

Walk-Bike-Bus-Rail

COAST provides advocacy, education and outreach to improve transportation options in the Santa Barbara and Ventura regions, promoting rail, bus, bike, and pedestrian access.

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 General Meeting

Our General Meetings discuss transportation issues affecting the Santa Barbara region. Meetings are open to the public. Location: 15 E. Carrillo Street, Santa Barbara. They are held the second Wednesday of each month, 12 noon to 1:15 pm. Please check our website for updates.

Walking Wednesdays

COAST organizes monthly walking tours on the fourth Wednesday of each month that are free and open to the public. Check our website for schedule.

Support COAST

COAST depends on you to create better transportation options in Santa Barbara and beyond. Support COAST by making a donation. Just use the enclosed envelope. Thank you!

COAST NEWS

COALITION FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

SPRING 2017

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The southbound off-ramp on Milpas, one of the impacted intersections

Caltrans falls short on 101 EIR Revisions

By Alex Pujo

Over a year ago, on December 15, 2015 Superior Court Judge Thomas Anderle ordered Caltrans to revise and recirculate portions of the environmental impact report (EIR) for the Highway 101 project that will add a third lane in each direction between Santa Barbara and Carpinteria. Attorney Marc Chytilo, who filed the lawsuit, successfully argued that Caltrans did not properly consider impacts on certain intersections that would be significantly affected by the freeway project.

Exactly a year later, on December 15, 2016 Caltrans released the draft of the revised EIR at a public hearing in Santa Barbara. The main part of the EIR was not reopened; the revised draft focused on sections of the previous document challenged in courts, not the entire EIR. This is a summary of COAST's letter to Caltrans:

Delays in the Hwy 101 project will surely be costly to commuters and taxpayers. However, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was created to protect the health and safety of these same commuters and taxpayers, and the Draft Revised EIR (DREIR) for the project does not appear to satisfy CEQA requirements.

Caltrans' Draft lacks an updated analysis of how increased traffic will impact pedestrians and bicyclists. COAST is particularly concerned about the proposed "mitigation" for the Milpas St. off-ramps (double right turn lanes) and the Cabrillo/Los Patos intersection, areas of high pedestrian and bicycle use.

The DREIR proposes to mitigate impacts to local intersections as a monetary contribution to local agencies for improvements, but their funding would be subject to future negotiations. It is critical that projects designed for all road users (including pedestrians) and their funding be secured and sufficient to accomplish the improvements needed to mitigate.

Beyond the issues addressed in the Revised EIR, COAST would like to remind Caltrans and SBCAG that widening the Union Pacific bridge, crucial to coastal access through the Cabrillo/Hot Springs pinch point, must be included and funded as part of the freeway project - not subject to future negotiations. The portion of the project that runs through the City of Santa Barbara will require a Coastal Development Permit, providing another opportunity for the City to require compliance with its multimodal transportation

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Changes at COAST

By Eva Inbar

Our popular Project Director, Erisy Watt, has travelled back to Thailand for another study excursion. After that, she wants to pursue her music career full time. We thank Erisy for all her work for COAST and wish her well in her future adventures! In her place, Joanna Kaufman (at right) has joined COAST as our new Program Director. Here she is, in her own words:

"My name is Joanna Kaufman, and I am the new Program Director for COAST. I grew up in car-oriented Riverside County, which started

my interest in the field of urban planning. Shortly after I moved to the Santa Barbara area and I found myself riding a bicycle, which I hadn't done since I was a very young child. Ever since I experienced this shift I have been fascinated with the interaction of environment and behavior. At the same time I became involved in local bicycle advocacy efforts with the formation of Bici Centro in 2007.

Subsequently I completed my B.S. in Community and Regional Development from the University of California, Davis and my Master's in City and Regional Planning from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. I have worked as a Planner for both the Cities of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, and am excited to have a position that will allow me to be even more engaged with my community. I would like to see diversified transportation options for the Santa Barbara Region and beyond including the expansion of the bike/ped network, improved commuter rail and cross regional transit networks, and appreciate the



increased attention to better land use/transportation planning. I consider myself a multi-modal person and want to contribute to efforts to ease the transition between different forms of transportation. Furthermore, I despise sitting in traffic! All in all, I look forward to meeting everyone that supports COAST's mission."

Barry Remis is a native of New Haven, Connecticut. He came to Santa Barbara in 2006 and joined COAST's Safe Routes to School team as an instructor in 2013. In addition, he has worked on our Safe Routes for Seniors program, the County's Pedestrian Master Plan, Vision Zero and our website. Barry enjoys running, biking, fitness, local music and volunteering for organizations like SBBIKE, SBIFF, the Arlington Theater, KCRW, Organic Soup Kitchen and Los Padres ForestWatch. He helps execute the annual SB Open Streets celebration and coaches young riders on the Riviera Youth Bike Team. Now is taking on an expanded role as the new COAST administrator.

Caltrans, continued from p. 1

goals and coastal access. The application for this Coastal Development Permit (CDP) will be heard by the City's Planning Commission and it will not be limited to the issues addressed in the revised EIR. The CDP may be appealed to the State Coastal Commission.

It should also be noted that the modeling analysis for the EIR presumes that an effective commuter rail service will be in place by the time the highway construction is completed, and that almost 20% of the congestion relief provided by "the lane and a train" package will come from the train. However, SBCAG has made very little headway negotiating with Union Pacific for the right-of-way to operate commuter rail service - even for a single re-timed Amtrak train, which is less than the level of service assumed in the

EIR analysis.

