

MARCH 2009

TRANSPORTATION REPORT TO THE STATE LEGISLATURE



STra

Solano Transportation Authority

... working for you!

STA Board of Directors

Members and their alternates are appointed by their local jurisdiction to serve as representatives on the STA Board. Each jurisdiction also has staff representatives on the Technical Advisory Committee and the SolanoExpress Intercity Transit Consortium. These two committees act in an advisory capacity to the STA Board of Directors.



Pictured left to right: Harry Price, Mayor, City of Fairfield; Len Augustine, Mayor, City of Vacaville; Pete Sanchez (Vice Chair), Mayor, City of Suisun City; Jim Sperring (Chair), Member of Solano County Board of Supervisors; Jan Vick, Mayor, City of Rio Vista; Jack Batchelor, Jr., Mayor, City of Dixon; Elizabeth Patterson, Mayor, City of Benicia; Osby Davis, Mayor, City of Vallejo.

Mission Statement

To improve the quality of life in Solano County by delivering transportation projects to ensure mobility, travel safety, and economic vitality.

The STA Commitment

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) was created under a Joint Powers Agreement to serve as the County's Congestion Management Agency to program federal, state and regional transportation funds. Member agencies include the cities of Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, Vallejo and Solano County. The STA is responsible for transportation planning, coordination, and the financing of projects for its eight member jurisdictions. The STA also provides countywide planning for the development of roads, transit, rideshare, rail, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, manages the Solano Napa Commuter Information and Safe Routes to School programs and coordinates four transit services.



Solano Transportation Authority

March 18, 2009

Members:

Benicia
Dixon
Fairfield
Rio Vista
Solano County
Suisun City
Vacaville
Vallejo

To Our State Representatives:

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) is pleased to submit this report summarizing the impact of the California State Budget to Solano County's priorities. Improved mobility and traffic safety are the top priorities for residents in Solano County, the San Francisco Bay Area's fastest growing county in per capita income. Solano County has several projects that may be delayed without critical state transportation funding.

Transportation and transit improvement projects rely upon multiple pots of money. At a time when housing construction is sagging, infrastructure projects are creating jobs in a sector that sorely needs them. Decreasing transportation funds will further destroy an already struggling industry and severely hamper economic recovery.

Our legislative focus this year is:

- Support of lowering the voter threshold to 55% for special local taxes for transportation measures;
- Seek eligibility for the Solano Transportation Authority to directly claim Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) as a planning agency; and
- Support the concept of partnering together throughout the Bay Area region to connect the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane network as a means to reduce traffic congestion and increase mobility.

Additionally, this report provides updates on the project delivery status of several state-funded projects. With your continued support for funding these projects, the STA, Caltrans and our local agencies will ensure these much needed transportation projects are completed. These projects are of strategic and economic importance for the movement of goods and interregional traffic, as well as to support current and new residents and increasing employment opportunities in Solano County. Six out of seven of Solano's industry clusters are growing faster than in any other Bay Area county. The fastest growth is in the Life Sciences cluster, which expanded 35% between 2000 and 2006.

We appreciate your interest and support of Solano County's transportation priorities. If you have questions, please contact Daryl Halls, Executive Director of the STA at (707) 424-6075 or Gus Khouri, Shaw/Yoder, Inc. at (916) 446-4656.

Sincerely,

James P. Spering, Chair
Solano Transportation Authority
Supervisor, District 3
Solano County

Table of Contents

STA Commitment / Mission Statement	2
STA Board of Directors / Member Agencies	2
Letter to Delegates	3
Table of Contents	4
State Budget Impacts on Solano County	5
Prop 42	5
Prop 1B, STIP, SHOPP Programs	5
State Transit Assistance Fund Cuts	5
STA's State Legislative Priorities:	6
55% Voter Threshold	6
TDA Legislation	6
Regional HOT Lanes Network Concept	6
Project Status:	7
Bond Projects: HOV Lanes, Truck Scales, Jameson Canyon	7
STIP: I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange, Jepson Parkway	9
SHOPP: Truck Climbing Lane, I-80 Rehab, SR 12 Safety	11
Solano Intermodal Facilities	13
STA Transit Projects and Express Routes Map	14
STA Roadway Projects Map	15
About Solano County	16

