



COAST is a Santa Barbara County regional organization promoting environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable transportation and reduced dependency on automobiles.

How to reach us

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E-mail discussion list

Participate in discussions of local and regional transportation issues; receive notices of meetings and events. Subscribing is free and easy. Just visit:

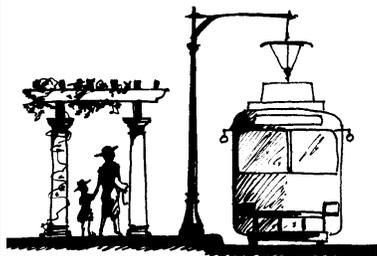
<http://groups.google.com/group/coastsb>

COAST Happy Hour

Please join us the second Thursday of each month from 5-7 PM at the El Paseo Restaurant in Santa Barbara.

Join COAST

Support COAST by becoming a member. Just use the enclosed envelope. Thank you!



COAST NEWS

COALITION FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

FALL 2008

WWW.COAST-SANTABARBARA.ORG

Events you don't want to miss...

Bicycle and Pedestrian Forum with John Pucher

Saturday, October 18th, 10 AM to 12:30 PM

Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Public Library

John Pucher is a professor at Rutgers University internationally known for his research on bicycle and pedestrian planning. He will be joined by **Grant House** (City of Santa Barbara), **Janet Wolf** (County of Santa Barbara) and **Michael Chiacos** (CEC). This event is proudly co-sponsored by **Santa Barbara Walks, A Project of COAST**, and the **Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition**.



COAST Fall Party and Annual Meeting at the Train Station

Thursday, October 23rd, 5-7 PM

Santa Barbara Amtrak Depot

Please join us for drinks and hors d'oeuvres as we celebrate another successful year of transportation advocacy!

Want to Walk More? Check Your Score!

By Courtney Dietz

.With front page newspaper articles appearing each day about how people are looking for alternatives to their cars and the expensive gas they consume, **Santa Barbara Walks** sees this as an incredible time to work towards making the South Coast more pedestrian friendly and encouraging walking. Furthermore, enabling more and varied transportation choices reduces our energy consumption, increases health, and decreases air pollution thus reducing our global impact and helping our communities live more sustainably and healthily.

Recently Santa Barbara Walks caught up with Darcie Simson, a previous UCSB employee that has just taken a new job downtown, in part because of her ability to ditch her car and walk more. When deciding whether to take the new position, Darcie discovered that her office would only

be one mile from where she lived, allowing her to walk to work most days. "It was a big factor in accepting the position and leaving the UCSB community. I'm very happy with my decision." Darcie also appreciates being able to walk downtown after work for farmers' market or errands. And because we experience such a mild climate here in Santa Barbara, she can pretty much walk year round and so can you!

Interested in how walkable *your* neighborhood is? Check out www.walkscore.com to see how your address rates for walkability. The calculations are based on proximity to amenities such as stores, restaurants, schools and more (though it is admittedly lacking important things such as proximity to transit). I live at an 86 out of 100. What's your score?

From our President: COAST elects Board Officers

By Mark Bradley

After two and a half very rewarding years as President of COAST, I will be stepping down and turning over the Presidency to Eva Inbar. Dennis Story will take over as Vice President. I want to take this opportunity to thank our COAST members, donors, funding foundations, and all the other people who have supported us and our mission. Without you, COAST would not be possible.

Recent trends such as rising fuel prices, increasing evidence of climate change, and intensifying debate about the future of land use and transportation policies in our local cities have made COAST's work more crucial than ever, but also more challenging. COAST is responding to those challenges in many ways, including:

Making our local neighborhoods safer and more attractive for walking and biking: COAST is the main force behind the implementation of Safe Routes to School programs on

the South Coast. Safe pedestrian and bike routes are important for all citizens, not just school children, and our new Santa Barbara Walks project aims to bring concrete, on-the-ground improvements to pedestrian safety in Santa Barbara in the next few years.

