Small City, Big Plans-
Santa Barbara Rail

Mayor Helene Schneider
Rail~Volution: October 19, 2010
Santa Barbara, CA
The High Cost of Paradise

- Median Home Price $800,000
- Average Income $35,720
- Rental households are > 50%

Trend: As people retire, new hires tend to live in other communities.
Commuters into Santa Barbara

30,000 commuters/day
The Result!

Peak hour and weekend traffic congestion.
The Question
The Question

How can Santa Barbara use the existing rail line to get commuters to work each day?
Council Rail Subcommittee

- Councilmembers Horton and House, and Schneider
- Formed in late 2005
- 101 in Motion consensus
- Rail Action Plan
On-TRAC: A Plan of Transit/Rail Action for Commuters
On-TRAC: A Plan of Transit/Rail Action for Commuters

1) Build on existing consensus and need
2) Articulate the challenges and opportunities
3) Identify initial action steps
4) Develop a partnership for implementation
Community Consensus

- 101 in Motion
- Measure A (1/2 cent)
  - $140 Million for freeway widening
  - $25 Million for rail
  - "Lane and a train"
- On-TRAC:
  - Focus current efforts on establishing new or rescheduled Amtrak Service
Current Highway Projects

- Linden Interchange
- Mussel Shoals widening (2011-2013)
- Six lanes, Montecito to County line

On-TRAC:

- Encourage the use of passenger rail service timed to meet the needs of regional commuters as a way to mitigate freeway congestion
State of the Rail Corridor

- 1920s
- Manual switching
- Single track
- Short sidings

On-TRAC:
- Support Union Pacific investment in better freight movement in the region and in other locations
Existing Amtrak Intercity Train Service

- 12 Intercity trains
  - Pacific Surfliner (10)
  - Coast Starlight (2)
- Commonly delayed
- Slower than auto
- Train Schedules
Existing Amtrak Intercity Train Service

On-TRAC:

- Support any capital investment to the rail line that will improve on-time performance of passenger rail
Existing and Increased Bus Service

- Coastal Express
- Metropolitan Transit District (MTD)
- Private Sector Distribution Service
Existing and Increased Bus Service

On-TRAC:

- Include MTD and employers early on
- Develop a single transit pass
Concurrent Rail Efforts

- LOSSAN
- Coast Rail Coordinating Council

On-TRAC:
- Attend meetings of other agencies interested in expanded passenger rail services
Funding

- New Starts (Federal)
- Proposition 1B (State)
- Measure A (Local Sales Tax)
- Congresswoman Capps (Federal earmarks)

On-TRAC:

- Pursue opportunities to plan, fund, and implement long-term commuter rail service
Regional Governance

- City of Santa Barbara
- City of Goleta
- City of Ventura
- SBCAG
- VCTC
- CRCC

On-TRAC:

- MTD
- Santa Barbara Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Goleta Chamber
- Assemblymember Pedro Nava
- LOSSAN

- Foster the coordination of regional interests in establishing Amtrak as a reasonable early start commuter service
Introduction

Establishing commuter rail and increasing transit service between Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties have been identified as key elements for congestion management and future travel within the Highway 101 corridor.

When complete, at least three heavy rail commuter trains operating in the morning and three evening trains will serve to reduce peak demand on Highway 101 and surface streets. They will complement five other Surfliner trains that currently run in each direction throughout the day. Combined with currently existing and increased low-cost express bus service, commuters who choose not to use an automobile will have a system with multiple options for mobility.
Progress to Date

- Meetings with Union Pacific
- Representation at LOSSAN
- Partnership repeated request for rescheduling.
- Commuter-friendly service.
- Caltrans agrees to model new times
Making the Connection

- LOSSAN hires Gene Skoropowski
  - Grassroots organizer in Boston
  - Capital Corridor JPA Managing Director
  - HNTB, Associate Vice President
Next Stops?

- Strategy
- Funding opportunities and leveraging
- Defining the vision
- Not a zero/sum game
- Persistence
Small City, Big Plans-
Santa Barbara Rail

Mayor Helene Schneider
Rail~Volution: October 19, 2010