State Budget Impacts on Solano County

Proposition 42

The STA is encouraged that Proposition 42 was kept primarily intact in the current State Budget. Approved by California voters, Prop. 42 dedicates gasoline sales tax revenue to transportation projects. A provision in Prop. 42 allowing the state to retain the gas-tax revenue in the state's General Fund in times of severe fiscal crisis has authorized the state to divert more than \$5 billion of that revenue to other uses in recent years.

The STA strongly supports the protection of Prop. 42 funds in order to maintain voter supported investment in critical transportation infrastructure in Solano County.



New pavement on I-80

Proposition 1B, STIP, SHOPP

Voter-approved Proposition 1B authorized \$19.9 billion in bonds to be spent on vital state and local transportation improvements over multiple years, subject to legislative appropriations. Commitment to this annual appropriation without delay is crucial to Solano County.

Major highway improvement projects are gearing up for construction, which are funded by Prop. 1B, including the widening of State Route (SR) 12 Jameson Canyon, a new High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane on the I-80 corridor, and the relocation and upgrade of the I-80 Eastbound Cordelia Truck

Scales. Solano County has transportation improvements already programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP). Maintaining these funding commitments on schedule is critical.

State Transit Assistance Fund Cuts Needs Restoration

State Transit Assistance Funds (STAF) have been used for providing matching funds to help fund the purchase of new paratransit and intercity buses, SolanoExpress and Paratransit operations, and to fund STA countywide transit studies and marketing of transit services. Recently STAF has also been used to fund Lifeline transit for low-income residents in Solano County.

The State Budget approved in February entirely suspended funding to STAF beginning in FY 2009-10 until 2013. Only 25% of STAF allocation for FY 2008-09 is being released. Over \$2 million of STAF for Solano was cut in FY 2008-09 as compared to the original State Budget approved in September 2008. When STAF is suspended completely in FY 2009-10, nearly \$3 million in critical annual transit funds will be eliminated in Solano County.

This is a substantial loss with the limited funding options for Solano County transit operators. The loss in STAF will eliminate \$395,000 for SolanoExpress operating beginning in FY 2009-10, \$287,000 for countywide paratransit services, \$500,000 for Intercity Transit vehicle capital purchases, and \$1,378,000 for local Solano County transit service.

The impact to transit passengers in Solano County will be significant. The STA urges restoration of at least part of the STAF that has been eliminated, or the development of an alternative funding source for transit.



SolanoExpress and FAST buses

STA's State Legislative Priorities

55% Voter Threshold

Support initiatives to pursue the 55% voter threshold for county transportation infrastructure measures.

Assemblymember Huffman has introduced Assembly Constitutional Amendment (ACA) 9 to change the 2/3 voter-approval requirement for special taxes to authorize a city, county, or special district to impose a special tax with the approval of 55% of its voters voting on the tax. The STA fully supports this legislation.

Solano County has placed a local ½ cent sales tax measure for transportation on the ballot three times in recent years and received an average voter support of 58%, with a high of 64% in 2004. The 2006 Measure H would have generated \$1.4 billion for transportation improvements in Solano County over a 30-year period. The STA supports lowering the 66.67% voter threshold requirement to 55% for county transportation infrastructure measures. With the lack of availability of State funding for transportation in the immediate future, it is imperative the State provide local agencies with the flexibility to finance projects locally.

