

Community Based Transportation Planning Grants

SLOCOG-PLACE3S Model

- **Grant Recipient:** San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG)
- **County:** San Luis Obispo (SLO)

Project Area - San Luis Obispo County

Project Focus - Establishing the SLO County PLACE3S II (Planning for Community Energy, Economic, and Environmental Sustainability) program will substantially enhance the ability of local agencies to integrate the evaluation of livable community principles in proposed Housing Elements and the resultant specific plans and projects. The redevelopment analysis function helps identify opportunities for infill and redevelopment, and the visual nature of the software helps overcome concerns about density and affordable housing.

Project Goals – The goal of the SLO County PLACE3S II program is to provide clear, comprehensible analysis of the transportation, energy, and air quality issues as they apply to the options for development and to facilitate a very collaborative planning process. The PLACE3S software has recently been updated to address housing issues, and housing/jobs balance issues much more comprehensively, including: Analyzing owner vs. renter occupied housing; bedrooms and persons per unit; and matching wage levels in a plan with housing affordability to help ensure that the type of houses provided are an actual match.

Community Outreach – Participants in two workshops provided their ideas about where growth should occur between 2025 and 2050 and then received feedback on the transportation impacts of their proposals. The mapping "Game" was to place chips representing different kinds of development on zoning maps. These changes to zoning were entered into PLACE3S computer mapping technology in order to estimate the resulting population and traffic changes, which were reported back to the workshop participants--a first in the country.

Project Outcome - Participants were asked to choose one of three growth scenarios to accommodate the projected growth demand between 2025 and 2050. The business as usual scenario that would require 7,500 acres of land under normal suburban development was rejected. Overwhelmingly, participants chose compact development that would impact half the area, or about 3,750 acres. The favored scenario, "compact communities" would result in mixes of commercial and housing in close proximity.

Planning Goals Realized -

- Develop more efficient land use patterns accommodating a sufficient housing supply to match population increases and workforce needs for the full spectrum of the population;
- Reduce dependence on single occupant vehicle trips;
- Foster neighborhoods and project designs that enable more walking and biking;
- Reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.