

# 2009-2010 Annual Report



[www.Coast-SantaBarbara.org](http://www.Coast-SantaBarbara.org)

## Our Major Programs

### Safe Routes to School

COAST is the regional coordinator for Safe Routes to School (SR2S), an international program designed to decrease traffic and pollution and improve the health of children and the community. Safe Routes to School promotes walking and biking to school through education and incentives. The program also addresses the safety concerns of parents by encouraging greater enforcement of traffic laws, educating the public, and exploring ways to create safer streets. Currently, 33 schools and more than 5,000 students participate in the program.

### Santa Barbara Walks

Santa Barbara Walks (SBW) aims to build awareness and public support for walking infrastructure and culture. The program advocates for good pedestrian policies in major planning efforts. It features a monthly series of Walking Wednesdays, which hosts guided walks emphasizing various architectural, historical or cultural themes.

### CoastalRailNow

CoastalRailNow (CRN) spearheads the effort to bring commuter rail to the South Coast, eliminating potentially thousands of vehicle trips off our crowded freeway and local streets. We work with government leaders and agencies to increase public funds and political support for rail.

### ASERT (Alliance for Sustainable and Equitable Regional Transportation)

With support from the McCune Foundation, COAST formed ASERT to promote sustainable ways of traveling within and between Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. ASERT is a cooperative venture between COAST, VCCool, and two social justice organizations—CAUSE and PUEBLO. ASERT hosts public forums to discuss regional transportation issues, and advocates for a transportation sales tax measure in Ventura Co. with substantial funding for new bus and commuter rail services.



Our staff, from left: Courtney Dietz, ED; KK Holland, ASERT coordinator; Kim Stanley, SR2S



## Courtney Dietz is named COAST Executive Director

Courtney Dietz is a graduate of UCSB's Bren School and joined COAST's staff in the spring of 2008 as the project director of *Santa Barbara Walks*. She quickly became the voice of pedestrians in the Santa Barbara General Plan update and in some hard-fought projects that will improve the safety of walkers. Her passion and tenacity served her equally well as COAST's representative on the Sustainable University Now (SUN) Coalition which is negotiating with UCSB regarding their Long Range Development Plan.

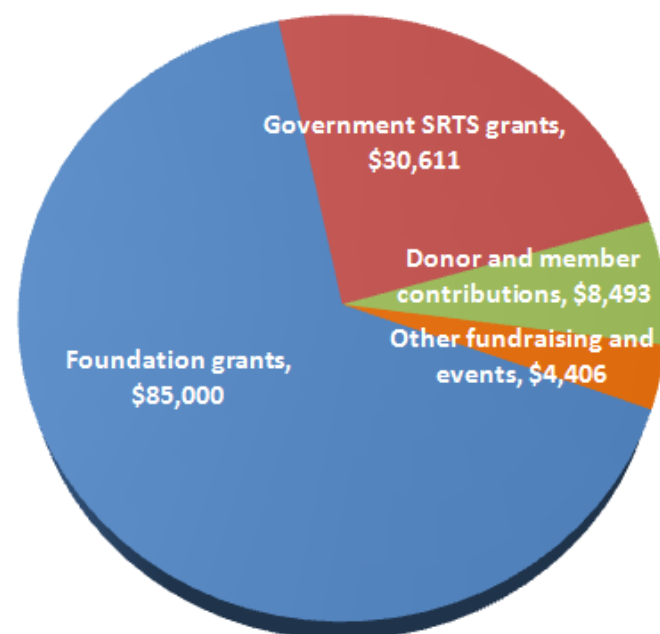
After two years of distinguished service, Courtney became COAST's Executive Director in the spring of 2010. She will continue to be in charge of *Santa Barbara Walks* as well and will continue to lead her wildly popular Walking Wednesdays.