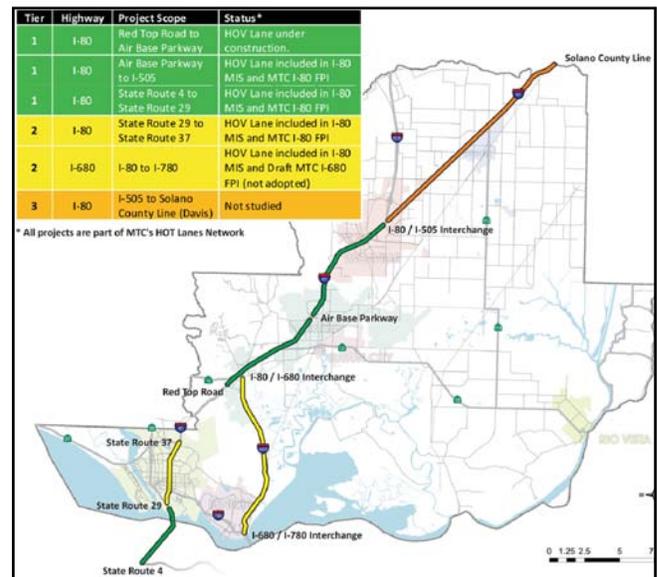
TDA Legislation

Seek eligibility for the Solano Transportation Authority to directly claim Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds from MTC as a planning agency.

Assemblymember Evans has introduced Assembly Bill (AB) 1219 to authorize the Solano Transportation Authority to directly claim up to 2% of local TDA funds for countywide transit planning and coordination relative to Solano County. This bill would provide a more streamlined process for the STA to claim these funds from MTC.

Regional HOT Lanes Network Concept

Support for establishment of regional High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes network with assurance that revenues collected for the use of HOT lanes are spent to improve operations and mobility for the corridor in which they originate.



STA's HOT Lanes Network priorities

Assembly Member Torrico has introduced Assembly Bill (AB) 744 to authorize the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) to build and operate a value pricing High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes network in the Bay Area. The STA supports the concept of partnering throughout the Bay Area region to establish a regional HOT lanes network as a means to reduce traffic congestion and increase mobility with assurance that revenues collected for the use of HOT lanes are spent to improve operations and mobility for the corridor in which they originate.



Sign for I-80 HOV Construction

Project Status

The STA has developed a successful partnership with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the California Transportation Commission (CTC), to fund and deliver critical mobility and safety projects. With the support of Solano County's state legislative delegation, the STA has been able to maintain the positive momentum of project delivery, creating and preserving jobs during the recent economic downturn.

Proposition 1B Bond

I-80 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes

I-80 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes Project in Solano County received \$56.2 million Proposition 1B funds from the Corridor Mobility Improvement



I-80 HOV Groundbreaking, June 2008

Account (CMIA) in addition to a federal earmark. This project will construct the first HOV Lanes in Solano County on I-80 between Red Top Road Interchange and Air Base Parkway. The new 8.7 miles of additional east- and west-bound lanes are being constructed in the median.

Studies show that about 25% of vehicles are carrying at least two passengers. The new lanes are expected to decrease the morning commute Vehicle Hours of Delay by 39% for HOVs and by 21% for all other vehicles. The new lanes are expected to decrease the afternoon commute vehicle hours of delay by 47% for HOVs and by 28% for all other vehicles.



I-80 HOV Lane Construction, Fairfield

Construction began in 2008 and due to the dry winter, the construction progress has been superior. Because the work is funded with Prop. 1B funds, this contract is subject to funding impacts by the State. MTC, Caltrans and STA are actively seeking innovative funding options to keep this important construction work going. The HOV Lanes are scheduled to open by September 2009.

I-80 Eastbound Cordelia Truck Scales

The STA received \$49.8 million from the Prop. 1B Trade Corridors Improvement Fund (TCIF) for the I-80 Eastbound Cordelia Truck Scales Relocation Project. This project supports STA's and Caltrans' goal of improving goods movement and mobility along the I-80 corridor. The I-80/I-680/SR 12



I-80 Eastbound Truck Scales (existing)

Interchange is the major obstacle to mobility along the major trans-continental I-80 highway route. Relocation of the Eastbound Cordelia Truck Scales along I-80 will improve traffic congestion and movement of goods through Solano County and within the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange Complex.



