 142
33 Comparison of South County Characteristics with BRT....149
34 Responses to High School On-Board Survey 153
35 Impact if Incorporating SCAT into RTA on Annual Operating 159
36 South County Operating Budget and Cost....173
37 Multi-Fare Instrument Elasticity Analysis....183
38 South County Transit Plan - Estimated Operating Cost 184
39 South County Transit Plan - Estimated Ridership and Farebox Revenue 186
40 South County Financial Plan 187

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure **Page**

1 Study Area 4
2 Youth Population by Census Block Group 9
3 Elderly Population by Census Block Group 10
4 Mobility Limited Population by Census Block Group 11
5 Below Poverty Level Population by Census Block Group 12
6 Zero Vehicle Households by Census Block Group 13
7 SCAT Organizational Chart 28
8 SCAT Fixed-Routes in 5 Cities Area 29
9 Fares Sold by Type – August 2009 32
10 SCAT Ridership by Month, April 2009 – March 2010 34
11 SCAT Fixed-Route Average Ridership by Time of Day 35
12 SCAT Ridership by Service Miles 37
13 SCAT Ridership by Service Hour 37
14 SCAT Cost per Passenger-Trip 38
15 SCAT Subsidy Required per Passenger-Trip 38
16 SCAT Farebox Recovery Ratio 39
17 SCAT Mile Between Roadcalls by Year 40
18 SCAT Revenues by Source 2008-09 42
19 SCAT Revenues by Source 2009-10 42
20 SCAT Expenses by Category FY 2008-09 46
21 SCAT Expenses by Category FY 2009-10 46
22 Quarter- Mile Service Area by Transit Stop 90
23 Existing Service Gaps 94
24 Summer 2009 Evening Boarding Survey 99
25 Pulse Point Route Alternatives 101
26 SCAT Fixed-Routes with On-Call Alternatives 106
27 Route 23 Two-Route Option A Alternative 109
28 Route 23 Two-Route Option B Alternative 111
29 Number of Vehicles Required with Conversion to Demand Response Service 113
30 Potential New Stops in 5 Cities Area 116
31 Trolley Alternatives 122
32 Recommended South County Service Plan 130
33 Bus Stop Sign 138
34 SCAT Boardings by Fare Type 2009-10 182

Chapter 1
Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Public transit strategies play a crucial role in the quality of life provided by modern society. Access to social and medical services, employment opportunities, educational resources and basic necessities are topics of universal concern, as they have a strong impact on the economy, ease of movement, and quality of life for the residents of an area. In addition to providing mobility to residents without easy access to a private automobile, transit services can provide a wide range of economic development and environmental benefits.

Transit services are important to the South County portion of San Luis Obispo County, including the Five Cities area (Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Oceano, Pismo Beach, and Shell Beach), as well as Nipomo and Avila Beach. Services provided by the South County Area Transit (SCAT) program, as well as regional services, are currently providing a wide range of benefits to the community. Improvements in transit services are also important elements of local and regional plans to address environmental, economic, and livability goals.

The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, aware of the importance of transportation issues, has retained LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc., to prepare the South County Transit Plan for the South County area. The study provides an opportunity to develop plans that will tailor transit services to current conditions and provide a "business plan" for the transit program regarding services, capital improvements, marketing, and management strategies. While this study focuses on the SCAT program, regional services in South County are also considered. It should be noted that a separate Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) has been prepared for the Nipomo Dial-A-Ride program.

This document, building on a series of interim study Technical Memoranda, provides:

- A thorough review of the existing demographic conditions in the study area
- An analysis of current transit conditions including survey results
- Detailed service alternatives analysis
- A review of goals and objectives
- A capital improvement program
- An initial evaluation of potential Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) strategies (with a more in-depth study to be produced separately)
- Marketing strategies
- A detailed financial plan

This South County Transit Plan provides the leaders and transportation providers of the area with a blueprint for transit operations over the coming seven years.

This Page Left Intentionally Blank.

Chapter 2
Study Area Characteristics

STUDY AREA

San Luis Obispo County is located along the central coast of California, midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, as shown in Figure 1. The overall county is roughly 3,316 square miles and is bordered by Monterey County to the north, Kern County to the east, and Santa Barbara County to the south. The study area for this report focuses on the southern portion of San Luis Obispo County, which includes the Five Cities area (Shell Beach, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, and Oceano), Avila Beach and Nipomo. The western edge of the study area is bordered by the Pacific Ocean and expansive beaches and sand dunes. In contrast, the eastern, southern, and northern borders contain agricultural land and foothills and mountain peaks associated with the Santa Lucia Mountain range.

The major roadways within the transportation system in the study area include US Highway (US) 101, California State Route (SR) 1 and California State Route 227. From the City of San Luis Obispo south to Pismo Beach, SR 1 shares US 101 alignment, at which point US101 continues in a southeastern direction and SR 1 follows the coastline south.

SOUTH SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY BACKGROUND

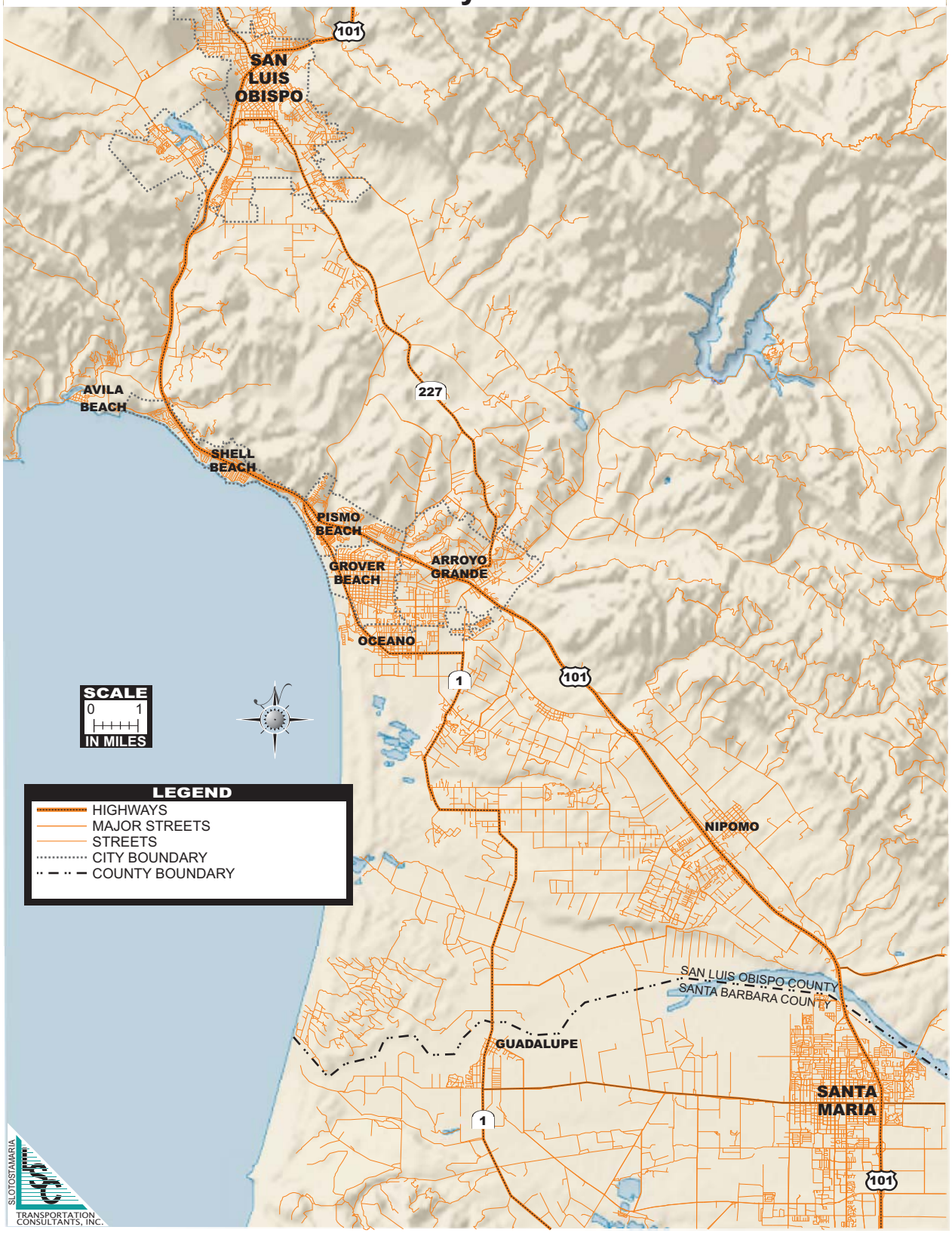
The cultural history of south San Luis Obispo County reaches as far back as the Chumash Indians, who inhabited the area for roughly 8,000 years. In the late 1700's, the arrival of Europeans resulted in the establishment of missions, including Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, located in downtown San Luis Obispo; this settlement spread agricultural activities to the South County area due to its fertile soils. The Arroyo Grande valley continues to flourish with agricultural practices, producing major crops such as strawberries, citrus, wine grapes, and various vegetables.

In 1840, four years after it was claimed by the United States, San Luis Obispo became one of the first counties in California. The South County area includes three incorporated cities. Arroyo Grande was the first town to be established, in 1862 as a township and incorporated in 1911. Grover Beach followed suit, being founded in 1887 (as Grover City) as a township and an incorporated city in 1959. Pismo Beach was established in 1891 and became incorporated in 1946 (including the Shell Beach area). Key unincorporated communities include Avila Beach, Oceano, and Nipomo.

Today, the South County area not only provides active agricultural activities, but many recreational activities, including surfing, camping, and hiking locations throughout. Additionally, with the wine grape industry, many wineries have been established, leading to a winery-based tourist industry.

FIGURE 1

Study Area



Major Activity Centers

Activity centers that generate particular need for public transit service include the following:

Activity Centers for Seniors, Persons with Disabilities, Low-Income Persons and Youth

- Central Coast Senior Center
- Nipomo Senior Club
- Estrella Career Center
- Nipomo Department of Social Services
- Arroyo Grande Women's Center / South County Seniors
- Business and Career Center of Five Cities
- Arroyo Grande Department of Social Services

Medical Facilities

- Arroyo Grande Community Hospital
- Marian Medical Center, Santa Maria
- Oak Park/James Way Medical Complex

Government/Recreational

- Arroyo Grande Library
- Shell Beach Library
- Oceano Community Center
- Arroyo Grande City Hall
- Grover Beach City Hall
- Avila Beach Village
- Grand Avenue (Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande)
- Nipomo Library
- Arroyo Grande Community Center
- Pismo Beach Veteran's Memorial Hall
- Pismo Beach City Hall
- Downtown Pismo Beach and Pier
- Arroyo Grande Village
- Shell Beach Village
- West Tefft Street (Nipomo)

Educational

- Judkins Middle School
- Paulding Middle School
- Lopez High School
- Mesa Middle School
- Arroyo Grande High School
- Nipomo High School

POPULATION

Table 1 presents detailed data regarding the population characteristics of the South County area. The data is provided by Census block group for Shell Beach, Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Oceano, Nipomo, applicable areas of Avila Beach and unincorporated areas. As shown, the total population for the area in 2000 (the most recent available comprehensive data)

TABLE 1: 2000 South San Luis Obispo County Population, by Census Block Group

Tract	Block Group	Area	Total Population #	Youth (ages 5 - 16) #	Youth (ages 5 - 16) %	Elderly (65+) #	Elderly (65+) %	Mobility Disability[1] #	Mobility Disability[1] %	Low Income #	Low Income %	Total # Household	Zero Vehicle Households #	Zero Vehicle Households %
116	3	*Avila Beach*	1068	86	8.1%	354	33.1%	24	2.2%	66	6.2%	555	18	3.2%
117	1	*Shell Beach*	1863	233	12.5%	437	23.5%	43	2.3%	107	5.7%	918	42	4.6%
117	2	*Pismo Beach*	1096	241	22.0%	161	14.7%	45	4.1%	172	15.7%	535	13	2.4%
	3		835	130	15.6%	98	11.7%	59	7.1%	99	11.9%	444	57	12.8%
	4		1075	0	0.0%	628	58.4%	134	12.5%	94	8.7%	653	66	10.1%
	5		3656	571	15.6%	771	21.1%	59	1.6%	296	8.1%	1670	26	1.6%
Subtotal: City of Pismo Beach			*6662*	*942*	*14.1%*	*1658*	*24.9%*	*297*	*4.5%*	*661*	*9.9%*	*3302*	*162*	*4.9%*
118	1	*Arroyo Grande*	1173	281	24.0%	180	15.3%	45	3.8%	42	3.6%	442	0	0.0%
	2		2377	483	20.3%	488	20.5%	64	2.7%	95	4.0%	949	7	0.7%
	3		819	200	24.4%	99	12.1%	30	3.7%	100	12.2%	303	14	4.6%
	4		694	164	23.6%	177	25.5%	23	3.3%	7	1.0%	300	0	0.0%
	5		1527	225	14.7%	275	18.0%	57	3.7%	76	5.0%	581	25	4.3%
119	1	*Arroyo Grande*	1271	148	11.6%	552	43.4%	63	5.0%	59	4.6%	584	23	3.9%
	2		1580	224	14.2%	293	18.5%	137	8.7%	110	7.0%	665	69	10.4%
119	1	*Arroyo Grande*	1402	342	24.4%	279	19.9%	49	3.5%	68	4.9%	626	36	5.8%
	2		1003	316	31.5%	174	17.3%	81	8.1%	196	19.5%	416	61	14.7%
	3		1668	351	21.0%	298	17.9%	77	4.6%	125	7.5%	710	111	15.6%
	4		1446	265	18.3%	288	19.9%	119	8.2%	67	4.6%	529	49	9.3%
	5		1760	352	20.0%	295	16.8%	69	3.9%	195	11.1%	723	33	4.6%
Subtotal: City of Arroyo Grande			*16720*	*3351*	*20.0%*	*3398*	*20.3%*	*814*	*4.9%*	*1140*	*6.8%*	*6828*	*428*	*6.3%*
120	1	*Grover Beach*	880	198	22.5%	92	10.5%	28	3.2%	104	11.8%	350	7	2.0%
	2		1884	406	21.5%	201	10.7%	108	5.7%	270	14.3%	779	83	10.7%
	3		1920	493	25.7%	163	8.5%	84	4.4%	206	10.7%	733	55	7.5%
	4		2336	511	21.9%	348	14.9%	108	4.6%	83	3.6%	912	42	4.6%
121	1	*Grover Beach*	1505	387	25.7%	207	13.8%	69	4.6%	245	16.3%	629	45	7.2%
	2		2066	421	20.4%	323	15.6%	118	5.7%	382	18.5%	752	41	5.5%
	3		1627	398	24.5%	105	6.5%	87	5.3%	95	5.8%	557	38	6.8%
	4		882	175	19.8%	67	7.6%	35	4.0%	84	9.5%	319	9	2.8%
Subtotal: Grover Beach			*13100*	*2989*	*22.8%*	*1506*	*11.5%*	*637*	*4.9%*	*1469*	*11.2%*	*5031*	*320*	*6.4%*
122	1	*Oceano*	699	130	18.6%	105	15.0%	46	6.6%	180	25.8%	299	31	10.4%
	2		2376	687	28.9%	172	7.2%	174	7.3%	432	18.2%	686	26	3.8%
	3		2359	772	32.7%	91	3.9%	136	5.8%	418	17.7%	654	67	10.2%
	4		1690	312	18.5%	373	22.1%	99	5.9%	143	8.5%	763	42	5.5%
Subtotal: Oceano			*7124*	*1901*	*26.7%*	*741*	*10.4%*	*455*	*6.4%*	*1173*	*16.5%*	*2402*	*166*	*6.9%*
123	1	*Unincorporated*	474	99	20.9%	46	9.7%	18	3.8%	90	19.0%	133	11	8.3%
	2		941	333	35.4%	108	11.5%	59	6.3%	26	2.8%	322	21	6.5%
	3		1590	211	13.3%	478	30.1%	47	3.0%	23	1.4%	702	17	2.4%
	4		747	133	17.8%	83	11.1%	42	5.6%	30	4.0%	239	0	0.0%
	5		670	135	20.1%	86	12.8%	26	3.9%	119	17.8%	230	0	0.0%
	6		1459	177	12.1%	316	21.7%	90	6.2%	31	2.1%	602	9	1.5%
	7		467	125	26.8%	82	17.6%	23	4.9%	83	17.8%	158	0	0.0%
123	1	*Unincorporated*	2460	576	23.4%	356	14.5%	101	4.1%	180	7.3%	940	0	0.0%
	2		772	178	23.1%	105	13.6%	23	3.0%	103	13.3%	284	7	2.5%
	3		1257	174	13.8%	124	9.9%	21	1.7%	9	0.7%	431	0	0.0%
Subtotal: Unincorporated Areas of South SLO County			*10837*	*2141*	*19.8%*	*1784*	*16.5%*	*450*	*4.2%*	*694*	*6.4%*	*4041*	*65*	*1.6%*
124	1	*Nipomo*	1723	551	32.0%	120	7.0%	55	3.2%	88	5.1%	495	18	3.6%
	2		1153	387	33.6%	88	7.6%	107	9.3%	228	19.8%	337	19	5.6%
	3		2704	801	29.6%	232	8.6%	118	4.4%	201	7.4%	761	40	5.3%
124	1	*Nipomo*	4184	1073	25.6%	580	13.9%	198	4.7%	241	5.8%	1395	29	2.1%
	2		2890	605	20.9%	517	17.9%	196	6.8%	133	4.6%	1044	26	2.5%
Subtotal: Nipomo			*12654*	*3417*	*27.0%*	*1537*	*12.1%*	*674*	*5.3%*	*891*	*7.0%*	*4032*	*132*	*3.3%*
Proportion of Total by Subarea														
		Avila Beach	*1.5%*	*0.6%*		*3.1%*		*0.7%*		*1.1%*			*1.4%*	
		Shell Beach	*2.7%*	*1.5%*		*3.8%*		*1.3%*		*1.7%*			*3.2%*	
		Pismo Beach	*9.5%*	*6.3%*		*14.5%*		*8.8%*		*10.7%*			*12.2%*	
		Arroyo Grande	*23.9%*	*22.3%*		*29.8%*		*24.0%*		*18.4%*			*32.1%*	
		Grover Beach	*18.7%*	*19.8%*		*13.2%*		*18.8%*		*23.7%*			*24.0%*	
		Oceano	*10.2%*	*12.6%*		*6.5%*		*13.4%*		*18.9%*			*12.5%*	
		Unincorporated	*15.5%*	*14.2%*		*15.6%*		*13.3%*		*11.2%*			*4.9%*	
		Nipomo	*18.1%*	*22.7%*		*13.5%*		*19.9%*		*14.4%*			*9.9%*	
Total South San Luis Obispo County Study Area			***70,028***	***15,060***	***21.5%***	***11,415***	***16.3%***	***3,394***	***4.8%***	***6,201***	***8.9%***	***27,109***	***1,333***	***4.9%***

Note 1: Mobility Disability includes "Go outside the home" disabilities for persons age 16 - 64.

Source: U.S. Census 2000

was 70,028 persons, with Arroyo Grande comprising roughly 24 percent of the population (or 16,720 persons), followed by Grover Beach with 19 percent (or 13,100 persons) and Nipomo with 18 percent (or 12,654 persons).

While the most recent comprehensive population information obtained as part of the 2000 US Census is now ten years old, the population trends for the South County area show that there has been very little change in many communities in the study area, while others have experienced much more growth. Table 2 presents historical population data for the study area's largest cities. Note that the US Census Bureau has yet to conduct American Community Survey data for Nipomo, Oceano, and Avila Beach; as such, data was obtained for these locations from the *Update to Long Range Socio-Economic Projects* report prepared by ERA/AECOM in May 2009. As shown, the greatest population increases have occurred in Nipomo and Oceano. Between 1990 and 2000, US Census data indicates that the population grew exponentially, increasing by 78 percent, in the Nipomo area, while the ERA/AECOM report data for 2008 indicates that the population between 1990 and 2008 would have more than doubled (107 percent increase). While not as dramatic, Oceano is estimated to have increased 31 percent between 1990 and 2008. In both instances, the majority of growth occurred between 1990 and 2000, with more moderate growth between 2000 and 2008. The remaining cities, Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach/Shell Beach, and Grover Beach, all experienced moderate population increases between 2000 and 2008, while it is estimated that Avila Beach has seen a slight reduction in population (roughly 5 percent).

TABLE 2: Historical Population for South San Luis Obispo County

	1990	2000	2008	% Change 1990-2008	% Change 2000-2008	Annual Growth Rate 2000-2008
Arroyo Grande	14,378	15,851	17,180	*19.5%*	*8.4%*	*1.0%*
Pismo Beach/Shell Beach	7,669	8,551	8,573	*11.8%*	*0.3%*	*0.6%*
Grover Beach	11,656	13,067	13,131	*12.7%*	*0.5%*	*0.7%*
Nipomo [1]	7,109	12,626	14,726	*107.1%*	*16.6%*	*4.1%*
Oceano [1]	6,169	7,260	7,941	*28.7%*	*9.4%*	*1.4%*
Avila Beach [2,3]	N/A	1,068	1,012	*N/A*	*-5.2%*	*-0.7%*

Note 1: Nipomo and Oceano 2008 populations were obtained from the ERA/AECOM *Update to Long Range Socio-Economic Projections* report, May 6, 2009

Note 2: Avila Beach population was obtained using Census Tract Data from the 2000 Census and the ERA/AECOM *Update to Long Range Socio-Economic Projections,* May 6, 2009, for 2008 populations

Note 3: Census Block Groups for Avila Beach were revised for the 2000 Census, thus 1990 data does not reflect current boundaries and population

Source: US Census Bureau; SLOCOG, 2010

High Transit Potential Population

Nationwide, transit system ridership is drawn largely from various groups of persons who make up what is often called the potential "transit dependent" population. This category includes youth, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, low-income persons, and members of households with no available vehicle. Table 1 presents the potential transit dependent population by block group, based on the 2000 US Census.

There are an estimated 15,060 persons ages 5 to 16 years old residing in the South San Luis Obispo County area, comprising 21.5 percent of the total population. The largest number of youth is present in Arroyo Grande (3,351 youth), followed by Grover Beach (2,989 youth), Nipomo (2,417 youth), and the unincorporated areas (2,141 youth). This information is presented graphically in Figure 2. This data shows that the study area has a higher youth population than the County as a whole, where 13.8 percent of the population is considered youth in the 2000 Census.

Approximately 16.3 percent (or 11,415 persons) of the area residents are considered seniors, defined for the purposes of this report as 65 years of age and older. The City of Arroyo Grande overwhelmingly has the greatest proportion (3,398 persons), followed by unincorporated areas (1,784 persons) and Pismo Beach (1,658 persons). Countywide, the elderly population comprises 14.5 percent of the total population, indicating that there is a slightly greater aging population in the study area. Figure 3 shows the geographic distribution of the senior population in the study area.

The US Census Bureau defines “mobility limited” as persons having a health condition lasting more than six months that makes it difficult to go outside the home alone. It is estimated that there are 3,394 mobility limited persons in the South County area, which comprises nearly 5 percent (4.8 percent) of the total population. The majority, 814 persons, reside in Arroyo Grande, followed by 674 persons in Nipomo, and 637 persons in Grover Beach. This data suggests that the study area is on par with the county, as 5 percent of the overall population is mobility limited. Figure 4 shows the geographic distribution of the mobility limited population in the study area.

Low-income persons are another likely market for transit services, as measured by the number of persons living below the poverty level. According to the 2000 US Census, there was an estimated 6,201 persons considered to be low-income, which amounts to approximately 9 percent of the total area population. The largest concentration of low-income persons is in Grover Beach, with 1,469 persons, Oceano (1,173 persons) and Arroyo Grande (1,140 persons). The countywide population that is living below the poverty level totaled 12.8 percent in 2000, thus the study area contains fewer low-income persons. Figure 5 is a graphic representation of this demographic group.

The number of households without access to an operable vehicle is another indicator of a potential transit dependent group. In 2000, the US Census identified a total of 1,333 zero-vehicle households, or 4.9 percent of all households, in the study area. As shown in Table 1 and Figure 6, the greatest number of households was found in Arroyo Grande, with 428 households, while Grover Beach has 320 zero-vehicle households. On a proportional basis, the unincorporated South County areas had only 1.6 percent of all households qualify as zero-vehicle, while Oceano had the greatest, where nearly 7 percent of all households did not have a vehicle. Overall, this data is consistent with the countywide totals, which showed that a total of 4.8 percent of the households in San Luis Obispo County did not have a vehicle available.

FIGURE 2

Youth Population by Census Block Group

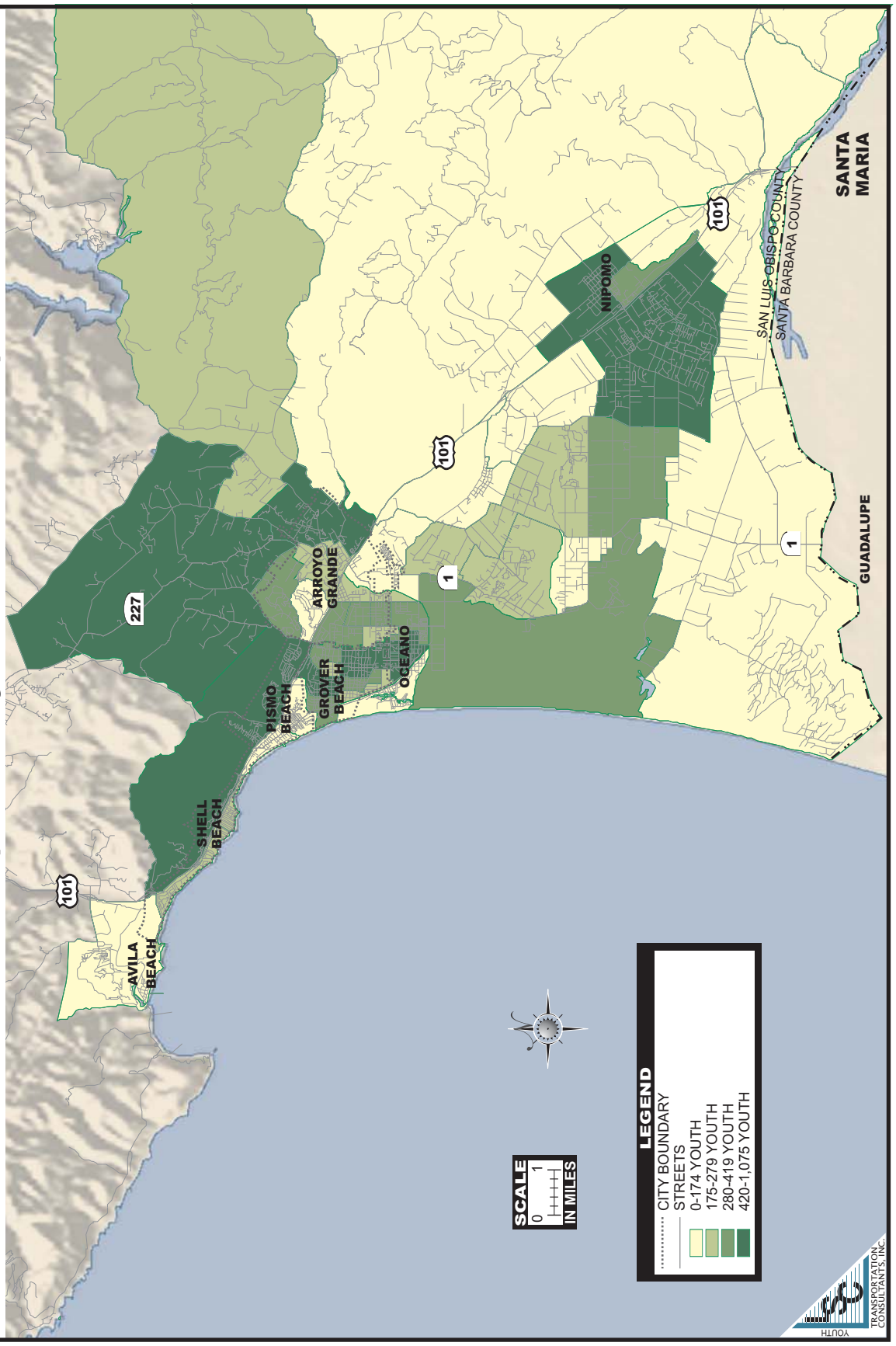


FIGURE 3

Elderly Population by Census Block Group

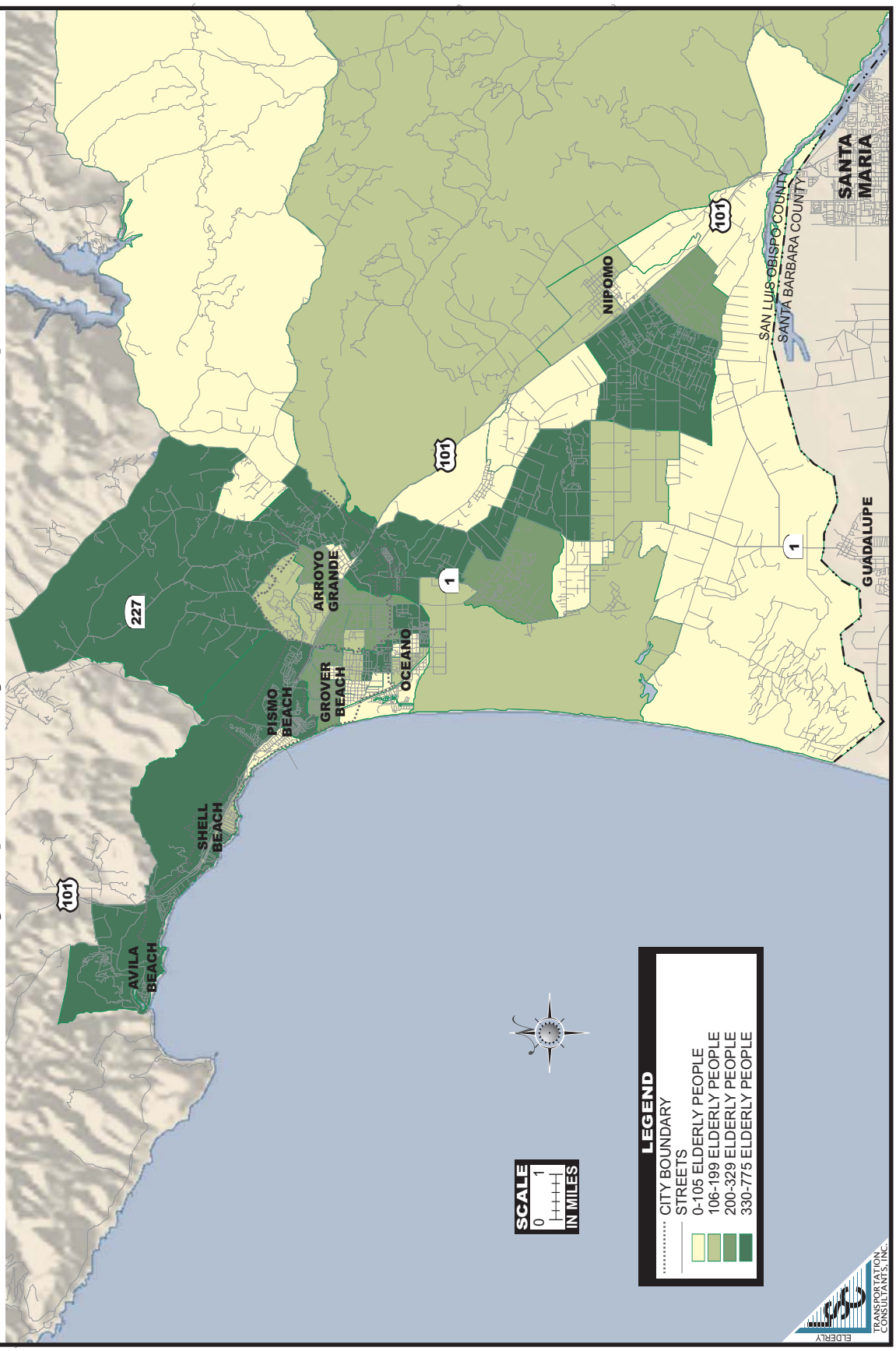


FIGURE 4

Mobility Limited Population by Census Block Group

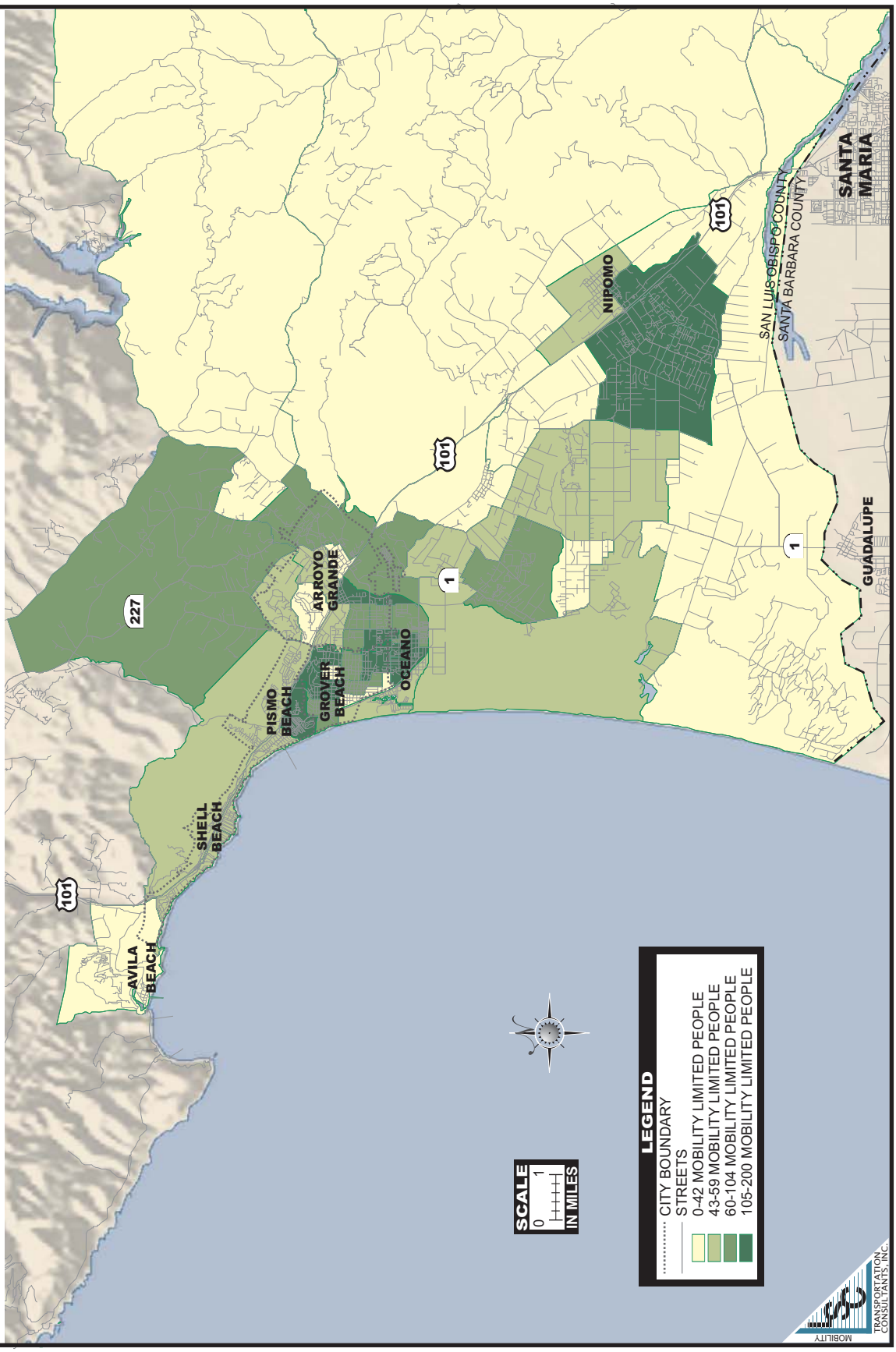


FIGURE 5

Below Poverty Level Population by Census Block Group

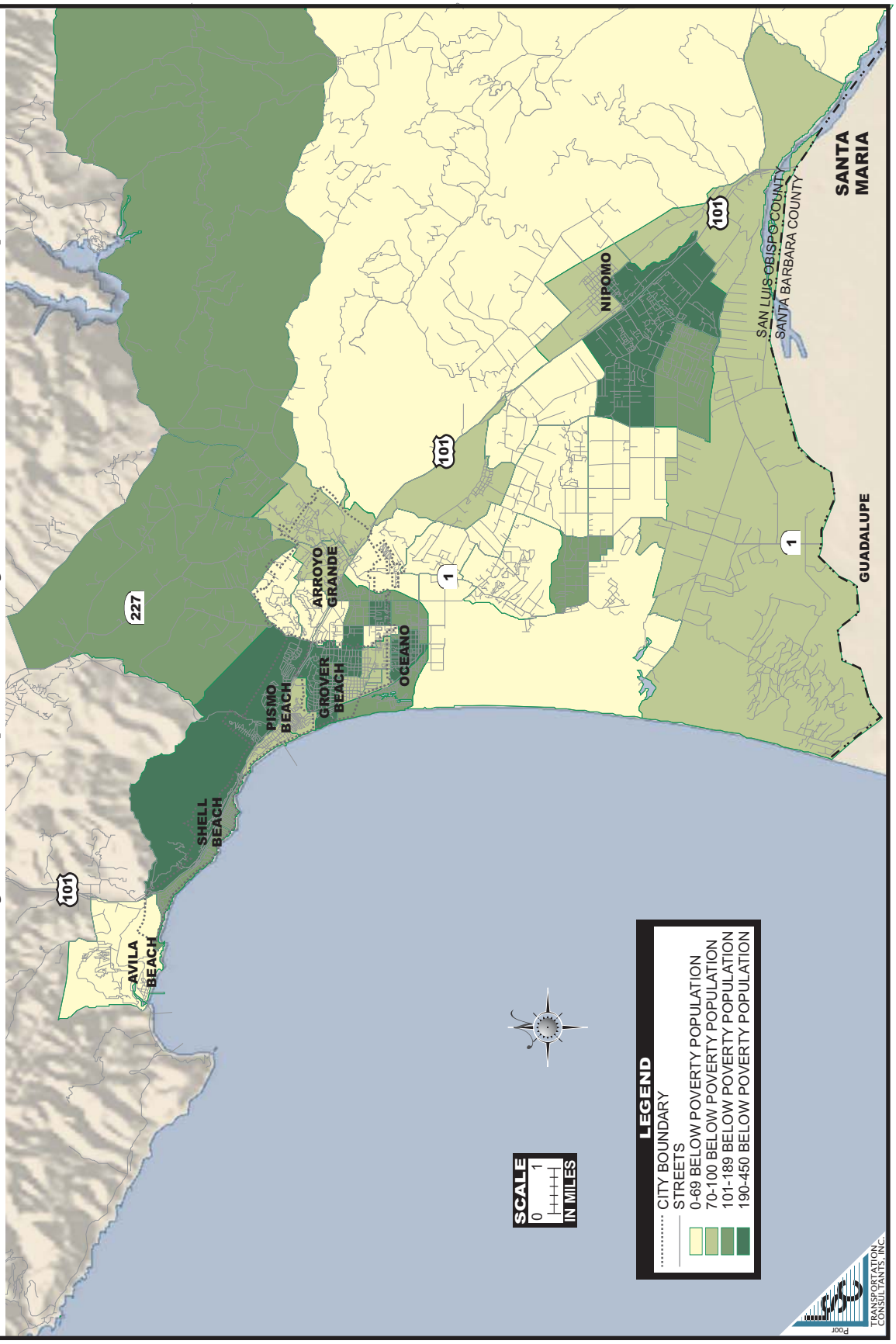
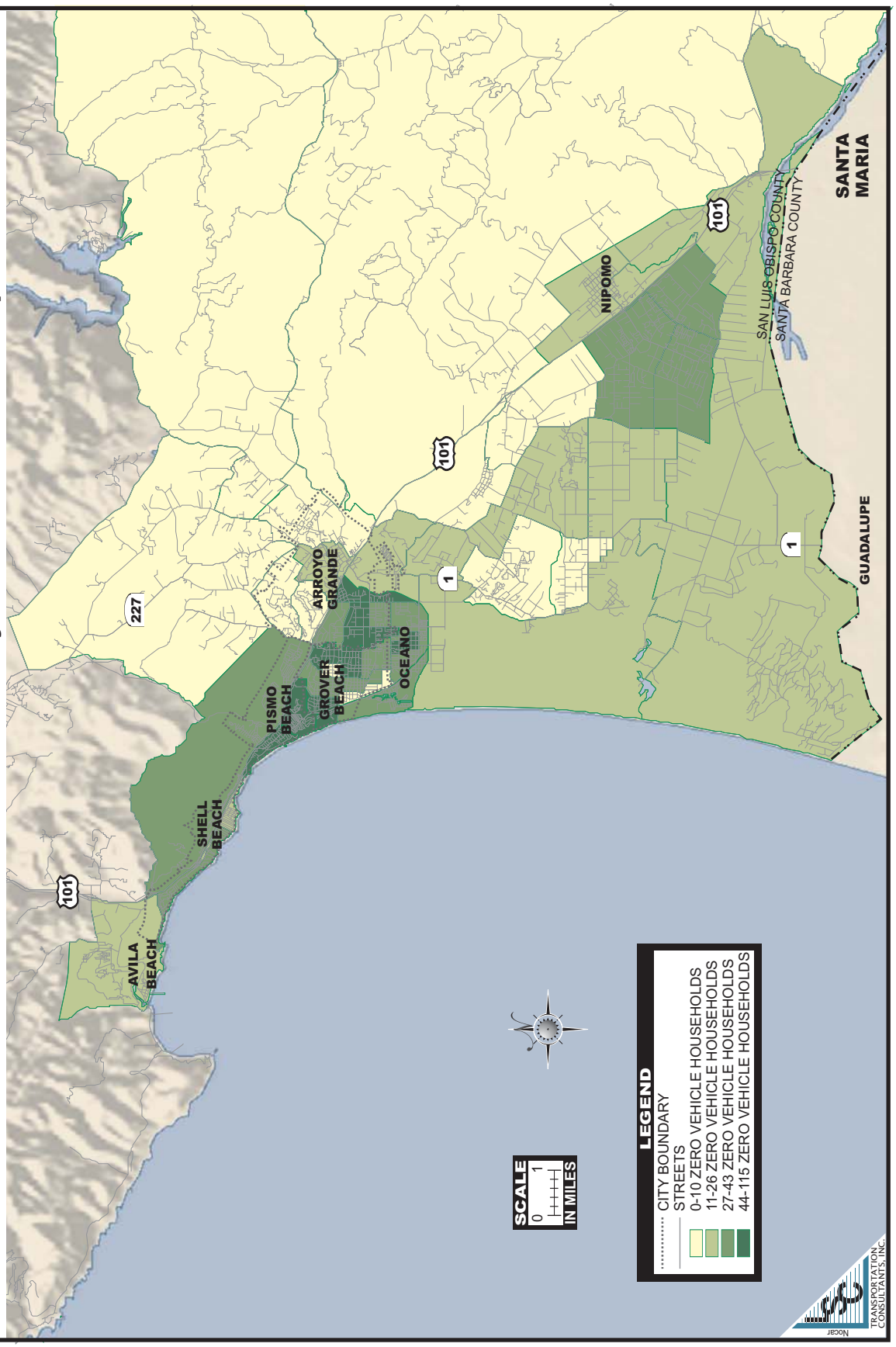


FIGURE 6

Zero Vehicle Households by Census Block Group



Future Population Growth Trends

The SLOCOG Regional Transportation Plan, *Vision 2025*, anticipates a significant level of increased growth in the San Luis Obispo County area between now and 2025. Of the estimated countywide growth, nearly one-third is expected to be absorbed by the South County area. Table 3 provides potential population growth data. Because the most recent data from the California Department of Finance is only available for incorporated cities, two sources for 2010 estimates were used: the California Department of Finance for Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, and Grover Beach, and the ERA/AECOM *Update to Long Range Socio-Economic Projects* report for Nipomo, Oceano and Avila Beach. The future projection population totals were obtained from the "Medium Population Growth Estimate" ERA/AECOM report, as the report was completed more recently and includes discussion regarding the recent housing and economic issues.

TABLE 3: Population Growth for South San Luis Obispo County

Major Cities in South San Luis Obispo County

	2010 [1]	2015	2020	% Change 2010-2025	Annual Growth Rate 2010-2025
Arroyo Grande	17,145	17,640	18,200	*6.2%*	*0.6%*
Pismo Beach/Shell Beach	8,704	8,620	8,900	*2.3%*	*0.2%*
Grover Beach	13,276	13,120	13,390	*0.9%*	*0.1%*
Nipomo	15,256	16,419	17,429	*14.2%*	*1.3%*
Oceano	8,098	8,378	8,465	*4.5%*	*0.4%*
Avila Beach	1,058	1,139	1,185	*12.0%*	*1.1%*

Note 1: 2010 estimates for Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach and Grover Beach were obtained from the CA Dept. of Finance, while Nipomo, Oceano and Avila Beach data was taken from "High Population Growth Estimate" table of the ERA/AECOM *Projections* report

Source: California Department of Finance; SLOCOG, 2010

As shown in the table, and as suggested in the *Vision 2025* RTP, Nipomo is expected to see the highest growth (roughly 14 percent between 2010 and 2020), particularly in the Nipomo Mesa area. This is primarily due to the availability of developable land and more affordable housing choices. This is followed by the Avila Beach area, with a 12 percent increase in population over the 10-year period. Arroyo Grande is projected to see a 6.2 percent increase in population, Oceano a 4.5 percent increase, Pismo Beach a 2.3 percent increase, and Grover Beach with just less than 1 percent increase. This data reflects the assumption that the larger communities will be reaching their development capacity, thus shifting new populations to more rural and less dense areas. Further, the data also suggests that as the Santa Barbara County community of Santa Maria grows, there will be an impact in the southern San Luis Obispo Counties such as Nipomo and Oceano.

EMPLOYMENT

According to the California Employment Development Department, the majority of large-scale employers located within San Luis Obispo County are located outside the South County study area, mostly within the City of San Luis Obispo. However, the two exceptions are Arroyo Grande Community Hospital (Arroyo Grande) and Pacific Gas and Electric (outside Avila Beach), which according to the California Employment Development Department, each employ between 1,000 and 4,999 persons. Further, the lodging facilities located in the Pismo Beach area generate a significant amount of employment for the area, particularly during the summer when tourism is highest.

From an industry standpoint, the 2000 Census indicates that the Educational, Health and Social Services sectors generate the greatest employment in the study area (19 percent of total). This is followed by Retail trade (13 percent) and Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services (11 percent). Other industries in the study area include Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management (9 percent); Construction (9 percent); Manufacturing (7 percent); Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Rental/Leasing (6 percent); Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities (6 percent); Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining (5 percent); Public Administration (5 percent); Wholesale Trade (3 percent); Information (3 percent); and Other Services (5 percent).

Employment Status

Table 4 presents employment data from the 2000 US Census. As shown, approximately 5.7 percent of persons 16 years or older in the labor force were considered unemployed, while 21,722 persons were not in the labor force (39 percent of civilians over the age of 16 years). The table also shows a breakdown of employment status from the Census by city/sub area. According to this data, the lowest rate of unemployment was found in the unincorporated areas (nearly 3 percent), while the greatest in Oceano (nearly 10 percent) and Nipomo (6.8 percent). Of the remaining areas, Avila Beach had a 4.1 percent rate of unemployment, Pismo Beach/Shell Beach had 5.4 percent, Arroyo Grande 5.2 percent and Grover Beach 5.6 percent.

TABLE 4: South SLO County Employment Status, 2000

	Arroyo Grande		Pismo Beach/ Shell Beach		Grover Beach		Nipomo		Oceano		Avila Beach		Unincorporated	
	Persons	*% of Total*	*Persons*	*% of Total*	*Persons*	*% of Total*	*Persons*	*% of Total*	*Persons*	*% of Total*	*Persons*	*% of Total*	*Persons*	*% of Total*
Persons Aged 16 and Over														
Employed	7,498	94.8%	3,961	94.9%	6,354	94.4%	5,232	93.2%	3,003	90.1%	417	95.9%	4,823	97.1%
Unemployed	410	5.2%	214	5.1%	379	5.6%	381	6.8%	331	9.9%	18	4.1%	143	2.9%
Total in Labor Force	7,908		4,175		6,733		5,613		3,334		435		4,966	
Not In Labor Force	5,453		3,175		3,361		3,624		1,889		490		3,730	
Total South County														
Employed	31,288	94.3%												
Unemployed	1,876	5.7%												
Total in Labor Force	33,164													
Not In Labor Force	21,722													

Source: 2000 Census, US Census Bureau; Summarized by LSC in May 2010.

Data for the study area, San Luis Obispo County, and California obtained from the last Census is not indicative of the present unemployment conditions resulting from the current economic recession. More recent data shows that levels have increased significantly. San Luis Obispo County had an unemployment rate of 5.7 percent between 2006 and 2008, according to the American Community Survey, and a rate of 10.6 percent in 2010, based on data provided by the California Employment Development Department. On the statewide level, unemployment reached 6.9 percent between 2006 and 2008, and 13 percent in 2010. While there was no American Community Survey data available for the study area, preliminary estimates from the Employment Development Department show that unemployment has grown substantially to 12.5 percent. The following is a breakdown for the study area:

- Pismo Beach has seen the greatest jump in unemployment, from 5.1 percent in 2000 to an estimated 10.9 percent in March 2010.

- Oceano continues to experience the greatest unemployment rate in the study area, with a 19.4 percent unemployment rate in March 2010, a 96 percent increase from the 2000 data (9.9 percent).

- Nipomo has the second largest population of unemployed residents, increasing from 6.8 percent in 2000 to an estimated 14 percent in March 2010.

- Grover Beach has the lowest unemployment rate in the study area at 10.4 percent, however it is still an 86 percent increase from 2000.

- Finally, Arroyo Grande's unemployment rate increased to an estimated 10.9 percent in March 2010, the second highest jump within the study area.

COMMUTE PATTERNS

Commute data can provide insight into another potential group of transit riders. The US Census maintains the "Longitudinal Employer Household Dataset" which provides detailed data on the location of employment for the study area's residents, as well as data on the location of residence of persons working in the study area. Table 5 presents the commute data for the cumulative study area: the upper portion shows the cities/areas where South San Luis Obispo County residents work, while the lower portion shows the residence location of persons that commute into the South County area for work.

As shown in the table, most residents of the study area work outside of the study area, with the City of San Luis Obispo attracting the most workers (5,752 persons or 23 percent). This is not surprising considering it is the largest city in San Luis Obispo County and is a relatively short distance from the study area. Within the study area, Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach had the largest number of workers that also reside in the study area, with 2,594 persons, 1,486 persons and 1,435 persons, respectively. Residents of the study area also worked in Nipomo (499

persons) and Oceano (368 persons). Overall, 25.7 percent of study area residents also work in the study area. On a county level, the majority of residents commute within San Luis Obispo County (15,339 persons, or 62 percent), which not only includes the study area and San Luis Obispo, but also Paso Robles and Atascadero in the northern area of the county. Santa Barbara County also attracts study area residents for jobs (4,452 jobs), of which more than half are located in Santa Maria, just south of the Santa Barbara-San Luis Obispo County line.

TABLE 5: South SLO County Commute Pattern Data, 2008
Bold = *Locations within the South SLO County Study Area*

Location of Employment for Residents of the South SLO County Area

Communities Where Residents of the South County Area Work	# of Jobs	% of Total	Counties Where Residents of the South County Area Work	# of Jobs	% of Total
San Luis Obispo, CA	5,752	23.1%	San Luis Obispo County, CA	15,339	61.7%
Santa Maria, CA	2,981	12.0%	Santa Barbara County, CA	4,452	17.9%
Arroyo Grande, CA	**2,594**	**10.4%**	Los Angeles County, CA	1,606	6.5%
Pismo Beach, CA	**1,486**	**6.0%**	Orange County, CA	513	2.1%
Grover Beach, CA	**1,435**	**5.8%**	Kern County, CA	450	1.8%
Los Angeles, CA	598	2.4%	Ventura County, CA	402	1.6%
Nipomo, CA	**499**	**2.0%**	Fresno County, CA	260	1.0%
Paso Robles, CA	421	1.7%	Santa Clara County, CA	250	1.0%
Oceano, CA	**368**	**1.5%**	Monterey County, CA	187	0.8%
Atascadero, CA	368	1.5%	San Bernadino County, CA	166	0.7%
All Other Locations	8,376	33.7%	All Other Locations	1,253	5.0%
Total	*24,878*	*100.0%*	*Total*	*24,878*	*100.0%*
Percent of Study Area Residents Working in Study Ar		*25.7%*			

Location of Residence for Workers Within the South SLO County Area

City of Residence for Persons Working in the South County Area	# of Workers	% of Total	County of Residence for Persons Working in the South County Area	# of Workers	% of Total
Arroyo Grande, CA	**2,012**	**12.3%**	San Luis Obispo County, CA	10,650	65.1%
Santa Maria, CA	1,714	10.5%	Santa Barbara County, CA	2,945	18.0%
Grover Beach, CA	**1,599**	**9.8%**	Los Angeles County, CA	713	4.4%
Nipomo, CA	**1,315**	**8.0%**	Orange County, CA	231	1.4%
San Luis Obispo, CA	1,028	6.3%	Fesno County, CA	195	1.2%
Oceano, CA	**803**	**4.9%**	Ventura County, CA	184	1.1%
Pismo Beach, CA	**674**	**4.1%**	Kern County, CA	170	1.0%
Orcutt, CA	480	2.9%	Santa Clara Cunty, CA	157	1.0%
Atascadero, CA	409	2.5%	Tulare County, CA	120	0.7%
Baywood-Los Osos, CA	328	2.0%	Monterey County, CA	99	0.6%
All Other Locations	5,998	36.7%	All Other Locations	896	5.5%
Total	*16,360*	*100.0%*	*Total*	*16,360*	*100.0%*
Percent of Study Area Workers Living in Study Area		*39.1%*			

Source: US Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Data Base

For those persons working in the South County area, approximately 2,012 persons live in Arroyo Grande, followed by 1,599 persons in Grover Beach, 1,315 persons in Nipomo, 803 persons in Oceano and 674 persons in Pismo Beach. Overall, 39 percent of jobs in the South County area are held by residents of the study area, while the remaining 61 percent is held by employees commuting from elsewhere; this includes roughly 1,714 persons commuting from Santa Maria and 1,028 persons from San Luis Obispo. County-level data indicates that after San Luis Obispo County, Santa Barbara County generates the greatest number of commuters, with 2,945 persons; this includes the City of Santa Maria and other outlying areas.

Means of Transportation to Work

Table 6 shows the commute travel mode split data identified in the 2000 Census. For all areas, the majority of workers drive alone (76.3 percent), while 11.3 percent of the employed residents carpooled, 8 percent worked at home and 3 percent walked. A significantly low proportion of employed residents used a bicycle (0.4 percent), rode a motorcycle to work (0.2 percent) or took public transit (0.2 percent). Another 0.6 percent of residents stated they used other means to commute. Oceano had the largest proportion of residents use public transit (1.8 percent), while Avila Beach, Shell Beach and the unincorporated areas generated no public transit ridership for commute purposes. Also according to the Census, 70 percent of the employed population had a commute time of less than 25 minutes. The majority had a commute time of between 10 and 14 minutes (5,080 persons, or 17.5 percent), followed by 20 to 24 minutes (4,914 persons, or 17 percent), 15 to 19 minutes (4,897 persons, or 16.9 percent) and 5 to 9 minutes (4,318 persons, or 14.9 percent).

TABLE 6: Commute Mode Data for the South SLO County Area

	Avila Beach	Shell Beach	Pismo Beach	Arroyo Grande	Grover Beach	Oceano	Nipomo	Unincorporated Areas	**Total for All Areas**
Drove Alone	392	750	2,212	5,891	4,576	2008	3971	3,529	**6,883**
Carpool	0	55	317	823	1,058	561	704	644	**1,016**
Public Transit	0	0	17	16	23	54	23	0	**17**
Motorcycle	0	0	15	46	23	0	26	7	**22**
Bicycle	0	0	6	69	83	19	0	26	**32**
Walk	0	9	164	107	142	76	85	102	**275**
Other Means	0	8	19	66	60	44	108	27	**54**
Work at Home	17	57	231	387	286	159	213	414	**719**
Total	***409***	***879***	***2,981***	***7,405***	***6,251***	***2,921***	***5,130***	***4,749***	**9,018**
Drove Alone	*95.8%*	*85.32%*	*74.20%*	*79.6%*	*73.2%*	*68.7%*	*77.4%*	*74.3%*	***76.3%***
Carpool	*0.0%*	*6.3%*	*10.63%*	*11.1%*	*16.9%*	*19.2%*	*13.7%*	*13.6%*	***11.3%***
Public Transit	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.57%*	*0.2%*	*0.4%*	*1.8%*	*0.4%*	*0.0%*	***0.2%***
Motorcycle	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.50%*	*0.6%*	*0.4%*	*0.0%*	*0.5%*	*0.1%*	***0.2%***
Bicycle	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.20%*	*0.9%*	*1.3%*	*0.7%*	*0.0%*	*0.5%*	***0.4%***
Walk	*0.0%*	*1.0%*	*5.50%*	*1.4%*	*2.3%*	*2.6%*	*1.7%*	*2.1%*	***3.0%***
Other Means	*0.0%*	*0.9%*	*0.64%*	*0.9%*	*1.0%*	*1.5%*	*2.1%*	*0.6%*	***0.6%***
Work at Home	*4.2%*	*6.5%*	*7.75%*	*5.2%*	*4.6%*	*5.4%*	*4.2%*	*8.7%*	***8.0%***

Source: 2000 Census, US Census Bureau; Summarized by LSC in May 2010.

In 2007, the consulting firm of Strategic Consulting and Research conducted a study of commute profiles for San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. While detailed data was not available specifically for the study area communities, the data and study results can provide insight on overall trends, including the following:

- According to the study, only 2 percent of commuters from San Luis Obispo County used public transit; of these only 15 percent used SCAT services. This equates to roughly 0.3 percent of employed persons using public transit offered by SCAT, which is on par with the findings detailed above (0.2 percent of persons used transit, per the 2000 US Census).

- Roughly 78 percent of persons in the county drove alone in 2007, which is a similar finding to the 76 percent within the study area based on the 2000 US Census.

- The data suggests that the study area has a greater proportion of employed residents that work from home – 8 percent versus the countywide total of 4.9 percent.

- Approximately 10 percent of the employed population carpooled, based on the 2007 report data, which is slightly less than the 11.3 percent that carpooled within the study area.

- The average commute time for residents of the county was 24 minutes in 2007, which is comparable to the commute data for the study area.

- Countywide, approximately 4 percent of the population did not have a vehicle available in 2007, compared to 4.9 percent in the study area in 2000.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

A key step in any physical planning process, particularly one that considers a longer planning horizon, is the careful consideration of other ongoing planning processes in the area. This section presents a review of these recent and concurrent planning studies and considers how each impacts the potential for future transit services.

City of Arroyo Grande General Plan

Both the Circulation Element and Land Use Element of Arroyo Grande's General Plan include specific goals, policies and objectives related to improving transit service and access in the City. These aspects of both plans are highlighted below.

<u>Circulation Element</u>

- CT3 – Maintain and improve existing "multi-modal" circulation and transportation systems and facilities, to maximize alternatives to new street and highway construction.

  - CT3-1 – In cooperation with SCAT and RTA or other operators, provide for safe and efficient transit system for local and regional travel, particularly for youth, elderly, low-income or disabled persons.

    - CT3-1.1 – The City should encourage convenient routes and schedules on arterial and/or collector streets including stops, shelters, bus benches, turnouts, Park-and-Ride, transfer and other facilities or features to be provided in connection with new developments.

    - CT3-1.2 – The City should encourage major employers to promote the use of public transit and/or provide van/car pools, private shuttles or other trip reduction and transportation demand management.

- CT3-3 – Promote non-motorized bike and pedestrian circulation facilities to serve all areas of the City and linking regional systems, with priority coordination with school, park, transit and major public facilities.

    - CT3-3.1 – Improve bike lanes and sidewalks serving all school, parks and selected transit and community facilities as priority system, including neighborhood connections in addition to conventional streets.

- CT4 – Ensure compatibility and complementary relationships between the circulation/transportation system and existing and planned land uses, promoting environmental objectives such as safe and un-congested neighborhoods, energy conservation, reduction of air and noise pollution, transit, bike and pedestrian friendly characteristics.

    - CT4-1 – Promote "transit-oriented development" and coordinated, compatible land use pattern by encouraging multiple family residential and special needs housing in Mixed Use Corridors, Village Core and near Office, Regional Commercial, Business Park and major Community Facility areas.

        - CT4-1.1 – Transit routes should serve E. Grand Avenue Mixed Use corridor, Village Core, and West Branch Street Regional Commercial areas.

        - CT4-1.2 – Future transit loop to serve Halcyon/Fair Oaks, Offices, Village Core, James Way and Rancho Parkway residential areas.

        - CT4-1.3 – Consider higher density allowance and reduced parking requirements within one-quarter mile of transit routes when updating Development Code

<u>Land Use Element</u>

- LU3 – Accommodate a broad range of Multiple Family Residential and special needs housing types ad densities within the City.

    - LU3-6 – Encourage the development of special needs housing in locations with good access to public transit and shopping facilities

- LU5 – Community commercial, office, residential and other compatible land uses shall be located in Mixed Use (MU) areas and corridors, both north and south of the freeway, in proximity to major arterial streets.

    - LU5-3 – Ensure that all projects developed in the MU areas include appropriate site planning and urban design amenities to encourage travel by walking, bicycling and public transit.

    - LU5-9 – All revitalization, redevelopment and new development projects in the MU corridors shall include appropriate site planning and urban design amenities to encourage pedestrian travel and encourage bike and transit access as well as automotive.

- LU5-11 – Promote a mixture of residential and commercial uses along MU corridors including substantial landscaping and streetscape improvements.

    - LU5-11.3 – Provide functional design including specialized open space, such as squares, courtyards and greens whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design, such as in proximity to public transit stops.

    - LU5-11.5 – Promote public transit-oriented development by allowing density bonuses and MU with shared or public parking reduction to conventional individual parking requirements.

- LU6 – The historic Village Core area shall be sustained, enhanced and expanded as the symbolic, functional and unique business center of the City, with diverse mixed uses emphasizing pedestrian-oriented activities and providing for the needs of residents and tourists.

    - LU6-9 – Extend the Village Core designation along Station Way and Traffic Way.

        - LU6-9.3 – Integrate improvements into the design of individual sites and public streetscape that facilitate transit access to the Village Core, such as bus shelters and recessed turnouts consistent with historic character and particular location.

City of Grover Beach General Plan

The transit-related goals, policies and programs from the Grover Beach General Plan are listed below:

- Goal 3: Promote alternative travel modes, including transit, pedestrian, bicycle, rail systems

    - Policy 3.1: Provide for desirable and safe alternative access to schools, parks and shopping areas from residential areas within the City.

        - Program 3.1.2: The City shall maximize the involvement of public agencies and the private sector in the provision of transit services and alternative access.

    - Policy 3.2: Encourage the continued development and expansion of local and regional public transit systems.

        - Program 3.2.1: The City shall review and comment on proposed changes to the South County Area Transit (SCAT) bus system.

        - Program 3.2.2: The City shall pursue a Regional Transit Station on Ramona Avenue at Ramona Park.

City of Pismo Beach General Plan

The following are applicable transit-related policies from the Circulation Element of the City of Pismo Beach's General Plan.

Circulation Element

- C-15: Comprehensive Transit Services – The City shall support the availability of transit service as a means to reduce automobile congestion, to provide transportation for those who have no other form of transportation, as a means to reduce air pollution, and as a service to visitors. Such support should include, but not be limited to, South County Area Transit (SCAT), Greyhound bus service, van pools, shuttle bus systems, dial-a-ride and cab services.

- C-16: Multimodal Transfer Areas – The City w ill work with Caltrans, CCAT, SLOCOG, and the commuting public to develop a multimodal transfer area that will incorporate auto parking areas, bike parking, bus, transit, pedestrian bike paths, and Park-and-Ride pick-up points for carpooling.

- C-19: Downtown Traffic – To discourage traffic in the downtown area and reduce the need for additional parking facilities, the City shall work with the hotel/motel industry to 1) provide free (or very low rent) bicycles for guests and 2) to develop a trolley system for summer months, weekends, and special events.C-20: Express Bus or Transit Service – The City will work with appropriate transportation agencies and major employers to establish express bus or transit service to San Luis Obispo and Northern Santa Barbara County.

Regional Transportation Plan for San Luis Obispo County, 2010

The Regional Transportation Plan for San Luis Obispo County has been updated and was adopted in December 2010. The RTP update demonstrates a commitment to developing and promoting a wide variety of alternative travel modes, including bus and paratransit service, vanpools, bicycles, and walking to meet not only the needs of the transit dependent individuals but also to encourage use of alternative modes of travel by choice riders. The plan defines Public Transit Policies as well as Transportation Demand Management strategies that are relevant to the South County Transit Plan, as summarized below.

Public Transit Policies from 2010 RTP

The primary goal of the 2010 RTP Public Transit element is to ensure that a viable public transportation system grows to meet the region's transit needs in the future. The Report states that "A practical, easy-to-use public transportation system is fundamental in promoting regional mobility and minimizing the traffic congestion and air pollution caused by over reliance on the single occupant vehicle." This is to be accomplished through a commitment to developing and promoting a wide variety of alternative travel modes, including bus and paratransit service, vanpools, bicycles, and walking to meet not only the needs of the transit dependent individuals but also to encourage use of alternative modes of travel by choice riders. To accomplish this, the RTP includes the following goals.

SLOCOG and all transit agencies should:

- Develop a responsive customer oriented perspective to transit service delivery through increased service coordination and gradual program consolidation.

- Continue to expand the scope of the Regional Rideshare function to allow "one-stop" information for all mobility options (all forms of ridesharing, public transit, human services transportation, and specialized transportation services (i.e. Ride-On Transportation)).

- Increase the share of LTF funds allocated to transit and consider a local option sales tax in order to support program continuation and allow for further expansion. A dedicated, local funding source will increase flexibility in the choice of transit services, fund technology improvements, and help transit keep pace with growing demand.

- Encourage future transit service expansion consistent with the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

To achieve these goals, the RTP also outlines the following specific Public Transit Policies:

PT.1 **Service Level**: Provide regional fixed-route transit services connecting major and minor population centers; maintain appropriate local community transit services; and provide paratransit service as necessary – all coordinated to meet the identified transit needs of each city and major area. The appropriate levels of service shall be determined by the Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) updates (in agreement with sub area transit plans) and consistent with the RTP regional policies.

PT.2 **Convenience and Amenities**: Improve convenience and amenities for public transit service, where feasible and cost- effective, to make transit attractive to both transportation-disadvantaged and choice riders, with a goal to increase ridership 4 percent each year (all services combined).

PT.3 **Sustainable Communities Strategy**: Emphasize public transit role in the coordinated effort to reduce overall miles traveled and improve air quality in tandem with ridesharing incentives programs, proposed regulatory changes and potential technological applications (alternative fuels, automated passenger information, automated vehicle location etc.)

PT.4 **Vanpool Programs:** Encourage growth in commuter vanpool programs through user-side incentives, outreach, education and promotion. Continue to support the agricultural workers' vanpool program via targeted bi-lingual outreach and subsidies.

PT.5 **Efficiency and Effectiveness**: Ensure the provision of reliable public transit services to meet mobility needs at the lowest reasonable cost and encourage better coordination among different transit and paratransit systems for more efficient service delivery.

PT.6 **Public Participation**: Maximize regional input from the general public, jurisdictions, and groups on all aspects of public transit.

PT 7 **Corridor Planning**: Focus on sub-regional corridor and system planning in geographically similar areas to reduce planning costs and enhance coordination and system integration.

PT 8 **Specialized Transit Services**: Develop and provide specialized services and systems to meet the needs of transportation disadvantaged individuals, including those with disabilities or mobility impairments, seniors and persons with low income.

PT 9 **Express Bus Corridors**: Support the regional deployment of a Bus Rapid Transit network along main commute corridors enabling the delivery of more competitive travel times and more attractive bus transit services.

Transportation Demand Management Strategies from RTP 2010

The RTP 2010 outlines Transportation Demand Management as a fundamental approach to achieve multiple goals of the region. As relates to the South County Transit Plan, the RTP…"supports actions to reduce single occupant vehicles with focused efforts to increase carpooling, vanpooling, and public transit usage."

Transportation Demand Policies most relevant to the South County Transit Plan include:

TDM / TSM 1. Support actions to reduce single occupant vehicle trips, promote alternative travel modes, and increase the use of information technology to reduce the need to travel.

TDM / TSM 2. Improve the interconnectedness between all transportation modes to maximize the efficiency of the existing system and delay the need for capacity expansions.

TDM / TSM 4. Continue to provide financial support to TDM programs supporting transit, rail, bike and pedestrian systems and support facilities to encourage use of all modes of transportation.

TDM / TSM 6. Encourage a modal shift by expanding alternative transportation options and opportunities, including but not limited to improvements for intercity rail, public transit, bicycling, Park and Ride lots, ridesharing and car/vanpooling, and land use modifications.

TDM / TSM 7. Support a coordinated marketing and education program to improve public awareness of alternative transportation modes, including but not limited to

ridesharing, carpool, vanpool, public transit, bicycling, Park and Ride lots, and intercity rail.

TDM / TSM 8. Provide financial support for TSM projects that improve the efficiency of the existing network, promote alternative transportation modes and limit future expenditures for capacity expansion.

San Luis Obispo Region Coordinated Human Services-Public Transportation Plan

In 2007, a Coordinated Human Services Plan was prepared for SLOCOG, discussing a strategy for coordinated regional transportation services with special focus on unmet transportation needs for seniors, disabled persons, and low income persons. Below is a brief summary of needs and recommendations found that concern the South County area.

Unmet Needs

The report identified selected unmet needs (from 2007/2008) that were considered to be reasonable to meet. With respect to SCAT services, these included expanded bus service and more bus shelters in Arroyo Grande, service to/from the Oceano Senior Center via Route 24/22, bus service on Sundays until 8:00 PM, and improved connections between SCAT and RTA buses. A few needs associated with Nipomo services included improved senior transportation, expanding Nipomo Dial-A-Ride on weekends and that Dial-A-Ride vehicles display RTA connection information. Lastly, there were a few needs that applied to all operators, such as more bike racks on buses, the provision of shuttles to all hospitals, and lowering the age limit for the senior fare discount to persons 55 years of age.

