

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following plan presents service enhancements, capital improvements, and management plan elements as well as marketing and financial strategies to enhance public transit services in the Five Cities region. It is based on a review of existing transit service and demand conditions, analysis of a wide range of alternatives and public input. This chapter presents the individual plan elements in brief based on the substantial discussions presented in previous chapters; the reader is encouraged to refer to previous chapters for additional background on the plan elements. The overall plan features are presented graphically in Figure 41. These service changes build upon the “base” of the existing services, which are planned to continue except as modified by the plan elements.

Per the San Luis Obispo County 2040 Population, Housing and Employment Forecast (SLOCOG, 2011), the Five Cities area is forecast to increase by 0.5 percent per year from 2020 to 2025. The base transit ridership is assumed to increase at this rate of population growth.

## **INSTITUTIONAL PLAN**

### **Incorporate the SoCo Transit Program into the RTA**

The SoCo Transit organization will be dissolved and functions incorporated into the Regional Transit Authority, through the adoption of an amended RTA Joint Powers Agreement. This will have the following benefits to the SoCo Transit programs and riders:

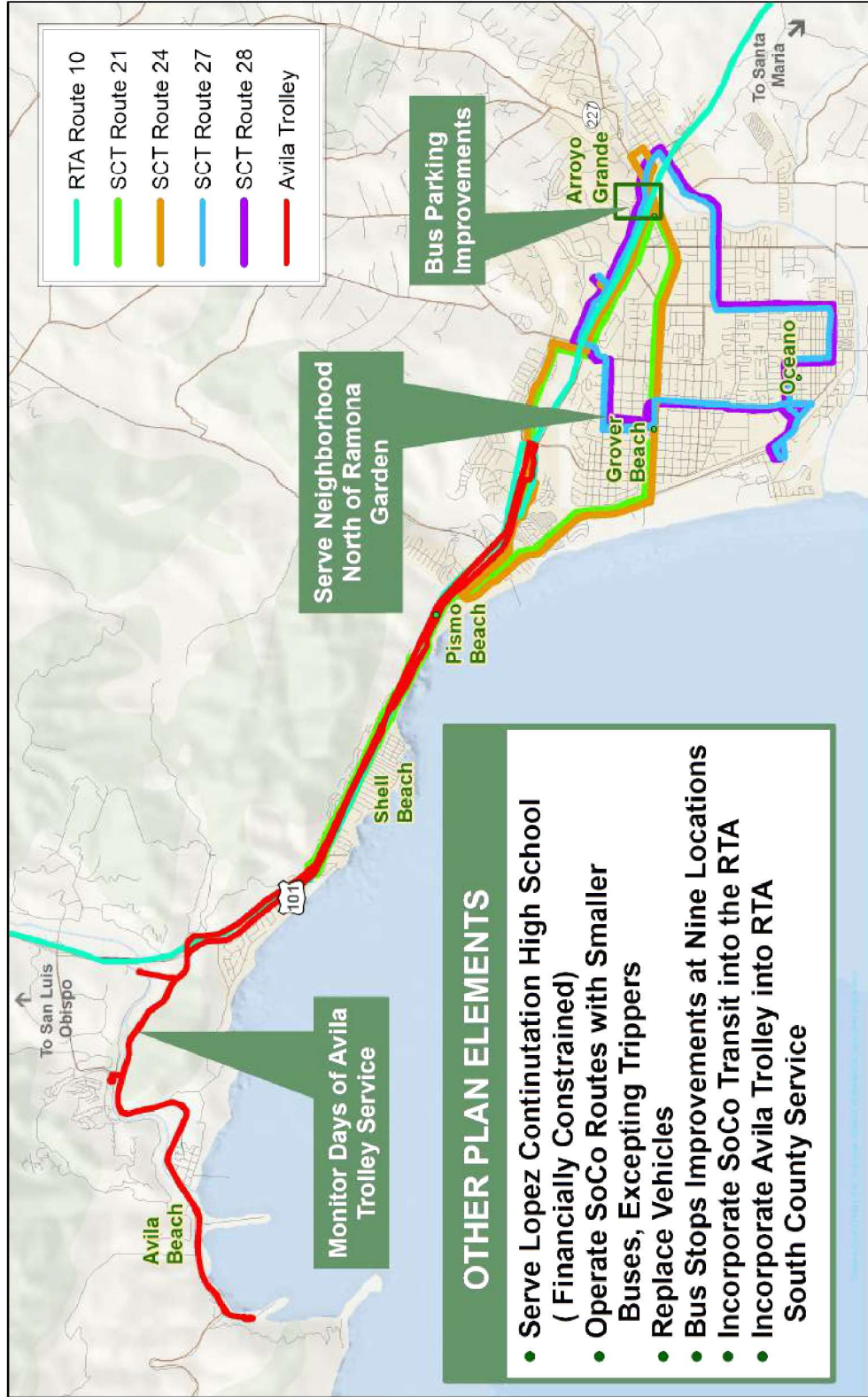
- Most importantly, it will address the existing issue regarding non-attainment of the Transportation Development Act’s (TDA) minimum farebox return ratio requirements. By “blending” the relatively low farebox return ratio of local service with the higher figures for regional services, the overall RTA program (with SoCo Transit included) will easily attain the regional ratio requirements. Absent this institutional change, the SoCo Transit program would be faced with a combination of (1) significant reductions in services, (2) significant increases in fares and/or (3) cuts in TDA revenues that can be spent on local services.
- It will reduce administrative costs associated with full separate management of the SoCo Transit program.
- It will provide substantial cost savings.
- It enhances opportunities for joint marketing campaigns.