I-80/SR 12 Westbound Merge Approaching Truck Scales

The Cordelia Truck Scales, built in 1958, are located on I-80 between Suisun Valley Road and SR 12 East. Although the scales are located at an optimum site from an enforcement standpoint (capturing virtually all the freeway truck traffic traveling to and from State Route (SR) 12, I-680, and I-80), they are located in the most congested freeway segment of the County. The existing truck scale facilities are considerably undersized to accommodate current truck traffic, let alone truck traffic projected over the next 35 years.

This regionally significant transportation facility substantially contributes to the congestion and safety concerns on I-80 because of the large num-



I-80 Eastbound Truck Scale Relocation Conceptual Illustration

ber of trucks exiting and entering I-80 and the close proximity of the scales to both the Suisun Valley Road and I-680 and SR 12 E interchanges. Congestion leads to closure of the truck scales when queuing trucks begin to back up onto the mainline freeway. The proposed project is to construct a larger, more efficient truck scale facility on eastbound I-80 approximately a half mile east of the current facility in a large oval configuration. Associated on- and off-ramps would be constructed, and, upon completion of the project, the existing facility would be demolished.

The EB Cordelia Truck Scales Relocation Project is funded by Bridge Tolls and Prop. 1B Trade Corridors Improvement Fund (TCIF). The Project Draft EIR/EA environmental document was released for public comment on January 30, 2009 for a 45-day comment period. The public hearing was held in February. Construction is scheduled to begin as early as 2011.

State Route 12 (Jameson Canyon) Widening

The State Route (SR) 12 Jameson Canyon Project in Solano and Napa Counties received \$74 million Proposition 1B funds from the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA). These funds in combination with other State and Federal funds fully fund the Phase 1 \$139 million project. This project will widen SR 12 through the canyon from two to four lanes and install a median barrier.

SR 12 in Napa and Solano Counties serves as an inter-regional, recreational, commercial, agricultural, and commuter route. Commuter traffic congestion has increased on this inter-regional route in recent years due to growth and shifts in industrial center locations in Solano and Napa counties as well as population growth in the Fairfield/Suisun City and American Canyon areas. The planned improvements will have a corresponding operational benefit by improving safety through reducing the potential for accidents in the corridor.



STA, Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency (NCTPA) and Caltrans are partners in completing these improvements. The Environmental Document was approved on schedule in January 2008 with the construction scheduled to begin in October 2010.



Jameson Canyon traffic congestion

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange

The top priority for Solano County is the reduction of congestion on I-80 as well as improving trade mobility throughout the corridor and improving safety on all corridors, especially State Route (SR) 12 which has been plagued by an increasing amount of vehicle accidents, including a number of fatal accidents in Solano County.

I-80 is a major transcontinental highway route, an essential commuter route within the San Francisco Bay Area. This route provides an important connection between the Bay Area and Sacramento, the Sierra Nevada and Lake Tahoe regions. The route is also a primary truck route connecting the Port of Oakland to points east and north, contributing significantly to the economic health of the State of California by facilitating goods distribution throughout the western U.S. This section of I-80 is

also a designated "Lifeline Highway Route."

STA, in partnership with Caltrans, has been working on a number of important transportation projects in Solano County. These projects provide for safety improvements, operational improvements, roadway rehabilitation, and congestion relief on I-80 and SR 12 corridors. After several years of lobbying for funds in Sacramento and Washington D.C., STA and Caltrans have begun construction on many important transportation projects in the interchange complex. Over the next 2 years, \$242.7 million in much needed construction will occur on the I-80 and SR 12 corridors in the county.

Two full-build alternatives (Alternatives B and C) and two first phases (Alternative B Phase I and Alternative C Phase I) are currently being considered for the improvement of the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange. Alternatives B and C are full build alternatives addressing comprehensive improvements to the I-80/I-680/SR12 west (SR12W) interchange; the widening of I-680 and I-80; and the relocation, upgrade, and expansion of the westbound truck scales on I-80. Alternatives B and C each include an option (Option 1 or Option 2) for improvements to SR 12 east (SR12E).