Target Population Program Solutions

The list of program solutions was developed to meeting the needs and concerns discovered for each of the target population categories.

- **Able Bodied Seniors –** Provide a single point of information; educational initiatives, including experience with bus riding before it is needed; buddy programs; transit fairs or transit seniors free-ride days; promotion of Gold Pass (80+ years of age ride free).

- **Frail Seniors or Chronically Ill Persons –** Escorted transportation options; door-through-door assistance/outside vehicle assistance; increased role for volunteers; technology that provides feedback to consumers and dispatch; individualized trip planning and scheduling assistance; mileage reimbursement programs; driver sensitivity training; appropriately placed bus shelters.

- **Persons with Disabilities –** Single point of information; continuing attention to service performance; importance of time sensitive service applications; driver education and attention to procedures; aggressive program of bus shelters; vehicles and capital replacement.

- **Persons of Low Income –** Creative fare options available to human service agencies; increased quantity of bus tokens available; standardized fare payment mechanism; bus passes

available to those searching for jobs or in job training programs; special shuttles oriented to predictable travel patterns; education about transit to case managers/staff; feedback to transit planners on demand; training of staff to train consumers; vehicles and capital replacement.

- **Persons with Sensory Impairment** – Single point of information; information in accessible formats; guides through information; driver training critical to respond to needs.

- **Persons with Behavioral Disabilities** – Possibly special shuttles oriented to predictable travel need; aggressive program of bus shelters; "hand-off" can be critical for confused riders; important that driver understand riders' conditions.

Goals and Objectives

The first goal identified in the report was to provide for coordination of infrastructure. To meet this goal, objectives focused on establishing a Regional Mobility Manager that works closely with SLOCOG to lead the coordination efforts. It also included providing agency-level Mobility Managers, increasing the visibility of specialized transportation issues/needs, establishing a Call for Projects process, and conducting regular project performance reports.

The report's second identified goal was to build capacity to meet individualized mobility needs. Objectives recommended promoting policies and strategies that increase the quantity and quality of public transit and specialized transportation, strategies for improving transportation solutions in specific corridors (including the Five Cities area, between the Five Cities and San Luis Obispo, and between the Five Cities and Nipomo), promoting capital improvements, establishing support mechanisms for human service agencies, and procedures to measure the quantities of trips.

Lastly, the third goal was regarding information portals. Three objectives were developed that provided recommendations on meeting this goal. These included integrating and promoting information strategies (511, web based tools, etc), developing portal tools for wide distribution, and promoting information opportunities for human service agency staff.

Chapter 3
Transportation Services

SOUTH COUNTY AREA TRANSIT

SCAT is a public fixed-route transit system serving the Five Cities area in South San Luis Obispo County, including the cities of Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach, as well as unincorporated Oceano and Shell Beach. Each of these cities and San Luis Obispo County, representing Oceano and Shell Beach, entered into a Joint Powers Agreement in 1978 to form SCAT. In 1990, SCAT became a member agency of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) which was formed as a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to provide a county-wide transit system.

South County Area Transit Organization

The South County Area Transit program operates under contract with RTA. RTA provides administration and management, dispatching services, maintenance and financial management. SCAT also receives policy and planning oversight through RTA, whose Board includes representatives from each City and San Luis Obispo County. SCAT also operates under direction of an Executive Committee, which provides technical oversight and policy guidance. The Executive Committee includes the City Managers from each of the Cities served by SCAT (Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach and Grover Beach). An organization chart for SCAT is depicted in Figure 7.

Existing South County Area Transit Service Plan

SCAT currently provides three fixed-routes on a year-round basis, as well as the Avila Trolley (operated on weekends and holiday Mondays year-round), as shown in Figure 8. The routes are described below.

- Route 21: This hourly route operates from 6:29 AM to 7:23 PM weekdays, 7:29 AM to 7:23 PM Saturdays, and 7:29 AM to 6:23 PM Sundays. The route consists of a small counter-clockwise loop serving Pismo Beach and Shell Beach, and a larger clockwise loop traveling on Price Street to 4th, north of US 101 on James Way and West Branch Street, and back through Arroyo Grande/Grover Beach on Grand Avenue and SR 1. This route connects with Regional Route 10 at the top of the hour, and with Routes 23 and 24 at Ramona Gardens at 29 minutes after the hour.

- Route 23: Service is provided hourly from 5:29 AM to 8:17 PM weekdays, 6:29 AM to 8:17 PM Saturdays, and 6:29 AM to 7:17 PM Sundays. This circuitous route makes multiple loops to serve the core of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach and Oceano, primarily in a clockwise direction. From Ramona Gardens, the route travels east to Arroyo Grande High School, loops north of US 101 and travels south on Halcyon Road past the Arroyo Grande Community Hospital. The route then serves residential portions of Oceano and the Oceano Senior Center,

FIGURE 7

SCAT Organizational Chart

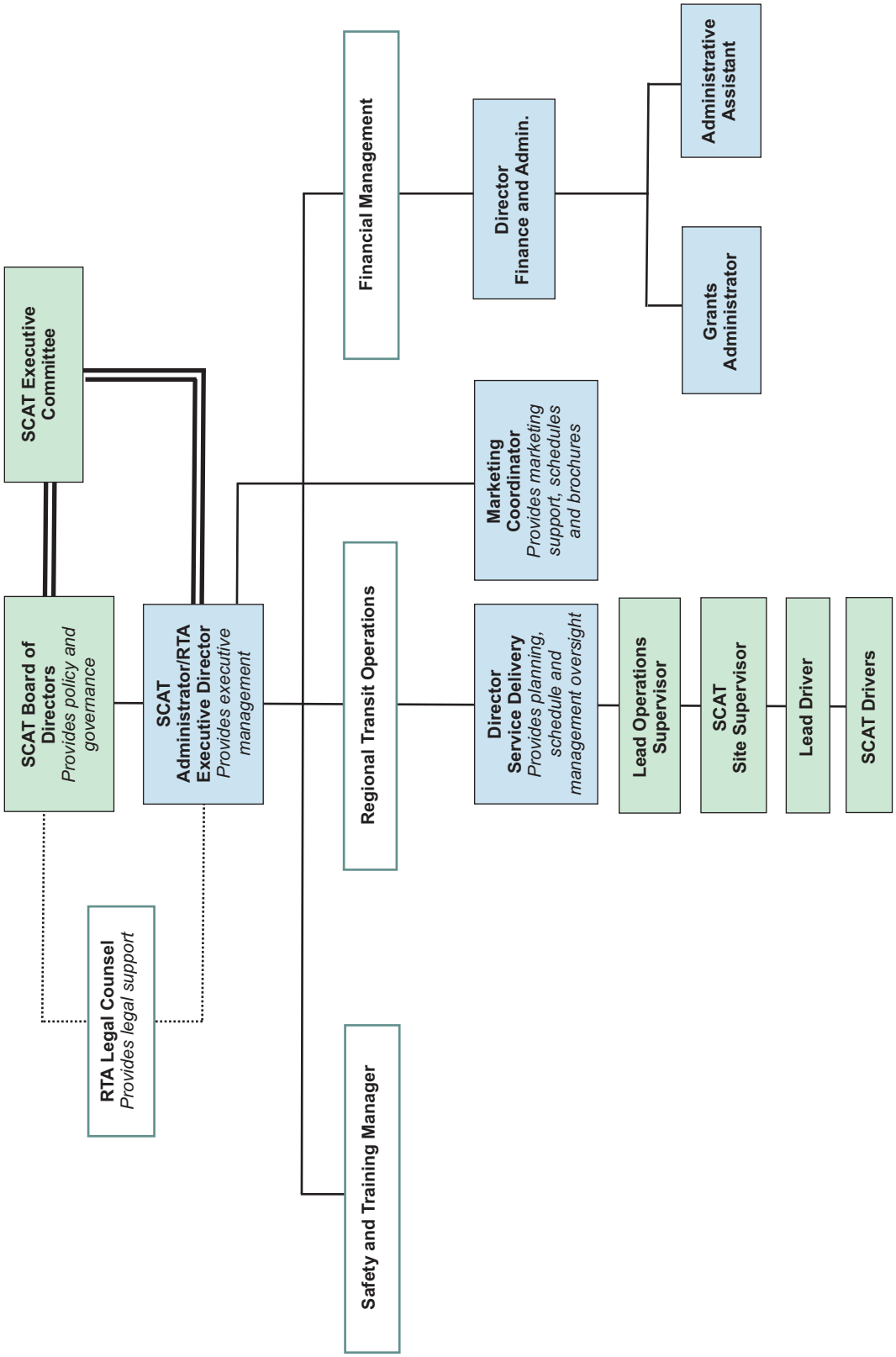
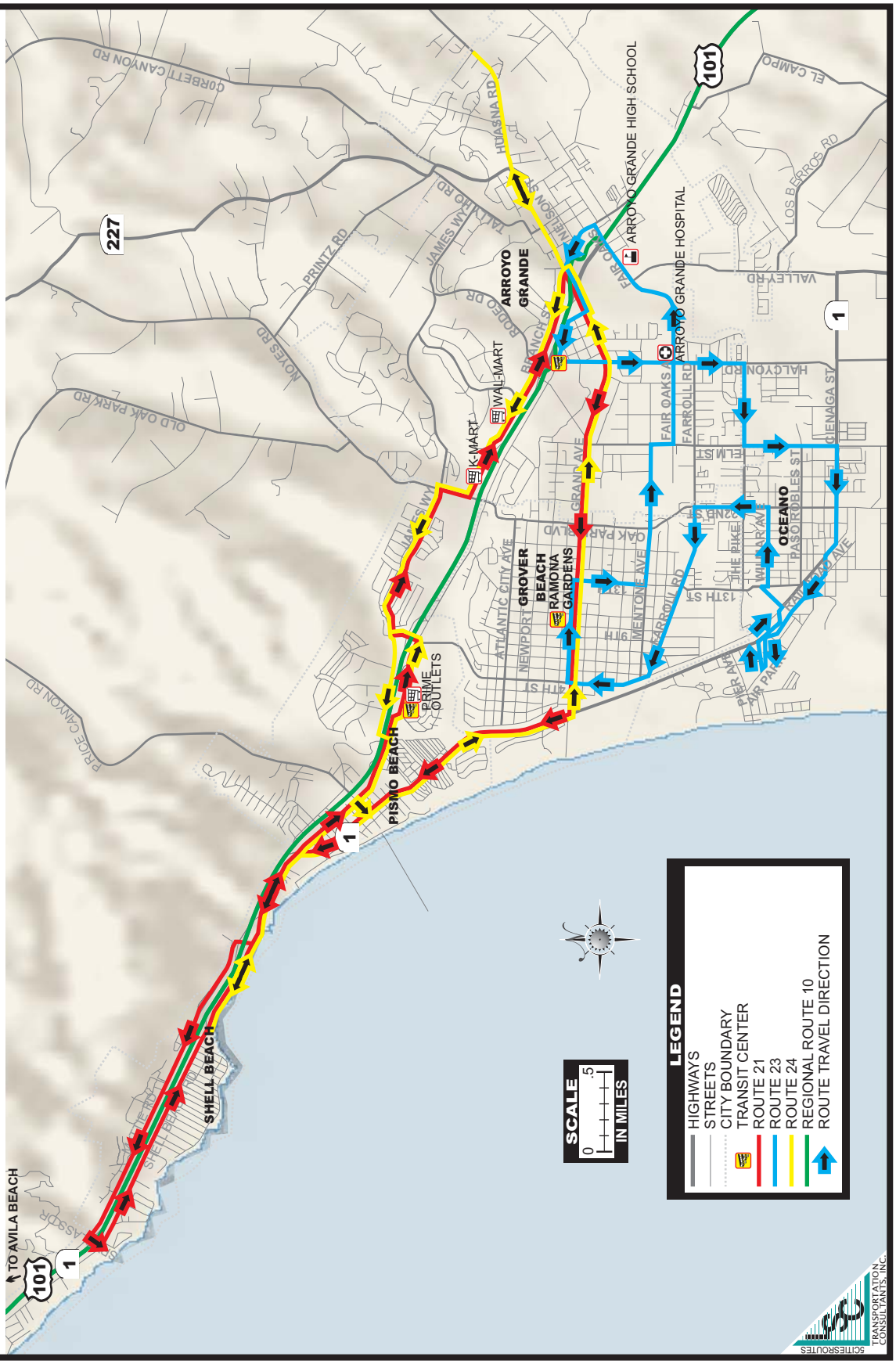


FIGURE 8

Current SCAT Fixed Route Services in the 5 Cities Area



Grover Beach before returning to Ramona Gardens. Passengers can use the El Camino & Halcyon Park-and-Ride to transfer between SCAT Route 23 and RTA Route 10 (Route 23 arrives at 47 minutes after the hour, and Route 10 arrives at 54 minutes after the hour traveling southbound, and 6 minutes after the hour traveling northbound). This route also meets Routes 21 and 24 at Ramona Gardens at 29 minutes after the hour.

- Route 24: Hourly service is provided from 6:29 AM to 7:26 PM weekdays, 7:29 AM to 7:26 PM Saturdays, and 7:29 AM to 6:26 PM Sundays. This route travels in the opposite direction of Route 21, in a primarily counter-clockwise direction, but staying on the south side of US 101 and turning around at Dinosaur Caves Park. This route connects with Regional Route 10 at the top of the hour, and with Routes 21 and 23 at Ramona Gardens at 29 minutes after the hour.

- Route 25: This afternoon tripper mirrors Route 23 and is operated from 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM to accommodate heavier passenger loads due to youth ridership.

Routes 21, 23, and 24 are interlined, with each bus shifting from one route to another at the end of every run at Ramona Gardens. This requires passengers to transfer at Ramona Gardens if they wish to continue on the same route.

The last service changes were enacted in August of 2009, when the span of weekday service was reduced from approximately 9:30 PM to the current 7:30 PM. Prior to that, changes were made in 2007 that resulted in the elimination of RTA Route 10 to Ramona Gardens (except for one short commute run from Arroyo Grande to San Luis Obispo which operated for two years). Instead of serving Ramona Gardens, Route 10 now operates along the US 101 corridor. Additionally, SCAT routes were realigned in 2007 to create more of a feeder routing system rather than a somewhat dispersed and disjointed route system.

Since 2005, the Avila Beach Trolley has been administered by SCAT and funded by the County with a combination of donations and local contributions from the Avila Beach Foundation. The Avila Trolley is operated on 30-minute headways on weekends, holidays, Mondays and Fridays, and daily in summer. Service is provided from 9:00 AM to 5:55 PM. The Beach Trolley connects with SCAT Route 21 on Shell Beach Road at Spyglass Road.

Travel Times

An important service quality factor is the travel time required to complete trips, as well as the need to transfer between buses. Table 7 provides a summary of travel times between major destinations in the South County area. These include the Pismo Beach pier area, Grover Beach (4th Street and Grand Avenue), the Oceano Senior Center, Arroyo Grande City Hall, Arroyo Grande High School, as well as trips between each area and downtown San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria. The following bullet points provide discussion on some of the major findings.

- As shown, the majority of trips would require transfers between routes (as indicated by the letter “T”), resulting in longer travel times and the uncertainty associated with making the transfer. For instance, it would require roughly 56 minutes to travel from Arroyo Grande

High School to Pismo Beach – 36 minutes on Route 23, a 12 minute layover at Ramona Garden Park, and 8 minutes on Route 21.

- In general, the southern portions of the service area (generally served by Route 23) are provided by the least convenient transit services, as it requires many transfers or passengers to ride for long periods of time to get to their destinations. Examples of this are discussed below:

  - Travel from Arroyo Grande City Hall to Arroyo Grande High School requires a significant amount of time: 50 minutes by solely riding Route 23 and 44 minutes by riding Route 23 and Route 24. The first issue is that the high school is only served on Route 23. Further, the route serves the high school before stopping at City Hall. Thus, passengers must travel along nearly the entire route before arriving at the high school. Another option is to ride Route 24 from Arroyo Grande City Hall to Ramona Gardens in Grover Beach, and transfer to Route 23 for the remainder of the trip.

  - With service to Oceano only available on one route (Route 23) travel times tend to be much longer than between other destinations. Four of the six origin-destination analyses required transfers between routes, contributing to the longer travel times observed. The exceptions are trips leaving Arroyo Grande High School or Arroyo Grande City Hall, which require 18 minutes and 14 minutes, respectively, for trips to Oceano, and from Oceano to Grover Beach, which requires roughly 15 minutes. However, the return times on these trips are much longer.

TABLE 7: Travel Times for Current Services

T = Transfer Required

		Destination						
		San Luis Obispo	**Pismo Beach**	**Grover Beach**	**Oceano**	**Grande City Hall**	**Grande High School**	**Santa Maria**
Origin	**San Luis Obispo**	~	30 m. T	58 m. T	40 m. T	66 m. T	75 m. T	~
	Pismo Beach	30 m. T	~	3 min.	40 m. T	14 m.	22 m. T	48 m. T
	Grover Beach	56 m. T	6 m.	~	37 m. T	15 m.	19 m. T	75 m. T
	Oceano	85 m. T	38 m. T	15 m.	~	38 m. T	42 m.	105 m. T
	Arroyo Grande City Hall	39 m. T	21 m.	19 m.	14 m.	~	44 m. T	58 m. T
	Arroyo Grande High	43 m. T	56 m. T	33 m.	18 m.	4 m.	~	62 m. T
	Santa Maria	~	45 m. T	73 m. T	55 m. T	95 m. T	90 m. T	~

Source: SCAT and SLO RTA, 2010

- Routes 21 and 24 provide the most convenient service within the network, with shorter travel times on average and less transfers required. Transfers are typically only necessary when traveling to Oceano, Arroyo Grande High School, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Maria.

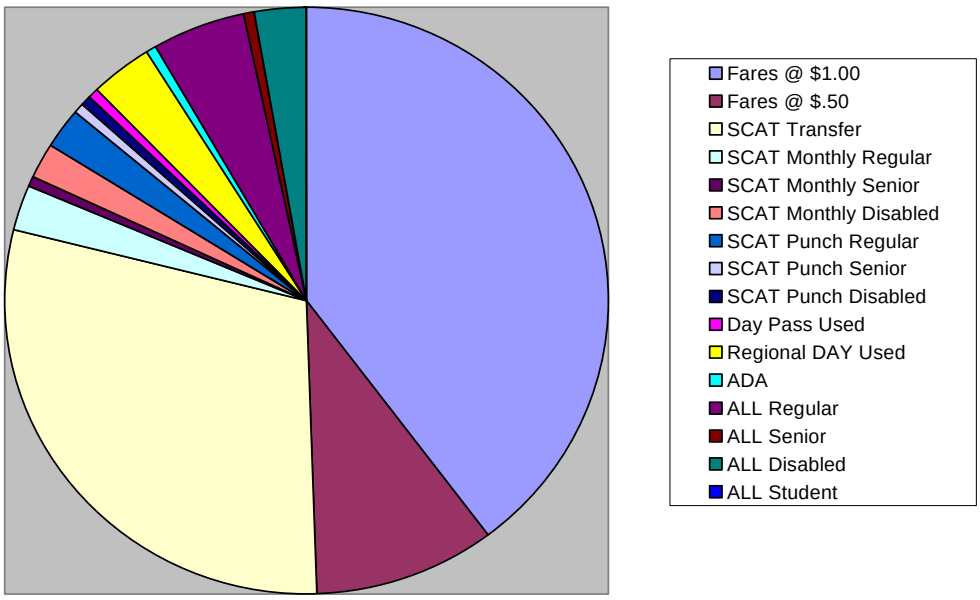
SCAT Fare Structure

SCAT uses a large variety of fare media, including the following:

- Cash Fares ($1.25 for the general public, $0.60 for senior citizens or disabled)
- SCAT 31-Day Pass
- SCAT 20-Ride Pass
- RTA Regional DAY Pass
- RTA Regional 31-Day Pass
- Summer Break Pass: for students in K-12 from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
- VIP Pass: Unlimited rides for seniors aged 80 and over

As indicated by fare data collected in August 2009 and shown in Figure 9, the most common fare type used is cash followed by transfers. Full cash fares accounted for 40 percent of all fare media, while discounted cash fares accounted for 10 percent and transfers accounted for 30 percent, for a total of 80 percent of all fares used in August of 2009. Regional "ALL" passes, which have been replaced by the Regional 31-day pass, accounted for 8 percent of fare types used (5 percent for regular ALL passes, 3 percent for disabled ALL passes, and less than 1 percent for senior ALL passes).

FIGURE 9: Fares Sold by Type
August 2009



Operating Characteristics

SCAT operating characteristics are depicted in Table 8 for Fiscal Years (FY) 2005-06 to the current 2009-2010 (as available).

TABLE 8: SCAT Operating Data by Year

	Fixed Route [1]						Trolley/Shuttle Route		
Fiscal Year	**Route 21**	**Route 22**	**Route 23**	**Route 24**	**Route 25**	***Subtotal***	**Lopez Shuttle [2]**	**Avila Trolley**	***Total***
Ridership: One-Way Passenger Trips per Year									
05-06	41,489	34,503	44,088	40,637	7,336	*168,053*	951	5,120	***174,124***
06-07	45,720	37,308	46,597	41,813	8,072	*179,510*	1,211	4,682	***185,403***
07-08	63,272	0	64,543	56,505	5,794	*190,114*	891	5,815	***196,820***
08-09	74,180	0	74,419	63,515	6,568	*218,682*	857	6,947	***226,486***
Hours (includes deadhead)									
05-06	4,803	2,584	2,402	4,779	256	*14,823*	315	935	***16,072***
06-07	4,789	2,648	2,356	4,769	256	*14,817*	302	952	***16,071***
07-08	5,059	219	5,521	5,045	91	*15,935*	231	935	***17,101***
08-09	5,078	0	5,798	5,068	278	*16,222*	231	952	***17,405***
Miles (includes deadhead)									
05-06	65,824	39,030	37,268	83,733	1,260	*227,115*	4,496	21,483	***253,094***
06-07	65,525	38,768	37,014	83,161	1,253	*225,720*	4,205	21,892	***251,818***
07-08	83,632	3,308	93,971	76,736	1,629	*259,275*	4,085	21,483	***284,843***
08-09	80,966	0	91,770	75,827	1,544	*250,107*	3,350	19,794	***273,251***
Operating Costs (including overhead administrative costs)									
05-06	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$686,420*	$9,396	$45,335	***$741,151***
06-07	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$692,888*	$10,028	$51,487	***$754,403***
07-08	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$859,150*	$8,492	$63,616	***$931,258***
08-09	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$843,333*	$6,267	$74,198	***$923,798***
Fare Revenue									
05-06	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$93,488*	$0	$4,022	***$97,510***
06-07	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$98,760*	$0	$5,550	***$104,310***
07-08	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$104,352*	$0	$6,363	***$110,715***
08-09	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*na*	*$120,845*	$0	$7,912	***$128,757***

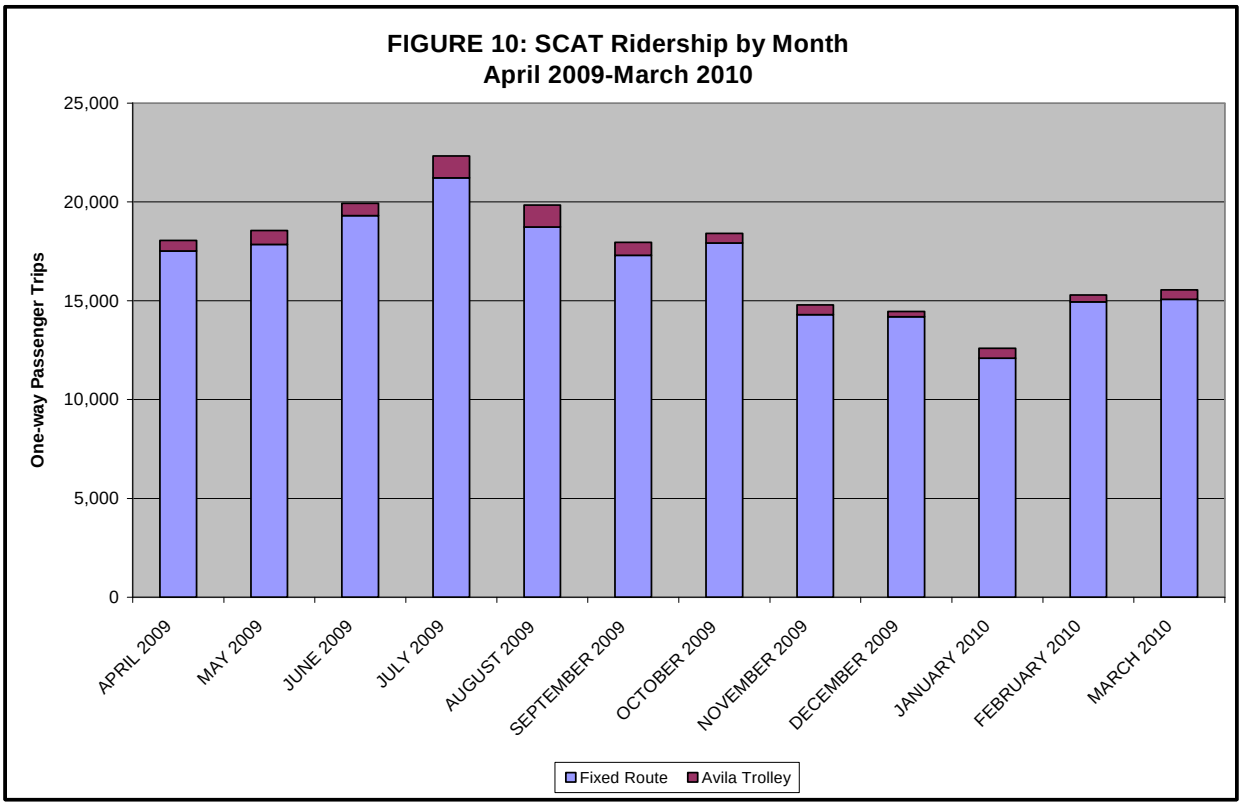
Note 1: Route 22 discontinued in 2007, with major changes to Routes 21, 23 and 24.
Note 2: Lopez Shuttle discontinued in 2009.
Source: SCAT Reports, 2010

Ridership

SCAT ridership has steadily grown over the past five years, though indications are that ridership has declined in the 2009-10 fiscal year. In particular, the fixed-route ridership is down by an estimated 9 percent, while Trolley ridership has increased by approximately 5 percent. As shown in Table 8, ridership in 2005-06 was 174,124 one-way passenger-trips, increasing to 226,486 in 2008-09; indications are that the current year ridership will be approximately 207,000. This

equates to a 30 percent increase from 2005-06 to 2008-09, with a 15 percent increase taking place between 2007-08 and 2008-09, likely reflecting improvements to the route changes implemented in 2007. The current estimated 9 percent decrease is a significant decline and could be related to several factors: a) the economic decline, a reduction in gas prices from the highs of 2008, and b) the reduction in span of service in the evening.

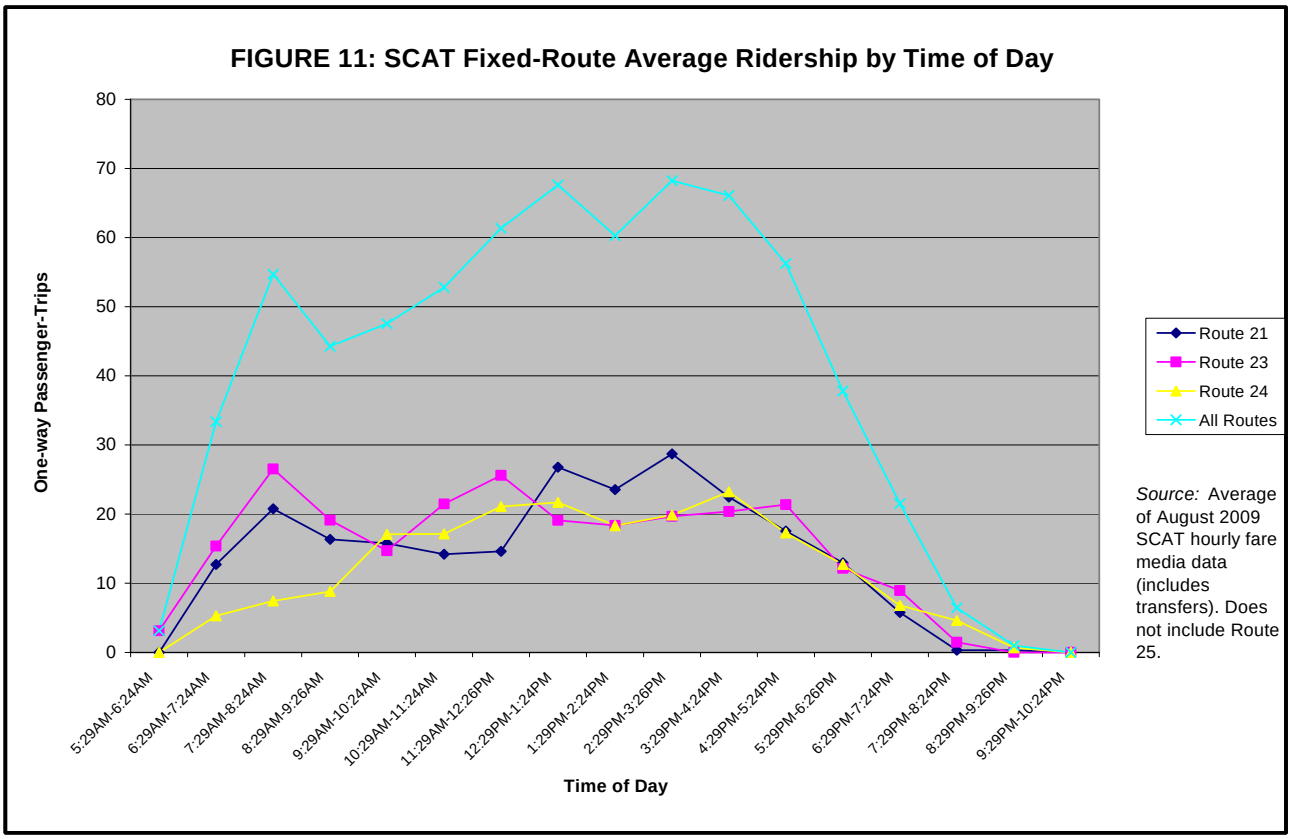
Ridership by month from April 2009 to March 2010 is shown in Figure 10, including fixed-route ridership and the Avila Trolley. As indicated, ridership on both services is highest in the summer, particularly in July when monthly ridership is roughly 30 percent above the annual average. Ridership is lowest in January, roughly 25 percent below the annual average.



Ridership by time of day was derived by evaluating fare media used on each run over the month of August 2009 (including transfers, but not including tripper Route 25). The data, summarized in Figure 11, indicates that ridership is highest from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM, with a slight lull after the lunch hour (1:29 PM to 2:24 PM). Morning ridership peaks between 7:29 AM and 8:24 AM, and ridership declines sharply after the 4:29 PM to 5:24 PM runs. By route, ridership on Route 23 peaks in the morning, while ridership on Routes 21 and 24 peaks in the afternoon.

Hours and Miles of Service

The hours of service operated increased in 2007 by approximately 6 percent with changes to the routing, increasing the annual vehicle-hours from approximately 16,000 to approximately 17,000 annually. As shown in Table 8, the vehicle-miles operated increased by 13 percent in 2007-08 from 251,818 to 284,843 and then were reduced by 5 percent the following year to 273,251. It is



important to note that the miles and hours presented in this report are considered "platform" hours. As such, the reported miles and hours represent of all the time each driver is in the bus, including deadhead time before and after the in-revenue-service time, rather than simply the standard revenue or service-miles/hours.

Operating Cost Trends

SCAT operating costs, including overhead costs, are depicted in Table 8. As indicated, the annual costs increased from $741,151 in 2005-06 to $923,278, with the biggest jump in costs occurring in 2007-08, which was primarily due to fuel cost increases as well as maintenance expenses. The budgeted operating cost for FY 2009-10 is $893,056, which is a 3 percent decrease over the previous year.

Fare Revenue Trends

Fare revenue is also shown in Table 8. As indicated, a total of $128,757 in fare revenues was generated in FY 2008-09. As would be expected, fare revenues paralleled ridership trends.

Service Performance Analysis

To gain further insight into the efficiency and effectiveness of the SCAT services, it is useful to conduct an analysis of ridership and operating data on a service category basis. Ridership and operating statistics for FYs 2005-06 through 2008-09 were reviewed to identify average

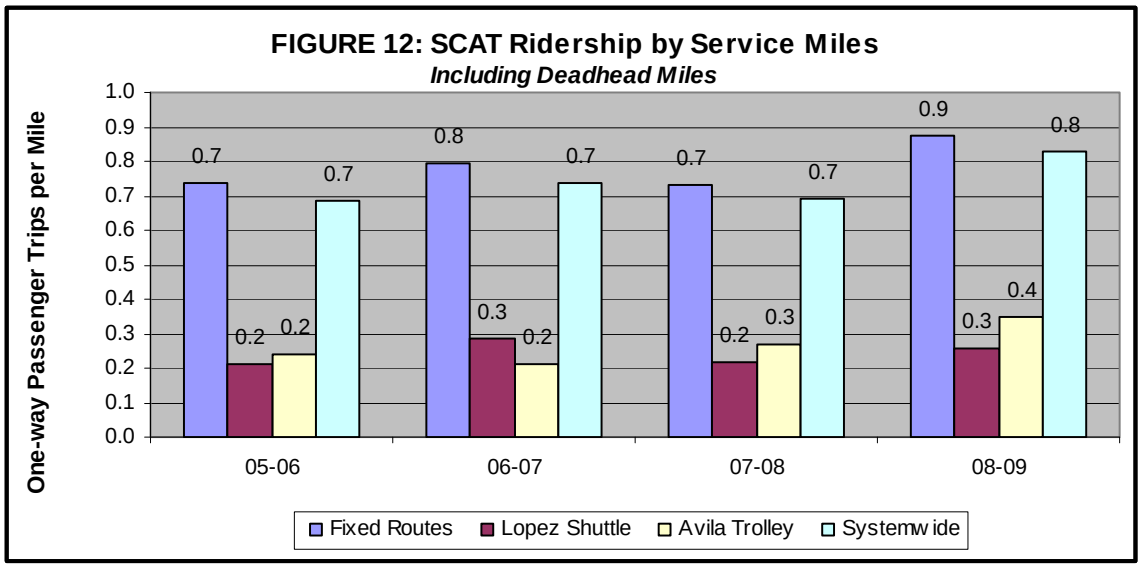
passenger activity, fares, and operating quantities including costs and fare revenues per service quantity. These service quantities for each service were then used to evaluate a variety of transit service performance measures, as shown in Table 9 and discussed below.

TABLE 9: SCAT Performance Data by Year

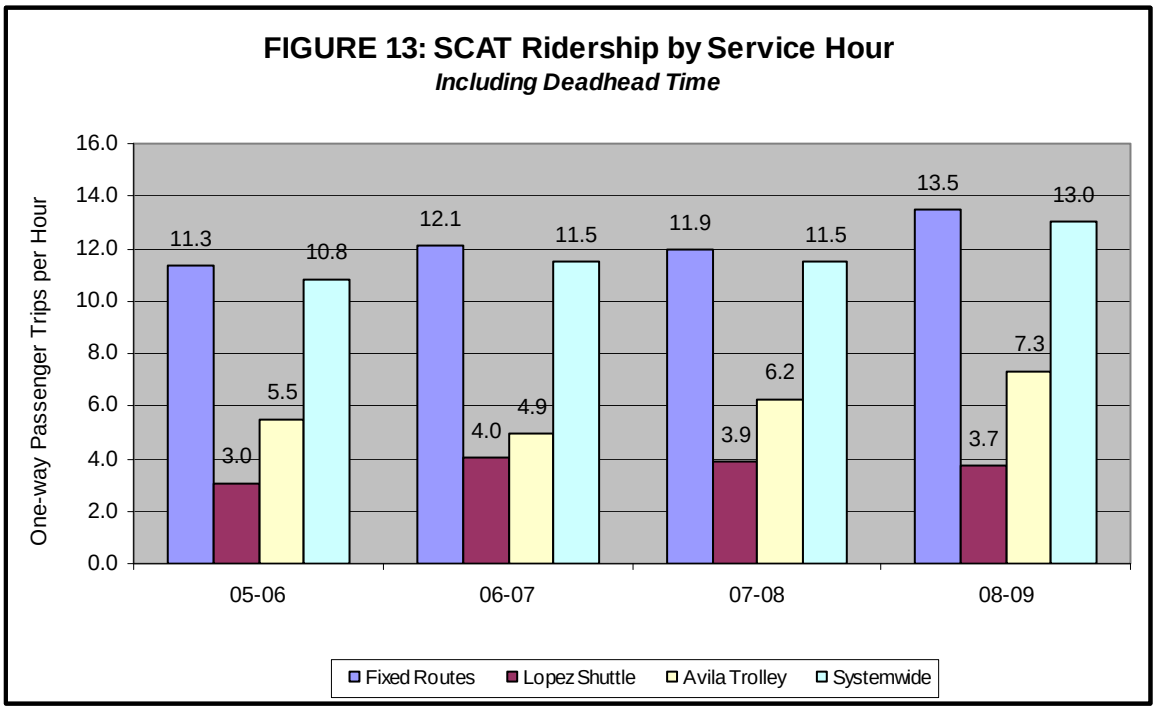
Fiscal Year	Fixed Routes	Lopez Shuttle	Avila Trolley	Systemwide
SCAT Ridership by Hour (includes deadhead hours)				
05-06	11.3	3.0	5.5	**10.8**
06-07	12.1	4.0	4.9	**11.5**
07-08	11.9	3.9	6.2	**11.5**
08-09	13.5	3.7	7.3	**13.0**
SCAT Ridership by Mile (includes deadhead miles)				
05-06	0.7	0.2	0.2	**0.7**
06-07	0.8	0.3	0.2	**0.7**
07-08	0.7	0.2	0.3	**0.7**
08-09	0.9	0.3	0.4	**0.8**
SCAT Operating Cost per Passenger Trip				
05-06	$4.08	$9.88	$8.85	**$4.26**
06-07	$3.86	$8.28	$11.00	**$4.07**
07-08	$4.52	$9.53	$10.94	**$4.73**
08-09	$3.86	$7.31	$10.68	**$4.08**
SCAT Operating Cost per Hour of Service (including deadhead)				
05-06	$46.31	$29.87	$48.51	**$46.11**
06-07	$46.76	$33.23	$54.07	**$46.94**
07-08	$53.92	$36.74	$68.08	**$54.46**
08-09	$51.99	$27.12	$77.91	**$53.08**
SCAT Farebox Recovery Ratio				
05-06	13.6%	0.0%	8.9%	**13.2%**
06-07	14.3%	0.0%	10.8%	**13.8%**
07-08	12.1%	0.0%	10.0%	**11.9%**
08-09	14.3%	0.0%	10.7%	**13.9%**
SCAT Operating Subsidy per Passenger Trip				
05-06	$3.53	$9.88	$8.07	**$3.70**
06-07	$3.31	$8.28	$9.81	**$3.51**
07-08	$3.97	$9.53	$9.85	**$4.17**
08-09	$3.30	$7.31	$9.54	**$3.51**

Source: SCAT, 2010

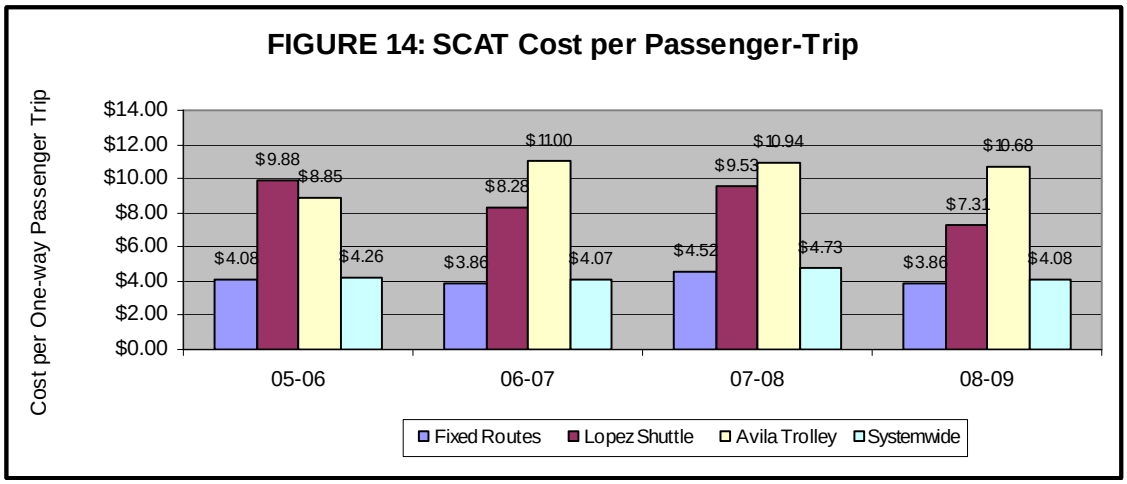
Figure 12 graphically illustrates the service effectiveness of the SCAT system based on the number of passenger-trips per service-mile. As shown, the fixed-routes carried 0.7 to 0.9 passenger-trips per service-mile, while the Lopez Shuttle and Avila Trolley only carried between 0.2 and 0.3 passenger-trips per service-mile.



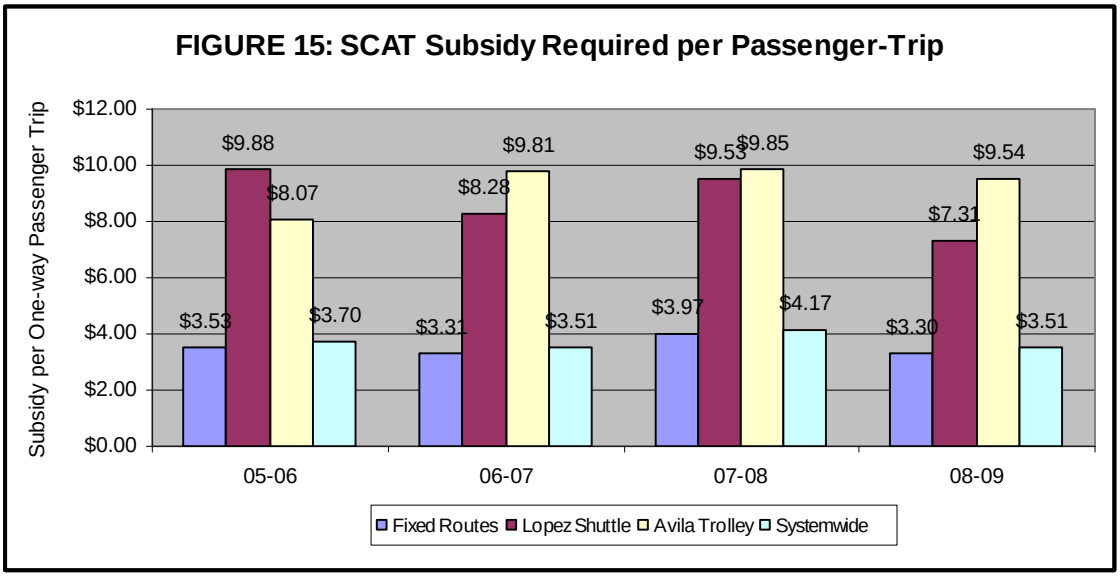
The fixed-routes also have the highest productivity in terms of passenger-trips per service hour, with 11.3 to 13.5 passengers per hour (2008-09 being the most productive after service changes in August 2007). The Lopez Shuttle, which has been discontinued, only carried 3.0 to 4.0 passengers per hour, while the Avila Trolley carried between 4.9 and 7.3 passenger-trips per hour. The passenger-trips per hour are shown in Figure 13.



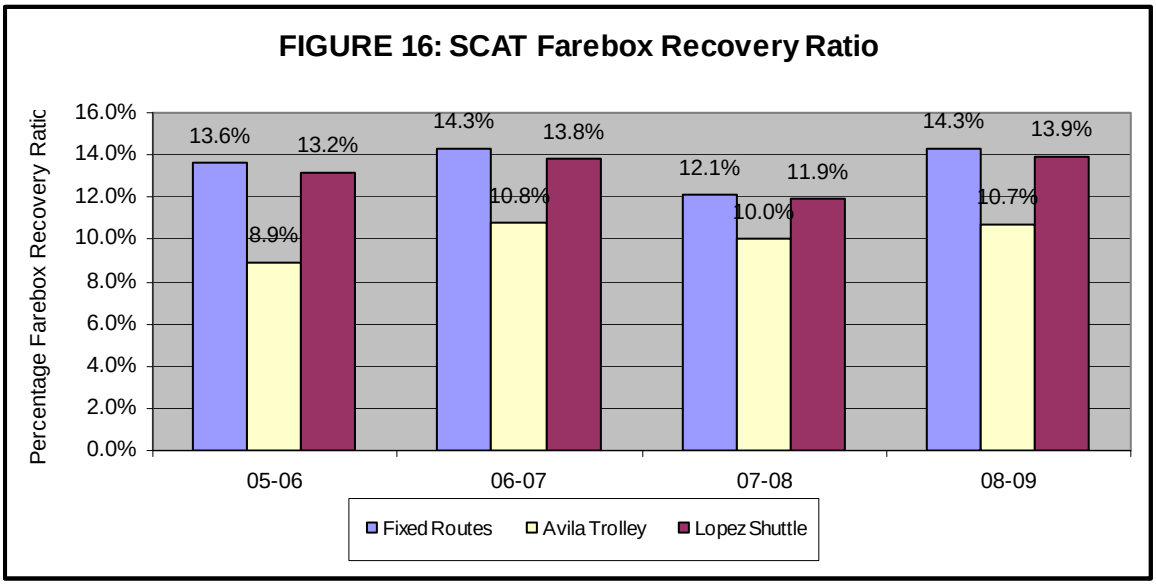
Dividing the estimated operating cost by the number of passenger-trips served on each service yields the cost per passenger-trip. As shown in Table 9 and Figure 14, operating cost was between $3.86 and $4.52 over the past several years on the fixed-routes. The Lopez Shuttle was by contrast much higher at between $7.31 and $9.53 per passenger-trip. However, the highest cost per passenger-trip was for the Avila Trolley which cost between $8.85 and $11.00 over the past several years.



The subsidy per passenger-trip is calculated by subtracting fare revenues from the costs of each route and dividing by the number of passenger-trips. This is a particularly useful performance measure, as it directly relates the key public input to a public transit program (subsidy funding) with the key "output" (passenger-trips). As shown in Figure 15, the most effective services have been the fixed-routes with relatively low subsidies per passenger-trip of $3.30 to $3.97. Because no fares were collected on the Lopez Shuttle, the subsidy per passenger-trip is the same as the cost per passenger-trip. Donations are accepted on the Avila Trolley, which slightly reduces the cost per passenger-trip requiring subsidies between $8.07 and $9.85.



The farebox ratio is calculated by dividing the passenger revenues by the operating costs. Also shown in Table 9 and Figure 16, the farebox ratio ranged from a low of 8.9 percent on the Avila Trolley (bearing in mind that this is through donations) and a high of 14.3 percent on the fixed-routes. System-wide, the farebox ratio ranged from 11.9 percent to 13.9 percent. Per Transportation Development Act (TDA) requirements, SCAT must meet a minimum farebox return ratio of 10 percent, which it has done. However, if the Five Cities area or portions of the area are designated as part of an Urbanized Area in the 2010 Census, a higher minimum farebox return ratio of 20 percent would be required.

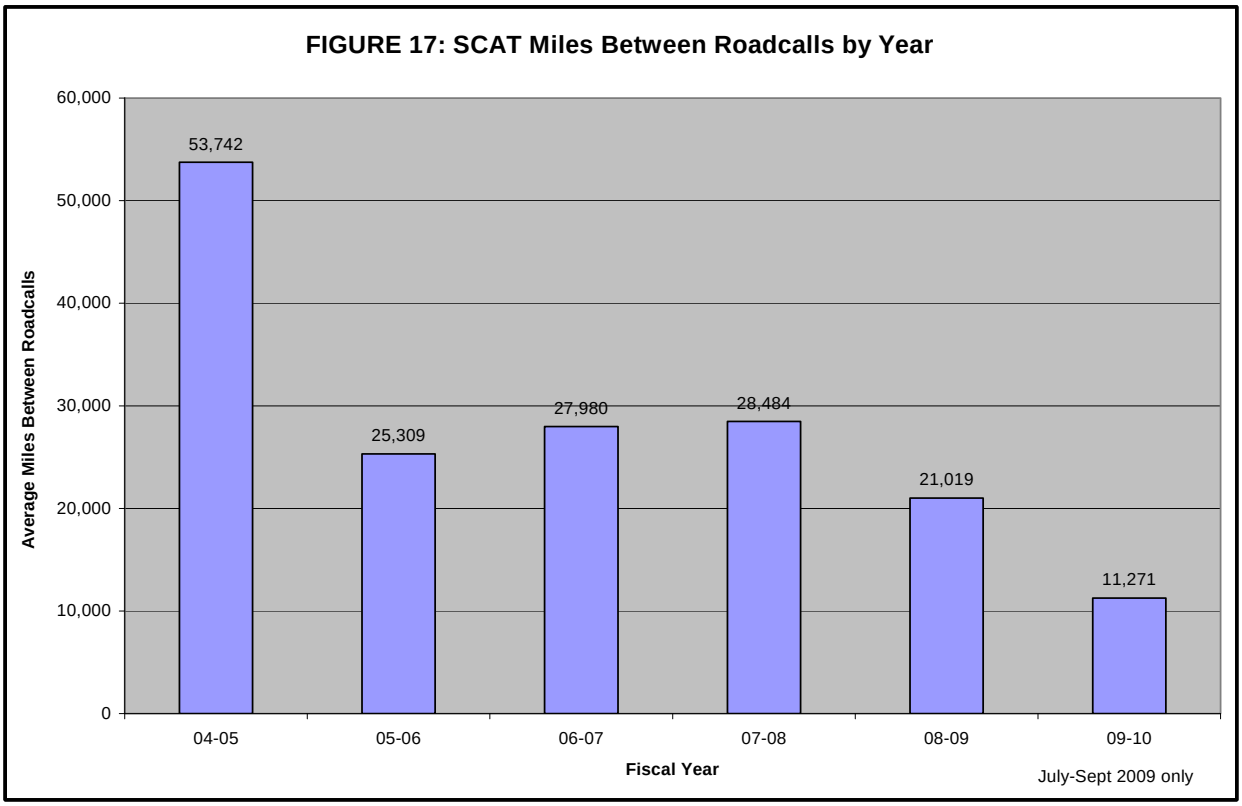


On-time Performance

On-time performance was tracked for Routes 21, 23, and 24 for FY 2008-09. The on-time performance was tracked hourly (rather than at key time points) at the Ramona Garden Center. Out of 15,092 trips provided over the year, only 23 were 6 to 10 minutes late, and only 2 were 10 to 20 minutes late. This equates to a 99.8 percent on-time performance record, which is an excellent figure. In part, this is due to the policy to hold a vehicle for Route 10 transfers at the Ramona Gardens transfer center. Route 21 must depart the Prime Outlet stop by 3 minutes after the hour so that it is not late, but Route 24 can wait as late as 8 minutes after the hour and still remain on time.

Miles Between Roadcalls

Another measure impacting the quality of service for a transit system is the average number of miles operated between roadcalls. A roadcall occurs when a vehicle is disabled requiring it to taken out of service for repairs. Passengers perceive this as a direct correlation of service reliability. According to data provided by SCAT, the frequency of roadcalls has been generally increasing over the past six years, as shown in Figure 17. In 2004-05, the SCAT fleet averaged 53,742 miles between roadcalls, which is quite good. From 2005-06 to 2007-08, the miles



between roadcalls was approximately 25,000 to 28,000, which while it is half of the previous year is still good compared with transit industry standards. This dropped to 21,019 in 2008-09, and for the first few months of FY 2009-10, the vehicles have averaged 11,271 miles between roadcalls. A reasonable minimum standard is 10,000 miles between roadcalls, with a desirable target at 12,000 or higher, which means that SCAT is meeting the minimum standard. However, the progressive increase in frequency of roadcalls is cause for concern and justifies careful monitoring. The revenue miles per year have been decreasing, which indicates the increase in roadcalls is likely a function of aging vehicles. Since August 2009 with the shift to in-house operations, there has been an improvement in this indicator.

SCAT Staffing

SCAT has a full-time operations supervisor, a full-time mechanic, four full-time drivers, and 16 part-time drivers. In addition, SCAT receives support from RTA including financial support, planning assistance, maintenance support, dispatch services. However, staff hours provided by RTA are not well tracked, and it is unknown specifically how many hours of support are provided. Additionally, many of the duties undertaken by RTA are undertaken on behalf of both organizations and therefore difficult to allocate.

Financial Characteristics

Revenues

SCAT derives its revenues from a number of sources, the largest being Local Transportation Fund (LTF) monies apportioned to the jurisdictions in the Five Cities area. The LTF is based on a quarter-cent sales tax collected by the State of California and returned to the source area. This includes LTF for Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Pismo Beach and a portion of San Luis Obispo County for the unincorporated area of Oceano, as shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10: SCAT Revenues
for Fiscal Year 2009-10

	FY 2008-09		FY 2009-10	
Revenue Source	**Amount**	**Percent**	**Amount**	**Percent**
Fund Balance Available	$202,348	20.8%	$21,848	2.3%
Fares	$112,619	11.6%	$145,112	15.1%
STA	$22,922	2.4%	$0	0.0%
RTF - Preventative Maintenance	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%
Federal Stimulus - Preventative Maintenance	$0	0.0%	$70,000	7.3%
Federal Stimulus - Electronic Farebox	$0	0.0%	$68,000	7.1%
SLO County Avila Trolley	$59,976	6.2%	$58,872	6.1%
STA Lopez Lake	$11,025	1.1%	$0	0.0%
Non-TDA Operating Revenues	**$206,542**	**21.2%**	**$341,984**	**35.5%**
Arroyo Grande (36.4%)	$199,663	20.5%	$215,471	22.4%
Grover Beach (28.4%)	$155,781	16.0%	$171,425	17.8%
Pismo Beach (18.6%)	$102,025	10.5%	$111,902	11.6%
SLO County (16.6%)	$91,055	9.4%	$96,426	10.0%
Local Transportation Funds	**$548,524**	**56.4%**	**$595,224**	**61.8%**
Total Operating Revenues	**$755,066**	**77.6%**	**$937,208**	**97.3%**
Non-Operating Resources (Interest)	$16,000	1.6%	$4,000	0.4%
Total Revenue Resources	**$973,414**	**100.0%**	**$963,056**	**100.0%**

Source: SCAT April 2010

The LTF is apportioned based on population. In all, LTF, accounts for nearly 62 percent of the current year's budget and accounted for over 56 percent of revenues in the 2008-09 budget (with 20 percent derived from carryover funds). After LTF, the largest revenue source is fares. In FY 2008-09, fare revenue accounted for 11.6 percent of revenue resources, while the current fiscal year budget projects fare revenue to provide 15.1 percent of the annual revenue. The FY 2009-10 fiscal year budget also includes one-time stimulus funding, accounting for just under 15 percent of the budgeted revenue. SCAT also receives money from the County (funds administered by

RTA) and local contributions from the Avila Beach Foundation (supplemental contributions toward the farebox to meet the minimum 10 percent ratio). Figures 18 and 19 present the percentages of each revenue source for FY 2008-09 and 2009-10, respectively.

FIGURE 18: SCAT Revenues by Source 2008-09

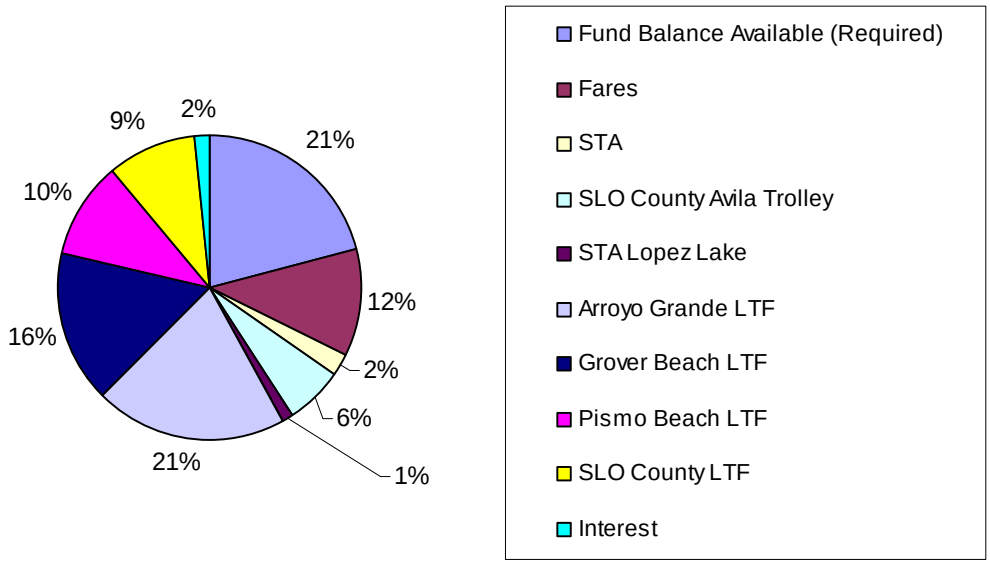


FIGURE 19: SCAT Revenues by Source 2009-10

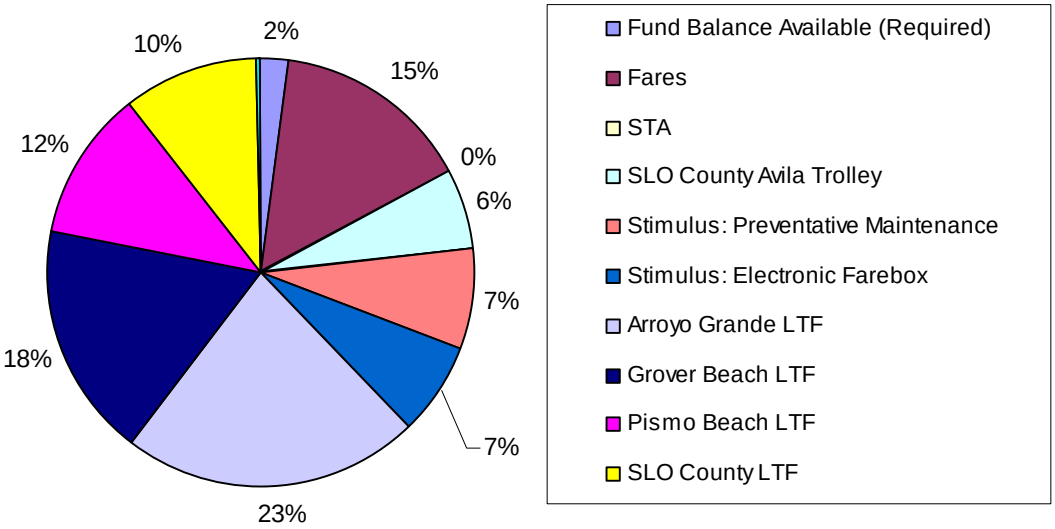


Table 11 presents the total TDA funds received by and distributed within San Luis Obispo County, with funds apportioned to SCAT highlighted in yellow. As shown, SCAT received approximately $657,900 in 2008-09 ($548,524 from LTF and $109,419 from STA), which was 6.2 percent of the area TDA funds.

Expenses

SCAT services cost in the $900,000 range for the past two fiscal years (not including capital outlay), as shown in Table 12. Salaries and benefits account for the approximately 40 to 45 percent of the budget, as shown in Figure 20 (2008-09) and Figure 21 (2009-10). Fuel is the next largest expense (19 percent of expenses), followed by maintenance (15 to 16 percent). Administrative costs are between 6 to 7 percent of the budget, though no efforts have been made to accurately quantify the cost of administrative oversight provided by RTA.

Cost Allocation

A cost allocation model is a useful tool for evaluating current costs as well as for developing service alternatives later on. A model was not able to be developed for FY 2009-10, as accurate administrative costs need to be obtained from RTA. The costs associated with service factors were evaluated for FY 2008-09 to develop a cost allocation model. Each cost item in the budget is allocated to that quantity – vehicle service hour, vehicle service-mile, or fixed costs – upon which it is most dependent. Fuel costs, for example, are allocated to vehicle service-miles. When divided by the total quantity of service budgeted for FY 2008-09, a "cost equation" can be developed, as presented in Table 13. This equation is:

Operating Cost = $25.31 x annual vehicle service hours +
$1.15 x annual vehicle service-miles +
$166,547 in annual fixed costs.

This equation can be used to estimate the cost of any changes in service, such as the operation of additional routes or changes in daily hours of operation.

SCAT Capital Assets

Transit Fleet

SCAT has a fleet of five 35-foot buses and a trolley replica vehicle, as shown in Table 14. The peak vehicle requirement is four buses and a trolley, which leaves only one vehicle as a back-up. RTA vehicles are available as additional back ups, but the RTA 40-foot buses are too large to make turns on Routes 23 and 24. Based on industry standards, four of the vehicles will warrant replacement in 2013, with one warranting replacement in 2016. The Trolley, which would meet replacement guidelines by 2012, is being replaced in 2010.

This Page is Left Intentionally Blank.

TABLE 11: San Luis Obispo County Transportation Revenues FY 2008-09

	Net Local Transportation Fund																State Transit Assistance (STA)				
			Committed Funds					Discretionary Uses													
Jurisdiction/ Transit Property	Total LTF	Net LTF Available	Bike/Ped	Net RTA	RTA RTF	RTA	SCAT	To be determined by Claimant	TDA Audit	Transit Ops & Planning	Roads & Maintenance	Transit Cap/ Special Services	Net LTF	Total RTF Award	Total RTF Carryover	Total LTF, RTF and RTF Carry-over	Operating Revenue	Population Served	Discre-tionary	Total STA	**Total LTF, STA & RTF Distribution**
Arroyo Grande	539,252	513,686	10,721	108,606	25,566	134,172	199,663	194,696	0	0	188,696	6,000	513,686	0	0	513,686	0	0	0	0	**513,686**
Atascadero	926,018	881,932	18,511	181,735	44,086	225,821	0	681,686	3,650	258,174	419,862	0	881,932	0	0	881,932	2,755	22,362	0	25,117	**907,049**
Grover Beach	421,034	401,040	8,534	86,808	19,994	106,802	155,781	149,917	3,000	0	146,917	0	401,040	0	0	401,040	0	0	0	0	**401,040**
Morro Bay	335,798	319,901	6,776	68,046	15,897	83,943	0	245,079	0	245,079	0	0	319,901	69,020	82,486	471,407	1,178	8,109	0	9,287	**480,694**
Paso Robles	949,668	904,436	18,711	196,022	45,233	241,255	0	689,703	1,500	653,203	35,000	0	904,436	0	0	904,436	4,047	22,934	0	26,981	**931,417**
Pismo Beach	274,951	261,840	5,566	56,541	13,111	69,652	102,025	97,708	1,000	0	95,958	750	261,840	0	0	261,840	0	0	0	0	**261,840**
San Luis Obispo Transit	1,586,898	1,497,505	31,014	380,661	89,393	470,054	0	1,085,830	0	1,085,830	0	0	1,497,505	0	0	1,497,505	15,413	38,322	0	53,735	**1,551,240**
SLO County	3,490,030	3,246,682	70,193	1,036,244	243,348	1,279,592	91,055	2,049,190	0	0	1,190,721	858,469	3,246,682	30,000	72,899	3,349,581	2,380	0	0	2,380	**3,351,961**
Los Osos																		11,392	0	11,392	**11,392**
Cambria																		5,358	0	5,358	**5,358**
Nipomo																		11,764	475	11,764	**11,764**
SLORTA												0	0	352,600	328,891	681,491	24,444	53,500	525	78,419	**759,910**
SCAT	0			n/a										45,008	15,000	60,008	2,627	46,259	0	49,411	**109,419**
SLOCOG Admin	219,575			n/a									219,575			219,575	0	0	0	0	**219,575**
SLOCOG Planning	305,189			n/a									305,189			305,189	0	0	0	0	**305,189**
SLOCOG [1]	25,000												25,000			25,000		77,500		77,500	**102,500**
Rideshare [2]	8,949		8,949	n/a									8,949			8,949	0	0	125,000	125,000	**133,949**
Ride-On/CIP [3, 4, 5]	5,000			n/a									5,000			5,000	0	15,000	0	15,000	**20,000**
Ride-On/CTSA [4, 5, 6]	441,139			n/a									441,139			441,139	0	0	40,000	40,000	**481,139**
Vanpool Service [7]	0			n/a									0			0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Grover Beach Train Station [8]				n/a															10,000	10,000	**10,000**
Contingency Fund [9]	70,000			n/a									70,000			70,000	0	0	10,240	10,240	**80,240**
Unexchanged RTF	0			n/a									0				0	0		0	**0**
Total	*9,598,501*	*8,027,022*	*178,975*	*2,114,663*	*496,628*	*2,611,291*	*548,524*	*5,193,809*	*9,150*	*2,242,286*	*2,077,154*	*865,219*	*9,101,874*	*496,628*	*499,276*	*10,097,778*	*52,844*	*312,500*	*186,240*	*551,584*	***10,649,362***

Note 1. Re STA: Decrease the $50k for cash flow for Ag Grant to $10k and remove $25k for RTP EIR (backfill with $25k from SHA)
Note 2. Decrease Ridesharing STA from $305k to $125k. To make up for loss of STA funding for Ridesharing, staff recommends backfilling with $100k State Highway Account (SHA) funding. In addition, Ridesharing will receive a New Freedom Grant ($68k) in April 2009.
Note 3. Increase Ride-On's LTF by $5k for CIP to backfill for loss of STA
Note 4. To make up for loss of STA funding to CTSA - Senior Shuttle (Ride On Transportation), on 3/4/09 the Board approved backfilling with $25k from Local Transportation Fund (LTF) unallocated balance.
Note 5. To make up for loss of STA funding to CTSA - CIP (Ride On Transportation), on 3/4/09 the Board approved backfilling with $5k from LTF unallocated balance.
Note 6. Increase Ride-On's LTF by $25k for CTSA to backfill for loss of STA
Note 7. Re STA: Remove the $10k for vanpool service.
Note 8. Decrease the STA contribution to the Grover Beach Train Station Expansion from $30k to $10k.
Note 9. Decrease the unallocated STA funding to $10,240.

Source: SLOGOG, 2010

This Page Left Intentionally Blank.

