



San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Coalition

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Press Release

Bicycle Coalition Helps City of SLO Win \$890,000 Grant for Railroad Bicycle Trail

Last month the California Department of Transportation released the news that San Luis Obispo will be granted \$890,000 toward the construction of the Railroad Bicycle Trail. The grant is from the State Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA), which funds projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters. The grant will fund the portion of the trail from the Amtrak Train Station to Marsh Street.

The San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Coalition offered assistance in acquiring the grant funding, which is the third consecutive grant from the BTA awarded in as many years for the Railroad Bicycle Trail. As far as the Bicycle Coalition has been able to determine, it is the first time that the BTA has been awarded to a project three years in a row. Competition was especially keen this year with applications from around the state totaling over \$26.5 million of which only \$7.2 million could be funded. Out of the 19 projects, the Railroad Bicycle Trail was in the top four with the highest level of funding.

When completed, the Railroad Bicycle Trail will offer a continuous off-street pathway along the Union Pacific railroad tracks from Cal Poly to the southern city limits, serving downtown and offering an alternative for bicycling on busy streets, which due to high speeds and vehicle volumes can be intimidating for riding. Currently, a portion of the trail exists from Orcutt Road to the Amtrak Train Station and at Cal Poly from Mustang Stadium to Campus Way. A new portion is under construction from Foothill Blvd to Hwy 101.

Last summer, the Rotary Club of San Luis Obispo launched a fundraising campaign for a portion of the trail between Campus Way and Foothill Blvd.

According to the American Automobile Association, SLO County consistently has the highest gas prices in the state. Having a bicycle trail through the center of town encourages riding and is a great way to save money, all the while getting fit and doing a modest part to reduce global warming. According to the Public Health Department 55% of adults in SLO County are either overweight or obese, underlining the need to integrate active transportation into our everyday lives.

The San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Coalition is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to transform SLO County into a safer and more livable community by promoting bicycling and walking for everyday transportation and recreation. For more information, visit www.slobikelane.org.

"Many people express an interest in bicycle commuting but cite the fear of auto traffic as a barrier to trying it out," says Adam Fukushima, executive director of the SLO County Bicycle Coalition. "The Railroad Bicycle Trail will be a pleasant alternative to riding in busy traffic. Imagine riding from home to Cal Poly or to the downtown Farmers Market and not having to take busy streets. It just makes bike travel so much more enjoyable."