STA will hold a third public open house in March 2009 to provide an update to the public and show the fundable phase for both alternatives. The



I-80/680/SR 12 Interchange Complex

Project Status

project's environmental document is scheduled to be completed in 2010.

Jepson Parkway

STA, in conjunction with the cities of Fairfield, Suisun City, Vacaville, and Solano County, will construct improvements along a 12-mile-long corridor between I-80 in Vacaville and State Route (SR) 12 in Suisun City. The project would widen from two to four lanes and/or upgrade and link a series of existing local two- and four-lane roadways, as well as construct an extension of an existing roadway, to provide a safe, convenient north-south alternative to I-80 and SR 12 for local travel between neighborhoods and jurisdictions in central Solano County.

The project includes safety improvements such as roadway medians, traffic signals, standard shoulders, separate turn lanes, and a railroad grade separation. It would construct a separated and landscaped continuous bike lane/pedestrian path to encourage non-motor travel and accommodate future implementation of bus service, including one local and one express route. When completed, the project will provide improved access to Travis Air Force Base and the future Fairfield-Vacaville Train Station.



Jepson Parkway Aerial View



Jepson Parkway—Walters Road Widening, Suisun City

The project is designed to meet the objectives of the 2000 Jepson Parkway Concept Plan. It is named for Willis Linn Jepson, who was born near Vacaville and was one of America's greatest regional botanists and interpreters of California flora. Since 2002, STA has been working to prepare alignment plans for the four (4) Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) alternatives and to complete a range of environmental studies. The overall estimated construction cost of the remaining segments is estimated at \$125 million. Funding for this project will be provided by 50% local funds and 50% regional/state/federal funds. STA currently has \$36.9 million of STIP funds programmed for this project.

The Draft EIR/EIS was released for public comment in June 2008 with a public hearing held on June 24, 2008. The Final EIR is expected to go to the STA Board for consideration of certification in March 2009. STA is working with the partner agencies to prioritize the segments for construction, with the selected segment slated to begin construction in 2011.

State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP)

SR 12 West Truck Climbing Lane

The truck climbing lane on westbound SR 12 (Jameson Canyon), extending 1.3 miles from I-80 to west of Red Top Road, was opened by Caltrans in December 2008. The construction allows westbound SR 12 motorists to pass slower vehicles in the truck climbing lane. Drivers have already praised the significant improvement in the reduced level of congestion during the westbound morning commute.



Truck Climbing Lane Project
Sol-12 PM 1.5 to PM 2.8
Add One Lane in the WB



SR 12 West Truck Climbing Lane

I-80 Pavement Rehabilitation



I-80 Pavement before rehabilitation

The I-80 corridor has been undergoing major rehabilitation efforts since the spring of 2008. Over 27 miles of highway will be rehabilitated by Caltrans when completed. This rehabilitation will also include median barrier reconstruction along the route. Work was completed through the City of Vallejo in 2008. Construction between the Cities of Vallejo and Fairfield is underway and will be completed by fall 2009, as will the rehabilitation between the Cities of Fairfield and Vacaville.

Due to the necessary coordination of the rehabilitation project with the new High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes project that is currently under construction, the rehabilitation work along I-80 through the City of Fairfield will begin in the spring of 2009.



I-80 Pavement Rehabilitation

SR 12 Traffic Safety

Safety on State Route (SR) 12 has been a priority for the STA Board for a number of years, but recent accidents and fatalities have increased the urgency to take immediate action. Several facts speak to the gravity of this matter:

- The accident rate has gone from 60% of the statewide average for similar routes to over 150% in the last ten (10) years.
- Peak period traffic is expected to double before 2030.
- Four (4) fatalities occurred in 2007 between Walters Road and Drouin Drive, an 18-mile stretch of SR 12 in Solano County; three (3) fatalities occurred in 2006 in the same area.