TABLE 12: SCAT Expenditures

for Fiscal Year 2008-09 and 2009-10

	FY 2008-09		FY 2009-10	
Expense Item	**Amount**	**Percent**	**Amount**	**Percent**
Lopez Lake service	$6,267	0.7%	$0	0.0%
Salaries and benefits	$416,283	45.1%	$368,875	40.0%
Maintenance	$138,319	15.0%	$150,108	16.3%
Dispatch	$17,976	1.9%	$19,200	2.1%
Uniforms, laundry and physicals	$2,312	0.3%	$4,000	0.4%
SCAT bus fuel	$175,358	19.0%	$174,060	18.9%
Insurance SLIP/SPIP	$49,640	5.4%	$950	0.1%
Insurance	--	--	$43,485	4.7%
Rent	$16,225	1.8%	$18,585	2.0%
Utilities	$3,923	0.4%	$4,000	0.4%
Radio expense	$1,187	0.1%	$2,028	0.2%
Mileage and meeting expense	$496	0.1%	$1,000	0.1%
Legal services	$0	0.0%	$500	0.1%
Payroll processing	$2,955	0.3%	$2,540	0.3%
Administration	$66,248	7.2%	$60,500	6.6%
Finance	$13,250	1.4%	$12,100	1.3%
Office expense	$3,801	0.4%	$3,125	0.3%
Audit	$4,917	0.5%	$2,500	0.3%
Sign maintenance	$1,593	0.2%	$2,000	0.2%
Marketing/Community Relations/Printing	--	--	$8,500	0.9%
Promotion	-$578	-0.1%	--	--
Schedule and pass printing	$2,220	0.2%	--	--
Contingency	$0	0.0%	$15,000	1.6%
Total administration and operations	**$922,392**	**97.4%**	**$893,056**	**92.7%**
Bus stop improvements	$760	3.0%	$1,000	1.4%
Bus rehabilitation	$24,274	97.0%	--	--
Electronic Fareboxes	--	--	$68,000	97.1%
Computer and copier	$0	0.0%	$1,000	1.4%
Total capital outlay	**$25,034**	**2.6%**	**$70,000**	**7.3%**
Total Expenditures	**$947,426**		**$963,056**	

Source: SCAT, April 2010

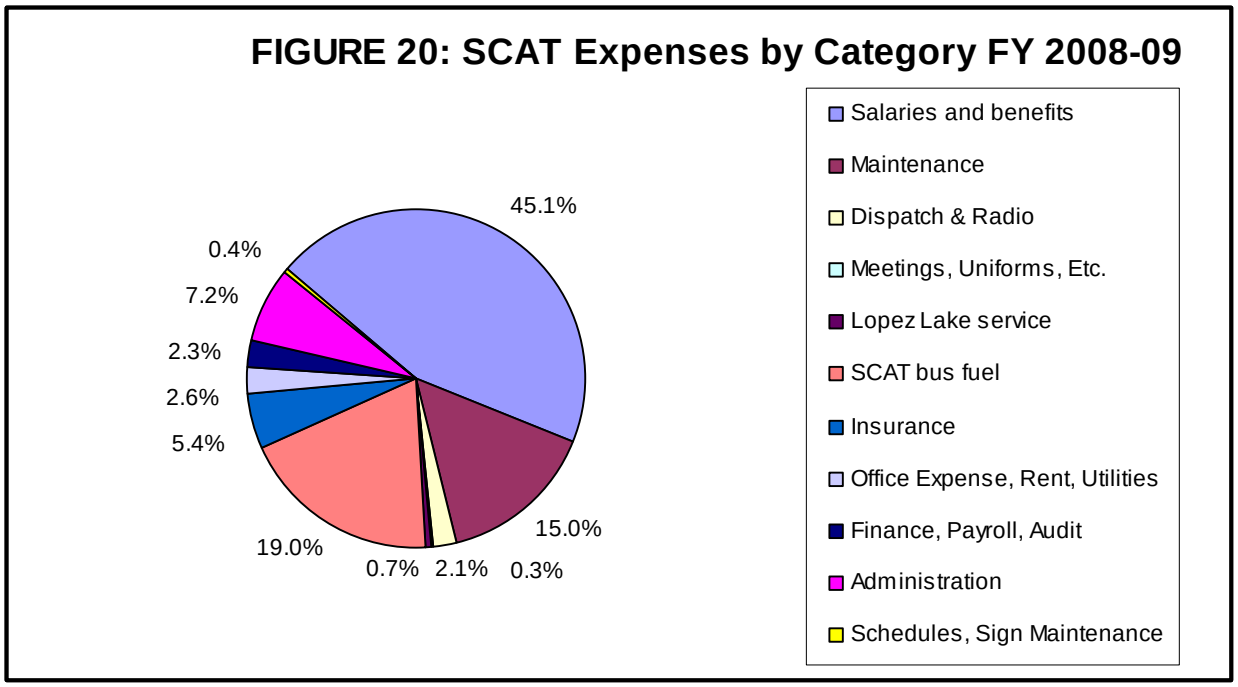


FIGURE 20: SCAT Expenses by Category FY 2008-09
45.1%
0.4%
7.2%
2.3%
2.6%
5.4%
19.0%
0.7%
2.1%
0.3%
15.0%
Salaries and benefits
Maintenance
Dispatch & Radio
Meetings, Uniforms, Etc.
Lopez Lake service
SCAT bus fuel
Insurance
Office Expense, Rent, Utilities
Finance, Payroll, Audit
Administration
Schedules, Sign Maintenance

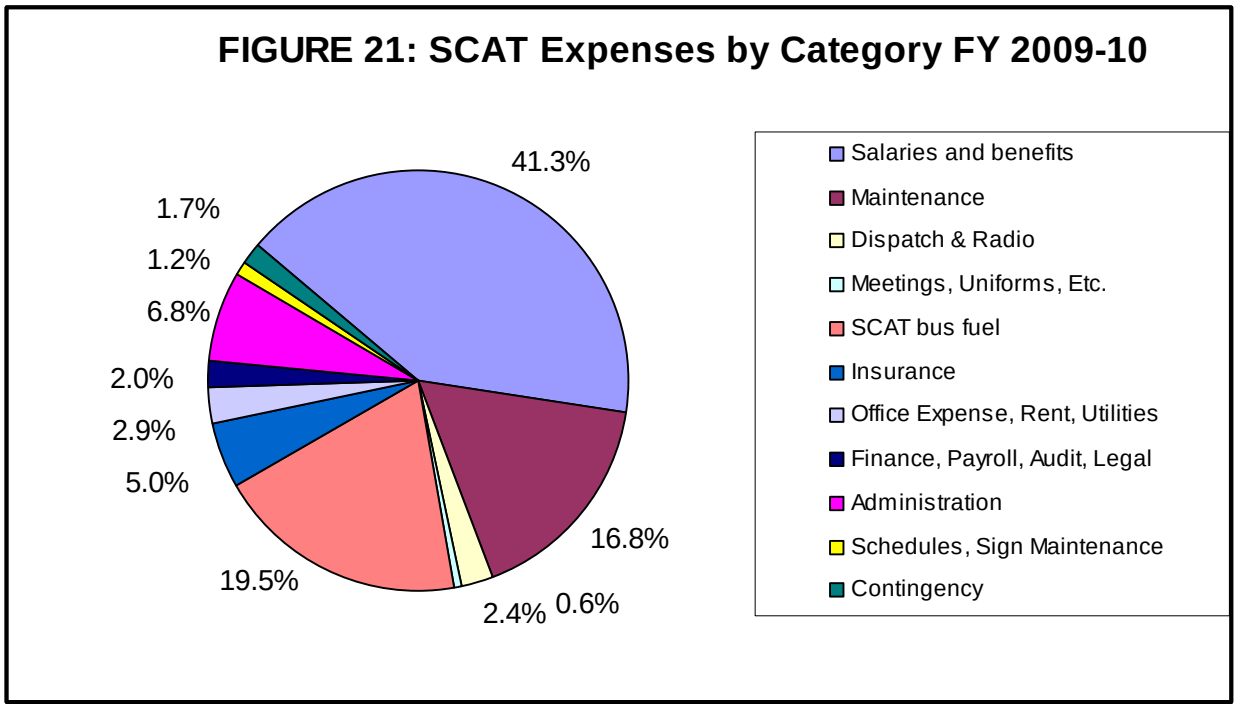


FIGURE 21: SCAT Expenses by Category FY 2009-10
41.3%
1.7%
1.2%
6.8%
2.0%
2.9%
5.0%
19.5%
2.4%
0.6%
16.8%
Salaries and benefits
Maintenance
Dispatch & Radio
Meetings, Uniforms, Etc.
SCAT bus fuel
Insurance
Office Expense, Rent, Utilities
Finance, Payroll, Audit, Legal
Administration
Schedules, Sign Maintenance
Contingency

TABLE 13: SCAT Cost Allocation Model for FY 2008-09

Expense Items	Total	Total FY 2008-2009 (Actual) Service Hrs	Service Miles	Fixed
Lopez Lake service	$6,267	$6,267		
Salaries and benefits	$416,283	$416,283		
Maintenance	$138,319		$138,319	
Dispatch	$17,976	$17,976		
Uniforms, laundry and physicals	$2,312			$2,312
SCAT bus fuel	$175,358		$175,358	
Insurance	$49,640			$49,640
Rent	$16,225			$16,225
Utilities	$3,923			$3,923
Radio expense	$1,187			$1,187
Mileage and meeting expense	$496			$496
Payroll processing	$2,955			$2,955
Administration	$66,248			$66,248
Finance	$13,250			$13,250
Office expense	$3,801			$3,801
Audit	$4,917			$4,917
Sign maintenance	$1,593			$1,593
Contingency	$0			
OPERATING TOTAL	$920,750	$440,526	$313,677	$166,547
Unit Quantities		17,405	273,251	--
Cost Per Unit		**$25.31**	**$1.15**	**$166,547**

Source: SCAT Budget, miles/hours spreadsheets, 2010

TABLE 14: SCAT Vehicle Fleet

As of April 2010

Vehicle #	Type	Year	Make	Model	Mileage: Current on 8/1/2009	Mileage: Projected for 1/1/2010	Year Expected to	Seating	Bike Racks
201	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	317,650	339,240	2013	35	6
202	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	344,464	368,194	2013	35	6
203	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	317,629	339,409	2013	35	6
204	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	296,130	315,125	2013	35	6
208	Bus	2006	CCW	Hybrid	100,116	102,290	2016	35	6
209	Trolley	2002	Supreme	Trolley	161,977	169,943	2012	29	3

Source: SCAT, 2010

The 2003 buses use clean diesel fuel, while the 2006 bus is a gas-electric hybrid. The trolley uses gasoline. The buses are equipped with front and rear bike racks, providing capacity for up to six bicycles, while the trolley offers three bike spaces. All of the vehicles are wheelchair lift-equipped with two tie-down positions. Each vehicle seats 35 passengers.

Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility

The SCAT operations and maintenance facility is located at 1198 Farroll Road in Grover Beach, between 11th and 12th Streets. This is a leased space with one maintenance bay, a small administrative space, and a small space for drivers. Buses are washed directly in front of the office door in the parking lot, with a drain installed to capture runoff. The facility is small and run-down, with inadequate parking, but is centrally located. Vehicles fuel at a commercial fueling station two blocks from the facility. The building is shared with several other businesses. The back half of the parking lot where buses are stored is enclosed by a gated chain-link fence.

In addition to this facility, vehicles are sent to the RTA facility for major maintenance when necessary. The RTA facility has recently been upgraded with four large maintenance bays and extensive office space, and a small dispatch center.

Transfer Centers and Passenger Amenities

SCAT has two transfer centers: the Ramona Garden Park transit center and the Prime Outlet Mall transfer center. Ramona Garden Park is a city-block-long site located at Ramona Avenue between North 9th and 10th Streets, one block north of Grand Avenue in Grover Beach. This location has recently been improved with four sawtooth bus pullouts and three passenger shelters with benches. All three interlined fixed-routes stop here and the transit vehicles switch routes each hour. The park has bathrooms which are available to passengers (and drivers), and park-and-ride spots are designated on 10th Street. There is room for expanded bus parking, and the facility is attractive and works well as a transfer location.

A second transfer center is located at the Prime Outlets Mall on Five Cities Drive near 4th Street in Pismo Beach. This location has a bus pullout which will accommodate four buses, a covered shelter with benches, and an information kiosk. Restrooms were planned for the facility, but the capital funds for this project have not yet been acquired. Routes 21 and 24 serve this stop, as does RTA Route 10. Because the curb has not been painted red, commercial bus lines use this location as an informal bus stop and commercial truck drivers use this location for parking, which can interfere with SCAT and RTA operations. The transfer stop is conveniently located at an exit/egress to US 101.

In addition to these two transfer centers, transfers are available at the Halcyon Park-and-Ride located at Halcyon Road and El Camino Real in Arroyo Grande. Passengers can use this location to transfer between SCAT Route 23 and RTA Route 10 (Route 23 arrives at 0:47 minutes after the hour, and Route 10 arrives at 0:54 minutes after the hour southbound, and 0:06 after the hour northbound).

The “street furniture” provided by a transit system is important to a system’s attractiveness to passengers, residents, and visitors. In addition, they increase the physical presence of the transit system in the community. Bus benches and shelters can play a large role in improving the overall image of a transit system and improve the convenience of transit as a travel mode. Additionally, shelter is important to those waiting for buses during inclement weather conditions. SCAT is

currently cataloging its passenger amenities, which primarily consist of bus stop signs and occasional benches, trash cans, and information kiosks.

OTHER TRANSIT PROVIDERS

RTA

Route 10: San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria Service

Connections from the South County area to San Luis Obispo to the north and Santa Maria to the south are provided by RTA Route 10, which operates along the US 101 corridor. There are 14 runs per day on hourly headways, as well as 2 express routes (morning and evening). General operating hours in the South County area are between 6:50 AM and 6:54 PM in the northbound direction (towards San Luis Obispo) and 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM in the southbound direction (towards Santa Maria). One-way fares are dependent upon the origin and destination:

- $1.25 general/$0.60 discount for service wholly within a single area: San Luis Obispo, Pismo Beach/Arroyo Grande, Nipomo or Santa Maria.
- $1.75 general/$0.85 discount for service between San Luis Obispo and Pismo Beach/Arroyo Grande, between Pismo Beach/Arroyo Grande and Nipomo, and between Nipomo and Santa Maria.
- $2.25 general/$1.10 discount for service between San Luis Obispo and Nipomo, and Pismo Beach/Arroyo Grande and Santa Maria.
- $2.75 general/$1.35 discount for service between Santa Maria and San Luis Obispo.

Operating data for the most recent 12 months (May 2009 through April 2010) shows that Route 10 ridership totaled 531,594 one-way passenger-trips. A review of the monthly data shows that, historically, the month of October tends to generate the greatest ridership. Further, in the most recent 12 months, a total of 924,305 miles and 31,059 hours were completed on the route. From a service performance analysis perspective, Route 10 is performing very well, with 17.11 passenger-trips per hour and 0.57 passenger-trips per mile.

Surveys and public input processes conducted for the San Luis Obispo RTA and Runabout Short Range Transit Plan provide some useful data. Many respondents surveyed at the Nipomo Farmers Market indicated they use Route 10 to commute to Cal Poly. These riders expressed:

- Interest in more frequent and direct service on Route 10 between Nipomo and Cal Poly;
- Increased frequency of Route 10 morning runs;
- More runs that terminate at Cal Poly as opposed to terminating at the SLO County Government Center, which necessitates a transfer.

SLO Rideshare

SLOCOG operates a regional rideshare program, designed to educate commuters and promote alternative transportation modes, such as carpool, bicycles and transit. While the program itself does not provide actual transit services, it provides a wealth of information regarding transportation alternatives to employers, residents and transit providers, including trip planners, and marketing services.

Nipomo Dial-A-Ride

Dial-A-Ride service is available to the general public serving most of Nipomo. Service is provided from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM, Monday through Friday. The Dial-A-Ride provides transfers to Route 10, which allows passengers to access SCAT services by transferring at Prime Outlets. Rides are available through reservations only, with one-way fares of $1.75 for the general public and $1.25 for senior, disabled, and youth passengers. Travel is arranged through reservation only. To guarantee a ride, passengers must call by 12:00 noon the day before their trip. Same day requests may be honored if space is available.

Runabout

The Runabout is a paratransit system that operates throughout the county, providing ADA service along the fixed-route corridors, including regional, local, and trolley services. Seniors and persons with disabilities are able to use Runabout for both local and intercity trips. Additionally, the general public may use the service though rides are not guaranteed; per ADA requirements, priority is given to certified individuals within three-quarters of a mile of all fixed-routes. Fares for the Runabout service are $5.00 for the general public, plus $0.50 for each service area zone crossed per one-way trip. Fares for ADA certified passengers are double the general public fares. Within the South County area, service is available Monday through Friday from 5:29 AM to 8:17 PM, Saturday from 6:29 AM to 8:17 PM, and Sunday from 6:29 AM to 7:17 PM.

Ride-On Transportation

In an effort to reduce congestion, air pollution and parking demand while increasing the mobility of area residents, Ride-On offers transportation services to both social service clients and the general public. Services tailored for social service clients (such as the disabled) include errand and recreational trips; contract service for social service agencies for group and individual rides; contract service for Medi-Cal recipients; support service for smaller community groups; and a senior shuttle. Specifically in the South County, the senior shuttle is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and in the Five Cities area on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. One-way fares are $3.00

The general public can take advantage of Ride-On services through the airport/train shuttle; special event shuttles; vanpools for commuters; guaranteed/emergency ride home service; and private shuttles for individuals within the county.

Amtrak

Amtrak currently serves San Luis Obispo County with two rail routes, the *Coast Starlight* and the *Pacific Surfliner*. The *Coast Starlight* route operates between Seattle and Los Angeles, with stops in Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo. The Pacific Surfliner, operating between San Luis Obispo and San Diego, includes stops in San Luis Obispo and Grover Beach. Trains depart the Grover Beach station at 7:05 AM and 2:20 PM each day in the southbound direction, and arrive at the Grover Beach station at 12:26 PM and 7:55 PM in the northbound direction. Amtrak Thruway motor coaches are also available for bus connections from the South County area to the Surfliner, Capital Corridor (service to Sacramento from the Bay Area) and the San Joaquin (service from Bakersfield to Sacramento and the East Bay area) trains.

This Page Left Intentionally Left Blank.

Chapter 4
Field Data and Survey Results

Onboard passenger surveys were conducted for South County Area Transit fixed-routes 21, 23 and 24 on May 25 and 26, 2010, and on the Avila Trolley on May 29 and July 24, 2010. Surveyors were placed on 100 percent of runs operated over the course of a day, though not all runs were surveyed on the same day. The survey forms consisted of a single sheet with questions in English on one side and Spanish on the other. A copy of the survey forms and detailed survey results appear as Appendix A of this report. Survey results are summarized in this chapter.

Comprehensive surveys were conducted for all SCAT services, including surveys of passenger characteristics and opinions, boarding and alighting activity, and on-time performance.

PASSENGER SURVEY RESULTS FOR FIXED-ROUTES 21, 23, 24, AND 25

A total of 212 surveys were completed, with nearly 20 percent of them in Spanish.

Passenger Characteristics

- Slightly more women responded to the survey than men. Over a quarter of respondents were between the ages of 12 and 18, suggesting a high youth ridership. Approximately 10 percent of respondents were seniors.

- Approximately a quarter of passengers were students and another quarter described themselves as full-time employees. 13 percent were unable to work or were unemployed.

- An overwhelming majority (63 percent) said their household income was below $20,000 annually (poverty level), and another 23 percent had household incomes from $20,000 to $30,000.

- Only 2 percent of passengers said they needed a wheelchair lift to board the bus, though 14 percent had a disability that limits driving.

- A full two-thirds of respondents said they did not have a driver's license, and 86 percent said they did not have a car available for the trip, indicating a very high level of transit dependency among the passengers.

- While most respondents would find another way to make their trips if SCAT were not available, 13 percent would not be able to make the trip.

- The majority of SCAT passengers are long-time riders (more than a year).

- When asked how they get their information about service, over half said from the schedule. Another 12-13 percent each get the information from the driver, from a friend, or from telephoning. Only 7 percent use the internet for information.

Passenger-Trip Characteristics

- The majority of passengers (77 percent) walked to get to the bus, or transferred (13 percent). Another 7 percent bicycled: the number bicycling is higher on SCAT than generally seen in small urban or rural transit systems.

- More than a third of respondents said they were making a one-way trip.

- The majority were traveling for work or school (at least ten percent of respondents were high school students). Only 6 percent were traveling for medical or dental appointments.

- Just over 60 percent of passengers pay cash fares, while another 11 percent use monthly passes.

Opinions of Survey Respondents

Passengers were asked to rank service quality factors on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent.

- Passengers ranked overall service quality an average of 3.3 on a scale of 1 to 4. Fully 41 percent indicated that overall service quality is a 4 (excellent). This indicates a high overall level of satisfaction with the service.

- The highest ranked service factors were bus cleanliness and safety (each with an average of 3.6).

- Driver courtesy and convenience of transferring each had an average score of 3.5

- The lowest performing service factor was the cost of fares (3.0), followed by service frequency, trip duration and crowding, each receiving an average score of 3.2.

Desired Customer Improvements

- **Frequency**: 12 comments addressed the need for increased service. In particular, passengers wish for 30 minute frequency.

- **Span of Service**: 9 comments addressed a desire for increased span of service, especially later evening or night service.

- **Stops**: several respondents expressed a need for additional stops between existing stops (Stops along Price and Grand were specifically mentioned).

- **Others**: Other comments addressed crowding (especially when school is let out in the afternoon); a desire for more information provided in Spanish, and better communication.

When asked where passengers would like to see new or extended routes, specific areas that were mentioned included:

- Avila Beach (during the week)
- Better service to Oceano
- Grover Beach
- Nipomo (multiple comments)
- On the Mesa (south of Oceano)
- Pismo Library
- North of Grand in Grover Beach
- New medical areas
- Throughout the City
- Trader Joes
- More frequent service to Wal-Mart

BOARDING AND ALIGHTING ACTIVITY ON SCAT ROUTES 21, 23, 24, AND 25

The boarding and alighting data collected by SCAT for a week in April provides detailed data regarding which stops received the highest and lowest activity. The busiest fixed-route stops (20 or more boardings/alightings on a weekday) were observed at:

- Ramona Gardens Transfer Center
- Prime Outlets
- Wal-Mart
- Arroyo Grande High School
- Grand Avenue at 16th Street
- Grand Avenue at 21st Street
- Dolliver at Pomeroy
- Wilmar and 19th Street

On the other hand, six stops recorded no passenger activity over the week.

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE SURVEY RESULTS FOR ROUTES 21, 23, AND 24

On-time performance data was recorded, indicating that routes were on-time only 77 percent of the time, were late (departing 5 or more minutes after the scheduled time) 5 percent of the time, and left the stops early (at least 1 minute prior to the scheduled time) 15 percent of the time. A detailed evaluation of on-time performance at Pismo Outlets (particularly important as a transfer point) indicated no operational issues with Route 21, but some late departures on Route 24.

SURVEY RESULTS FOR THE AVILA TROLLEY

Similar surveys were conducted for the Avila Trolley, indicating:

- The majority of passengers (79 percent) walked to get to the trolley, while the rest drove with others or alone. Most (89 percent) were planning to walk to get to their final destination from the Trolley.

- Of those who responded, most were traveling for recreation, sight-seeing, social or personal business. None of the respondents were traveling for work.

- More than half of the passengers said they were using the trolley for the first time (57 percent), while almost a quarter use it a few times a year, and 18 percent use the trolley every weekend

- Half of the respondents were visitors, and half were residents. Most visitors were overnight guests, and most residents were full time.

- All but one who responded said they had a driver's license, and the majority (21 of 27) said they had a car available for the trip.

- Half of the respondents were aged 25 to 44, and all were 19 or older. Only two respondents were over seniors (over 65).

- The majority (14) said they had a family income over $50,000 annually, but two passengers had an income of less that $20,000 and 4 had low household incomes between $20,000 and $30,000.

- 7 of the respondents were from the Five Cities area, and another 4 were from the region, while 11 were from other locations in California, and 2 were from Germany.

- Passengers were asked to rank service quality factors on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent. The average score was 3.8. Driver courtesy, trolley cleanliness and crowding on the trolley received all excellent (4) responses. The lowest performing was on-time performance, which received 3.4, which was a generous score given the on-time performance issues during both survey dates. Overall service averaged 3.8. These high rankings indicate passengers are pleased with the current services.

- Passengers tend to ride the Avila Trolley from one end to the other, with 50 percent of boardings and alightings at Avila Beach Park and 19 percent at Shell Beach Road and Spyglass Road. Port San Luis and Avila Hot Springs were the only other two stops with more than two boardings/alightings per day.

- During the survey, the trolley runs experienced significant scheduling problems so that a third of the runs were missed. Furthermore, only 2 of the 9 connections with Route 21 were on time, with two more runs within 7 minutes of the scheduled connection.

Chapter 5
Transit Performance Review

Chapters 3 and 4 present an evaluation of transit performance for SCAT services as a whole, while this chapter further evaluates performance by route. This was done by allocating the combined costs and fare revenue of the fixed-route service to each individual route based on the hours, miles, and passenger-trips that were operated on each route in Fiscal Year 2008-09. The performance summary is provided in Table 15. The existing service quantities are shown for each route, followed by the calculated performance measure.

TABLE 15: SCAT Performance Data by Route

	SCAT Routes					Avila	
Fiscal Year 2008-09	21	23	24	25	All	Trolley	Systemwide [1]
Service Characteristics							
Passenger Trips	74,180	74,419	63,515	6,568	218,682	6,947	225,629
Vehicle Miles [2]	80,966	91,770	75,827	1,544	250,107	19,794	269,901
Vehicle Hours [2]	5,078	5,798	5,068	278	16,222	952	17,174
Operating Cost [3]	$264,017	$301,399	$263,448	$14,469	$843,333	$74,198	$917,531
Fare Revenue [4]	$40,992	$41,124	$35,099	$3,630	$120,845	$7,912	$128,757
Performance Measures							
Cost per Vehicle Mile	$3.26	$3.28	$3.47	$9.37	$3.37	$3.75	$3.40
Cost per Vehicle Hour	$51.99	$51.99	$51.99	$51.99	$51.99	$77.91	$53.43
Psgrs per Vehicle Mile	0.9	0.8	0.8	4.3	0.9	0.4	0.8
Psgrs per Vehicle Hour	14.6	12.8	12.5	23.6	13.5	7.3	13.1
Farebox Return Ratio	15.5%	13.6%	13.3%	25.1%	14.3%	10.7%	14.0%
Cost per Psgr-trip	$3.56	$4.05	$4.15	$2.20	$3.86	$10.68	$4.07
Subsidy per Psgr-trip	$3.01	$3.50	$3.60	$1.65	$3.30	$9.54	$3.50

Note 1: Does not include Lopez Shuttle.

Note 2: Miles and hours include approximately 1-2 percent deadhead (from the yard to the start or end of the service). SCAT will begin to track revenue miles and revenue hours in the future.

Note 3: Operating cost per route is estimated based on the percentage of hours per route.

Note 4: Fare revenue is estimated based on the percentage of passenger-trips per route.

Source: Data provided by SCAT, spring 2010. Compiled by LSC Transportation Consultants.

It should be noted that SCAT has historically tracked total vehicle-hours and vehicle-miles rather than revenue hours and revenue miles. Total vehicle-hours and miles include time and distance from when the vehicle leaves the shop to when the vehicle returns. Revenue hours and miles reflect when vehicles are in actual service, from the first stop to the last stop in service. Given the available data, the performance analysis reflects total vehicle-hours and vehicle-miles.

Cost per Vehicle-Mile

Operating costs were allocated to each route (21, 23, 24, and 25) based on the number of vehicle-hours operated over the year. As shown in Table 15, the operating cost per mile ranged from a low of $3.26 on Route 21 to a high of $9.37 per mile on Route 25, and a systemwide average of $3.40. The high cost per mile on Route 25 is a reflection of the dense ridership and the time

required to drop-off students within a relatively small area. Furthermore, Route 25 includes more deadhead miles than other routes, as the route begins at the High School rather than Ramona Gardens Transit Center.

Cost per Vehicle-Hour

As shown in Table 15, the operating cost per hour was an estimated $51.99 on the SCAT fixed-routes, $77.91 per hour on the Avila Trolley, and averaged $53.43 systemwide. The higher cost per hour on the Avila Trolley reflects overhead costs that are spread over a smaller number of vehicle-hours for this limited service.

Passenger-Trips per Vehicle-Mile

Service effectiveness can be measured by calculating the number of passenger-trips per vehicle-mile. As shown in Table 15, Route 25 carries more than four times the passenger-trips per vehicle-mile than the other routes, with an average of 4.3 passenger-trips per mile of service. This is not surprising, as Route 25 operates to accommodate the additional demand generated by students. Among the other SCAT routes, 0.8 to 0.9 passenger-trips are carried per vehicle-mile. The Avila Trolley, however, only carried an average of 0.4 passenger-trips per vehicle-mile of service.

Passenger-Trips per Vehicle-Hour

This performance measure also is an indication of service effectiveness. As indicated in Table 15, Route 25 carried an average of 23.6 passenger-trips per vehicle-hour. This route is efficient because a large group is picked up in a single location and transported within the hour to other destinations. Among Routes 21, 23, and 24, Route 21 is the most effective, carrying 14.6 passenger-trips per vehicle-hour, while Route 23 carried 12.8 and Route 24 carried 12.5. The Avila Trolley carried an average of 7.3 passenger-trips per hour, which is comparatively low.

Farebox Return Ratio

The farebox ratio is calculated by dividing the passenger revenues by operating costs. As also shown in Table 15, the farebox ratio ranged from a low of 10.7 percent on the Avila Trolley (bearing in mind that this is through donations) and a high of 25.1 percent on Route 25. Among the remainder of the SCAT routes, the farebox ratio ranged from 13.3 percent on Route 24 to 15.5 percent on Route 21. Per Transportation Development Act (TDA) requirements, SCAT must meet a minimum farebox return ratio of 10 percent, which it has done. However, if the Five Cities area or portions of the area are designated as part of an Urbanized Area as a result of the 2010 Census, a higher minimum farebox return ratio of 20 percent would be required.

Cost per Passenger-Trip

Dividing the estimated operating cost by the number of passenger-trips served on each route yields the cost per passenger-trip. As shown in Table 15, operating cost per passenger-trip ranged from a low of $2.20 on Route 25 (which is quite good) to a high of $10.68 on the Avila Trolley,

which is not cost-effective. Other SCAT routes averaged from $3.56 per passenger-trip on Route 21 to $4.15 on Route 24. These costs are relatively efficient for a transit system of SCAT's size.

Net Operating Subsidy per Passenger-Trip

The net operating subsidy per passenger-trip is calculated by subtracting fare revenues from the operating costs of each route and dividing by the number of passenger-trips. This is a particularly useful performance measure, as it directly relates the key public input to a public transit program (subsidy funding) with the key "output" (passenger-trips). As shown in Table 15, the most effective service was Route 25 (due to the high passenger loads) which requires only an estimated $1.65 subsidy per passenger-trip, followed by Route 21, which was also relatively efficient with a $3.01 subsidy required per passenger-trip. Routes 23 and 24 require a $3.50 and $3.60 subsidy per passenger-trip, respectively. Avila Trolley, however, requires a subsidy per passenger-trip of $9.54.

This page left intentionally blank.

Chapter 6
Review of Goals, Objectives and Standards

INTRODUCTION

An important element in the success of any organization is a clear and concise set of goals and objectives, and the standards needed to attain them. South County Area Transit (SCAT) developed goals and objectives as part of their 1997 *Short Range Transit Plan*, and reviewed the progress in achieving these goals and objectives again in the 2003 *Short Range Transit Plan*. This periodic review is key to evaluating the effectiveness of the transit service, and in determining if the existing goals and objectives remain valid. Often, goals, objectives and standards need adjusting to reflect on-the-ground performance, available resources and an understanding of what a transit agency is trying to achieve.

REVIEW OF EXISTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Performance of the transit system is guided by the goals, objectives, measures and standards, as described below:

> **Goals** are statements that qualify the desired results. They are the ends toward which effort is directed. They are general and timeless, but theoretically attainable.
>
> > **Objectives** provide quantifiable measures of the goals. They are more precise and capable of both attainment and measurement.
> >
> > > **Measures and Standards** set quantifiable targets for achieving the objectives.

SCAT has identified a total of six goals, each with different objectives and standards to meet the objectives. A current review of the goals, objectives, and standards indicates that some are being met, and some are not. Furthermore, as is to be expected as the system develops and changes, some objectives and standards are outdated or unrealistic and need to be revised. A discussion of each goal and the recommended changes is provided below. It is important to note that this discussion will be revisited once the full evaluation of service and financial alternatives better defines feasible standards for SCAT.

Goal I: Provide a public transit system that increases the mobility of the community while serving the specific mobility needs of the elderly, persons with disabilities, and youth.

As shown in Table 16, this goal outlines four objectives to achieve mobility. The following conclusions were made:

> **Objective 1:** The standards state that a) 80 percent of the population should be within a half mile of peak period transit service, excluding services with fewer than three trips in each period, and b) 70 percent of the population should be within a half mile of midday transit.

TABLE 16: GOAL I

GOAL I: Provide a public transit system that increases the mobility of the community while serving the specific mobility needs of the elderly, persons with disabilities, and youth.

Objective	Current Standards	Current Status of Standards	Recommended Changes to Standards
Provide service to the maximum number of residents given available resources. The specific levels shall be consistent with the Joint Powers Agreement.	80% of the population within 1/2 mile peak period transit service, excluding services with fewer than three trips in each period.	Standard is met for 5 Cities, but not Avila, Nipomo or outlying areas. 5 Cities has 65% of South County population.	Service shall be provided to a minimum of 90% of 5 Cities population.
	70% of the population within 1/2 mile of mid-day transit	There is no peak/mid-day differentiation. Currently, 70% of population is estimated to be within 1/2 mile of service.	
Provide increased frequency during peak periods. Convenient access to major employment centers within the service area.	90% of key employment centers (100 or more employees) served on 30-minute peak hour headway service.	Service is on 60 minute headways. Avila collectively has less than 100 employees, but may warrant service.	Under current finances, 30-minute headways are unrealistic. Restate for 60 minute headways.
Provide service to the maximum number of activity centers in the service area given available resources. Emphasis is placed on access to locations serving the transit dependent.	100% of post-primary schools within 1/4 mile of fixed-route alignments	Arroyo Grande HS, Paulding MS, Judkins MS, Mesa MS are within 1/4 mile of SCAT route alignment; Nipomo HS is on RTA Route 10.	Maintain standard.
Provide service start and end times that facilitate convenient public access to major trip generators, including employment centers, schools, and retail centers	Weekday service hours: 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM	Met for 5 Cities; not for Avila	Revise to include "…for 80 percent of the population."
	Saturday service hours: 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM	Met for 5 Cities; not for Avila	Revise to include "…for 80 percent of the population."

Based on census data provided in Chapter 2, approximately 65 percent of the South County population is in the Five Cities area, while 18 percent is in Nipomo, 15 percent is in unincorporated areas and 1.5 percent is in Avila. While service in the Five Cities area exceeds these standards (providing service within one-quarter of a mile to approximately 90 percent of population in this area), Avila, Nipomo and the outlying unincorporated areas do not.

> ***Recommended Change:*** It is appropriate to have one standard for the denser area of Five Cities as shown in Table 16. As existing demand is relatively constant across the day (with the exception of students), it is recommended that the standard allowing a smaller service area in midday be eliminated. Change to: "***Standard:*** Service shall be provided to a minimum of 90 percent of 5 Cities population."

Objective 2: The standards state that 90 percent of key employment centers (100 or more employees) should be served on 30-minute peak hour headway service.

Service is currently provided on 60-minute headways throughout the day, including at peak times. Key employment centers are served, except for Port San Luis in Avila, and the Avila hotels and restaurants collectively.

> ***Recommended Change:*** While 30-minute headways are ultimately desirable, they probably are not realistic within the time-frame of this Short Range Transit Plan and should be restated for 60-minute headways. It is desirable to serve key employment centers, and this standard should be maintained. Change to: "***Standard:*** 90 percent of key employment centers (100 or more employees) should be served on 60-minute headway service."

Objective 3: The standard states 100 percent of post-primary schools within one-quarter of a mile of fixed-route alignments. This is a reasonable standard that is currently being met and should be maintained.

Objective 4: The standard states service should be provided weekdays from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM and Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The standard is met for the Five Cities area, but not for Avila Beach.

> ***Recommended Change:*** Restate: "***Standard:*** Service should be provided weekdays from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM and Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM to 80 percent of the South County's population."

Goal II: Support the consideration of transit access in the planning processes of member jurisdictions.

As shown in Table 17, this goal outlines two objectives to improve transit access in the planning process. The following conclusions were made:

Objective 1: The standard states that service levels and capital improvements should be specified for new developments.

Recommended Change: This is a worthwhile standard that is loosely maintained. To ensure that thorough and consistent reviews are conducted, SCAT should develop a check-list to guide evaluation of projects. An example is presented as Appendix B. The checklist would guide SCAT staff in assessing if the development is likely to increase the need for transit, and if so, what service levels and amenities will be needed.

Objective 2: The standard is to specify service levels and capital improvements included in county and regional transportation development plans. This is currently being implemented.

Goal III: Enhance local and regional mobility and integration by improving access between SCAT and regional services.

As shown in Table 17, this goal outlines one objective to achieve regional access. The following conclusions were made:

Objective 1: The objective states "Coordinate SCAT operations/schedules with those of CCAT at Arroyo Grande city hall and Grover Beach Intermodal Center. Advance notice of schedule changes" and the standard to achieve this objective is "Transfer wait times at key transfer points no greater than 15 minutes for majority of routes."

As CCAT is no longer in service, this objective needs to be restated. While SCAT and RTA Route 10 services are currently scheduled in a coordinated manner, it is worthwhile to retain this objective to guide future scheduling decisions. It is also important to ensure that services are actually operated so that the large majority of transfers are accomplished.

Recommended Changes: Replace Objective 1 with "***Objective***: Coordinate SCAT operations/schedules with Route 10 at transfer points. Provide advance notice of schedule changes." Also, restate "***Standard:*** Delays shall not result in more than 5 percent of scheduled transfers between individual SCAT routes and Route 10 being missed."

Goal IV: Support local and regional goals for air quality and congestion management.

As shown in Table 17, the objectives and standards for this goal are being met. However, ADA compliance is not an objective of air quality and congestion management goals. As a requirement, ADA compliance is absolute and does not need to be stated as an objective or standard. The second objective and the standard to achieve it should be removed.

Goal V: Operate the transit system in an efficient manner. Maximize service and financial resources, while minimizing costs.

TABLE 17: Goals II through IV

Objective	Current Standards	Current Status of Standards	Recommended Changes
GOAL II: Support the consideration of transit access in the planning processes of member jurisdictions.			
Encourage consideration of transit needs in land-use policies of Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, and San Luis Obispo County. During the development review and approval process.	Specify service levels and capital improvements to be included in new developments. Include SCAT participation in review/approval process.	This is currently done for most large developments.	No change, except SCAT should develop a checklist to be applied in evaluating developments in order to ensure a consistent review process.
Integrate local transit plans into regional plans to develop area-wide planning consistency, visibility, and political support. Encourage consideration of transit needs in land-use policies of Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, and San Luis Obispo County.	Specify service levels and capital improvements included in county and regional transportation development plans.	On-going interaction with RTPA, County and partner cities.	Maintain standard.
GOAL III: Enhance local and regional mobility and integration by improving access between SCAT and regional services.			
Objective	**Current Standards**	**Current Status of Standards**	**Recommended Changes**
Coordinate SCAT operations/schedules with those of CCAT at Arroyo Grande city hall and Grover Beach Intermodal Center. Advance notice of schedule changes.	Transfer wait times at key transfer points no greater than 15 minutes for majority of routes.	Currently met, due to revisions to schedules. Worthwhile to maintain as a guide for future potential service changes.	Objective should be changed to "Coordinate SCAT operations/schedules with Route 10 at transfer points. Advance notice of schedule changes."
			Delays shall not result in more than 5 percent of scheduled transfers between individual SCAT routes and Route 10 being missed. should be added to objective.
GOAL IV: Support local and regional goals for air quality and congestion management.			
Objective	**Current Standards**	**Current Status of Standards**	**Recommended Changes**
Develop Capital Plan which meets all air quality standards.	Develop an alternatives fuel plan.	Most of the fleet uses alternative fuels: clean diesel, hybrid.	Maintain standard.
Develop Capital Plan which meets ADA's architectural criteria standards for all vehicles (i.e., doorways, wheelchair lifts, and other vehicle amenities).	Ensure full ADA compliance: vehicles and facilities.	Standard is met.	Remove ojective and standard. ADA compliance is not an objective of air quality and congestion management goals. As a requirement, ADA compliance is absolute and does not need to be stated as an objective or standard.

As shown in Table 18, this goal includes five objectives to achieve efficient, financially sound service. The following conclusions were made:

Objective 1: States that SCAT shall attain a threshold rate for farebox recovery, with the standard being a systemwide farebox recovery rate of 18 percent.

In 2008-09, SCAT fixed-routes maintained a farebox revenue of 14.3 percent, while the Avila Trolley (no fares, but donations) maintained a farebox revenue of 10.7 percent.

> ***Recommended Change:*** Attaining this standard would require either a substantial fare increase, a reduction in service, or both. A 15 percent farebox revenue, while not recently achieved, is a reasonable standard to set in hopes of improving farebox revenue. This should be the new standard systemwide for SCAT fixed-routes, while the Avila Trolley should continue to try to achieve a 10 percent farebox revenue through donations. Restate as "***Standard:*** Maintain an average systemwide farebox return ratio of 15 percent. Continue to encourage donations to achieve a 10 percent farebox return ratio on the trolley service."

Objective 2: The Objective is to maximize system productivity, while the standard to meet this objective is to maintain a systemwide average of 23 passenger-trips per hour.

Currently, SCAT fixed-routes are averaging between 12.8 and 14.6 passenger-trips per hour, while the Trolley averages 7.3 passenger-trips per hour. The deadhead hours are included in this calculation, so that if this were properly calculated, this would be slightly improved, but still not nearly approaching 23 passenger-trips per hour. This standard is unreasonably high.

> ***Recommended Change:*** A more reasonable standard, not yet achieved, would be stated as "***Standard:*** Maintain a systemwide average of 15.0 passenger-trips per hour and an average on the Trolley of 10.0 passenger-trips per hour."

Objective 3: The Objective is to maximize system efficiency, while the standard to meet this objective is to match increases in operating cost to the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

This standard was met in 2006-07, but in 2007-08, operating cost per hour increased 16 percent due to high fuel costs. The operating cost per service hour declined in 2008-09. This standard is a reasonable standard and should be maintained.

Objective 4: The Objective is to maximize system effectiveness through provision of reliable transit service, with a number of standards to achieve this objective, including:

- 95 percent of scheduled departures on-time, defined as no more than 5-minutes off published schedule.
- 97 percent of scheduled departures on-time, defined as no more than 10 minutes off published schedule.
- 7,000 vehicle-miles between road calls for fixed-route service.

TABLE 18: Goal V

GOAL V: Operate the transit system in an efficient manner. Maximize service and financial resources, while minimizing costs.

Objective	Current Standards	Current Service Effectiveness/Efficiency (2008-09)						Recommended Service Effectiveness/Efficiency		
		Routes				Avila Trolley	System		Avila Trolley	System
		21.00	23.00	24.00	All			Routes 21, 23, 24		
Attain threshold rate for farebox recovery.	System average 18%				14.3%	10.7%	13.9%	15%	Based on donations: 10%	15%
Maximize system productivity.	System average = 23 passengers/hour [1]	14.6	12.8	13.1	13.5	7.3	13.0	15.0	10.0	15.0
Maximize system efficiency	Increases in operating cost per vehicle service hour should not exceed the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the region.				Met most years, but increased 16% in 2007-08 due to high fuel prices.			Maintain standard		
Maximize system effectiveness through provision of reliable transit service.	95% of scheduled departures on-time, defined as no more than 5-minutes off published schedule. [2]	91%	98%	94%	95%	NA	95%	See Note 2: Under new definition, standards not met.	Not enough information.	See Note 2: Under new definition, standards not met.
	97% of scheduled departures on-time, defined as no more than 10 minutes off published schedule. [2]	100%	100%	100%	100%	NA	100%	See Note 2: Under new definition, standards not met.	Not enough information.	See Note 2: Under new definition, standards not met.
	7,000 vehicle miles between road calls for fixed-route service.				21,019	NA	NA	20,000	NA	NA
Efficiently maintain vehicle fleet.	100% of preventative maintenance inspections completed within 10% of scheduled mileage.				Yes	Yes	Yes	Maintain standard		

Note 1: SCAT has included deadhead time in data records, which therefore shows a slightly reduced productivity. The recommendation is based on correcting data-keeping to show revenue hours not including deadhead.

Note 2: While SCAT services met the requirements by this definition, transit industry standards dictate that buses should NEVER leave early (allowing passengers to arrive up to the minute of scheduled departure time). The standards should be revised to state "95% (or 97%) of depature times, defined as never early and no more than 5 (or 10) minutes past the published schedule." Furthermore, time checks should be tested on multiple stops, not just at the transfer center. Data is based on one day of time checks.

The first two standards allow for early departures from bus stops, which should not be the case. Industry standards consider buses to be on-time if they do not depart early, and leave no later than five minutes after the scheduled departure time. Under this definition, SCAT had very poor on-time performance as buses left stops early approximately 15 percent of the time during survey observations.

In regards to roadcalls, even though the last year was SCAT's weakest in terms of roadcalls, over 21,000 miles were still operated between road calls.

> ***Recommended Changes:*** The definition of on-time performance should be changed to match industry standards. With this new definition of "never leaving early and departing within 5 minutes after the scheduled departure time," the standards should be restated as: "***Standard:*** 95 percent of departures should be "on-time" and 97 percent of departures should not leave early and should not leave more than ten minutes past the scheduled departure time" and "***Standard:*** Miles between road calls should be a minimum of 20,000 miles."

Objective 5: The Objective is to efficiently maintain the vehicle fleet, while the standard to this objective is to complete 100 percent of preventative maintenance inspections within 10 percent of scheduled mileage. This standard is being met.

Goal VI: Provide a level of transit service that ensures passenger comfort and maximizes safety.

As shown in Table 19, this goal includes three objectives to achieve passenger comfort and maximize safety. The following conclusions were made:

TABLE 19: Goal VI

GOAL VI: Provide a level of transit service that ensures passenger comfort and maximizes safety.

Objectives	Current Standards	Current Status of Standards	Recommended Changes to Standards
Service should operate in a safe manner.	50,000-70,000 miles between preventable accidents for fixed route service.	67,475	Maintain Standard.
	1 passenger injury per 100,000 boardings for fixed-route service.	-	Maintain Standard.
Maintain Street Shelters.	Transfer points: Daily cleaning of shelters.	Meeting standard	Maintain Standard.
	System: Weekly cleaning of shelters. Monthly detailing	Meeting standard	Maintain Standard.
Provide appropriate passenger amenities.	Install bus stop shelters at all stops where there is an average of 20 more passenger boarding's or alightings per day.	No shelters at Grand/16th; Grand/21st; Dolliver & Pomeroy.	Maintain Standard.

Objective 1: Two standards are included to meet this objective:

- 50,000-70,000 miles between preventable accidents for fixed-route service
- 1 passenger injury per 100,000 boardings for fixed-route service

In 2008-09, there were 67,475 miles between preventable accidents, which meets the current standard. There were no injuries in 2008-09, but there have been two in 2009-10. However,

as SCAT provides over 200,000 passenger-trips per year, this standard is likely to be met in the current year as well, and no changes are recommended.

Objective 2: To meet the objective of maintaining street shelters, two standards are provided: 1) at transfer points – daily cleaning of shelters, and 2) systemwide weekly cleaning of shelters with monthly detailing. These standards are maintained.

Objective 3: The objective is to provide appropriate passenger amenities, with the standard being that all stops with 20 or more average daily boardings and alightings should have a shelter installed.

Currently, this standard is not being met at three locations (Grand Avenue and 16th; Cienega Street and 21st; and Dolliver and Pomeroy). Nonetheless, this standard is desirable and should be maintained.

This Page Left Intentionally Blank.

Chapter 7
Public Outreach

INTRODUCTION

As the ultimate users of the transit program, it is essential that the citizens of the Five Cities area have full input to the study development process. Therefore, an extensive public outreach process has been implemented to give a clear understanding as to the perceived effectiveness of the current services and the desired direction for new services.

Community outreach for the South County Transit Plan has consisted of a diverse approach to soliciting public input from daily transit users, the general public, community leaders, and the SCAT Executive Committee. Outreach was gathered through onboard surveys, two open house events at major transfer centers, and two focus groups consisting of: 1) representatives of the youth population of transit users, and 2) adult users including representatives of the Hispanic community, stakeholders, and community leaders.

Issues discussed with participants focused primarily on what improvements could be made to current transit service, approaches to improve outreach, and SCAT branding. Input was gathered from a diversity of age and interests groups. A comprehensive summary from each outreach event is provided below.

INPUT SUMMARY

Major reoccurring themes that emerged from this initial phase of public outreach are summarized below in general categories.

Suggested Improvements

- Increase frequency during peak hours – hourly service does not adequately serve work force
- Increase stops to less than every half mile, but maintain timing efficiency (by adding new routes)
- Improve efficiency of routes (by eliminating overlap/backtracking)
- More bike racks
- Improve communication amongst drivers (regarding timing) and regional coordination with other multi-modal services (RTA, SLO City Buses, Santa Maria Area Transit, Breeze, Greyhound, Amtrak, etc)
- Regular service to Avila is needed throughout the week
- Need to plan for new park and ride lots along 101 to create nodes and improve efficiency to promote ridership

Branding and Outreach

RTA has been considering rebranding of the SCAT name and logo for two primary reasons. First, the name "SCAT" has negative connotations for some, and secondly, the "SCAT" name and logo are not distinctive enough from RTA, causing some confusion as to how the services are segregated (fares in particular). Additionally, input was sought regarding ongoing outreach efforts. The response from focus groups is as follows:

- Rebranding SCAT is too costly and change is confusing – focus resources on service improvements
- Need improved outreach – route maps at every stop, TV advertizing, radio and flyers in public places
- Provide service to major local events – develop increased partnerships to up ridership/exposure
- Offer occasional promotions – free rides, transit intro sessions for elderly, bring a friend day

Innovative Ideas/Considerations

Some other suggestions that arose from the public outreach forums are listed below.

- Create a "boutique transit route" that is seasonal and tourist-focused. Charge extra to bring in additional funding source for basic program expansion. Market to/partner with local hotels.
  - Spring – Wildflower route
  - Fall – Apple Cider Route to See Canyon
  - Summer – Beach Route
- Host a launch event to promote services to new population of riders. "Free ridership day scavenger hunt" hosted by partnering nonprofit (bike coalition?) providing a substantial end prize for winner. Event could be funded by:
  - Guadalupe Mitigation Fund
  - PG&E
  - Air Pollution Control District
  - Conoco Phillips
  - Air Quality Grants

Comments from South County Transit Plan 2010 Open Houses

Two open houses were held. The first was on May 27, 2010, at the Ramona Garden Transit Center in Grover Beach. The second was on June 1, 2010, at the Pismo Prime Outlets in Pismo Beach. The Open Houses were primarily attended by passengers boarding or alighting SCAT services at these locations. Information regarding the current study was available including presentation boards with maps. Passersby were asked to give their feedback regarding the effectiveness of current services. They were also invited to make suggestions about branding the

service as “Five Cities Transit” and several attendees drew logo ideas. Approximately 30 individuals attended the open houses. Below is a summary of comments received.

Comments

Note: * indicates duplicate comment

1) Middle aged man

   – Earlier service to San Luis Obispo: 7:20 AM is not early enough to catch the 6:33 AM Route 10 bus. This is especially a problem since RTA doesn’t run hourly.
     (Note: The 6:33 AM RTA Route 10 bus arrives at Prime Outlets at 7:00 am, connecting with both Route 21 and 24. RTA Route 10 does operate hourly. It is uncertain where the misinformation originates.)

2) Housekeeper

   – Can’t get to Motel 6. On Route 24, I have to transfer at City Hall and arrive to work half an hour early. Also, a lot of housekeepers catch 8:06 AM bus at 19th and Wilmar, which competes with the morning High School Run/Route 23.

3) Elderly woman

   – Nipomo Connection: Route 10 goes down Thompson and stops on Mary by Jacos. It doesn’t go west of 101 to the health clinic. People who don’t know in advance about appointments can’t schedule DAR, so it’s hard to get to the clinic for short-notice appointments.
   – Avila: would like regular service to Avila. Had to turn down a job because I don’t drive and there’s no transit there.

4) Mom & 2 teen daughters

   – Student discounts or student passes would be a good idea.
   – Students have to wait a long time for the bus after being dropped at Ramona.
   – Some students walk a long way rather than wait for the bus.
   – Advertise events on Craigslist. People locally spend a lot of time on Craigslist.
   – Travel time is long; more frequency is needed, especially at peak times.

5) *Need more bike capacity on each bus.

6) *Stops are too far apart. Additional, suggested stops include:

   – Oak Park stop needed in Grover Beach
   – 13th and Grand in Grover
   – More stops between Grand and Harlow (Route 23)

- AG neighborhoods to Pismo to SLO (summer needs for youth)
- Bus stops short at Jocko's in Nipomo on Teft St.
- Oceano
- Campground by 4th and Farrell needs a stop

7) *Need more buses per route - 1 hour between pickups isn't sufficient for employees.

8) Transit ridership is discouraged because it takes too long to get anywhere.

9) Village of AG to Oceano takes too long – 50 minutes. You could walk in that time. It was more efficient 5 years ago.

10) *Buses should run later at night -- at least until 9 PM.

11) *Avila Trolley should run all week long.

12) Ray is a wonderful driver!

13) Drivers all need to know how to operate Handicapped lift.

14) Timing of connections is consistently a big problem.

15) Transit is easy to catch from the Mall.

16) *Drivers are very helpful and friendly.

17) Route info is mostly from drivers and word of mouth – need postings at each stop.

18) Late buses cause missed connections and are frustrating.

19) Having exact change to ride the bus is an issue.

20) SCAT is great the way it is. Convenient with friendly drivers.

21) SCAT is very convenient. Love hourly stops at Pismo.

22) SCAT could improve outreach. The website is not great, but it does the job.

23) Transit takes too long to get anywhere. It should not take 1.5 hrs to get from Grover to SLO, but I am grateful for the service regardless.

24) Service used to be easier before routes and drivers were changed.

25) SCAT needs a pocket route map that's user friendly and concise.

26) Need a Park n Ride at Halcyon, Pismo Visitor's center and Senior housing on Grand in Pismo.

27) Shell Beach to Pismo route is inconvenient and inefficient, it backtracks.

28) *Could benefit from improved driver communication regarding connections/timing.

29) Direct outreach to elderly would increase ridership significantly. Perhaps Training demos at care center or senior center/communities to promote ridership.

30) Increase hours morning and night for route 10.

31) 21 and 24 should go to Avila – there is a great need.

32) *Weekend service should start earlier and be just as frequent as week days.

33) Participate/partner more in community events.

34) Increase discount for disabled.

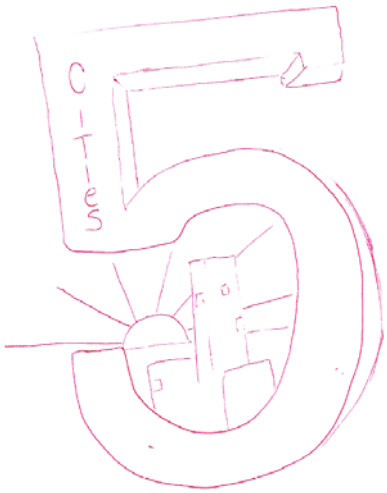
35) Stops should be in more highly visible stops (unsafe in early morning and at night).

36) Buses should run every half hour.

37) Route should run from Grand up Oak Park so that there's no backtracking.

38) Go back to the previous direct route from Shell Beach to SLO, current route is inefficient & backtracks.

Logo drawings by Open House Attendees



SOUTH COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN FOCUS GROUPS

Two focus groups were held. The first was on June 2, 2010, at Arroyo Grande High School, and the second was on June 30, 2010, at Ramona Gardens Transit Center. A summary for each is provided below.

Arroyo Grande High School Focus Group

The Consultant met with students who are regular transit users, including 7 freshmen, 6 sophomores, 5 juniors and 3 seniors, for a total of 21 participants. Below is a summary of answers to specific questions as well as general comments received. If multiple responses were received, the number is placed in parenthesis.

***Place of Residence*:** Where do you live?

- 8 student bus riders reside in Oceano
- 12 reside in Grover Beach
- 1 resides in Santa Maria

***Frequency of Bus Use*:** How often do you ride SCAT buses?

- 14 ride daily
- 5 ride weekly

***Trip Purpose*:** What do you use the bus for?

- 19 use the bus for school
- 2 use the bus for fun (activities)

Desired improvements: What improvements would you like to see?

- It's fine as is (4 responses)
- More seating (4 responses)
- Go straight to school (3 responses)
- More stops (3 responses)
- Be consistently on time (2 responses)
- Universal bus passes
- Get to destinations faster
- Longer hours
- Lower prices
- Faster drop-offs and pick-ups
- Resolve issues with automatic magnetic card reader. It doesn't work 100% of time and is problematic and time consuming for riders

Desired Destinations: Where in the 5 Cities area do you think transit services are most needed (particularly in summer)?

- AG, Oceano & Pismo (5)
- Vons (3)
- Grover Beach residential developments (3)
- Wal-Mart (2)
- 16th Street not all the way down Grand (2)
- Santa Barbara (2)
- TJ Maxx
- Pismo Outlets
- SLO
- Trips to local events/theatres

Desired span of service: When (day of week, time of day) are transit services are most needed?

- Higher frequency in early AM (13)
- Later evening/night hours (3)
- Same hours of operation on weekends as weekdays

Service Overlap: Are there stops or parts of existing routes that should not be served (if so, where?)

- None (6)
- The stop at Shell in Arroyo Grande – there is a stop at AM-PM quite close (consolidate)
- Too many stops on Grand – slows down timing
- Oceano Airport

Outreach: Do you have ideas for getting more people to use transit?

- Free rides (or once a week people ride free) (4)
- Better outreach/ advertising (3)
- More stops at heavily traveled public gathering places (2)
- Cooler buses
- "Bring a friend for free" Day
- More comfortable seats

Communication: What is the best way for people to hear about transit services?

- Post routes at every stop (7)
- Word of mouth(5)
- Internet/social networking(3)
- Flyers & posters around city(2)
- Go back to lower fare ($1.00)
- TV advertisement
- Radio

Branding: What could a new SCAT name and logo look like on the buses?

- Imagery of ocean
- Imagery of local agriculture (strawberries)

Adult Users and Community Leaders Focus Group

The Consultant met with adults from the community on June 30, 2010, including representatives of the business community and social service agencies. The attendees are shown in Table 20, and a list of questions and responses follows.

TABLE 20: Adult and Community Leaders Focus Group Attendees

Name	Title	Representing	Affiliation
Joseph Scott	General/Marketing Manager	Businesses	Prime Outlets - Pismo Beach
Mary Squellati	Site Coordinator	Social Services	SAFE - Nipoma Family Resource Center
Bob Ellis	Planning Dept.	Social Services	Community Action Partnership of SLO
Mike Winn	Director	Community leaders	Nipomo Community Services District
Barbara Mann		General Public	Came with Vern Dahl - curious
Vern Dahl		Community leaders	Oceano Advisory Committee
Nancy Graves		Community leaders	SLO County District 3 (Hill)
Orsa Aguirre		Hispanic clients	Avila Lighthouse Suites

Demographics:

- Attendees were generally of 40 years of age or older
- 75% of attendees had lived in the area for over 15 years/majority from Nipomo area

Discussion Items:

- What are your perceptions (or what have you heard) of current Transit service?
  - Stops are too far apart
  - Service to Avila is desperately needed (over 30 employees without transportation daily)
  - Oceano made big improvement by adding new stop along Rte 23
  - Love the new shelters
- What are the top benefits (or functions) provided by bus service in the 5 Cities area?
  - Getting employees to work
  - Transporting people to medical appointments

- What improvements to transit services would increase ridership?

  - Provide service to local events (such as Mid State Fair, Strawberry Festival, etc) – this would gain exposure to larger demographic/user group. Convenience is everything.
  - Should check with Oceano S.A.F.E regarding improvements needed
  - Increase frequency during peak hours (every half hour 6-9AM and 4-7PM)
  - Improve timing between SLO City and SCAT
  - Better communication and coordination between buses, stops, timing, and other services
  - Create a punch pass that is good for say 30 rides and never expires (Nipomo service has this)
  - Look at inefficiencies – where is ridership lowest – cancel that route(s)
  - Examine demographics – serve only areas with the greatest concentration of needs
  - Need bilingual support on phone at SCAT Hotline and should publish RTA info in Hispanic publications (Santa Maria, etc)
  - Shuttle from Ontario Road (frontage rd on US 101) to Avila park n ride
  - Nipomo park n ride at Los Berros and Thompson should become a stop
  - Willow Road Caltrans project should include a park n ride while in design phase – RTA should coordinate with them soon.
  - PG&E to fund Avila Trolley during outages to partner in connecting employees to Diablo Canyon
  - Implement a "Beach Hopper" route during the summer to promote tourism and transit

- How can we best communicate general transit (including schedule) information?

  - Kiosks in cities/towns between stops at pedestrian nodes
  - Should be easily accessible online and at EVERY stop
  - Senior centers
  - Word of mouth (tell a friend program?)
  - Community Health Services
  - Need proactive outreach strategy/campaign
  - Need central hub of information like at SLO library node – Nipomo library on Tefft is good location
  - Add info at computer kiosks in public libraries – make RTA website homepage
  - Post info inside all buses and provide pocket route maps
  - Clearly list RTA hotline # in buses
  - Advertise RTA website on side of bus

- Do you have any input or direction on the new Five Cities Transit Logo?

  - Don't change the brand! – focus money on service improvements
  - Timing is bad for rebranding in a bad economy – RTA may be perceived as wasting $
  - Change is confusing
  - RTA should be overarching

Additional Comments:

- New Homeless Day Center in planning process between Grover, Oceano and Nipomo, check with S.A.F.E. Organization to coordinate possible new stop
- Consider improving coordination with/connecting to adjacent counties
- Go back to punch passes
- Create a "boutique route" that is seasonal and tourist focused. Charge extra to bring in additional funding source for basic program expansion. Market to local hotels

  - Spring – Wildflower route
  - winter - Apple Cider Route to See Canyon
  - summer - Beach Route

- Avila information from Ofsa Aguirre, Maintenance Manager at Avila Lighthouse Suites:

  - Employees who need transportation:

    - Avila Lighthouse Suites – 5
    - La Fonda Resort – 13
    - Avila Village – 5
    - San Luis Bay Inn – 10

  - Employees often walk home in very early or late hours of day because they have no other means of transportation. Majority live in Grover. Need regular service and bus stop in Avila.

SCAT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS

The SCAT Executive Committee is another valuable source regarding existing transit conditions and issues in the South County area, as the members are closely involved with the transit program. As city managers, the executive committee members also have a good perspective on transit issues in relation to broader transportation issues and beyond. LSC staff conducted a 20-30 minute phone conversation with each committee member. A total of 14 questions were posed to each, which generated the following general responses.

1. **In your opinion, what are the major transportation issues facing the South County area?**

   There was a consensus that providing funding to maintain current transportation conditions is the key issue, both for transit as well as for roadway maintenance. Transit service is important, but so are other forms of transportation. Key transit issues are providing efficient service to a low density, dispersed area that can retain existing riders and attract new ones.

2. **In your opinion, what is the role of public transportation in South County?**

   The key role was seen as providing safe, reliable, and affordable transportation. Today, much of the ridership is seen as students and persons that are dependent on public transit due to mobility limitations or limited income. In the future, this role can grow to encompass a greater proportion of the community and expand environmental benefits

3. **What do you think are the greatest strengths of the transit services in South County?**

   Strengths mentioned consisted of the following:

   - Well run operation, providing dependable service
   - Good route coverage – much of the region is within walking distance of a stop, and all major stops are served
   - Good ADA accessibility
   - Fare is reasonable (avoid raising it)
   - Good balance between local service and connections to regional service

4. **What are the greatest weaknesses?**

   Weaknesses mentioned consisted of the following:

   - Frequency needs to be increased
   - Route system is hard to understand
   - Need better connections to regional bus service and to rail service
   - Some buses may be too large for the ridership
   - Need to increase marketing to major employers

5. **What do you see as the greatest unmet transit needs in the South County region? (Who needs it, and where do they need to go?)**

   Service needs to better serve commuters (both within the South County area and connecting to regional services) as well as seniors. As the population ages, needs can be expected to increase.

6. **In your opinion, what would make transit more relevant to people who currently use a car as their primary form of transportation?**

   Besides higher gas prices, single greatest factor would be to increase frequency. Also need to market the service as an auto alternative for shopping, movies, beach, special events. Route deviation might be a viable option.

7. **Do you feel there is much public support for public transit services?**

   Public support for transit is considered to be broad, but not very deep. Residents like that there is a public transit program, but expanding public funding for transit would be difficult.

8. **Do you feel there is political support for public transit services?**

   There is general support for public transit, though it is not a particularly high priority compared with other local government functions. Transit is seen as a component of efforts to achieve environmental goals, along with other travel demand and land use strategies.

9. **SCAT has its own identity via its Board and contracts with the RTA for management, maintenance, and operation. Do you think the existing arrangement between SCAT and RTA works well? What are the pluses and minuses of the current institutional framework? Looking 7 years ahead, should this framework be changed or retained?**

   There was a consensus that the existing structure is working well, and that the current Board and staff have good working relationships. The level of control provided to the South County is seen as a positive aspect of the current arrangement. The public does not understand the relationship between SCAT and RTA, nor does the public particularly know whether they are separate or combined services. There was a difference of opinion as to whether maintaining a separate identity for South County transit services is worthwhile.

10. **Do you have suggestions regarding better ways that local and regional services can be coordinated?**

    Responses focused on marketing strategies, including provision of coordinated schedules, marketing to hotel employees, and a marketing effort in Spanish.

11. **As part of our plan, we will be conducting several focus group meetings. Do you have any suggestions as to who should take part in these groups? Can you or someone in your agency recommend persons to contact?**

    A long list of suggestions was generated, and used to refine the focus groups.

12. **We will also be gathering public input at staffed information tables at key activity centers. Our working list of these locations is: Ramona Gardens (during a Farmers Market), Prime Outlets, AG High School, Central Coast Senior Center (in Oceano). Any suggestions about other locations?**

    Suggestions included the Farmers Markets in Arroyo Grande Village and at Dinosaurs Cave Park, Art in the Park, the Visitors Information kiosk at the Pismo Beach Pier, and outside the Grover Beach Von's.

13. Is there anyone else that you think we should contact for our plan?

Several additional contacts were mentioned and folded into the focus groups.

14. Additional comments?

Additional comments consisted of the following:

- Key issue in this plan is the potential for 5307. Hopefully, would be able to free up funding for other transportation needs.
- Removing regional service from Ramona Center has been a detriment
- Need to consider level of services available to seniors through Runabout and DAR. Current program is limited in hours.
- More and more retirees will change the demands on the service.
- Need additional marketing to tourists
- Need to focus on marketing. Definitely need to better educate people about the system.

CUSTOMER PETITION

In addition to the formal outreach organized by the Consultant, SCAT received a petition for service to Avila Beach. The petition organizer is an employee at the Avila Lighthouse Suites. The petition states:

> *"We are employees that work in Avila Beach, California. We would like to request bus service from the Five Cities and from San Luis Obispo to Avila Beach. If possible, we would like to request service Monday through Sunday."*

The petition, dated May 15, 2010, was signed by 39 individuals. When further exploring the needs expressed in the petition, it was found that an estimated 30 or more employees who live in the Five Cities area or in San Luis Obispo need transportation for jobs in Avila on a daily basis. A number of these employees are Spanish speaking, and most work low wage jobs in the tourist industry (such as hotel and restaurant staff). As a result of the survey, a representative was included in the second focus group. Input is summarized under the focus group discussion, above.

BUS DRIVER AND SURVEYOR OBSERVATIONS

First hand observations provide valuable insight into on-the-ground problems of a transit system. The Consultant met with drivers to document opinions regarding problems in driving the routes,

and surveyors conducting onboard surveys were asked to observe any issues and identify problems, particularly with passenger amenities. Below is a list of observations. Many of the observations recorded by surveyors were relayed to them through the drivers.

General Comments:

- Drivers would like to have microphones again.
- Management should consult with drivers to set stop times (make a policy change).
- The High School is adding shelters.
- Stops at Price/Hinds and Price/Stimson could both use shelters.
- Put in better wheelchair locking devices to reduce wheelchair strap-in time.
- People have requested service up to the Mesa.
- A few passengers commented that they would like more service north of Grand Avenue and connecting to more areas with the ability to transfer without having to pay so much.

Route 23

- South Elm at Ash: Small area of curb needs to be painted red for wheelchair access, deal with drive.
- Elm at Ash needs a shelter (many elderly use the stop)
- Oceano Senior Center: Traveling on Railroad St. has delay due to big rigs blocking road to park at packing shed. Delays up to 5 minutes, big rigs parking along railroad take up more space, creating safety concerns. (Some drivers said this is a problem; other drivers said it is rarely a problem)
- Wilmar at 19th: Parking problems when community center has adult education or school – need to paint the curb red.
- Another stop is needed at Railroad Diner.
- Flooding problems.
- Shell Beach Road: time has been built in to pick up wheelchairs, but none are picked up here.

Route 21

- Runs well the first half, but gets off schedule due to pedestrians, boardings and alightings. In summer, there is a huge swell in traffic/pedestrians.
- There is no left turn signal at Pismo Beach Pier (Pomeroy at Dolliver), causing a huge back-up.
- Granite House Inn: if the bus has to stop, waiting for the light to re-enter the road can delay the route 5 minutes.
- Railroad crossing: Delays due to crossing; hazardous.

- Shell Beach Road at Spyglass Village: Accident occurred at least a year ago – still no bench or sign.
- W. Branch at Rodeo and W. Branch at Vernon: No bench, no red curb, riders stand among rocks.
- Highway 1 at Butterfly Trees (northbound): there is a bench, but the shoulder is soft. Large hole in front of bench.
- Price at Dolliver: soft shoulder, large pot holes in front of bench.
- Price at Lighthouse: no bus stop sign.
- Price at Harbor View to Price at Stimson: very long distance between stops.
- Kmart: buses have to turn in, which takes time, but often no one is there. It would be helpful to have a way to know from the street if someone was at the stop.
- East Grand at Rabo Bank: there is no sign at the bus stop.

Route 24

- Move the Grand/Halcyon stop to Alder and Grand.
- Huasna at Bolsa Chica: Cannot see bench – in bushes.
- Get rid of Strother Park – no ridership.
- It would be beneficial to have transfers between Route 23 and 24 – perhaps at the High School or Arroyo Grande Village.
- Eliminate the stop at Chevron (passengers have to walk to get anywhere)
- There is no crosswalk at Jiffy Lube
- Strother: Very tight area to pull in while avoiding trees, curbs, and vehicles.

Avila Trolley

- Air conditioner was not working – too hot inside the trolley.
- Trolley should go to Pismo Pier.
- Move or get rid of PG&E stop: no one goes there.
- Place brochures on Trolley and have a trolley schedule that drivers can hand out to passengers.
- Cushions on seats.
- Larger signs at stops.

This page left intentionally blank.

Chapter 8
Service Gaps

The compilation of data provided in the previous chapters and the public outreach process provide a strong foundation to determine the biggest services gaps and needs for improvements. The service gaps are described in terms of service area, span of service, service frequency, customer service, and outreach efforts.

Service Area

The area considered well served by transit is typically defined as areas within a quarter mile of a transit stop. Some input suggested coverage is very good in South County, while others felt walking distance to stops was too far. Figure 22 presents the areas within a quarter-mile perimeter of the existing bus stops located within the Five Cities transit service area. As indicated, the Five Cities area is predominantly well served. However, there are notable gaps in service:

- The area of Grover Beach north of Newport Avenue, between North 4th Street on the west and Alder Street on the east, focused on Atlantic Avenue.
- The northeast area of Arroyo Grande, focused on James Way.
- The southern area of Arroyo Grande along Valley Road.
- The Pier Avenue area of Oceano.

In particular, the neighborhood north of Grand Avenue along Atlantic City Drive is not well served by transit, yet demographic data provided in Chapter 2 indicates that this area has a high concentration of mobility-limited and low income persons, and a moderate number of households without a car available.

