# Appendix G

# JOINT COORDINATION OPPORTUNITIES

This is the eighth in a series of working papers prepared as part of the Joint Short-Range Transit Plan study for the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and the City of San Luis Obispo's transit program (SLO Transit). This working paper focuses on opportunities to better coordinate the two transit programs, building on the opportunity provided by this joint SRTP process.

As an introduction, it should be noted that there is a long history of coordination between the transit services. The intention and mechanism for coordination was formalized in 2003 via an agreement between SLOCOG, the City of SLO, and the RTA regarding public transit planning and programming. This document specifies that SLOCOG and the two operators "agree to work cooperatively with each other and with other public and private transit providers and governmental agencies to ensure the provision of coordinated, cost-effective, area-wide transit services. Such coordination includes, to the extent feasible: fares; operating service agreements; transfer rates and pass policies; transit information and marketing; schedule and service coordination; capital needs; shared support facilities; data needs to meet period reporting requirement; and other activities as agreed upon by the parties." (Section 2). This working paper is intended to build on this cooperative spirit by considering improvements to services jointly undertaken by both agencies, such as Runabout, as well as explore or expand opportunities for coordination which maximize cost-effectiveness.

# RTA/SLO TRANSIT COORDINATION OPPORTUNITIES

This chapter focuses on joint procurement opportunities and discusses intercity connections and day-to-day operational coordination. This is followed by a list of strategies to improve the effectiveness of the ADA Paratransit program, Runabout, which serves both the City and the County.

#### SERVICE COORDINATION

RTA Routes 9, 10, 12, and 14 operate within the City of San Luis Obispo and have some overlap with SLO Transit in order to make transfers with SLO Transit and to directly serve key locations within the City of San Luis Obispo for intercity RTA passengers. This includes 3 stops on the Cal Poly SLO campus. RTA serves 31 bus stops within the City of San Luis Obispo, 22 of which are shared with SLO Transit. RTA's main passenger transfer hub is the Government Center which is located at the opposite corner of the intersection of Palm Street and Osos Street from the SLO Downtown Transit Center. Route 14 service was reduced during the pandemic and is currently not operating (October 2024) because Cuesta College has moved many classes online.

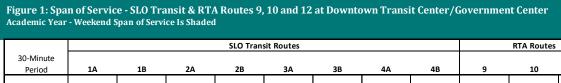
# **Scheduling and Transfer Opportunities**

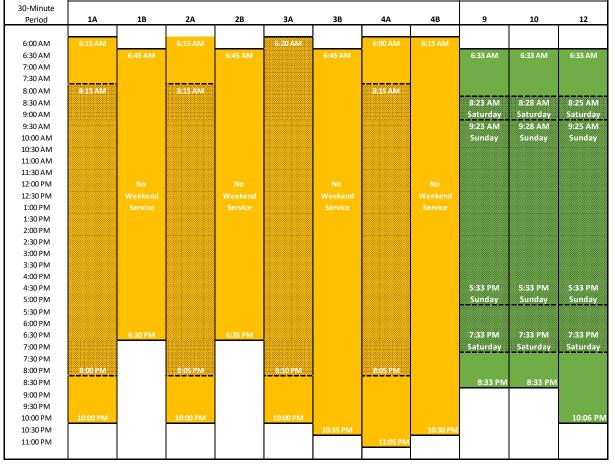
### **Hours of Operation**

On weekdays during the academic year, SLO Transit bi-directional loop routes begin service at the Downtown Transit Center before the first morning 6:33 AM RTA departures from the Government Center and continue service until after the 8:33 PM RTA departures. RTA Route 12 has a 10:06 PM arrival at the Government Center before it goes out of service for the night. Only SLO Routes 3B, 4A, and 4B continue operating after that last RTA arrival.

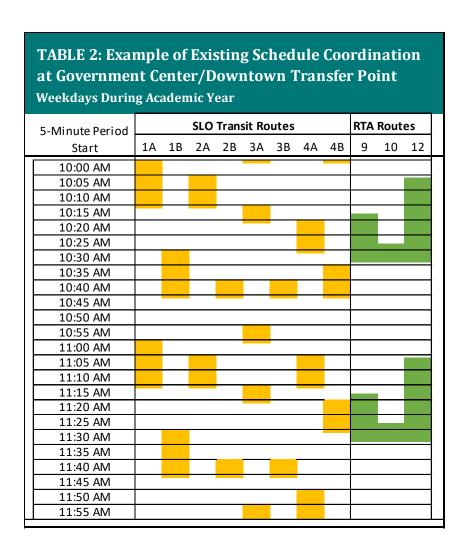
Both systems operate reduced service hours on weekends beginning later and ending earlier. SLO Transit operates only the "A" clockwise routes on the same schedule for both Saturday and Sunday. RTA operates Routes 9, 10, and 12 with five round trips on Saturday. On Sunday, Routes 9 and 10 operate three runs and Route 12 operates five runs.

Figure 1 and Table 1 display the span of service for both systems. These show that the service times between both systems align reasonably well. The transfer opportunities between both systems are described below. Table 2 provides an example of schedule coordination for a two-hour period on a weekday during the academic year. Appendix A presents schedule coordination for a full-service day.





able 1: Span cademic Yea		SLU Trans	IL & KIA K	outes 9, 10	) and 12 at	Downtow	n Transit (	enter/Gov	vernment (	enter	
				SLO Transit	Routes				F	TA Routes	
Weekday	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	3B	4A	4B	9	10	12
Begin	6:15 AM	6:45 AM	6:15 AM	6:45 AM	6:20 AM	6:45 AM	6:00 AM	6:15 AM	6:33 AM	6:33 AM	6:33 A
End	10:00 PM	6:30 PM	10:00 PM	6:35 PM	10:00 PM	10:35 PM	11:05 PM	10:30 PM	8:33 PM	8:33 PM	10:06 P
Span (Hours)	15:45	11:45	15:45	11:50	15:40	15:50	17:05	16:15	14:00	14:00	15:33
Saturday											
Begin	8:15 AM		8:15 AM		6:20 AM		8:15 AM		8:23 AM	8:28 AM	8:25 A
End	8:00 PM		8:05 PM		8:10 PM		8:05 PM	1	7:33 PM	7:33 PM	7:33 F
Span (Hours)	11:45		11:50		13:50		11:50		11:10	11:05	11:08
Sunday											
Begin	8:15 AM		8:15 AM		6:20 AM		8:15 AM		9:23 AM	9:28 AM	9:25 A
End	8:00 PM		8:05 PM		8:10 PM		8:05 PM		5:33 PM	5:33 PM	5:33 F
Span (Hours)	11:45		11:50		13:50		11:50		8:10	8:05	8:08