SR 12 serves as a major corridor for the movement of agricultural goods grown and processed in the Central Valley, Napa, the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta and eastern Solano County. It also serves Delta recreational users in the summer months. Substantial amounts of cargo are transported between Travis Air Force Base from Central Valley depots on SR 12. Finally, employees of northern Bay Area businesses who live in the Central Valley commute to work by way of SR 12.

No single effort will make SR 12 a safe and efficient route for the movement of people and goods, but a combination of short-term and long-term efforts can do so. The STA Board has developed a comprehensive multi-faceted strategy to improve safety on SR 12 in partnership with Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol, and local law enforcement. The focus has four main components: legislation, enforcement, education and engineering.



CHP Traffic Enforcement



SR 12 Temporary Median Barrier

Several activities are underway for SR 12 in partnership with Caltrans. The major project between Suisun City and Rio Vista that will correct vertical and horizontal curves and add 8 foot shoulders will begin construction in Spring 2009.

The STA-led Rio Vista Bridge Study will consider the relocation of SR 12 in conjunction with the construction of a new bridge. The study will also analyze the feasibility of a tunnel in lieu of a new bridge, update the environmental constraints and city development in the area, update cost estimates and provide a strategy for long term funding of this major capital investment.



Rio Vista Bridge

The SR 12 Major Investment Study from I-80 to I-5 is a partnership project with the many stakeholders along this corridor. A working group comprised of STA, MTC, Caltrans, San Joaquin Council of Governments and Sacramento Area Council of Governments is finalizing the scope/cost/schedule of the work and contributions of the participating agencies.

A Project Study Report for the SR 12/Church Road intersection is underway and expected to be completed by the STA this summer.

Solano Intermodal Facilities

The purpose of the transit system that STA helps plan, fund and promote in partnership with Solano's seven cities and the County is to provide mobility, reduce congestion, and ensure travel safety and economic vitality to Solano County and the northern California region. It does this by focusing on transit modes that link Solano's cities to each other and to the Bay Area and Sacramento. The transit system includes the Capitol Corridor intercity rail service, ferry service from Vallejo to the San Francisco Ferry Building, SolanoExpress intercity bus service to BART, San Francisco and Sacramento. The system also includes the highly successful carpool, vanpool and ridematching services provided by STA's Solano Napa Commuter Information program.



Capitol Corridor train at Suisun-Fairfield Station

STA is working with local transit providers to speed the replacement of older buses containing dirty diesel engines with new vehicles that have low-emission engines. STA has developed a list of regionally significant transit facilities in order to ensure that the investment of millions of dollars of transit capital funds is focused on the most critical elements of the transit system.



Vallejo Baylink Ferry



Fairfield-Vacaville Train Station Rendering



Baylink Ferry Maintenance Facility Rendering



Boarding at the Vacaville Downtown Transit Plaza

About Solano County

Population

The Association of Bay Area Governments has projected Solano County to have the largest percentage of population and job growth of any county in the Bay Area over the next 25 years. Its location between Sacramento and the Bay Area gives it strategic economic development importance for the region. Solano County's current population of about 427,000 is projected to increase to 488,000 by 2015 and 563,000 by 2030. The estimated 212,000 employed residents in 2009 will increase to about 300,000 by 2030.

Employment

Solano County's growing economy represents a diverse mix of traditional and emerging industries. In recent years, many large biotechnology manufacturing, medical device, biotechnology research and development, and seed production firms have relocated to Solano County. The Solano Business Park in Fairfield is home to the Jelly Belly Candy Company, and the Benicia Industrial Park is home to the Valero Refinery. Hospitals and medical facilities have grown in number throughout the county, and Solano County is home to large employers such as Genentech, COPART, Novartis, Alza, and Six Flags Discovery Kingdom in Vallejo. Travis Air Force Base, home to the 60th Air Mobility Wing, is the largest employer in Solano County, contributing more than \$1 billion annually to the local economy.



