



# Public Works 2009 3rd Quarter Highlights

Stanislaus County  
Public Works

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## Geographical Information System (GIS) Tool of the Future!

Submitted by Peou Khiek

**GIS**, is a division of Stanislaus County Public Works Department. Our mission is to provide advanced computer applications through visualization (spatial data) combined with relational databases.

### What Are Geographic Information Systems?

**GIS**, is a powerful and very marketable tool that allows information to be displayed to a location, such as people to an address, crime to a demographic area, aerial's view to a location and then spatially combining critical thinking and problem solving by layering other information to give a better understanding. Classic examples include spatially displaying information for Board of Supervisor Districts, environmental analysis, school attendant district, Assessor information, analyzing social demographic & voting patterns, or

analyzing pollutions within delineated watershed.

**Geographic Information Systems** are comprised of computer applications that allow you to visualize large amounts of complex, spatial data by creating and combining layers of customized maps. If you can imagine, GIS allows you to wipe a landscape clean of its jumble of topography, rivers, environmental damage, wildlife, streets, buildings, telephone lines, and people, and then add this information back as separate layers in any combination so that you can see patterns and relationships that would have been difficult to notice otherwise.

GIS can mine data from spreadsheets or relational databases, and combine it with visual data such as CAD files, graphics, and images to create "intelligent maps" on which different types of

analysis can be performed.

Recent accomplishments by the Stanislaus County GIS Team:

- Won "Best Innovation" award from 2009 Stanislaus County IT Summer Forum (see bottom left).
- Part of the Third Annual Report Efficient Delivery of Public Services (EDPS).
- Our GIS website has been visited by more than 40 countries from around the world.
- Our GIS website will be used by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) for their California Counties Information Systems Directors Association (CCISDA) conference in September.

Here's the link:

[www.gis.stancounty.com](http://www.gis.stancounty.com)

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### "Safety Byte"

Submitted by Laura Janovich  
**Just a reminder that the third Friday of every month is the FREE give-away day at the Household Hazardous Waste site at Morgan Rd. They have several gallons of paint, Miracle-Gro for your garden, chlorine bleach, pesticides, fly traps, and the list goes on! It starts at 9:00 a.m., but the line starts growing about 8:00 a.m. and it is first come, first serve.**

**Public Works is now 217 days without a reportable accident/injury!**



GIS Team from L to R: Roma Kahlon, Diane Rodrigues, Peou Khiek, Aron Harris, Bill Fischer, and Mike Wilson.

## Public Works Sets a Safety Record

Submitted by Laura Janovich

Amazing feats are accomplished when people pull together. **We, the Department of Public Works, have accomplished setting an amazing record of 217 consecutive accident free days.** Each and every one of us played an important role in achieving this record.

We remained accident free when temperatures were at their highest and morale was at its lowest. We paved where no man has gone before (or at least in ten years). We crunched num-

bers when things were soggy, and neither rain, nor fog could bog our buses down. Daily we are faced with challenges and exposures to danger and daily we defeat the odds and add to our existing record of consecutive days accident free.

We have received recognition from the Board of Supervisors (see certificate) and many departments within the County who want to know about our "Safety Incentive Program". We have saved thousands of dollars for the Department, and in these times of economic crisis, that translates to jobs.



This kind of feat is only accomplished because we, as a team, pulled together and accepted the daily challenges with a safe approach. A gift card is an incentive, but to go home to our families safely is priceless.

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## Seymour StaRT to the Rescue

Submitted by Doralee Boles

A request for information was received via the StaRT Customer Comment portion of the Stanislaus Regional Transit Website. The request was forwarded to Annette Borrelli, Transit's Staff Services Coordinator. The request came from a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade school teacher from the Westside of Modesto, Greg Hoagland. He was requesting information relative to a field trip he was contemplating for his class.

Mr. Hoagland was looking for the most efficient and inexpensive way to transport his class from their west Modesto School site to the Stanislaus County Fair in Turlock. Annette contacted him. He wanted to make the trip on August 6<sup>th</sup> leaving in the morning and returning to school in the early afternoon. She explained his options for the trip via MAX from the school to the transit center in downtown Modesto. From there he could subsequently transfer to StaRT (the County system) to reach the Fairgrounds in Turlock via Express Route #10. They discussed possible return times and she detailed the various locations where his little flock might disembark the bus. Per Annette's calculations, the round trip (including the two transfers) would cost \$55.50 for his 20

students and himself.