It is important to note that proposals to date will create a separate SoCo Transit Committee, comprised of representatives of the City of Arroyo Grande, City of Grover Beach, City of Pismo Beach and County of San Luis Obispo. This will be the governance body for a separate SoCo Transit budget. This will continue to ensure that SoCo Transit services are under the guidance of Board members that have the best local knowledge of needs and conditions in the area.

**FIGURE 41**  
**SoCo Transit Short Range Transit Plan**



0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles



## **Incorporate the Avila-Pismo Trolley into the RTA South County Service**

While the Avila-Pismo Trolley originated as a limited service focusing solely on Avila Beach visitors, it has grown into an important element of the South County regional public transit network. Unlike when the Trolley service started, it now operates wholly within the Arroyo Grande-Grover Beach Urbanized Area (with the exception of the last two stops in Port San Luis). It also serves trips within the SoCo Transit service area along Price Street. The inclusion of the Avila Beach area population in unincorporated San Luis Obispo County helps to achieve Urbanized Area status, which makes the overall area eligible for Federal Transit Administration 5307 urban formula funds.

As such, the Trolley route should be managed and funded as part of the overall SoCo Transit program. The current “service contract” funding agreement with San Luis Obispo County will be terminated, and instead the costs of this route allocated through the overall SoCo Transit funding agreement. This will allow all planning and operations to be under the management of the RTA’s SoCo Transit Committee.

## **SERVICE PLAN**

### **Financially Constrained Operating Plan**

#### Shift Routes 27 and 28 to Serve the Neighborhood North of Ramona Garden

Routes 27 and 28 will be revised to serve an additional neighborhood along 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Atlantic City Avenue north of Ramona Garden. This will provide new service within a convenient walking distance of an additional 1,300 residents, including many residents with a high potential of using transit services, such as residents of the Vista Pacific Apartments. Riders at the stops no longer served by Routes 27 and 28 will continue to be served by Routes 21 and 24, or be within a short walk of the new stops. This shift will result in a modest (\$1,200 per year) savings in operating costs, as the routes would be slightly shorter than at present, and increase overall ridership by an estimated 4,600 boardings per year. While this will require the operation of one bus per hour in each direction on streets currently not carrying buses, the shift to smaller vehicles will tend to offset the impacts.

### **Financially Unconstrained Operating Plan**

#### Serve Lopez Continuation High School

If new funding sources can be generated to cover operating subsidy needs, the schedules of the existing Route 27 and Route 28 tripper runs should be extended to provide service to Lopez Continuation High School on Mesa View Drive during school days. This would help to provide educational access to several elements of the school community. Approximately \$29,000 in additional funding would need to be secured.

#### Review Days of Avila-Pismo Trolley Service

Visitation patterns to Avila Beach could shift in the future based on factors such as the growth in tourism and expanded activity outside of the traditional summer season. Trends should be monitored, and service plans modified to match ridership demands as warranted and as funding availability allows.

## CAPITAL PLAN

### Operate SoCo Transit Routes with Smaller Vehicles Excepting Tripper Buses

This planning study has identified that the four SoCo Transit routes can be operated using smaller vehicles on most runs, which can reduce operating and capital costs while also reducing noise and other neighborhood impacts. Accordingly, as larger vehicles warrant replacement new smaller low-floor cutaway vehicles (with a capacity of approximately 20 seated passengers as well as two wheelchair positions) will be purchased. While a specific manufacturer and vehicle model is yet to be identified, it will ultimately be a low-floor model with easier passenger movement and driver space than the cutaway currently being used on Route 21.

In 2020 (when existing vehicles 201 and 204 warrant replacement), smaller vehicles will be implemented on Routes 27 and 28. After several months, staff will survey the passengers and review operating results (such as on-time performance) to determine if an overall benefit to the transit program has occurred. If so, vehicles 1011 and 1012 will be replaced with smaller vehicles for conversion of Routes 21 and 24 in 2022. This will still provide four 35-foot buses (Gilligs) in the SoCo Transit fleet for tripper use. The tripper runs will continue to be operated using larger buses to accommodate the larger passenger loads. In addition, there are some specific runs (such as for school trips) that are known in advance and will be operated using larger buses.

This strategy will reduce operating costs by an estimated \$46,700, over all four routes. Replacing the larger buses with less expensive smaller cutaways will also reduce total initial capital costs by approximately \$1.2 Million.