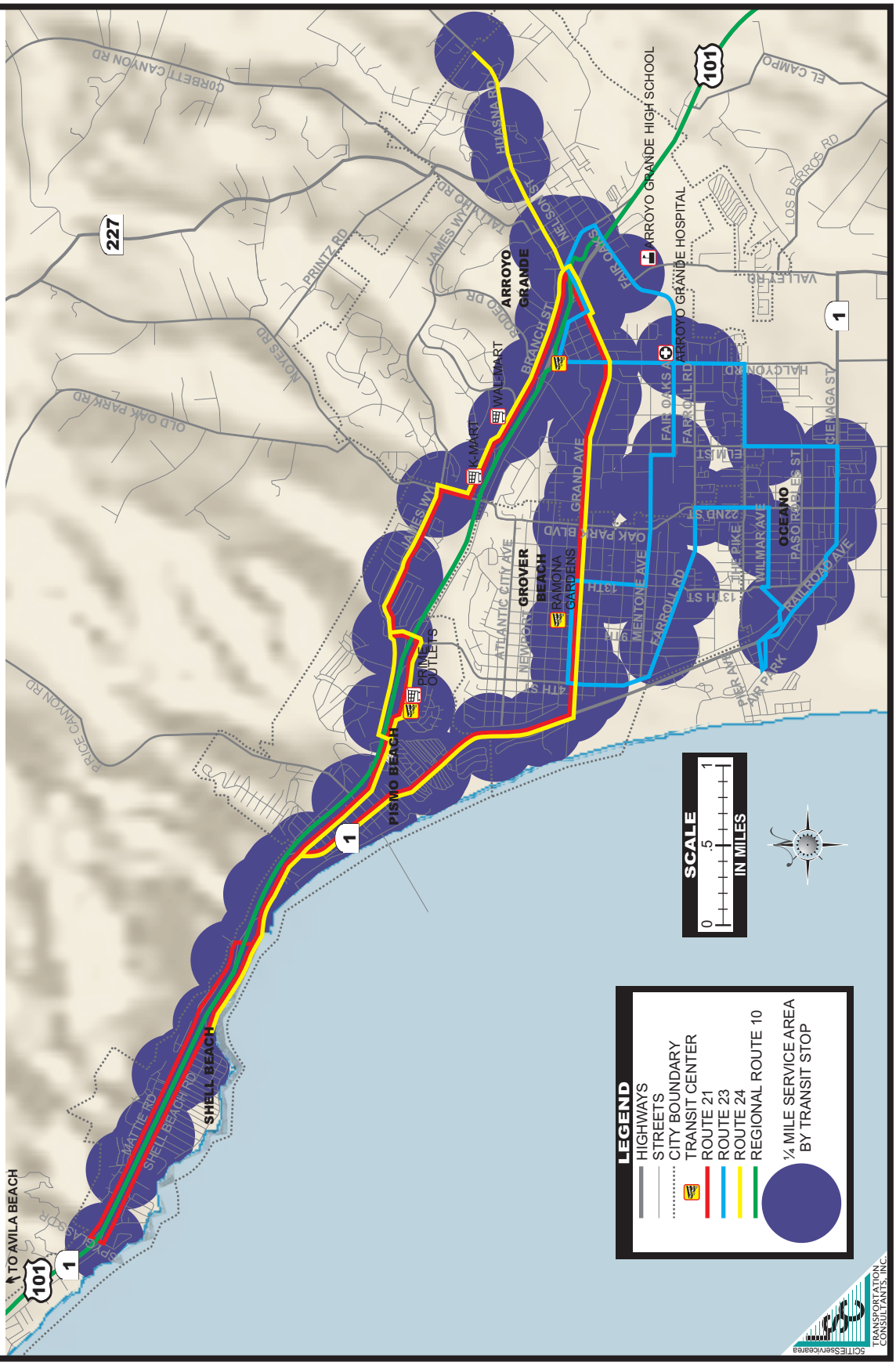
Figure 22 also shows areas that are served by a route, but because of limited bus stop spacing, there are gaps in the service area. Routes 21 and 23 have no significant gaps due to bus stop spacing, but the following gaps are present:

- Along the western end of Cienega Street
- Along Fair Oaks Avenue around Pecan Street (between Elm Street and Halcyon Road)

In addition to the analysis above, boarding and alighting data collected over a full week of service showed patterns of activity at stops throughout the Route 21, 23, and 24 area. Bus stop activity was highest at Ramona Gardens Transfer Center, Pismo Prime Outlets, Wal-Mart, Highway 1 in Oceano, and Spy Glass road in Shell Beach. On the other hand, service east of Arroyo Grande Village received almost no ridership, which strongly supports discontinuing the portion of the route that extends to Strother Park. Furthermore, there was little ridership on Highway 1 between Grand Avenue and Hinds Avenue, suggesting a different route may be more productive. For example, there were multiple requests for additional service on Oak Park north of Grand as well as on Atlantic City Avenue. However, it should be noted that these passenger

FIGURE 22

Quarter-Mile Service Area by Transit Stop



counts were conducted in mid-May 2010, and do not represent summer ridership. The RV parks along Highway 1 north of Grand tend to have high summer use, and low off-season use.
Some specific locations residents would like to see served include the following:

- Avila Beach from the Five Cities area on weekdays
- Avila Beach from San Luis Obispo
- Directly from Grand to Oak Park Drive and the Outlets
- More service on Atlantic City Drive
- More stops along Price in Shell Beach
- More service in Oceano (to reduce travel time)
- Service in Nipomo west of Highway 101 to serve clinics, as Route 10 stays east

Span of Service

Through the public input process, including onboard surveys, focus groups and interviews, requests were repeated for later evening service, and to a lesser extent, earlier morning service. SCAT reduced evening hours in August of 2009 (ending service at 7:30 PM instead of 9:30 PM). Ridership has decreased, perhaps in part as a result of this reduction. However, service performance in terms of passengers per hour is described as having been very low in the evenings, and even currently, ridership drops off after 4:30 PM.

Another side of this equation, however, and a factor that may potentially impact ridership is the fact that some transit users who need evening or early morning transportation may find entirely different modes of transportation. If their trip requirements in the evening cannot be met by transit, they may quit using transit in the day time as well.

Service Frequency

Probably the most requested service improvement from all sources was for an increase in service frequency. Most often mentioned was a desire for 30-minute headways, either all day long or, at a minimum, during peak hours. Increased frequency would significantly improve the overall effectiveness of the transit system. A related request was the desire for reduced in-vehicle travel times for some trips, particularly to and from Oceano and other areas along Route 23. A travel-time analysis found that certain portions of SCAT routes have very long travel-times, and this should be addressed in the service alternatives.

Transfers and Connections

Passengers in general seem accepting of the need to change buses at the Ramona Gardens Transfer Center to continue on their trip. There are concerns, however, about connecting to Route 10 and other regional services. Passengers suggested there needs to be better communication between the SCAT drivers and the regional transit drivers and/or dispatchers to improve regional transfers. Additionally, it was noted that the SCAT routes do not operate early enough to get to the 6:56 AM Route 10 northbound express run. Passengers also expressed an overall desire for better connections and more transfer opportunities within the route system.

Improved Bus Stop Amenities

SCAT has adopted a standard to provide shelters at stops with an average of 10 or more boardings and alightings daily. Ten stops meet this criterion but do not have shelters include:

- Grand Avenue at 16th Street
- SR 1 (Cienega) at 21st Street
- Dolliver at Pomeroy
- Dolliver at Hinds
- Price St at Hinds
- Shell Beach Rd at Spyglass
- Shell Beach Rd at Pier
- E. Branch Road at W. Branch
- Oceano Train Depot
- James Way at Oak Park

Furthermore, although there were only an average of 11 boardings and alightings, a shelter should be provided at Elm and Ash due to the number of frail elderly who use this stop and the lack of shade.

SCAT should conduct a periodic inventory of passenger bus stop conditions. An accident at Shell Beach Road at Spyglass Village demolished the bus stop sign over a year ago and it has yet to be replaced. Some stops have large pot holes in front of benches, making the benches ineffectual.

The design of the current bus stop signs have small writing on a white background and are easily missed. A bolder design, and/or larger signage is desirable.

Passengers have suggested they would like to see schedule information at every stop. Currently, there is a lack of schedule information both on the buses and at stops. However, if this information is placed at every stop, any changes to the information would require an extensive effort to update. One option is to provide schedule information at all transfer locations, and at up to a dozen major stops per route.

Other Miscellaneous Service Needs

Visitor Oriented Seasonal Service: A number of ideas for visitor oriented public transit were expressed in the public outreach process, including:

- Spring – Wildflower route
- Fall - Apple Cider Route to See Canyon
- Summer - Beach Route

Customer Service and Information: A number of people commented on the lack of information or that the information available is confusing. SCAT has been operating within a limited marketing budget and limited public information, but this has recently changed and a new,

easier-to-read map has been created for the system. Still, information needs to be more widely available in print and on the vehicles. Information should be provided in both English and Spanish.

SUMMARY OF SERVICE GAPS

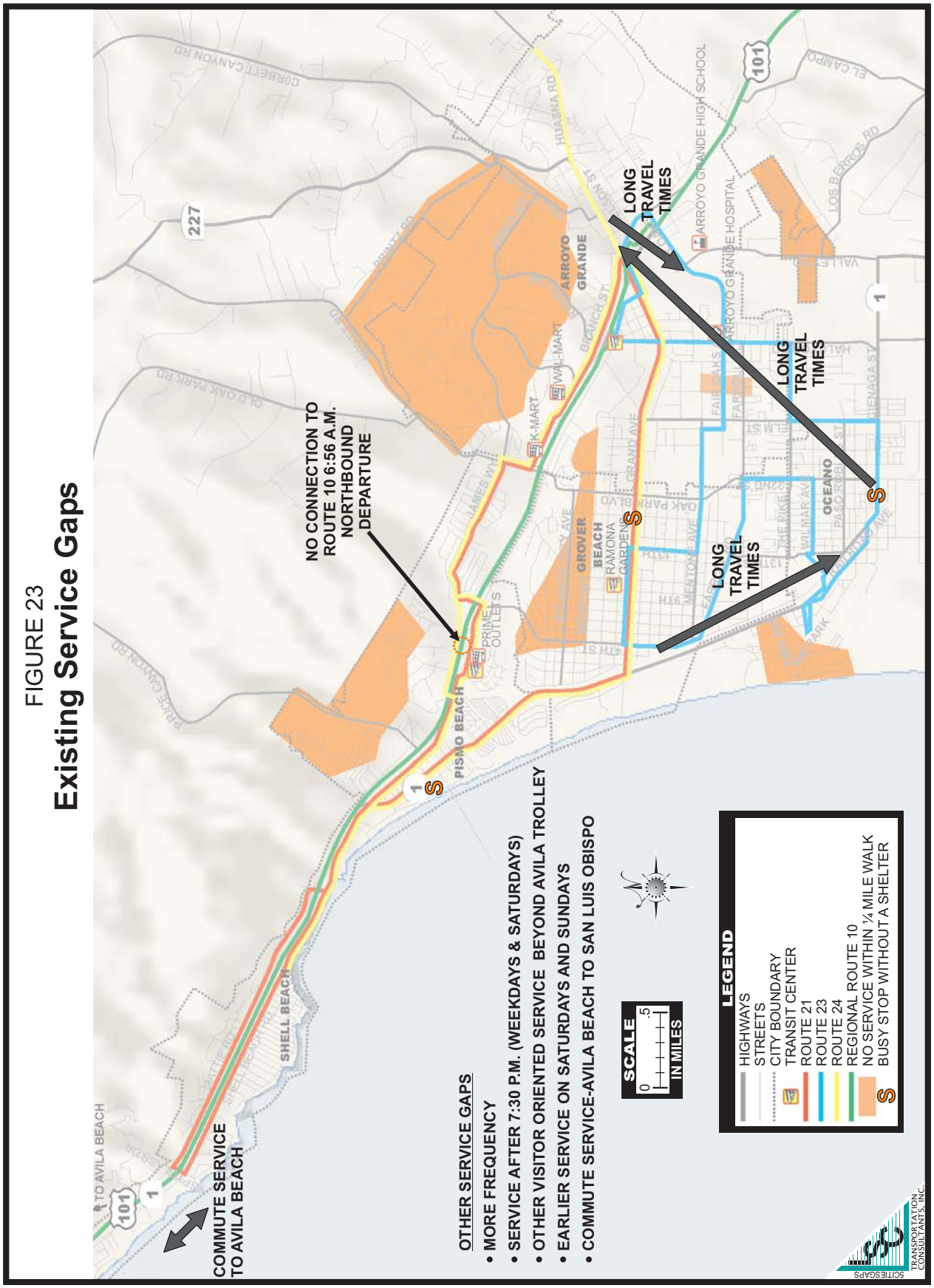
The service gaps discussed above have been mapped to provide a visual summary of service gaps as well. Figure 23 shows the existing gaps in service area, along with other elements of the existing service (span of service, frequency, long travel times, etc.) that have been identified through this study process, as well as high activity stops not currently provided with a bus shelter. Note that identification as an existing gap does not necessarily mean that a new service plan will fill all the defined gaps. Rather, strategies to fill these gaps will be evaluated as part of future study tasks to identify those that can be addressed while meeting overall system financial and productivity goals.

Services NOT Requested/NOT Needed

In addition to identifying gaps in service, it is instructive to note that certain services were not requested, and certain patterns of travel and boarding/alighting information suggest there are areas that do not need service. Most notably, these include the following:

- There was little passenger activity east of Arroyo Grande Village to Strother Park
- Throughout the public outreach, no one mentioned or requested commute service along the State Route 227 corridor
- There is little demonstrated need to serve Dinosaur Caves Park

FIGURE 23
Existing Service Gaps



Chapter 9
Service Alternatives

INTRODUCTION

The service alternatives presented below include an analysis of resources necessary to implement the alternative (including capital equipment and cost of the service), ridership impacts, and expected fare revenues. The pros and cons of each alternative are also described. Based on the service plan, capital requirements, funding requirements, and appropriate institutional and management strategies can be determined, as is presented in subsequent chapters.

It should be noted that this analysis reflects a long-term ridership estimate for each alternative. Typically, it takes new transit services three years to reach its ultimate total ridership potential. This reflects the fact that it takes potential transit riders roughly two years to become aware of new services and to adjust their travel patterns. While the estimates provided in the alternatives analysis represent the long-term ridership potential, the year-by-year transit plan will reflect this "lag" in ridership response.

Costs for additional services are estimated based on the 2009-10 cost allocation, which is an update of the cost model provided in Table 13. Hour-related costs are based on 2009-10 operating costs, mileage-related costs are based on maintenance and fuel costs, and administrative costs are fixed costs. The cost factors for the service alternatives are assumed to be $24.47 per hour of service and $1.51 per mile of service. Fixed costs are not included in the analysis of the alternatives: only the marginal operating costs are included as a basis of comparison. The average SCAT fare revenue estimated for alternatives was based on past revenues per passenger-trip, and is estimated to be $0.55 per passenger-trip.

FIVE CITIES ALTERNATIVES

Status Quo

A good starting point for the evaluation of SCAT local route service alternatives is the consideration of the impacts of the "status quo" – if current services remain unchanged over the upcoming planning period. The largest single external factor that can be expected to impact SCAT over this period is economic conditions. The tough economy means fewer jobs, and thus fewer work trips. In addition, able passengers on "stretched" budgets may choose to walk half a mile or more rather than pay the fare for the bus. This may be a factor in the decreased ridership over the past year. However, should the economy strengthen, the steady growth seen in the Five Cities area, particularly in the outlying unincorporated areas, may have an impact on demand.

One issue to consider in the status quo is the fact that passengers are currently frustrated by the out-of-direction travel and long travel times, particularly on Route 23. This indicates that the service is not providing the quality of service that should be expected of SCAT. Maintaining the status quo does not address this issue and it cannot be addressed without adding more service or modifying one or more of the routes. If this is not addressed, it could continue to negatively

affect ridership. However, while minor changes are imperative, large changes are not feasible given current financial realities expected within this plan period.

The operating characteristics of SCAT are shown in Table 21, based on the 2009-10 service year. The status quo is used as a basis of comparison and therefore shows the calculated characteristics of the existing service plan so that it can be related to the operating characteristics of the service elements of each alternative. The status quo numbers vary slightly from actual numbers, because they do not reflect missed trips from on-time performance issues on the trolley and other small discrepancies.

SPAN/FREQUENCY OF SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

These alternatives evaluate the span of service and service frequency for the SCAT program as a whole.

Earlier Weekday Service to Meet RTA Express Route 10

Currently, SCAT weekday services start between 5:29 AM (Route 23) and 6:29 AM (Routes 21 and 24). These early start times meet the needs for most local commuters and connect with the northbound and southbound regular RTA Route 10 buses at Prime Outlets at 7:00 AM. However, these SCAT Routes miss the connection with the northbound RTA Express Route 10 at 6:56 AM. The Express Route 10 makes fewer stops and gets to the San Luis Obispo Government Center (with opportunities to transfer to SLO and other RTA routes) 11 minutes earlier than the regular Route 10 bus. It is worth considering revision of SCAT service to provide a transfer opportunity with the 6:56 AM northbound RTA Express Route 10. This would require Routes 21 and 24 to operate the first portion of the first run of the day approximately 7 minutes earlier than the current schedule, then laying over at the Prime Outlets to return to the standard schedule. While costs would be relatively modest ($1,500 per year), this option would complicate the schedule and would require passengers (including those not benefiting from the new transfer opportunity) to get to the bus stop 7 minutes earlier.

Both the Regular and Express RTA Route 10 provide opportunities to transfer to other RTA and SLO Transit Routes at the Government Center in San Luis Obispo. The RTA Express Route 10 in particular offers direct service to Cal Poly, as well as an opportunity to transfer to SLO Route 1 (South Higuera/Suburban) and SLO Route 5 (Cal Poly/Laguna Lake/Madonna), while the RTA Regular Route 10 requires a 51 minute wait to catch Route 1 and a 24 minute layover to catch Route 5. On the other hand, the Express Route 10 simply requires a slightly longer layover to catch the same runs of SLO Routes 2, 3, and 4 and RTA Routes 9, 12A, and 12B that are served by the regular Route 10 run. Overall, altering the schedule of SCAT Routes 21 and 24 seems of little benefit.

Another option that slightly increases flexibility for passengers would be for Route 23 to extend its first run to the Prime Outlets. Route 23 operates a first run at 5:29 AM, ending with a 12 minute layover at Ramona Gardens from 6:17 AM to 6:29 AM. Given that operating delays this early in the morning are minimal, it would be possible for this time to be used for a quick trip from Ramona Gardens to serve the Prime Outlets stop at 6:24 AM and return (with no

TABLE 21: South County Span of Service and Service Frequency Alternatives

Service Alternative Options/Details	Additional Peak Vehicles[1]	Total Daily Veh. Serv. Miles	Total Daily Veh. Serv. Hours	Total Annual Veh. Serv. Miles	Total Annual Veh. Serv. Hours	Total Annual Operating Cost[2]	Ridership Impact (One-Way Trips) Daily	Ridership Impact (One-Way Trips) Annual	Annual Farebox Revenue	Annual Subsidy Required
	Service Operating Characteristics (miles, hours, ridership and costs rounded to nearest 100s)									
Status Quo (based on Fiscal Year 2009-10)										
Route 21	–	214	13	77,600	4,700	$232,200	181	65,600	$37,100	$195,100
Route 23	–	183	15	66,300	5,400	$232,300	185	67,100	$37,500	$194,800
Route 24	–	214	13	77,500	4,700	$232,100	144	52,000	$29,000	$203,100
Route 25	–	12	2	2,500	300	$11,100	35	7,100	$6,300	$4,800
Subtotal	**4**	**624**	**43**	**223,900**	**15,100**	**$707,700**	**545**	**191,800**	**$109,900**	**$597,800**
Avila Trolley	1	231	10	24,500	1,100	$63,900	69	7,300	$2,400	$61,500
Systemwide	4	855	53	248,400	16,200	$771,600	545	199,100	$112,300	$659,300
Service Alternatives				*Operating Impact of Additional or Reduced Service*						
SCAT Connector to Route 10 Northbound Express										
Extend Route 23 to Prime Outlets		3.5	0	900	0	$1,400	1	300	$200	$1,200
Reinstate Service to 9:30 PM Weekdays										
Route 21		33.0	2	8,500	500	$25,100	13	3,400	$1,900	$23,200
Route 23		12.2	1	3,200	300	$12,200	7	1,800	$1,000	$11,200
Route 24		32.9	2	8,500	500	$25,100	11	2,800	$1,500	$23,600
Routes 21, 23 & 24		78.1	5	20,200	1,300	$62,400		8,000	$4,400	$58,000
30 Minute Headways 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM Weekdays										
Route 21	1	181.4	11	46,800	2,800	$139,200	80	20,600	$11,400	$127,800
Route 23	1	134.3	11	34,700	2,800	$120,900	84	21,600	$12,500	$108,400
Route 24	1	181.2	11	46,700	2,800	$139,100	64	16,600	$9,100	$130,000
Routes 21, 23 & 24	3	496.9	33	128,200	8,400	$399,200		58,800	$33,000	$366,200
Increased Peak Hour Service (7:00-9:00 AM & 2:00--4:00 PM)										
Route 21	1	66.0	4	17,000	1,000	$50,200	37	9,600	$5,300	$44,900
Route 23	1	48.8	4	12,600	1,000	$43,500	38	9,900	$5,700	$37,800
Route 24	1	65.9	4	17,000	1,000	$50,200	30	7,700	$4,200	$46,000
Routes 21, 23 & 24	3	180.7	12	46,600	3,000	$143,900		27,200	$15,200	$128,700

Note 1: Vehicles needed during peak times.

Note 2: Operating cost is based on $24.47 per hour variable cost (primarily salaries and benefits), plus $1.15 per mile fuel and maintenance cost (based on fuel and maintenance costs in 2009-10). Does not include fixed costs.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

intermediate stops), giving Route 23 passengers an opportunity (albeit with a 32 minute wait) to catch the 6:56 AM northbound Route 10 express service. Extending the first run to the Prime Outlets would add 3.5 miles to the run. However, if it caused delays in the second run of Route 23, it would not be beneficial. The only cost associated with the alternative is the increased mileage, which would add approximately $1,400 in operating cost per year. The added convenience of this alternative is estimated to generate 1 additional passenger-trip per weekday, generating a fare revenue of $200 annually. The annual operating subsidy would therefore be approximately $1,200 annually, as shown in Table 21.

Reschedule RTA Express Route 10 Later for Better SCAT Connections

Alternately, RTA Express Route 10 could be rescheduled to arrive at Prime Outlet Mall at 7:00 AM instead of 6:56 AM which would allow it to connect with the SCAT Routes 21 and 24. The Express Route already often arrives late at this stop, but this would ensure passengers could depend on making the connection.

Evening and Weekend Extended Hours of Service

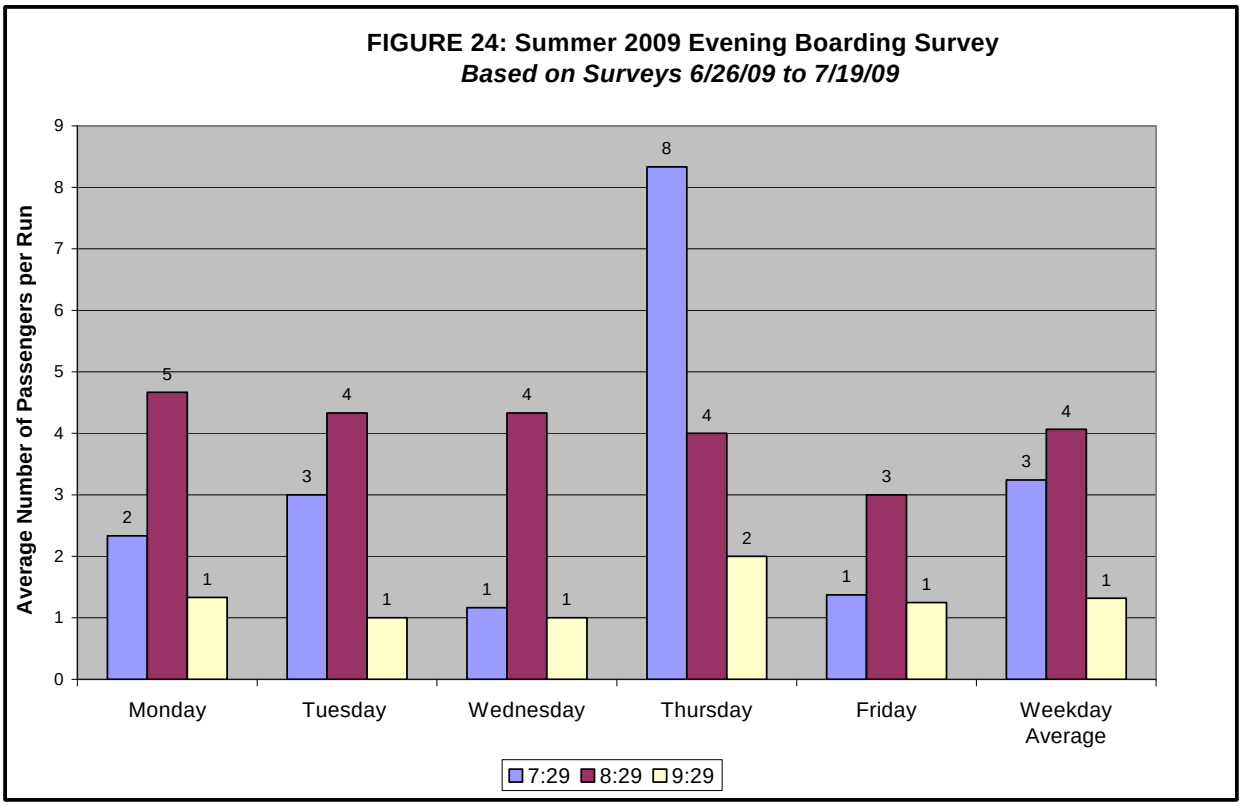
As part of the public input process, a number of individuals expressed the desire for later evening service. SCAT hours were reduced in August 2009 from an end time of 9:30 PM to the current end times of approximately 7:30 PM on Routes 21 and 24, and at 8:17 PM on Route 23. Several weeks prior to discontinuing the service, SCAT conducted boarding and alighting counts on runs that were being considered for discontinuation. The counts were done from June 26 to July 19, 2009, which is during the summer peak period. As shown in Figure 24, for the most part, fewer than 5 passengers per run used the transit service in the evening, and on average, 3 passengers per run used the service between 7:30-8:30 PM (with 2 runs surveyed), 4 passengers used the service on the run from 8:30-9:30 PM, and only 1 passenger was on the run from 9:30-10:30 PM. As stated in Chapter 6, the recommended systemwide standard for average passengers per service hour is 15. Clearly, the level of passenger activity generated by this option indicates that evening service is not warranted.

Similarly, requests for earlier or later Saturday or Sunday service would result in even less ridership per hour of service. In a typical transit system, weekend ridership is approximately two thirds the ridership of weekday service. On average, less than three passengers per hour would be expected in earlier or later weekend transit services.

Half-Hourly Headways 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM – Routes 21, 23, 24 (Weekdays only)

The most often requested improvement during outreach efforts was for increased frequency of service. Under this alternative, service frequency would be increased to 30 minute headways on Routes 21, 23, and 24, Monday through Friday. This would be a near doubling of service and would require three additional vehicles. The annual marginal operating cost would increase by $402,100. Based on an elasticity[1] analysis, the ridership would increase by approximately 58,800

[1] Elasticity analysis, developed in the field of microeconomics, considers the relationship between a change in an input variable (such as service frequency) to a resulting change in ridership, and is based on changes in ridership to input variable observed in similar transit systems.



passenger-trips per year, resulting in an increase in a fare revenue of $33,000, as shown in Table 21. The operating subsidy required per passenger-trip, therefore, would be an estimated $6.84 per passenger-trip, which is more than twice the current subsidy of $2.67 per passenger-trip on SCAT fixed routes.

Increased Peak Hour Service

While it would not be cost efficient to double the frequency throughout the day, it is worth considering the pros and cons of increasing frequency during peak hours (7:00-9:00 AM and 2:00-4:00 PM). Adding four hours of service to the three routes each weekday would increase annual hours by 3,000 and annual miles by 46,000. The marginal operating cost would therefore be $143,900. Using an elasticity analysis, it is estimated that the additional ridership generated would be approximately 27,200 passenger-trips, or on average almost nine additional passenger-trips per hour of service added. This alternative would increase annual subsidy requirements by an estimated $128,700. The marginal estimated operating subsidy per passenger-trip would be $4.73, which is higher than the current $2.67, but not unreasonable for a mid-sized transit system. While this alternative is not affordable in the short-term, it might be considered for the long-term, particularly as the local population continues to grow. However, as with the previous alternative, this alternative would require three additional vehicles in service.

ROUTE ALTERNATIVES

The series of alternatives below address potential changes in route alignment or the type of transit service, either for the system as a whole, or to address individual route conditions.

Conversion to a Pulse Point System

In an attempt to address the long travel times and inefficiencies of existing services, a "pulse point" routing system was evaluated. A pulse point is a system where routes begin and end at one starting point (Ramona Gardens) at the same time, then pulse out in separate directions covering different areas and returning to the original point at the same time. This strategy, which is very common among smaller urban transit services, has the advantage of providing relatively quick trips with little out-of-direction travel throughout the service area with at most one transfer. Under this alternative, six paired routes would be operated each hour using three vehicles: three 20-minute routes and three 40-minute routes. The short routes would depart Ramona Gardens at 52 minutes after the hour, returning by 10 minutes after the hour. The long routes would depart Ramona Gardens at 12 minutes after the hour, returning by 45 to 50 minutes after the hour. This scheduling would allow transfers at Prime Outlets to RTA Route 10, as shown in the example schedule in Table 22. The route pairs, as shown in Figure 25, would consist of the following:

Route 1A: Ramona Gardens to Prime Outlets (connecting to RTA Route 10)
Route 1B: Ramona Gardens to Shell Beach (Spy Glass Road)
Route 2A: Ramona Gardens to Wal-Mart
Route 2B: Ramona Gardens to Arroyo Grande (Hospital, High School and Village)
Route 3A: Ramona Gardens to K-Mart via Oak Park
Route 3B: Ramona Gardens to Oceano

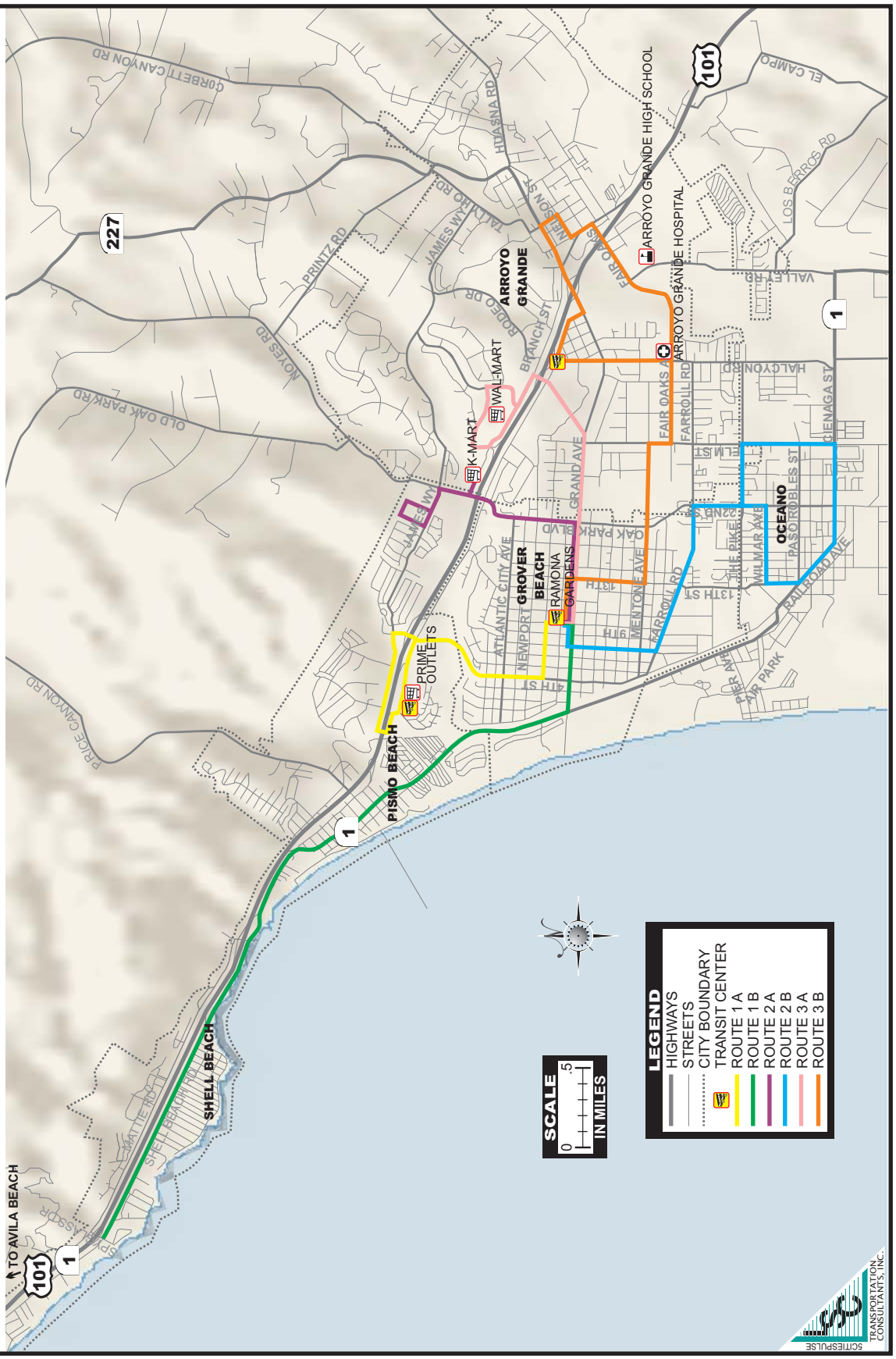
TABLE 22: Example Pulse Point Operating Schedule

Bus	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	3B
Route	Prime Outlets	Shell Beach	K-Mart	AGHS/Village	Walmart	Oceano
Schedule: Minutes Past the Hour						
Dep Ramona Gardens	:52		:52		:52	
Arrive Prime Outlets	:58					
Arrive K-Mart			:02			
Arrive Walmart					:05	
Dep Prime Outlets	:04					
Arrive Ramona Gardens	:10		:10		:10	
Dep Ramona Gardens		:12		:12		:12
Arrive Spyglass Road		:30				
Arrive AG HS				:24		
Arrive AG Village Center				:27		
Arrive Oceano (Beach/Cienega)						:28
Arrive Ramona Gardens		:50		:45		:45
Route Length (miles)	4.1	10.6	4.2	7.4	5.1	6.5
Operating Speed (mph)	13.7	16.7	14.0	13.5	17.0	11.8

The "A" routes are the shorter routes operated by each individual bus, while the "B" routes are the longer routes. This alternative would operate the same hours of service as the current SCAT

FIGURE 25

Pulse Point Route Alternative



services. The benefits of this alternative are that opportunities for transfers are offered more frequently than on the current system. This service works particularly well for trips to and from Ramona Gardens.

To measure the effectiveness of this service, travel times from key locations were estimated, as shown in Table 23, and compared to the current travel times measured in Table 7 of Chapter 3.

TABLE 23: Travel Times for Pulse Point Route Alternative

T = Transfer Required *= Five Cities Area*

Origin	Destination: San Luis Obispo	Pismo Beach (Spyglass)	Grover Beach (Ramona)	Oceano	Arroyo Grande City Hall	Arroyo Grande High School	Santa Maria
San Luis Obispo	~	45 m. T	25 m. T	43 m. T	42 m. T	39 m. T	~
Pismo Beach (Spyglass)	45 m. T	~	20 m.	58 m. T	57 m. T	54 m. T	61 m. T
Grover Beach (Ramona)	19 m. T	18 m.	~	16 m.	15 m.	12 m.	39 m. T
Oceano	40 m. T	62 m. T	17 m.	~	59 m. T	59 m. T	61 m. T
Arroyo Grande City Hall	48 m. T	63 m. T	18 m.	61 m. T	~	57 m. T	64 m. T
Arroyo Grande High School	44 m. T	66 m. T	21 m.	64 m. T	3 m.	~	67 m. T
Santa Maria	~	61 m. T	41 m. T	59 m. T	58 m. T	64 m. T	~

Source: SCAT and SLO RTA, 2010

The travel times to and from San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria generally improved, as the Route 1A loop provides quick, direct connections to the Prime Outlets from the longer "B" routes. However, since it is estimated that only 10 percent of current ridership transfers to Route 10, this is not a substantial improvement. The pulse point reduces the longest trip times in that none of the trips require more than 67 minutes of in-vehicle travel time (Arroyo Grande High School to Santa Maria) while a number of the current trips take over 75 minutes and as long as 95 minutes. However, a very telling comparison can be made by totaling all the travel minutes of the local origins/destinations under the current system and comparing them to the Pulse Point Alternative. Currently, all the local trips take 498 minutes to complete, whereas under the Pulse Point Alternative, combined local trips would take a total of 800 minutes, which is a 38 percent increase. Some trips that currently require a relatively short travel time (such as Pismo Beach to Arroyo Grande City Hall) would require substantially longer in-vehicle travel times.

The operating cost of this alternative was estimated to be $655,000, as shown in Table 24, which is approximately $53,000 less than the cost of the existing service plan. This is a result of the reduced vehicle-miles that would be operated. The ridership was estimated using an elasticity

TABLE 24: South County SCAT Route Service Alternatives

Service Element Options/Details	Peak Vehicles[1]	Total Daily Veh. Serv. Miles	Total Daily Veh. Serv. Hours	Total Annual Veh. Serv. Miles	Total Annual Veh. Serv. Hours	Total Annual Operating Cost[2]	Ridership Impact (One-Way Trips) Daily	Ridership Impact (One-Way Trips) Annual	Annual Farebox Revenue	Annual Subsidy Required
Status Quo (based on Fiscal Year 2009-10)										
Route 21	*1*	*214*	*13*	*77,600*	*4,700*	*$232,200*	*181*	*65,600*	*$37,100*	*$195,100*
Route 23	*1*	*183*	*15*	*66,300*	*5,400*	*$232,300*	*185*	*67,100*	*$37,500*	*$194,800*
Route 24	*1*	*214*	*13*	*77,500*	*4,700*	*$232,100*	*144*	*52,000*	*$29,000*	*$203,100*
Route 25	*1*	*12*	*2*	*2,500*	*300*	*$11,100*	*39*	*7,100*	*$6,300*	*$4,800*
Subtotal	***4***	***624***	***43***	***223,900***	***15,100***	***$707,700***	***550***	***191,800***	***$109,900***	***$597,800***
Service Elements										
Pulse Point										
Route 1a & 1b	*1*	*191*	*13*	*69,200*	*4,700*	*$219,500*	*128*	*46,300*	*$25,600*	*$193,900*
Route 2a & 2b	*1*	*174*	*15*	*63,000*	*5,400*	*$227,300*	*128*	*46,300*	*$25,600*	*$201,700*
Route 3a & 3b	*1*	*151*	*13*	*54,600*	*4,700*	*$197,500*	*128*	*46,300*	*$25,600*	*$171,900*
Route 25	*1*	*12*	*2*	*2,200*	*300*	*$10,700*	*39*	*7,100*	*$6,300*	*$4,400*
Total	***4***	*528*	*43*	*189,000*	*15,100*	*$655,000*	*403*	*146,000*	*$83,100*	*$571,900*
Fixed Route with On-Call Stops										
Route 21: No change	*1*	*192*	*13*	*69,500*	*4,700*	*$220,000*	*181*	*65,600*	*$36,100*	*$183,900*
Route 23: 7.2 miles plus deviations	*1*	*125*	*15*	*45,400*	*5,400*	*$200,700*	*168*	*60,800*	*$33,400*	*$167,300*
Route 24: 14 miles plus deviations	*1*	*192*	*13*	*69,500*	*4,700*	*$220,000*	*127*	*46,100*	*$25,400*	*$194,600*
Route 25	*1*	*12*	*2*	*2,200*	*300*	*$10,700*	*39*	*7,100*	*$6,300*	*$4,400*
Total	***4***	*522*	*43*	*186,600*	*15,100*	*$651,400*	*496*	*179,600*	*$99,200*	*$552,200*
Route Deviation with On-call Stops										
Route 23: With On-Call	*1*	*125*	*15*	*45,400*	*5,400*	*$200,700*	*168*	*60,800*	*$33,600*	*$167,100*
Route 23 Two-Route Plan / Option A										
Route 23 East	*1*	*99*	*8*	*35,800*	*2,700*	*$120,200*	*102*	*36,800*	*$20,300*	*$99,900*
Route 23 West	*1*	*98*	*8*	*35,300*	*2,700*	*$119,400*	*102*	*36,800*	*$20,300*	*$99,100*
Total	***2***	*197*	*15*	*71,100*	*5,400*	*$239,500*	*203*	*73,600*	*$40,700*	$199,000
Route 23 Two-Route Plan / Option B										
Route 23 East	*1*	*116*	*8*	*42,100*	*2,700*	*$129,700*	*108*	*39,200*	*$21,700*	*$108,000*
Route 23 West	*1*	*103*	*8*	*37,200*	*2,700*	*$122,300*	*108*	*39,200*	*$21,700*	*$100,600*
Total	***2***	*219*	*15*	*79,300*	*5,400*	*$251,900*	*217*	*78,400*	*$43,300*	$208,600
Route 24 Realignment										
Eliminate Strother, Dinosaur Caves	*-1*	*-85*	*0*	*-30,900*	*0*	*-$46,700*	*-6*	*-2,200*	*-$1,200*	*($45,500)*
Extend Route to Oceano Lagoon, High School	*1*	*57*	*0*	*20,600*	*0*	*$31,100*	*20*	*7,200*	*$4,000*	*$27,100*
Total	***0***	*-29*	*0*	*-10,300*	*0*	*-$15,600*	*14*	*5,000*	*$2,800*	($18,400)

Note 1: Vehicles needed during peak times.

Note 2: Operating cost is based on $24.47 per hour variable cost (primarily salaries and benefits), plus $1.15 per mile fuel and maintenance cost (based on fuel and maintenance costs in 2009-10). Does not include fixed costs.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

analysis which considered the increased local travel time. Based on this, it is estimated ridership would be reduced to 146,600 passenger-trips per year, a reduction of approximately 46,000 passenger-trips (or 24 percent) from existing ridership. Overall per-passenger subsidy (excluding Route 25) would increase to $3.48 compared with the current figure of $2.74. Overall, this evaluation indicates that the current general service plan (with Routes 21 and 24 generally operating both directions of a large loop route, and Route 23 connecting at Ramona Gardens) is a better route plan to serve the SCAT area than a pulse point system. This is a result of the elongated shape of the SCAT service area, the concentration of land uses along the US 101 corridor, and the fact that the Route 10 transfer point is not centrally located to the service area.

Fixed-Route with On-Call Stops

While SCAT currently operates traditional fixed-route service, an alternative type of transit service to consider is a flexible fixed-route service with on-call stops. Under this alternative, existing routes would be reduced in length to eliminate scheduled service at some of the more outlying stops, which would then only be served when requested by passengers, A good source of information regarding this form of service is *Report 140: A Guide for Planning and Operating Flexible Public Transportation (TCRP Report 140)* published by the Transportation Research Board through the Transit Cooperative Research Program. This report evaluates existing flexible transportation programs and provides a means of evaluating the most likely scenarios where such services will succeed. Services are evaluated for rural (population under 50,000), small urban (50,000 to 200,000) and large urban and suburban areas. The Five Cities area has a population approaching 50,000, and due to the density of the area is most suitably evaluated as small urban.

According to *TCRP Report 140*, agencies operating fixed-route service in small urban areas with productivity rates of fewer than 15 passengers per hour can consider flexible fixed-route service for the entire transit system, and such systems can support productivity rates up to 15 passenger-trips per hour. In 2008-09, SCAT averaged 13.1 passenger-trips per hour of service. Therefore, SCAT is currently within a size and productivity where flexible fixed-route service could work. However, if SCAT wishes to grow beyond 15 passenger-trips per hour, switching to a flexible fixed-route would not be desirable. Another factor to consider is trip purpose. If passenger-trips are largely work or school commutes, the agency is less likely to be in a position to successfully operate route deviation throughout the day. According to the onboard survey results, approximately 60 percent of SCAT trips were work or school trips. One more consideration is that flex routes work best when approximately half of the run time is scheduled for the route and the other half is scheduled for deviations.

The factors outlined above indicate flexible fixed-route service is not right for SCAT services as a whole, though it may be appropriate for portions of the service. The existing SCAT routes each have outlying destinations that may have low demand or demand that peaks only several times per day. Serving these stops on an on-call basis while reducing the length of the basic routes could increase route efficiency. Under this alternative, each of the routes would be shortened, with some of the outlying stops served on-demand. Passengers would request a deviation for a drop-off at the on-call stop when boarding the bus, or they would call in to request a deviation an hour before the start of each run at Ramona Gardens. “Standing requests” could also be made for recurring trips (such as to serve bell times at the High School).

This concept would only be successful if on-call stops were requested on a limited basis. A brief evaluation of each route identifies the best potential for implementing on-demand stops.

- Route 21 could potentially be shortened by ending the route at Dinosaur Caves instead of Spyglass Road, which, along with Pismo Beach City Hall, would become an on-demand stop. However, the boarding and alighting survey data showed passengers boarded or alighted in this segment of the route on seven of the twelve runs surveyed, indicating that this location would not work as an on-call stop because a deviation would be requested on more than half the runs. There are no other practical stops to serve on-demand, so Route 21 is not changed under this alternative.

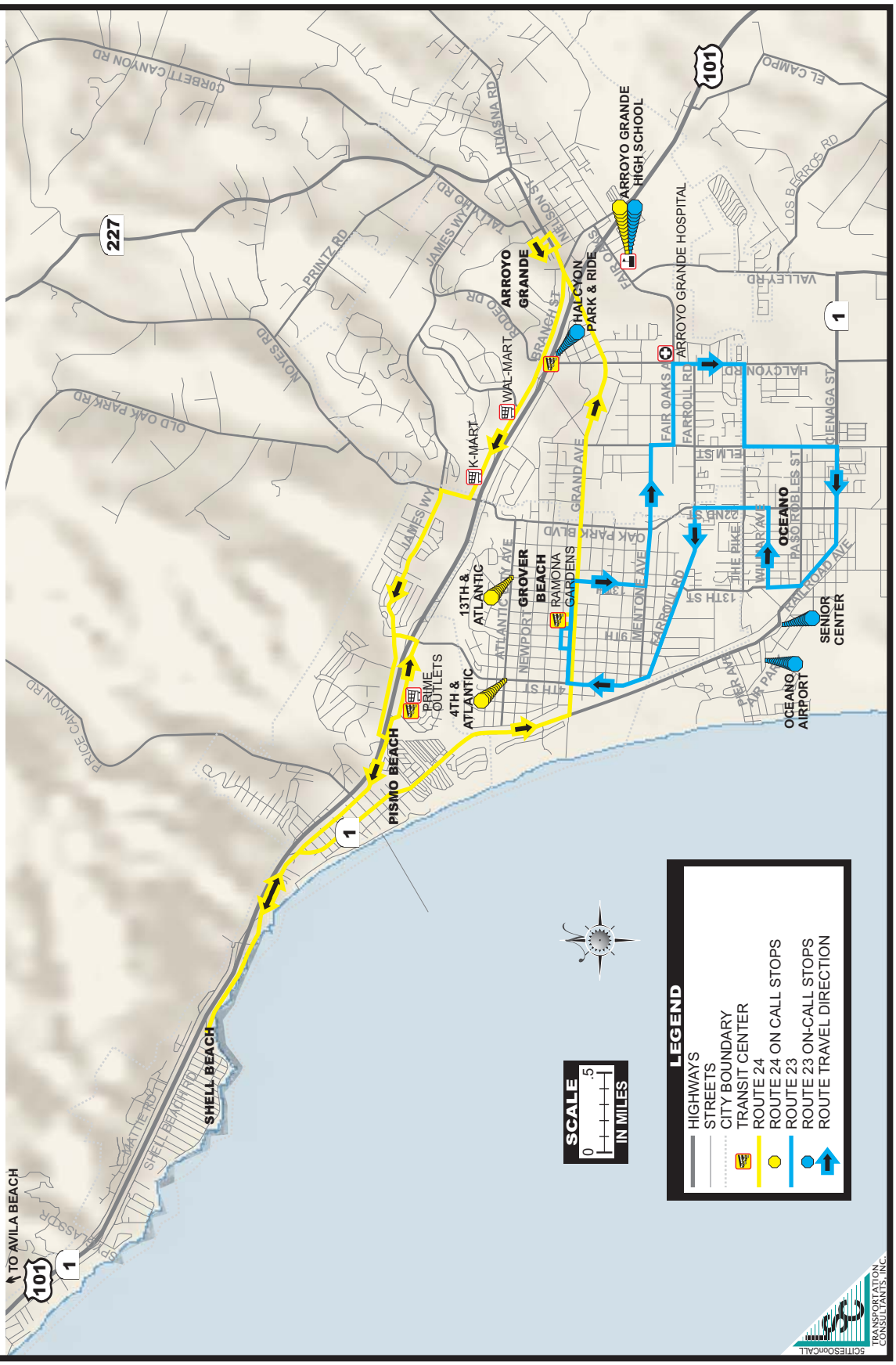
- Route 23 could be shortened to 7.2 miles in length by changing the high school and Halcyon Park and Ride stops to on-call stops, as well as the Oceano Senior Center and Oceano airport. These stops have specific times when there is demand, such as high school bell times or senior congregate meals, and serving them on-demand could improve overall efficiency. Passenger-trip demand at the high school would be high, but only two to three times per day, making it predictable to serve. The Route 25 tripper in the afternoon would continue to serve the bulk of the high school demand. The fixed portion of the route would take approximately 30 minutes to operate, leaving 20 to 25 minutes for deviations for on-call stops.

- Route 24 could be reduced to 14 miles by discontinuing the portion of the route to Strother Park which would be eliminated from service due to very low demand. In fact, the low demand at Strother indicates other on-call locations would be better served than Strother, such as Arroyo Grande High School or stops along Atlantic City Avenue. While Route 24 could be further shortened by eliminating Dinosaur Caves from the route, instead turning around at Price and Dolliver, the ridership and numerous lodging properties along this segment indicate that it is best served by fixed service. The fixed portion of this route would still take 50 minutes to serve, leaving only five minutes for deviations. Serving Arroyo Grande High School, which is a half mile off of the route, would offer several benefits. In addition to providing students with another option for transportation, the schedule is such that including the High School as an on-demand stop for both Route 23 and 24 would allow a transfer opportunity. This could alleviate the long travel time some passengers experience in trying to get from the Vons to Oceano. However, with the short deviation time, this deviation could cause serious on-time performance issues.

The potential shortened routes and on-call stops for Routes 23 and 24 are shown in Figure 26, with Route 21 remaining unchanged. The hours of service would remain unchanged, though mileage would be reduced by approximately 30 percent on Route 23 and 10 percent on Route 24 reflecting the shorter route length when on-call requests are not made. As shown in Table 24, route costs would decrease by approximately $55,800 per year. However, increased operating cost for this alternative would be associated with the need for additional dispatching resources. The dispatch transactions would be fairly simple: drivers would be provided with a list of stops to serve each hour when they arrive at Ramona Gardens. Drivers would check text or voice messages for the information. Still, the increased volume of calls would potentially require 20 hours per week of additional staff time or an estimated $20,000 to $24,000 annually.

FIGURE 26

SCAT Fixed-Routes with On-Call Alternative



This alternative would have several impacts on ridership:

- Passengers wishing to board at on-call stops would be required to make requests at least an hour in advance of actual service, which would be an inconvenience and a potential barrier to use. Applying a reduction in ridership of 10 percent to the estimated annual ridership at the on-call stops indicates a ridership impact of 1,000 fewer passenger-trips per year.

- At the same time, new areas would be served along Atlantic City Avenue, which would add an estimated 1,100 passenger-trips per year.

- Passengers traveling between stops on the fixed-route portion would be provided with shorter in-vehicle travel times. This would benefit those passengers with both origins and destinations along an individual route, though passengers needing to transfer to another route would get to Ramona Gardens quicker and have to wait longer for their transfer. An elasticity analysis of the various routes, factored by the proportion of ridership along those portions remaining on the fixed schedule indicates that this factor would increase overall ridership by 8,200 passenger-trips per year.

- A final key factor is that serving the on-call stops would substantially decrease the on-time reliability of the service. For instance, on some runs of Route 23 no on call stops would be served while other runs could have two or three on call requests would increase running time by 10 to 15 minutes. This reduction in reliability and the corresponding need for long waits at a bus stop would reduce ridership by an estimated 20 percent, or 23,800 fewer passenger-trips per year.

Overall, ridership under this alternative is estimated to drop by 12,100 passenger-trips per year, or approximately 6 percent.

Fixed-Route with On-call: Route 23 Only

The analysis of the fixed-route service with on-call stops for Routes 23 and 24, above, indicates there could be significant on-time performance problems with the tightly scheduled Route 24. Under this alternative, Routes 21 and 24 would remain unchanged, and on-call stops would be implemented for Route 23 only. The annual vehicle miles would be reduced by 20,900. Including $10,100 for 10 additional dispatcher hours per week, operating costs would be $211,600 annually or $21,400 less than the status quo operating cost. Focusing on the ridership factors discussed above for Route 23, ridership for this alternative is estimated to be 60,800, which is over a 30 percent decrease from current ridership.

Route 23: Revise to Provide Two Shorter Routes - Option A

SCAT staff and performance evaluations have indicated that Routes 21 and 24 operate fairly efficiently as a bi-directional pair. More problematic has been the meandering Route 23, which results in long in-vehicle travel times for many passengers to get to their destinations. One possible reconfiguration to potentially improve efficiency and coverage would be to operate Route 23 as two 25 minute routes instead of one 50 minute route, as shown in Figure 27. A

sample schedule is shown in Table 25. Each route would be approximately 6.5 miles in length. Combined, these two routes offer better coverage than the current Route 23, providing new service to the Hillcrest and El Camino area, as well as Oak Park Boulevard north of Grand Avenue. To ensure the High School is served at bell times, the east route would be operated starting at 29 minutes past the hour. This means that passengers on the west route would depart from Ramona Gardens at 54 minutes after the hour with approximately a half hour layover for any transfers to Routes 21 and 24.

TABLE 25: Example Route 23 Two-Route Alternative, Option A Operating Schedule

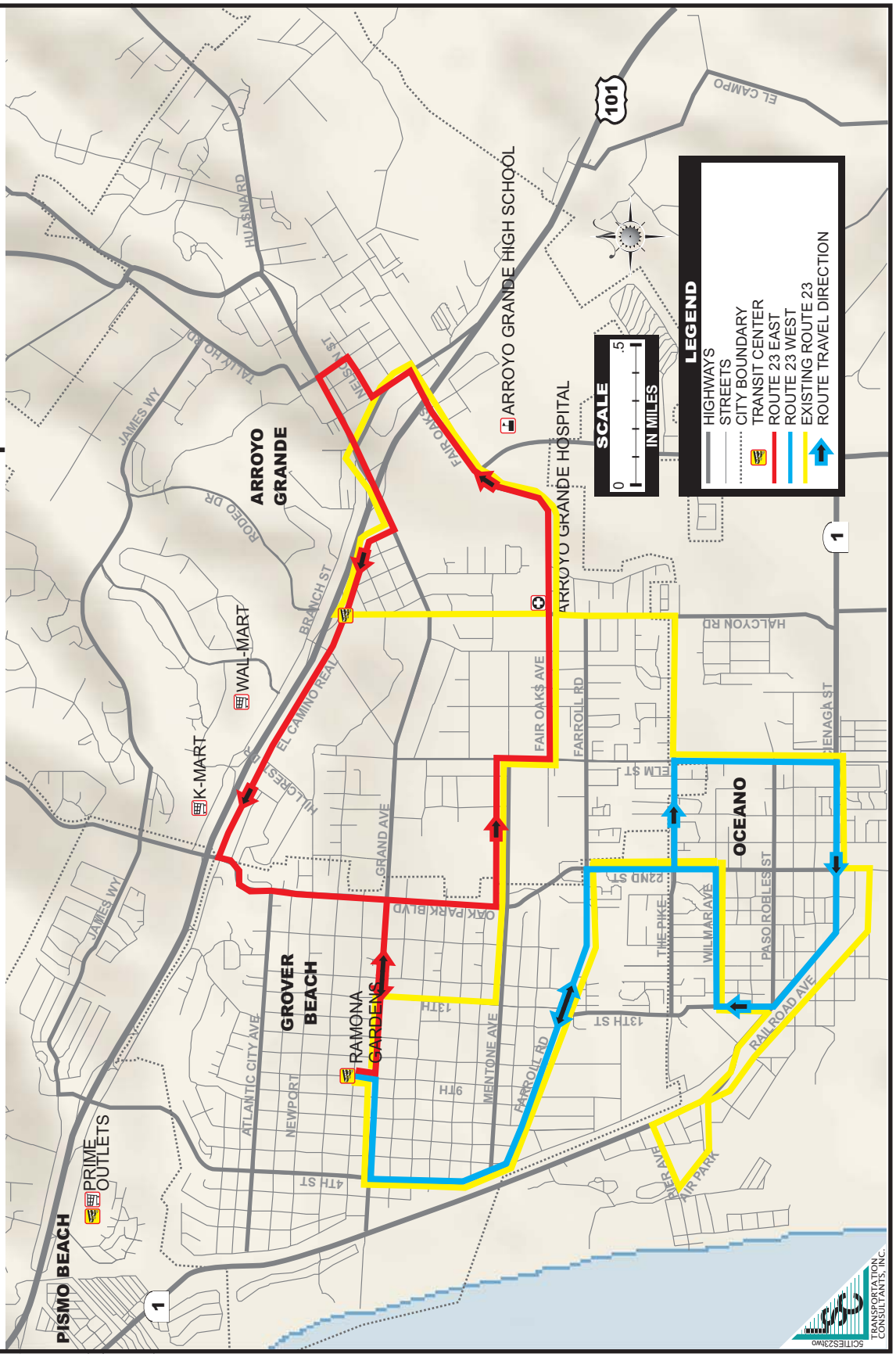
	New Routes	
Stops	23 East	23 West
Schedule: Minutes Past the Hour		
Dep Ramona Gardens	:29	
Arrive Grand Ave & Oak	:33	
Arrive Arroyo Grande High School	:39	
East Branch & West Branch	:45	
Arrive El Camino and Hillcrest	:49	
Arrive Ramona Gardens	:54	
Dep Ramona Gardens		:54
Arrive Farroll & Oak Park		:00
Arrive 26th and Cienaga		:05
Arrive 13th and Wilmar		:12
Arrive Farroll & Oak Park		:15
Arrive Ramona Gardens		:19
Route Length (miles)	6.6	6.5
Operating Speed (mph)	15.8	15.6

To determine if this alternative provides benefits, it is helpful to evaluate travel time between bus stop locations on Route 23 with high ridership. Route 23 bus stops with high passenger activity include Ramona Gardens, Arroyo Grande Hospital, Arroyo Grande High School, 21st and Cienega, and Wilmar and 19th. The average travel times between these major stops is approximately 24 minutes, requiring just a minute from the hospital to the high school, but 54 minutes from the high school to the hospital. Travel time from the hospital or high school to 19th and Wilmar is also fairly long, taking an estimated 38 to 40 minutes. For passengers staying on Route 23, this alternative would likely improve travel times. For passengers transferring to or from Route 21 or 24, this alternative would not be beneficial. However, ridership data indicates that roughly 23 percent of Route 23 passengers transfer to or from other routes, inferring that many existing Route 23 passengers would be provided with a more convenient service under this alternative. It is estimated that ridership would increase by 6,500 passenger-trips per year.

This alternative is estimated to require 71,100 miles and 5,400 hours of service annually, for a marginal operating cost of $239,500, compared to the current cost of $233,000 (a $6,500 increase). The marginal subsidy per new passenger-trip would be only $1.00. Compared with the existing Route 23 subsidy per passenger-trip of $2.30, this indicates that this alternative would

FIGURE 27

Route 23 Two Route Alternative - Option A



increase the overall cost effectiveness of Route 23. This alternative would not require an additional vehicle to operate.

Route 23: Revise to Provide Two Shorter Routes - Option B

An alternative two-route option was devised with a larger east loop and a smaller western loop, as shown in Figure 28. This reconfiguration would result in a 29 minute, 7.75 mile loop and a 25 minute, 6.9 mile loop instead of one 50 minute route. These two routes would serve Oceano and Ramona Gardens twice each hour, optimizing opportunities to move predominantly low income residents and seniors in Oceano to services in Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande, including to the high school, hospital, and shopping. Passengers would have the opportunity to transfer to Routes 21 or 24 at Ramona Gardens at 23 minutes after the hour, or to Route 24 at the High School at 40 minutes after the hour (allowing them to continue to Wal-Mart and Prime Outlets on Route 24).

This alternative is estimated to require 79,300 miles and 5,400 hours of service annually, for a marginal operating cost of $251,900, which is an increase of $19,600 over the status quo due to the costs associated with the increased mileage. The marginal subsidy per new passenger-trip would be $5.05. This alternative would not require an additional vehicle to operate.

Additional Route 23 Consideration: Re-route via Brisco Road

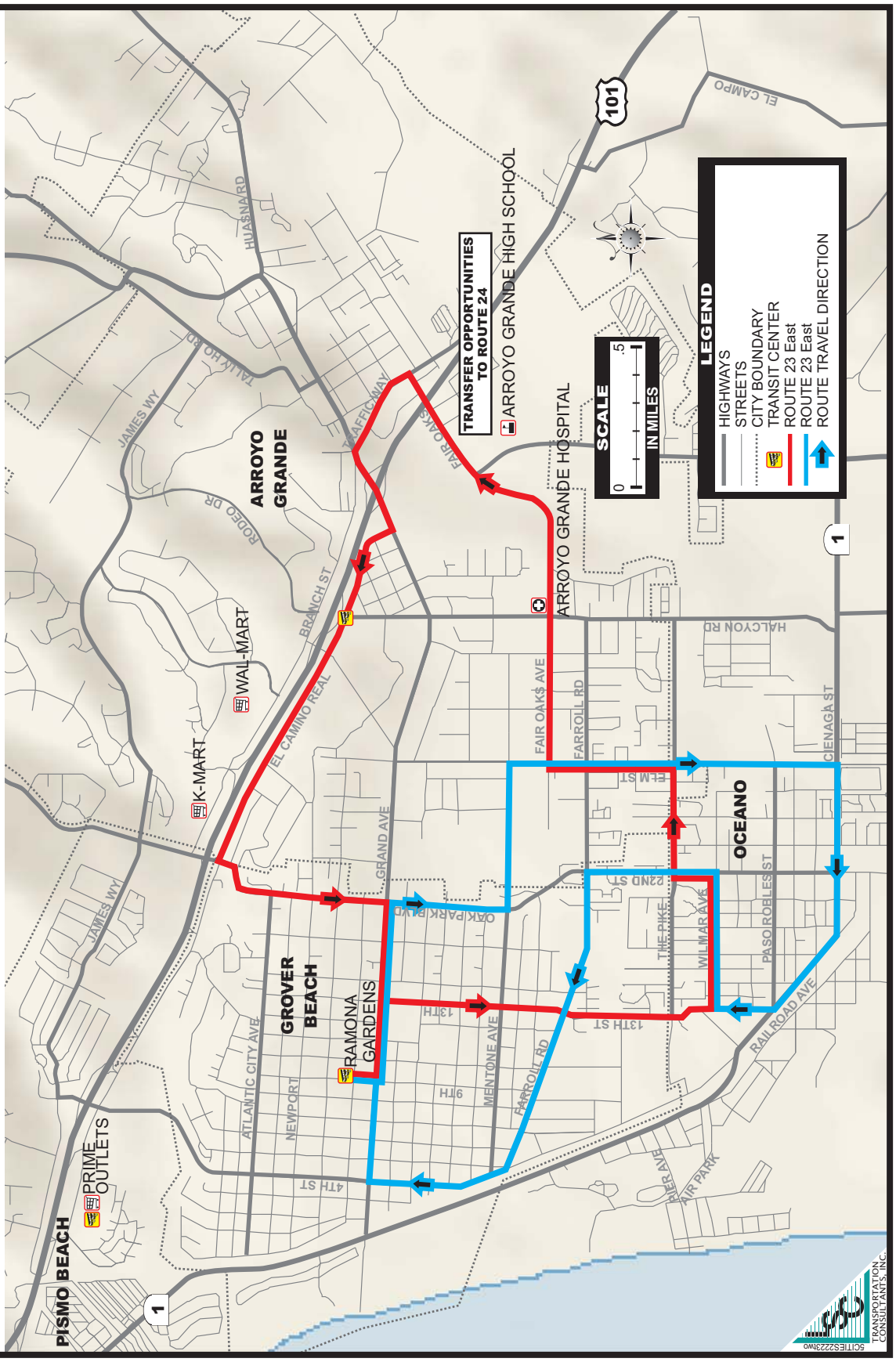
During a presentation of the Draft Final South County Transit Plan, the Consultant was asked to investigate re-routing Route 23 along Brisco Road from El Camino Real after the Halcyon Park and Ride, to potentially provide a direct service from Oceano to the commercial properties along West Branch Street. This was found to be infeasible, as the additional three to six minutes of running time needed to serve this area would not allow Route 23 to be consistently operated on time. A memorandum presenting the analysis of this option,, is presented in Appendix C of this report.

Route 21 & 24: Add Service to Atlantic City Drive

The area north of Ramona Gardens along Atlantic City Drive was identified in the service gaps analysis, presented in Chapter 8, as an area that does not currently receive transit service. This area could be served on-demand with Route 24, as discussed in the on-call alternative presented above, or Route 21 and/or Route 24 could be re-aligned to serve this neighborhood. However, to re-align the route would require a trade-off. On Route 21, this would require moving the service from Grand Avenue to Atlantic City Avenue, which does not make sense given the high ridership and activity along Grand Avenue. On Route 24, the elimination of service to Strother Park would provide approximately 5 additional minutes of running time, but replacing this with service along Atlantic City Avenue would not allow sufficient time to operate the route on schedule. Serving this area with a fixed-route would require additional resources and would yield marginal increased ridership.

FIGURE 28

Route 23 Two-Route Large Loop Alternative - Option B



Route 23: Eliminate Service along Railroad Street

Route 23 currently operates along Railroad Street in Oceano to serve the Oceano Senior Center. The southern portion of the street is bordered by numerous warehouses which receive truckloads of goods throughout the day. The road is in poor condition, and the trucking activity conflicts with bus activity. One potential alternative is to eliminate this segment of Route 23 and serve the Senior Center on-demand only. Instead of traveling on Railroad Street, Route 23 would continue on Front Street to Pershing Drive, go north on Norswing Drive, and return to Highway 1 on Pier Avenue. The Senior Center would be served on-demand only, with requests made directly to the driver or phoned in 15 minutes in advance of the start of the run. Ridership to the Senior Center is relatively low and predictable, as it is primarily to access congregate meals provided at the site.

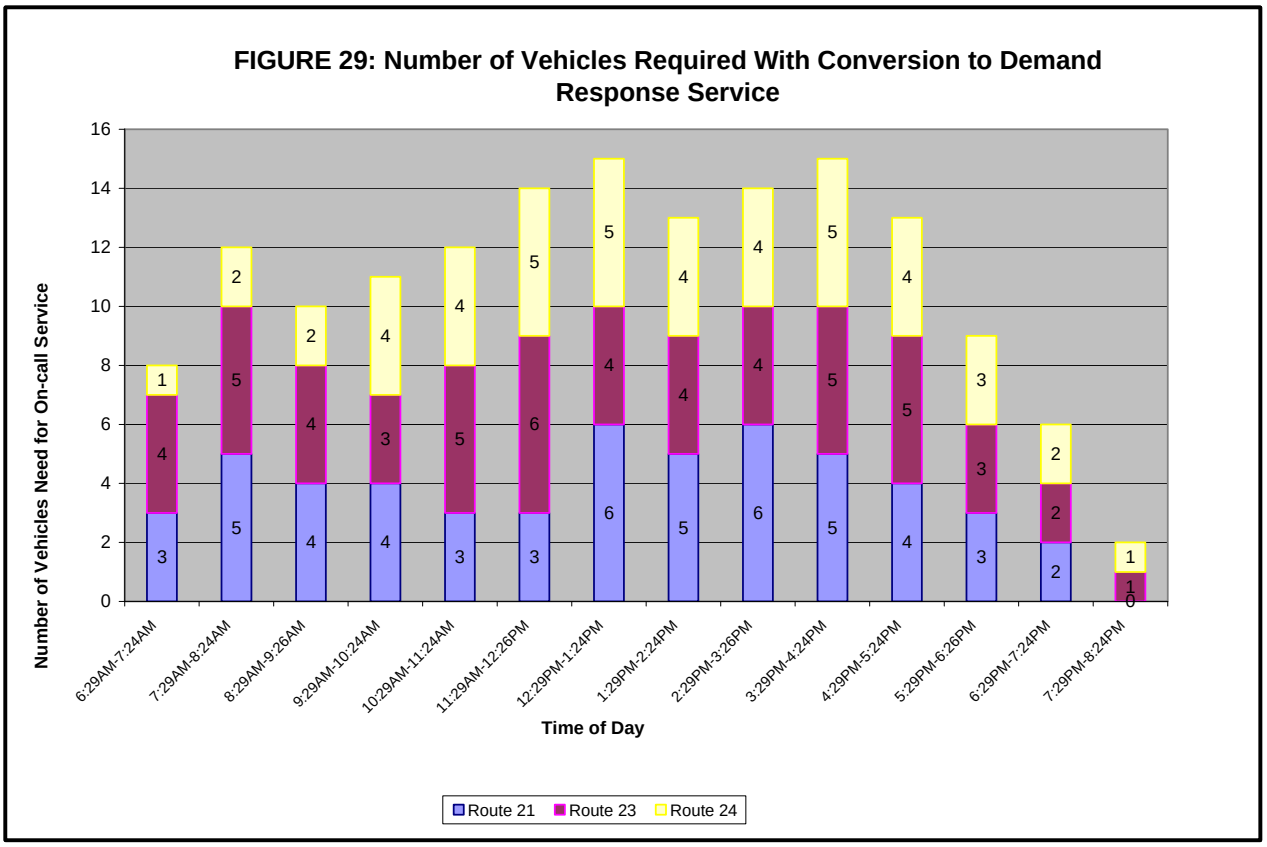
Regular passengers could request a subscription service by which they would be provided a standing reservation. Given typical travel patterns, this would likely require deviations to the site only a few times per day on a few days per week. This would not change the hours or miles of operations, and the operating cost would be essentially the same. Ridership would not likely change as most who attend the Senior Center meals plan their trips in advance and would prefer the benefit of a standing reservation, though other passengers would benefit from a reduction in out-of-direction travel This alternative is primarily a matter of convenience and comfort with no quantitative impacts.

Route 24: Eliminate Strother and Dinosaur Caves, Extend to Oceano Lagoon and Arroyo Grande High School

As mentioned previously, there is very little ridership on the segment of Route 24 from Arroyo Grande Village to Strother Park. Furthermore, there is limited ridership on Route 24 between Pismo Beach and Dinosaur Caves Park. Eliminating Strother Park and Dinosaur Caves would reduce the route by 5.9 miles. The reduction of these poor performing route segments would allow more productive service to be added to Oceano Lagoon and Arroyo Grande High School, for a net reduction in the route of 2.4 miles. These changes would reduce the annual mileage by 10,300, saving $15,600. Furthermore, this alternative would provide opportunities to transfer to Route 23 at Arroyo Grande High School under the Route 23 two-route Option B alternative. The ridership is estimated to increase by 5,000 passenger trips per year, adding $2,800 in fare revenue.

Conversion to Demand-Response Service for Routes 21, 23, and 24

During public outreach, the question was raised as to whether SCAT service could be provided effectively and more efficiently by providing demand-response service instead of the current fixed-route services. A basic rule of thumb is that a maximum of five passenger-trips can be served by one demand-response vehicle each hour. Figure 29 shows the number of vehicles that would be required to replace each route on an hourly basis given the current ridership by hour. As shown, the service would require just two vehicles for the last run of the day, but as many as 13 to 15 vehicles between 11:30 AM and 5:30 PM. Furthermore, the required number of vehicles



(and drivers) changes each hour, which would likely require one or more drivers to be on "stand-by" for some part of the day. This alternative would also require a dispatching system. A total of 154 vehicle-hours would need to be operated daily – more than 3 times the vehicle-hours required to operate the current fixed-route service. In short, the capital requirements and operating requirements would far exceed current requirements.