We realize that Caltrans is not the primary agency for providing commuter rail, but Caltrans is a key agency for providing rail service in the state, and any influence it can bring to bear on enabling commuter rail service in the South Coast would be beneficial to commuters and to the traffic situation in the 101 corridor.

The revised EIR sections must return for Judge Anderle's review before certification. The widening project, known as the South Coast 101 HOV Lanes, is expected to cost \$435 million. Most of its funding is local, with \$140 million coming from Santa Barbara County's Measure A sales tax and another \$135 million from 15 years' worth of the county's share of gas taxes.

Transportation and Infrastructure Needs

An Interview with Councilmember Cathy Murillo

By Deborah L. Schwartz

I recently sat down with City of Santa Barbara Councilmember Cathy Murillo to discuss transportation challenges and opportunities, focusing on the city's infrastructure needs to provide safe accessibility for all.

On the policy front, with the Pedestrian Master Plan having been adopted back in July, 2006, she believes a City-sponsored series of community feedback workshops would encourage residents from all neighborhoods to come forward. Ms. Murillo has received constituent comments on the need for more friendly sidewalks, safer intersections, and increased traffic enforcement where cars don't stop for pedestrians. We know that unsafe and missing links (i.e., gaps) in sidewalk connectivity are deterrents to pedestrians and reduce safety for our children walking to school. To that end she wants to look for additional opportunities to partner and enhance the Safe Routes to School program.

Shared road user awareness requires continuing education. For that Ms. Murillo recommends a public education campaign along the lines of "share the road". This could also be bolstered by expanding the city's "Slow Down Santa Barbara" campaign.

Deferred maintenance costs related to the city's aging road infrastructure continue to escalate. The funding gap for



investment in city infrastructure is an estimated \$27M per year. Pavement Maintenance alone would require approximately 11.7M and traffic signals, sidewalks, storm drains, and streetlights would require \$2.8M per year. Without an adequate revenue source, the council finance committee recently recommended that the council engage a professional pollster to canvas Santa Barbara voters' receptivity on a sales tax ballot measure. Subsequently the council voted to implement this as a step toward that. The proposed sales tax measure would increase the current local sales tax rate by ¼ cent to up to 1 cent.

At the state level, there are various transportation funding measures under consideration. Recent proposals are

Jim Frazier's Assembly Bill 1 and Jim Beall's Senate Bill 1 which would create the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Program, together providing over \$3M annually to our city. However as Councilmember Murillo pointed out, even if the legislature approves this funding approach it represents a relatively small percent of the total \$27M needed per year.

The bigger picture on infrastructure funding is that beyond California, this issue is rapidly becoming one of the largest, most important financing issues across the country.

Winter cycling By Christine Nelsen -Thuresson

For those accustomed to biking in t-shirts and shorts, it's hard to imagine cycling in Sweden in winter. My Scandinavian friends say, "There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing." But while gear certainly helps, it's nothing without infrastructure and upkeep.

The city of Stockholm, Sweden, is making a concerted effort to encourage year-round biking. They are employing new methods of keeping paths free of ice and snow by sweeping more, reducing salt and sand use. Better lighting and the widening of key commuter bike routes (to as much as 14 1/2 feet) make it more attractive even in the dead of winter. It is working. Winter biking has increased by 30% since 2012 and each year that number rises.

As evidence, despite a midday temperature of 23° F, some remaining snow and ice, I safely and comfortably

traveled the five miles from my suburb into central Stockholm this week. About 90% of my trip was on fully separated, well-lit paths that were dry and clean.

There is always room for improvement. I was forced onto the sidewalk at one point because snow had been plowed onto a section of the bike track, and those simple painted lanes can become nearly invisible when dirty slush and ice conceal them. To report shortcomings however, the city has an app that allows cyclists to describe issues on the spot, including an exact GPS location. This is reinforced by a group of passionate bloggers who post deficiencies on Facebook, publicly holding the city accountable.

There is no doubt in my mind, were it not for the infrastructure—there are 1,318 miles of bike paths in Stockholm—and maintenance, my Trek would be in the shed until spring.



Note: The author is a former SB resident who moved to Sweden with her family last year.



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Announcing a new Season of Walking Wednesdays



Our popular Walking Wednesday program is entering its seventh season. The program runs during the spring and summer months on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 5:30 to 7pm. Under the guidance of a wonderful and knowledgeable docent, we discover a new piece of Santa Barbara each time.

We will kick off the season on **March 22nd** with a tour of the Santa Barbara waterfront led by **Dave Davis**, former SB Planning Director and former Executive Director of CEC (pictured above). We will continue our tour of the SB Waterfront where we left off last year, including La Entrada and the Funk Zone, Skaters' Point, Chase Palm Park, Fess Parker DoubleTree, the Chromatic Gate, our old/new desalination facility, Wright properties, Garden Street back through the Funk Zone to end the walk at Figueroa Mountain Brewery where a portion of all beer proceeds that night will

benefit COAST. This is a walk not to be missed!

Looking ahead: On April 26, local historian **Fermina Murray** will lead us on a tour of Goleta Old Town. In May we'll visit historic Victorian homes on Valerio Street with **Betsy Green** and in June we are up for more Riviera gems with **Karen Feeney**. Later in the year, we'll visit some of the studios in the Funk Zone with local artist **Marcello Ricci**. More walks are still being planned.

For a detailed schedule, please visit our website and watch your e-mail for our monthly e-newsletter.

Our thanks go to our season sponsors, **Allen Construction, Harrison Design Associates, Deckers Outdoor Corp.** and **Sansum Clinic** who make this program possible.