### Vehicle Replacement Plan

Reflecting the use of smaller vehicles where appropriate, the following SoCo Transit replacement vehicles will be purchased over the five-year SRTP planning period:

- Two 35-foot Gillig buses (201 and 204) will be replaced by low-floor cutaway vehicles in FY 2020-21.
- Assuming the smaller vehicles are found to be satisfactory, two 35-foot Thor buses will be replaced by low-floor cutaway vehicles in FY 2022-23.
- Two Dodge Grand Caravan minivans will require replacement in 2024-25.

At the current unit costs of \$50,000 for a minivan and \$150,000 for a low-floor cutaway bus (with farebox and other equipment), and assuming a 3 percent annual rate of inflation in capital costs, these vehicle purchases will require an estimated \$752,700 over the five-year plan period. Note that these costs assume standard fossil fuels, pending the results of a comprehensive zero emission vehicle readiness plan for the region.

## **Zero Emission Vehicles**

The California Air Resource Board's (CARB) "Transit Fleet Rule" requires that all public transit fleets in the state ultimately use only Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) vehicles. ZEB technologies consist of Battery Electric Buses (BEBs) and hydrogen fuel cell buses. With limited exceptions, beginning on January 1, 2026, 25 percent of all new bus purchases must be ZEB and beginning on January 1, 2029 all transit fleet new bus purchases must be ZEBs. A transition rollout plan is required to be completed by 2023, which considers technology, vehicles and charging/fueling options. As SoCo Transit and Dial-a-Ride services will be provided using a combined overall RTA fleet, this issue will be addressed at the broader RTA level rather than for the SoCo Transit system alone.

## **Bus Stop Improvements**

The quality of passenger amenities is important in the convenience and safety of a public transit trip, and can "make or break" an individual's decision on using transit services. The following bus stop improvements are included in this plan:

**Shelters:** Grand Avenue & 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Highway 1 and 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Grand Avenue & 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Dolliver Avenue & Pomeroy Avenue, Highway 1 & 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Avenue & Elm Street.

**Benches:** Dolliver Avenue & Hinds Avenue, Shell Beach Road & Seacliff Drive

**Concrete Wheelchair Pad:** Oceano Airport. In addition, San Luis Obispo County is encouraged to provide sidewalks along Air Park Drive to connect this stop with nearby residences.

Funding for stop improvements are included in this plan, equal to the existing FY 2019/20 funding level (\$45,590) increasing by 3 percent per year for inflation.

## **Premium Outlets Transfer Center Improvements**

While improvements are best accomplished through comprehensive RTA plans, a westbound bus stop for northbound Route 10 on the northeast side of Five Cities Drive (opposite the existing bus bays) would benefit SoCo Transit passengers and operations by improving the reliability of connections at this key location.

## **Bus Parking Facility Improvements**

Pavement conditions at the SoCo Transit bus operations facility on Rodeo Drive in Arroyo Grande are in adequate but deteriorating condition. The plan includes \$200,000 for repaving the parking lot and access drives at this facility.

In addition, transit management staff should investigate the provision of secured parking in the Nipomo area for the two vehicles used for the Nipomo Dial-a-Ride service. Specifically, other public entities (such as the County or School District) should be contacted to see if there are opportunities available to establish secure overnight parking (with 24-hour staff access) at little or no cost to the transit program.

## FINANCIAL PLAN

The impacts of the service plan elements on annual operating costs are shown in Table 61. Operating costs are forecast assuming a 5 percent annual increase in unit costs. While this is higher than the typical rate of inflation in recent years, it reflects current labor agreements regarding base wage increases, as well as potential increases in fuel costs and liability costs. The impacts of the operating plan elements on operating costs are then included to estimate the annual operating costs over each of the next five years. As shown, the financially constrained service element will reduce operating costs by 3.0 percent, equal to \$61,100 in savings by the last year of the plan period. Including the financially unconstrained element still provides a reduction in operating costs, totaling \$20,100 (1.0 percent).

<b>TABLE 61: SoCo Transit S RTP Estimated Annual Operating Cost</b>					
Plan Element	Fiscal Year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Base Case Operating Cost<sup>(1)</sup></b>	\$1,588,700	\$1,751,500	\$1,839,100	\$1,931,100	\$2,027,600
<b>Financially Constrained Service Plan Elements</b>					
Rt 27 & 28 Service North of Ramona Garden	-\$1,300	-\$1,300	-\$1,400	-\$1,500	-\$1,500
Percent Increase	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%
<b>Financially Unconstrained Service Plan Elements</b>					
Serve Lopez High School	\$33,700	\$35,400	\$37,200	\$39,000	\$41,000
Percent Change	2.1%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
<b>Impact of Smaller Vehicles</b>	-\$21,900	-\$23,000	-\$54,100	-\$56,800	-\$59,600
<b>Total Operating Cost</b>					
Financially Constrained	\$1,565,500	\$1,727,200	\$1,783,600	\$1,872,800	\$1,966,500
Percent Change	-1.5%	-1.4%	-3.0%	-3.0%	-3.0%
Financially Unconstrained	\$1,599,200	\$1,762,600	\$1,820,800	\$1,911,800	\$2,007,500
Percent Change	0.7%	0.6%	-1.0%	-1.0%	-1.0%
Note 1: Per 2019/20 Final Budget, excluding capital outlays; assumes 5% annual inflation.					
Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.					