### Transfers between SLO Transit and RTA

This review of transfer opportunities examines the coordination between RTA routes 9, 10, and 12 serving San Luis Obispo and the all-day, bi-directional SLO Transit routes (1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B). Ideally, the service schedule would enable transfers to and from all route buses. Because the combined schedules of the two systems are not designed as a pulse schedule, where timetables are coordinated to converge at the Government Center and Downtown Transit Center at the same time, passengers on an incoming bus may need to wait to transfer to the next arrival of a bus from the other system. Described below are the transfer options between RTA and SLO Transit routes. Since both systems operate on generally consistent headways throughout the day, the transfer times repeat in a similar fashion each hour. On weekdays RTA operates on 60-minute headways. SLO operates on 30-, 45- and 60-minute headways depending on the route and time of day, which can make the exact transfer times vary depending on the hour. Appendix A of this working paper displays the times that each route bus is present at the Government Center/Downtown Transit Center in 15-minute increments for full weekday service during the academic year. Appendix B provides a series of tables depicting transfer times at selected times as described below.

SLO Transit Page G5

Weekday Morning Service: RTA Routes 9, 10, and 12 start operations at the Government Center at 6:33 AM. SLO Transit's bi-directional routes (1, 2, 3, and 4 - A and B) begin service at the Downtown Transit Center between 6:00 AM and 6:45 AM. The first transfer opportunity between the two systems occurs before the three RTA route departures at 7:33 AM. Six of the eight SLO Transit routes complete a loop before the 7:33 AM RTA departures, allowing passengers to transfer to RTA inter-city routes. The two SLO Transit routes that do not complete a loop are 2B and 3B operating in the counter-clockwise direction, but Routes 2A and 3A do complete a clockwise loop of the same route and return to the Transit Center before the RTA 7:33 AM departures. The first morning RTA routes with passengers are scheduled to arrive at 7:12 AM (Route 12), 7:24 AM (Route 9), and 7:28 AM (Route 10) at the Government Center. Route 9 Express arrives at 7:27 AM. Shortly after, SLO Transit route 4A departs at 7:30 AM, and routes 1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B depart at 7:45 AM. Routes 1A and 2A leave at 7:15 AM, which allows for potential transfers from RTA Route 12, scheduled to arrive at 7:12 AM. Route 3A departs at 7:20 AM, providing a reasonable window for passengers transferring from Route 12. The only SLO Transit routes that facilitate transfers to and from all three RTA routes are 1B and 4A, which share dwell time at the Government Center/Downtown Transit Center hub.

One noteworthy observation is that SLO Transit Route 4A is scheduled to complete its first loop from 6:00 AM to 6:35 AM at the Downtown Transit Center, missing the scheduled transfer opportunity for the first RTA intercity departures at 6:33 AM by just two minutes. Since this is the first morning run, it may be possible to adjust the public timetable to allow the Route 4A to arrive at 6:30 AM to allow passengers to transfer to the 6:33 AM RTA departures.

Weekday Midday Service: Transfers between both systems are available for the entire day. The pattern does not repeat identically throughout the day because SLO Transit Routes 3A and 3B change headways midday. Route 3A runs more frequently during the first half of the day and Route 3B runs more frequently during the second half of the day.

The transfer pattern midday is like both the morning and late-night transfers as described in this section. One significant difference is that the five arrivals of RTA Route 9 from 2:30 PM to 6:30 PM have a much shorter scheduled layover of only three minutes versus 15 minutes earlier and later in the day. This makes transfers in both directions between Route 9 and SLO Transit routes unlikely during this 4-hour period of the day. For example, Route 4A and 4B combined have 2:30 PM, 4:30 PM, and 5:30 PM departures scheduled at the same time RTA Route 9 is scheduled to arrive. There is not enough shared dwell time on these runs to allow for transfers in both directions. The reason for the shorter layover is that RTA serves the Cal Poly Campus directly on those five runs, which also has the effect of reducing the need for those passengers to make a transfer to SLO Transit. The Draft SRTP recommends one additional mid-day arrival at the Cal Poly campus on Southbound Route 9 at 12:17 PM. SLO Routes 1B and 2B are in service until 6:30 PM and 6:35 PM respectively and have transfers available at those times as they do in the morning example above.

SLO Transit Page G6

Weekday Night Service: The last nighttime departures for RTA Routes 9, 10, and 12 are at 8:33 PM from the Government Center. During the academic year, SLO Transit operates six of its eight routes after 8:33 PM, allowing for transfers to the RTA intercity routes. Routes 1B and 2B, which operate in the counterclockwise direction, end service at 6:30 PM and 6:35 PM, respectively. However, the clockwise counterparts—1A and 2A—operate until 10:00 PM. SLO Transit routes arrive between 8:00 PM and 8:20 PM, enabling transfers to the last RTA departures. SLO Transit Route 3B has an 8:40 PM scheduled arrival at the Downtown Transit Center after the departure of the RTA buses, meaning passengers wanting to transfer to the RTA routes need to take Route 3A, which arrives at 8:10 PM, or the earlier Route 3B that arrives at 7:40 PM. SLO Route 4B is on a layover from 8:20 PM to 8:30 PM allowing Route 4B passengers to transfer to all three RTA routes departing at 8:33 PM. RTA Route 9 has a scheduled stop at the Cal Poly SLO campus on the 8:33 departure which means that RTA passengers that are travelling to the campus do not need to transfer to a SLO Transit bus at that time. RTA Route 10 and 12 passengers can transfer to RTA Route 9 to get to the Cal Poly SLO campus for the 8:33 PM departure.