New Benicia-Martinez Bridge Toll Plaza



“Solano County is outpacing California and the Bay Area in several job growth categories. We have a track record of successfully working together on major issues such as overcoming congestion with new federal, state and local dollars for transportation infrastructure. We cannot underestimate the importance of our ‘collaborative capital’ to growing jobs.”

**Mike Ammann, President
Solano Economic Development Corporation**

Solano Traffic

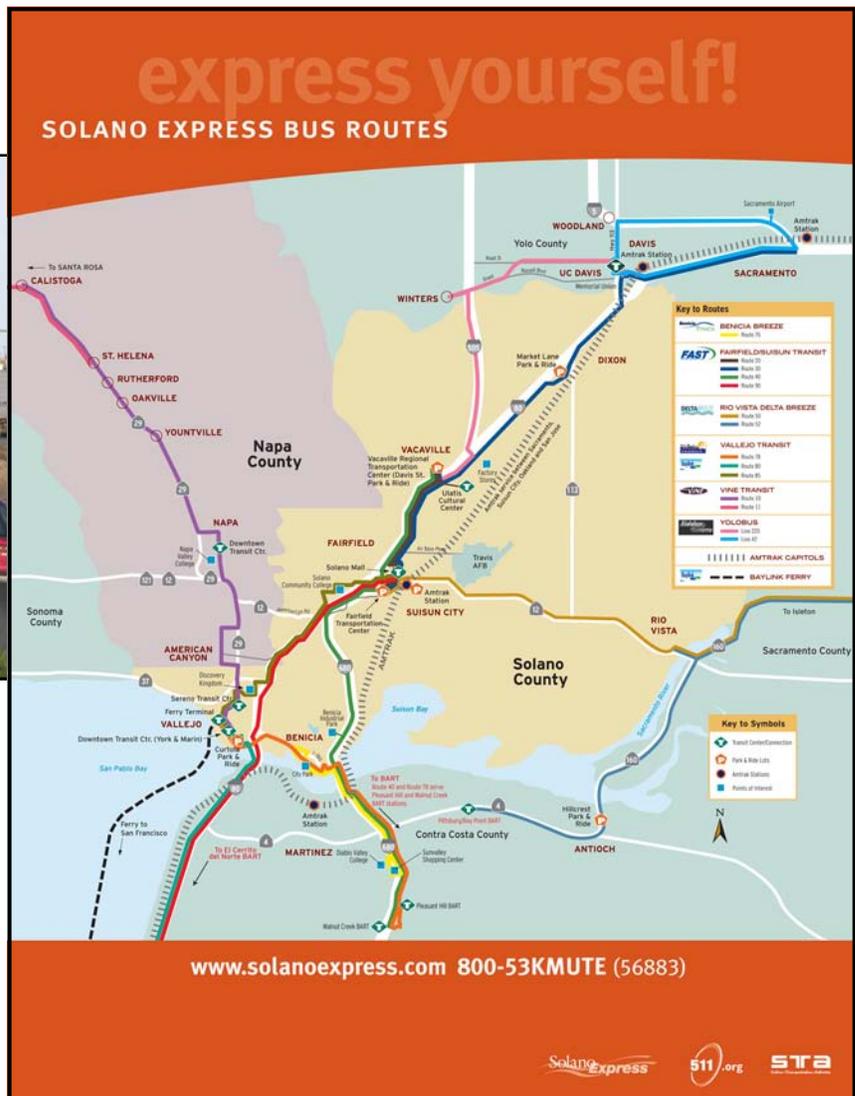
Solano County is dissected by I-80 (connecting the Bay Area to Sacramento), I-680 (connecting Contra Costa and Santa Clara counties to Solano) and State Route 12 (connecting San Joaquin County and the Napa Valley). New residential and commercial developments throughout the Bay Area have increased the stress on current transportation infrastructure. Many Solano residents continue to travel to jobs in other counties, making commute traffic and safety on I-80, I-680, and State Route 12 an increasingly critical transportation problem.



I-80/SR 12 West Junction



SR 12 Traffic in Suisun City





Solano Transportation Authority
... working for you!

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