Total annual ridership, as shown in Table 62, will increase by 2.0 percent or 4,700 passenger boardings under the financially constrained plan, or 4.2 percent (10,000) under the financially unconstrained option. As indicated in Table 63, this ridership increase would add \$3,800 in passenger fare revenue under the financially constrained option, and \$6,100 if financially unconstrained.

The SoCo Transit financial plan is shown provided in Table 64. This plan is built from the existing adopted budget. The forecasts for operating funding are defined as follows:

- Annual passenger fares are drawn from Table 63.
- 5307 Operating, interest, and advertising/other revenues are assumed to grow at 3 percent per year.



**TABLE 62: SoCo Transit SRTP Estimated Annual Ridership**

Plan Element	Fiscal Year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Base Case <sup>(1)</sup></b>					
SoCo Transit	221,600	222,700	223,800	224,900	226,100
Avila Trolley	9,200	9,300	9,300	9,400	9,400
Total	230,800	232,000	233,100	234,300	235,500
<b>Financially Constrained Service Plan Elements</b>					
Rt 27 & 28 Service North of Ramona Garden	3,100	4,600	4,700	4,700	4,700
Percent Increase	1.3%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
<b>Financially Unconstrained Service Plan Elements</b>					
Serve Lopez High School	3,700	3,700	3,800	3,800	3,800
Percent Increase	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
<b>Total Ridership</b>					
Financially Constrained	233,900	236,600	237,800	239,000	240,200
Financially Unconstrained	237,600	240,300	241,600	242,800	244,000
Note 1: Base case ridership assumed to grow at the pace of population growth (0.5% annually). Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.					

**TABLE 63: SoCo Transit SRTP Estimated Annual Farebox Revenues**

Plan Element	Fiscal Year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Base Case <sup>(1)</sup></b>					
SoCo Transit	\$153,500	\$154,300	\$155,100	\$155,800	\$156,600
Avila Trolley	\$8,800	\$8,900	\$8,900	\$9,000	\$9,000
Total	\$162,300	\$163,200	\$164,000	\$164,800	\$165,600
<b>Financially Constrained Service Plan Elements</b>					
Rt 27 & 28 Service North of Ramona Garden	\$2,500	\$3,700	\$3,800	\$3,800	\$3,800
<b>Financially Unconstrained Service Plan Elements</b>					
Serve Lopez High School	\$3,100	\$3,100	\$3,100	\$3,200	\$3,200
<b>Total</b>					
Financially Constrained	\$164,800	\$166,900	\$167,800	\$168,600	\$169,400
Percent Increase	1.5%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%
Financially Unconstrained	\$167,900	\$170,000	\$170,900	\$171,800	\$172,600
Percent Increase	3.5%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%
Note 1: Base case ridership assumed to grow at the pace of population growth (0.5% annually). Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.					

<b>TABLE 64: SoCo Transit SRTP Financial Plan -- Financially Constrained</b>						
	Fiscal Year					
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
<b>OPERATING ELEMENTS</b>						
Base Case Costs	\$1,588,700	\$1,668,100	\$1,751,500	\$1,839,100	\$1,931,000	
Operating Plan Elements (From Table 61)	(\$23,200)	(\$24,300)	(\$55,500)	(\$58,300)	(\$61,100)	
Total Operating Costs	\$1,565,500	\$1,643,800	\$1,696,000	\$1,780,800	\$1,869,900	
Operating Revenues <sup>1</sup>						
Passenger Fares (From Table 63)	\$164,800	\$166,900	\$167,800	\$168,600	\$169,400	
Low Carbon Transit Grant	\$309,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
FTA 5307 Operating	\$575,900	\$593,200	\$611,000	\$629,300	\$648,200	
SLO County Trolley Operations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Advertising & Other	\$5,200	\$5,400	\$5,600	\$5,800	\$6,000	
Local Transportation Funds						
- Arroyo Grande	\$189,100	\$328,600	\$341,100	\$365,900	\$392,000	
- Grover Beach	\$144,300	\$250,800	\$260,300	\$279,200	\$299,200	
- Pismo Beach	\$84,600	\$147,000	\$152,600	\$163,700	\$175,400	
- SLO County	\$79,600	\$138,400	\$143,600	\$154,000	\$165,100	
- Subtotal	\$497,500	\$864,800	\$897,700	\$962,800	\$1,031,600	
Interest	\$13,100	\$13,500	\$13,900	\$14,300	\$14,700	
TOTAL	\$1,565,500	\$1,643,800	\$1,696,000	\$1,780,800	\$1,869,900	
Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
<b>CAPITAL ELEMENTS</b>						
Capital Costs (From Table 64)	\$356,000	\$48,400	\$577,600	\$51,300	\$168,800	Total
Capital Revenues						\$1,202,100
FTA 5307 Capital <sup>(2)</sup>	\$247,200	\$0	\$262,240	\$0	\$92,720	\$602,160
FTA 5339 Capital <sup>(2)</sup>	\$37,600	\$38,720	\$199,840	\$41,040	\$42,320	\$359,520
STA (Local Match)	\$71,200	\$9,680	\$115,520	\$10,260	\$33,760	\$240,420
Total Capital Revenues	\$356,000	\$48,400	\$577,600	\$51,300	\$168,800	\$1,202,100
Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Note 1: 2019-20 figures based upon adopted budget. Note 2: 80 percent Federal / 20 percent local match. Note 3: The Low Carbon Transit Grant discontinues after FY 2020-21						
Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.						