Transfers from the last RTA arrivals at the Government Center to SLO Transit are available across the full SLO Transit system, though they are less convenient. The last scheduled RTA arrivals are at 8:18 PM for Route 9, 8:28 PM for Route 10, and 8:06 PM for Route 12. Six SLO Transit routes are in service at these arrival times during the academic year (Routes 1B and 2B end service by 6:35 PM). Four of the SLO routes (1A, 2A, 3A, 4A) have scheduled departures at 8:15 PM, allowing for transfers only from RTA Route 12. Route 4B has an 8:30 PM departure, which can accommodate transfers from all three RTA routes. The 8:28 PM arrival of Route 10 allows only two minutes for passengers to transfer to 4B, assuming everything is on schedule. Route 3B departs at 8:45 PM, providing ample time for transfers from all three RTA routes, but this results in waiting times ranging from 39 to 17 minutes. Passengers from RTA Routes 9 and 10 must wait until 9:00 PM for the next SLO route 4A departure, resulting in a 42- and 32-minute wait from the scheduled arrivals of Routes 9 and 10, respectively. SLO routes 1A, 2A, and 3A leave at 9:15 PM, resulting in a 57- and 47-minute wait for passengers arriving on Routes 9 and 10. Route 12, with its scheduled 8:06 PM arrival, shares 9 minutes of dwell time at the Government Center with SLO Routes 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A at the Downtown Transit Center allowing for transfer in passengers between both systems between 8:06 PM and 8:15 PM.

During the summer schedule, SLO Transit routes end service between two to four hours earlier, making transfers with the last RTA departures unavailable.

Saturday Morning Service: The first departure of RTA Routes 9, 10, and 12 on Saturday morning is at 8:33 AM. Only SLO Transit Route 3A has completed a loop in time to bring passengers to the Downtown Transit Center in time to transfer to the three RTA Routes. The next departures of SLO Transit routes 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A take place between 9:00 AM and 9:20 AM for intercity passengers who arrive on RTA routes and wish to transfer to SLO Transit. The wait time for passengers transferring from one of the RTA routes to SLO Transit at that time ranges from 32 to 57 minutes.

Saturday Midday Service: RTA routes 9, 10, and 12 make only five runs on Saturday, while SLO Transit runs 60-minute headways on Routes 1A, 2A, and 3A; and 45-minute headways on Route 4A. This means there are multiple runs per day on SLO Transit where there is no transfer available to or from RTA Routes 9, 10, and 12.

Saturday Night Service: The last Saturday nighttime departures for RTA Routes 9, 10, and 12 are at 7:33 PM from the Government Center. On Saturdays, SLO Transit Routes 1A, 2A, and 3A complete their last loops at 7:15 PM, so incoming RTA passengers are not able to transfer to those routes on the last Saturday run. Transfers in both directions are possible between RTA routes 9, 10, 12, and SLO Transit Route 4A, which has a scheduled 7:20 PM arrival and a 7:30 PM departure for its last loop of the night. The scheduled arrival time of RTA Route 10 is 7:28 PM, making the transfer to SLO Route 4A tight.

Sunday Service: SLO Transit operates the same schedule on Saturday and Sunday. However, RTA Routes 9, and 10 operate only three runs and Route 12 operates 5 runs. Transfers between systems are similar to Saturday, but at different times because the three RTA routes start an hour later and end two hours later than on Saturday. The first RTA departure from the Government Center is 9:33 AM and the last is 5:33 PM.

# Opportunities for Improvement of Transfers

As both RTA and SLO Transit adjust their routes and schedules, prioritizing convenient transfers between systems to minimize wait times should be a key consideration. However, balancing these adjustments to accommodate transfers with the needs of passengers who do not require them presents challenges. Long-distance intercity RTA routes, in particular, have scheduled transfers in other communities that must be maintained, especially when operating on 60-minute headways. In a survey conducted in October 2023, 48 percent of RTA Regional Route passengers rated the "ease of transfers/connections" as excellent, with an average score of 4.2 out of five. In comparison, 37 percent of SLO Transit passengers provided a similar rating, averaging 3.9 out of five.

According to on-board surveys from October 2023, only 5 percent of RTA passengers on Routes 9, 10, and 12 transferred to SLO Transit to complete their trip, while just under 4 percent of SLO Transit respondents required a transfer to those same RTA routes. Notably, the proportion of passengers transferring between SLO Transit and RTA has increased by 6 percent since 2015 (time period of the last SRTP). Although enhancing inter-system transfers may not be the highest priority, strategically improving connections on the most heavily utilized routes could boost rider satisfaction and expand the intercity ridership market.

Key takeaways regarding transfer opportunities between the two systems are:

Timing Coordination: The combined schedules of RTA and SLO Transit are not designed as a pulse system, where routes are timed to arrive and depart at the Government Center and Downtown Transit Center at the same time. While service times generally align well, particularly during morning and midday hours when all eight SLO Transit routes are in

operation, there are still missed opportunities for transfers between systems. For example, Route 4A misses early RTA departures by just two minutes, highlighting areas for potential improvement.

Evening Service Gaps: Although many SLO Transit routes continue to operate after RTA's last departures, significant waiting times can occur for passengers transferring from RTA Routes 9 and 10, reducing convenience for late-night passengers. Additionally, SLO Routes 1B and 2B cease service by 6:35 PM, further limiting options.

Seasonal Variability: The reduction in service hours during the summer schedule restricts transfer opportunities, particularly for late arrivals and departures. This inconsistency can adversely affect commuters throughout the year. This could be improved under the "Operate Academic Schedule Year-Round" alternative for SLO Transit.

Central Transit Hub: The absence of a central transit hub capable of accommodating at least 11 full-size (40-foot) buses simultaneously poses a significant constraint on the system. As a result, SLO Transit must stagger the schedules of the eight buses in service, preventing all from pulsing into the hub at the same time.