Demand-Responsive Connector: Route 23

A variation of the demand response alternative presented above could be to convert only Route 23 to a Demand Response Connector. Instead of operating a fixed-route, a demand-response system would be implemented for all transit needs south of Grand Avenue, with hourly connections to Routes 21 and 24 at Ramona Gardens at 29 minutes after the hour. Again considering Figure 29, this would require as few as 1 or 2 vehicles at the end of the day, but as many as 6 for just the hour from 11:29 AM to 12:29 PM. In most hours, four or five vehicles and drivers would be needed. Compared with the existing approximately 15 vehicle-hours of service required for the fixed-route Route 23, a demand-response service would require a total of 55 daily vehicle-hours of service. Given the operating and cost increases that would occur, this alternative is not practical.

Decrease Bus Stop Spacing

In the transit industry, the standard for bus stop spacing in urbanized areas is every two blocks, and in suburban to rural areas, it is a quarter mile. This has been found to be the best "tradeoff" between the conveniences of a short walk distance to the nearest stop versus the inconvenience of increased travel times for passengers already on the bus. The SCAT routes currently average a half mile between stops. Based on this spacing and as identified in the "Quarter-Mile Service Area by Bus Stops" graphic in Chapter 8, there are several locations where additional stops warrant consideration to provide better service coverage. Potential route segments for additional stops include the following:

Route 21

- **Pismo Mobile Home Park to Dolliver at Pomeroy** is 0.54 miles between stops: a stop in Pismo Beach along westbound Dolliver within a block of Park Avenue would serve the south end of Pismo Beach, which has retail shops, lodging, and restaurants.

- **Dolliver at Pomeroy to Price at Dolliver** is 0.55 miles: a stop along westbound Dolliver within a block of Wadsworth would also serve the retail shops and restaurants in this area of Pismo Beach.

- **Price and Harbor View to Price and Stimpson** is 0.59 miles: a stop is needed along eastbound Price within a block of Main Street. This would serve lodging, restaurants, and a small grocery store.

- There are three stops along westbound Grand Avenue between Elm and 10th, averaging 0.33 miles between stops. A fourth stop could be added to decrease spacing to 0.25 miles, such as at:

  - Grand, East of Courtland Drive
  - Grand at Oak Park
  - Grand at 13th (existing)
  - Grand at 11th

  This change would provide better access to the many retail shops, restaurants, and businesses along Grand Avenue.

Route 23

- **Long Branch & S. 12th Street to Mentone at 16th** is 0.52 miles: a stop is needed along southbound 13th Street within a block of Mentone. This would serve a small health clinic on the corner of 13th and Mentone, as well as apartments nearby, and a gym and grocery a block away.

- **S. Elm at Fair Oaks to Fair Oaks at Halcyon** is 0.58 miles: a stop is needed along eastbound Fair Oaks within a block of Pecan to better serve this residential neighborhood.

- **Halcyon and E. Grand to Halcyon and Sandalwood** is 0.60 miles: a stop is needed on southbound Halcyon within a block of Dodson. Many health services are located on both sides of the street in the same block as the hospital between Dodson and Fair Oaks.

Route 24

- **E. Grand at Alder to E. Branch at W. Branch** is 0.69 miles: a stop is needed along eastbound E. Grand Avenue within a block of Alpine. This area has shops and restaurants and is nearby to residential neighborhoods.

- **Price and Hinds to Price and Dolliver** is 0.58 miles: a stop is needed along westbound Prince within a block of Wadsworth. This would serve the popular Splash Café and other local eateries.

- **Price and Dolliver to Dolliver and Hinds** is 0.61 miles: a stop is needed along westbound Dolliver within a block of Wadsworth to serve the many restaurants, lodging, and retail shops.

These potential stops are shown in Figure 30. Overall, these new stops would generate a modest increase in ridership. However, adding these stops would increase route running time by approximately 2 to 3 minutes. A review of the current running times indicates that this would impact the layover time needed to adequately provide driver breaks, particularly on Route 24. However, should Strother Park be eliminated from the route, these additional stops could sufficiently be served under the current schedule.

Reschedule Routes to Better Reflect Actual Travel Time

Surveys of on-time performance found approximately 15 percent of all departures left bus stops early, and 3 percent were late. While the problem of early departures is primarily a training and scheduling issue, it is important to mention that a policy of never leaving a stop early should be conveyed to all drivers. Furthermore, some of the time checks should be adjusted to more realistically reflect the running time of each route. In particular, early departures were most frequently recorded at the following stops:

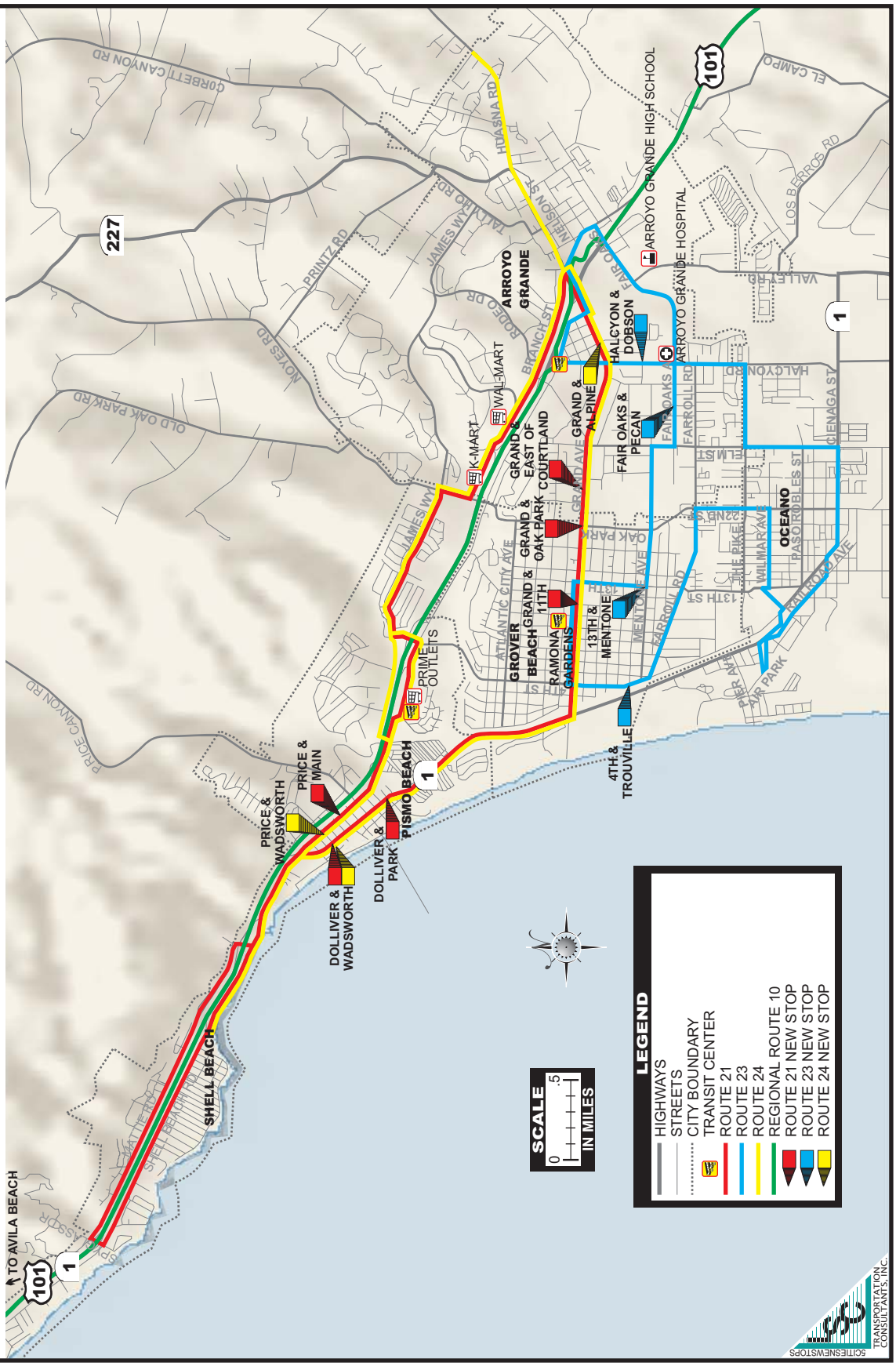
Route 21:
- Price at Shelter Cove
- Shell Beach at Spy Glass Village
- West Branch and Oak Park (Kmart)

Route 23
- East Branch and El Camino
- Highway 1 at 25th Street

Route 24
- East Oak at Grand Park
- Shell Beach at Dinosaur Caves
- Price Street at Shelter Cove

FIGURE 30

Potential New Stops in 5 Cities Area



Schedule times could be adjusted based on additional trial runs, to reduce the potential to operate ahead of schedule during periods of light traffic and boarding delays.

Interlining of Routes 21, 23 and 24

At present, each of the SCAT Routes 21, 23 and 24 are interlined: the driver changes the route number each time he/she arrives at Ramona Gardens, and departs on a different route that the one served on the inbound trip. "Interlining" is typically done where there is a strong pattern of ridership between two routes, in order to minimize the number of persons that need to transfer between individual buses. For instance, if there were a strong pattern of persons living along Route 23 that use SCAT services to commute to Pismo Beach, interlining Routes 23 and 21 in the AM period and interlining Route 23 and 24 in the PM period could make the overall system more convenient for passengers. The onboard surveys of SCAT passengers, however, indicate that the level of transfers between routes is relatively low: of all Route 23 passengers, only roughly 8 percent transfer to/from Route 23 and 12 percent transfer to/from Route 24. This equates to approximately 40 passengers per day that must transfer to/from Route 23 at Ramona Gardens. Considering the much greater number of passengers that stay on board Route 21 and 24 buses at Ramona Gardens as well as the potential for confusion among passengers, the current system of interlining, while an advantage to the operating staff, is a disadvantage to passengers.

The advantage to drivers in this case is 1) they do not get as bored with driving, which helps keep them alert and 2) it allows the drivers to get a break, as Route 23 is the only route currently operating with consistent layovers.

Route 21 Bus Stops at Kmart and along West Branch

There are currently three problematic stops served by Route 21 along West Branch, at K-Mart (east of Oak Park Boulevard), at Rodeo Drive, and approximately 200 feet east of Vernon Street. As this Chapter focuses on service alternatives, capital alternatives (such as bus stop and sidewalk improvements) will be discussed in Chapter 10. This discussion therefore focuses on operational strategies that may address shortcomings at these stops:

- At the K-Mart stop, the bus serves a stop at the shelter along the parking bay to the north of West Branch Street, which requires a difficult and time-wasting left turn movement back onto West Branch Street. On the day of the onboard surveys, a total of 4 boardings and alightings occurred on Route 21 at this stop. While one option would be to move the Route 21 stop to the south side of West Branch Street, this would require passengers to cross a busy three-lane street, as well as requiring US 101 right-of-way. The resulting pedestrian volumes would not be sufficient to warrant any advanced crossing protection (such as an activated signal). This alternative therefore is not feasible. One other potential option would be to make this an "on-call" stop, requiring de-boarding passengers to tell the driver their desire to get off the bus at this stop, and requiring boarding passengers to call at least by 54 minutes past the hour for service at 09 past the next hour. This would be some inconvenience to passengers, but would eliminate the need for Route 21 buses to make the left turn onto West Branch roughly 9 times per day when no passenger is served.

- The Rodeo Drive stop is located on the south side of West Branch Street, and both provides very limited space for passengers to wait for the bus as well as for the need for passengers to cross a busy 3-lane roadway. This stop primarily serves the South County Library on the north side of West Branch Street. On the day of the onboard surveys, a total of 4 passengers boarded or de-boarded at this location. It could potentially be relocated to the drop-off area of the library, which has adequate geometrics to allow a turnaround of the bus. This stop would be designated an on-demand stop. This modification would require a southbound left turn movement out of the library onto West Branch Street, though the presence of a center turn lane allows two-stage left turn movements.

- The Vernon Street stop is also along the south side of West Branch Street. While there is a three-way Stop sign control of the Vernon/West Branch intersection, the stop is located approximately 200 feet to the west as there is a guardrail eliminating any shoulder space closer to the intersection. This guardrail also requires passengers either to walk directly adjacent to the travel lane on the south side of West Branch to Vernon Street, or to jaywalk across West Branch Street. One option would be to reroute Route 21 to turn left on Vernon Street, serve a stop just north of West Branch Street, and then proceed onward to turn right on Larchmont Drive and Wesley Avenue to regain westbound Grand Avenue. However, this would add several minutes of travel time to the route (particularly considering the Wesley/Traffic Way/Branch Street signal) and would put the route through a residential neighborhood. Given that on the day of the onboard surveys no passengers were observed to board or deboard at this location, and given that Vernon Street is only roughly 800 feet from the next stop at Traffic Way, another potential option would be to simply eliminate the stop.

AVILA BEACH SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

As a tourist community, Avila Beach faces a different set of circumstances than the Five Cities area. The alternatives outlined in this chapter address the current trolley operations and potential new operations, as well as commuter needs. In addition, this chapter addresses special events transportation alternatives, and service options for Regional RTA Route 10.

Trolley Alternatives

The Avila Trolley is operated on weekends and holidays throughout the year and is geared toward tourists. The trolley operates on 30 minute headways, which it easily maintains from Labor Day until Memorial Day. However, once tourist season begins at the end of May, the trolley is unable to maintain its 30 minute schedule due to heavy traffic. When surveyed, it was found that up to half of the runs were missed due to traffic and congestion, making the schedule meaningless and leading to a high amount of frustration among passengers. As shown in Table 26, the trolley took an average of 39 minutes to operate on the routes that it was able to complete. Therefore, the alternatives below focus on addressing this peak season on-time problem.

It should be noted that maintaining the status quo would not change ridership as approximately 41 percent of trolley passengers are first time users unaware of the problems, and long-time users

TABLE 26: Avila Beach Trolley Actual Surveyed Running Times

	Avila Ocean Park -- Scheduled		Avila Ocean Park -- Actual		Minutes Behind Schedule		Running Time		
	Departure	Arrival	Departure	Arrival	Departure	Arrival	Scheduled	Actual	Difference
May 29	9:10 AM	9:38 AM	9:07 AM	9:50 AM	-3	12	28	43	15
	9:40 AM	10:08 AM	9:52 AM	10:40 AM	12	32	28	48	20
	10:10 AM	10:38 AM	*MISSED RUN*						
	10:40 AM	11:08 AM	10:40 AM	11:26 AM	0	18	28	46	18
	11:10 AM	11:38 AM	11:30 AM	12:02 PM	20	24	28	32	4
	11:40 AM	12:08 PM	12:02 PM	12:42 PM	22	34	28	40	12
	12:10 PM	12:38 PM	*MISSED RUN*						
	12:40 PM	1:08 PM	12:42 PM	1:08 PM	2	0	28	26	-2
	1:10 PM	1:38 PM	*Not Surveyed*						
July 24	1:40 PM	2:08 PM	2:00 PM	2:40 PM	20	32	28	40	12
	2:10 PM	2:38 PM	*MISSED RUN*						
	2:40 PM	3:08 PM	2:40 PM	3:20 PM	0	12	28	40	12
	3:10 PM	3:38 PM	3:20 PM	4:00 PM	10	22	28	40	12
	3:40 PM	4:08 PM	4:02 PM	4:40 PM	22	32	28	38	10
	4:10 PM	4:38 PM	4:41 PM	5:20 PM	31	42	28	39	11
	4:40 PM	5:08 PM	*MISSED RUN*						

are already aware of and tolerate the scheduling difficulties. However, it would be a continuation of subpar service with very poor on-time performance.

Change to an Hourly Schedule from Memorial Day to Labor Day

The most straight-forward solution to the on-time performance problem in the summer would be to have the trolley operate on an hourly schedule, as this is generally the time needed to operate the current route during periods of congestion. By officially changing the schedule, the trolley would maintain better on-time performance and passengers could plan more successful trips using the trolley. Examining the running time during summer operations, it was found that the trolley took an average of 12 minutes to get to Spyglass. Inbound, the running time averaged from 26 to 32 minutes. To balance the problem of "running hot" when there is no congestion, the schedule could be modified such that the trolley would leave Avila Beach at 30 minutes after the hour, arriving at Spyglass at 37 minutes after the hour. The trolley would have a 10 minute layover at Spyglass, providing an opportunity to make up for delays while still making the transfer with Route 21 at 47 minutes after the hour. The trolley would continue to be scheduled for a 21 minute inbound running time, with a 22 minute layover scheduled at Avila Beach. The long layover would sufficiently accommodate late operations due to congestion while providing the most convenient waiting location on occasions when the trolley operated on time. Under all but the worst traffic conditions, this schedule would allow runs in both directions to at least depart on time.

Approximately 40 percent of Trolley ridership is by first-time passengers. These passengers might be slightly less inclined to use the trolley if it was on an hourly instead of half-hourly schedule. On the other hand, the improved on-time performance and reliability of the schedule would be a benefit to the 60 percent of passengers who are repeat passengers. The overall impact would be positive, with an estimated 7,600 passenger-trips annually (300 more than currently) as shown in Table 27. This ridership increase could also potentially grow in the future, as the public's awareness of the improved reliability of the service grows.

TABLE 27: South County Avila and Trolley Service Alternatives

Service Element Options/Details	Peak Vehicles[1]	Total Daily Veh. Serv. Miles	Total Daily Veh. Serv. Hours	Total Annual Veh. Serv. Miles	Total Annual Veh. Serv. Hours	Total Annual Operating Cost[2]	Ridership Impact (One-Way Trips) Daily	Ridership Impact (One-Way Trips) Annual	Annual Farebox Revenue	Annual Subsidy Required
Status Quo (based on Fiscal Year 2009-10)										
Avila Trolley: Summer [3]	*1*	*207.9*	*9*	*6,900*	*300*	*$17,800*	*85*	*2,800*	*$952*	*$16,800*
Avila Trolley: Fall, Winter, Spring [4]	*1*	*207.9*	*9*	*15,200*	*660*	*$39,100*	*62*	*4,500*	*$1,530*	*$37,600*
Avila Trolley Total	*1*	*207.9*	*9*	*22,100*	*960*	*$56,900*	*69*	*7,300*	*$2,493*	*$54,400*
Service Elements										
TROLLEY ALTERNATIVES										
Hourly Service in Summer										
Summer Schedule [3]	*1*	*104.4*	*9*	*3,400*	*300*	*$12,500*	*94*	*3,100*	*$1,100*	*$11,400*
Fall-Winter-Spring Schedule [4]	*1*	*207.9*	*9*	*15,200*	*660*	*$39,100*	*62*	*4,500*	*$1,500*	*$37,600*
Total	*1*	*--*	*--*	*18,600*	*960*	*$51,600*	*72*	*7,600*	*$2,600*	*$49,000*
Hourly Service in Summer: Extend to Pismo Beach										
Summer Schedule [3]	*1*	*157.86*	*9*	*5,200*	*300*	*$15,200*	*113*	*3,700*	*$1,300*	*$13,900*
Fall-Winter-Spring Schedule [4]	*1*	*207.9*	*9*	*15,200*	*660*	*$39,100*	*62*	*4,500*	*$1,500*	*$37,600*
Total	*1*	*--*	*--*	*20,400*	*960*	*$54,300*	*77*	*8,200*	*$2,800*	*$51,500*
Half-Hourly Service with Two Trolleys in Summer						($2,600)				
Summer Schedule [3]	*2*	*207.9*	*18*	*13,700*	*590*	*$35,100*	*148*	*4,900*	*$1,700*	*$33,400*
Fall-Winter-Spring Schedule [4]	*1*	*207.9*	*10*	*15,200*	*730*	*$40,800*	*62*	*4,500*	*$1,500*	*$39,300*
Total	*1*	*--*	*--*	*28,900*	*1,320*	*$76,000*	*89*	*9,400*	*$3,200*	*$72,700*
Seasonally adjusted Trolley Service										
1/2 hr 2-Trolley Summer Schedule	*2*	*207.9*	*18*	*6,900*	*590*	*$24,900*	*148*	*4,900*	*$1,700*	*$23,200*
1/2 hr 1-Trolley Reduced Off-season hrs 10 AM-4 PM	*1*	*161.7*	*7*	*11,800*	*510*	*$30,300*	*45*	*3,300*	*$1,100*	*$29,200*
Total		*--*	*--*	*18,700*	*1,100*	*$55,200*	*77*	*8,200*	*$2,800*	*$52,400*
Shell Beach/Pismo Beach Summer Trolley [3]	*1*	*119.3*	*9*	*3,900*	*300*	*$13,200*	*64*	*2,100*	*$700*	*$12,500*
Spyglass to Ramona Gardens Summer Trolley [3]	*1*	*96.8*	*9*	*3,200*	*300*	*$12,200*	*85*	*2,800*	*$1,000*	*$11,200*
AVILA COMMUTER ALTERNATIVE										
Daily Service to Avila, Year-round		*80.0*	*6*	*29,000*	*2,170*	*$96,900*	*24*	*8,800*	*$8,800*	*$88,100*

Note 1: Vehicles needed during peak times.
costs.
Note 3: Summer is from Memorial Day in May to Labor Day in September. Holidays include Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day.
Note 4: Fall-Winter-Spring is from Labor Day in September to Memorial Day in May.
Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

The cost of operating the trolley on an hourly basis in summer would be nearly the same as the current plan. If the trolley were able to operate on a half-hourly schedule on weekends throughout the year, it would operate 24,490 miles of service. In actuality, only 14,070 miles were operated in 2009-10. Operating hourly during the peak season and half-hourly during the remainder of the year would equate to operating 20,760 miles and 1,060 hours of service annually, at a marginal operating cost of $57,170 ($5,760 less than the current service plan).

Change to an Hourly Schedule Memorial Day to Labor Day and Extend to Pismo Beach

A variance on the above alternative would be to take the extra time in the schedule to extend the Trolley route to Wadsworth in Pismo Beach, as shown in Figure 31. This would add 6.3 miles to the route, making the one hour route 17.5 miles. Turning around at Bay Street brings tourists close enough to restaurants and shops without getting into the heaviest tourist traffic which occurs a few blocks south of Bay Street. Adding the popular Pismo Beach area to the Avila Trolley would be expected to increase the ridership by an estimated 20 percent, adding 900 passenger trips per summer of service. The cost of this alternative would decrease over the status quo due to the decreased miles (a longer route, but only once per hour instead of twice per hour), decreasing the annual cost by $2,700.

Add Second Trolley for Half-Hour Service Memorial Day to Labor Day

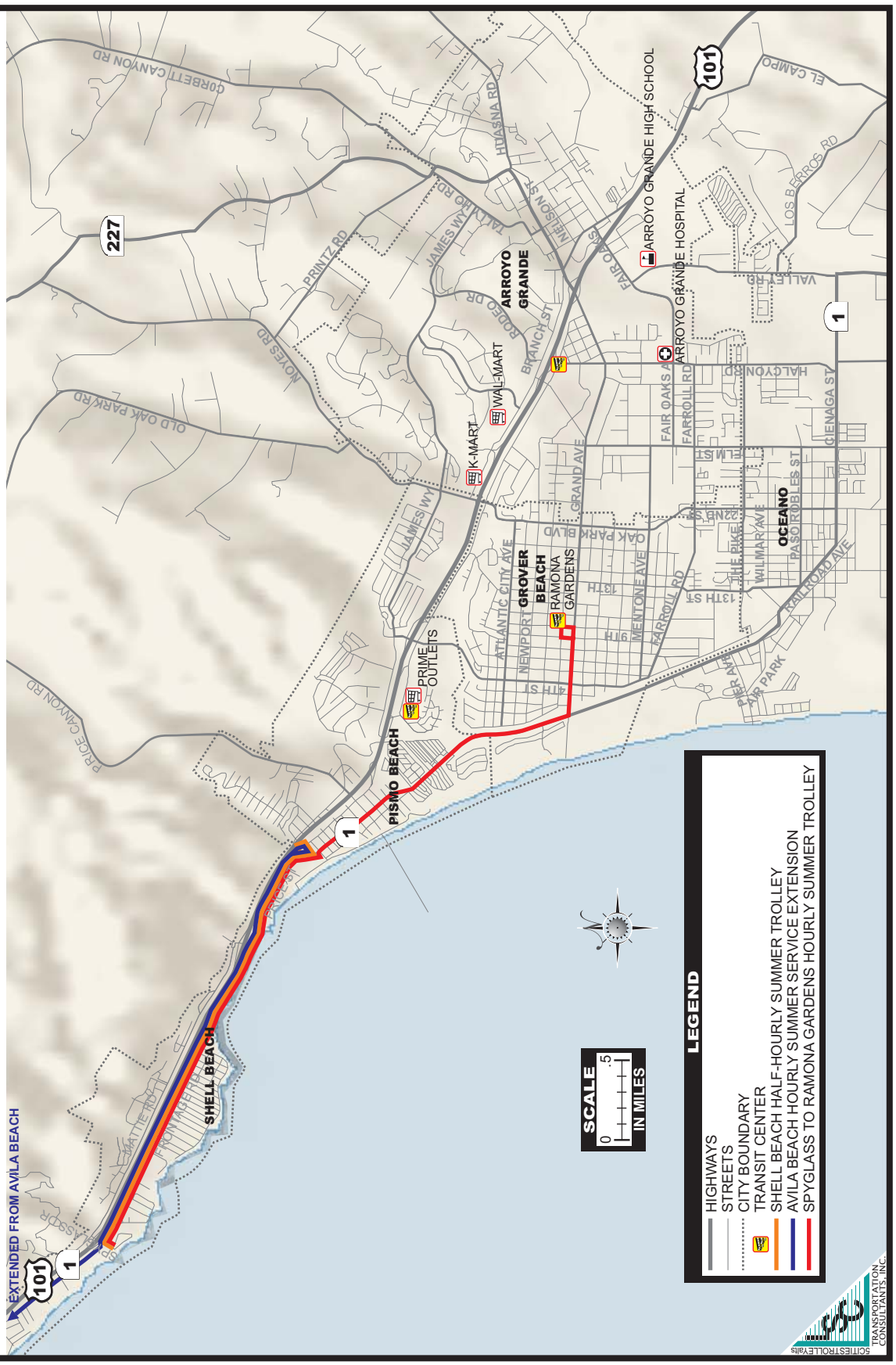
Another option for better reliability in summer would be to add a second trolley. Each would operate on an hourly schedule, thereby providing half-hourly service. One trolley would follow the schedule outlined in the previous alternative, with a second trolley departing Avila Beach at the top of the hour. This alternative would require 2,120 hours and 24,480 miles of service to operate annually, for a marginal operating cost of $88,900.

The increased frequency (or, as passengers might perceive it, the improved on-time performance) would generate increased ridership, with an estimated 9,500 passenger-trips per year instead of the current 7,308 (see Table 27). However, the cost per passenger-trip would increase from $8.61 to $9.36. This alternative would require the purchase of an additional trolley.

Increased Summer Frequency and Decreased Off-Season Frequency

To maintain the current operating cost but more effectively serve the higher demand for service in summer, the Avila Trolley could be operated with two trolleys for half-hourly service in summer, and reduced off-season service by shortening the operating day or eliminating service in months with low ridership. June, July and August have the highest ridership, and December and February have the lowest ridership. Doubling high season service would add 330 hours of service annually, which would require 330 hours to be reduced in other months. This could be done by eliminating service for 33 days in the off-season (December through February), or by shortening operating days to serve only from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM from September through May. Either choice would have a similar impact on ridership, with a loss of approximately 1,200 passenger-trips in the off-season. This would be made up for by the gain of an estimated 1,500 passenger-trips in the summer, for a net gain of approximately 300 passenger-trips annually (see Table 27).

FIGURE 31
Trolley Alternatives



Under this alternative, half-hourly service would be operated from Memorial Day to Labor Day on weekends and holidays using two trolleys, and half hourly service would be maintained on weekends and holidays from September through May using one trolley and operating from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. This would require a total of 17,740 miles of service and 1,098 hours of service annually. The overall ridership impact would be positive: 8,300 passenger-trips annually, compared to the current 7,308. However, this alternative would also require the purchase of an additional trolley.

Shorten the Route

Another option to attempt to maintain better on-time performance would be to shorten the route. However, the most popular origin/destinations are the end points of the route at Avila Beach and at Spyglass Road, where transfers are available to Route 21. Removing Port St. Luis would shorten the route by 0.4 miles, but there is enough ridership to this location that it would not be beneficial to cut service for the small route reduction. There is very little demand at PG&E, but there is some demand at the Bob Jones bike trail. However, the half mile segment of the route from Bob Jones to PG&E is scheduled to take just one minute, so there is no great savings by cutting this portion, and PG&E offers a safe and easy turn-around location. In brief, there are no ideal segments of the route which can be eliminated to shorten the route.

Summer Beach Trolley: Half-Hourly from Spyglass to Pismo Beach

As a complement to the Avila Trolley and to better serve the summer tourists, a second trolley could be operated from Memorial Day to Labor Day on weekends and holidays between Spyglass Road and Pismo Beach, as shown in Figure 31. The route would operate from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM and connect with the existing Avila Trolley at Shell Beach Road and Spyglass Road either hourly or half-hourly, depending on which service alternatives are implemented. The Shell Beach Summer Trolley would be a 6.6 mile loop and could be operated twice per hour on 30-minute headways. This would serve the busy tourist and beach area from Spyglass Road into Pismo Beach. The trolley route would go eastbound on Dolliver, turn left on Hinds, and return on Price, avoiding the more congested areas around Stimpson Avenue and Ocean View Avenue.

This alternative would require 4,380 miles and 330 hours of service annually, at a marginal operating cost of $14,700. Ridership on the Avila Trolley is approximately 86 passenger-trips per day in summer. Considering the lack of parking in Avila Beach, it is estimated that the Shell Beach Trolley would generate approximately three quarters as much ridership, or 2,400 passenger-trips each summer (see Table 27). The subsidy per passenger-trip is estimated to be $6.66, compared to $6.55 on the Avila Trolley in summer. This service would only be recommended if outside funding could be found for subsidy.

Summer Beach Trolley: Hourly Service from Spyglass to Grover Beach

In this option, a summer trolley would operate from Spyglass Road in Shell Beach to Pismo Beach, then to Grover Beach via Highway One and Grand Avenue ending at Ramona Gardens, as shown in Figure 31. This one hour route would serve the busiest tourists areas in summer. This alternative would require 300 hours and 3,600 miles of service to operate annually, for a

marginal operating cost of $12,800. Ridership is estimated to be similar to the Avila Trolley at 2,800 passenger trips per year. This alternative would require the purchase of an additional trolley, as well as private funding for operations.

COMMUTE ALTERNATIVES

Commute Service to Avila Beach

Avila Beach is a tourist oriented community with much of the labor force commuting in from nearby communities, especially the Five Cities area. While very little employment and commuting data was available for this small community, approximately 30 individuals signed a petition expressing a desire for commute service to Avila Beach daily, and a follow-up survey of employees was conducted by SLOGOG to gain insight into commuting needs. Many of the petitioners are employees of the Avila Lighthouse Suites, with approximately 30 employees. The San Luis Bay Inn is another large employer, with approximately 45 employees. Other employers include restaurants and small shops. The survey effort, conducted in September, 2010, surveyed 44 individual employees. Major findings include the following:

- Half of the respondents came from the Five Cities (50 percent among Arroyo Grande, Pismo and Shell Beach, Oceano and Grover Beach combined); the largest share resided in Grover Beach. Nearly a quarter came from Santa Maria and 18 percent from Nipomo.
- Only 28 workers answered whether they have a car available; among the respondents close to 79 percent did not have a car available for their commute.
- Most workers (75 percent) started their shift between 7 and 9 AM and ended their shift between 4 and 6 PM (66 percent).
- 64 percent of respondents said their schedule changes on a weekly basis, and employees worked all days of the week in almost even proportions.
- 61 percent of respondents get a ride to work.

This survey, though only a sampling of employees, illustrates both the need for service (61 percent are depending on others for a ride and 79 percent of those who responded did not have a vehicle available), while also indicating the difficulty of serving a work force that comes from such dispersed locations with varying schedules. Only half of the employees in the survey come from the Five Cities area, with a sizable number coming from Nipomo and Santa Maria. Furthermore, tourist-based employment centers tend to have shifts that change frequently, and often the end time of a shift is dependent on when the work is completed rather than a set time. In addition, employment fluctuates seasonally, with higher employment in summer.

To address commute needs with transit, a feasible operating plan would be to operate a route originating at Ramona Gardens and traveling to the Prime Outlets (allowing transfers to Route 10) and along Price Street/Shell Beach Road/Avila Beach Drive to Avila Beach twice per day (two morning runs and two afternoon runs) timed to serve employees starting work shifts at 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM, and ending work shifts at 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM. Operated seven days per

week over the year, this service would consist of 28,960 miles and 2,170 hours of service at a marginal operating cost of $96,800 annually. Based on an estimated average of 70 employees commuting either from the Five Cities area or transferring from Route 10 daily (each employee works four to five days per week) and applying a mode split of 25 percent, it can be estimated that this service would generate a ridership of 8,800 passenger-trips annually. This equates to a cost per passenger of $11.00. Assuming $1.00 was collected per passenger-trip (compared to the average of $0.55 collected on SCAT), the subsidy would still be $10.00 per passenger-trip. This alternative is therefore not cost effective.

Employee Vanpools

A better tailored and more affordable option for transportation for Avila Beach would be to participate in a vanpool program. SLOCOG oversees the well-established "Rideshare" program which helps facilitate carpool and vanpool formation. To form a vanpool, one person volunteers to be the primary driver/coordinator of the van. In exchange for taking on that responsibility, the driver sometimes does not pay towards the cost of the vanpool or pays a reduced cost. Riders usually meet at a designated pick-up location such as a Park and Ride lot or transit transfer point. Some vans have more than one pick-up point, some don't. The same applies to drop-off points at the destination. For example, a vanpool might serve only Avila Lighthouse employees, or it might serve Avila Lighthouse, San Luis Bay Resort, and others.

The riders share a fee that covers the cost of the vanpool lease and gas. The leasing price depends on the number of miles the vanpool travels each month, how many people are in the van and the vanpool vendor. All maintenance, license, and insurance costs are included in the lease. Vanpool Information can be found at www.rideshare.org. The typical vanpool monthly fee is $1,600 to operate 4 to 5 days a week, $1,700 for 6 days a week and $1,800 for 7 days a week. With fifteen people sharing the ride, this equates to about $100 per person per month, which includes gas. The cost varies depending on the vendor, the size of the vanpool, and the mileage. More details of the Rideshare program for vanpools are described in Appendix D, *Transportation Choices Program: Vanpool Q&A*.

SPECIAL EVENT TRANSPORTATION

During the public outreach process, a number of members of the community expressed a desire for special events transportation. In addition to reducing traffic congestion, such services, particularly if operated with a visually pleasing trolley, can create a favorable impression of the transit system. Several suggestions for providing service included providing transportation for the Strawberry Festival and the Mid-State Fair.

In general, operating transit services to special events can be a positive addition to a transit program. In addition to helping to reduce traffic and parking problems at event sites, this type of service provides an opportunity to serve area residents that otherwise do not make use of the transit program. As a result, the overall public image of the transit service can be enhanced.

In recent years, however, providing such service among services using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds (such as SCAT) has been made more difficult by new regulations

regarding "charter" service. While there are some narrow exemptions, in general service provided to special events on an irregular basis is considered to be a charter service. Before operating charter service, any recipient of FTA grant funding is required to determine if a private transportation operator is willing to provide the service. The public transit agency must solicit bids from private transportation operators through a web-based charter operations process. If a private operator on the web-based registered list (not necessarily a local operator) is willing to perform the service, the public transit agency who receives FTA funding cannot provide that charter service. If there is no response from a registered charter operator, the public transit agency can provide the service, although the public transit operator must maintain detailed records of the service. If an FTA grantee does not follow these procedures, fines can be levied or FTA funds denied.

RTA and SCAT's current policy is to encourage special transportation service requests from non-profit organizations. RTA and SCAT also consider public requests for special events. All requests for special transportation are decided on a case-by-case basis. Of great importance is that the requested service cannot interfere with the regular provision of service. Some of the past services RTA and SCAT have offered include:

- Five Cities Youth Football League shuttle from AG to Edna Valley Hall
- Special Earth Day shuttles to the Atascadero Zoo
- Special shuttles to the Earth Day Food and Wine Celebration at Santa Margarita Ranch
- Shuttles from Atascadero motels to wine tastings events (such as for Sunset Magazine's Savor the Central Coast event the first weekend of October) San Luis Obispo Home Show at the Madonna Expo Center – shuttle from lower parking to upper event center
- Shuttle Service for the Strawberry Festival in Arroyo Grande

These events promote awareness of RTA and SCAT services and create very positive public-private partnerships, at minimal costs. As is consistent with current RTA and SCAT practice, any future special transportation services would need to fully adhere to Federal requirements regarding charter services.

ROUTE 10

Stop at New Park-and-Ride at Spyglass Road

To improve commute opportunities between San Luis Obispo and Avila Beach or Shell Beach, a park and ride stop could be placed at Spyglass Road and Shell Beach Road. Two possible locations include the Cliff Restaurant overflow parking, or US 101 Frontage Road. RTA Route 10 could stop in the southbound direction in the morning at approximately 6:52 and 7:52 AM and in the northbound direction at approximately 5:05 PM and 6:05 PM to provide an opportunity for passengers to commute to Shell Beach or to meet a carpool/vanpool traveling to Avila Beach.

This alternative would require that bus pullouts be constructed at the lower end of the two on-ramps, along with sidewalks for passengers to be able to get over to Spyglass Village on Shell Beach Road to catch either the trolley or Route 21.

For this alternative to be successful, smooth connections to SCAT services would be necessary. As the Avila Trolley operates on weekends only and does not start service until 9:10 AM, this would not provide a connection for regular daily commuters. A benefit would be achieved if passengers could deboard the RTA Route 10 bus and walk to their destination or catch the SCAT Route 21 to a location in Shell Beach or Pismo Beach without having to travel to the Pismo Outlets first. However, to create this connection would require a change in the departure time of Route 21 at the Pismo Outlets. This would then eliminate the opportunity for RTA Route 10 passengers to connect at the Prime Outlets, a trade-off which is not beneficial. Furthermore, when on-time performance checks were conducted on RTA Route 10, it was found that 20 percent of runs operated late, which would make transfers even more difficult and indicates additional running time is not available for additional stops. Therefore, this alternative is not compatible with current services and not recommended in this plan.

COMPARISON OF SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

Below is a comparison of cost and performance measures for the alternatives presented in this chapter, as well as a preliminary recommendations as to which alternatives should be dismissed and which should be reviewed by the public and decision-makers in order to select the preferred alternatives. A comparison of the service alternatives is presented in Table 28. Note that relatively minor alternatives (such as provision of new individual bus stops) are not reflected in this summary. As a basis of comparison, the table presents the status quo operating characteristics of the existing services. The operating characteristics of each of the alternatives are shown, with the assumption that each would be individually implemented in addition to or as a replacement of the current services, as appropriate. Performance measures of the alternatives can then be evaluated in terms of how the change in service would impact the transit program. A review of this summary indicates the following:

- The impact of the various alternatives on **annual ridership** ranges from an increase of 58,800 passenger-trips (for weekday 30-minute headway service) to a decrease of 52,900 passenger-trips (for the pulse point alternative).

- The impact on **annual subsidy requirements** ranges from an increase of $366,200 (for weekday 30-minute headway service) to a decrease of $45,600 (for the on-call stop alternative for Routes 23 and 24).

A good measure of the efficiency of the various alternatives is the change in ridership per change in vehicle-hour of service. Note that this performance measure is not applicable for alternatives (such as the Route 23 two-route alternative) that do not result in a change in vehicle-hours of service. While a larger value is typically a better result, in this case there is one large value (for the pulse point alternative) that is a result of a substantial reduction in ridership associated with a most reduction in vehicle-hours of service. Setting this aside, the “best” alternative is the additional Spyglass to Ramona Gardens Summer Trolley (9.3), followed by the 30-minute peak hour SCAT service (9.1), then the Avila commuter service (7.3) and the Spyglass-Pismo Beach Trolley (7.0). A relatively poor alternative by this measure is the provision of two trolleys on the existing Avila Trolley route, with an increase of only 1.8 passenger-trips per additional vehicle-hour of service.

TABLE 28: Comparison of South County Service Alternatives

Alternative/Option	Annual Vehicle Miles	Annual Vehicle Hours	Change in Annual Vehicle Hours	Annual Ridership	Change in Annual Ridership	Marginal Annual Subsidy	Change in Marginal Annual Subsidy	Ridership per Vehicle Service Hour	Net Subsidy per Passenger-Trip	Performance Measures: Change in Psgr-Trips per Change in Vehicle Hours	Performance Measures: Change in Subsidy Per New Psgr-Trip
Status Quo											
Route 21	77,600	4,700	--	65,600	--	$195,100	--	14.0	$2.97	--	--
Route 23	66,300	5,400	--	67,100	--	$194,800	--	12.4	$2.90	--	--
Route 24	77,500	4,700	--	52,000	--	$203,100	--	11.1	$3.91	--	--
Tripper	2,500	300	--	7,100	--	$4,800	--	23.7	$0.68	--	--
SCAT Fixed Route Total	**223,900**	**15,100**	**--**	**191,800**	**--**	**$597,800**	**--**	**12.7**	**$3.12**	--	--
Avila Trolley	**22,100**	**960**	**--**	**7,300**	**--**	**$54,400**	**--**	**7.6**	**$7.45**	--	--
Span of Service Alternatives for Fixed Routes											
SCAT Rt 23 to Route 10 Northbound Express	224,800	15,100	0	192,100	300	$599,000	$1,200	12.7	$3.12	--	$4.00
Reinstate Service to 9:30 PM Weekdays	244,100	16,400	1,300	199,800	8,000	$655,800	$58,000	12.2	$3.28	6.2	$7.25
30 Minute Headways Weekdays	352,100	23,500	8,400	250,600	58,800	$964,000	$366,200	10.7	$3.85	7.0	$6.23
30 Minute Peak Hour Service	270,500	18,100	3,000	219,000	27,200	$741,700	$143,900	12.1	$3.39	9.1	$5.29
SCAT Route Alternatives											
Pulse Point	189,000	15,100	-300	146,000	-52,900	$571,900	($30,700)	9.7	$3.92	176.3	$0.58
Fixed Route with On-Call Stops Rt 23 & 24	186,600	15,100	0	179,600	-12,200	$552,200	($45,600)	11.9	$3.07	--	$3.74
Fixed Route with On-Call Stops Rt 23 Only	203,000	15,100	0	185,500	-6,300	$570,100	($27,700)	12.3	$3.07	--	$4.40
Route 23 Two-Route Plan / Option A	228,700	15,100	0	198,300	6,500	$602,000	$4,200	13.1	$3.04	--	$0.65
Route 23 Two-Route Plan / Option B	236,900	15,100	0	203,100	11,300	$654,900	$57,100	13.5	$3.22	--	$5.05
Route 24 Realignment	213,600	15,100	0	196,800	5,000	$585,000	($12,800)	13.0	$2.97	--	($2.56)
Trolley Alternatives											
Hourly Service in Summer	18,600	960	0	7,600	300	$49,000	($5,400)	7.9	$6.45	--	($18.00)
Hourly Service in Summer: Extend to Pismo Beach	20,400	960	0	8,200	8,200	$51,500	($2,900)	8.5	$6.28	--	($0.35)
Half-Hourly Service with Two Trolleys in Summer	28,900	1,320	360	9,400	2,100	$72,700	$18,300	7.1	$7.73	5.8	$8.71
Seasonally adjusted Trolley	18,700	1,100	1,100	8,200	900	$52,400	($2,000)	7.5	$6.39	0.8	($2.22)
Shell Beach/Pismo Beach Summer Trolley	3,900	300	300	2,100	2,100	$12,500	$12,500	7.0	$5.95	7.0	$5.95
Spyglass to Ramona Gardens Summer Trolley	3,200	300	300	2,800	2,800	$11,200	$11,200	9.3	$4.00	9.3	$4.00
Avila Commuter Alternatives											
Daily Service to Avila, Year-round	29,000	2,170	1,210	8,800	8,800	$88,100	$88,100	4.1	$10.01	7.3	$10.01

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

The performance indicator which best represents the financial effectiveness of an alternative is the change in subsidy per new passenger-trip. This is calculated by dividing the change in the annual subsidy by the change in the annual ridership. As with the previous performance measure, it is important to consider those alternatives that reduce costs and/or ridership separately from those that increase these values:

- The "best" value for this performance measure results when a reduction in subsidy requirements is associated with an increase in ridership. Several alternatives fall into this category including the hourly summer Avila Trolley alternative which would save $19.33 in subsidy for every additional passenger-trip served; the seasonally adjusted trolley ($9.11 saved per additional trip); the Route 24 realignment ($2.56 saved per additional passenger trip); and extending the Avila Trolley to Pismo Beach ($0.37 saved).

- For those alternatives that increase both ridership and subsidy needs, a low value (reflecting relatively small increase in subsidy needs per new passenger served) is better than a larger value. By this measure the Route 23 Two-Route Alternative stands out as the best alternative, requiring only $0.65 in additional subsidy for every new passenger served. Other alternatives range from $4.00 (for Route 23 connections to the Route 10 early AM northbound express) up to $10.09 for the Avila Commuter Service.

- Finally, for those alternatives that decrease both ridership and subsidy, a larger value is "better" in that it represents a greater cost savings for each passenger-trip eliminated. The conversion of Route 23 to a shorter fixed-route with on-call stops is the best of these alternatives ($4.40), while the pulse point alternative is the worst ($0.58).

SERVICE PLAN

Based on the evaluation of alternatives, vetting through public outreach efforts, and discussions with RTA and SCAT staff, a number of alternatives are recommended for implementation for the South County Transit Plan:

Route Alternatives

- Revise Route 23 to the Two-Route Service Option B, with transfers at the high school.
- Revise Route 24 to eliminate service to Strother Park and Dinosaur Caves, and add service to Oceano Lagoon.
- Minor rescheduling to reduce early departures

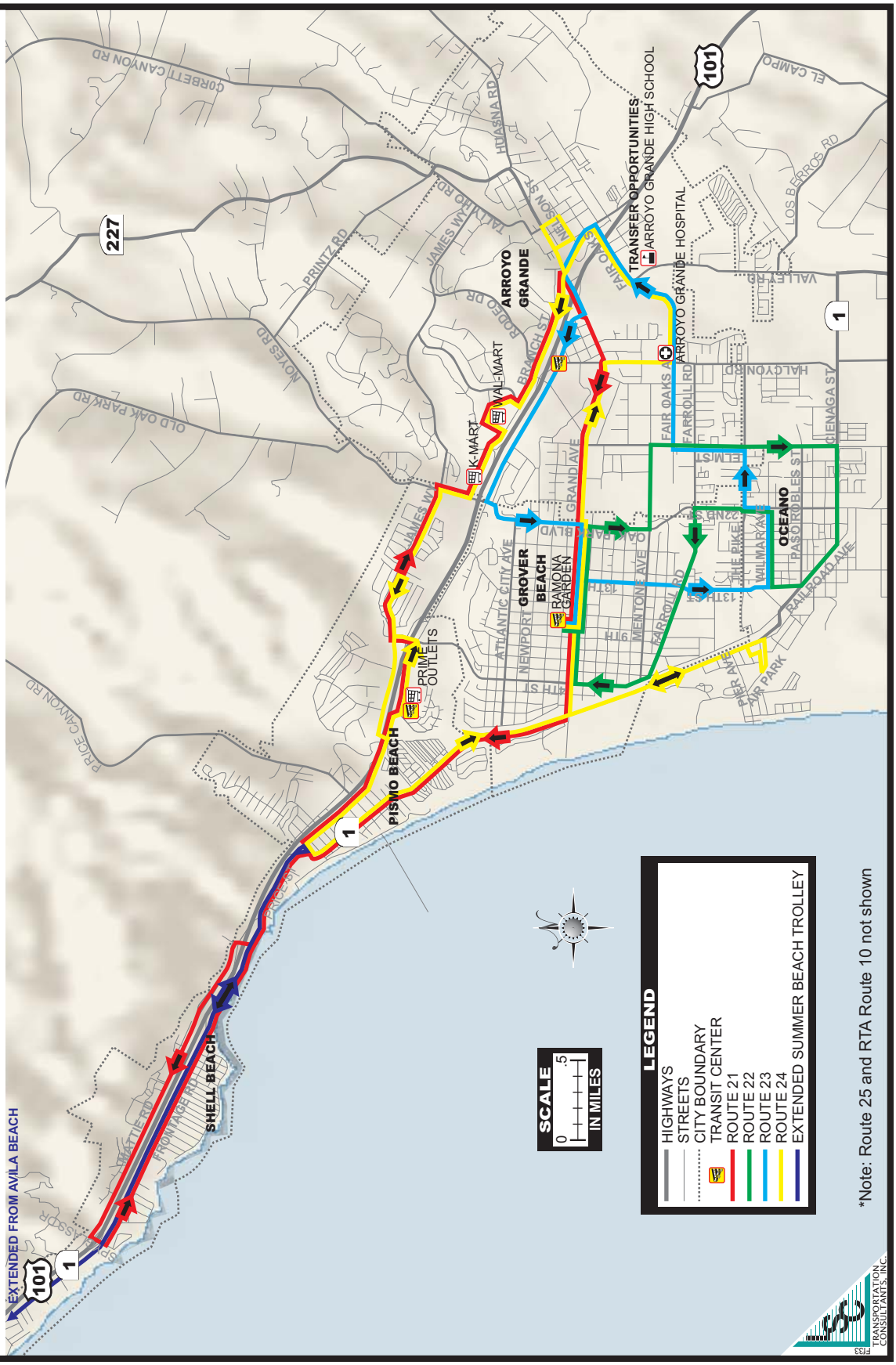
Avila Beach/Trolley Alternatives

- Operate Avila Trolley on an hourly schedule in busy traffic periods (summer) and extend to Pismo Beach, turning around at Bay Street.
- Rideshare vanpool service to Avila Beach.

These recommended service options are depicted in Figure 32, and are part of the Financial Plan presented in Chapter 15.

FIGURE 32

Recommended South County Service Plan



Chapter 10
Capital Improvement Program

Provision of public transit services requires a variety of capital items, including vehicles, vehicle maintenance facilities, passenger amenities such as shelters and benches, and office equipment. This document presents an evaluation of capital alternatives with consideration to replacement of existing equipment as it ages, as well as new capital purchases to enhance the transit program.

VEHICLE PLAN

SCAT currently has a fleet of five fixed route buses and a trolley replica vehicle, with an additional trolley recently added to the fleet. All of the vehicles except the new trolley are due to be replaced within the timeframe of this Transit Plan based on industry standards of age and mileage. Furthermore, the 2006 hybrid bus has proven to be unreliable, and is only used as a back-up. These factors indicate that SCAT will need to undertake an aggressive vehicle replacement plan in the upcoming years.

Bus Fleet Expansion / Replacement

Replacement Vehicles

As shown in Table 29, all of the SCAT vehicles are due for replacement within the timeframe of this South County Transit Plan. The trolley is due for replacement in 2012. A trolley was purchased as a spare and was added to the fleet in December 2010. Because of the delay in its delivery, the existing trolley has aged and will be used as the spare instead. It will be a benefit to have a trolley as a back-up rather than a route bus, as currently occurs. Passengers riding the trolley often do so in part for the charm of the vehicle and expect to see a trolley in instances where the normal trolley vehicle is taken out of service for a road call or accident.

TABLE 29: SCAT Vehicle Replacement Needs

Vehicle #	Type	Year	Make	Model	Year Expected to Retire	Seating	Bike Racks
209	Trolley	2002	Supreme	Trolley	**2012**	29	3
201	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	**2013**	35	3
202	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	**2013**	35	3
203	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	**2013**	35	3
204	Bus	2003	Gillig	Phantom	**2013**	35	3
208 [1]	Bus	2006	CCW	Hybrid	**2016**	35	3
Added to Fleet December 2010							
--	Trolley	2010		Trolley	**2020**	29	3

Note 1: While the hybrid bus is not due to retire until 2016, repeated and extensive maintenance problems indicate it should be retired as soon as possible.

Source: SCAT, 2010

Four of the fixed route buses are due for replacement in 2013. Instead of buying all four at once, it is recommended that two are purchased in 2012-13 and two are purchased in 2013-14. Spreading out the purchase of large capital items helps with budgeting and provides an overall more reliable fleet. The fifth bus, a hybrid, is due for replacement in 2016. However, the hybrid should be retired and replaced as soon as possible because of the problematic ongoing mechanical issues. A replacement for the hybrid is urgently needed to create an adequate spare ratio. Four buses are needed for peak service, with a fifth vehicle required as a spare.

Additional Vehicles

None of the recommended service alternatives require an additional vehicle, unless more funding is acquired for the Shell Beach summer service. However, SCAT would benefit from purchasing a staff vehicle. Currently, the SCAT Operations Supervisor and Mechanic jointly use a spare Runabout vehicle which is soon to be retired, or they are reimbursed for mileage on their personal vehicles. Having a small, reliable staff vehicle would be more appropriate for SCAT work trips than requiring employees to rely on personal vehicles.

Vehicle Size

SCAT currently uses buses 35 feet in length, which meet the local needs better than the 40-foot buses such as those used in San Luis Obispo for RTA services. The current vehicles generally meet passenger capacity while still allowing maneuverability in some of the smaller roads in Arroyo Grande Village and Pismo Beach, as well as turn-around locations. Drivers have had difficulty when using 40-foot RTA buses. However, should SCAT discontinue serving Strother Park, this would eliminate the limitations in using the 40-foot buses.

In addition to maneuverability, transit vehicle size is a function of the passenger demand. Table 30 presents a summary of the peak passenger loads on each route observed as part of the onboard surveys conducted in May 2010 (see Chapter 4). Monthly ridership data by route was used to adjust this “snapshot” of a single day’s passenger activity to the peak month. In addition, SCAT staff indicates that peak passenger loads vary substantially day-to-day; to account for this, a 25 percent factor was included. As shown, buses have passenger loads exceeding seating capacity (requiring some passenger to stand) on Routes 23 and 25. This occurs when transporting students in the morning and late afternoon. Furthermore, Routes 21 and 24 require a capacity of 21 to 24 seats. These latter figures are reported to be exceeded in the summer when YMCA camp attendees ride the buses. While the current 35-seat capacity buses are definitely needed for Routes 23 and 25, strictly from the standpoint of passenger loads, smaller buses (such as 25-seat capacity) could be operated on Routes 21 and 24. There are, however, other factors that must be considered in assessing whether smaller buses for operation of Routes 21 and 24 would be an overall benefit:

- Routes 21, 23 and 24 currently operate in an interline fashion (with each bus operating multiple routes successively). If only one of the three buses used on these routes had adequate capacity for the morning school peak, options for assigning buses would be limited.

TABLE 30: Maximum Passenger Load

Observed During Onboard Surveys

Run Start Time	Route 21	Route 23	Route 24	Route 25
Existing Seating Capacity	*35*	*35*	*35*	*35*
5:29 AM	--	32	--	--
6:29 AM	5	22	4	--
7:29 AM	6	34	10	--
8:29 AM	13	13	5	--
9:29 AM	10	16	5	--
10:29 AM	11	6	5	--
11:29 AM	8	6	5	--
12:29 PM	10	4	5	--
1:29 PM	12	5	9	--
2:29 PM	8	7	11	--
2:50 PM	--	--	--	43
3:29 PM	6	14	11	--
4:29 PM	5	3	3	--
5:29 PM	6	1	3	--
6:29 PM	6	8	1	--
7:29 PM	--	8	--	--
Maximum	13	34	11	0
Maximum	13	36	11	0
Adjusted for Peak Month	17	41	15	--
With 25% Factor for Peaks	21	51	19	--

Source: LSC Survey in May 2010 and SCAT ridership data.

- Operating smaller buses does not reduce costs substantially. As drivers wages and benefits are a large proportion of overall marginal costs of service, and as these costs do not vary with the size of vehicle, the modest improvement in fuel efficiency of smaller vehicles does not result in any substantial overall cost reduction.

- Increasing the number of vehicle types in the SCAT fleet would increase the cost of maintenance, by requiring additional spare parts inventory and increasing mechanics training on the different vehicles.

- Changes in service plans could result in substantial changes in peak passenger loads. As an example, providing direct service to Arroyo Grande High School via Route 24 could result in a large increase in the peak loads on this route.

In sum, purchasing smaller vehicles for Routes 21 and 24 would be a detriment to the overall SCAT operations, and is therefore not recommended.

Bike Racks

Currently, SCAT buses have front bike racks that hold three bicycles. Onboard survey comments indicated passengers would like to see increased bike rack capacity. To increase capacity would require installing rear bike racks on the buses, as is done on RTA buses. While this increases capacity from 3 positions to 6, it can be a safety risk as the drivers cannot see passengers loading and unloading rear bike racks, and it can be unsafe for passengers to be behind the buses. Still, it has been successful at RTA, and with proper driver training and passenger training, adequately safe conditions can be provided.

Alternative Fuels

The current bus fleet operates using clean diesel technology (with the exception of the hybrid bus, which is seldom used) while the trolleys operate on gasoline. While there are alternative fuel options (such as compressed natural gas) that could be employed in the SCAT fleet, the small size of the transit fleet and the substantial costs associated with alternative fuels makes it cost prohibitive for SCAT on its own to pursue an alternative fuel option. If alternative fuels are implemented on a more regional scale, however, SCAT could be included in a larger program.

PASSENGER AND FACILITY NEEDS

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL)

An Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system is a computer-based vehicle tracking system that uses a specific location technology (typically Global Positioning Satellites (GPS)) and a method of transmitting that real-time location of any receiver-equipped vehicle to a dispatch center. GPS satellites locate the bus, and the location data are then transmitted to the transit center through the communications system. The AVL data can be used on a real-time basis for daily operations or archived for further analysis.

When combined with other technologies or processes, AVL can provide many benefits in the areas of fleet management, systems planning, safety and security, traveler information, fare payment, and data collection. Introduction of an AVL system is often the first step in a more comprehensive Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) implementation.

Some common uses and combinations of AVL technology include the following:

- **Daily Operations:** Combined with Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), AVL can allow Dispatchers to optimize service, which aids in providing transfers between routes. This is particularly important in South County with regards to transfers between SCAT buses, and to/from RTA Route 10. For demand-response services, AVL can allow each vehicle to service more passengers. Transit agencies often realize reductions in nonrevenue miles as well as passenger wait times, and in larger system it can allow a reduction in fleet size. AVL also can be utilized by Transit Signal Priority (TSP) systems through the detection of specific transit vehicles as they approach select intersections.

- **Safety and Security:** AVL data displayed on a GIS map facilitates incident response.

- **Systems Planning and Fleet Management:** AVL data can be used for systems planning and fleet management. When this data are combined with bus stop and facility inventory data, they can be mapped on GIS. These data can also be linked to Automatic Passenger Counters (APC) to gather ridership information by location and time. The data can be used for planning routes, schedules, and facility and fleet requirements.

- **Traveler Information:** When linked to an electronic traveler information infrastructure, an AVL system can provide information on expected arrival times. This information can be provided via the internet (including directly to smart phones) as well as on reader boards at key transit stops.

- **Electronic Fare Payment:** An AVL system can collect fare information by location and trigger electronic fare boxes to accept different payment amounts across fare zones.

A number of rural and small urban transit systems have implemented AVL systems. The extent to which each has incorporated these systems into a system-wide Advanced Public Transportation Systems (APTS) program varies according to the complexity of each transit system. In general, however, AVL is a core technology for larger agencies, especially bus and multimodal agencies, as they can spread the cost of the system over a larger fleet size. Larger agencies also require more complex analytical tools for systems planning and fleet management. While SCAT could benefit from implementing AVL technology, it best makes sense to do so as a partner with RTA.

According to the Federal Transit Administration, the average cost of a baseline AVL system including on-board GPS, vehicle tracking integrated with operations control center dispatching and security systems is $315,000. When combined with other technologies or processes, AVL can deliver increased benefits in the areas of fleet management, systems planning, safety and security, traveler information, fare payment, and data collection. Introduction of an AVL system is often the first step in a more comprehensive APTS implementation.

AVL is an expensive investment. It would not be cost effective for SCAT alone to implement AVL. However, if RTA decides to invest in AVL (which has been a recent consideration), it would be a benefit to SCAT to participate in the purchase and implementation of the program. On-time performance has not been a significant issue for SCAT except on the Trolley service, but SCAT service does rely on timely transfers, which could increase under some of the service alternatives under consideration. Furthermore, if SCAT should choose to include on-call stops in its service plan, these also could benefit from the aid of AVL.

In addition to providing tools to better manage the operations of the transit system, one strong benefit of AVL is the added convenience to passengers. This is particularly true for a system such as SCAT's which relies heavily on transfers to move passengers (and will rely on transfers even more with the additional transfer point to be provided as part of this plan). Specific ways in which AVL can benefit SCAT passengers include the following:

- Using AVL technologies to announce arrival times or expected delays allows passengers to make “real time” decisions about options for their trip.

- The fact that AVL results in more consistent transfer opportunities between buses means that a higher proportion of passenger’s trips can be accomplished without long delays caused by missed transfers.

- Providing passengers with up-to-date information on services reduces the stress associated with delays.

- AVL allows police and medical personnel to more quickly respond to an incident on a bus.

- AVL helps ensure that bus stop announcements are consistently provided, which is a great help to blind passengers.

Overall, passengers are more likely to use transit services if they have better and more instantaneous information about bus arrivals and departures, which results in a growth in ridership.

Mobile Data Terminals

Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) are a form of on-board communication technology between transit drivers and operations staff. Using a text format transmitted via radio/cell phone, dispatch messages, vehicle location, passenger counts, engine performance, mileage, and other information is directly communicated to the transit agency office. MDTs can effectively replace paper manifests and allow for easier and more thorough analysis of route performance. Additionally, MDTs limit frustration and time when radio messages between dispatchers and drivers become inaudible and require repeating.

This form of technology can be particularly efficient when paired with other ITS systems such as electronic fare payment, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) scheduling, automatic passenger counters (APC), and AVL. An MDT/CAD combination allows dispatchers to make optimal changes to itineraries when necessary and to automatically communicate updated information to drivers. Communication systems can also be integrated with AVL systems to provide real-time location data with every communication exchange. This information can be transmitted in voice or text form.

MDTs can also be used to assist with the efficiency of system planning and fleet management. A MDT-AVL system combination can gather data and link the operations data to the transit agency's GIS to be analyzed for long-term planning and service adjustments. This data could include real-time ridership figures generated by another technology (APC) that can be used by for long-range service planning or in the short-term by operations supervisors to add vehicles when demand outpaces the current in-transit capacity. Transit vehicles and their communication systems can be installed with a dedicated channel for emergency response. MDTs can include a pre-programmed emergency message that when integrated with AVL technologies can help

provide location and pertinent information about a distressed vehicle. In addition, a silent alarm or CCTV camera video feed from a transit vehicle or transit facility to the operations or security center can be employed.

According to TCRP Synthesis Report 70 (2007), which documents a survey of transit agencies who employ MDT technologies, 39 percent of transit system respondents use MDTs to monitor on-time performance. The exact cost of an MDT is difficult to determine without going through the procurement process, and the price is very dependent on the number of units ordered the features provided. According to the TCRP survey, MDTs cost on the order of $1,000 to $4,000 per unit. Installation of the MDT units cost roughly $500-$1,000 per unit. Transit agencies reported that annual maintenance is on average $200 per unit. In addition to the initial capital costs, MDT manufacturers may charge monthly or annual fees for technical support. Each driver requires training on the MDT, which can take up to 8 hours per driver. If RTA and SCAT determine to invest in AVL, MDT technology should be a part of the package.

AVL in the SCAT Program

SCAT currently uses AVL technology for bus destination signs and a "Talking Bus" program (which announces stops). This limited AVL application can be expanded when RTA implements more advanced AVL technology on a regional basis. In the meantime, SCAT will need to revise its Talking Bus programming and destination signs for any route changes resulting from this plan. Furthermore, when the Talking Bus program was installed on SCAT vehicles, the PA system was disconnected. For safety purposes and to allow drivers to make specific announcements, the PA system should be modified to provide drivers with a means of making announcements to passengers.

The cost of AVL technology ranges greatly depending on the selected technologies as well as the economy of scale. RTA is in the early stages of investigating implementation of AVL technology for the region and specific costs are not yet known. One aspect of AVL that would be particularly beneficial to the SCAT program would be real-time bus arrival information. As the transit program relies on timed transfers between SCAT buses at Ramona Gardens and to/from RTA Route 10 at Prime Outlets, real-time information can allow dispatchers and drivers to improve the quality and efficiency of the services, as well as allow passengers a better level of comfort and convenience in using the system. Passenger information options that merit consideration include dissemination over the web, over an automated phone system, and via reader boards at key passenger activity centers (such as Ramona Gardens, Prime Outlets and Spyglass Road). When costs are determined, SCAT should contribute to a portion of the RTA integrated AVL technology (based on the relative size of the program in the SCAT service area) and should pay for outfitting each of its vehicles to take advantage of the AVL system. Dispatching and software costs are yet to be determined, but each vehicle will cost an estimated $15,000 to equip with AVL.

It should be emphasized that AVL technologies provide both "behind the scenes" operational improvements and improved conveyance of information to the public. This combination translates to a better product for passengers, resulting in increased service reliability and increased ridership.

Passenger Amenities

The "street furniture" provided by a transit system is a key determinant of the system's attractiveness to passengers, residents, and visitors. SCAT recently cataloged its passenger amenities, which consist of bus stop signs and occasional benches, trash cans, and information kiosks, as well as shelters. Below is a discussion of recommended improvements.

Bus Shelters and Benches

Based on a review of boarding and alighting activity and onsite observations, the following bus stop improvements are needed. Bus shelters are recommended at the following locations:

- Halcyon and Grand (Park and Ride), Arroyo Grande
- East Grand at El Camino Real, Arroyo Grande
- Grand at 16th, Grover Beach
- Elm at Ash, Arroyo Grande
- Cienega (SR 1) at 21st, Oceano
- Dolliver at Pomeroy, Pismo Beach
- Dolliver at Hind, Pismo Beach
- Price/Hinds, Pismo Beach
- Price/Stimpson, Pismo Beach

RTA recently purchased nine shelters and intends to install shelters at the first four locations on this list. However, the shelters may not meet the City design criteria for locations in Pismo Beach. RTA will need to work with the City of Pismo Beach to come to an agreement for placing shelters at these locations.

Bus Stop Signage

Bus stop signs not only identify the location of stops, but are an opportunity to create name-recognition for the transit service. The bus stops signs should be easily visible, easily recognizable, and convey important information at a glance, including the system name and/or logo, and a phone number for additional information.

Figure 33: Existing Bus Stop Signage

The SCAT bus stop signs have the logo for RTA with very small print that says South County Area Transit, and larger letters that say "Bus Stop" as shown in Figure 33. At the bottom of the sign, the SCAT telephone number for information is included. The signs have a white background which easily gets lost in the landscape. Additionally, the bus stop signs are one-

sided, so the stops can only be identified when approaching the stop in the same direction as traffic. This is a particular inconvenience for transit passengers searching for a stop while walking in the opposite direction.

To make the SCAT bus stop signs more visible, they should have a background that is colored rather than white, and the signs should be two-sided. A more recognizable logo should be created specifically for SCAT. The phone number should be a larger font, and the website should also be identified.

SCAT is adding information kiosks to many of its bus stop signs which improves visibility and provides useful information. Nonetheless, the signs should be redesigned for better recognition.

Improved Bus Stop Maintenance

SCAT currently has an employee who is both a bus washer and cleans bus stops, trying to attend to two routes per week. For stops that are damaged, SCAT reports the damage to RTA. RTA in turn dispatches an RTA maintenance staffer or a contractor to handle the repairs. However, during the course of this study, it was found that some bus stops suffered damage from accidents, vandalism, or weathering, yet went without repairs for as long as a year. SCAT recently conducted a survey of all passenger amenities, and is working on stops that need repairs. This inventory should be repeated on a regular basis to insure that passenger amenities are repaired and maintained in a timely manner after accidents, storms or acts of vandalism.

Facility Needs

The SCAT operations and maintenance facility is located at 1198 Farroll Road in Grover Beach, between 11th and 12th Streets. This is a leased space with one maintenance bay, a small administrative space, and a small space for drivers. Buses are washed directly in front of the office door in the parking lot, with a drain installed to capture runoff. The back half of the parking lot where buses are stored is enclosed by a gated chain-link fence. The facility is small and not in good condition, with inadequate parking. The building is shared with several other businesses. However, it is centrally located, and vehicles fuel at a commercial fueling station two blocks from the facility.

In addition to this facility, vehicles are sent to the RTA facility for major maintenance when necessary. The RTA facility has recently been completed with four large maintenance bays and extensive office space, and a small dispatch center.

Table 31 presents an analysis of the requirements for a SCAT operations/maintenance facility, taking into consideration the various existing and planned uses under this Transit Plan. Applying the planning methodology presented in Transit Garage Planning Guidelines: A Review (US Dept. of Transportation, 1987), a site of 0.8 acres would be needed for an adequate operations and maintenance facility for SCAT, as indicated in Table 31. The current SCAT space is on 0.3 acres, with a 2,500 square foot building space consisting of less than 2,000 square feet of maintenance bay and just over 500 square feet of office and staff space. There is approximately 10,000 square feet of asphalt for bus parking, staff parking and bus washing. The remainder of

TABLE 31: SCAT Maintenance Facility Space Requirements

Input Data	
Administrative Employees on Site	1
Total Employees on Site	20
Annual Vehicle Service Miles Maintained On Site	246,000
Number of Staff Cars	1
Number of Vans in Fleet	-
Number of Mini-Buses in Fleet (16-32 psgr)	-
Number of Buses/Trolleys in Fleet	8

Program Element		**Square Feet**	
Operations Building			
Administrative Space		1,000	
Operations Space		900	
Conference/Training Room			
Restrooms			
Locker Room			
Maintenance Area		3,550	
Work Bays			
Parts Storage			
Maintenance Storage			
Parts Cleaning			
Maintenance Offices			
Circulation and Utilities (10 percent)		550	
Total Operations Building Minimum Floor Area		6,000	
Vehicle Storage and Wash Building			
Full-Size Bus Storage		7,200	
Mini-Bus Storage		0	
Van Storage		0	
Service Lane / Wash		3,500	
Total Vehicle Storage and Wash Building Minimum Floor Area		10,700	
Parking and Vehicle Circulation			
Circulation (Depending On Site)		10,000	
Employee Parking		6,000	
Staff Vehicle Parking		300	
Parking for Other Vehicles Maintained on Site		0	
Visitor Parking		1,500	
Subtotal: Pavement		17,800	
Subtotal: Developed Area		*34,500*	
Total Minimum Site Area		34,500	Sq. Ft.
	or	0.8	Acres

Source: Transit Garage Planning Guidelines: A Review, USDOT, 1987.

the site, which is occupied by other businesses, still would not provide adequate space if it became available. The space at this location is clearly inadequate, and a new site is needed.