- The Low Carbon Transit Grant program ends after Fiscal Year 2020-21.
- The existing San Luis Obispo County operating funds for the Avila Trolley are assumed to be eliminated, as this service is folded into the SoCo Transit program.
- The remaining funding requirements will be met by Local Transportation Funds (LTF). In total, these funds will need to increase by \$577,000 per year, driven by the end of the Low Carbon Transit Grant program, the loss of separate County trolley funding and the effects of inflation. This is equal to a 127 percent increase in LTF funding. This total LTF requirement is allocated to the individual jurisdictions based on the proportion of population, per the SoCo Transit joint powers agreement. Note that the current proportions are applied over the plan period, though these proportions may change based upon 2020 Census results.



Total forecast capital costs are shown in Table 65. As indicated, the capital improvements total \$1,202,100 over the coming five years (assuming a 3 percent annual inflation rate for capital items). Funding for capital improvements is expected to be provided as follows:

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funds are used to fund 80 percent of the vehicle purchase costs.
- FTA 5339 Bus and Bus Facility funds (administered through the Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transportation) are used to fund 80 percent of the facility improvement costs.
- State Transit Assistance (STA) funds are used as the 20 percent local match for the FTA funding.

These funding sources will provide a balanced capital budget.

TABLE 65: SoCo Transit Short Range Capital Plan							5-Year Plan Total
Plan Element	FY 2019-20 Unit Cost	Fiscal Year					
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
Vehicle Purchases							
Number of Buses -- Replacement							
Minivan	\$50,000	0	0	0	0	2	2
Cutaway	\$150,000	2	0	2	0	0	4
Total Cost <sup>(1)</sup>		\$309,000	\$0	\$327,800	\$0	\$115,900	\$752,700
Bus Stop Improvement Program		\$47,000	\$48,400	\$49,800	\$51,300	\$52,900	\$249,400
Bus Operations Facility Paving		\$0	\$0	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$200,000
Total Capital Plan Elements		\$356,000	\$48,400	\$577,600	\$51,300	\$168,800	\$1,202,100
Note 1: All costs include 3 percent annual inflation. Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.							

## CONCLUSION

In sum, this plan will increase ridership modestly (2.0 to 4.2 percent), while yielding a net reduction in annual operating costs (0.4 to 3.0 percent). It will provide the Trolley with a permanent source of funding, and result in important capital improvements. Finally, this plan will provide the basis for full integration of the SoCo Transit program into the Regional Transit Authority.

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This chapter presents the plan for service enhancements, capital improvements, management elements and financial strategies to support and improve the various Dial-A-Ride programs, building from the data and analyses presented in previous chapters. The reader is encouraged to refer to previous chapters for additional background on the plan elements. The overall plan features are presented graphically in Figure 42. These service changes build upon the “base” of the existing services, which are planned to continue except as modified by the plan elements.

Per the San Luis Obispo County 2040 Population, Housing and Employment Forecast (SLOCOG, 2011), the rural areas of San Luis Obispo County are forecast to increase by 0.9 percent per year from 2020 to 2025. The base transit ridership is assumed to increase at this rate of population growth.