#### **JOINT TRANSIT FACILITIES**

# **Operations and Maintenance Facilities**

RTA and SLO Transit operate from separate facilities in San Luis Obispo that are located within one-third of a mile of one another. RTA completed the construction of their facility on Elks Lane in 2022. The City of SLO Transit facility on Prado Road was built in 1984. Both RTA and SLO Transit have capital improvements planned for battery electric bus (BEB) charging infrastructure at their facilities.

The proximity of the operations and maintenance facilities provides opportunities for coordination of parts inventory, which has been in practice for several years. In addition, vehicle charging and training can be more easily coordinated with the close proximity of the facilities. This will be particularly important as both agencies transition into battery electric bus fleets.

#### **Relocated Transit Center**

The primary passenger transfer hub in San Luis Obispo is centered on the intersection of Osos Street and Palm Street. The SLO Transit buses stop in five sawtooth bays on the west side of Osos Street north of Palm Street. This is identified as the "Transit Center" by SLO Transit. RTA buses stop on the east side of Osos Street south of Palm Street. This is identified as the "Government Center" by RTA. Up to three RTA buses board and alight passengers there at one time. There is room for a fourth RTA bus around the corner on the south side of Palm Street, that is currently used as a deboarding area during operator shift changes and for express runs. In 2020, RTA completed significant improvements to their portion of the Government Center facility adding a passenger waiting area, two additional shelters, lighting, a ticket vending machine, display boards, and real-time bus arrival digital displays.

The 2016 SRTP noted that SLOCOG was leading an effort to construct a new enhanced transit center on Higuera Street between Santa Rosa Street and Toro Street. In 2012, the Coordinated Downtown San Luis Obispo Transit Center Study envisioned a facility consisting of up to 16 bus bays, indoor/outdoor passenger waiting areas, driver break areas, restrooms, and a transit information counter. The larger transit center would allow for more buses to be able to pulse in and out of the transit center which would enable enhanced route timing coordination. In 2017, the SLO City Council adopted the Downtown Concept Plan which also envisions a relocated transit center on Higuera Street between Santa Rosa Street and Toro Street. In November of 2023, the SLO City Council approved the purchase of a property in this block on the northwest corner of Higuera Street and Toro Street (1166 Higuera Street). This is the same property identified in the 2012 Coordinated Downtown San Luis Obispo Transit Center Study as the preferred alternative to advance into environmental review (Alternative 6).

It is recommended that the RTA, City of SLO, and SLOCOG resume project development for a relocated transit center. This would include the development of joint funding applications, environmental clearance, design, project phasing, and construction. A lead agency for environmental clearance, project approvals, and construction would need to be agreed upon to initiate the project development. Both the City of SLO and RTA are capable of being the lead agency for the project. A new Downtown Transit Center which has the capacity for a minimum of11 buses at one time would allow for better transfers not only between SLO Transit Routes but also between SLO Transit and RTA routes. Additional bays – up to 16 per the 2012 Downtown Coordinated Downtown San Luis Obispo Transit Center Study – would allow for full transfers with express buses and other potential intercity routes. A key feature not fully envisioned in the 2012 study is the addition of bus charging at bus bays. This will be important to support the transition to a BEB fleet by both SLO Transit and RTA.

#### **JOINT PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

A joint procurement is a method of contracting in which two or more purchasers agree from the outset to use a single solicitation document (Request for Proposals – RFP) to enter into a single contract with a vendor for the delivery of goods or services in a fixed quantity with jointly developed technical specifications. The purchasers in a joint procurement process may also enter into individual contracts. FTA and Caltrans will review joint procurements to ensure that the RFP expresses a minimum and potential maximum order based on the reasonably expected needs of the participating agencies. One agency would agree to be the lead agency for joint procurements and would take the responsibility of ensuring compliance with FTA and Caltrans requirements.

#### **Bus Procurement**

Both the City of SLO and RTA are participating agencies in the California Association of Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) transit purchasing cooperative. The procurement process for the CalACT cooperative is led by the Morongo Basin Transit Authority (MBTA). The MBTA recently completed a heavy-duty bus procurement (RFP #23-01) for the consortium. In July 2024, MBTA issued an intent to award contracts to Gillig, New Flyer, and Motor Coach Industries (MCI) for diesel, compressed natural gas, battery-electric, and fuel-cell electric buses. This procurement includes 35' and 40' transit buses, and 45' commuter buses.

Bus purchases include the selection of multiple different optional features including seating, flooring, destination signs, wheelchair restraints, and many more. For shared parts and training, it would be useful for SLO Transit and RTA to coordinate on selection of optional features.

#### **Technology**

Both RTA and SLO transit have technology projects in their capital improvement programs. The SLO Transit Innovation Study places a high priority on replacing the CAD/AVL and APC systems to incorporate more state-of-the-art technology. The capital improvement program includes funding in FY 2027/28 to replace the system. There may be an opportunity to procure systems jointly with RTA, which has a CAD/AVL technology contract that expires in 2026.

If microtransit is implemented in both systems, a joint procurement of the technology provider would be a strategic way to implement new technology for both operations. System parameters, policies, and operations can be implemented separately by both agencies under the same technology. A specific example of this is with Placer County Transit, Roseville Transit, and Auburn Transit which implemented a joint procurement in 2022. The RFP resulted in six proposals. Placer County was the lead agency for the procurement.

Having common technology vendors, software and hardware would be beneficial for parts, training, and scheduling installations, maintenance, and repairs.

### **Passenger Shelters**

Both RTA and SLO will be improving bus stops over the seven-year planning period. This will involve the addition and replacement of passenger shelters and amenities at certain bus stops. In some cases, the improvements may be within the City of San Luis Obispo for stops served by both systems. A joint procurement of shelters and related passenger amenities would be advantageous. In addition to leading large-scale bus procurement, the CalACT transit purchasing cooperative has a contract in place with Tolar Manufacturing. The contract includes different sizes and styles of shelters, seating, lighting, map holders, and digital real-time arrival signs — among other accessories. This contract can be in place through October of 2027 if all three one-year extensions are executed. RTA has used and plans to continue to use this contract for passenger shelter purchases. This is an option an ongoing opportunity for both RTA and SLO to a jointly procure passenger shelters.