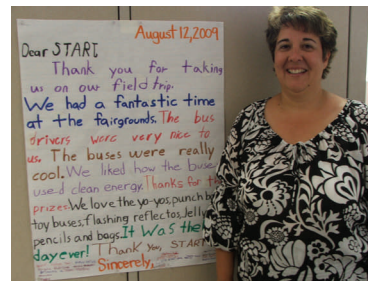
Annette advised him to contact MAX to let them know his itinerary. He mentioned that his students were first-time bus riders. Part of his goal was to introduce them to Public Transportation. He said it was part of a unit the class was studying on environmental issues and alternative fuels. Annette explained to him that this was an ideal match since the County operated a fleet of compressed natural gas (CNG) buses and had just purchased 3 new 40' low floor buses which were powered by clean fuel CNG.

She then recommended that he could show his students the County's "How to Ride the Bus Video" which is available for free viewing on the Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT) website. He was delighted with the idea and told her he would do that the day before the ride to educate his class. He subsequently checked out the locations in Turlock, came by the office to purchase the tickets in advance and confirm the date and locations. She gave him informational handouts and giveaway items to be given to the class the day after the field trip.

These items feature the mascot for the County Bus System "Seymour StaRT", a cartoon flying bus that operates on clean fuels only.

The following week a huge colorful "THANK YOU" letter on poster paper was delivered to the StaRT office (see below). It was signed by every class member thanking Annette and StaRT for making their trip possible.

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**Thank you for taking us on our field trip. We had a terrific time at the Fairgrounds. The bus drivers were very nice to us. The bus ride was really cool. We liked the buses used clean energy. Thanks for the prizes. We liked the yo-yos, toy buses, flashing reflectors, jelly beans pencils and bags. It was the BEST DAY EVER! Thank you StaRT.**

Sincerely,

Daniel	Marisol	Miguel	Jorge	Fabian
Brianna	Graciella	Revas	Cyrus	Kevin
Andreas	Ivan	Stefanie	Nayley	Jackie
Brianna	Joel	Hector	Tovar	

Mr. Hoagland

## “Local Roads Matter” Campaign Launched

Submitted by  
**Anthony Giancola**  
**NACE Executive Director**

The National Association of County Engineers (NACE) launched its "Local Roads Matter" campaign to highlight the importance of "Local Roads" to our nation's transportation system. Over 75% of the roads and bridges in the United States are under local jurisdiction, but national and state transportation funding policies starve them of the resources necessary to maintain a state of good repair and meeting growing mobility needs. The surface transportation authorization provides us with the opportunity to act on these critical issues. NACE President Chris Bauserman, County Engineer, Delaware County Ohio added that "Across the nation, it is difficult for those responsible for the local road system to have a voice at the state level to ensure money is targeted for investment at the local level is actually spent at the local level."

The consequences of this shortsightedness range from an appalling highway safety record to a pervasive negative impact on local and regional economies. A new and more enlightened federal, state, and local partnership is needed to restore the balance to highway investments and achieve important economic, environmental and safety goals. A needs assessment brochure is available at the following link NACE Needs Assessment brochure.

<http://countyengineers.org/LRM/needs-assessment/needs-assessment-brochure.html>

Local Roads do matter. The time is now to address fundamental issues of fairness and equity in the distribution of federal highway funds if we are to stimulate and preserve local economies and address a safety problem of troubling dimensions. Valerie Brown, President-elect of the National Association of Counties and member of the Sonoma County, California Board of Supervisors adds "The NACE Local Roads Matter Campaign supports our efforts at NACo to "Restore the Partnership" between the Federal government and America's counties. County roads are the backbone of rural America and as such a renewed national focus is required to protect the users and preserve these vital public assets."

To visit the NACE Local Roads Matter Campaign site visit: <http://countyengineers.org/LRM/index.html>

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## Public Works Projects Information

### RSTP Overlay Program B Project

Submitted by Chris Brady

This federally funded project consists of resurfacing approximately 26 miles of County roads. Construction of this project consists of placing a 0.23' hot mix asphalt concrete overlay, shoulder preparation and backing placement, and replacement of all roadway striping and markings.

The roads included in this project are Beckwith Road, Hart Road (see photos below), Eastin Road, Marshall Road, River Road, Sycamore Avenue, Villa Manucha Road, Ward Avenue, and Whitmore Avenue.

The overall cost of the project is approximately \$3.3 million and is scheduled for completion by the end of September 2009.