## **SERVICE PLAN**

### **Expand Nipomo Dial-a-Ride Service Area**

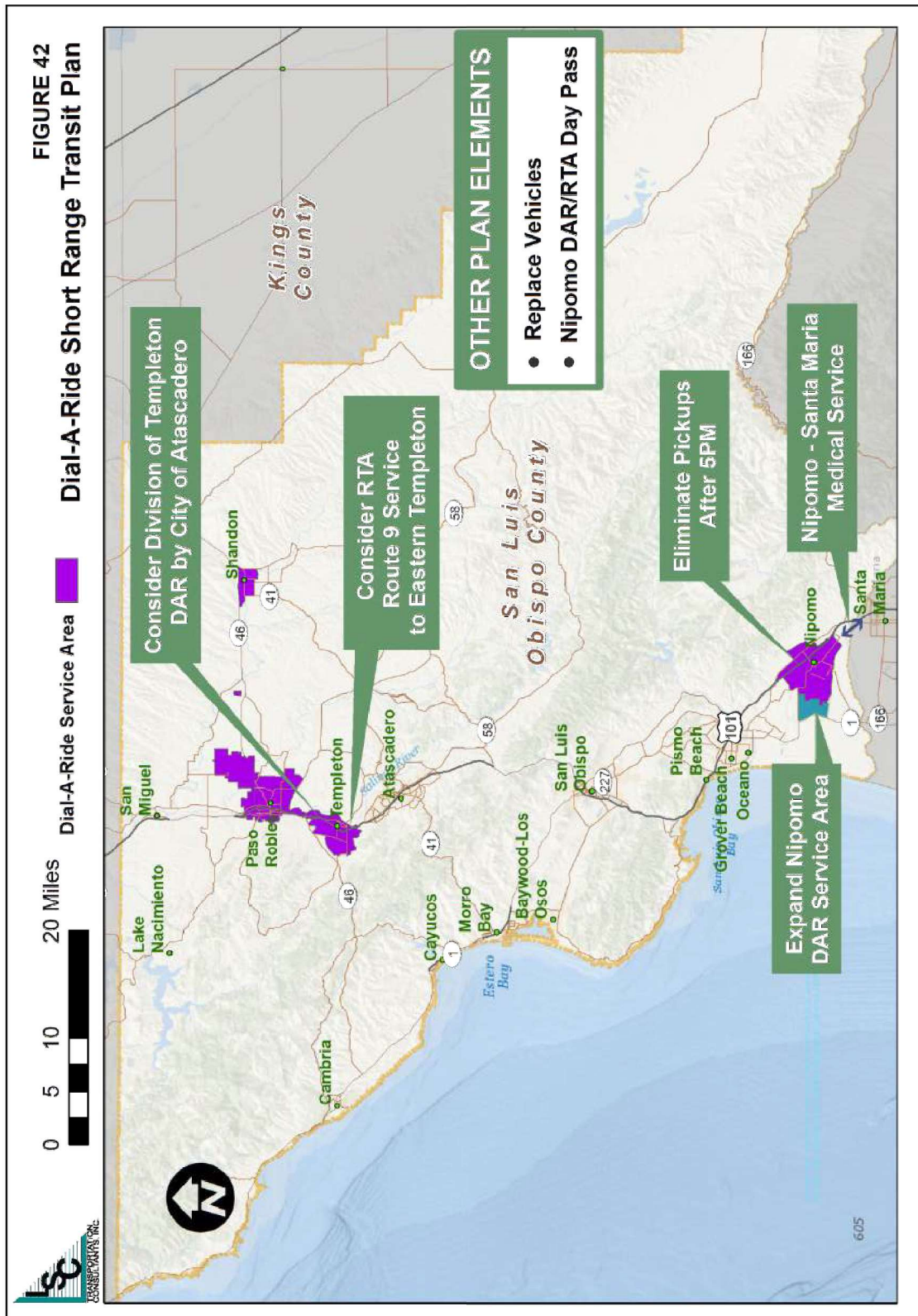
The existing Nipomo Dial-a-Ride service area will be extended westward approximately 1 to 1.5 miles from the existing western boundary (as far west as Via Conchina Road) to the Highway 1 alignment. This area includes the Trilogy development as well as other nearby residential areas. The analysis of existing ridership and service patterns for the Nipomo Dial-a-Ride indicates that there are substantial periods (outside of the school bell times) when there are available resources to expand service. A review of existing capacity indicates that service to this area can be provided without adding additional drivers or vehicles (while further expansion to other area would trigger increased service levels). While this will increase the mileage operated (and thus costs), it will make better use of the existing resources and serve more residents of the area.

### **Provide Nipomo – Santa Maria Medical Trips**

On a demonstration basis, the Nipomo Dial-a-Ride program will be expanded to include two-days-a-week service to medical destinations in Santa Maria on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Two runs a day (mid-morning and mid-afternoon) will be offered on a reservation basis (with a minimum of 2 days advance reservation). Marketing efforts will be made to make Nipomo area residents aware of the service. Ridership, costs and the ability to provide these trips using existing drivers/vehicles (or the need to provide additional service) will be monitored for a minimum of 6 months. This service will fill an existing need for door-to-door service across the county line for persons who cannot use the fixed route service. A fare of \$5.00 per one-way trip will be charged, which is slightly higher than with the Senior Go! fare for a trip of similar length.

### **Continue to Monitor Nipomo Dial-a-Ride Service Levels**

The demand for Nipomo Dial-a-Ride service can vary substantially by day, by season, and over successive years. Changes in factors such as school and summer student programs can impact service. RTA should continue to review ridership demands and tailor the level of service (number of vehicles in operation) to maximize the efficiency of this service.



### **Eliminate Nipomo Dial-a-Ride Pickups After 5 PM**

The hours of the Nipomo Dial-a-Ride service, which currently ends at 6:30 PM, will be reduced to stop picking up new passengers after 5:00 PM (though passengers picked up before 5:00 PM will be transported home). A review of ridership data indicates that only an average of 1.4 passengers per day board after 5:00 PM (or 1.5 percent of all riders), and keeping the drivers on the clock for later pick-ups increases annual operating costs by \$9,600 per year.