#### **JOINT GRANT APPLICATIONS**

RTA and SLO Transit recently coordinated on a joint application for discretionary FTA 5339 funds along with Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transportation District and Santa Cruz Metro. The application was titled *Electrifying the California Central Coast*. Both RTA and Santa Barbara were successful in receiving funding from this submittal. RTA will receive \$2.6 million toward the purchase of four BEBs to replace aging diesel buses. Prior to this grant, the RTA submitted a FTA 5339 grant that awarded funding for five BEBs for RTA and six BEB's for SLO Transit.

When practical, RTA and SLO Transit should consider joint applications for discretionary funding at the Federal and State levels to increase competitiveness. This helps secure the support of local representatives at both levels along with support from important entities within the region. Joint applications would be particularly useful for projects and initiatives that both agencies coordinate such as joint procurement of buses, charging infrastructure, bus stop/transit center improvements, and technology.

#### **RUNABOUT STRATEGIES**

Runabout is the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) complementary paratransit service for people with disabilities. This is the sole ADA complementary paratransit service for San Luis Obispo County. The service is operated by the RTA and meets the ADA paratransit requirements for all fixed-route transit service operators in the County. The San Luis Obispo region has accomplished a significant coordination step by establishing this single regional ADA service.

### Cost of Americans with Disabilities Paratransit Service

Runabout is an effective service meeting the needs of passengers who are not able to use fixed routes due to disabilities. RTA has continued to meet on-time performance standards for Runabout and its other demand-responsive services. Runabout service is on-time if the vehicle arrives within 30 minutes of the appointed pick-up time. The goal is 95 percent or higher. Runabout surpassed this goal in Fiscal Year 2022-23 with a 99 percent on-time average. This exceeds the on-time performance of RTA fixed routes which achieved 88 percent in fiscal year 2022-23.

The cost of operating ADA paratransit service is relatively high on a per-passenger basis compared to other general public transit services. This is true for Runabout as well. In Fiscal Year 2022/2023 the Runabout subsidy per passenger was \$146 compared to \$11.81 for RTA fixed route services and \$5.63 for SLO Transit fixed routes. In Fiscal Year 2022/2023 the Runabout operating cost was \$3.43 million which represents 26 percent of the RTA systemwide costs. The annual ridership of 22,963 represented only three percent of the systemwide ridership. The high cost and low productivity of ADA paratransit service are typical for all public transit agencies, especially those ADA paratransit systems that operate across both rural and small urban areas. As ridership continues to increase coming out of the effects of the pandemic, RTA has been able to decrease the subsidy per passenger by 20 percent to \$138.73 per passenger based on pre-audited Fiscal Year 2023-24 data.

The 2016 Short Range Transit plan noted that one of the factors driving the growth of Runabout operating costs is the increasing average length of passenger trips. Factors leading to this were noted as changes in healthcare and overall greater mobility among seniors and people with disabilities. Based on Runabout trip samples taken from October 1 to October 14, 2023, 54 percent of Runabout trips were taken between two different communities. Average trip lengths on Runabout in FY 2023-24 were 12 miles. The average trip length of all demand response peers in Working Paper #2 is 6 miles. Only one peer operator – Yolo Bus – has a demand response average trip length greater than RTA at 13 miles. Yolo Bus, like RTA, offers paratransit service within ¾ miles of all fixed routes, including long-distance intercity routes. RTA operates long-distance regional fixed routes totaling 422 directional route miles (DRM) over a very large geographic service area. The DRM of the nine peer operators in Working Paper

#2 averages 312. RTA has the second highest DRM after Monterey-Salinas Transit, which has 448 DRM. These long trips can require long dead-head travel which contributes to the high subsidy per passenger and high cost per vehicle revenue hour.

#### **Cost Reduction Measures**

While rebounding ridership is bringing down the cost per passenger, the overall cost of providing Runabout service is still a concern to RTA. RTA has already implemented some substantive strategies to reduce the cost of service. It is recommended that RTA continue to monitor the service and pursue additional cost-reduction measures.

#### Cost Reduction Measures Implemented

RTA has implemented several measures to reduce or contain the costs of Runabout service. RTA eliminated general public service on Runabout over a decade ago. RTA has also implemented a three-year recertification process to ensure that they are only providing service to ADA-eligible passengers. A no-show policy is in place to reduce the number of riders who book trips but fail to show up for the ride. In the fiscal year 2022-23, there were only 279 no-shows on Runabout, which is only 1.2% of the Runabout ridership that year.

RTA, SLO transit and other fixed-route operators in the County offer rides to ADA passengers on fixed routes at no cost to the rider, although RTA reimburses SLO Transit and Morro Bay Transit for free rides as spelled out in cooperative agreements with both agencies. This is meant to encourage ADA passengers to use the fixed route services and require fewer Runabout trips. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, there were 15,695 free ADA boardings which was 68 percent of the Runabout ridership that year. In Fiscal Year 2023-24 there were 15,875 free ADA boardings which was 59 percent of Runabout ridership. Based on these relatively high levels of ADA-eligible passenger ridership on fixed routes, the program appears to be effective and should continue to be promoted as both an added benefit for ADA-eligible passengers and as a cost-reduction measure for Runabout.

#### Additional Cost Reduction Measures Considered

RTA has considered other measures including subsidized taxi or Transportation Network Company (TNC) rides, reducing the seven-day booking window, and instituting call-backs for next-day rides.

- TNC Subsidized Rides Transit agencies have begun partnering with TNCs such as Uber and Lyft to supplement existing services. This is a common solution to provide passenger service outside of regular operating hours in areas where TNC service is generally available. TNC service is also a good first/last-mile solution for bus passengers. It is common for the agency to subsidize up to a certain amount of the trip cost and the rider pays the rest. This can be done by working with the TNC to establish a promotion code specific to the transit agency. For Example, Marin Transit has implemented a TNC program known as Catch-A-Ride that allows eligible riders to receive up to eight one-way rides per month at a \$14 per ride discount for general riders and \$18 for low-income riders.
- Reducing Booking Window The current RTA policy for Runabout is to permit riders to schedule trips up to seven days in advance, although the ADA only requires next-day scheduling. The longer booking window of seven days is a good customer service feature but can have some

- disadvantages such as an increased potential for no-shows, and the need to adjust trips based on fluctuations in trip demand.
- Call-backs for next-day rides This practice would allow schedulers to optimize scheduling for trips for the next service days. Schedulers would need to call each rider back for the next service day to tell the passenger what their scheduled pick-up is for the next day.