Bringing better transit service to all residents of the region: COAST works on several fronts to bring more extensive and more frequent transit service. By spearheading the Coalition for a Fair Measure D (now Measure A), we ensured that the new ballot measure contains dedicated funding for MTD and other County transit agencies. We work with PUEBLO and SBCAN to bring about a more equitable transportation system, including a new vanpool service for North County farm workers. We also work with



Pedestrians on outer State Street

CAUSE in Ventura County to demand better regional transit service, including both commuter rail and bus service between our two counties.

As the politics behind these issues becomes more polarized and the opposition grows more vocal, we need all the volunteer help we can get to remain effective. Please let us know what improvements you would like to see in your neighborhood and how you can participate.

Two competing visions for Plan Santa Barbara

By Alex Pujó

Workshops, meetings and hearings continue to shape "Plan SB", the process to update policies and ordinances that will guide Santa Barbara's future. Transportation policies advocated by COAST are universally embraced, but land use decisions that reduce "auto mobility" remain controversial.

Parallel to this process is a ballot initiative proposed by several groups to lower the allowable height of buildings downtown. This proposal will limit the current trend to include housing on top of commercial spaces ("mixed use"). PlanSB will include policies that will affect not only the size and shape of buildings in the urban core, but the community priorities that development must fulfill.

Two seemingly opposing visions compete for the spotlight at PlanSB and related blogs. Laura Hout's commentaries on Noozhawk ("Fear of Heights", "Hijacking History") brought about hundreds of responses, pro and con.

Some want to protect the extraordinary beauty of our corner of Paradise from further development. Others celebrate the historic urban pattern of density downtown and lesser uses towards the edges.

As resources here and elsewhere become strained—what with fires, droughts, traffic, smog and the cost of housing— it becomes essential to protect our natural and human resources, and to use them judiciously for the common good. We may not reach agreement as a community on what, exactly, is this "common good" but there is consensus on the principles that underpin COAST's mission.

Whether you consider automobiles: a) a tool for freedom; b) a necessary evil; or c) a sprawl machine, everyone agrees that life is better with fewer cars on the road, driving fewer miles. The old bungalow—with internet, dual glazing, insulation and modern heating— is still a wonderful place to raise a family,

but not the only one, and not the most frugal. One size does not fit all, and other choices exist.

When Santa Barbara expanded beyond the urban grid in the 1930's it left behind a compact town of smaller lots, corner markets, schools and parks, all within walking distance. We are called "idealistic" for imagining a future not too different from the past, but this is how author Mark Bowden describes idealism:

"Idealism is often ridiculed because it attracts the naïf and hides the hypocrite, but it also serves a transcendent role. American history can be seen as one long struggle to live up to the lofty ideals enunciated at its founding. Idealism continues to lead us towards a more hopeful future by grabbing mankind's sordid failings by the scruff of the neck and dragging them into the bright light of our noblest goals."

COASTing along in 2018

by Grant House

Ten years ago, back in November 2008, Santa Barbara County voters wisely decided to continue the long-standing tradition of being a “self-help county” by voting for Measure A. The ½ cent sales tax was long known for its ability to magnify the value of local funds by attracting and leveraging federal and state money for major projects. Other counties weren’t so lucky and had to borrow money over and over again, often missing opportunities to receive much needed federal and state support.

In 2018, ten years into its thirty year life, people take the benefits of Measure A for granted. It’s the key to well maintained streets, good bus service, and so much more.

Local transit ridership is at an all-time high. “The buses come so often,” says one rider, “I don’t bother with the bus schedule anymore.” She is not alone. Many leave the car at home; others forego the budget crippling costs of car ownership altogether.

All day, express buses and trains slip through the 101 corridor offering pleasant, cost effective, time-saving alternatives for thousands of area workers. Some hop into ready vans and shuttles. Others pedal into work a little early, refreshed and ready to go.

Bicyclists and motorists alike appreciate well-maintained pothole free streets. Traffic congestion is on a decline as more and more use a bus, bike, carpool, or their own two feet for many trips.