### **Consider Route 9 Service to Eastern Templeton as Part of Next RTA SRTP or North County Corridor Plan**

The revision of RTA Route 9 to serve the eastern portion of Templeton (including South Main Street between Templeton Road and 1<sup>st</sup> Street) has the potential to expand Route 9 ridership and expand service to new residential areas, schools and businesses. Overall, a ridership increase of 4,500 per year would be provided, while operating costs would be increased by an estimated \$48,100. As the additional running time also has the potential to impact transfer opportunities elsewhere along the route, this option should be considered as part of a future larger RTA study encompassing the entire route.

## **CAPITAL PLAN**

### **Replacement Vehicles**

As detailed in Table 56, above, a total of three Dial-a-Ride cutaway buses will require replacement over the coming five years: two Braun Entravans in 2020-21 and one Starcraft in 2022-23. These vehicles will be replaced with vehicles of similar size. While a larger bus for Nipomo Dial-a-Ride school trips would allow additional ridership (and reduce the waiting list), it would not be appropriate for the remainder of the service day.

## **INSTITUTIONAL PLAN**

### **Pursue Provision of Templeton Dial-a-Ride Service by City of Atascadero**

RTA should lead discussions with San Luis Obispo County and the City of Atascadero for the City to serve the modest (167 per year, or only an average of 3.2 one-way passenger-trips per week) trips on the Templeton Dial-a-Ride service. The City has recently expanded service to Templeton for Atascadero resident trips and has the potential to serve these passengers for less than the \$5,800 per year currently incurred by RTA. Management, monitoring and billing procedures would need to be addressed.

## **FINANCIAL PLAN**

### **Pursue Grant Funding to Provide Nipomo Dial-a-Ride / RTA Fixed Route Day Pass**

At present, Nipomo residents not living near the few Route 10 stops must pay separate fares for Nipomo Dial-a-Ride and RTA fixed route service. As a result, a relatively short trip to and from Santa Maria can cost \$9.00 (\$2.25 per one-way trip on Nipomo Dial-a-Ride plus \$2.25 per one-way trip in RTA) for general public and \$5.70 (\$1.75 and \$1.10, times two) for seniors age 65 to 79 and persons with disabilities. A Day Pass is good for a single round-trip on Nipomo Dial-a-Ride as well as unlimited regional

fixed route service would aid Nipomo residents in reaching destinations in other communities, such as for medical, recreational, shopping or cultural purposes. A reasonable cost for this Day Pass (considering existing single fares and Day Pass options) would be \$7.00 for the general public and \$3.50 for seniors and persons with disabilities. Specific costs and ridership impacts of this strategy would need to be based on passenger surveys, but are expected to be modest. This would be a good opportunity for grant programs (such as Area Agency on Aging) focused on senior and/or disabled resident mobility needs.

## Planned Funding Sources

Forecast Dial-a-Ride service annual operating costs under this plan are shown in Table 66. This reflects the cost impacts of the service plan elements, the existing base FY 2020-21 budgeted operating costs, and includes a 5 percent per year inflation factor. The expansion of the Nipomo Dial-a-Ride area as well as the medical transportation service to Santa Maria is assumed to be implemented in July of 2020. As it takes time for a new service to reach full ridership potential, two-thirds of the full potential ridership is assumed for the first year (based on studies of ridership impacts typically seen for new services). As modifications to existing Dial-a-Ride service, the marginal costs of these services correspond to the level of ridership. To reflect this, the operating cost impacts in the first year are also factored by two-thirds.

<b>TABLE 66: Dial-a-Ride SRTP Estimated Annual Operating Cost</b>					
Plan Element	Fiscal Year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Base Case Operating Cost <sup>(1)</sup></b>	\$513,500	\$539,200	\$566,200	\$594,500	\$624,200
<b><u>Service Plan Elements</u></b>					
Expand Nipomo DAR Service Area <sup>(2)</sup>	\$3,300	\$5,200	\$5,400	\$5,700	\$6,000
Nipomo-Santa Maria Medical Trips <sup>(2)</sup>	\$17,000	\$27,000	\$28,400	\$29,800	\$31,300
Eliminate Nipomo DAR Service After 5 PM	-\$9,400	-\$9,900	-\$10,400	-\$10,900	-\$11,400
Subtotal	\$10,900	\$22,300	\$23,400	\$24,600	\$25,900
Percent Increase	2.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%
<b>Total Operating Cost</b>	<b>\$524,400</b>	<b>\$561,500</b>	<b>\$589,600</b>	<b>\$619,100</b>	<b>\$650,100</b>
Note 1: Per 2019/20 Final Budget, excluding capital outlays and Avila Trolley, Special Transit costs; assumes 5% annual inflation. Note 2: Assumes 2/3 of full ridership potential in first year, with corresponding cost impact. Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.					

As indicated, the plan elements are forecast to increase operating costs by \$25,900 per year by the end of the five-year plan period, or 4.1 percent above the base case costs. Including the impacts of inflation, total annual operating costs for the Dial-a-Ride services are forecast to increase to \$650,100.