Providing a new facility is a large undertaking both in terms of planning, finding an adequate location, and acquiring funding. Defining a new facility program is an in-depth process and best carried out by conducting a facility design and site alternatives study. It is recommended that SLOCOG appropriate funds for such a study that would identify a number of options, including: 1) a more detailed analysis of the most appropriate site size for SCAT's needs, 2) the overall needs for a maintenance and operations facility, 3) alternative locations for a facility, and 4) potential site designs including building layout and overall site layout. It is estimated that the study would cost between $30,000 and $40,000. One potential option would be to provide vehicle storage for RTA Route 10 and Runabout in the South County area as part of an improved SCAT facility.

Security Equipment

The SCAT transit facility currently has an alarm, but no video surveillance. Installing a video surveillance system would help protect the property as well as safe-guard employees who work very early or late when few other people are around. The installation of a facility surveillance system would cost less than $1,000, with an annual fee of approximately $400.

CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN

Table 32 identifies the cost of the capital plan over the next seven years, adjusted to include a three percent annual rate of inflation. As shown, an estimated $2,208,400 is needed for vehicle replacements, as well as an estimated $23,700 for additional vehicles, for a total seven-year fleet cost of $2,232,100. Miscellaneous capital needs are also identified in the table based on discussion of needs in this Chapter. These include bus stop improvements ($7,000 total), a security system for the operations facility ($3,400 total), and AVL equipment for each vehicle ($105,000). The total known cost of the capital program is estimated at $2,438,000 over the seven-year planning period. Costs yet to be determined include the relocation of the operations and maintenance facility, and SCAT's share of the regional AVL program. The revenue for capital costs will be primarily through Federal and State Capital grants, and are identified in detail in the Financial Plan in Chapter 15.

TABLE 32: South County Transit Capital Plan

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Current Capital Costs	Projected FY11-12 [1]	Projected FY12-13 [1]	Projected FY13-14 [1]	Projected FY14-15 [1]	Projected FY15-16 [1]	Projected FY16-17 [1]	Projected FY17-18 [1]	**7-Year Total**
SCAT Replacement Vehicles									
Number of Buses Needed [2]		1	2	2	-	-	-	-	**5**
Cost	$380.0	$391.4	$806.3	$830.5	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	**$2,028.2**
Number of Trolleys Needed		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Cost	$175.0	$180.3	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	**$180.3**
Total Number of Vehicles		2	2	2	-	-	-	-	**6**
Total Replacement Vehicle Cost		***$571.7***	***$806.3***	***$830.5***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$2,208.4***
SCAT Additional Vehicles [3]									
Number of Staff Vehicles Needed		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Cost	$23.0	$23.7	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	**$23.7**
Total Number of Vehicles		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Total Additional Vehicle Cost		**$23.7**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$0.0**	**$ 23.7**
Miscellanous Capital Equipment									
Bus Stop Improvements		$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	$1.0	**$7.0**
Operations Facility Security Improvements		$1.0	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	**$3.4**
New Operations and Maintenance Facility		*To be determined*							
AVL Equipment for Vehicle Fleet [4]		$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$105.0	$0.0	$0.5	$0.5	**$105.5**
Total Miscellaneous Capital Equipment Cost		***$2.0***	***$1.4***	***$1.4***	***$106.4***	***$1.4***	***$1.9***	***$1.9***	***$115.9***
Total South County Capital Costs		***$597.3***	***$807.7***	***$831.9***	***$106.4***	***$1.4***	***$1.9***	***$1.9***	***$2,348.0***

Note 1: Assumes a 3 percent annual inflation rate for the cost of vehicles.

Note 2: The Hybrid Bus should be retired as soon as possible due to service issues.

Note 3: A staff vehicle is recommended for optimal supervision.

Note 4: Assumes $15,000 per vehicle for AVL equipment. Does not include additonal program costs shared with SLORTA, yet to be determined.

Source: SCAT and LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

Chapter 11
Bus Rapid Transit Strategies

INTRODUCTION

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a system of technologies and operating strategies that is rapidly gaining acceptance nationwide. As defined by Wikipedia:

> *"BRT is a term applied to a variety of public transportation systems using buses to provide faster, more efficient service than an ordinary bus line. Often this is achieved by making improvements to existing infrastructure, vehicles and scheduling. The goal of these systems is to approach the service quality of rail transit while still enjoying the cost savings and flexibility of bus transit. At present, 30 full BRT systems are operating in the US, with many other transit services employing elements of BRT."*

As part of the South County Transit Plan process, this Chapter reviews the BRT concept, and presents an evaluation of its applicability to the South County area. Additional analysis of potential interchange improvements and park-and-ride options encompassing the entire US 101 corridor in south San Luis Obispo County will be conducted as a separate study.

The following discussion is presented starting at the "heavy" end of BRT options (that have the greatest right-of-way and other impacts) and progressing to the "light" alternatives.

BRT SERVICE ON SEPARATE FACILITIES

The most intensive type of BRT consists of rubber-tired transit vehicles operating on separate bus lanes. Beyond travel lanes limited to transit vehicles, characteristics of "full" BRT include:

- High capacity vehicles with a distinctive image. Important vehicle characteristics for BRT include high capacity (typically articulated) buses, low-floor design, multiple loading points, and advanced real-time service information.

- Limited stops, with high level boarding platforms.

- Fare payment upon entering the stations, rather than on the vehicles.

- High frequency of service. BRT typically provides service every 5-8 minutes in rush hours, 10 minutes midday, and 12-15 minutes evening and weekends. Connecting services should be provided at least every 30 minutes off peak and 15 minutes peak.

This type of BRT service most closely reflects the characteristics of Light Rail Transit (LRT). Like LRT, this type of BRT service is typically used to connect outlying residential areas with major employment centers. Examples include the 17-mile Orange Line in Los Angeles, the Silver Line in Boston, and the majority of the EmX BRT system in Eugene, Oregon. The transit

planning profession has developed a series of thresholds that are used as a minimum level of urban development that may warrant a full BRT program:

- The Seattle Metro transit system considers a minimum threshold of 10,000 employees in an employment center for cost-effective bus transit.
- Seattle Metro also recommends a minimum of 50 employees per acre.
- The US Department of Transportation recommends a minimum Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR)[2] of 2.0 for the primary employment district.
- The City of Portland Oregon recommends a minimum FAR of 1.0 within one half mile of BRT stations.[3]
- *Public Transportation and Land Use Policy*, authored by B. Pushkarev and J. Zupan, identifies a minimum of 12 dwelling units per acre for rapid transit service.
- TCRP Report 90 identifies a "radial route with strong commute pattern to downtown" as an important factor.
- TCRP Report 90 also indicates that rapid urban development is a factor indicating a higher potential for BRT. In addition, TCRP Report 90 indicates that the residential area should be no more than 20 miles from the downtown area.
- Finally, TCRP Report 90 indicates that the presence of traffic congestion on roadways parallel to the BRT system is an important determinate in BRT feasibility

BRT IN MIXED TRAVEL LANES

Under this BRT scenario, BRT vehicles operate in mixed travel lanes with auto traffic. The Silver Line connecting El Monte, downtown Los Angeles, and Artesia is one example, while others are found in Reno, Oakland, and Las Vegas. To provide faster and more dependable service, these types of BRT systems typically employ transit signal priority and/or "jump queue" lanes (discussed in greater detail below).

The National Cooperative Highway Research Project Report 155 provides warrant levels for consideration of curb bus-only lanes in roadways that includes mixed (bus and non-bus) traffic. For concurrent bus lanes, a minimum hourly volume of 20 per hour is recommended within Central Business Districts, and 30 buses per hour outside of Central Business Districts.

[2] The Floor to Area Ratio is defined as the total square footage of floor area divided by the square footage of land area. As an example, a four story building with 1,000 square feet of floor area on each floor on a parcel 2,000 square feet in size would have an FAR of 2.0.

[3] This standard is applied to each separate potential BRT station area, while the US DOT standard of 2.0 is considered for the employment district as a whole.

TRANSIT SIGNAL PRIORITY

Under transit signal priority, a detector is installed (typically a video detector) that is triggered when a transit vehicle approaches the signal. A signal is then sent to the computer controlling the signal, generating a request for priority. The computer then identifies if the request should be accommodated (given pre-determined parameters). A second detector also identifies when the transit vehicle has cleared the intersection.

There are a variety of types of signal priority:

- A transit vehicle could be provided with a **green extension** if detected at a point in the cycle timing when additional green time (up to a pre-determined maximum) would aid transit operations. This is typically the most effective form of signal priority, as it does not require additional clearance phases that waste intersection time.

- An **early green** could be provided to a transit vehicle arriving during a red phase, speeding green phases for other movements to allow faster movement of the priority vehicle.

- **Phase insertion** could be provided *only* when a transit vehicle is present, such as a left-turn movement that is allowed only for transit vehicles.

- **Phase rotation** could change the order of specific phases in order to speed transit movements, such as providing a transit vehicle with a left-turn indication prior to the parallel through movement (a "leading left-turn phase") where left turns are typically provided with a phase after the parallel through movement (a "lagging left-turn phase").

A discussion of transit signal priority needs to start from an understanding of modern traffic signals. Historically, traffic signals were pre-timed – controlled by a clock (very similar to a household automatic light timer) with preset length of times for each signal phase (i.e., each individual signal indication). While many of these pre-timed signal controllers are still in operation, they cannot respond to the substantial variation in traffic volumes that typically occur, and thus are relatively inefficient, either wasting signal time by providing a green indication to an approach where all vehicles have already been served, or not allowing adequate green time to an approach where more vehicles are arriving than is assumed in developing the preset timing plans.

Traffic engineers have found that "actuated" traffic signals can greatly reduce overall traffic delays. Actuated signal controllers are connected to a series of detectors that detect the presence of traffic at or approaching the intersection on the various movements. With this information, the controller can in "real-time" shorten phases with relatively low traffic volumes.

A key consideration is the difference between transit signal **preemption** and transit signal **priority**. Under preemption, a transit vehicle is automatically provided with a green signal indication, regardless of where the signal is in the typical cycle of phases. In comparison, priority reflects a system in which a transit vehicle is provided with a higher percentage of green indications, but is not always provided with a green indication. As signal preemption can substantially impact overall traffic operations, priority is a much more common strategy.

Existing Transit Signal Priority Programs in California

In considering a transit priority program, it is worthwhile to review the recent history of similar programs at other California transit agencies:

- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority – Transit signal priority was started in 2000 as part of a 65-mile Bus Rapid Transit program along two demonstration corridors: Whittier/Wilshire and Ventura Boulevard. The BRT System, entitled Metro Rapid, consists of frequent service, transit signal priority, headway based schedules, simple route layouts, less frequent stops, integration with local bus service, floor-level platform boarding and alighting, and color-coded buses and stations. The demonstration corridors provided a maximum initial travel time reduction of 29 percent with approximately one-third associated with bus signal priority (10 percent) and ridership increase of 40 percent. Minimal impacts were observed on cross-street traffic, with an average of 1 second per vehicle per cycle increase in delay, and no change in the traffic level of service. In 2005 through 2008, the bus rapid transit system increased to 450 route miles including Ventura Boulevard between Universal City and Warner Center. A 20 percent reduction in travel times is associated with transit signal priority.

- Alameda County Transit (Oakland/San Leandro) – In 2005, BRT corridor improvements, including transit signal priority, were started for two routes (San Pablo and Telegraph/International/East 14th), totaling 16 route miles. Alameda County's program consists of: transit signal priority, headway based schedules, limited stops, far side of the intersection stops to reduce intersection delays, level boarding and alighting, queue bypass lanes, bus arrival information at stops, and logo and branding on all buses and shelters. The BRT system as a whole resulted in an estimated 33 percent travel time reduction for transit vehicles.

- Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority – A BRT system was launched in July 2005 on a 26-mile corridor along El Camino/Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue. The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority program consists of: transit signal priority at 55 intersections to extend green time or reduce red phase, limited stops (every one-half mile), 15-minute headways, and queue bypass lanes. Future program improvements will consist of permanent rail-like stations, more TSP intersections, real time passenger information at station displays, higher capacity vehicles, exclusive bus lanes, and off vehicle fare payment. The resulting bus service has benefitted from as much as a 25 percent decrease in travel time.

- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency – Transit signal priority has been implemented in several ongoing projects in San Francisco. A sample project including 16 intersections for MUNI including light rail vehicles and trolleys provided a 6 percent to 25 percent reduction in transit delays. This was followed by a signal priority corridor along Third Street which includes signal priority for light rail vehicles at over 65 intersections. This is estimated to result in a travel time reduction of 15 minutes over the whole route.

- Sacramento Regional Transit District – The first transit signal priority project was implemented at 15 intersections along a 10-mile section of Watt Avenue (Route 80 and 84), a very busy roadway which can exceed 100,000 vehicles per day and has significant

congestion during peak periods. No other factors (such as signal timing, bus stop locations, or schedules) were changed. This system is unusual in that it relied on the drivers to manually activate the system (which has been found to be less effective than automatic detection). The system resulted in a reduction in travel time of 1 minute per 40- minute run or about 3 percent. The program reduced the travel times of all vehicles traveling on Watt Avenue by an average of 11 percent, but increased the travel time of vehicles on the cross-streets an average of 5 percent. Sacramento's second transit signal priority system was incorporated in a BRT program along Stockton Boulevard, Route 50E, with four priority signals, limited stops, one queue-jumping lane, and buses equipped with automatic sensors (drivers are not required to activate the system). The outcome of this study was that the system would be more effective if the bus had priority at more signals. Therefore, Sacramento is currently planning a BRT with 22 priority signals on Arden Way.

Results at Other Transit Systems

A wider survey of existing transit priority systems presented in the *Transit Signal Priority Handbook* (ITS America, 2005) yielded the following key findings:

- Annual cost of maintenance was relatively small. Some agencies did not notice any change in overall signal maintenance costs over and above activities without priority systems. Of those that did, an average is on the order of $1,000 per intersection per year.

- Travel time savings through individual intersections ranging from 9 percent to 70 percent, with a typical value in the range of 20 to 30 percent.

- Very little impact on non-priority street traffic, typically described as "minimal," 1 second per vehicle, or "infinitesimal."

"JUMP QUEUE" LANES

Jump queue lanes allow buses to bypass traffic queues at traffic signals. This is most beneficial in congested conditions where vehicles cannot pass through a signal in a single cycle. This can take the form of designating existing right-turn lanes as "Right Turn Only – Buses Excepted" in order to allow buses to jump the through traffic queue. Merging back into the through traffic stream can potentially be accomplished by either (1) providing an acceleration lane on the far side of the intersection to allow buses to get up to speed and merge to the left, or (2) providing a special signal indication (and timing phase) to give buses a short head start before the through general traffic movement phase.

EVALUATION OF BRT APPLICABILITY TO THE SOUTH COUNTY AREA

An important consideration in assessing applicability of BRT is the relatively low level of existing transit service that can be provided given existing operating funding constraints in the South County Area. The key transit routes in the area (RTA Route 10, and SCAT Routes 21, 23 and 24) all operate on only hourly headways. The roadway in the area with the highest volume of bus traffic is East Grand Avenue between El Camino Real and the nearby southbound US 101 ramps with a total of five bus movements per hour (Route 10 northbound, Route 10 southbound,

and SCAT Routes 21, 23, and 24), followed by Five Cities Drive adjacent to the Prime Outlets transfer point with a total of four bus movements per hour (Route 10 northbound, Route 10 southbound, Route 21, and Route 24). These figures are far below the minimum levels cited above that would warrant a full BRT program or even a curb bus lane in mixed flow.

Table 33 presents a comparison of South County demographic/geographic factors against the minimum "warrant" values discussed above. As shown, none of the communities meet the minimum levels, for either the employment-related or residential-related categories. The highest employment value is found in Arroyo Grande, which reaches 59 percent of the minimum value. Regarding housing density, the highest value is found in Grover Beach, at 32 percent of the minimum value. These results also indicate that a full BRT program is not appropriate for the South County study area.

A potential but more limited application of BRT strategies would be to implement Transit Signal Preemption and/or Jump Queue Lanes at key intersections near a transit center with a relatively high number of transit movements, such as the following signals near the Prime Outlets transit center:

- Five Cities Drive/US 101 Southbound Ramps
- Five Cities Drive/4th Street
- 4th Street/US 101 Northbound Ramps

Signal preemption or jump queues could be warranted at these locations if transit buses are experiencing long traffic delays at these intersections. However, existing Level of Service (LOS) at these locations is relatively good: the *Price Canyon Master Plan EIR Traffic and Circulation Study* prepared by Associated Transportation Engineers in October of 2009 indicates AM and PM peak hour LOS of B at the first of these intersections, and LOS C at the latter two. These LOS values indicate that the average delay for vehicles passing through these intersections during peak hours does not exceed 35 seconds. Given these relatively modest delays and the parallel modest level of transit movements, the overall benefit to the transit programs would not be worth the cost and staff effort needed to implement intersection improvements.

While not a full BRT strategy, another element of some BRT programs with potential applicability to the study area would be to modify elements of the US 101 corridor in order to reduce running times on RTA Route 10. An overall strategy of the regional transit network is to focus Route 10 service (as well as other similar services in North County) on the US 101 corridor, with connecting services (such as the SCAT routes) providing connections between this corridor and the surrounding communities. At present, the configuration of interchanges and local streets results in routings that add substantial travel time to Route 10. The most noticeable example is the routing required for northbound Route 10 to serve the Prime Outlets stop, which consists of exiting US 101 northbound at 4th Street, a right turn followed by an immediate left at James Way, travel along James Way northbound and Five Cities Drive southbound to the Prime Outlets, and then a left turn on 4th Street and left again onto the northbound US 101 onramp. In total, serving this one stop requires 1.4 miles of travel on local streets, travel through four signalized intersections, and adds approximately 6 minutes of travel time to the route (in addition to time spent at the actual stop).

TABLE 33: Comparison of South County Charactistics with BRT Thresholds

Threshold	Source	Threshold Met (Yes/No) and Percent of Threshold (Where Appropriate)					
		Pismo Beach	Arroyo Grande	Grover Beach	Oceano	Avila Beach	Total
Population		6,662	16,720	13,100	7,124	1,068	44,674
Households		3,302	6,828	5,031	2,402	555	18,118
Employees		3,894	5,941	3,136	718	301	13,990
Land Area (Square Miles)		9.34	8.59	2.17	1.86	3.68	25.65
Households per Acre		0.55	1.24	3.62	2.02	0.24	1.10
EMPLOYMENT CENTER THRESHOLD							
10,000 Employees for Cost-Effective Bus Transit	*Seattle Metro*	No 39%	No 59%	No 31%	No 7%	No 3%	No Note 1
RESIDENTIAL CENTER THRESHOLDS							
Minimum of 12 Dwelling Units per Acre (2)	*Pushkarev and Zupan*	No 5%	No 10%	No 30%	No 17%	No 2%	No 9%
Presence of Traffic Congestion on Parallel Roadways	*TCRP Report 90*	No	No	No	No	No	No

1. Does not meet the intended definition due to large extent of the total area.

Faced with these same issues, other transit programs have undertaken substantial programs to provide direct access to and from freeways:

- In California, the Marin County Transit District and Golden Gate Transit for many years benefited from transit stops and integrated into the freeway ramps and nearby access roadways along the US 101 corridor in Marin County. At the Rowland Boulevard interchange, bus stops are provided both on the northbound US 101 on-ramp as well as the southbound US 101off-ramp, along with a park-and-ride lot within the interchange. At the Ignacio Boulevard interchange, a bus stop is provided on the northbound US 101 on-ramp. The Marin Transit district is currently working with Caltrans and others to relocate local bus stops on the cross streets to improve connectivity between local and regional services, as well as to improve pedestrian crossing conditions, as part of a "South Novato Transit Hub Study."
- In Washington, Sound Transit has implemented "freeway stations" along both I-5 and State Route 520 in the northern Seattle region. Perhaps most pertinent to the southern San Luis Obispo US 101 corridor is the Washington State Route 520 corridor, which connects downtown Seattle with the Bellevue and Kirkland area via the Evergreen floating bridge across Lake Washington. This 7-mile-long 4-lane freeway corridor is served by approximately 500 daily one-way bus trips, carrying on the order of 11,000 transit passengers daily. There are three transit "freeway stations" (Montlake, Evergreen Point, and Yarrow Point) that have been serving the corridor since the 1970's, consisting of short bus-only lanes outside both sides of the freeway, with adjacent bus shelters and park-and-ride lots. Washington DOT, in association with the regional Sound Transit district and King County, are currently implementing a "SR 520 High Capacity Transit Plan" that will include an expanded Multimodal Center at the Montlake station.

It is also worth noting that recent Caltrans policy changes support BRT implementation along California's state highway system. Both Caltrans' *Policy on Bus Rapid Transit Implementation Support* (DP-27) published in 2007 as well as Caltrans' Deputy Directive 98 ("Integrating Bus Rapid Transit into State Facilities") published in 2008 reflect a willingness to support implementation of BRT strategies.

Focusing on the South US 101 corridor, to provide good connections between the regional and local services, it is important for Route 10 buses in both directions to service either the same stop (as at the current Prime Outlets and Halcyon stops), or within a convenient walk distance (as could be provided at potential future stops on the Spyglass Road onramps). It is also important to consider that current levels of transit operations and ridership along the Route 10 corridor are far below those that would warrant, by themselves, the costs and permitting hurdles associated with significant changes to US 101 interchanges that could improve route efficiency. However, if and when projects that include reconstruction of US 101 through the South County occur, provision of design elements that can speed Route 10 operations while still providing convenient connections to SCAT routes and park-and-ride facilities should be given careful consideration.

Chapter 12
Public Outreach

INTRODUCTION

Initial public outreach efforts for the South County Transit Plan were summarized in Chapter 7. These early efforts centered on the opinions of Five Cities residents and decision-makers regarding the effectiveness of existing services. The summary included results of onboard passenger surveys, information tables, comment cards, and focus groups. The initial input was instrumental in developing service alternatives presented in Chapter 9.

Further public outreach efforts have been conducted to gain feedback on the service alternatives. This chapter describes the outreach activities and summarizes the results from the latest outreach efforts.

Overview of Findings

The major reoccurring themes that emerged from this series of public outreach include:

- A strong preference for the proposed Route 23 two-route scenario.
- Route 24 should be re-aligned in conjunction with Route 23 to eliminate low demand areas and offer better coverage.
- A preference for the Avila Trolley to extend to Pismo Beach and convert to an hourly schedule in summer.
- A desire for better service between residential services in Oceano and shopping north of US 101.
- Extending trolley service to the greatest extent possible (within financial means).

Web Survey

A web survey was developed to solicit responses to alternatives presented in Chapter 9, which was posted online. The web survey was announced at focus groups and information tables, where the survey web address was distributed on cards. The survey was linked to the RTA and SCAT website. The survey ran from October 28 to December 3, 2010. Only 12 individuals responded to the survey.

In summary, the web survey results indicated:

- Half of the respondents regularly use SCAT services, and half do not.

- 6 of 10 who answered were employees; 2 were college students and 2 were elderly

- 7 of 11 prefer the Route 23 as two routes over the current service.

- Respondents were split on whether bus should stop on demand at the High School and Oceano, but 8 of 9 said the bus should stop at Atlantic City Drive and 9th Street.

- 10 of 14 respondents favored the Avila Trolley changing to an hourly schedule in summer and extending to Pismo Beach.

High School Onboard Survey

At the outset of the study efforts, a focus group meeting was held with Arroyo Grande High School students to identify issues specific to this group. As a follow-up, students on Route 25 (the afternoon high school tripper route) were presented with a map of the Route 23 two-route alternative and were given a one-page survey to solicit their opinions on the service alternatives which were most likely to impact this group. A total of 37 students completed the survey form. Survey results are tabulated in Table 34.

Results of the survey showed students did not have a strong preference about some of the options, specifically whether it would be important to get to the West Branch/James Way area including Kmart and Wal-Mart (question number 2b) or whether additional stops would be beneficial in Pismo Beach. Highlights of the survey findings include the following:

- Based on presentation of the map and a verbal explanation of the new Two-Route 23 option, 61 percent of respondents said they favored the new routing over the current routing, while 12 percent preferred the current plan and 27 percent were unsure.

- 64 percent were in favor of re-routing Route 24 to serve the high school, and 36 percent were not in favor.

- Students were told serving the high school on Route 24 would provide better access to Pismo Beach. Only a quarter of students thought this was very important, while more than half thought it was somewhat important and 17 percent thought it was not important.

- Respondents did not feel it would be important to serve additional stops in Pismo Beach.

- Just over a quarter of respondents felt it would be very important to serve the Railroad Avenue Area of Oceano, while 35 percent said it would be somewhat important and 38 percent said it would not be important.

The results of this survey did not provide any strong conclusions, except that most students were in favor of a new two-route service in place of Route 23. The survey also indicated students were primarily interested in service to the high school, and less interested in service to West Branch Street or Pismo Beach.

TABLE 34: Responses to High School Onboard Survey, October 28, 2010

Questions:

1	Looking at the map, does the Route 23 two-route plan work better for you than the current Route 23?		**Yes**	**No**	**Not Sure**	**Sum**
		Number of Respondents	21	12	9	**42**
		Percent of Respondents	50%	29%	21%	
2	Should Route 24 be rerouted off of Grand Avenue and onto S. Halcyon then Fair Oaks to serve the high school?		**Yes**	**No**	**Not Sure**	**Sum**
		Number of Respondents	21	12	0	**33**
		Percent of Respondents	64%	36%	0%	
2a	If yes, what times?		**All of the time**	**Specifc time**	**Time listed**	**Sum**
		Number of Respondents	22	0	0	**22**
		Percent of Respondents	100%	0%	0%	
2b	How important is it for you to get to the West Branch/James Way area (including Kmart and WalMart)?		**Very**	**Some-what**	**Not**	**Sum**
		Number of Respondents	8	13	15	**36**
		Percent of Respondents	22%	36%	42%	
2c	Serving the High School on Route 24 would provide better access to/from Pismo Beach. Do you think this is important?		**Very**	**Some-what**	**Not**	**Sum**
		Number of Respondents	10	20	6	**36**
		Percent of Respondents	28%	56%	17%	
3	Would an additional stop on Route 21 at Grand Avenue and 16th be helpful to you?		**Yes**	**No**	**Not Sure**	**Sum**
		Number of Respondents	10	12	13	**35**
		Percent of Respondents	29%	34%	37%	
4	Would additional stops (Rt 21) in Pismo Beach be helpful to you?		**Yes**	**No**	**Not Sure**	**Sum**
	a. At Dolliver and Park	Number of Respondents	9	11	13	**33**
		Percent of Respondents	27%	33%	39%	
	b. At Dolliver and Wadsworth	Number of Respondents	6	15	12	**33**
		Percent of Respondents	18%	45%	36%	
	c. At Price and Main	Number of Respondents	9	10	16	**35**
		Percent of Respondents	26%	29%	46%	
5	Would additional stops (Rt 24) in Pismo Beach be helpful to you?		**Yes**	**No**	**Not Sure**	**Sum**
	a. At Price and Wadsworth	Number of Respondents	12	13	11	**36**
		Percent of Respondents	33%	36%	31%	
	b. At Dolliver and Wadsworth	Number of Respondents	6	17	12	**35**
		Percent of Respondents	17%	49%	34%	
6	How important is it for Route 23 to serve the Railroad Avenue area?		**Very**	**Some-what**	**Not**	**Sum**
		Number of Respondents	10	13	14	**37**
		Percent of Respondents	27%	35%	38%	

Source: Data collected onboard October 27, 2010. LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

Information Tables

Using the same format as the earlier successful information tables, the Consultants staffed information tables at Ramona Gardens and Prime Outlets for two hours each on October 28, 2010. Presentation materials included poster boards of service alternative options (maps), a narrative description of the South County Transit Plan process to date, and comment cards.

Water bottles and granola bars were placed on the tables to attract passers-by, which did successfully draw in a number of curious passengers.

The comments and feedback received at these venues included the following observations:

- Service is needed from Oceano to Kmart.
- Current route 24 from Grover to Kmart needs to arrive a few minutes earlier for connection purposes.
- The proposed 2-route split for Route 23 would significantly improve service.
- Bus drivers should be consulted in determining the viability of proposed changes
- Route 23 needs to get to Wilmar and Central Market.
- Route 23 needs to pick up earlier from Oceano in order to connect to 24 to get to Wal-Mart.
- Proposed changes to route 24 look good. No need for Strother leg and Dinosaur Caves stop. New stop in Oceano would serve greater number of riders.
- Be sure to keep the stop at 8th Street and Farrell in Grover.
- RTA Route 10 – Spyglass stop is a great proposed idea.
- Route 24 should include a high school stop.

Additional Comments Received from transit users:

"I have always been a frequent trolley rider and believe they provide great service! I am also a fan of the Gold Card. I have spoken with trolley drivers and we agree on the following points:

1. A 1 hour trip that goes into Pismo Beach makes a lot of sense
2. 10 AM to 4 PM in off season is a good idea because Chrissie tells me that it is actually dangerous later in the day
3. 2 Trolleys would be inefficient. It is no way to save money and is not necessary."

Focus Group

A focus group meeting was held on October 27 between the consultants, SLOGOG staff, and members of the community who had been invited to the first focus group, plus additional members representing a broader spectrum of community groups who had been identified as instrumental in providing a well rounded perspective on future transit. Attendees included:

Name	Title	Representing	Affiliation
Nancy Graves		Community leaders	SLO County District 3 (Hill)
Eustaquio Valdez	Agricultural Workers Vanpool Coordinator	Hispanic clients	Ride On
Dan Woodson	Vice Chair	Community leaders	South County Advisory Committee
Laurie Morgan	Systems Coordinator	Social Services	SAFE

An overview of the service alternatives was presented to the focus group, followed by a series of questions to determine which service options the group preferred and in what order of priority. A list of Focus Group questions asked and input received is as follows (participant responses in italics):

SCAT Routes

1. Do you prefer the current Route 23 or Route 23 with east/west loops, or Route 23 with two loops and transfers at Arroyo Grande High School? *The proposed 2-route split is preferred.*
2. Should Route 24 end in Pismo instead of Dinosaur Park? *Yes*
3. With additional time available, should Route 24 serve the Oceano Lagoon area? *Yes, it will benefit a greater number of riders.*
4. What do you think of other potential "on-call" stops:
    a. Senior Center (Rt 23) - *Yes*
    b. Oceano Airport (Rt 23) - *No*
    c. Atlantic City Blvd/9th (Rt 21 and 24) - *Yes*

Avila Trolley

1. The trolley cannot make the route in 30 minutes so needs to be extended to an hour during the busy summer season. That gives the route about 20 minutes of "down" time. Should the route be extended to Pismo Beach (turning around at Main)? *Pismo extension is a great idea if it is cost-effective and achievable.*
2. If private funding can be acquired, should a Shell Beach Trolley serve from Spyglass to Grover Beach in summer (PCH and Grand)? *Yes*

Focus Group Conference Call

Due to the limited turnout at the October 27 event, a follow-up conference call was held on November 30, 2010 to further solicit responses to the service alternatives.

Name	Title	Representing	Affiliation
Joseph Scott	Marketing Manager	Businesses	Prime Outlets - Pismo Beach
Boyd Horne		Community Leaders	Avila Beach Community Foundation

As in the October Focus Group meeting, an overview of the service alternatives was presented to the focus group participants, followed by a series of questions to determine which service options the group preferred. Between the October and November focus group discussions, the list of questions was refined by the consultant team to exclude options that were deemed to be less desirable based on further study. A list of Focus Group questions asked and input received is as follows:

SCAT Routes

1. Route 23, Option B provides the most benefits in terms of reducing passenger travel time.
    a. Do you see any problems with the new route structure? *No*
2. Route 24 will need to be altered to maximize the new Two-Route 23 Option B. It is clear that Strother Park should be discontinued. *Agree*
    a. Do you agree or disagree that Dinosaur Caves should be eliminated from the route? *Agree*
    b. Do you agree or disagree that adding service to Oceano on Route 24 will adequately serve the Oceano Lagoon area? *Agree*
    c. Do you have any concerns about the potential new changes to Route 24? *No*
3. Bus stops are too far apart on many portions of all three routes.
    a. Where do you think additional stops would be most beneficial? *No suggestions. No objections to recommended alternatives.*

Avila Trolley

1. The trolley cannot make the route in 30 minutes so needs to be extended to an hour during the busy summer season. That gives the route about 20 minutes of "down" time.
    a. Should the route be extended to Pismo Beach (turning around at Main)? *Yes. That would benefit tourists and businesses alike.*
2. The trolley operates the same hours on weekends year-round, but demand is much higher in summer.
    a. Should summer service be extended, balanced by a reduction of off-season service to serve the Farmer/Fish market on Fridays? *Friday service should be provided to fish and farmer's market. Swap out hours in winter for hours in summer – no net cost increase with this scenario, but may result in increased revenue!*
3. If private funding can be acquired, should a Shell Beach Trolley serve from Spyglass to Grover Beach in summer (PCH and Grand)? *Extending trolley from Spyglass to Ramona is preferred if funding becomes available and subject to development patterns in Grover Beach.*

Avila Commute Service

1. Employees in Avila Beach expressed a desire for commute service, but it is too expensive to provide regularly scheduled service. A better option would be to encourage vanpools.
    a. Should employers organize vanpools on behalf of their employees? *Yes*
    b. Should employers cover a portion of the cost of their employees vanpool? What share? *Yes, full up-front monthly fee.*

Participants Recommendations:

a. *Avila Business Association should be brought into a closer loop with the trolley program.*
b. *Bring Pismo Lodging Organization into the equation especially for the vanpooling proposal.*

Chapter 13
Institutional Framework

EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL FORM

The South County Area Transit program founding document is a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) signed by The Cities of Arroyo Grande, Grover City, Pismo Beach and the County of San Luis Obispo on January 23, 1978. SCAT is governed by a four-member Board of Directors, made up of a representative of the City of Grover Beach, City of Arroyo Grande, City of Pismo Beach, and San Luis Obispo County. The Board typically meets on a quarterly basis. SCAT also operates under the direction of an Executive Committee, which provides technical oversight and policy guidance. The Executive Committee consists of the City Managers from each of the Cities served by SCAT (Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach and Grover Beach), and typically meets quarterly in the week prior to the SCAT Board meeting.

All four jurisdictions represented on the SCAT Board are also represented on the 12-member RTA Board, whose Board includes representatives from each City and San Luis Obispo County (the same members as those serving on the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments Board). In fact, two individuals currently serve on both Boards. This cross-representation tends to reduce the potential for coordination conflicts between boards. It is the Consultant's observation that the current level of cooperation between SCAT and RTA is very good, both at the staff and the Board levels.

Actual operation of SCAT services is overseen by RTA. RTA provides a RTA Executive Director, dispatching services, maintenance and financial management. Administrative services for SCAT are provided by RTA under the Contract for Administrative and Financial Services Between South County Area Transit and the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority, first signed in 1997 and most recently amended on June 20th, 2001. Under this contract, RTA manages the transit program on a day-to-day basis, administers grants and funding requests, staffs all meetings of both the Board and the Executive Committee, and prepares meeting agendas and minutes. RTA marketing staff also prepares marketing materials, such as schedules, specific for SCAT, and maintains a series of separate SCAT web pages within the overall RTA website. In addition, RTA staff spends substantial time on planning for South County services.

The current costs (FY 2010-11 budget) incurred by SCAT for these services total $87,815, and consist of the following elements:

Legal Services	$ 500
Payroll Processing	$ 2,600
Administration	$60,500
Finance	$12,100
Marketing/Community Relations/Printing	$12,115

These costs are allocated proportions of individual RTA staff costs and other budget items, based on time spent on SCAT issues as tracked by RTA staffers. No additional staff is needed at RTA

to manage SCAT as a separate entity over the staffing levels that would be required if transit services in the Five Cities area were to be provided simply as part of the RTA. As RTA staff does not include positions specifically for SCAT, in reality the *marginal* cost to RTA associated with providing services to SCAT is very low. Overall, however, the administrative services provided by RTA to South County substantially exceed the budgeted amount.

Impacts of Eliminating SCAT and Providing Services Directly as Part of RTA

Alternatively, the institutional framework could be modified so that transit services in the Five Cities area are made the direct responsibility of the RTA Board. The existing SCAT JPA could be revised to continue the current funding allocation between South County jurisdictions. TDA and other funding currently allocated to SCAT would instead be provided directly to RTA. Revenues from the South County jurisdictions would be listed in the RTA budget, but operating and capital expenses would be included as part of overall line items.

The RTA Board consists of each of the five County Supervisors, as well as a voting representative from Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Paso Robles, Pismo Beach, and San Luis Obispo. As all of the Five Cities area is already represented on this board, it is reasonable to assume that providing South County transit services directly through RTA would not result in any changes to the existing Board composition. The South County, however, would remain a relatively self-contained fixed-route service area with a strong commonality of interests. It is also therefore reasonable to assume that a "South County Committee" of the RTA Board or Executive Committee would be established to address issues specific to South County, with recommendations of this Committee being made to the full RTA Board. (As an aside, staffing these committee meetings could well equal the staff time currently allocated.)

At present, transit service decisions in the Five Cities area already require coordination between the SCAT program and RTA Route 10. Having a separate SCAT Board tends to give the Five Cities jurisdictions a greater say in these matters than if South County transit routes were managed as part of an overall RTA system. While transit boards will often defer to those members that represent specific areas served by local routes, this institutional change would result in a reduced level of control by the Five Cities area, as all final decisionmaking would be made at the level of the 12-member regional board.

<u>Personnel</u>

Presently, SCAT employees are not unionized, while RTA employees are members of Teamsters Union Local 381. While the total compensation levels between the two systems are comparable, differences in work assignments result in a 14 percent higher cost per driver hour for RTA services than for SCAT services. This factor could vary depending on future negotiations, but is expected to be between a 10 to 15 percent higher unit cost under RTA than for SCAT. This factor indicates that driver costs would therefore increase by a minimum of 10 percent, or approximately $37,000 per year.

However, under this alternative in the long term, the existing Operations Supervisor position could be combined with RTA staff, effectively reducing personnel needs. Including wages,

fringe benefits and overhead costs, this would reduce costs by an estimated $60,500 per year. This alternative would also eliminate the need for one of the SCAT drivers to be designated as a Lead Driver. In light of the additional pay rate for Lead Drivers, this would reduce costs by approximately $1,000 per year. As maintenance services are already provided by RTA employees, no change would occur with regards to maintenance personnel costs. As shown in Table 35, overall this alternative would reduce salaries/benefit costs by an estimated $24,500 annually.

TABLE 35: Impact of Incorporating SCAT into RTA on Annual Operating Costs

	Existing SCAT [1]	Incorporated Into RTA	Difference
Operating Expenditures			
Salaries/Benefits [2]	$369,960	$345,460	-$24,500
Maintenance	$175,000	$175,000	$0
Dispatch	$20,000	$20,000	$0
Uniforms/Laundry/Physicals/Ads	$5,750	$5,750	$0
SCAT Bus Fuel	$174,060	$174,060	$0
Insurance SLIP/SPIP	$1,000	$1,000	$0
Insurance	$45,660	$45,660	$0
Rent	$18,585	$4,000	-$14,585
Utilities	$4,000	$500	-$3,500
Radio Expense	$2,028	$2,028	$0
Mileage/Meeting Expense	$250	$250	$0
Legal Services	$500	$500	$0
Payroll Processing	$2,600	$2,600	$0
Administration	$60,500	$60,500	$0
Finance	$12,100	$12,100	$0
Office Expense/Miscellaneous	$4,000	$2,000	-$2,000
Financial Audit	$3,000	$0	-$3,000
Annual Cost of Triennial Audits	$5,000	$0	-$5,000
Sign Maintenance	$2,000	$2,000	$0
Marketing/Community Relations/Printing	$12,115	$12,115	$0
Contingency	$15,000	$15,000	$0
Total Operating Expenditures	$933,108	$880,523	-$52,585
Percent Change			-6%

Note 1: Source: FY 2010/11 SCAT Adopted Budget.

Note 2: Difference consists of $37,000 in additional overall staff salary/benefits minus $1,000 associated with conversion of Lead Driver position to Driver position minus $60,500 associated with reduction in total Supervisor positions.

In addition, this alternative would change the driver bid process for South County routes. Approximately three quarters of SCAT employees are casual or part-time, and many live in the Five Cities area. SCAT drivers currently bid on work schedules within the SCAT system, and do not "compete" for preferred schedules with other RTA employees. As part of a single system, these employees would be part of a single work schedule bidding pool. Given differences in

seniority, an unknown number of existing SCAT employees could end up driving RTA routes outside of the South County area.

Other Operating Considerations

A review of the existing SCAT operating budget with RTA/SCAT staff indicates that two other budget items that would change with this alternative. Specifically, the $3,000 in annual audit costs would be avoided. Also, the $15,000 required every three years for triennial audits would be avoided.

Capital Considerations

This alternative would not change the number of buses required to operate fixed route services in the Five Cities area. Informal use of RTA vehicles as backup to SCAT buses is already occurring.

The existing costs associated with the current SCAT facility (approximately $24,600 per year, including rent, utilities, and a portion of office-related costs) could be eliminated. If eliminated and not replaced (such as by a joint facility in the South County area), this would require "deadhead" travel for vehicles and drivers from the RTA facility in San Luis Obispo. As an example, on a typical weekday, the four buses used in the SCAT routes would be required to make a total of 8 one-way trips. In addition, mid-day shift changes on Routes 21, 23 and 24 would require paying drivers for travel time to and from the RTA facility (while transported in a crew van). As each one-way bus trip would require approximately 12 miles in travel distance and 20 minutes of driver time, and as each shift change driver trip would require 20 minutes of driver time, over the course of a year this deadhead travel would require approximately 32,000 additional vehicle-miles of bus travel, and 1,600 driver hours. At the current SCAT average cost per driver hour and mileage-related cost per mile, this would incur an increase in annual operating cost on the order of $85,000.

Maintaining an operating base in the Five Cities area therefore provides a clear benefit. However, under direct provision of service by RTA this could be reduced to a simple "park out" lot, avoiding deadhead bus and driver costs. Depending on the lease and security costs of a park out lot, this would reduce overall costs on the order of $20,000.

It should be noted that RTA is currently evaluating the potential for a larger joint SCAT/RTA south county facility near the US 101 Brisco Road interchange. Folding SCAT into RTA would not change the necessary size of this facility, though it would eliminate the need to allocate facility costs to the two systems. The staff time needed to make this allocation, however, would be minimal.

Farebox Ratio Considerations

At present, the minimum farebox ratio requirement (defined as the ratio of fares and other operating revenues to the total operating costs per the state TDA guidelines) for SCAT is 10 percent (considered a rural service area). The current fixed route requirement for the RTA is a

blended ratio of 16 percent (serves both urbanized and rural areas). At present SCAT meets its minimum TDA requirement. The current fixed route farebox ratio for the RTA (FY 2009/10 annual summary) is 20.1 percent, which substantially exceeds the 16 percent regional mandate.

With the potential provision of South County service directly by the RTA, the impact upon the overall RTA farebox ratio would be minimal. Based on current performance (hours, costs and fares), the overall SCAT and RTA combined services would result in a joint farebox ratio of 19 percent, above the RTA mandate without the need to increase fares or modify services.

Note: In the event of a small urbanized area designation for the Five Cities by FY 2012/13, the blended farebox ratio for the RTA fixed route services would increase from 16 to 18 percent due to the shift of Route 10 to a full urban status (thus increasing the proportion of RTA services within the higher-farebox-ratio urbanized area). As the overall farebox revenue would still exceed this increased minimum farebox requirement, designation as a small urbanized area would not result in noncompliance by RTA (or SCAT as part of RTA) with the TDA rules as a combined operations.

Summary

Advantages

- Could reduce overall operating/administrative costs by approximately $53,000 per year, or 6 percent of total annual operating budget.
- Would reduce existing RTA administrative staff time needed for the four SCAT Board and four SCAT Executive Committee meetings each year, though overall administrative staffing levels would not change (replaced by staffing for RTA South County committee).
- Allow potential for through-routing (though the current service plan does not lend itself to through-routing between local routes and Route 10).
- Potential for reduced facility overhead, as there would be no need for any maintenance area or equipment.
- Allow for the use of both fleets where best needed in the region.
- Reduce reporting needs, audit needs, CHP, etc.
- Simplify coordination of drug and alcohol testing, rules and regulations, policies, uniforms etc.

Disadvantages

- Could potentially somewhat reduce the level of control of transit services in the Five Cities area currently held by the SCAT JPA signatories.

- Would disrupt current work assignments, and probably result in a requirement for some existing SCAT drivers to report for shifts in San Luis Obispo.

- Could potentially increase the need for future service reductions and/or fare increases in RTA services to achieve the higher minimum farebox return ratio (though at present adequate farebox return ratio can be provided without changes).

It should be noted that eliminating the separate branding and public awareness of SCAT services as distinct from other RTA services could be accomplished without any formal change in SCAT's institutional structure. There are many examples in the transit industry of services that are branded as one entity, though they are administered through various individual institutions. Similarly, the issue of RTA passes being accepted for SCAT services can also be addressed separately from the institutional issue. The advantages and disadvantages of "single branding" of the two systems is therefore not included above.

Overall, it is LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc's opinion providing South County fixed route services directly as part of RTA would provide long-term benefits to the region, so long as an appropriate level of control over South County transit service decisionmaking can be retained (such as through establishment of a South County subcommittee). However, this issue is best addressed as part of a broader assessment of consolidation of services throughout the region, and is not a specific recommendation of this sub-area plan. This discussion should also be brought in front of the South County Efficiency Committee of the SLOCOG Board for further consideration.

Chapter 14
Marketing Strategies

INTRODUCTION

People use transit services for a myriad of reasons. While many are dependent on transit due to a lack of resources or limited mobility, others choose transit for its environmental benefits or the convenience of the service. To maximize the positive experience for all passengers and encourage ridership growth, a well developed marketing program is essential. The role of transit marketing is not only to increase ridership, but to make the community at large aware of the benefits of transit. This Chapter evaluates the current marketing program and recommends strategies to further advance marketing.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SCAT MARKETING EFFORTS

RTA employs a full time Communications and Marketing staff member who oversees the marketing program for RTA and SCAT. In the past year, SCAT has undergone significant improvements in its marketing program. Specific marketing activities and improvements include the following (samples are presented in Appendix E):

- *Updated SCAT Route Maps*: New route maps were developed which show each route individually on the same page, and which show time points for stops on each route. These new maps are larger in scale and easier to read, and include a simplified "straight line" map of RTA Route 10. The maps have been incorporated into new brochures and are posted in kiosks at many of the bus stops and on the buses.

- *New Riders' Guides*: Using the new maps, updated Riders' Guides are being developed with assistance from the Cal Poly graphics design department. The new guides will be ready in early 2011, though they will need to be updated again pending changes in fiscal year 2011/12.

- *Website*: The SCAT web page is accessed through the RTA website. Individuals can access maps, schedule information, fare information and local events in English and Spanish, as well as accessing Google Transit for trip planning. Automated trip planning for all SCAT fixed routes on Google Transit was implemented in the spring of 2010. This completed the integration of online bus trip planning for ALL transit agencies in San Luis Obispo County. Customers can now easily plan routes on multiple transit agencies in one place, whether they start from the RTA website, Regional Rideshare website, SLO Transit's website, or just the generic Google Transit bus trip planner.

- *Telephone Information*: SCAT phone information is available in Spanish and English through a common phone number shared with RTA. The phone number is posted on the buses, kiosks, bus stop signs, brochures and website.

- *Outreach Efforts*: Marketing staff only occasionally visit sites for conducting outreach efforts. RTA is developing a "How to Ride" video aimed specifically at using SCAT services. This will be available on the website as well as for presentation to target groups. Every quarter SCAT staff attends events, such as at Cuesta College, a specific school site, a fair, etc. to promote and educate potential riders, but as marketing for RTA and SCAT is a staff of one person, there is limited opportunity for this type of outreach.

- *Transit Partnerships:* RTA and SCAT have several important partnerships in the region regarding transit marketing:

  - RTA has worked with Regional Rideshare to provide information on RTA and SCAT services that Rideshare includes in outreach presentations. This benefits both organizations, as one goal of Rideshare is to educate the public on using alternative transportation (including transit), and RTA has limited staff resources for conducting onsite outreach.

  - Rideshare also hosts the *Marketing, Outreach and Ridership Development Group*, consisting of representatives of all of the area fixed route services. The purpose of these meetings is to standardize marketing materials and discuss strategies for ridership development. An example of one immediate product from this is the new Regional Route Graphic that will be used by several transit agencies on materials (onboard, posters at stops and on local schedules) to show customers how to get around the county, not just their city.

  - Another important partnership is that between SCAT and the Avila Beach Foundation. The Foundation was instrumental in establishing the Avila Beach Trolley, and recently provided a $5,000 marketing grant (as discussed below).

- *Passenger Facilities*: RTA has been installing 11 by 22 inch maps in kiosk displays at most stops, and plans to have new kiosks installed at all SCAT bus stops (over 100 stops).

- *Transit Vehicles*: The SCAT transit vehicles are white with an RTA logo that has an underlining title of "South County Area Transit" in much smaller letters. Three of the buses have wrap-around decal advertising and two have small frame advertising. Inside of the buses, each has a 15-brochure rack which when filled looks cluttered, though during onboard surveys many of the racks were empty. RTA has installed the new 17-inch wide route maps on all of the SCAT vehicles, but not much other interior advertising. In general, the transit vehicles are not taken advantage of as a marketing tool.

- *Trolley Grant*: RTA received a $5,000 marketing grant from the Avila Beach Foundation with three components: bus stop improvements; mailings and schedules to businesses; advertising on trolleys. This grant will be used to:

  1. Increase sign visibility. The current stops with dolphins are not very visible. They will be redesigned with bright "Ride the Trolley" new signs, and replacement of some of the

wooden poles. A-frame signs will be posted at major stops such as the park, the port, the Avila Hot Springs Resort, and the Spyglass Road stop.

2. Trolley schedules will be provided directly to businesses each spring. They will also be laminated on easel backs for posting. Businesses that are not visited in person will receive mailings.

3. New advertising policies will allow businesses more flexibility in designing their advertisements for posting on the trolley. In the past, businesses had to follow guidelines regarding size and design and submit a nearly completed design to RTA. Under the new policy, businesses will be able to provide a rough draft of advertising designs to RTA for developing and producing, which could streamline the process for those who wish to take advantage of this service.

MARKETING IMPROVEMENTS

RTA has made great strides in improving the marketing of SCAT services in recent years, particularly in updating the service maps and making them available at most of the SCAT bus stops. Nonetheless, there are opportunities for further improving marketing as discussed below.

Riders' Guides

A transit system's passenger guide is the "instruction manual" for using the product, as well as a promotional tool, and is a potential new rider's single best source of information on how a transit service can meet their needs. The Riders' Guides are currently being updated. The new maps will be provided as five individual brochures: one for each route, plus a separate "how to ride" brochure. The guides will be in English and Spanish. As the guides are not yet out, they are not specifically reviewed. However, important features of a good Riders' Guide include the following:

- A simple, easy to follow format
- A map with bus stop locations
- A schedule
- Continuity in design for each brochure
- Highly visible identifying features such as transit logo or name, transit route number, phone number and web address
- Colored maps are preferable, but may not be financially feasible for handouts. If using gray scale, paper stock should be a muted color.

The cost to update the Riders' Guides is estimated to be $3,000 (for 10,000 copies at $0.30 per copy) for SCAT routes, and $600 for new summer Avila Beach Trolley brochures.

Website

The website provides the basic information passengers and potential passengers need: schedules, route maps, trip planning assistance (Google Transit), a phone number for further information, hours and fare information. However, the layout is somewhat bland, with subdued colors. RTA is trying to maintain continuity with its logo in using these colors, but they do not stand out well against the white background, and non-RTA services such as SCAT are somewhat lost in the background on the bottom half of the web page. One potential layout that might be more visually appealing as well as offer quick navigation would be to have colorful photos representing the various services instead of the dull grey bulleted list of services. An example of such a layout is on the El Dorado County Transit Authority website, which has a photo of each vehicle type and the name of the service it represents (commuter, local routes, and dial-a-ride). In addition to being colorful and attractive, it lends to easy navigation.

RTA estimates it receives 600 to 700 hits per day on its website, with comments or questions received every other week or so. Onboard surveys of SCAT passengers indicated that only 7 percent of passengers received their information through the web page (with the majority gaining needed information via the printed schedule or directly from the drivers). Improving the web design would likely draw more passengers to use this resource. In addition, including the website on bus stop signs and on the buses is also expected to "drive" more website use. Finally, having SCAT trip planning data available on Google Transit can be a draw to tech-savvy passengers, including potential new passengers who discover service availability this way.

Telephone Information

Approximately 12 percent of passengers receive their trip information via SCAT's phone line according to onboard passenger surveys conducted in May 2010. The telephone number is prominently displayed on the vehicles, schedules and bus stop signs, and both English and Spanish speaking staff is available to answer questions. There is no noticeable need for improvement of the phone service.

Vehicles

Transit vehicles themselves have the potential to be an important marketing tool on several levels. On the exterior, the color and logo of each vehicle identifies it as belonging to the transit system. Exterior advertising, done well, can be attractive and in addition to providing advertising revenue, ties the advertising entity to the transit community. SCAT would benefit by improving the exterior of its vehicles with an improved design, better logo, and more high quality advertising. Placing advertising toward the back of the vehicle instead of the middle or front also tends to be more attractive. Updating the bus logo is estimated to cost a minimum of $200 per vehicle, or $1,000 for the five SCAT vehicles.

On the interior, the comfort, cleanliness and attractiveness of a transit vehicle reflect positively or negatively on the transit system. SCAT vehicles are clean and orderly, but advertising is underutilized and the brochure display is cluttered and not well stocked. The 15-brochure racks should be replaced with a simpler 5-brochure rack and updated with new Riders' Guides as they become available. Updating the interior graphics would cost approximately $200 per vehicle, or $1,000. New interior racks would cost approximately $100 each, or $500 total.

Passenger Facilities

As mentioned above, RTA has been updating all of its bus stops (including the SCAT stops) with kiosks which display the new route maps, including 15 bus stops which have larger display maps. This will eventually provide schedule information at every stop within the transit system. However, some of the kiosks are older and not particularly attractive. Furthermore, having the schedules posted at every stop requires a large undertaking for updating every time the schedules are changed. SCAT will need to ensure that schedule information is updated in a timely manner whenever there are notable changes.

Bus stop signs are also an important form of marketing. As discussed in Chapter 10, the bus stop signs currently depict a small RTA logo with even smaller small print that says South County Area Transit, and larger letters that say "Bus Stop". At the bottom of the sign, the SCAT telephone number for information is included. The signs have a white background which easily gets lost in the landscape. Additionally, the bus stop signs are one-sided, so the stops can only be identified when approaching the stop in the same direction as traffic. This is a particular inconvenience for transit passengers searching for a stop while walking in the opposite direction.

To make the SCAT bus stop signs more visible, they should have a background or frame that is colored rather than white, and the signs should be two-sided. A more recognizable logo should be created specifically for SCAT. The phone number should be a larger font, and the website should also be identified. Two-sided signs could be hung flag-style on existing poles rather than center-mounted. The cost of replacing the current signs with two-sided signs is estimated to be $75 per sign (rather than the budgeted amount of $40 per sign), or $9,000 for 120 bus stops. However, SCAT should postpone sign replacement until it is determined if SCAT will be merged with RTA or not (see the Chapter 13 review and the discussion on branding, below).

Outreach Efforts

As mentioned, RTA is making a "How to Ride the Bus" video which will be available online and to target groups. Target groups will be invited to preview the video online and can then ask for follow-up presentations. A similar program is in place for Rideshare, but this particular program will be route-specific for SCAT. The target groups would likely include seniors, Services Affirming Family Empowerment (S.A.F.E.) clients, high school students, and disabled individuals wishing to use SCAT routes. This video should be produced in Spanish as well as English.

SCAT should make special efforts to reach the Latino community, as Spanish-speaking passengers compose a large percentage of the ridership. Promotional materials (riders' guides, website, phone information) are already available in Spanish, but additional outreach efforts might include presentations to Latino advocacy groups, faith-based organizations and radio advertisements in Spanish. In particular, Spanish-speaking passengers tend to favor cash fares. Fare options such as pass sales should be directly promoted to the Spanish-speaking ridership to ensure they are aware of cost-saving options.

Promoting Changes

Changes in a transit system offer key opportunities for promoting the service. Large changes, such as installing a large number of signs, benches, and shelters, amount to a systemwide facelift, and should be broadcasted with a marketing campaign. Route changes, such as splitting Route 23 into two new routes, should also be accompanied by a marketing campaign, both to teach the passengers about the new service but also to tout the benefits of the improvements. Other potential opportunities for creating mini-marketing campaigns include:

- *Name change* – Obviously, this would be a big change and passengers should be invited to participate in a name change by submitting suggestions and possibly voting on a name via the web site.

- *New logo* – As with a name change, passenger participation in the design should be encouraged (noting that the design may be simplified to meet production criteria).

- *Purchase of new vehicles* – A new vehicle can create excitement, particularly if there is an "unveiling." Park City Transit, for example, literally gift wrapped two of its new vehicles and placed them at the transit center for unwrapping.

Branding

Transit vehicles and bus stops/amenities are a transit system's form of "packaging." They are the most visible and cheapest communication tool. The image they create is a reflection of how the public views the transit system. The image conveyed by the SCAT name and logo is lacking in several regards. First, the name "SCAT" can have several negative connotations. Secondly, the SCAT logo is barely distinguishable from the RTA logo, and the color scheme is the same, so the SCAT identity is not unique. This visual aspect of the transit system is much in need of improving. However, the timing of such an improvement is an issue. There are pros and cons to merging SCAT into RTA's operations as discussed in Chapter 13 of this Plan. If this occurs, logos, vehicles and signs will be designed as an extension of RTA. While signage will still need improving for better visibility, this would not include an extensive rebranding campaign.

If, on the other hand, SCAT remains a separate entity, it is important that a rebranding effort be undertaken. Concepts that have been mentioned include "Five Cities Transit," "5Cities Transit" and "SoCoTrans." Some members of a focus group conducted as part of this study indicated that branding was not a high priority in light of economic difficulties. It is not uncommon for marketing to be dismissed as a "luxury" when in fact transit systems see positive results when they invest in marketing. Creating a clearer image and positive identity of SCAT services is important both to help boost ridership and to make the public aware of the transit system and its benefits to the community. An important step is to rebrand SCAT services as a service independent of RTA.

During outreach efforts, passengers were asked for input on rebranding, and several participants at the information tables enthusiastically drew logo designs. This type of participation fuels the buy-in that a community has for its transit system, which is another benefit of rebranding. Costs

for rebranding need not be exorbitant as new signage and vehicles are already a component of the capital plan. The rebranding costs will primarily come from designing a logo (or, better yet, overseeing a contest to have the public design a logo); re-printing of Riders' Guides; and updating signs. If timed well, this will not add costs. However, to make the most of the rebranding, additional promotional activities should take place, such as increased radio and newspaper advertising, and increased outreach presentations. Therefore, it would be prudent to budget $3,000 toward rebranding promotions.

Service Monitoring

Another important marketing tool is evaluation. The quality of transit services must be closely monitored in order to know which elements are succeeding and which areas need improvement. SCAT produces monthly reports with statistical data as necessary. However, while ridership data, financial data, and vehicle information are generally well tracked, some information such as on-time performance and pass sale data are not as well tracked. It would be beneficial to SCAT to establish monitoring practices with standardized reporting formats for this information. To ensure optimal operations, the following data categories are recommended (beyond the already collected data) for careful supervision of services and should be collected on a regular ongoing basis:

- **On-Time Performance** – Comprehensive records of on-time performance are useful in determining proper scheduling and ensuring quality service. While SCAT has routinely monitored on-time performance at the Ramona Gardens Transit Center, on-time performance is not recorded at other stops along the routes. On-time performance surveys should be conducted at least quarterly, whereby drivers radio in their arrival and departure times at major stops.

- **Biennial Passenger Survey** – Onboard surveys are a vital source of planning information regarding ridership and trip-making purposes. In addition, surveys are the single best way to gain feedback regarding services. Funding for onboard surveys to be conducted every two years should be a priority. Questions that should be addressed in the passenger survey include the following.

  - Day and date that the survey is completed
  - Time at which the survey is completed
  - Route that the passenger is traveling
  - Passenger gender
  - Passenger age (0-5, 6-15, 16-64, 65 and above)
  - Whether the passenger is disabled, and if so, the type of disability
  - Income, which is typically expressed in 10,000 dollar increments (0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, and 40 and above)
  - Origin of trip (major intersection near trip origin) and trip destination (major intersection near trip destination)
  - Purpose of trip, typically categorized as work, shopping, recreational, social, educational, or other

- Rating of the transit service (poor, fair, good, very good, excellent)
- Suggestions for improvements in transit service

Development, scheduling and oversight of the surveys should be the responsibility of the marketing staff with input from the Executive Director. Surveys could be conducted by interns or temporary employees. Surveys should be conducted during a busy time of year, over every run of each route. Development and implementation of the initial survey would take approximately 30 hours of time, with only 20 hours for subsequent surveys once the initial instrument and process are developed. The marginal cost of the surveys would include approximately 56 hours of surveyor time and printing and supplies. At $15.00 per hour for temporary employees, the labor would be $840, and $300 for supplies for a total of $1,140.

- **Boarding and Alighting Counts –** It is worthwhile on at least an annual basis to conduct a day-long count for boarding and alighting by stop for each service. Given SCAT's high passenger loads, it will be necessary to use office staff or temporary labor to ride the busier routes to conduct the survey. Valuable information can be gleaned from boarding and alighting counts such as:

  - Identifying the most important stops,
  - Ranking bus stops for potential passenger amenities such as shelters or benches, and
  - Identifying the section along the route where the maximum load occurs. This information is important in determining the appropriate vehicle size for the service, if service quality is being maintained, and whether there is passenger overcrowding.

  Boarding and alighting counts should be organized and supervised by the SCAT Operations Supervisor.

- **Pass Sales –** Fare data and ridership data are tracked and compiled, but fare revenues are not reconciled with expected income. This critical task is necessary to ensure that fare media are being properly sold and used.

OTHER MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

Other commonly used marketing tools in the transit industry include the following:

- **News Releases –** There are many advantages to pursuing news media coverage for a transit system whenever possible. There is no cost (beyond staff time), it reaches across a broad spectrum of the population, it is credible, and in small communities media are often anxious for news stories. By being proactive, a transit agency can make it easy for news media to tell their story. The better the information is that is provided to the media, the more likely they are to use it and the more likely the transit agency will be pleased with the results.

  Several steps are involved in taking advantage of local media. The transit system should know the local media (TV stations, newspapers, radio stations) and should form a relationship with them. The transit agency should know what is newsworthy, such as large system changes or special events. Transit can be tied into timely events, such as touting

ridership increase in relation to increasing gas prices, or earth day events. Finally, the transit system manager should know how to write a news release and should create a news release calendar to make sure they are regularly taking advantage of this resource.

- **Testimonial Advertising** – Transit systems inevitably have grateful passengers. The transit agency should let the rider tell their story. This can be done as a newspaper story, as part of a flyer or poster, or as a radio spot. Identify regular passengers on your transit system (a single mom, a student, a disabled passenger, a local politician, etc.) and ask why they ride, what they like about the service, and how transit personally helps them. Sharing this with the public can be inspirational and put your transit system in a positive light.

- **Community Based Marketing** – This is direct marketing through partnerships with community organizations such as schools and colleges, businesses and employers, social services, senior residences and senior centers, and neighborhood associations. The benefits of community based marketing are that it is effective and inexpensive, and that it capitalizes on transit's unique role as a community service. It also allows the transit agency to specifically target messages and appeals, and it allows them to provide the high information content necessary to generate ridership. It also allows the partner to provide direct feedback on how well transit is meeting their needs.

  The first step in community based marketing is to identify a target group and then determine the "gatekeeper" for that audience. For example, the "gatekeeper" of a school would be a principal and for social services it would be the director. RTA engages in community based marketing through relationships it has built and continues to build. RTA regularly communicates with Cuesta College, Arroyo Grande High School, as well as County Supervisors and local politicians.

- **Presentations** – Public speaking is the ultimate low cost marketing tool. It shows confidence in your message and is a great image builder (if done well). It puts a face on the transit organization. It can be done interactively so that the speaker can answer questions and convey customized information. The target audience would likely be seniors, students, welfare to work clients, Spanish-speakers and employee groups. The presentation can be for non-users as well. Speaking to members of civic and business organizations enables the transit agency to set up an identity as part of the community. It is also useful to present to decision makers and elected officials to maintain a positive image.

- **Promotional** – Promotional activities are a common tool for reinvigorating the passenger base. Some ideas include:

  - Free fare day
  - Bring a friend for free day
  - Prizes/raffles

MARKETING COSTS

Many of the activities and items discussed above have costs that are associated with the time commitment of current staff, such as 30 hours of marketing staff time to develop and oversee an onboard survey or time spent updating the website. These costs are not specifically identified herein. Marginal costs -- those which add cost to the existing transit program -- are identified in Table 36. As shown, the following marginal costs would be incurred:

- The Riders' Guides are being updated in the current fiscal year and would be updated again in 2013-14 and in 2016-17, for a seven-year cost of $6,180.

- The Avila Beach Trolley guide would be updated and printed annually in the spring at a cost of $4,410 over seven years.

- The exterior and interior vehicle logos would be replaced in 2011-12 subsequent to a decision regarding SCAT merging with RTA. Logos would also need to be replaced the following year on two newly purchased vehicles. The cost of logos, interior graphics, and brochure racks is estimated at $8,240 over the plan period.

- Developing and producing the outreach video is estimated at $1,000, with an updated video produced four years later.

- Materials associated with Latino outreach events are programmed at $1,500 annually plus inflation, or $11,130 over the plan period.

- Onboard surveys, which would occur every two years, would cost an estimated $3,730 over the plan period.

Table 36 also includes the cost of replacing all of the bus stop signs with double-sided signs. This effort should take place as soon as possible, but not until it is determined if SCAT will be rebranded. The cost of replacing signs using existing poles is estimated at $75 per sign, or $9,180 (including two percent inflation).

TABLE 36: South County Transit Marketing Program and Costs

Project Description [1]	Projected FY11-12 [1]	Projected FY12-13 [1]	Projected FY13-14 [1]	Projected FY14-15 [1]	Projected FY15-16 [1]	Projected FY16-17 [1]	Projected FY17-18 [1]	7-Year Total
MARKETING SPECIFIC ITEMS								
Riders Guides [2]								
SCAT - single fold-out only	$0	$0	$3,120	$0	$0	$3,060	$0	**$6,180**
Avila Trolley schedules	$600	$610	$620	$630	$640	$650	$660	**$4,410**
Subtotal	*$600*	*$610*	*$3,740*	*$630*	*$640*	*$3,710*	*$660*	***$10,590***
Vehicles [3]								
Exterior Logos	$0	$1,020	$1,040	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$2,060**
Interior Graphics	$0	$1,020	$1,040	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$2,060**
Interior Brochure Racks	$0	$2,040	$2,080	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$4,120**
Subtotal	*$0*	*$4,080*	*$4,160*	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*	***$8,240***
Promotion and Outreach								
"How to Ride" Video Production	$1,000	$0	$0	$0	$1,060	$0	$0	**$2,060**
Latino Outreach Events	$1,500	$1,530	$1,560	$1,590	$1,620	$1,650	$1,680	**$11,130**
Subtotal	*$2,500*	*$1,530*	*$1,560*	*$1,590*	*$2,680*	*$1,650*	*$1,680*	***$13,190***
Onboard Passenger Surveys:								
Temporary Staff	$0	$860	$0	$910	$0	$970	$0	**$2,740**
Supplies	$0	$310	$0	$330	$0	$350	$0	**$990**
Subtotal	*$0*	*$1,170*	*$0*	*$1,240*	*$0*	*$1,320*	*$0*	***$3,730***
TOTAL MARKETING ITEMS	**$3,100**	**$7,390**	**$9,460**	**$3,460**	**$3,320**	**$6,680**	**$2,340**	**$17,530**
CAPITAL ITEMS FOR MARKETING								
Passenger Amenities [4]								
Bus Stop Signs	$0	$9,180	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$9,180**
Total Marketing Marginal Costs	***$3,100***	***$16,570***	***$9,460***	***$3,460***	***$3,320***	***$6,680***	***$2,340***	***$26,710***

Note 1: Projects as discussed in the text, not including RTA staff time. Does not include costs associated with the Avila Beach Foundation Grant. Assumes 2 percent inflation.

Note 2: New Riders Guides will be produced in June 2011. Avila Beach Trolley schedules are printed each Spring. SCAT Riders Guides will be needed annually.

Note 3: Exterior logos are $200 per vehicle; interior graphics are $200 per vehicle. Interior racks are $100 per vehicle. Logos will be needed with new buses in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Note 4: These costs are in addition to $1,000 annually budgeted for bus stop improvements in order to maintain stops. Double-sided bus stop signs at $75 per sign, for 120 stops.

Source: RTA and LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

This Page Left Intentionally Blank.

Chapter 15
Transit Funding Sources and Financial Plan

Transit programs rely on multiple sources of funding. This chapter discusses the funding programs and potential funding opportunities available for public transit, and presents a seven-year financial plan to implement the transit program. Also included is a discussion of the implications for the South County area should it become urbanized during the plan period.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Funding for SCAT services is provided through numerous channels, including transit fares and various federal, state and local sources. The following discussion provides information on the funding sources available to SCAT, with specifics regarding the current outlook of these sources.

FEDERAL TRANSIT FUNDING SOURCES

The federal government provides a number of grant programs that assist in transit operations. Many of these grants are administered through the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The following are programs that are potentially available to SCAT programs.

FTA Section 5307 Transit Capital and Operating Grants for Urbanized Areas

This program is available for incorporated areas with a population of 50,000 or more and makes resources available to these urbanized areas and to state governors for transit capital and operating assistance, and for transportation-related planning. In the recent past, SLOCOG received approximately $1.8 million per year. An increase of $400,000 to $700,000 for the region is possible starting in the year 2012 should the Five Cities sub-region be designated as a new small Urbanized Area as a result of the 2010 Census. Revenues from this source are expected to grow between 2.0 percent and 4.0 percent per year.