The COAST Board and ED at the Board retreat in August, 2009

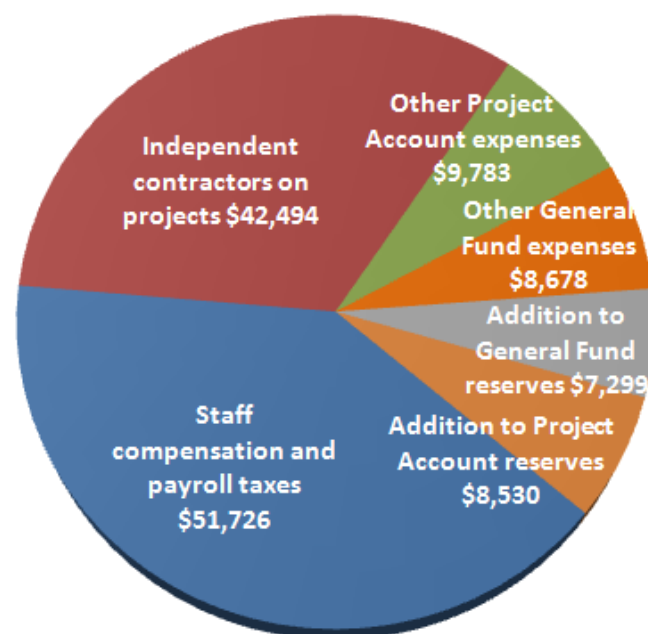
## COAST Financial Report 2009-2010

In fiscal year 2009-10, COAST's annual budget was \$128,500, continuing our growth trend since 2007-08, when we went over \$100,000 for the first time. Thanks to the generosity of our members and donors, to the McCune Foundation, to the Green Park Foundation, to the Fund for Santa Barbara, to the Bower Foundatin, and to Government Safe Routes to School grants, we have been able to expand our projects and promote Courtney Dietz to Executive Director. We ended the fiscal year in June with roughly \$40,000 in our General Fund reserve, enough to continue our projects, member recruitment, and other fundraising efforts for the coming year. With success comes challenges. COAST's challenge is to keep new memberships, donations and grants coming in, so that we can keep our current projects going into 2011 and beyond, and so that we can begin new projects aimed at making our local and regional transportation systems cleaner, safer, and more inclusive.

### COAST FY 09-10 Income



### COAST FY 09-10 Expenses



COAST provides advocacy, education and outreach to improve transportation options in Santa Barbara County, including rail, bus, bike and pedestrian access.

Help COAST fight against global warming and air and water pollution, and for cities and towns where automobiles are an option, not a necessity. To join COAST or volunteer to help out on one of our projects, please call us, or visit: [www.coast-santabarbara.org](http://www.coast-santabarbara.org)

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Join us for our General Meeting the fourth Tuesday of each month at noon at the SB Public Library's Faulkner Gallery!



*"What I think makes a difference to decision-makers is the extent of community involvement and passion and determination --ongoing determination-- not giving up when it comes to controversial issues. And certainly our transportation planning has been controversial at times and in recent years certainly so. This kind of consistent, well-informed, persistent exposure on the part of just plain citizens has made all the difference and I can't overemphasize the importance for local decision-making of an informed and active public. To me that is what COAST represents."*

Naomi Schwartz, former County Supervisor

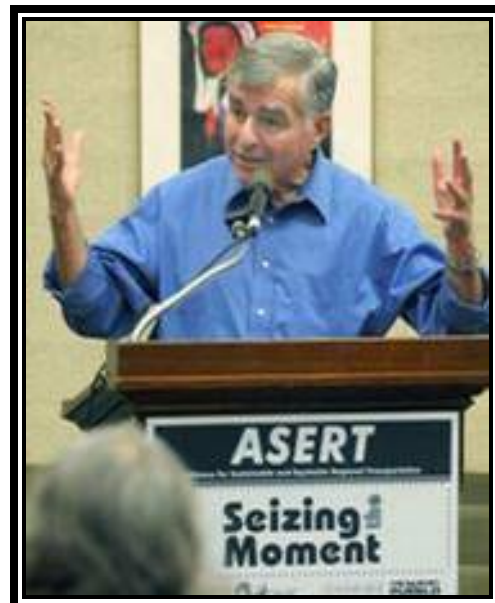
## ASERT Gets Results for Transit Riders

For over three years, ASERT has worked in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties to increase the advocacy and visibility of alternative transportation by becoming a routine presence at commission meetings and increasing press coverage of transit issues. In 2009, ASERT hosted two successful forums in the cities of Ventura and Santa Barbara which brought out several hundred people to learn about regional transit issues. These forums fed into the Unmet Transit Needs process and resulted in an outpouring of community input around the transit challenges and needs of riders and citizens.

As a direct result of this advocacy work, additional bus service was secured in Oxnard south of Victoria to service residents who were previously forced to walk several miles with their children along busy roads to access the buses that they depend on.

In the past year, ASERT has organized "transit town halls" in Santa Barbara, Ventura and Oxnard, providing a crucial means for riders to be heard. As a result, the City of Ventura directed \$150,000 that had been diverted to street paving back to the Gold Coast bus service, averting proposed service cuts.

