

Transit Center Relocation

The City of Santa Maria (population 88,000), located on California's Central Coast, hired Nelson\Nygaard to conduct a feasibility study for development of a new centralized transit center/intermodal facility.

Seven of Santa Maria Area Transit's (SMAT) routes, plus several intercity services operated by other public and private entities, meet for timed-transfers at the existing central transit facility located in the downtown Santa Maria area. This center, an "on-street" facility located on a major thoroughfare adjacent to a regional shopping mall, has no amenities other than a few bus stop signs, two benches and several trash receptacles.

The need for this project arose from a concern that the existing facility would be incapable of serving as a multimodal regional transit center in the future. It was agreed that a new central facility would have to meet the needs of SMAT, Central Coast Area Transit, Guadalupe Transit, regional carriers (e.g. Amtrak and Greyhound) and taxi operators.

Over a four-month period, Nelson\Nygaard and Richard Chong Associates assessed facility needs, developed evaluation criteria, interviewed key stakeholders, conducted a planning charrette with 15 people, assessed operational issues, and developed conceptual designs.

Nelson\Nygaard started with three potential locations and, after four months, had identified a preferred site. A final report (Sept 2001) was prepared outlining the assessment methodology, the preferred site, capital costs, a conceptual design and the impacts on bus operations.

It took the city nearly a decade to line up the funding and the parcel for the new transit center. Construction finally began in mid 2010 and the center is expected to be operational by early 2011.



Image credit: bfgc Architecture

Project Duration: 2001–2002

Total Budget: \$47,000

Nelson\Nygaard Budget: \$24,210

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