# **Coordination with Human Service Transportation**

The San Luis Obispo County Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan (CHSPTP) completed by SLOCOG in 2022 includes implementation strategies to coordinate between human service transportation programs and services operated by RTA and SLO Transit. While there are multiple non-profit and human service transportation programs (See Working Paper #1) Ride-On Transportation and Senior Go! are the services that RTA and SLO transit focus their coordination efforts with.

Ride-On serves as a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) in San Luis Obispo and in that role provides door-to-door shuttle service for seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, and social service agencies. Senior Go! is a transportation service available to seniors aged 65 and older in San Luis Obispo County. Senior Go! is a SLOCOG program. SLOCOG has designated the RTA as a CTSA for the purpose of passing funding for the program through the RTA. The service is operated by Ventura Transportation Systems Inc. (VTS) and is managed by SLOGOG.

# Customer Facing Technology

The CHSPTP recommends improvements to customer-facing technology for scheduling trips and fare payment among human service transportation providers. The CHSPTP also recommends adding technology to improve scheduling/dispatching, vehicle tracking, and responding to unforeseen changes in service needs. The CHSPTP recommends coordinating these efforts between transportation providers to avoid using different technology platforms.

RTA plans to conduct a procurement for a new paratransit scheduling and dispatching software contract in early 2025 for Runabout. The existing contract for paratransit scheduling and dispatch software is set to expire in 2025. The new agreement will allow RTA to implement the latest features in this technology. This may include:

Automated Scheduling

**Automated Ride Confirmations** 

**Ride Status Updates** 

**Real-Time Tracking** 

User Interface with drivers, dispatch, and users

**Route Optimization** 

Reporting and Analytics

The number of software vendors in this field has increased significantly in recent years. The onboard hardware and technology are advanced, reliable and widely available. This has been able to improve the user experience as well as the expectations of the public.

Ride-on recently contracted with Ecolane to implement improved scheduling software. Senior Go! scheduling and dispatching software is managed by the contractor – VTS. With RTA updating its paratransit scheduling and dispatching platform, the opportunity exists for human service transportation providers such as Ride-on and Senior Go! to piggyback with RTA to obtain and deploy the same technology or deploy new technology that can be coordinated with existing technology. A coordinated scheduling technology would enhance the ability of agencies to coordinate with one another in providing transportation across the different demand-responsive services available.

# **Travel Management Coordination Center**

In 2015 Ride-On was awarded a Federal Transit Administration Mobility Services for All Americans (MSAA) Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) research grant to design a Travel Management Coordination Center (TMCC) for San Luis Obispo County. The TMCC would be a single information center with shared phones and a website meant to provide the most convenient access to information on transportation services in the region with direct access to trip reservations.

As part of the process, a TMCC advisory committee was created, which included RTA, The City of San Luis Obispo, and SLOCOG along with multiple other entities with a stake in regional transportation. The final report was issued in 2018. The report provided a comprehensive review of the administrative, operational, and technical design development of the San Luis Obispo County TMCC. The project deliverables included the concept of operations, system requirements, high-level system design, and a phased implementation plan.

The CHSPTP and the 2016 Short Range Transit Plans include a recommendation for creating a one-call center for regional transportation services. The CHSPTP terms it a One Call/One-Click Center. With advances in technology since 2018 and a resumption of services, since the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided, it is recommended that the efforts to form a TMCC resume during the SRTP planning period. The 2018 TMCC Project report provides a good starting point, along with coordination between RTA and Ride-on to deploy the same paratransit reservation and dispatch software.

SLO Transit Page G15

# Attachment A

# RTA AND SLO TRANSIT SCHEDULE COORDINATION

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TABLE A-1: Example of Existing Schedule Coordination at Government Center/Downtown Transfer Point

Weekdays During Academic Year

15-Mi	nute			SLO	O Tran	sit Rou	tes			RT	'A Rou	tes
Peri	od	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	3B	4A	4B	9	10	12
6:0	00							6:00				
6:1	L <b>5</b>	6:15		6:15		6:20			6:15			
6:3	30					_		6:35		6:33	6:33	6:33
6:4	15		6:45		6:45		6:45	6:45	6:50			
7:0	00	7:00		7:05		7:00			7:00			7:12
7:1	<b>L</b> 5	7:15		7:15		7:15		7:20		7:24	7:28	
7:3	30		7:30		7:40		7:40	7:30	7:35	7:33	7:33	7:33
7:4	15		7:45		7:45	7:55	7:45		7:45			
8:0	00	8:00		8:05		7:55		8:05				8:06
8:1	L <b>5</b>	8:15		8:15		8:15		8:15	8:20	8:24	8:28	
8:3	30		8:30		8:40		8:40		8:30	8:33	8:33	8:33
8:4	<b>1</b> 5		8:45		8:45	8:50	8:45	8:50				
9:0	00	9:00		9:05		8:55		9:00	9:05			9:06
9:1	<b>L5</b>	9:15		9:15		9:15			9:15	9:18	9:28	
9:3	30		9:30		9:40		9:40	9:35		9:33	9:33	9:33
9:4	15		9:45		9:45	9:50	9:45	9:45	9:50			
10:0	00	10:00		10:05		9:55			10:00			10:06
10:1	15	10:15		10:15		10:15		10:20		10:18	10:28	
10:3	30		10:30		10:40		10:40	10:30	10:35	10:33	10:33	10:33
10:4	45		10:45		10:45	10:50	10:45		10:45			
11:0	00	11:00		11:05		10:55		11:05				11:06
11:1	15	11:15		11:15		11:15		11:15	11:20	11:18	11:28	
11:3			11:30		11:40		11:40		11:30	11:33	11:33	11:33
11:4	_		11:45		11:45	11:50	11:45	11:50				
12:0		12:00		12:05			ı	12:00	12:05			12:06
12:1		12:15		12:15		12:15			12:15	12:18	12:28	
12:3			12:30		12:40		12:40	12:35		12:33	12:33	12:33
12:4			12:45		12:45		12:45	12:45	12:50			
13:0		13:00		13:05		13:10	13:00		13:00			13:06
13:1		13:15		13:15		13:15		13:20		13:18	13:28	
13:3			13:30		13:40		13:40	13:30	13:35	13:33	13:33	13:33
13:4			13:45		13:45		13:55		13:45			11.00
14:0		14:00		14:05		14:10	14:00	14:05				14:06
14:1		14:15		14:15		14:15		14:15	14:20	44-00-	14:28	
14:3			14:30		14:40		14:50		14:30	14:33	14:33	14:33
14:4	45		14:45		14:45		14:55	14:50				