FTA Section 5309 Bus and Bus Related Equipment and Facilities Program

Another FTA program is available for a wide range of transit capital items in urbanized areas. Eligible expenses for which funding can be provided consists of the following:

- purchase of buses for replacement or fleet/service expansion
- bus maintenance and administrative facilities
- transfer facilities and park-and-ride stations
- bus malls, transportation centers and intermodal terminals
- bus rebuilds and bus preventive maintenance
- passenger amenities such as passenger shelters and bus stop signs
- other equipment such as mobile radio units, supervisory vehicles, fare boxes, computers and shop and garage equipment

A local match of 20 percent is typically required, though lower local match requirements pertain to certain projects required for ADA, bicycle, and air quality purposes. A total of $366 million is allocated to this program for FY 2010, including 26 projects in California that range from $200,000 for bus shelter replacements in the City of Hawaiian Gardens to $1,400,000 for bus replacements in the City of Riverside.

A key factor in this funding program is that all funds in recent years have been allocated based on congressional "earmarks." As such, the availability of funds for South County projects depends greatly on the willingness and ability of local legislators to "carry" the earmark request, and the overall political process of federal transportation funding decision making. This picture is further complicated by the "continuing resolution" status of the federal surface transportation law as allocations in future years are uncertain.

FTA Section 5311 Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program

Federal transit funding for rural areas is currently provided through Section 5311 and requires a 50 percent local match for operating expenses. Historically, the City of Morro Bay, all unincorporated county areas, RTA (which serves rural and urban), and SCAT (the Five Cities area) received those funds competitively. Since 2004, SLOCOG adopted the Rural Transit Fund (RTF) exchange program (5311 Federal funds traded with Local Transportation Funds (state) dedicated to capital projects). This makes RTF the prime source of capital revenues for rural providers although there is flexibility to use such funds toward rural operating support. Under the Section 5311 program, capital projects require an 11.47 percent local match while operating projects require a 44.67 percent local match. Depending on the amount of funding available, there is a lower match (as low as 0 percent) required for the local RTF program.

In the past, SLOCOG received approximately $550,000 per year. Reflecting the associated reduction in countywide non-urbanized population, a decrease in 5311 funds of $25,000 per year in Section 5311 allocations to SLOCOG for the county as a whole would be expected in 2012 should the Five Cities area become urbanized and become eligible for 5307 funds. Revenues from 5311 are estimated to grow by between 1.5 percent and 2.0 percent per year.

FTA 5311 Intercity

Within the 5311 program, 15 percent of funding provided to each state is designated for the 5311(f) intercity bus program. The Section 5311(f) funds set aside for the intercity bus program are intended to meet the following objectives:

- To support the connection between non-urbanized and the larger regional or national systems of intercity bus service.
- To support services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in non-urbanized areas.
- To support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance and capital investment in facilities.

The intercity program funds are available for both capital and operating funding. Caltrans is currently emphasizing the funding of capital, though requests for operating funding will be considered. Caltrans has adopted specific definitions of "intercity" services, limiting this funding program to services that meet the following criteria:

- *Making limited stops – At transit gateways that may include an Intermodal facility, a station/terminal such as Greyhound, and/or Amtrak, and no more than three additional stops at major activity centers such as a medical facility or shopping center.*

- *Connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity – Close proximity is defined as communities located within a distance greater than fifteen (15) miles apart of each other.*

As neither SCAT nor RTA Route 10 meet these definitions, this funding program is not available for South County transit services.

FTA Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC)

The JARC program assists states and localities in developing new or expanded transportation services that connect welfare recipients and other low-income persons to jobs and other employment related services. Applicable projects are targeted at developing new or expanded mobility management transportation services such as shuttles, vanpools and new bus routes. This is the prime source of funding for Regional Rideshare. In the past, SLOCOG received vastly varying amounts, but it would be reasonable to assume $200,000 to $400,000 might be available annually. To be conservative, the Financial Plan does not assume JARC funding toward SCAT.

FTA Section 5317 New Freedom (NF)

The New Freedom (NF) or Section 5317 was introduced in 2006 by SAFETEA-LU and was modeled after JARC (services that expand transit availability beyond that traditionally provided by public transit, at about half of the Section 5316 funding level). The NF competitive-grant funding, managed by Caltrans, is determined based on the number of residents with disabilities (as measured in the 2000 US Census relative to the state share within all rural and small urbanized areas) compared to the national level. Both operating and capital programs are eligible (including mobility management) as long as they support new or expanded travel options for persons with disabilities going beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandate to complement fixed route bus coverage or provide new travel options beyond ADA. The California funding cap is $125,000 per project per year. Under the 5317 program, capital projects require a 20 percent local match and operating projects a 50 percent local match. In the past, SLOCOG received vastly varying amounts, but it is likely that from $100,000 to $200,000 would be available each year. To be conservative, the Financial Plan does not assume NF funding toward SCAT.

Surface Transportation Program (STP)/State Highway Account (SHA)

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway, including the National Highway System, bridge projects on any public road (not classified as local or rural minor collectors), transit

capital projects, and intra-city and intercity bus terminals and facilities. The federal share for STP funds is generally 80 percent, subject to the sliding scale adjustment. A rural allocation is directly allocated to all counties.

Historically, SLOCOG's STP funds have been exchanged with the State for State Highway Account (SHA) funds. The advantage of this exchange is that the revenue is no longer subject to federal regulations. This allows the cities and county to significantly reduce the amount of time and cost required to build a transportation project by having only to meet state and local regulations. The disadvantage of exchanging the revenue is that the use of the revenue becomes less flexible. The SHA funds are subject to the restrictions of Article 19 of the State Constitution and can only be used on Surface Transportation projects.

This revenue stream is currently the most flexible of SLOCOG's funding sources and is assumed stable. Typical projects funded in this program include: roadways, bridges, transit capital, bicycle, and pedestrian projects. This revenue stream is allocated to the region on a formula basis. In the past, SLOCOG received approximately $2.3 million per year. Growth is expected to be between 2.0 percent and 3.0 percent per year. To be conservative, the Financial Plan does not assume STIP funding toward SCAT (see Capital Revenues in Table 46).

STATE TRANSIT FUNDING SOURCES

Transportation Development Act

The State levies and allocates a one-fourth percent general sales tax on retail purchases for transportation purposes through the Transportation Development Act (TDA) program. TDA provides two major sources of funding for public transportation: the Local Transportation Fund and State Transit Assistance. Any excess revenues from fuel sales tax *("fuel tax spillover"*) are deposited in the *Public Transportation Account (PTA)*. Both LTF and STA funds are distributed to the region by the State and allocated by SLOCOG to each of the seven cities, the County, SLOCOG, Ride-On and transit operators in the San Luis Obispo region. These funds are for the development and support of public transportation needs that exist in California and are allocated to each region based on population, taxable sales and, to some extent, transit performance.

Local Transportation Funds (LTF)

LTF is a mainstay for transit funding in California and is provided through the Transportation Development Act (TDA). Funding must be provided for bicycle facilities, and the remaining funds spent for transit and paratransit, unless SLOCOG finds that no unmet transit needs exist that can be reasonably met.

In the past, the LTF had been a very stable and increasing source of funding at approximately $10 million per year. SCAT has received amounts of between $457,317 in 2005-06 and an estimated $595,224 in 2009-10. However, due to the sharp decline in the economy, the 2010-11 budget remained steady at 2009-10 levels. However, beginning 2012-13, it is expected LTF will recover and grow at a rate of 1.0 percent per year.

State Transit Assistance (STA)

Previously, the TDA included a STA funding mechanism; the sales tax on gasoline was used to reimburse the state coffers for the impacts of the one-fourth cent sales tax, and any remaining funds were available to counties for local transportation purposes. Due to state budgetary constraints, this important funding source was diverted to other (non-transit) programs. The California State Supreme Court recently upheld an Appeals Court decision that this diversion was unconstitutional. AB6/AB9 legislation (the "gas tax swap") that was signed into law in March 2010 changed the source generating STA and re-established this funding program. In the past several years, SCAT's STA has varied significantly, with $95,000 budgeted for 2010-11. For planning purposes, STA is assumed to grow at a rate of 2.0 percent annually.

California Proposition 1B

This proposition, approved by voters in 2006, authorized the issuance of general obligation bonds to invest in high-priority improvements to the state's transportation system and to finance strategies to improve air quality. Among the programs are the Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement and Service Enhancement Account. Funds can be used for rehabilitation, safety and modernization improvements (Prop 1B Safety), and capital enhancements or expansion, to name a few. For transit purposes, Prop 1B was expected to deliver $12-$14 million over a 10 year period. In the first and second years, SLOCOG programmed $2.5 million and $1.5 million respectively. The State has frozen the cash outlays it provided to the Year 1 projects, and actual State payment for the Year 2 projects are subject to the State's ability to sell bonds. The remainder, between $8 and10 million, is yet to be programmed.

LOCAL TRANSIT FUNDING SOURCES

Local revenue sources are classified as either general purpose or special purpose. General purpose revenues - which include various taxes, fees, rates, and fines - flow directly into a jurisdiction's General Fund, such as:

- Sales and Use taxes
- Locally imposed general taxes
- Property taxes
- Business license taxes
- Utility user's taxes
- Motor Vehicle in lieu tax (VLF)
- Transient occupancy taxes
- Rents, royalties and concessions
- Franchise fees, and
- Fines, forfeitures, and penalties

Five of the cities recently passed a one-half cent locally imposed general tax, including Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach and Grover Beach. Local jurisdictions may choose to use general fund moneys to help finance transportation projects or services, or as local matching funds for transportation grants. By definition, special purpose revenues are for specific purposes only. Categories include:

- Property-related fees
- User fees
- Assessments
- Developer Fees
- Gas Tax Subventions

- Transportation Development Act funds
- Utility rates
- Regulatory fees, and
- Special taxes

Development Impact Fees are imposed to pay for improvements and facilities required to serve new development or otherwise reduce the impacts of new development on a community. These fees cover onetime capital improvements and community amenities. Although every jurisdiction collects Development Impact Fees, each jurisdiction collects for different purposes, such as police, fire, parks, transportation, storm drainage, wastewater, water supply, community centers, libraries, or open space. Nearly every city updated their fee programs in 2007; Paso Robles and the County updated several of its sub-area programs in 2006.

Development fees collected within the region between 2001 and 2007 provided a significant influx of local funding for transportation purposes. However, given the recent economic downturn, street and road funding originating from these fees are assumed to be reduced and grow at a rate more comparable to recent housing projections. While special purpose revenues – such as Development Impact Fees – are only for specific purposes, the reports from the State Controller's Office combines all local funds used for transportation into one category (Local Street and Road funds).

Private Contributions

Private contributions for transit services are not uncommon in tourist areas. Tourist-oriented trolley services are a prime example of a service which should include a partnership with private industry, as they provide both mobility and economic benefits. The Avila Beach Foundation was the local catalyst in starting the Avila Trolley, which then became a part of SCAT in 2005 as a result of an unmet transit needs finding. The Foundation contributed to the start up costs of the service and continues to contribute directly to SCAT for meeting the minimum 10 percent farebox ratio requirement, matching the County TDA funds. Furthermore, the Avila Business Association that to date has not been actively involved in the program, should be approached to determine a potential financial partnership in line with the trolley benefits to the tourism-oriented business community.

Farebox Revenues

Farebox revenues are generated through the cash and pass fares of the transit system. Farebox revenues are an important source of revenue for a number of reasons. First, they help to offset the operating cost of transit. Secondly, they insure that those who directly benefit from the services contribute to it financially. In fact, this form of equity is the basis for the mandate in TDA law which requires a transit system to meet a minimum farebox return ratio in order to continue to receive funding. SCAT is required to meet a minimum farebox return ratio of 10 percent because it is a non-urbanized area. This could potentially change to a 20 percent minimum farebox return ratio if the Five Cities area is identified as urbanized after completion of the 2010 Census, but this is an uncertainty. SCAT's farebox return ratio for the last fiscal year was 14.2 percent.

Fare Media

SCAT passengers currently have a number of fare options, with discounts generally offered to seniors (age 65 to 79), persons with disabilities and students. Children five and under are carried for no fare, as are seniors age 80 or older. Transfers are also free.

Cash Fares

SCAT regular fares are $1.25 for a one-way trip, while seniors (age 65 to 79), disabled, and Medicare card holders pay $0.60. Of the cash fares paid in 2009-10, 79 percent were full cash fares while 21 percent were discounted cash fares. Overall cash fares amount to 43 percent of total fares (see Figure 34), a high share.

Passes:

- ***Regional DAY Pass*** – This pass provides unlimited rides on all RTA, SLO Transit, SCAT, Paso Express and North County Shuttle routes for the date indicated for $5.00 (for all users).

- ***31-Day Pass*** – This pass provides unlimited rides for 31 days from the date of purchase on all SCAT Routes. It is available to the general public for $30.00 and to seniors (age 65-79) and disabled for $15.00.

- ***20-Ride Pass*** – This pass provides 20 one-way rides on any SCAT route, and is available to the general public for $20.00 and to seniors (age 65-79) and disabled for $8.00.

- ***Regional 31-Day Pass*** - Good for unlimited rides on ALL SCAT, RTA, Paso Express, North County Shuttle and SLO Transit routes for 31 consecutive days: general public is $60.00; seniors (65-79)/disabled/students (K-12) are $30.00.

Fare Media on SCAT

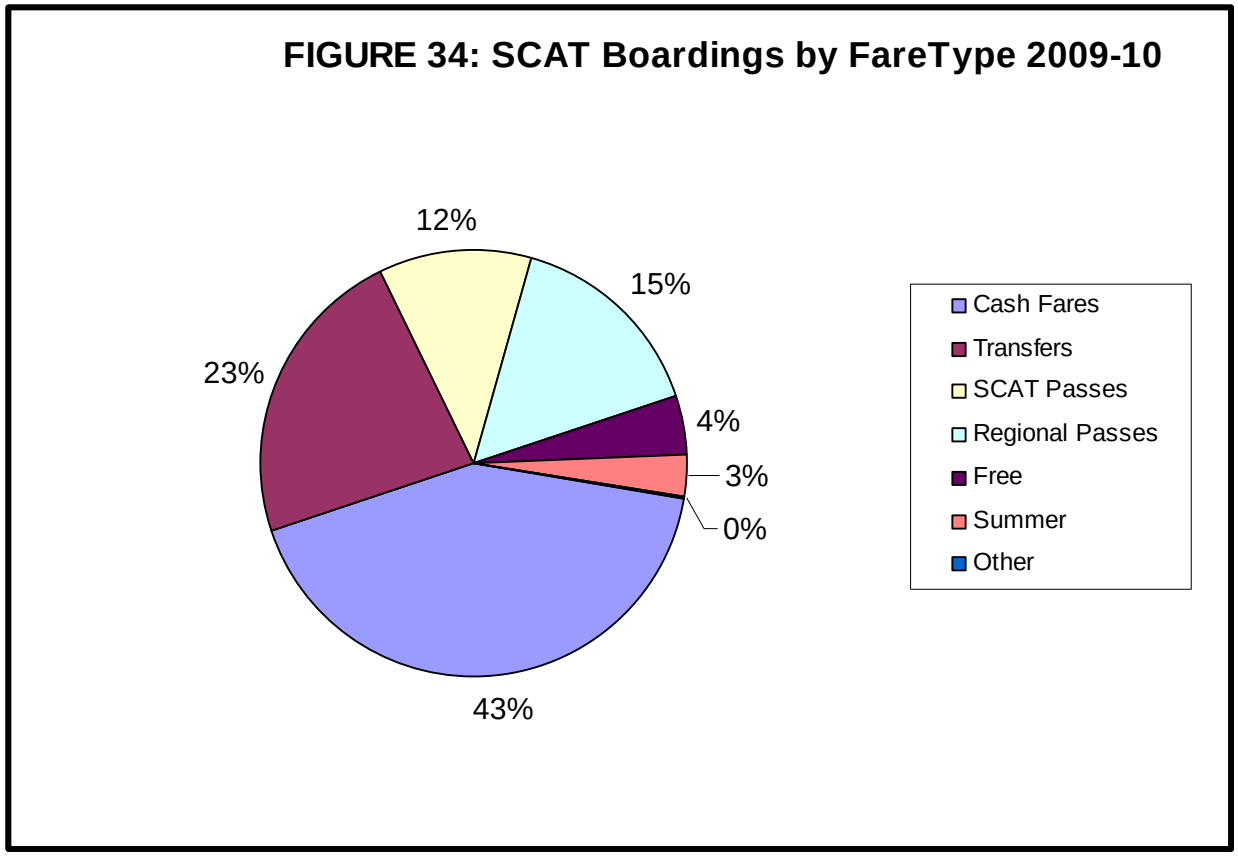
Fares collected on SCAT averaged $0.57 per passenger-trip in 2009-10, reflecting that discounts and pass use are prevalent. In fact, as shown in Figure 34, a review of SCAT fares by media type indicate that 43 percent of fare media were cash fares, 23 percent were transfers, 15 percent used some type of regional pass, and 12 percent used some type of SCAT pass.

Typically in the public transit industry, passes or multi-use fare media provide a discount of approximately 10 to 20 percent. This discount encourages the regular use of the transit system, and also effectively compensates the passenger for the need to make a greater “up front” payment. Regarding the 31 day (monthly) pass, it is transit industry standard practice to price the pass assuming that a passenger uses the service to commute to work (or twice per day over 22 days month). For local SCAT service, for example, applying a 20 percent discount to the price would equate to:

22 days x 2 trips = 44 passenger trips

The full cash fare for this use would be:

44.00 x $1.25 = $55.00



Providing a 20 percent discount would equate to $44, as follows:

$55.00 x 0.80 = $44.00

Therefore, the appropriate fee for a monthly or 31 day pass would be $44.00 ($22.00 for seniors and persons with disabilities), while SCAT only charges $30.00 (and $15.00). Using similar logic on the 20-ride pass, the appropriate fare would be $22.00 for the general public (compared with the current cost of $20.00), and $11.00 for passengers eligible for discounted fares (compared with the current cost of $8.00).

The impact of fare changes can be evaluated by applying the concept of "elasticity" developed in the field of microeconomics. An "elasticity analysis" considers the relationship between the change in an economic input (such as fare level) and economic output (such as demand for transit services). While there are several forms of elasticity equations, the most appropriate for transit fare analysis is the following "mid-point elasticity" equation:

$$R_A = R_B \quad X \quad (F_A / F_B)^E$$

where:

R_A	=	Ridership After the Fare Change
R_B	=	Ridership Before the Fare Change
F_A	=	Fare After the Fare Change
F_B	=	Fare Before the Fare Change
E	=	Elasticity Value

The Elasticity Value has a negative sign, reflecting the fact that ridership tends to decrease as fare increases. The value applied for E is based upon the change in transit ridership that has been observed in other transit systems (preferably as similar to SCAT as possible). Per Transit Cooperative Research Program Report 95: *Transit Pricing and Fares* published by the Transportation Research Board in 2004, the appropriate value for the Five Cities area is -0.35.

Using this model, Table 37 presents the analysis of the impacts of the following changes in multiride fare prices:

General Public 31-day Pass – Increase from $30 to $44
Elderly/Disabled 31-day Pass – Increase from $15 to $22
General Public 20-Ride Pass – Increase from $20 to $22
Elderly/Disabled 20-Ride Pass – Increase from $8 to $11

TABLE 37: Multi-Fare Instrument Elasticity Analysis

Factors	SCAT 31-day Pass		SCAT 20-ride Card		Total
	GP	Discount	GP	Discount	
Pass Cost Before the Fare Change	$ 30.00	$ 15.00	$ 20.00	$ 8.00	
Ridership Before the Fare Change	6,350	4,780	8,130	1,850	21,110
Estimated Current Fare Revenue	$ 5,910	$ 3,410	$ 8,380	$ 2,040	$ 19,740
Pass Cost After the Fare Change	$ 44.00	$ 22.00	$ 22.00	$ 11.00	
Ridership After the Fare Change	5,550	4,180	7,860	1,650	19,240
Estimated Revenue with the Fare Change	$ 7,580	$ 4,370	$ 8,910	$ 2,500	$ 23,360
Change in Ridership	-800	-600	-270	-200	(1,870)
Change in Revenue	$ 1,670	$ 960	$ 530	$ 460	$ 3,620

GP = General Public Discount = Elderly, Disabled, Students
Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

It is estimated that these changes in pass pricing would result in a reduction of 1,870 one-way passenger trips, or 9 percent of passengers using the combination of monthly passes and 20-ride passes. This equates to only a 1 percent reduction in total annual SCAT ridership. The increased fare revenue is estimated to be $3,600 in the first year, reflecting a 3.3 percent increase in fare revenues. While no increase in the base fare is recommended as part of this plan, these increases in the multiride pass prices are recommended to positively affect the operating budget, to address the low net fare per one-way passenger-trip on the SCAT system, and to help address the impacts of inflation.

FINANCIAL PLAN

The financial plan for SCAT over the next seven years draws on many of the sources described above. Table 38 identifies the operating costs of the transit program for each year of the plan, based on the recommended services and using the cost allocation developed from the 2010-11 adopted budget, and including additional marketing costs. As indicated, the status quo costs total $928,700, and would be expected to increase to $953,900 in 2011-12 based on the service plan and an assumed inflation rate of 2.0 percent. The operating cost would continue to increase by the inflation rate, with an operating cost of $1,073,100 in 2017-18. Excluding the impacts of

TABLE 38: South County Transit Plan - Estimated Operating Cost

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Status Quo FY10-11 [1]	Projected FY11-12	Projected FY12-13	Projected FY13-14	Projected FY14-15	Projected FY15-16	Projected FY16-17	Projected FY17-18	**7-Year Total**
SCAT Route Services									
Route 21 (no changes)	$226.9	$231.5	$236.1	$240.8	$245.6	$250.6	$255.6	$260.7	$1,720.8
Route 23 (with changes) [2]	$248.4	$277.0	$282.6	$288.2	$294.0	$299.8	$305.8	$312.0	$2,059.4
Route 24 (with changes) [3]	$237.5	$225.3	$229.8	$234.4	$239.1	$243.9	$248.8	$253.7	$1,675.0
Route 25 (no changes)	$9.7	$9.9	$10.1	$10.3	$10.5	$10.7	$10.9	$11.1	$73.5
Total SCAT Marginal Operating Costs [1]	$722.5	$743.7	$758.6	$773.7	$789.2	$805.0	$821.1	$837.5	$5,528.8
Trolley Services									
Avila Beach Trolley (with changes) [4]	$64.8	$62.8	$64.1	$65.4	$66.7	$68.0	$69.4	$70.8	$467.1
Total Route Marginal Operating Costs	$787.3	$806.5	$822.6	$839.1	$855.9	$873.0	$890.5	$908.3	$5,995.8
Impact of Operating Plan	--	*$3.5*	*$3.5*	*$3.6*	*$3.7*	*$3.7*	*$3.8*	*$3.9*	
SCAT Fixed Costs	$141.4	$144.3	$147.1	$150.1	$153.1	$156.1	$159.3	$162.5	$1,072.4
Additional Marketing Costs [5]	--	$3.1	$7.4	$9.5	$3.5	$3.3	$6.7	$2.3	$35.8
Total SCAT Operating Costs	$928.7	$953.9	$977.2	$998.6	$1,012.4	$1,032.5	$1,056.4	$1,073.1	$7,104.0

Note 1: This analysis assumes an annual inflation rate of 2 percent. Operating cost is based on the approved 2010-11 budget: marginal operating cost is $24.92 per hour plus $1.87 per mile, plus fixed costs. Fixed costs do not include costs associtated with a new operations facility. Assumes new services begin July 1, 2011.

Note 2: Reflects implementation of *Route 23 Two-Route Alternative Option B* on July 1, 2011

Note 3: Reflects elimination of Strother Park and Dinosaur Caves segments and addition of Oceano Lagoon services on July 1, 2011

Note 4: Avila Beach Trolley route would be extended to one hour in summer. The longer route, served half as often would decrease mileage by 8 percent, slightly reducing cost.

Note 5: From Marketing Cost Table. Does not include Capital Items.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

inflation, the net impact of the operating plan on annual operating costs is very modest, ranging from $3,500 to $3,900 per year.

Table 39 shows the projected ridership for the planned services as evaluated in Chapter 9. These figures also reflect an annual increase of 1.4 percent, based on the population growth and aging of the population. Also shown are the estimated farebox revenues based on the ridership and recommended multiride pass increase (the multiride pass increase is subtotaled separately to more clearly show its impact). As indicated, the status quo fare revenue, based on the adopted 2011-12 budget, is $110,000. It is estimated this would increase to $128,900 in 2011-12, and up to $140,400 in 2017-18. The farebox return ratio is calculated for each year, with improvements from the current 14 percent to as much as 16 percent over the next seven years. Considering the additional operating and marketing costs in comparison with the additional farebox revenues under this plan, the net impact of the plan on subsidy requirements (exclusive of inflation) is a *decrease* ranging from $4,900 to $13,000 per year (or roughly 1 percent of annual operating budget).

Table 40 presents the financial plan in which operating and capital revenues are identified for the operating costs and capital plan. The operating revenues are primarily the same as have been recently used, although the City of Pismo Beach will be asked to share in the cost of the Avila Beach Trolley as it will extend into Pismo Beach for approximately a third of the time and mileage of operations in summer. This cost may be negotiated as the benefits to Pismo Beach are likely to be more than the proportional hours and miles suggest.

State Transit Assistance funds are budgeted at $95,000 in 2010-11, with no growth the first plan year and 3 percent growth in subsequent years. The Rural Transit Fund (RTF) will continue to be used for preventative maintenance, growing at a rate of 2 percent annually. Contributions for the Avila Trolley will start at $5,300 in 2011-12 for Pismo Beach, and $57,500 from San Luis Obispo County.

The mainstay of the operating program will continue to be Local Transportation Funds (LTF). This is projected to remain steady in 2011-12, with a 1 percent growth rate each year thereafter. The operating costs, which are projected to grow at a 2 percent rate of inflation, outpace the forecast growth in LTF, which requires each jurisdiction to contribute slightly higher levels of LTF each year. In Table 40, the total LTF available for the SCAT area is shown along with the proposed amount for transit and the available balance for discretionary uses and streets and roads.

Table 40 also shows the capital costs and revenues. The capital costs are based on the capital needs outlined in Chapter 10, as well as additional capital needs identified in the marketing strategies in Chapter 14. The costs include vehicle replacements, a staff vehicle, bus stop improvements, and security camera for the operations facility. These capital items would primarily be paid for using Proposition 1B funding. During the plan period, SCAT is programmed to receive $154,000 operator's share (non-competitive, which equates to approximately $20,000 to $25,000 annually and which can be claimed in three-year increments). Furthermore, up until 2017, the total regional apportionment in competitive funds will total $8.2 million. SCAT will need to compete for these funds, but it is reasonable to assume a portion will

TABLE 39: South County Transit Plan - Estimated Ridership and Farebox Revenue

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Status Quo FY10-11 [1]	Projected [2] FY11-12	Projected FY12-13	Projected FY13-14	Projected FY14-15	Projected FY15-16	Projected FY16-17	Projected FY17-18	7-Year Total
RIDERSHIP [2]									
SCAT Route Services									
Route 21 (no changes, without fare increase)	65.6	66.5	67.4	68.3	69.3	70.3	71.3	72.3	485.3
Route 23 (with changes, without fare increase) [3]	67.1	74.6	75.7	76.7	77.8	78.9	80.0	81.1	544.9
Route 24 (with changes, without fare increase) [4]	52.0	57.0	57.8	58.6	59.4	60.3	61.1	62.0	416.2
Route 25 (no changes, without fare increase)	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	52.9
Impact of Multiride Pass Fare Increase	--	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-13.1
Total SCAT Ridership	191.8	203.5	206.3	209.3	212.2	215.2	218.3	223.2	1499.2
Trolley Services									
Avila Beach Trolley (with changes) [5]	7.3	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.3	8.4	56.3
Total Ridership	199.1	211.2	214.2	217.2	220.3	223.4	226.5	231.6	1555.5
FAREBOX REVENUE [6]									
SCAT Route Services									
Route 21 (no changes, without fare increase)	--	*$38.2*	*$38.7*	*$39.3*	*$39.8*	*$40.4*	*$41.0*	*$41.5*	*$279.0*
Route 23 (with changes, without fare increase) [3]	--	*$42.9*	*$43.5*	*$44.1*	*$44.7*	*$45.4*	*$46.0*	*$46.6*	*$313.3*
Route 24 (with changes, without fare increase) [4]	--	*$32.8*	*$33.2*	*$33.7*	*$34.2*	*$34.6*	*$35.1*	*$35.6*	*$239.3*
Route 25 (no changes, without fare increase)	--	*$4.2*	*$4.2*	*$4.3*	*$4.3*	*$4.4*	*$4.5*	*$4.5*	*$30.4*
Impact of Multiride Pass Fare Increase		*$3.6*	*$3.7*	*$3.8*	*$3.9*	*$4.0*	*$4.1*	*$4.2*	*$27.3*
Total SCAT Fare Revenue	--	*$121.7*	*$123.4*	*$125.2*	*$127.0*	*$128.8*	*$130.7*	*$132.5*	*$889.3*
Trolley Services									
Avila Beach Trolley (with changes) [5]	--	*$7.3*	*$7.4*	*$7.5*	*$7.6*	*$7.7*	*$7.8*	*$7.9*	*$53.1*
Total Fare Revenue	*$110.0*	*$128.9*	*$130.8*	*$132.7*	*$134.6*	*$136.5*	*$138.5*	*$140.4*	*$942.3*
Impact of Service Plan and Pass Fare Increase		*$17.4*	*$17.7*	*$18.0*	*$18.3*	*$18.6*	*$18.9*	*$19.2*	
Overall Impact of Plan on Operating Subsidy		*-$10.8*	*-$6.8*	*-$4.9*	*-$11.1*	*-$11.5*	*-$8.4*	*-$13.0*	
Farebox Return Ratio	*14.0%*	*16.0%*	*15.9%*	*15.8%*	*15.7%*	*15.6%*	*15.5%*	*15.5%*	*15.7%*

Note 1: 2010-2011 Ridership based on 2009-10, with 1.4 percent growth (equivalent to population growth and aging in the Five Cities area). Fare revenue for 2010-11 based on adopted budget.

Note 2: Projected ridership is based on service changes (estimates from alterantives analysis chapter used) plus a 1.4 percent annual growth and aging factor.

Note 3: Route 23 would be divided into two routes, per *Route 23 Two-Route Alternative Option B*. Increases mileage by 20 percent.

Note 4: Strother Park and Dinosaur Caves segements would be eliminated, and Oceano Lagoon added. Decreases mileage by 13 percent.

Note 5: Avila Beach Trolley route would be extended to one hour and would serve Pismo Beach in summer.

Note 6: Fare revenue based on estimated ridership and an average of $0.57 collected per passenger trip on SCAT and $0.94 collected per passenger trip on Avila Beach Trolley.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE 40: South County Financial Plan

All Figures in Thousands

Project Description	Status Quo FY10-11 [1]	Projected FY11-12	Projected FY12-13	Projected FY13-14	Projected FY14-15	Projected FY15-16	Projected FY16-17	Projected FY17-18	7-Year Total
OPERATING PLAN									
Total Operating Costs (from Table 38)	$928.7	$953.9	$977.2	$998.6	$1,012.4	$1,032.5	$1,056.4	$1,073.1	**$7,104.0**
Operating Revenues									
Passenger Fares	$110.0	$128.9	$130.8	$132.7	$134.6	$136.5	$138.5	$140.4	**$942.3**
State Transit Assistance [2]	$95.0	$95.0	$97.9	$100.8	$103.8	$106.9	$110.1	$113.4	**$727.9**
RTF - Preventative Maintenance [3]	$70.0	$70.0	$71.4	$72.8	$74.3	$75.8	$77.3	$78.8	**$520.4**
Avila Trolley--Pismo Beach Contribution [4]	$0.0	$5.3	$5.4	$5.5	$5.6	$5.7	$5.9	$6.0	**$39.5**
Avila Trolley--SLO County Contribution [4]	$58.9	$57.5	$58.7	$59.8	$61.0	$62.3	$63.5	$64.8	**$427.6**
Total Non-TDA Funds	$333.9	$356.8	$364.1	$371.6	$379.3	$387.2	$395.2	$403.4	**$2,657.7**
Local Transportation Funds [5]	$595.2	$597.1	$613.1	$627.0	$633.1	$645.3	$661.2	$669.6	$4,446.3
Arroyo Grande (36.4%)	$215.5	$217.3	$223.2	$228.2	$230.4	$234.9	$240.7	$243.7	$1,618.4
Grover Beach (28.4%)	$171.4	$169.6	$174.1	$178.1	$179.8	$183.3	$187.8	$190.2	$1,262.7
Pismo Beach (18.6%)	$111.9	$111.1	$114.0	$116.6	$117.8	$120.0	$123.0	$124.5	$827.0
SLO County (16.6%)	$96.4	$99.1	$101.8	$104.1	$105.1	$107.1	$109.8	$111.2	$738.1
Total Operating Revenues	$929.1	$953.9	$977.2	$998.6	$1,012.4	$1,032.5	$1,056.4	$1,073.1	$7,104.0
LTF Balance									
Total Available LTF	$975.2	*$975.2*	*$985.0*	*$994.8*	*$1,004.8*	*$1,014.8*	*$1,025.0*	*$1,035.2*	***$7,034.9***
LTF Used for Transit Operations	$595.2	*$597.1*	*$613.1*	*$627.0*	*$633.1*	*$645.3*	*$661.2*	*$669.6*	***$4,446.3***
Balance	$380.0	$378.1	$371.9	$367.8	$371.7	$369.6	$363.8	$365.6	***$2,588.6***
CAPITAL PLAN									
Capital Costs (From Tables 32 and 36)	--	$597.3	$9,987.7	$831.9	$106.4	$1.4	$1.9	$1.9	**$11,528.5**
Capital Revenues									
Proposition 1B - PTMISEA [6]	--	$476.9	$7,989.7	$665.1	$84.7	$1.0	$1.5	$0.0	**$9,218.9**
Proposition 1B - CTSGP [7]	--	$1.0	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.0	**$3.0**
Rural Transit Fund [8]	$550.0	$119.5	$1,997.5	$166.4	$21.3	$0.0	$0.0	$1.9	**$2,306.6**
Total		$597.3	$9,987.7	$831.9	$106.4	$1.4	$1.9	$1.9	**$11,528.5**
Balance		***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	***$0.0***	

Note 1: Based on adopted 2010-11 budget.
Note 2: STA is projected to remain steady the first year, then grow by 3.0% annually.
Note 3: Rural Transit Funds will continue to be used for preventative maintenance, remaining steady in 2011-12, then assuming 2 percent growth.
Note 4: The Avila Beach Trolley is 90 percent funded through San Luis Obispo County. Under new plan, 1/3 of summer service, or 9 percent of annual service will take place in the City of Pismo Beach. It is assumed therefore that SLO will pay 81% of the trolley cost, and Pismo Beach will pay 9 percent.

Note 5: While no LTF revenue growth is expected in 2011-12, a higher percentage of LTF discretionary funds will be used for transit to pay for increased operating costs. Growth of LTF funds is assumed to be 1 percent thereafter, but each year of the plan slightly more discretionary funds will be used for transit (up to $54,000 more in 2016-17).

Note 6: Near term programing is $2.5 million for the region, with no funding available past 2016-17.

Note 7: Prop 1B funds for security and safety projects will be used for purchase and maintenance of a security camera at the SCAT operations facility.
Note 8: In 2010-11, approximately $550,000 of RTF will be available regionwide. This plan proposes to fund approximately 20 percent of the capital needs with RTF, and the balance with Prop 1B funds.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

be available to provide revenue for the majority of the capital needs over the plan period. The balance of the capital costs would be funded through the Rural Transit Fund.

In conclusion, the recommended operating plan and capital plan annual costs can be funded through the identified and previously available sources. No new funding sources are proposed, although the City of Pismo Beach will be asked to contribute a portion of funding for the Avila Beach summer trolley proportional to the amount of service within the City limits. It can be concluded that funding sources will be available that are sufficient to support the service plan, as well as the important enhancements identified in the capital plan.

Transit Implications of Urbanized Area Designation for the Five Cities Area

There is a potential that the results of the 2010 US Census will trigger designation of the Five Cities area as an Urbanized Area (UZA). The US Census Bureau defines an urbanized area as:

> *"An area consisting of a central place(s) and adjacent territory with a general population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile of land area that together have a minimum residential population of a least 50,000 people"*

At present, it is very much an unknown whether the Five Cities area will achieve the Census Bureau's criteria for a UZA, as Census results are not available, and there is no other good source of population estimates. If this were to occur, it would have substantial ramifications for transit funding in the South County area. Specifically, UZA designation would change the countywide funding available through the FTA 5311 (Formula Grants for Other Than Urbanized Areas) program, provide FTA 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula) Program funding to the Five Cities area, and change requirements under the California Transportation Development Act.

FTA 5311 Funding Impacts

Countywide, Caltrans passes through $520,846 (FY 2010-11) of FTA 5311 funds for transit programs in San Luis Obispo County. These funds are allocated to RTA. By reducing the population of SLO County considered to be rural, this would reduce 5311 funding available to RTA. SLOCOG currently receives $520,846, based on a rural population of 126,512 persons. All other factors being equal (such as the statewide total funding), the redesignation of Five Cities residents from "rural" to "urban" would reduce 5311 funding available in San Luis Obispo County by approximately $206,000 over the plan period.

FTA 5307 Funding Impacts

UZA designation would qualify the Five Cities area for FTA 5307 funding, which is the primary federal transit funding program for urbanized areas across the nation. At the Federal level, 9.32 percent of total available 5307 funds are allocated by the FTA to the individual state governors for small UZA. These funds are then allocated to the individual small UZAs based on a formula weighted 50 percent by population, and 50 percent by population times population density. In California, the State directly passes these funds to the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Within San Luis Obispo County, funds for the two current UZA's (San Luis Obispo and

Atascadero-Paso Robles) are passed to SLOCOG. In turn, SLOCOG makes these funds available for transit services in the individual urbanized areas.

It is not currently possible to accurately estimate the funding level that would be generated by the 5307 program if the Five Cities were to be designated as urbanized, as this level would depend on the following:

- The overall nationwide level of funding allocated by the US Congress to the program several years in the future. As the Federal surface transportation act (currently entitled SAFETEA-LU) is in need of re-authorization, this is particularly uncertain at present. While the current nationwide funding is $4.52 billion annually, this could change in either direction with re-authorization.

- The number, population, and population density of all urbanized areas across the nation after redesignation.

- The specific area defined to be included in the Five Cities urbanized area, its population and population density.

- To complicate matters further, the Census Bureau is also considering changes to the criteria regarding continuity of development within a UZA. In particular, under consideration is to change the current definition of the maximum "jump" between areas of sufficient density of 2.5 miles to 1.5 miles. This may eliminate some current small UZA's (including potentially Atascadero-Paso Robles) after the determination based on the 2010 Census.

- In addition, there is the potential that the Five Cities area (with Nipomo) could be designated as part of the existing Santa Maria UZA. This would depend on population density as well as the "jump" designation discussed above. There are examples of cross-county-boundary UZA, such as the Lodi-Galt UZA and the proposed conglomeration of the Santa Cruz, Watsonville and Salinas areas into a single UZA.

One general indication of potential 5307 funding is current funding levels for existing small UZA's. Of the 34 small urban areas wholly within California, the Atascadero-Paso Robles UZA receives the smallest allocation, equal to $702,873 in FY 2010-11.

The Five Cities would be a "small UZA" defined as UZAs with a population between 50,000 and 200,000. As a small UZA, 5307 funding can be used for operating. (For larger UZA's, 5307 funds can only be used for capital purposes.) 5307 funds used for operating purposes require a 50 percent local match, while funds used for capital purposes require only a 20 percent local match.

In addition to the direct funding implications, designation as a 5307 recipient would incur other changes to the administration and funding potentials for SCAT:

- Enhanced NTD annual reporting would be probably be required, as well as monthly operating and safety/security reporting.

- Annual reports are required as part of the FTA's TEAM grants management.

- Participation in the FTA's Triennial Review process

As RTA staff is already well versed in these requirements, addressing them for SCAT would not be overly onerous.

Transportation Development Act Impacts

In order to qualify for funding under TDA (from either the LTF or STA fund), a transit claimant must maintain a minimum "farebox return ratio" (the ratio of fare revenues to operating cost). The "default" minimum value for urbanized areas is 20 percent. SLOCOG current policy is a minimum farebox ratio of 20 percent for urbanized areas, 10 percent for rural areas, and 16.2 percent for RTA. However, TDA does allow an RTPA (such as SLOCOG) to set the required ratio of fare revenues to operating cost as low as 15 percent for an operator in a county with a population of 500,000 or less (such as San Luis Obispo), and where "funds may be allocated under section 99400 of the Public Utilities Code" (Article 8 of the TDA). (TDA Section 6633.2(d)). At present, SCAT's farebox return ratio is approximately 14 percent.

The increase in minimum farebox return ratio applicable to the Five Cities area that would accompany urban designation could have significant implications for the service design and/or fare levels. Per PUC 99270.2, there would be a five year grace period for the Five Cities area as a new urbanized area to meet the 20 percent minimum farebox ratio. Beyond the life of this plan, SCAT would need to conform to the new minimum farebox return ratio, or face "penalties" (essentially, reductions in available TDA revenues). Considering only the current service plan and fare structure, this would require reductions in unproductive services, increase in passenger fares, or both. As shown in Table 39, the financial plan developed for South County indicates that the farebox return ratio would increase to between 15.5 to 16.0 percent and thus a 3.5 to 4.0 percent increase would be needed.

As the designation of the Five Cities area as a UZA is very uncertain at present, this assumption is not reflected in the base financial plan presented above. If 5307 funding were to be made available as part of UZA designation, it would significantly expand the level of Federal funding available to the SCAT program. As it would be available to match other local transit operating funds (particularly TDA funds) on a dollar-for-dollar basis, the level of TDA funding provided by the SCAT local jurisdictions for transit operations (both existing as well as the improvements identified in this plan) might be reduced subject to a policy decision on the future transit service levels and associated capital projects. Remaining 5307 allocations to the Five Cities area would be available (with a 20 percent local match) for transit capital purposes.

The change in minimum farebox return ratio could also affect the feasibility of expanding public transit services beyond the level included in this plan. One element of SLOCOG's policy regarding transit needs that are reasonable to meet (if requested as an unmet need) is the following:

"The request is projected to generate the required farebox ratio (10% rural, 20% urban, 16.2% RTA) by the third year demonstrating continuous progress after the first and second year."

The service alternatives evaluated as part of this plan (but not included in the plan) can be assessed against this policy, to identify if there are further service enhancements that could be found to be "reasonable to meet" if the additional 5307 funding were to be available. Considering the farebox revenue and operating costs for individual alternatives shown in Table 24 of Chapter 9, the farebox return ratio for individual alternatives are estimated to be as follows:

- Reinstate Service to 9:30 PM on Weekdays -- 7.1 percent
- 30 Minute Headways from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM on Weekdays -- 8.3 percent
- 30 Minute Headways in Peak Periods (7:00-9:00 AM and 2:00PM -4:00 PM) -- 10.6 percent

As shown, none of these service enhancements would meet even a lowered minimum farebox return ratio of 15 percent. While the estimated farebox return ratios for the alternatives could potentially be increased somewhat by fare increases, it is very doubtful that 15 percent could be achieved without fare levels that would be unacceptably high. However, an operator (such as the SCAT Board) could choose to use a combination of 5307, LTF and other funding to implement service expansions outside of the "reasonable to meet" process, so long as systemwide minimum farebox requirements are attained.

Appendix A
Survey Instruments and Detailed Survey Results

INTRODUCTION

Onboard passenger surveys were conducted for South County Area Transit fixed-routes 21, 23 and 24 on May 25 and 26, 2010, and on the Avila Trolley on May 29 and July 24, 2010. Surveyors were placed on 100 percent of runs operated over the course of a day, though not all runs were surveyed on the same day. The survey forms consisted of a single sheet with questions in English on one side and Spanish on the other. A detailed survey results, followed by a copy of the survey forms are provided in this appendix.

ONBOARD PASSENGER SURVEY RESULTS

All passengers boarding buses with surveyors during the survey period were asked to complete a one page questionnaire. A total of 225 useful survey forms were collected, as follows:

Route 21	53 forms (43 in English, 10 in Spanish)
Route 23	74 forms (57 in English, 17 in Spanish)
Route 24	63 forms (51 in English, 12 in Spanish)
Route 25	22 forms (20 in English, 2 in Spanish)
Total Fixed-routes	212 forms (171 in English, 41 in Spanish)
Avila Trolley	28 forms (27 in English, 1 in Spanish)
Total Surveys	240 forms (198 in English, 42 in Spanish)

In total, 19 percent of the surveys on the fixed-routes were completed in Spanish and 81 percent in English, while just one of the trolley surveys were completed in Spanish. The survey response by fixed route is shown in Figure 1. Straight tabulations of survey responses for the fixed-routes are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

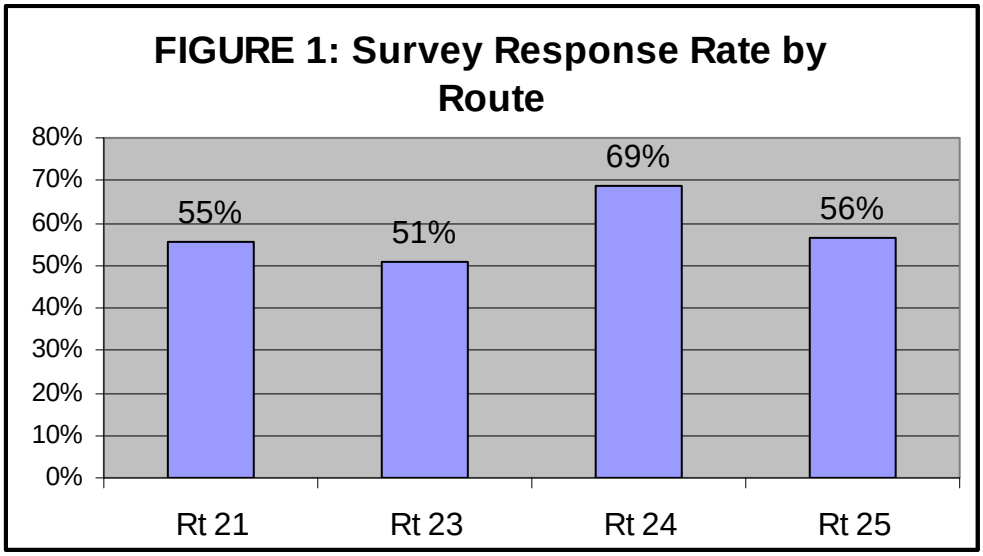


TABLE 1: Responses to Routes 21, 23, 24 and 25 Onboard Surveys

Questions 1, 2 and 5 through 11

Questions: **Answers:**

1 What time did you board the bus?

AM Times	**5:29-6:29**	**6:29-7:29**	**7:29-8:29**	**8:29-9:29**	**9:29-10:29**	**10:29-11:29**	**11:29-12:29**
Numer of Respondents	3	28	17	20	12	13	16
Percent of Respondents	1%	13%	8%	9%	6%	6%	7%

PM Times	**12:29-1:29**	**1:29-2:29**	**2:29-3:29**	**3:29-4:29**	**4:29-5:29**	**5:29-6:29**	**6:29-7:29**	**ALL**
Numer of Respondents	21	11	31	18	10	10	7	**217**
Percent of Respondents	10%	5%	14%	8%	5%	5%	3%	

2 How did you get to the bus?	**Walked**	**Bicycled**	**Transferred**	**Other**	**Sum**
Number of Responses	157	14	26	8	**205**
Percent of Responses	77%	7%	13%	4%	

5 How will you get to destination?	**Walk**	**Bicycle**	**Transfer**	**Other**	**Sum**
Number of Respondents	138	17	36	5	**196**
Percent of Respondents	70%	9%	18%	3%	

6 Are you traveling round trip today?	**Yes**	**No**	**Sum**
Number of Respondents	101	69	**170**
Percent of Respondents	59%	41%	

7 What is the main purpose of this trip?	**Work**	**Recreation**	**School/College**	**Medical**
Number of Respondents	79	15	73	14
Percent of Respondents	33%	6%	30%	6%

	Shopping	**Personal**	**Sum**
Number of Respondents	19	40	**240**
Percent of Respondents	8%	17%	

8 How often do you ride the bus?	**4x+/week**	**1-3x/week**	**1-3x/month**	**<1x/month**	**Sum**
Number of Respondents	130	32	31	6	**199**
Percent of Respondents	65%	16%	16%	3%	

9 How did you pay for your fare today?	**Cash**	**SCAT Day Pass**	**Monthly Pass**	**Reg. Day Pass**	**Reg. ALL Pass**
Number of Respondents	123	11	22	8	18
Percent of Respondents	61%	5%	11%	4%	9%

	VIP Pass	**Punch Pass**	**Other**	**Sum**
Number of Respondents	4	7	4	**201**
Percent of Respondents	2%	3%	2%	

10 How would you make trip if no SCAT?	**Ride**	**Drive**	**Hitch**	**Walk**	**Bike**	**No trip**	**Other**	**Sum**
Number of Respondents	57	9	5	84	31	27	3	**216**
Percent of Respondents	26%	4%	2%	39%	14%	13%	1%	

11 How long have you been using SCAT?	**1st time**	**<6mo**	**6mo-yr**	**year+**	**Sum**
Number of Respondents	3	25	47	124	**199**
Percent of Respondents	2%	13%	24%	62%	

Source: Data collected onboard May 26 and 27, 2010. LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE 2: Responses to Routes 21, 23, 24 and 25 Onboard Surveys

Questions 12 through 22

Questions: **Answers**

12	Opinion of Service?	Number of Respondents answering *1 = poor to 4 = excellent*				
		1	2	3	4	Average
	Driver Courtesy	4	11	61	107	3.5
	On-time	4	19	73	89	3.3
	Frequency	13	21	63	81	3.2
	Trip duration	10	26	64	79	3.2
	Cost of Bus fares	16	30	60	70	3.0
	Bus Cleanliness	3	12	43	124	3.6
	Crowding	12	22	57	80	3.2
	Safety	2	4	52	123	3.6
	Convenience of Transfers	4	12	58	101	3.5
	Walking distance	12	12	62	87	3.3

13	Overall ranking of service?	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Average
	Number of Respondents	1	26	89	79	3.3

14	How do you get info on SCAT?	Sched	Driver	Friend	Phone	Web	Other	Total
	Number of Respondents	111	27	26	24	14	3	**205**
	Percent of Respondents	54%	13%	13%	12%	7%	1%	

15	Require a Wheelchair Lift?	Yes	No	Total
	Number of Respondents	4	183	187
	Percent of Respondents	2%	98%	

16	Disability limiting driving?	Yes	No	Total
	Number of Respondents	26	162	188
	Percent of Respondents	14%	86%	

17	Have a driver's license?	Yes	No	Total
	Number of Respondents	60	121	181
	Percent of Respondents	33%	67%	

18	Car available for trip?	Yes	No	Total
	Number of Respondents	25	158	183
	Percent of Respondents	14%	86%	

19	Gender?	Male	Female	Total
	Number of Respondents	78	91	169
	Percent of Respondents	46%	54%	

20	Age group?	6-11	12-18	19-25	25-44	45-64	65+	Total
	Number of Respondents	1	54	26	61	31	19	**192**
	Percent of Respondents	1%	28%	14%	32%	16%	10%	

21	Occupation	Full Time	Part Time	Home	Student	Retired
	Number of Respondents	42	28	11	47	20
	Percent of Respondents	25%	16%	6%	28%	12%
	Occupation (cont)	**Not Employed**		**Unable to work**		**Total**
	Number of Respondents	12		10		**170**
	Percent of Respondents	7%		6%		

22	Income	<$20K	$20-30K	$30-50K	$50K+	Total
	Number of Respondents	91	34	11	9	145
	Percent of Respondents	63%	23%	8%	6%	

Source: Data collected onboard May 26 and 27, 2010. LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

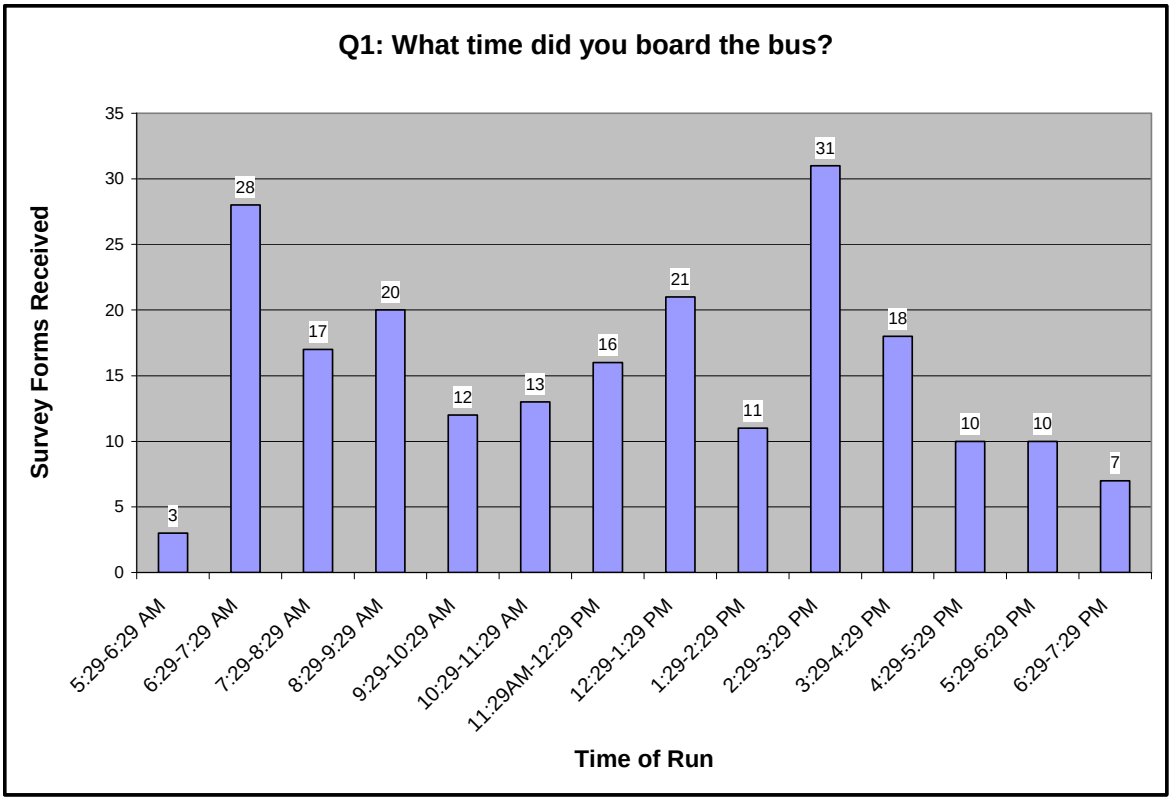
SURVEY RESULTS FOR FIXED-ROUTES 21, 23, 24 AND 25

Passenger Surveys

Surveys were conducted over two service days in order to survey all runs on all routes. Ridership statistics for the days of the survey show an average of 516 passenger-trips per day. Given the percentage of respondents who said they were making a roundtrip, it can be estimated this equates to no more than approximately 380 individual passengers. Therefore, the overall response rate for the fixed-route survey was 57 percent, or 42 percent of all passenger-trips. Given that the majority of passengers make round trips and choose to only fill out the survey once, this indicates that a substantial majority of persons using the service on the survey day provided a completed survey. This response rate gives a strong level of representation. Route 24 had the highest response rate, followed by Route 25 and Route 21, with Route 23 showing the lowest response rate.

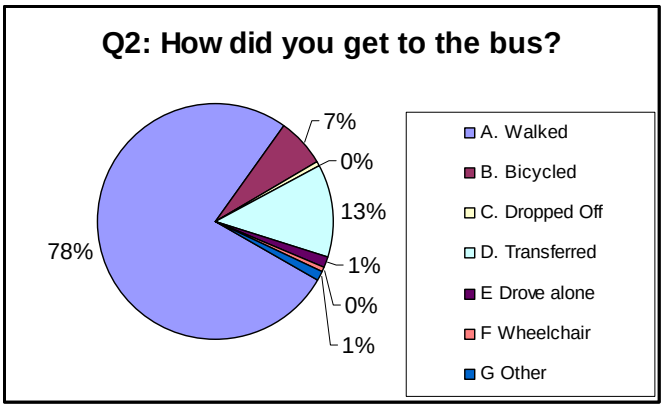
Q1: What time did you board this bus?

Respondents boarded the bus throughout the day, but the busiest survey response times were during the 2:29 PM to 3:29 PM run, with 31 responses including 22 from the Arroyo Grande High School Tripper. The next highest response rate was the 6:29 AM to 7:29 AM run.



Q2: How did you get to this bus?

Most passengers (77 percent) walked to the bus, while 13 percent transferred from another bus, and 7 percent bicycled. A few passengers used other modes. Of those who transferred, 13 respondents transferred from Route 10, while 12 respondents transferred from Routes 21, 23 or 24.

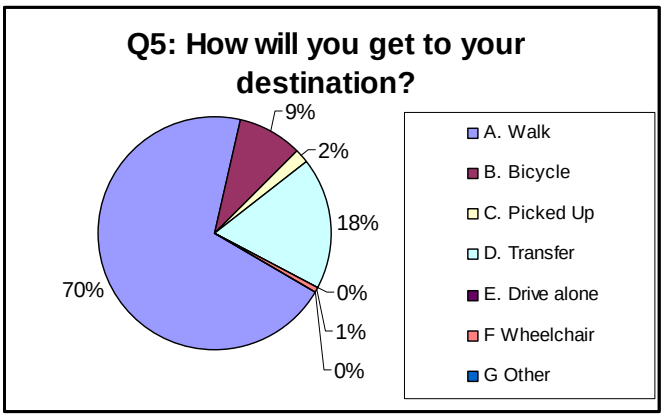


Q3: Where did you get on this bus? Q4: Where will you get off this bus?

Boarding and alighting data summarized later shows which stops are used most and least. Questions 3 and 4 give some indication of travel patterns by showing some of the more common trips. A cross tabulation of the data shows that passengers travelling from Arroyo Grande High School were often going to stops along Grand Avenue, or to Oceano. Passengers at Dolliver and Price and in Oceano (Wilmar and 19th) were most frequently traveling to Ramona Gardens. Other than these trends, and the pattern of travel to the Outlets and Ramona Gardens, no significant patterns of travel were apparent.

Q5: How will you get to your destination after you get off this bus?

When asked how they would get to their destination, the pattern was similar to the responses to Question 2, though more said they would transfer or bicycle, and fewer would walk.



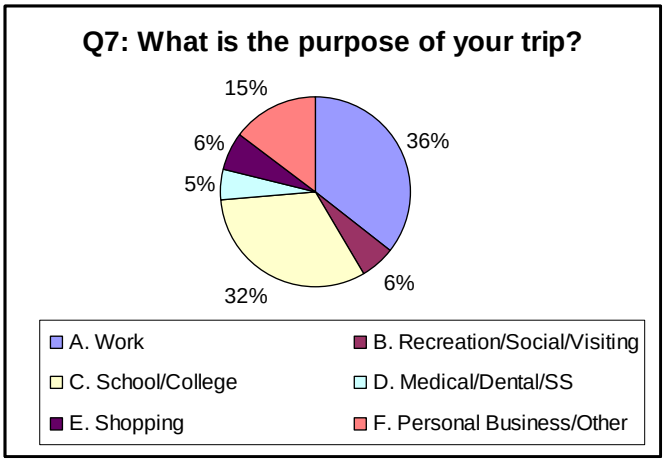
The results of Q2 and Q5, evaluated together, indicate the overall pattern of transfer activity between routes. Considering all valid responses regarding transfers both to and from the bus on which the survey was completed, 19 percent of surveyed SCAT passengers transferred on at least one end of their trip (18 percent on one end only, and 1 percent on both ends), while 81 percent did not transfer. Of those transferring, the following route pairs were reported:

Transferring between Route 24 and Route 10	28 percent
Transferring between Route 21 and Route 10	24 percent
Transferring between Route 23 and Route 24	22 percent
Transferring between Route 21 and Route 23	15 percent
Transferring between Route 23 and Route 10	9 percent
Transferring between Route 25 and Route 21	2 percent

Of all transfer activity, 61 percent was to/from Route 10 (or 12 percent of all SCAT passengers), while 39 percent (or 8 percent of all SCAT passengers) transferred between SCAT buses.

Q6: Are you travelling roundtrip by bus today?

Passengers were asked if they were traveling by roundtrip in order to get a clearer understanding of travel patterns. Approximately 59 percent of passengers said they were traveling by roundtrip (not including Route 25).



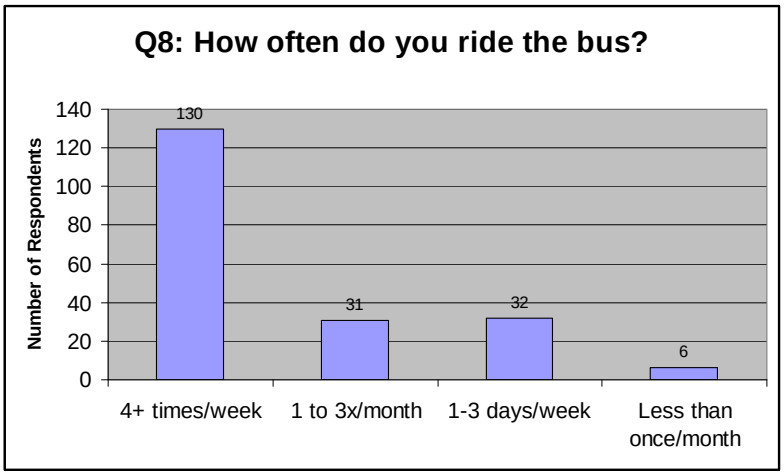
Q7: What is the main purpose of this trip?

When asked what the purpose of their trip was, the highest numbers of respondents were going to work (36 percent) or school/college (32 percent), reflecting the economic value of the SCAT services. Additionally, 15 percent of the trips were for personal business, while 5 to 6 percent were shopping, recreational/personal or medical/dental.

Trip purposes were also tabulated by route, with passengers following the same general trend on most routes. However, on Route 21, a higher percentage of passengers were traveling for recreation (13 percent, compared with 3 to 4 percent on Routes 23 and 24). Additionally, a higher percentage of passengers were traveling for school on Route 23 (36 percent, compared to 20 to 21 percent on Routes 21 and 24). Also, on Route 23, only 1 percent said they were traveling for medical or dental purposes, compared with 8 to 10 percent on Routes 21 and 24 respectively.

Q8: How often do you ride the bus?

When asked how often they use the bus, an overwhelming majority (65 percent) said they use the bus 4 or more times per week. Another 16 percent each use the bus 1 to 3 times per week, or 1 to 3 times per month. Only 3 percent use the bus service less than one day per month. There is a strong pattern of repeat ridership.



Q9: How did you pay for your fare?

The majority (62 percent) of respondents said they paid cash for their fare. Another 11 percent used a monthly pass, 9 percent used a regional ALL Pass, 6 percent used a SCAT day pass, 4 percent used a regional day pass, 4 percent used a punch pass, 2 percent used a VIP pass, and 2 percent reported "other." Note that not all passengers reporting that they used a form of fare valid on both SCAT and other RTA services necessarily transferred to/from RTA as part of their specific surveyed trips, while other passengers using forms of fare not valid on other RTA services may have transferred to/from RTA by paying an additional fare.

Q10: How would you make this trip if SCAT was not available?

Passengers were asked how they would make their trip if SCAT were not available. Approximately 39 percent said they would walk, 26 percent said they would get a ride with someone, 14 percent said they would bike, and 13 percent said they would not make their trip.

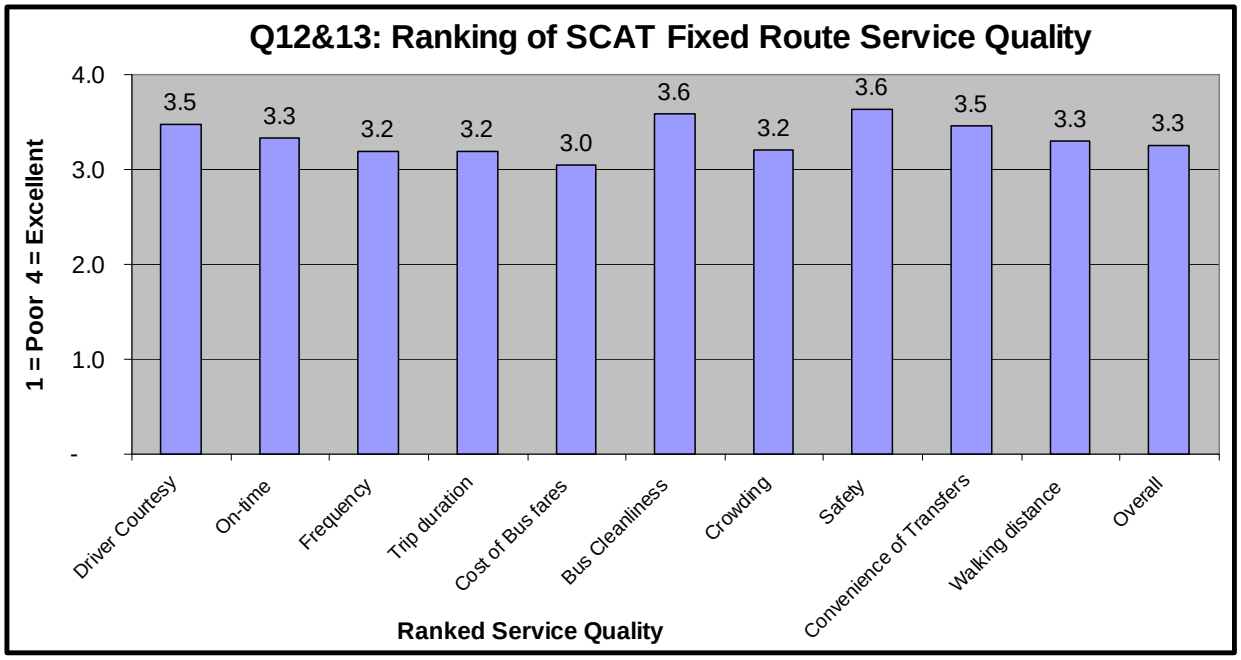
Q11: How long have you been using the bus?

Passengers were asked how long they have been using the SCAT service. The majority (62 percent) said more than a year. In addition, 24 percent had been using the service for 6 months to a year, and 13 percent had been using the service for under 6 months, while 2 percent were first time SCAT users.

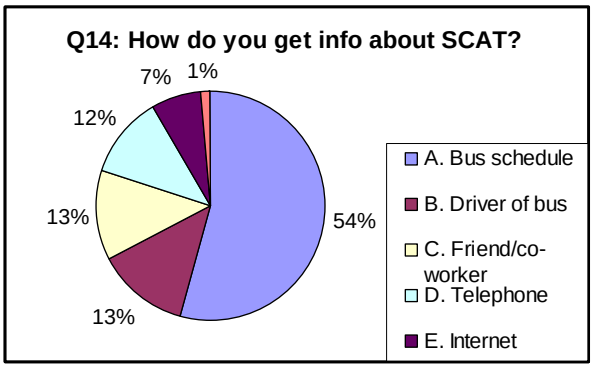
Q12: Indicate your opinion of the fixed-route service from 1 to 4 using the list below (1 = poor; 4 = Excellent) Q13: How does SCAT service rate overall?

Passengers were asked to rank service quality factors on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent. As shown in Table 2, overall service quality was ranked 3.3. The highest ranked service factors were bus cleanliness and safety (each with an average of 3.6), driver courtesy and convenience of transferring (each with an average score of 3.5). The lowest performing service factor was the cost of fares (3.0), followed by service frequency, trip duration and crowding, each receiving an average score of 3.2.

When asked how they would rate SCAT service overall, almost half of the respondents rated it as excellent (46 percent), 40 percent ranked it as good, 13 percent ranked it as fair, and only one person (less than 1 percent) ranked it as poor. The average score on a 4.0 scale was 3.3. In the Consultant's experience with passenger satisfaction surveys of similar transit programs, these results reflect a generally high level of satisfaction among SCAT riders, with no undue service quality issues. In particular, the passengers consider the system to be safe and clean, and have a high opinion of drivers. Areas that have relatively high proportions of passengers expressing poor opinions are the cost of fares, service frequency, crowding, and walk distance to stops.



Q14: How do you get information about SCAT?



The majority of passengers get service information from the schedule (54 percent). Between 12 and 13 percent each obtain their information from the driver, a friend or coworker, or by telephone. Only 7 percent use the internet to get information, and 1 percent cited other sources including bus stop bulletin boards and email.

Q15: Do you require the wheelchair lift to board or exit the bus?

Only 4 of 187 respondents (2 percent) said they need a wheelchair lift to board or exit the bus.

Q16: Do you have a disability that limits driving?

A sizeable percentage (14) of the respondents stated that they have a disability which limits driving.

Q17: Do you have a driver's license?

60 respondents had a driver's license (33 percent) and 121 did not (67 percent).

Q18: Did you have a car available for this trip?

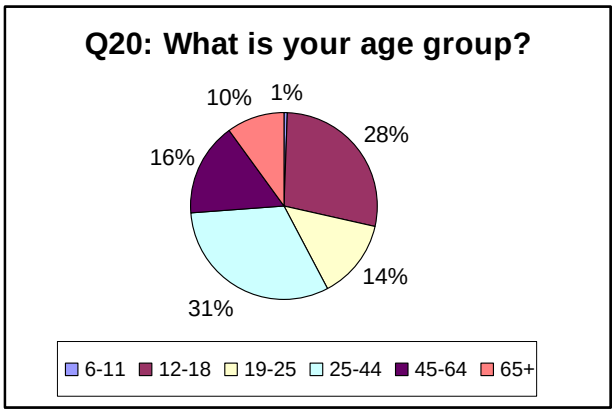
Only 25 respondents had a vehicle available (14 percent) while 158 did not (86 percent). This is a strong indicator of transit dependency.

Q19: Are you male or female?

Of 169 respondents who answered this question, 46 percent of passengers were male and 54 percent female.

Q20: What is your age?

The highest percentage of respondents were adults between the ages of 25 and 44 (31 percent), with 28 percent aged 12 to 18, 16 percent aged 45 to 64, and 14 percent aged 19to 25. Only 10 percent were elderly (65 or older).