Annual ridership forecasts, as presented in Table 67, include a modest 0.9 percent per year growth in base ridership (reflecting the forecasts in annual population for unincorporated San Luis Obispo County) as well as the ridership generated by the service plan elements. This total service plan element ridership increase (950 per year) is equal to a 5.1 percent increase over current Dial-a-Ride ridership.

**TABLE 67: Dial-a-Ride SRTF Estimated Annual Ridership**

Plan Element	Fiscal Year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Base Case <sup>(1)</sup></b>					
Nipomo Dial-a-Ride	15,544	15,700	15,800	16,000	16,100
Shandon Dial-a-Ride	2	2	2	2	2
Templeton Dial-a-Ride	168	170	170	170	170
Paso Robles Dial-a-Ride	2,875	2,900	2,930	2,950	2,980
Total	18,589	18,772	18,902	19,122	19,252
<b>Service Plan Elements</b>					
Expand Nipomo DAR Service Area <sup>(2)</sup>	400	600	600	600	600
Nipomo-Santa Maria Medical Trips <sup>(2)</sup>	460	700	700	700	700
Eliminate Nipomo DAR Service After 5 PM	-350	-350	-350	-350	-350
Subtotal	510	950	950	950	950
<b>Total Ridership</b>	19,099	19,722	19,852	20,072	20,202
<i>Percent Increase</i>	2.7%	5.1%	5.0%	5.0%	4.9%
Note 1: Base case ridership assumed to grow at the pace of population growth (0.5% annually). Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.					

The financial plan for operating elements is presented in the top of Table 68. Total operating revenues are defined as follows:

- Fare revenues are estimated based on the growth in base ridership as well as the fares generated by the expanded services. Between both factors, fare revenues will increase by \$3,270 per year.
- State Transit Assistance Funds is assumed to equal the currently budgeted amount for FY 2020-21 (\$206,000), increasing by the rate of inflation.
- The balance of required funding is assumed to consist of Local Transportation Funds provided through San Luis Obispo County for the Nipomo and Shandon/Templeton services, and the City of Paso Robles for the Paso Robles Dial-a-Ride. These funds range from \$266,020 in the first year of the plan to \$341,270 in the fifth year, largely due to the impacts of inflation.

Capital costs for the Dial-a-Ride services are generated by the replacement of three vehicles, with a total estimated cost of \$472,900. Approximately 80 percent of these funds are defined to come from the Federal Transit Administration 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities program (administered by Caltrans), while local match funds will come from State Transit Assistance funds.



<b>TABLE 68: Dial-a-Ride SRTP Financial Plan</b>						
	<i>Fiscal Year</i>					
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
<b>OPERATING ELEMENTS</b>						
<b>Operating Costs</b>						
<i>Base Case Costs</i>	\$513,500	\$539,200	\$566,200	\$594,500	\$624,200	
<u>Operating Plan Elements (From Table 66)</u>	\$10,900	\$22,300	\$23,400	\$24,600	\$25,900	
Total Operating Costs	\$524,400	\$561,500	\$589,600	\$619,100	\$650,100	
<b>Operating Revenues<sup>1</sup></b>						
<u>Passenger Fares</u>						
- Base	\$50,440	\$50,890	\$51,810	\$53,220	\$55,160	
- Expanded Nipomo DAR Service Area	\$260	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	
- Nipomo-Santa Maria Medical Svc	\$2,310	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	
- End Nipomo DAR Pickups After 5 PM	(\$630)	(\$630)	(\$630)	(\$630)	(\$630)	
- Subtotal	\$52,380	\$54,160	\$55,080	\$56,490	\$58,430	
Local Transportation Funds	\$266,020	\$291,040	\$307,420	\$324,110	\$341,270	
STA (Including SB1)	\$206,000	\$216,300	\$227,100	\$238,500	\$250,400	
TOTAL	\$524,400	\$561,500	\$589,600	\$619,100	\$650,100	
Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
<b>CAPITAL ELEMENTS</b>						
<u>Capital Costs</u>						
Vehicle Replacement						<u>Total</u>
Number of Cutaways	2	0	1	0	0	3
Total Cost	\$309,000	\$0	\$163,900	\$0	\$0	\$472,900
<u>Capital Revenues</u>						
FTA 5339 Capital <sup>(2)</sup>	\$247,200	\$0	\$131,100	\$0	\$0	\$378,300
STA (Local Match)	\$61,800	\$0	\$32,800	\$0	\$0	\$94,600
Total Capital Revenues	\$309,000	\$0	\$163,900	\$0	\$0	\$472,900
Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Note 1: 2019-20 figures based upon adopted budget. Note 2: 80 percent Federal / 20 percent local match. Source: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.						

## CONCLUSION

This plan will expand the overall benefits of the Nipomo Dial-a-Ride service to Nipomo area residents, including new service areas and mobility options to medical services, while improving the effectiveness of the remaining services. It also continues existing services to other areas of unincorporated San Luis Obispo County, and allows for replacement of vehicles as needed to ensure the sustainability of the services.