45.00	45.00		45.05		45.40	45.00	45.00	45.05			45.06
15:00	15:00		15:05		15:10	15:00	15:00	15:05		45.00	15:06
15:15	15:15	45.00	15:15	45.40	15:15	45.50	45.00	15:15	45.00	15:28	45.00
15:30		15:30		15:40		15:50	15:35		15:33	15:33	15:33
15:45		15:45		15:45		15:55	15:45	15:50			
16:00	16:00		16:05		16:10	16:00		16:00			16:06
16:15	16:15		16:15		16:15		16:20			16:28	
16:30		16:30		16:40		16:50	16:30	16:35	16:33	16:33	16:33
16:45		16:45		16:45		16:55		16:45			
17:00	17:00		17:05		17:10	17:00	17:05				17:06
17:15	17:15		17:15		17:15		17:15	17:20		17:28	
17:30		17:30		17:40		17:50		17:30	17:33	17:33	17:33
17:45		17:45		17:45		17:55	17:50				
18:00	18:00		18:05		18:10	18:00	18:00	18:05			18:06
18:15	18:15		18:15		18:15			18:15		18:28	
18:30		18:30		18:35		18:50	18:35		18:33	18:33	18:33
18:45						18:55	18:45	18:50			
19:00	19:00		19:05		19:10			19:00			19:06
19:15	19:15		19:15		19:15		19:20		19:18	19:28	
19:30						19:50	19:30	19:35	19:33	19:33	19:33
19:45				_		19:55		19:45			
20:00	20:00		20:05		20:10		20:05				20:06
20:15	20:15		20:15		20:15		20:15	20:20	20:18	20:28	
20:30						20:50		20:30	20:33	20:33	20:33
20:45						20:55	20:50				
21:00	21:00		21:05		21:10		21:00	21:05			21:06
21:15	21:15		21:15		21:15			21:15			
21:30		•				21:50	21:35				
21:45						21:55	21:45	21:50			
22:00	22:00		22:00		22:10			22:00			22:06
22:15		•			22:15		22:20				
22:30						22:45	22:30	22:30			
22:45					•						
23:00					23:10		23:05				
			SLC	) Trans	it Rou	tes			RT.	A Rout	es
	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	3B	4A	4B	9	10	12
Begin	6:15	6:45	6:15	6:45	6:20	6:45	6:00	6:15	6:33	6:33	6:33
End	22:00	18:30	22:00	18:35	23:10	22:45	23:05	22:30	20:33	20:33	22:06
Span	15:45	11:45	15:45	11:50	16:50	16:00	17:05	16:15	14:00	14:00	15:33

SLO Transit Page G19

# Attachment B

# RTA AND SLO TRANSIT ROUTE TRANSFER TIMES

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TABLE B-1: RTA and SLO Transit Route Transfer Times at Downtown Transit Center/Government Center Weekday Midday

**Example of Midday Transfers between RTA and SLO Transit Routes** 

	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	
2:11 PM			Arrive	Arrive		Arrive		Arrive	Arrive	Arrive		2:11 PN
2:12 PM			2:06 PM	2:00 PM		2:05 PM		2:10 PM	1:55 PM	2:05 PM		2:12 PN
2:13 PM									Depart			2:13 PN
2:14 PM									2:00 PM			2:14 PN
2:15 PM												2:15 PN
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2:42 PM												2:42 PN
2:43 PM												2:43 PN
2:44 PM												2:44 PN
2:45 PM												2:45 PN
	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	

 $TABLE\ B-2:\ RTA\ and\ SLO\ Transit\ Route\ Transfer\ Times\ at\ Downtown\ Transit\ Center/Government\ Center\ Weekday\ Night$ 

Last Transfer Opportunity between RTA and SLO Transit Routes

	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	
8:11 PM			Arrive	Arrive		Arrive		Arrive		Arrive		8:11 PM
8:12 PM			8:06 PM	8:00 PM	Ends	8:05 PM	Ends	8:10 PM	Arrive	8:05 PM		8:12 PM
8:13 PM					6:30 PM		6:35 PM		7:40 AM			8:13 PM
8:14 PM									Depart			8:14 PN
8:15 PM									7:45 PM			8:15 PM
8:16 PM												8:16 PM
8:17 PM												8:17 PM
8:18 PM												8:18 PN
8:19 PM												8:19 PN
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8:41 PM												8:41 PM
8:42 PM												8:42 PN
8:43 PM				Next		Next		Next		Next	Next	8:43 PM
8:44 PM				Depart		Depart		Depart		Depart	Depart	8:44 PN
8:45 PM				9:15 PM		9:15 PM		9:15 PM		9:00 PM	9:15 PM	8:45 PM
	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	

TABLE B-3: RTA and SLO Transit Route Transfer Times at Downtown Transit Center/Government Center Saturday Morning
First RTA Departure Times