In Ventura County, money given to transit has frequently been diverted to streets and roads. While the ASERT coalition, with the active involvement of riders, has pushed many cities in the county to devote 100% of their TDA funds to transit in the past few years, state budget problems bring renewed pressure. The ASERT coalition will continue to build on this work by helping riders develop a more sustainable grassroots network—strengthening



Former Governor, Presidential candidate, and Amtrak Board member Michael Dukakis speaks at an ASERT forum

ties to current riders, developing leadership, and recruiting new riders into a more organized network with a more formalized membership. These efforts will be increasingly important as the community faces future cuts to service and a climate of uncertainty around future funding.

ASERT is funded by the McCune foundation and is coordinated by KK Holland, a resident of Ventura who grew up in the greater Santa Barbara area. KK continues to do terrific work and make a real difference. "She is everywhere," said one decision maker.

## Safe Routes to School Is On a Roll



El Camino School: A very young customer's first helmet

Safe Routes to School is an international movement that encourages children to walk or bike to school and enables them to do so safely. As Congressman Oberstar has famously said, it is about "changing the habits of an entire generation." Toward this goal, Safe Routes to School uses a comprehensive approach that can be described under the four E's: Engineering, Enforcement, Education and Encouragement.

COAST has coordinated local Safe Routes to School projects since 2002. We lead a coalition of government agencies and community groups that has grown to over 20, and our program is one of the best in the nation. We have helped several schools get safer sidewalks, crosswalks and bike paths. We work with police to ensure enforcement of traffic laws around schools. We bring to the schools bicycle and pedestrian safety education and low-cost or free bicycle helmets. We help schools organize Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day as well as weekly Walk&Roll days. Everyone enjoys these events that bring out thousands of local children walking and biking to school.

With persistence and hard work, we have achieved steady growth in our program: In 2009-10, 33 South Coast schools (virtually all) participated in Walk to School day, with over 5000 children walking. We fitted 1,162 helmets on little heads and provided safety assemblies and bike rodeos at eighteen schools. Thanks to a grant from the Orfalea Foundation, we initiated a special pilot program at Cleveland Elementary School.

Our SR2S Program is made possible by grants from the City and County of Santa Barbara, the City of Goleta, grants from the Orfalea and Hutton foundations and donations from individuals. We appreciate all of your support!

## Santa Barbara Walks: Because We're All Pedestrians

Santa Barbara Walks (SBW) began in 2008 in response to a parent's concern about walking his children safely to Montecito Union School (MUS), when COAST was asked to help establish better walking facilities along San Ysidro Road. From this grassroots beginning, SBW emerged and has continued to push hard for the ¼ mile decomposed granite path that will connect N Jameson Road to MUS.

SBW works for specific improvements such as the intersections of State and De La Vina and Milpas and De La Guerra, engaging the actual stakeholders: families, residents, schools, and business owners.

We co-hosted the Walk/Bike Forum, bringing national expert John Pucher to Santa Barbara to illustrate the importance of walking and bicycling to our health and to our community. We were chosen by the UC Berkeley Traffic Safety Center to host a Community Pedestrian Safety Training workshop, which included training, a walkability audit, and community discussion targeting the lower Eastside. We have continued this effort and are working with Cleveland Elementary.

Documentation on usage and demand is a challenge, so we have joined the effort of the annual National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project. In addition, at the last three Earth Day events, SBW had a map for attendees to literally pinpoint trouble areas. This has evolved to an online reporting tool for hazards and near misses for walkers. We have also started the popular monthly event, "Walking Wednesdays" to learn together, enjoy our communities on foot and appreciate the slower pace that walking affords us. Santa Barbara Walks is made possible by a generous grant from the Green Park Foundation and support from the JS Bower Foundation. We will continue to support the rights of those who choose walking for recreation, leisure, exercise or transportation.

## North County Transit Making Progress



Through community involvement, technical research, surveys of transit users and legal action, COAST has succeeded in softening the structural bias against public transit prevalent in North County governmental agencies, and we have influenced important transit funding decisions. Local transit in Lompoc (COLT) and Santa Maria (SMAT) has been expanded and a new service ("The Breeze") connects both cities and Vandenberg. The City of Santa Maria no longer diverts transit development funds towards roads. The County started a vanpool service for farm workers and thirty vans will be available as the program develops.

Our efforts in the North County have been made possible by generous grants from the Fund for Santa Barbara and the McCune Foundation, and assistance from dedicated volunteers, legal counsel and other groups, particularly PUEBLO and SB CAN.

CoastalRailNow.org, a project of COAST, has been the most persistent advocate for commuter rail service between Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

Making commuter rail a reality will require strong and effective advocacy in both counties in the coming years.

On May 12, 2010, COAST hosted the local festivities in honor of National Train Day at the Santa Barbara Amtrak Station, including a train ride for families to Carpinteria and back. Visit our website for a video of this event and be sure to join us for National Train Day in May, 2011!