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Hart Road - Before



Hart Road - After

### Will you OPT In? organization + performance

Per Rick Robinson, "In these difficult times it could be easy to lose focus on our Board priorities. However, now more than ever we need to remember that we exist as an organization to serve the needs of our community and we do that best when we work together as a team."

Four key areas of focus are the basis of customer service.

- Are we Well Organized?**
- Are we Well Mannered?**
- Are we Effective?**
- Are we Knowledgeable?**

**Our vision is:** *To be respected for service in the community and to be known as the best County in America.*

What action can **YOU** take?

The OPT newsletter is emailed quarterly. Here is the link:

<http://saturn.co.stanislaus.ca.us/intranet/optin/>

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### Storm Water Pollution & Prevention Website

<http://www.stancounty.com/publicworks/storm/index.shtm>

**Only rain down the drain.**

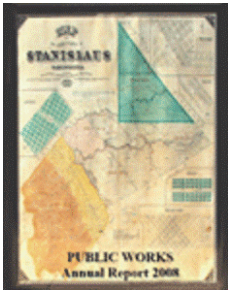


## Stanislaus County Public Works

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To access our Public Works 2008 Annual Report, go to <http://www.stancounty.com/publicworks/pdf/annual-report-2008.pdf>



### Transit Division

The Transit Division recently received three new Orion VII low-floor buses. The buses were acquired with a combination of Federal and State funds. The low-floor buses will make getting on the bus easier for passengers with limited mobility since the buses can "kneel" down and uses a ramp instead of a lift to get passengers on the bus.

Also, did you know that StaRT ridership has increased greater than the national average for the last five years and ridership has increased 28.56% since 2004?

Transit Division's website is: [www.srt.org/](http://www.srt.org/)

Passengers may call StaRT at 1-800-262-1516 for more information.

## 2009 Annual Road Report Preparation

Submitted by Julie Serrano

California Street and Highway Code Section 2151 requires that "on or before the first day of October of each year, the governing body of each county and city shall cause to be made and filed with the Controller a complete report of the expenditures for street or road purposes during the preceding fiscal year ending on the 30th day of June".

This year the preparation of Public Works' Annual Road Report went beautifully. The State Controller office's auditor arrived on August 17th. With him was an auditor-in-training, also from the State Controller's office. The Road Report was completed in just 2 ½ days.

Public Works staff has been evaluating the processes that are used to provide the necessary information for the Road Report. Resulting changes to CAMS (our Cost Accounting Management System) have really improved our reporting. Information is more accurate, cleaner and quicker to get to.

The state auditors were very impressed with this year's variances. A variance is the difference between what is reported in the financial system compared with the cost accounting system data (actual identified usage by project/activity). The auditors said our variance amounts were so minimal they were virtually unheard of. Acceptable variances are between 5% and 10%. The auditors requested our approval to provide our contact information to other counties for benchmarking purposes! The variances for 2009 are: Labor = 2.29%, Equipment = 1.92%, Overhead = 1.06%, Inventory = 0.03%

Thank you to everyone who played a part in making this an exceptional year.

### Public Works' 1st Annual Chili Cook-Off

There were several delicious entries. Congratulations to the winners (see photo from R to L).

1st Place Best Chili - Aja Yamzon (right)

People's Choice Chili - Julie Serrano (center)

Hottest Chili - Andrew Malizia (left)



## ANNOUNCEMENTS



*Learn and Live®*

**American Heart Association Fundraiser -** Public Works participated in the 18th Annual Heart Walk on 9/12/09. Sharon Andrews volunteered to be our department captain. We had a White Elephant Sale and two bake sales in addition to pledges for the walk (9 walkers). The department raised a total of \$1,435.35. **Thank you for your continued support!**

**United Way Annual Fundraising -** Sylvia Jones is our department representative. Donation forms will be available in October.

## Staff Updates

### **Retirement:**

Robert "Bob" Meleg. *Thank you for your service!*

### **Promotions:**

Joseph Duarte: Road Maintenance Worker II  
Marty Harper: Road Maintenance Worker II

### **Congratulations!**

### **Babies:**

Roma Kahlon (Sr. Software Developer/Analyst in GIS): New baby boy named Vikrum born on 9/16.

Anthony Ramirez (Road Worker III): New baby girl named Luna born on 9/22.

**Best wishes!!**



We're on the web: [www.stancounty.com/publicworks](http://www.stancounty.com/publicworks)