	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	
8:11 AM												8:11 AM
8:12 AM												8:12 AM
8:13 AM												8:13 AM
8:14 AM												8:14 AM
8:15 AM				1st Depart	No	1st Depart	No		No	1st Depart	No	8:15 AM
8:16 AM					Weekend		Weekend		Weekend		Weekend	8:16 AM
8:17 AM					Service		Service		Service		Service	8:17 AM
8:18 AM												8:18 AM
8:19 AM												8:19 AM
8:20 AM												8:20 AM
8:21 AM												8:21 AM
8:22 AM												8:22 AM
8:23 AM												8:23 AM
8:24 AM												8:24 AM
8:25 AM												8:25 AM
8:26 AM												8:26 AM
8:27 AM		L		L	L				<u> </u>	L		8:27 AM
8:28 AM												8:28 AM
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8:38 AM												8:38 AM
8:39 AM												8:39 AM
8:40 AM												8:40 AM
8:41 AM												8:41 AM
8:42 AM												8:42 AM
8:43 AM				Next		Next		Next		Next		8:43 AM
8:44 AM				Depart		Depart		Depart		Depart		8:44 AM
8:45 AM				9:15 AM		9:15 AM		9:20 AM		9:00 AM		8:45 AM
	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	

TABLE B-4: RTA and SLO Transit Route Transfer Times at Downtown Transit Center/Government Center Saturday Morning

First Transfer Opportunity between RTA and SLO Transit Routes

				ĺ								
	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	
11:11 AM				Arrive		Arrive				Arrive		11:11 AM
11:12 AM				11:00 AM		11:05 AM				11:05 AM		11:12 AM
11:13 AM												11:13 AM
11:14 AM												11:14 AM
11:15 AM					No		No		No		No	11:15 AM
11:16 AM					Weekend		Weekend		Weekend		Weekend	11:16 AM
11:17 AM					Service		Service		Service		Service	11:17 AM
11:18 AM												11:18 AM
11:19 AM												11:19 AM
11:20 AM												11:20 AM
11:21 AM												11:21 AM
11:22 AM												11:22 AM
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11:40 AM												11:40 AM
11:41 AM												11:41 AM
11:42 AM												11:42 AM
11:43 AM				Next		Next		Next		Next		11:43 AM
11:44 AM				Depart		Depart		Depart		Depart		11:44 AM
11:45 AM				12:15 PM		12:15 PM		12:15 PM		12:00 PM		11:45 AM
	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	_25 /

TABLE B-5: RTA and SLO Transit Route Transfer Times at Downtown Transit Center/Government Center Saturday Afternooon
Example of Midday Transfers between RTA and SLO Transit Routes

	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	
1:11 PM				Arrive	010 11	Arrive		0.000		0 2 0 11 1		1:11 PM
1:12 PM				1:00 PM		1:05 PM						1:12 PM
1:13 PM												1:13 PM
1:14 PM												1:14 PM
1:15 PM					No		No		No		No	1:15 PM
1:16 PM					Weekend		Weekend		Weekend		Weekend	1:16 PM
1:17 PM					Service		Service		Service		Service	1:17 PM
1:18 PM												1:18 PM
1:19 PM												1:19 PM
1:20 PM												1:20 PM
1:21 PM												1:21 PM
1:22 PM												1:22 PM
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1:39 PM												1:39 PM
1:40 PM												1:40 PM
1:41 PM												1:41 PM
1:42 PM												1:42 PM
1:43 PM				Next		Next		Next		Next		1:43 PM
1:44 PM				Depart		Depart		Depart		Depart		1:44 PM
1:45 PM				2:15 PM		2:15 PM		2:15 PM		2:15 PM		1:45 PM
	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	

# $TABLE\ B-6:\ RTA\ and\ SLO\ Transit\ Route\ Transfer\ Times\ at\ Downtown\ Transit\ Center/Government\ Center\ Saturday\ Afternoon$

Example of Saturday Midday Transfers between RTA and SLO Transit Routes

	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	
4:11 PM				Arrive		Arrive		Arrive				4:11 PM
4:12 PM				4:00 PM		4:05 PM		4:10 PM				4:12 PM
4:13 PM												4:13 PM
4:14 PM												4:14 PM
4:15 PM					No		No		No		No	4:15 PM
4:16 PM					Weekend		Weekend		Weekend		Weekend	4:16 PM
4:17 PM					Service		Service		Service		Service	4:17 PM
4:18 PM												4:18 PM
4:19 PM												4:19 PM
4:20 PM												4:20 PM
4:21 PM												4:21 PM
4:22 PM												4:22 PM
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4:41 PM												4:41 PM
4:42 PM												4:42 PM
4:43 PM				Next		Next		Next		Next		4:43 PM
4:44 PM				Depart		Depart		Depart		Depart		4:44 PM
4:45 PM				5:15 PM		5:15 PM		5:15 PM		5:15 PM		4:45 PM
	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	

SLO Transit

TABLE B-7: RTA and SLO Transit Route Transfer Times at Downtown Transit Center/Government Center Saturday Night Last Transfer Opportunity between RTA and SLO Transit Routes

	RTA 9	RTA 10	RTA 12	SLO 1A	SLO 1B	SLO 2A	SLO 2B	SLO 3A	SLO 3B	SLO 4A	SLO 4B	
7:11 PM				Arrive		Arrive		Arrive				7:11 PM
7:12 PM				7:00 PM		7:05 PM		7:10 PM				7:12 PM
7:13 PM												7:13 PM
7:14 PM												7:14 PM
7:15 PM				Final Loop	No	Final Loop	No	Final Loop	No		No	7:15 PM
7:16 PM					Weekend		Weekend		Weekend		Weekend	7:16 PM
7:17 PM					Service		Service		Service		Service	7:17 PM
7:18 PM												7:18 PM
7:19 PM												7:19 PM
7:20 PM												7:20 PM
7:21 PM												7:21 PM
7:22 PM												7:22 PM
7:23 PM												7:23 PM
7:24 PM												7:24 PM
7:25 PM												7:25 PM
7:26 PM												7:26 PM
7:27 PM				L				L				7:27 PM
7:28 PM				T								7:28 PM
7:29 PM												7:29 PM
7:30 PM										Final Loop		7:30 PM
7:31 PM												7:31 PM
7:32 PM												7:32 PM
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7:34 PM												7:34 PM
7:35 PM												7:35 PM
7:36 PM												7:36 PM
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