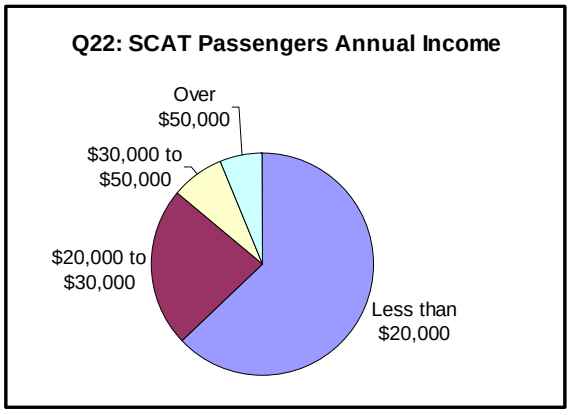


Q21: What is your occupation?

Passengers were asked to describe their occupation from a list: 28 percent described themselves as students; 25 percent of passengers said they work full-time, and 16 percent work part-time; 12 percent were retired, 12 percent were not employed, and 6 percent each were homemakers or said they were unable to work.

Q22: What is your family's annual income?

Passengers were asked to choose a range that described their family's annual income. While only two thirds responded to this question, the overwhelming majority (63 percent) indicated their household income was less than $20,000. On the other hand, 6 percent were members of households with more than $50,000 in annual income.



Q23: What is your home zip code?

Passengers were asked to give their home zip codes, as shown in Table 3. Not surprisingly, 90 percent of passengers were from the Five Cities area. Another 6 percent were from within San Luis Obispo County, and the remaining 4 percent were from other areas in Southern California and the Central Valley.

TABLE 3: Respondents Home Zip Code (Question 23)

Zip Code	# Respondents	% Respondents
Oceano	48	34%
Grover Beach	44	31%
Arroyo Grande	23	16%
Pismo Beach	11	8%
San Luis Obispo	4	3%
Harmony	2	1%
Nipomo	2	1%
Santa Maria	2	1%
Reseda	1	1%
Port Hueneme	1	1%
Atascadero	1	1%
Avila Beach	1	1%
Bradley	1	1%
Fowler	1	1%
	142	100%

Source: SCAT onboard passenger surveys, May 2010.

Q24: What service or customer improvements would you like to see?

Passengers were asked which customer service improvements they would like to see, with subcategories including service frequency, location of services, as well as specific times for increased services.

In regards to increased frequency, 12 comments addressed the need for increased service, and 9 comments addressed a desire for increased span of service. In particular, passengers wish for 30 minute frequency, as well as later evening or night service. Table 4 summarizes the requests for additional hours of service. Other comments addressed crowding (especially when school is let out in the afternoon); a need for additional stops between existing stops (Price and Grand were specifically mentioned); information provided in Spanish, and better communication.

Asked where passengers would like to see new or extended routes, specific areas that were mentioned included:

- Avila Beach (during the week)
- Better service to Oceano
- Grover Beach
- Nipomo (multiple comments)
- On the Mesa (south of Oceano)
- Pismo Library
- North of Grand in Grover Beach
- New medical areas

TABLE 4: Desired Service Time Improvements	# Responses	% Responses
Earlier Weekday Service	13	8.8%
Later Weekday Service	42	28.4%
Earlier Saturday Service	16	10.8%
Later Saturday Service	43	29.1%
Earlier Sunday Service	29	19.6%
Other	5	3.4%
	148	100.0%

Source: SCAT onboard passenger surveys, May 2010.

- Throughout the City
- Trader Joes
- More frequent service to Wal-Mart

Specific street locations passengers would like to see served included:

- 13th Street
- 4th Street
- James Way and Whitecap Street
- Branch Street next to the Women's Club
- Closer stop on Grand Theater and Chevron

Other requested improvements included more peak service (when high schoolers are on routes) and more than 3 runs per day on Route 10 on weekends.

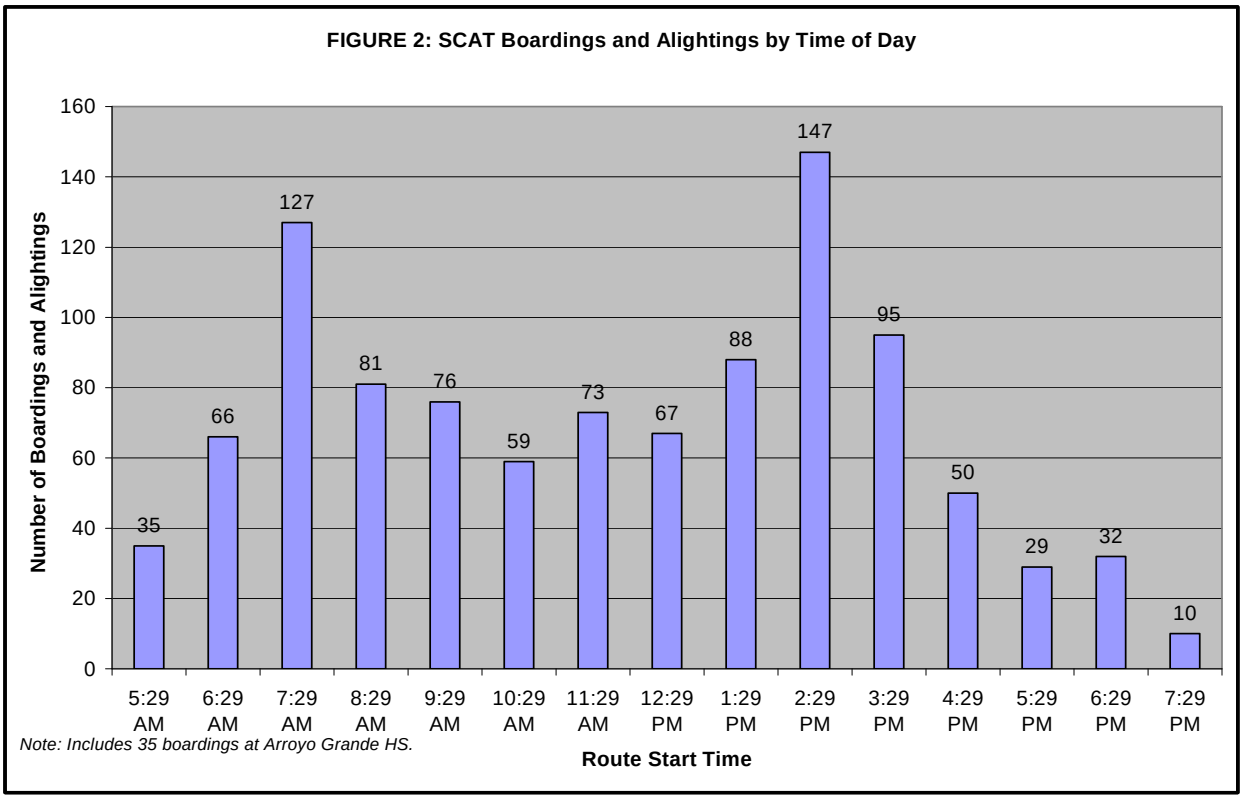
Additional comments received as part of the onboard surveys are presented in Appendix B.

BOARDING AND ALIGHTING SURVEYS FOR ROUTES 21, 23, AND 24

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. conducted boarding and alighting counts for each run over two days (May 26 and 27, 2010). Additionally, SCAT drivers completed boarding and alighting counts for eight days, from Saturday, April 10, 2010, to Saturday, April 17, 2010. A summary of the boarding and alighting counts are discussed below.

Boarding and Alightings by Time of Day

The boarding and alighting data collected by LSC was summarized by time of day, as shown in Figure 2. The data includes a count of all passengers boarding and alighting by stop on each



route, summarized by hour. As indicated, the busiest run of the day began at 2:29 PM, which had 76 boardings and 76 alightings, including 43 boardings at Arroyo Grande High School. The data indicates a second peak during the 7:29 AM run, which also includes 35 alightings at the high school. The 5:29 AM run and 7:29 PM run only reflect Route 23 ridership, as Routes 21 and 24 are not in service at that time. Ridership drops substantially after the 4:29 PM run.

Boarding and Alightings by Stop

The boarding and alighting data collected by SCAT for a week in April provides details regarding which stops received the highest and lowest activity. Table 5 shows the busiest stops by route, and for all three routes combined. Not surprisingly, the Ramona Gardens Transfer Center stop in Grover Beach is the busiest for each route and for the combined routes, followed by the Prime Outlets stop in Pismo Beach and Wal-Mart and Arroyo Grande High School in Arroyo Grande. Other busy stops (with 20 or more boardings/alightings per weekday) include Grand Avenue at 16th Street and 21st Street in Arroyo Grande, Dolliver at Pomeroy in Shell Beach, and 19th Street at Wilmar in Oceano.

This same data identifies stops which receive very little activity, as shown in Table 6. There were seven stops which on average had no activity on a typical weekday, including:

- The stop across from Bolsa Chica Mobile Home Park in Arroyo Grande
- Across from Le Sage Drive in Grover Beach
- Mattie Road at Valencia in Pismo Beach
- Huasna Road across from Stanley Drive

- Huasna Road at Bolsa Chica Mobile Home Park in Arroyo Grande
- Highway 1 at Le Sage Drive in Grover Beach

By plotting the boarding and alighting data on a map, sections of routes with high or low activity can be identified, as shown in Figure 3. The figure illustrates the low patronage on Route 24 beyond Arroyo Grande Village on Huasna Road to Strother Park, with only one passenger-trip on an average weekday. Ridership is also low on James Way west of Kmart.

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE SURVEY RESULTS FOR ROUTES 21, 23, AND 24

Surveyors also recorded on-time performance data. For each route, departure times were recorded at key stops including the Ramona Gardens Transfer Center and Prime Outlets, and seven to eight additional time points for each route. The vehicles were considered on-time if they departed the stop at or up to five minutes after the scheduled time. The vehicles were considered late if they left later than five minutes past the scheduled time, and were considered early if they left a minute or more before the scheduled time. As shown in Figure 4, routes were on time 82 percent of the time, while they were late 3 percent of the time and left the stops early 15 percent of the time. This poor on-time performance is significantly affected by the number of early departures. When conducting in-house on-time performance checks, SCAT only tracks performance at the Ramona Gardens Transfer Center. Because each stop has a published departure time, it is essential that vehicles do not leave prior to the published time.

On-time performance could probably be easily improved by revising the schedule to more accurately reflect the times routes are at stops. For example, Route 24 vehicles left the stop at Highway 1 and Le Sage early by 1 to 3 minutes on seven of thirteen runs, and left the stop 3 minutes after scheduled only once, suggesting the schedule should show a later departure time from this stop. On Route 23, vehicles departed the stop on East Branch at El Camino early four times, and on Route 21 the bus left prior to departure on Price Street at Shelter Cove five times and left Kmart early six times. In addition to adjusting stop times, when SCAT evaluates on-time performance, they should use a minimum of ten time checks per hour.

On-Time Performance at Pismo Outlets

The on-time performance at the Prime Outlets was particularly important to track because this stop offers timed transfers between RTA Route 10 and SCAT Routes 21 and 24. Both northbound and southbound Route 10 is scheduled to arrive and depart on the hour on weekdays. Routes 21 and 24 are scheduled to arrive on the hour and depart three minutes after the hour, providing a narrow window for transfers either to or from RTA. Surveyors, in most instances, recorded the arrival and departure time of the Route 21 and 24 buses at Pismo Outlets.

The on-time performance at the Pismo Outlets is depicted in Figure 5. Early and late arrivals and departures are shown for both routes. As indicated, the most significant performance issues occur during commute traffic between 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

TABLE 5: Busiest SCAT Transit Stops

Route 21 Top Ten Busiest Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Ramona Gardens Park	49	47	96
Prime Outlets	21	36	57
Dolliver @ Pomeroy	5	18	23
Wal-Mart Shelter	13	10	23
Grand @ 16th Street	6	14	20
Shell Beach RD @ Spyglass	5	6	11
Shell Beach Rd @ Pier	7	5	11
5th Street @ Grand	8	2	10
Grand @ Courtland	7	6	13
Grand @ Barnett	9	0	9

Route 23 Top Ten Busiest Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Ramona Gardens Park	69	49	118
Arroyo Grande High School	5	49	55
21st St	12	12	24
19th St @ Wilmar	17	5	22
Oceano Train Depot	13	5	18
Halcyon (AG Hospital)	7	12	19
25th St	8	5	13
Elm Street Park	4	7	11
16th St	6	4	9
Oceano Airport	5	3	8

Route 24 Top Ten Busiest Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Ramona Gardens Park	57	32	88
Wal-Mart Shelter	15	18	33
Prime Outlets	27	16	42
Grand @ 16th Street	7	10	17
James Way @ Oak Park	3	10	13
Price @ Hinds	6	6	13
Dolliver @ Hinds	8	2	10
Grand @ Alder	3	6	8
Grand @ Oak Park Blvd	2	7	8
Grand @ Elm Street	3	4	8

SCAT Routes Top Twenty Busiest Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Ramona Gardens Park	171	142	313
Prime Outlets	48	52	100
Wal-Mart Shelter	43	46	89
Arroyo Grande High School	5	49	55
Grand @ 16th Street	13	24	36
21st St	12	12	24
Dolliver @ Pomeroy	5	18	23
19th St @ Wilmar	17	5	22
Halcyon(AG Hospital)	7	12	19
Oceano Train Depot	13	5	18
25th St	8	5	13
James Way @ Oak Park	3	10	13
Grand @ Courtland	7	6	13
Price @ Hinds	6	6	13
Shell Beach RD @ Spyglass	5	6	11
Shell Beach Rd @ Pier	7	5	11
Elm Street Park	4	7	11
Dolliver @ Hinds	8	2	10
5th Street, on the corner	8	2	10

Notes

Based on counts conducted from Saturday, April 10 to Saturday, April 17, 2010 by SCAT drivers.

Weekend counts showed similar patterns, with fewer passengers at Arroyo Grande High School, and more passengers around Price, Dolliver, and Hinds in Pismo Beach.

Source: Data collected by SCAT; compiled by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

TABLE 6: Lowest Activity SCAT Transit Stops

Route 21 Top Ten Least Busy Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Across From Le Sage Dr.	0	0	0
Mattie Rd @ Valencia	0	0	0
Mattie Rd @ City Hall	0	0	0
Shell Beach Rd @ Shelter Cove	0	1	1
N. 4th Street (stop after Outlets)	1	0	1
Mattie Rd @ Foothill	1	1	1
Across from Butterfly Trees	1	0	1
W. Branch @ Rodeo Dr	0	1	1
W. Branch @ Vernon	1	1	2
James Way @ Marlene Way	1	1	2

Route 23 Top Ten Least Busy Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Halcyon @ Sandalwood	1	0	1
El Camino @ The Park & Ride	1	1	2
Longbranch	2	0	2
Oak Park @ Farroll	1	0	1
Grand @ 7th St	1	1	2
Just before Grand	1	1	2
The Pike @ Garfield	2	2	4
4th St just before Grand	2	1	3
Oceano Senior Center	3	1	4
E. Branch @ W. Branch	1	2	3

Route 24 Top Ten Least Busy Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Across from Bolsa Chica MHP	0	0	0
Across from Stanley	0	0	0
Huasna Rd @ Bolsa Chica MHP	0	0	0
Hwy 1 @ LeSage	0	0	0
James Way @ Ridge	1	0	1
Huasna Rd @ Stanley	1	0	1
Struther Park	1	0	1
Dolliver @ Pismo Coast Village	1	0	1
James Way @ Highland	0	2	2
Hwy 1 across from Butterfly Trees	2	0	2

SCAT Routes Top Least Busy Stops

Stop Name/Location	Average Weekday On	Off	Total
Across from Bolsa Chica MHP	0	0	0
Across From Le Sage Dr.	0	0	0
Mattie Rd @ Valencia	0	0	0
Across from Stanley	0	0	0
Huasna Rd @ Bolsa Chica MHP	0	0	0
Hwy 1 @ Le Sage	0	0	0
Mattie Rd @ City Hall	0	0	0
Shell Beach Rd @ Shelter Cove	0	1	1
James Way @ Ridge	1	0	1
Huasna Rd @ Stanley	1	0	1
N. 4th Street (stop after Outlets)	1	0	1
Mattie Rd @ Foothill	1	1	1
Price St @ Lighthouse Inn	1	0	1
James Way @ Marlene Way	1	1	1
Halcyon @ Sandalwood	1	0	1
Struther Park	1	0	1
W. Branch @ Vernon	1	1	1
Price @ Lighthouse Inn	1	0	2
Hwy 1 across from Butterfly Trees	1	0	1

Notes

Based on counts conducted from Saturday, April 10 to Saturday, April 17, 2010 by SCAT drivers.

Weekend counts showed similar patterns, with fewer passengers at Arroyo Grande High School, and more passengers around Price, Dolliver, and Hinds in Pismo Beach.

Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

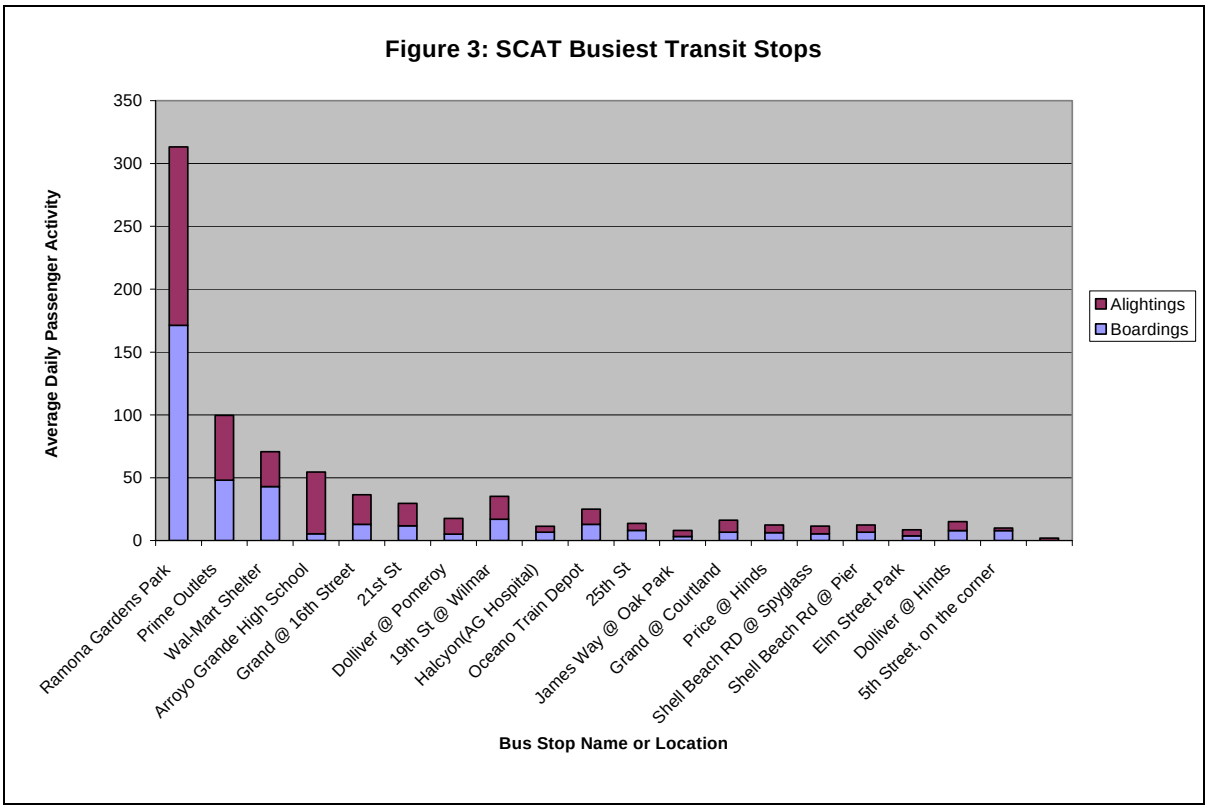


Figure 3: SCAT Busiest Transit Stops
Average Daily Passenger Activity
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
Alightings
Boardings
Ramona Gardens Park
Prime Outlets
Wal-Mart Shelter
Arroyo Grande High School
Grand @ 16th Street
21st St
Dolliver @ Pomeroy
19th St @ Wilmar
Halcyon(AG Hospital)
Oceano Train Depot
25th St
James Way @ Oak Park
Grand @ Courtland
Price @ Hinds
Shell Beach RD @ Spyglass
Shell Beach Rd @ Pier
Elm Street Park
Dolliver @ Hinds
5th Street, on the corner
Bus Stop Name or Location

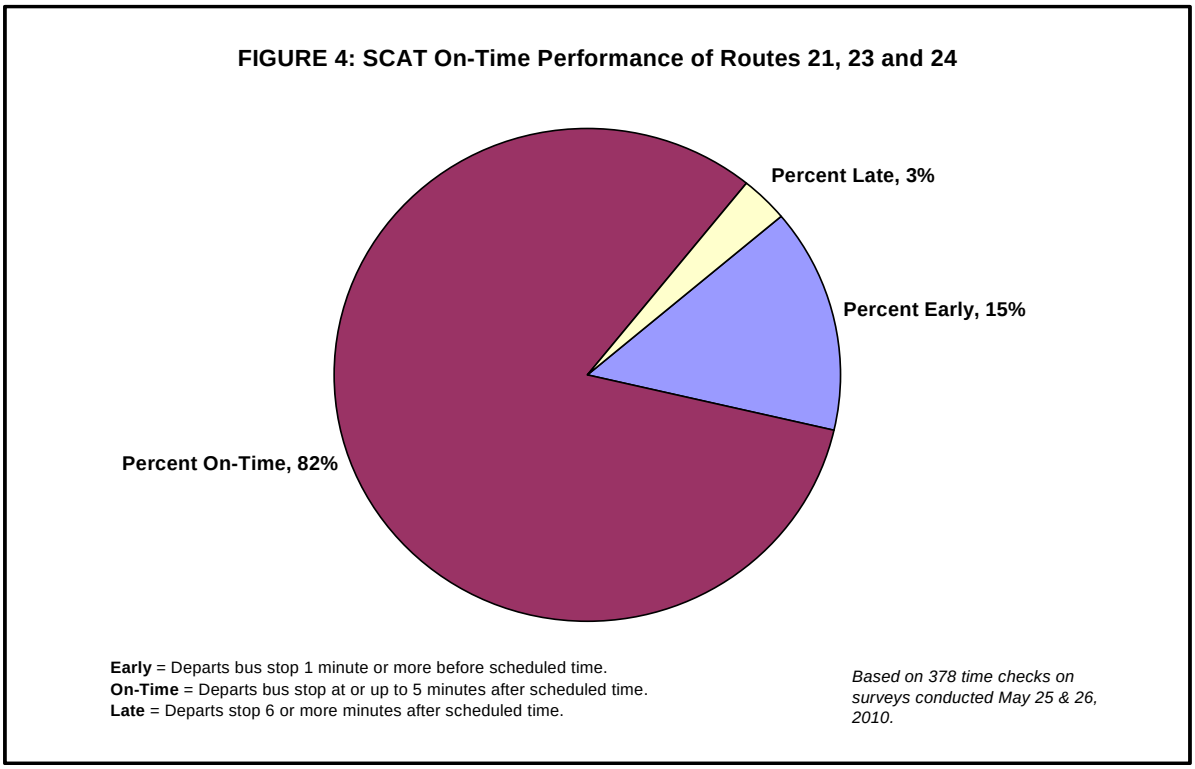
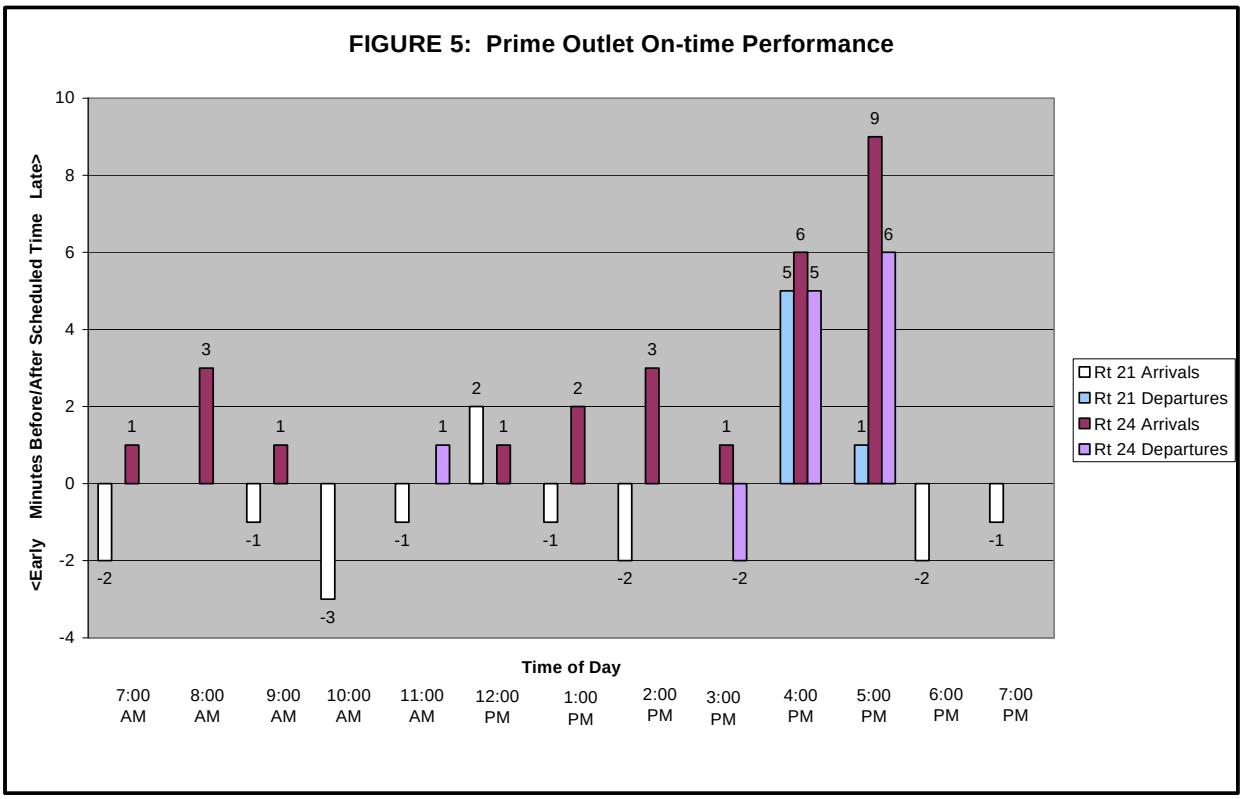


FIGURE 4: SCAT On-Time Performance of Routes 21, 23 and 24
Percent Late, 3%
Percent Early, 15%
Percent On-Time, 82%
Early = Departs bus stop 1 minute or more before scheduled time.
On-Time = Departs bus stop at or up to 5 minutes after scheduled time.
Late = Departs stop 6 or more minutes after scheduled time.
Based on 378 time checks on surveys conducted May 25 & 26, 2010.

The data indicates that Route 21 arrived at the Prime Outlets either on time, up to three minutes early, or in one instance 2 minutes late. Because the driver radioed ahead, the slightly late arrival was not an issue. Route 21 departed on schedule throughout the day, except on two runs. Route 21 departed the Prime Outlets at 4:08 PM instead of the scheduled 4:03 PM, and departed at 5:04 PM instead of the scheduled 5:03 PM, indicating no significant problems.

Route 24 arrived at Prime Outlets from one to nine minutes past the scheduled arrival time for most of the day. On two of thirteen runs the vehicle arrived 6 to 9 minutes late, which could cause passengers to miss Route 10 on the rare occasion that it is meeting its schedule. Route 24 departed the Prime Outlets late twice and early once.

The on-time performance analysis at the Prime Outlets was only a snapshot of data, and does not provide analysis of Route 10 performance. The data does indicate this particular stop has the potential to create significant schedule performance issues compared to the remainder of SCAT stops. However, during the surveying effort, communication with the RTA Route 10 drivers ensured that passengers were able to make their connections.



SURVEY RESULTS FOR THE AVILA TROLLEY

Passenger Surveys

Trolley surveys were conducted two Saturdays: May 29, 2010 (Memorial Day weekend) and the afternoon of July 24, 2010. On May 29, there were 61 passenger-trips (16 children, 45 adults).

As most passengers on the trolley travel roundtrip, this likely represents approximately 8 children and 22 to 28 adults. A total of 17 surveys were completed (by adults) representing an estimated 61 percent of all adult passengers for the day.

Because of errors in recording on-time performance in the afternoon of May 29, 2010, the survey was repeated in the afternoon of July 24, 2010. This effort netted 11 additional surveys. Ridership data was not available, so the response rate is uncertain. The straight tabulations of the combined survey efforts are presented in Tables 7 through 9.

Q1: What time did you board this bus?

Respondents boarded the bus throughout the day, but the busiest survey response times were from 4:00 to 5:00 PM (7 responses, or 25 percent of respondents) and from 11:00 AM to 12:00 noon (5 responses, or 18 percent of respondents).

Q2: How did you get to this bus?

Most passengers (22 respondents) walked to get to the trolley, while 5 drove in a group, and 1 drove alone.

Q3: Where did you get on this trolley? Q4: Where will you get off this trolley?

When asked where they boarded or planned to alight, the pattern showed that most passengers were traveling between Spyglass/Shell Beach and Avila Beach (essentially the beginning and end stops of the route). Several respondents also boarded at other locations: Ontario Road and Port San Luis) or planned to alight mid-route (Bob Jones Trail or San Miguel).

Q5: How will you get to your destination after you get off this trolley?

When asked how they would get to their destination, 25 individuals said they would walk, while 1 was planning to drive, and 1 was planning to be picked up.

Q6: Are you travelling roundtrip on the trolley today?

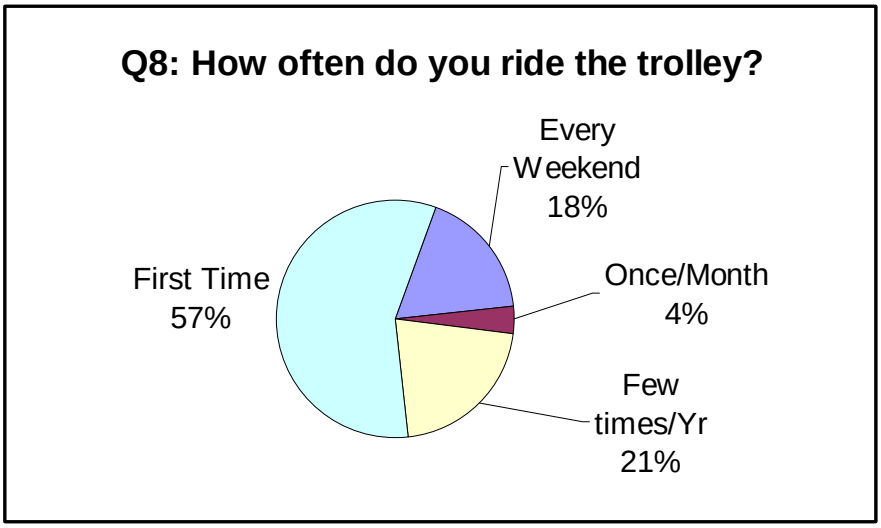
Passengers were asked if they were traveling by roundtrip in order to get a clearer understanding of travel patterns. Approximately 64 percent of passengers who responded said they were traveling by roundtrip.

Q7: What is the main purpose of this trip?

When asked what the purpose of their trip was, the highest number of respondents were using the trolley for recreation (18 responses) or sightseeing (8 responses) while 7 were traveling for social/visiting, 3 were traveling for shopping, and 2 were traveling for personal business. Numerous respondents cited several reasons for their trips.

Q8: How often do you ride the trolley?

When asked how often they use the trolley, the majority (16 respondents) said they were first time riders, while 6 ride a few times a year, 5 said they ride every weekend, and one respondent rides once a month.



Q9: How do you get information about the trolley?

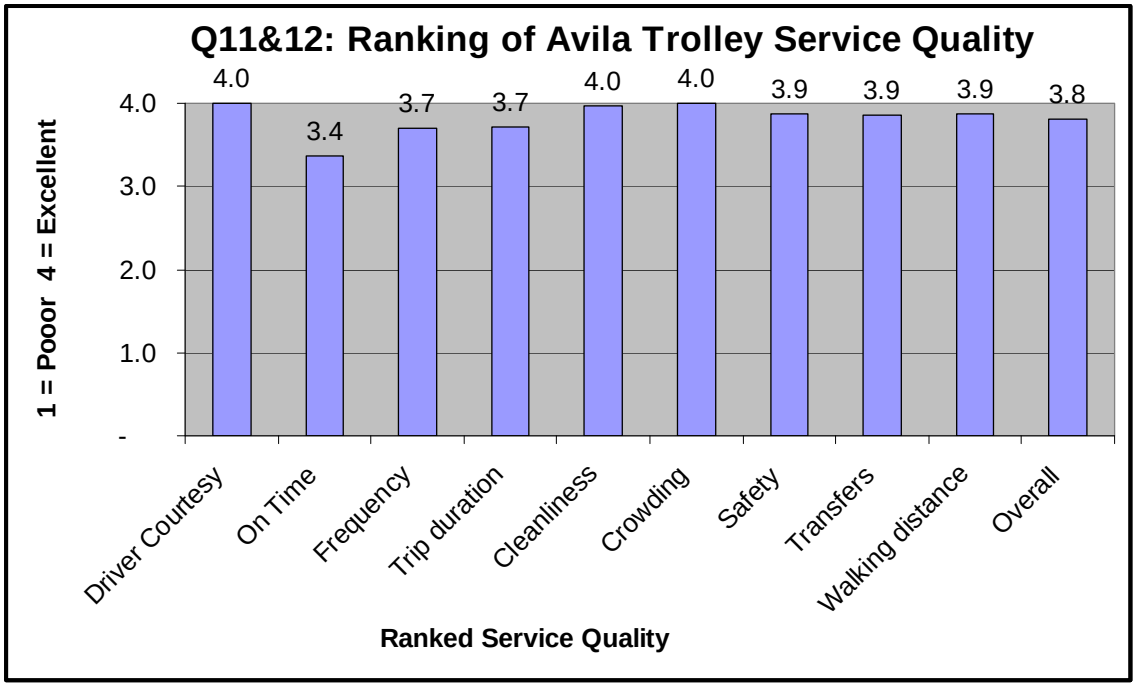
The most common source of information about the trolley came from the schedule (11 respondents), while equal numbers (5 respondents each) got information from friends/work, the web, or from the driver.

Q10: Which of the following best describes you?

When asked to describe themselves, 11 respondents said they were full time residents, and 11 more said they were overnight visitors. Two each said they were part time residents or day visitors.

Q11: Indicate your opinion of the Avila Trolley service from 1 to 4 using the list below (1 = poor; 4 = Excellent) Q12: How would you rank overall service?

Passengers were asked to rank service quality factors on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent. The average score was 3.8. Driver courtesy, trolley cleanliness and crowding on the trolley received all excellent (4) responses. Safety, convenience of transfers and walking distance all averaged 3.9. The lowest performing was on-time performance, which received 3.4, which was a generous score given the on-time performance issues during both survey dates. Overall service averaged 3.8. These high rankings indicate passengers are pleased with the current services.



Q13: Do you require the wheelchair lift to board or exit the trolley?

One of the 26 respondents who answered said they needed a wheelchair lift to board or exit the trolley.

Q14: Do you have a disability that limits driving? Q15: Do you have a driver's license? Q16: Did you have a car available for this trip?

Several (3) respondents said they have a disability that limits driving, and all but one of the respondents said they have a driver's license. However, 22 percent of respondents said they did not have a car available for the trip. Of those who did not have a vehicle available, four identified themselves as full time residents and two were overnight visitors.

Q17: Are you male or female?

Of 21 respondents answering this question, 11 were male, and 10 female.

Q18: What is your age?

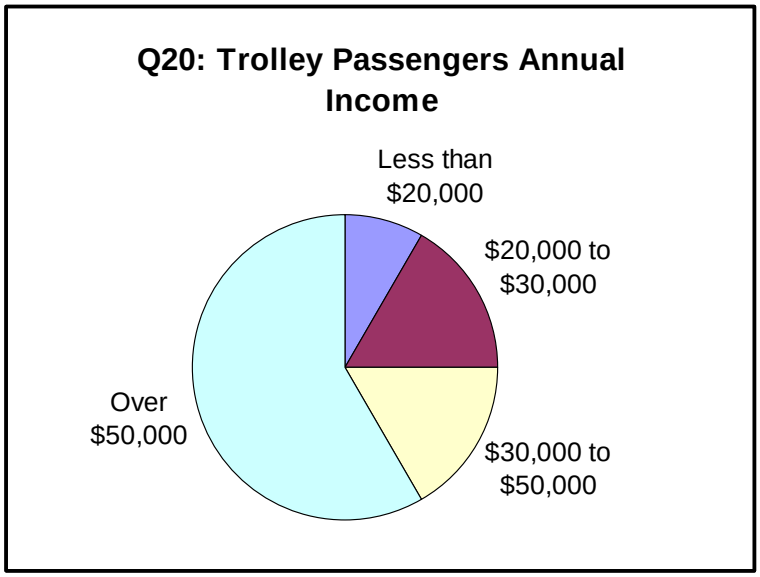
More than half of the respondents were between the ages of 25 and 44 (15 out of 28), followed by 6 who were between age 45 and 64, 5 who were age 19 to 25 and two who were over 65.

Q19: What is your occupation?

Passengers were asked to describe their occupation from a list: 13 passengers said they work full time; 5 were students, 3 were retired, 2 each said they were homemakers, worked part time, or were unemployed, and one was unable to work.

Q20: What is your family's annual income?

Passengers were asked to choose a range that described their family's annual income. The majority (14 of 24 respondents) said they had an income greater than $50,000 annually.



Q21: What zip code do you live in?

Passengers listed their residential zip code. The most represented zip code was Pismo Beach (5 respondents), with a total of 7 respondents in the Five Cities area, 4 more from San Luis Obispo County, and 11 from other California counties. Two respondents were from Germany.

Q22: What service or customer improvements would you like to see? Q23: Additional Comments?

When asked what customer improvements passengers would like to see, respondents suggested: service should start one hour earlier and run two hours later; provide night service; operate every 20 minutes on weekends; serve the Pismo Pier; provide earlier weekend service. Additional comments offered praise for the service and drivers, and suggested smoking/non-smoking areas be provided (presumably at the stops).

BOARDING AND ALIGHTING DATA FOR THE AVILA TROLLEY

Surveyors counted passengers getting on and off at each stop during the survey. As shown in Figure 6, the majority of boardings and alightings took place at the start and terminus of the Trolley Route: 57 out of 113 recorded boardings/alightings took place at the Avila Beach stop; and 22 boardings and alightings occurred at the stop at Shell Beach Road and Spyglass Road. A fair number (16) also boarded/alighted at Port San Luis and at Avila Hot Springs/Ocean Canyon Resort (12). None of the other stops had more than one or two boardings/alightings, and several stops had no passenger activity during the survey. These results indicate there may not be a need for service on Ontario Road or San Luis Bay Drive, which could slightly shorten the Trolley Route.

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE SURVEY RESULTS FOR THE AVILA TROLLEY

Surveyors recorded on-time performance data. On the morning of May 29, 2010, the first departure, which was scheduled to leave Avila Beach at 9:10 AM, actually departed several minutes early (9:07). However, by the time the trolley reached Avila Hot Springs Resort, it was already 10 minutes late (departing at 9:30 AM instead of the scheduled 9:20 AM). The second run, which was scheduled to leave Avila Beach at 9:40 AM, actually departed at 9:52 AM, and arrived back at Avila Beach at 10:40 AM instead of the scheduled 10:08 AM. Therefore, the 10:00 AM run was missed. This occurred during the second hour as well so that the 11:00 AM run was missed.

On July 24, when on-time performance was tracked for the afternoon, the Trolley was similarly off-schedule, and completed only 5 and a half runs of the 9 scheduled runs. Furthermore, the Trolley is scheduled to meet Route 21 at Shell Beach and Spyglass Road at 47 minutes after each hour, but during survey efforts, the trolley was at this stop at the following times:

May 29	July 24
9:27 AM	2:13 PM
10:07 AM	**2:49 PM**
10:54 AM	3:28 PM
11:40 AM	4:15 PM
12:19 PM	**4:50 PM**
12:57 PM	5:30 PM

On May 29, while the Trolley should have made four timed connections from 9:10 AM to 1:40 PM, the closest it came was 7 minutes early once, and 7 to 10 minutes late. Similarly on July 24, the Trolley should have made five timed connections from 1:40 PM to 6:00 PM but only made two. Additionally, the area of Shell Beach Road and Spyglass Road is a dead zone for cell phone service and radios, so drivers are not able to communicate with each other or the dispatcher as they approach this stop, so drivers do not hold the bus or trolley to ensure connections.

Avila Trolley Passenger Survey Form

Please help improve our services by answering this survey and returning the form to the surveyor as you leave the trolley.

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM EACH TIME YOU GET ONE

Mark only one response for each question. All responses are confidential. Thank you!

1. What time did you board this trolley?
   _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM
2. How did you get to this trolley?
   ☐ Walked ☐ Bicycled ☐ Dropped Off
   ☐ Transferred from Route _____
   ☐ Drove alone ☐ Wheelchair
   ☐ Other *(explain)* _____
3. Where did you get on this trolley?
   Name of trolley stop:_____
   Street: _____
   Cross Street: _____
4. Where will you get off this trolley?
   Name of trolley stop:_____
   Street: _____
   Cross Street: _____
5. How will you get to your destination after you get off this trolley?
   ☐ Walk ☐ Bicycle ☐ Picked Up
   ☐ Transfer to Route _____
   ☐ Drive alone ☐ Wheelchair
   ☐ Other *(explain)* _____
6. Are you travelling round trip by trolley today?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. What is the main purpose of your trip?
   ☐ Work ☐ Recreation
   ☐ Social/Visiting ☐ Sightseeing
   ☐ Shopping ☐ Personal Business/Other
8. How often do you ride the trolley?
   ☐ Every weekend ☐ Once/Month
   ☐ A few times/year ☐ This is my first time
9. How do you get information about the trolley service?
   ☐ Trolley Schedule ☐ Driver of trolley
   ☐ Friend / Co-worker ☐ Telephone
   ☐ Hotel/Motel/Lodging
   ☐ Website (specify) _____
   ☐ Other_____
10. Which of the following best describes you?
    ☐ Full-time Resident ☐ Part-time Resident
    ☐ Visitor Staying Overnight in the Area ☐ Day Visitor
11. Please indicate your opinion of the Trolley service from 1 to 4 using the list below *(please circle your answer or leave blank if you have no opinion)*:

	Poor → Excellent			
a. Driver courtesy & competency	1	2	3	4
b. On time performance (reliability)	1	2	3	4
c. Frequency of service	1	2	3	4
d. Trip duration (travel time)	1	2	3	4
e. Trolley cleanliness	1	2	3	4
f. Crowding onboard trolley	1	2	3	4
g. Safety onboard trolley & at stops	1	2	3	4
h. Convenience of transfers	1	2	3	4
i. Walking distance to/from stops	1	2	3	4

12. How do you rate the Trolley service overall?
    ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor
13. Do you require the wheelchair lift to board or exit the trolley? ☐ Yes ☐ No
14. Do you have a disability that limits driving?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No
15. Do you have a driver's license? ☐ Yes ☐ No
16. Did you have a car available for this trip?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No
17. Are you: ☐ Male ☐ Female
18. What is your age?
    ☐ 6 to 11 ☐ 12 to 18 ☐ 19 to 25
    ☐ 25 to 44 ☐ 45 to 64 ☐ 65 or over
19. What is your main occupation?
    ☐ Full-time employed ☐ Part-time employed
    ☐ Homemaker ☐ Student
    ☐ Retired ☐ Not employed
    ☐ Unable to work
20. What is your family's annual income?
    ☐ Less than $20,000 ☐ $20,000 to $30,000
    ☐ $30,000 to $50,000 ☐ Greater than $50,000
21. What is your home zip code? __ __ __ __ __

---

22. What service or customer improvements would you like to see?
    ☐ Increased service frequency – if so, when?_____
    ☐ New or extended route – if so, where?_____
    ☐ Off-season Weekday Service ☐ Earlier *Saturday* Service ☐ Later *Saturday* Service
    ☐ Earlier *Sunday* Service ☐ Later *Sunday* Service ☐ Other _____
23. Other Comments: _____

_____

Please list your phone number or email if you would like us to contact you about this survey: _____

Thank you for helping us to improve SCAT trolley and bus service by participating in this survey!

Encuesta Para Pasajeros de Avila Trolley

Por favor ayúdenos a mejorar nuestros servicios contestando esta encuesta y devolviendo el formulario al encuestador.

POR FAVOR LLENE ESTE FORMULARIO CADA VEZ QUE CONSIGA UNO

Marque solamente una repuesta por pregunta. Todas las repuestas son confidenciales. Gracias!

1. ¿Que hora abordo este trolebús? _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM
2. ¿Como llego a este trolebús?
   ☐ Caminando ☐ Bicicleta ☐ Aventón
   ☐ Transborde de Ruta _____
   ☐ Consuciendo solo/a ☐ Silla de ruedas
   ☐ Otro *(explique)* _____
3. ¿De donde abordo el trolebús?
   Nombre de la parada del trolebús:_____
   Calle: _____
   Esquina de calle: _____
4. ¿En donde se bajara de este trolebús?
   Nombre de la parada del trolebús:_____
   Calle: _____
   Esquina de calle: _____
5. ¿Como llegará a su destino después de bajar de este trolebús?
   ☐ Caminando ☐ Bicicleta ☐ Aventón
   ☐ Transferencia de Ruta _____
   ☐ Conduciendo solo/a ☐ Silla de ruedas
   ☐ Otro *(explique)* _____
6. ¿Esta usted haciendo un viaje redondo por trolebús hoy? ☐ Si ☐ No
7. ¿Cual es la razón principal de este viaje?
   ☐ Trabajo ☐ Recreación
   ☐ Visita social ☐ Turista
   ☐ De compras ☐ Negocio Personal/Otro
8. Con que frecuencia usa el trolebús?
   ☐ Cada fin de semana ☐ una vez/Mes
   ☐ Unas veces/año ☐ Esta es mi primera vez
9. ¿Como recibe información sobre los servicios del trolebús?
   ☐ Horario del trolebús ☐ Conductor del trolebús
   ☐ Amigos/ Colega ☐ Teléfono
   ☐ Hotel/Motel/Alojamiento
   ☐ Sitio Web (especifique) _____
   ☐ Otro_____
10. ¿Cual de lo siguiente te describe mejor?
    ☐ Residente tiempo-completo ☐ Residente de temporada ☐ Visista de trasnoche en el área
    ☐ Visita de un día
11. Por favor indique su opinión de los servicios del trolebús del 1 al 4 usando la lista abajo *(por favor circule su respuesta o deje en blanco si no tiene ninguna opinión)*:

	Pobre → Excelente			
a. Cortesía y competencia del conductor	1	2	3	4
b. Puntualidad	1	2	3	4
c. Frecuencia de servicios	1	2	3	4
d. Duración del viaje *(Horario de viaje)*	1	2	3	4
e. Limpieza del trolebús	1	2	3	4
f. Sobre-lleno de trolebús	1	2	3	4
g. Seguridad en el trolebús y paradas	1	2	3	4
h. Conveniencia de transborde	1	2	3	4
i. Distancia de caminata a las paradas	1	2	3	4

12. ¿Como clasificaría los servicios del trolebús en general? ☐ Excelente ☐ Bueno ☐ Regular ☐ Pobre
13. ¿Requiere usted del ascensor de silla de ruedas para entrar y salir del trolebús? ☐ Si ☐ No
14. ¿Tiene usted alguna incapacidad que limita su agilidad de conducir? ☐ Si ☐ No
15. ¿Tiene usted licencia de conducir? ☐ Si ☐ No
16. ¿Tuvo usted un vehiculo disponible para este viaje? ☐ Si ☐ No
17. Es usted: ☐ Hombre ☐ Mujer
18. ¿Cual es su edad?
    ☐ 6 a 11 ☐ 12 a 18 ☐ 19 a 25
    ☐ 25 a 44 ☐ 45 a 64 ☐ 65 o mas
19. ¿Cual es su ocupación principal?
    ☐ Empleado tiempo completo
    ☐ Empleado medio tiempo
    ☐ Ama de casa ☐ Estudiante
    ☐ Jubilado ☐ desempleado
    ☐ Incapacitado *(no puede trabajar)*
20. ¿Cual es el ingreso anual de su familia?
    ☐ Menos de $20,000 ☐ $20,000 a $30,000
    ☐ $30,000 a $50,000 ☐ Mas de $50,000
21. ¿Cual es su código postal? __ __ __ __ __

---

22. ¿Que tipo de mejoramiento al cliente le gustaría ver?
    ☐ Tener los servicios con mas frecuencia – si es así, cuando?_____
    ☐ Rutas nuevas y/o extendidas – si es así, donde?_____
    ☐ Servicios en dias de semana durante temporada bajas ☐ Servicios más temprano los sábados
    ☐ Servicios mas tarde los Sábados ☐ Servicios mas temprano los Domingos ☐ Servicios mas tarde los Domingos
    ☐ Otro _____
23. Otros Comentarios_____

Por favor apunte su número de teléfono o correo electrónico si le gustaría que lo contactáramos sobre esta encuesta:

_____

¡Gracias por ayudarnos a mejorar los servicios de SCAT trolebús y autobuses participando en esta encuesta!

SCAT Passenger Survey Form

Please help improve transit services by answering this survey and returning the form to the surveyor as you leave the bus.

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM EACH TIME YOU GET ONE

Mark only one response for each question. All responses are confidential. Thank you!

1. What time did you board this bus?
   _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM
2. How did you get to this bus?
   ☐ Walked ☐ Bicycled ☐ Dropped Off
   ☐ Transferred from Route _____
   ☐ Drove alone ☐ Wheelchair
   ☐ Other *(explain)* _____
3. Where did you get on this bus?
   Name of bus stop:_____
   Street: _____
   Cross Street: _____
4. Where will you get off this bus?
   Name of bus stop:_____
   Street: _____
   Cross Street: _____
5. How will you get to your destination after you get off this bus?
   ☐ Walk ☐ Bicycle ☐ Picked Up
   ☐ Transfer to Route _____
   ☐ Drive alone ☐ Wheelchair
   ☐ Other *(explain)* _____
6. Are you travelling round trip by bus today?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. What is the main purpose of your trip?
   ☐ Work ☐ Recreation/Social/Visiting
   ☐ School/College ☐ Medical/Dental/Social Svcs
   ☐ Shopping ☐ Personal Business/Other
8. How often do you ride the bus?
   ☐ 4 or more times/Week ☐ 1 to 3 times/Month
   ☐ 1 to 3 times/Week ☐ Less than once/Month
9. How did you pay for your fare this trip?
   ☐ Cash ☐ SCAT Daily Pass ☐ Monthly Pass
   ☐ Regional *DAY* Pass ☐ Regional *ALL* Pass
   ☐ VIP Pass ☐ Punch Pass
   ☐ Other_____
10. How would you make this trip if SCAT was not available? ☐ Ride with someone ☐ Drive my car
    ☐ Hitchhike ☐ Walk ☐ Bike ☐ Wouldn't make trip
    ☐ Other _____
11. How long have you been using the bus?
    ☐ First Time ☐ Under 6 months
    ☐ 6 months to a year ☐ More than a year
12. Please indicate your opinion of the SCAT bus service from 1 to 4 using the list below *(please circle your answer or leave blank if you have no opinion)*:

	Poor → Excellent			
a. Driver courtesy & competency	1	2	3	4
b. On time performance (reliability)	1	2	3	4
c. Frequency of service	1	2	3	4
d. Trip duration (travel time)	1	2	3	4
e. Cost of bus fares	1	2	3	4
f. Bus cleanliness	1	2	3	4
g. Crowding onboard buses	1	2	3	4
h. Safety onboard vehicles & at stops	1	2	3	4
i. Convenience of transfers	1	2	3	4
i. Walking distance to/from stops	1	2	3	4

13. How do you rate the SCAT service overall?
    ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor
14. How do you get information about SCAT?
    ☐ Bus Schedule ☐ Driver of bus
    ☐ Friend / Co-worker ☐ Telephone
    ☐ Internet ☐ Other_____
15. Do you require the wheelchair lift to board or exit the bus? ☐ Yes ☐ No
16. Do you have a disability that limits driving?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No
17. Do you have a driver's license? ☐ Yes ☐ No
18. Did you have a car available for this trip?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No
19. Are you: ☐ Male ☐ Female
20. What is your age?
    ☐ 6 to 11 ☐ 12 to 18 ☐ 19 to 25
    ☐ 25 to 44 ☐ 45 to 64 ☐ 65 or over
21. What is your main occupation?
    ☐ Full-time employed ☐ Part-time employed
    ☐ Homemaker ☐ Student
    ☐ Retired ☐ Not employed
    ☐ Unable to work
22. What is your family's annual income?
    ☐ Less than $20,000 ☐ $20,000 to $30,000
    ☐ $30,000 to $50,000 ☐ Greater than $50,000
23. What is your home zip code? __ __ __ __ _____

---

24. What service or customer improvements would you like to see?
    ☐ Increased service frequency – if so, when?_____
    ☐ New or extended routes – if so, where?_____
    ☐ Earlier *Weekday* Service ☐ Later *Weekday* Service ☐ Earlier *Saturday* Service ☐ Later *Saturday* Service
    ☐ *Sunday* Service ☐ Other_____
25. Other Comments: _____

_____

Thank you for helping us to improve SCAT bus service by participating in this survey!

Formulario de Encuesta para Pasajeros de SCAT

Por favor ayúdenos a mejorar los servicios de transito contestando las siguientes preguntas y devolviendo el formulario al encuestador al bajar del autobús.

POR FAVOR LLENE ESTE FORMULARIO CADA VEZ QUE RECIBA UNO
Marque solamente una respuesta por pregunta. Toda respuesta será confidencial. Gracias!

1. ¿Que hora abordo este autobús?_____ ☐ AM ☐ PM
2. ¿Como llego a este autobús?
   ☐ Caminando ☐ Bicicleta ☐ Aventón
   ☐ Trasborde de Ruta _____
   ☐ Conduciendo solo/a ☐ Silla de Ruedas
   ☐ Otro *(explique)* _____
3. ¿De donde abordo el autobús?
   Nombre de la parada del autobús: _____
   Calle: _____
   Esquina de calle: _____
4. ¿En donde se bajara de este autobús?
   Nombre de la parada del autobús:_____
   Calle: _____
   Esquina de calle: _____
5. ¿Como llegara a su destino después que baje de este autobús? ☐ Caminando ☐ Bicicleta
   ☐ Aventón ☐ Transferencia de Ruta _____
   ☐ Conduciendo solo/a ☐ Silla de Ruedas
   ☐ Otro *(explique)* _____
6. ¿Esta usted haciendo un viaje Redondo por autobús?
   ☐ Si ☐ No
7. ¿Cual es la razón principal de este viaje?
   ☐ Recreación/Social/Visita ☐ Escuela/Universidad
   ☐ Medico/Dental/Svcs Sociales ☐ Trabajo
   ☐ De compras ☐ Negocio Personal/Otro
8. ¿Con que frecuencia usa el autobús?
   ☐ 4 o más veces/semana ☐ 1 o 3 veces/mes
   ☐ 1 o 3 veces/semana ☐ Menos de una vez/Mes
9. ¿Como pago por este viaje?
   ☐ Pase SCAT/31-Dias ☐ Pase SCAT/20-viajes
   ☐ Pase Regional/*DÍA* ☐ Pase Regional/31-Dias
   ☐ Efectivo ☐ Pase VIP ☐ Otro_____
10. ¿Como haría usted este viaje si SCAT no estuviera disponible? ☐ Aventón ☐Conduciendo mi propio carro
    ☐ Taxi ☐ Caminando ☐ Bicicleta ☐ No haría el viaje
    ☐ Otro _____
11. ¿Cuanto tiempo ha usado los servicios del autobús?
    ☐ Primera Vez ☐ Menos de 6 meses
    ☐ 6 meses a un año ☐ más de un año
12. Por favor indique su opinión de los servicios de autobús SCAT de 1 a 4 usando la lista abajo *(por favor circule su respuesta o deje en blanco si no tiene alguna opinión)*:

	Pobre → Excelente			
a. Cortesía y competencia del conductor	1	2	3	4
b. Puntualidad	1	2	3	4
c. Frecuencia de servicio	1	2	3	4
d. Duración de viaje (horario de viaje)	1	2	3	4
e. Tarifa del autobús	1	2	3	4
f. Limpieza del autobús	1	2	3	4
g. Sobre-lleno del autobús	1	2	3	4
h. Seguridad en el autobús y paradas	1	2	3	4
i. Conveniencia de transborde	1	2	3	4
i. Distancia de caminata a las paradas	1	2	3	4

13. ¿Como calificaría los servicios de SCAT en general?
    ☐ Excelente ☐ Bueno ☐ Regular ☐ Pobre
14. ¿Como recibe información sobre SCAT?
    ☐ Horario del autobús ☐ Conductor del autobús
    ☐ Amigos/Colega ☐ Teléfono _____
    ☐ Sitio Web (especifique) _____
    ☐ Otro_____
15. ¿Requiere usted del ascensor de silla de ruedas para subir y bajar del autobús? ☐ Si ☐ No
16. ¿Tiene alguna incapacidad que limita su habilidad de conducir? ☐ Si ☐ No
17. ¿Tiene usted licencia de conducir? ☐ Si ☐ No
18. ¿Tuvo usted un vehiculo disponible para este viaje?
    ☐ Si ☐ No
19. Es usted: ☐ Hombre ☐ Mujer
20. ¿Cual es su edad? ☐ 6 a 11 ☐ 12 a 18
    ☐ 19 a 25 ☐ 26 a 44 ☐ 45 a 64 ☐ 65 o mas
21. ¿Cual es su ocupación general?
    ☐ Ama de casa ☐ Estudiante
    ☐ Empleado tiempo completo ☐ Jubilado
    ☐ Empleado medio tiempo ☐ Desempleado
    ☐ Incapacitado (no puedo trabajar)
22. ¿Cual es el ingreso anual de su familia?
    ☐ Menos de $20,000 ☐ $20,000 a $30,000
    ☐ $30,000 a $50,000 ☐ Más de $50,000
23. ¿Que es su código postal? __ __ __ __ _____

---

24. ¿Que servicios o mejoramiento al cliente le gustaría ver?
    ☐ Aumentar la frecuencia de servicios – si es así, ¿cuando?_____
    ☐ Rutas nuevas o extendidas – si es así, ¿donde?_____
    ☐ Servicios mas temprano los fines de semana ☐ Servicios mas tarde en día de semana
    ☐ Servicios más temprano los *sábados* ☐ Servicios más tarde los *sábados*
    ☐ Servicios más temprano los *domingos* ☐ Servicios más tarde los *domingos* ☐ Otro_____
25. Otros Comentarios: _____

Por favor apunte su número de teléfono o coreo electrónico si desea que lo contactemos sobre esta encuesta: _____

¡Gracias por ayudarnos a mejorar los servicios del autobús SCAT participando en esta encuesta!

Additional Onboard Survey Comments

- Just get rid of unnecessary stops and add at least 1 or 2 stops to the Mesa.
- I have been riding SCAT from 1982-2010. I think there should be a 6 month bus pass $35.00
- All the drivers are great. The info maps at stops could be clearer and the stops could use more shelter and light. Also, it could be made easier to transfer to popular stops, i.e. going from AGHS to Outlets it takes a long time.
- Lower cost
- Cost too much money especially passes. Please lower prices. Much appreciated.
- I really like using the SCAT
- Good job!
- Please keep services and not cut these services.
- Color code bus passes
- Later Sunday Service. Can't transfer @ 7:30AM to 24 in time for work. Have to get up and leave earlier.
- Overall it is a blessing to have available
- Make all buses the same on senior pricing
- Give bus drivers a break. Telephone info is terrible. Bus Pass too expensive for 75 year old.
- Route 10 run every Saturday and Sunday in 3 hour shifts
- 10 Service needs earlier service to SLO for those need to get to SLO
- Fun ride
- If there was a bus that went from Oceano to Pismo Outlets without having to transfer from 23-21-105 it would save a lot of time
- More stops closer rather than blocks apart and more frequent service such as 2 buses 20 to 30 minutes apart for routes.
- Buses should run later during the summer when it gets dark later
- The bus drivers real helpful
- Overall it's pretty good
- Need to be able to give right bus and not make them pay again
- Don't be late. Accommodate your riders
- Drivers vary, some are nice, some grumpy
- Great service overall. As good as most bigger cities. Good job! Could use more shade and rain covering at stops.
- It's been good - - sometimes work later hours
- More Sunday hours
- The passes cost too much. A lot of people can't afford the pass every month so please lower prices.
- Drivers are very nice to all passengers and I enjoy being on the bus.
- I like taking the bus because they are so nice.
- Some drivers are rude and need to have better people skills
- This system is competent
- No nearby service to Avila
- I am a caregiver, so I appreciate riding the bus as a way to get away from it all. I like the name of this bus as it is. I see no reason to change it.
- I love all the drivers.
- Need a stop closer to 300 James Way, Pismo Beach Office Complex

- Run later to at least 10PM. If it ran later and more often, more people would use it - and rear bike racks as well.
- Transfers that last more than 1 hour
- Some drivers aren't respectful and the cost should be less for students.
- There are some drivers that need to go to customer service school - very rude to passengers.
- Over all I am happy with service
- The buses smell kind of funny.

Appendix B

Example Development Review Checklist

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW TRANSIT CHECKLIST

Project/Title			
Jurisdiction/Location			
Reviewer		**Date**	
Type of Project	☐ Capital Project	☐ Development Project	☐ Other:
Type of Review	☐ Initial Consultation	☐ Project Application Review	☐ Other:

Key Issues	**Yes/No /NA**	**Notes**
Transit Operations		
Is the project on an existing or planned transit route?		
Does the project provide for direct, efficient transit service?		
Does the project provide for safe transit service?		
Does the project warrant bus pullouts?		
If roadway improvements are proposed, do they meet local standards?		
If the site will be served by Dial-A-Ride, is adequate access and passenger loading area provided?		
Bus Stop Improvements		
Does project propose to provide a transit stop or stops?		
Do proposed stop locations provide safe conditions, including adequate passenger and driver sight distances?		
Is the site adequately served by existing stops?		
Considering ridership and existing stops, is a new stop warranted?		
Is a bus bench warranted?		
Is a bus shelter warranted?		
Pedestrian access?		
If improvements are proposed, do they meet Transit System and ADA standards?		

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW TRANSIT CHECKLIST

Site Design		
Does the design concentrate activity near transit stops?		
Does the design provide safe and attractive pedestrian connections to activity centers?		
Does the land use and pedestrian network design maximize the potential ridership within a quarter-mile walk of a stop?		
Does the design provide pedestrian/bicycle connections to nearby facilities?		
Does the project generate the potential for transit passengers crossing busy streets at unprotected locations?		
Are there opportunities to provide passenger amenities (canopies, benches) as part of building designs?		
Does the design enhance security through adequate lighting and line of sight?		
Other Comments:		

Appendix C

Memo Regarding Route 23 Routing Via Brisco Road

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS

2690 Lake Forest Road, Suite C
Post Office Box 5875
Tahoe City, California 96145
(530) 583-4053 FAX: (530) 583-5966
info@lsctahoe.com
www.lsctrans.com

MEMORANDUM

To: Eliane Guillot, Transportation Planner, SLOCOG
SCAT Executive Committee; SCAT Board Members

From: Selena McKinney, Project Planner, LSC

Re: Evaluation of New Route 23 via West Branch Street Versus El Camino Real

---

On January 26, 2011, I presented the Draft Report of the South County Transit Plan to the SCAT Board. Mr. Jim Guthrie stated the benefit of routing Route 23 via West Branch Street and Brisco Road in order to serve Wal-Mart and Kmart before returning on North Oak Park Boulevard, and inquired as to the feasibility of this option. LSC has looked further into the matter and would like to report our findings to you and the Board.

Review of Route 23 Alignment on Brisco Road

Our current recommendation is for Route 23 to serve Halcyon Park and Ride, then travel west on El Camino Real to North Oak Park Boulevard, returning to Ramona Gardens via Grand Avenue. This alignment serves a new area of El Camino Real and North Oak Park Boulevard. Mr. Guthrie's suggestion was for Route 23 to serve Halcyon Park and Ride, travel west on El Camino Real to Brisco Road, north on Brisco Road to West Branch Street, and south on North Oak Park Boulevard, returning to Ramona Gardens via Grand Avenue. The benefit of this option is that it would allow passengers to access Wal-Mart and Kmart without having to transfer to Route 24 at Arroyo Grande High School.

When evaluating the realignment of Route 23 via Brisco Road, we made the following findings:

- Realigning the route on Brisco Road would add 0.4 miles to the length of the route.
- The realignment would add an estimated 3 to 6 minutes to the route running time. The driver-tested time from Halcyon to North Oak Park and Grand Avenue was 6 minutes during moderate traffic. The driver-tested time traveling via Brisco Road and stopping at Wal-Mart and Kmart was 9 minutes during light traffic.
- Some additional delay would be generated by needing to travel through the two signalized intersections on Brisco Road. Furthermore, the intersection of El Camino

Real/Brisco Road has a westbound double right turn. Route 10 currently makes this turn with some difficulty from the leftmost of these two right turn lanes (in order to enter the northbound left turn lane for the US 101 onramp). The Route 23 vehicle would need to make the right turn from El Camino Real onto Brisco Road, but enter the northbound through lane at the Brisco/US 101 intersection (on the right). However, due to the limited curb return radius, the bus requires use of both westbound right turn lanes, which can cause some additional delay as the bus driver must wait for any other vehicles to clear both right turn lanes.

- In addition to the increased time needed for the increased mileage and the signalized intersections, there would be delays of up to several minutes required for boardings and alightings at Wal-Mart and Kmart. Additionally, the Wal-Mart stop is actually in the parking lot which requires low speeds.

In our evaluation of the new Routes 22 and 23, we cautioned that the route would be on a firm timeline in order to make the transfer points. Adding 3 to 6 minutes to serve Wal-Mart and Kmart cannot be accomplished within this schedule. There are no reasonable options for reducing route segments on other portions of the new Route 23 in order to make the change to serve Wal-Mart and Kmart on this route. Furthermore, there are commercial businesses on El Camino Real which patrons and employees would be able to access under the new service, and there is some higher density housing near El Camino Real and Hillcrest Drive which would receive transit service.

Finally, travel times on the new Route 23 are a significant improvement over the current Route 23 even with a transfer at the high school, as follows:

Current Route 23 travel times:
- 13th & Wilmar in Oceano to Wal-Mart = 47 minutes
- Wal-Mart to 13th & Wilmar in Oceano = 52 minutes

Proposed Route 22/23 travel times:
- 13th & Wilmar in Oceano to Wal-Mart = 21 minutes
- Wal-Mart to 13th & Wilmar in Oceano = 18 minutes

I hope this clarifies the question for you and the SCAT Executive Board. It was a good suggestion worth looking into. The Five Cities area is difficult to cover with three routes, but we believe we have an optimal plan for doing so with the resources available.

Appendix D

Transportation Choices Program: Vanpool Q&A

Transportation
Choices
Program

Vanpool Q&A

What makes vanpools so economical? Shared expenses. In a typical vanpool, seven to fifteen commuters ride together, each contributing a low monthly fare that gets them a comfortable van and covers all maintenance and repairs, and all insurance, too.

Not only is the cost of gas spread out among all the riders, each saves on the wear and tear on their car. Your car won't depreciate as fast, nor need maintenance as often. For some people, a vanpool means not having to buy a new or used car just to be sure of having a vehicle they can rely on to make a daily long-distance commute.

How does a vanpool work?

One person volunteers to be the primary driver/coordinator of the van. In exchange for taking on that responsibility, the driver sometimes does not pay towards the cost of the vanpool or pays a reduced cost.

Riders usually meet a designated pick-up location such as a Park & Ride lot. Some vans have more than one pick-up point, some don't. The same applies to drop-off points at the destination. It all depends on the nature and needs of the vanpool group.

How much does a vanpool cost?

The riders share a fee that covers the cost of the vanpool lease and gas. The leasing price depends on the number of miles the vanpool travels each month and the vanpool operator. All maintenance, license and insurance costs are included in the lease.

The typical vanpool monthly fee is $1,600 to operate 4 to 5 days a week, $1,700 for 6 days a week and $1,800 for 7 days a week. With fifteen people sharing the ride, this equates to about $100 per person per month, which can include gas.

What if there's an emergency and I need to leave early?

Rideshare's Guaranteed Ride Home program makes sure you get to the places you need to in an emergency. If your child is sick, you become ill at work or you have to work late without nice, we've got you covered. For a nominal fee of $4 per trip, our service will pick you up from work within an half hour and take you where you need to go. This service is only available to those who have registered in our TripLink system. Each TripLink user is allowed four Guaranteed Ride Home passes each year.

What if I have errands I need to run?

Discuss schedule changes with other vanpoolers in your group. You may be able to set your pick-up point close to a shopping center or bank to accommodate errands after work. Or, you may choose not to vanpool on the days you have to run errands.

Who owns the van?

San Luis Obispo County has two vanpool operators, Ride-on and Enterprise Vanpool. Ride-on Transportation can be reached at 805-543-7862 (Bob Armstrong or Alison Stirling). Enterprise Vanpool information is available online at http://www.vanpool.com or by calling 1.800.VAN 4 WORK

What is my commitment to the van?

All commuters in a vanpool make a month-to-month commitment. You may leave the vanpool by giving 30 days notice. This allows the vanpool time to recruit another rider to take your place. The monthly fee paid by each rider is for the purchase of a seat on the vanpool. Whether that seat is occupied or not, due to illness, vacation etc. the purchaser is responsible for the payment. Refunds are not offered for missed days. Once payment ceases, the seat is forfeited. If the passenger wishes to resume the vanpool, they will be put on the waiting list for a vacancy.

What is the driver or a rider gets sick or goes on vacation?

Each van has a back-up driver in case the primary driver cannot drive the van for whatever reason.

What if I only want to ride the vanpool a couple of days a week?

A seat may be purchased by two people. An example of this is where one person rides the vanpool two days a week and the other rides the van three days a week. This arrangement must be processed through the vanpool providers.

How do I get started?

You can start by logging on to TripLink through www.rideshare.org. TripLink is our online rideshare system that matches up commuters based upon their travel patterns. Simply create a login, state where you are coming from and where you are going to, and TripLink will show you what vanpools are currently available on your route. If you find a vanpool that best matches your commuting pattern, call Ride-on at (805) 543-7862 to get on the road. If you do not find a vanpool along your route, go to vanpool.com for a list of Enterprise vanpools.

Appendix E

Route 10 Straightline Map

Route 10

Call 541-2228 or use our new Bus Trip Planner online at www.slorta.org

Stops are subject to change without notice at any time