Broken sidewalks are being repaired, universal access ramps installed, and missing segments filled in to make it safer for everyone, especially seniors out for a stroll and little children as they walk to school. Parents get into it, too. The old traffic snarl around each school is becoming a thing of the past. Teachers say how great it is to have their students arrive awake and alert.

Standing on the shoulders of a 100% track record of accomplishments for the first 20 years, Measure A improved

on the original by emphasizing the important role of transit, biking, walking, and commuter rail along with providing for much needed ongoing maintenance of local roads, highways and bridges.

Summing it up, one little ten year old, born the very week Measure A passed, exclaims, “I really like riding my bike to school. It’s a nice way to start my day!”



What’s Happening with Rail?

By Dennis Story, Chair, CoastalRailNow

Rail seems to be in the news a lot lately. Whether local or national, there’s a lot going on.

On the national scale – Senate Bill 3360 is working to fund more rail cars and improve infrastructure. On the State level – Prop. 1-B money for rail improvements continue to be held up by the Governor, and advocacy groups like RailPAC have written letters urging release of the monies. Surfliner ridership numbers continue to climb, and word is that people are standing or sitting on the floor on some routes.

All this points up the fact that more and more people are turning to rail for their transportation needs. While buying gas for vehicles becomes an increasing burden on the pocketbook, and airlines are increasing fares and cutting back on service – rail stands out as the one transportation mode that can get you there efficiently.

Locally voters have the transportation tax - Measure A on the ballot in November. Its expenditure plan includes \$25M for commuter rail from Ventura County. This is the service Coastal-RailNow has been advocating for and has crafted a budget for.

Many say \$25M (+ approx. \$20M matching funds) can’t get the job done, but one can look to Nashville’s Music City Star Commuter Rail Service www.musiccitystar.com to see how it can be done. Their 32 mile line was up and running in a few short years for \$42M. How? By thinking out of the box, they were able to buy trainsets used, and put most of their money in the corridor infrastructure. The problem with our local corridor is the improvements needed, and by using a strategy similar to Nashville, we can accomplish our goal too.

Walk to School Day is October 8

Thanks to COAST’s Safe Routes to School project, 22 schools participated in Walk to School Day last year, with an estimated total of 4,557 walkers. This equals 71% of all schools in the greater Santa Barbara area. Parents and children alike love this event. School parking lots are strangely quiet while sidewalks and crosswalks full of happy people. If only every day could be Walk to School Day!

Until then, let’s see if we can top last year’s great results. Is your child’s school participating this year? Call your principal to find out, or contact one of our SR2S coordinators, Kim Stanley, kimstanleyzimmerman@gmail.com for elementary schools or Angie Dukes, anged@cox.net for secondary schools.



Coalition for Sustainable Transportation
 P.O. Box 2495
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Be a COAST Member

This newsletter appears quarterly and is mailed to COAST members. If you are not a member yet, please consider joining COAST by returning the enclosed envelope. If you are a member, we thank you for your support. Please keep your membership current to continue to receive this newsletter. We couldn't do our work without you.

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 Eva Inbar, Vice President
 Alex Pujo, Secretary
 Dick Axilrod, Treasurer
 Dennis Story, CoastalRailNow
 Grant House
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 Steve Maas
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 Matt Dobberteen
 Kate Bechtel

Project Director/Administrator

Courtney Dietz

COAST Retreat, August 2008



Clockwise from left: Kate Bechtel, Mark Bradley, Dick Axilrod, Dennis Story, Lee Moldaver, Eva Inbar, Alex Pujo, Courtney Dietz. Not pictured: Board member Grant House and facilitator Geoff Green.

We thank our Supporters

We thank the **Green Park Foundation**, the **McCune Foundation** and the **Fund for Santa Barbara** for their generous grants this year. We further thank the **Goleta Valley Cycling Club** for their ongoing support of our Safe Routes to School Project. Most important, we thank all the individuals who made contributions large and small this year.

Last but not least, we wish to recognize **Geoff Green** of the **Fund for Santa Barbara** for his work as facilitator for Measure A workshops and COAST retreats.