



Board Report

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PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE APRIL 13, 2016

SUBJECT: REGIONAL RAIL UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE THE REGIONAL RAIL UPDATE THROUGH MARCH 2016

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the **Regional Rail Update through March 2016**.

ISSUE

The Regional Rail unit of the Program Management Department is responsible for providing overall coordination, management, and the programming of funds for LACMTA's commitment to the commuter, intercity, and high speed rail networks serving Los Angeles County. This unit also manages and coordinates capital improvement projects along the LACMTA owned railroad right-of-way.

DISCUSSION

LACMTA is the largest member agency for the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), the operator of the Metrolink commuter rail network. Metrolink carries approximately 42,000 riders per day throughout the southern California Region.

LACMTA is a member of the Los Angeles - San Diego - San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency. This Joint Powers Authority (JPA) coordinates the passenger rail services of the three carriers (Amtrak, Metrolink, and COASTER) within this intercity rail corridor.

LACMTA is instrumental in the planning and coordination efforts within the County of Los Angeles for the future high speed rail program connecting northern California to southern California. Staff is involved with regional and statewide groups working to develop integrated passenger rail service in the state.

The Regional Rail team coordinates and leads capital improvement projects for the Metro owned and Metrolink operated right-of-way.
Capital Projects

The Regional Rail unit has 11 capital improvement projects that it is actively managing. These

projects range from planning studies to the design of capacity and safety related projects.

- Bob Hope Airport/Hollywood Way Station, Antelope Valley Line

This project will add a new Metrolink station on the Antelope Valley Line, to provide better access to the Bob Hope Airport. This project was delayed due to coordination regarding the funding grant.

Procurement for the construction of the Project is underway. The Invitation for Bids (IFB) was issued on March 14, 2016. Notice to Proceed is anticipated in May 2016. Staff is seeking options to accelerate this project.

- Bob Hope Airport Pedestrian Grade Separation, Ventura Line

This project will construct an elevated walkway to enhance safety and directly link the existing station to the airport. In March 2015 the Metro Board awarded the design contract. Notice to Proceed was issued in April 2015. Staff is working closely with Burbank/Bob Hope Airport staff in the development of the project. The project design is at the 65% level but has been delayed a month due to stakeholders delay in providing comments on the 65% submittal. Once the 65% comments are addressed the 90% design package will be issued. There are no adverse impacts to the project as a result of extending the review time by one month.

A public outreach meeting was held on March 16 at the Burbank Airport to seek public input. The meeting was attended by over 30 people. Staff is coordinating with Burbank/Bob Hope Airport, Amtrak, Caltrans, LOSSAN, City of Burbank, Metrolink, Union Pacific, and utility owners to identify potential issues early on in the project.

- Brighton to Roxford Double Track

This project will double track 10.95 miles of the Antelope Valley Line between Burbank and Sylmar. Once completed, Metrolink will be able to significantly improve on time performance and operational reliability on the Antelope Valley Line. This project includes construction of three new railroad bridges, modification of 15 at-grade crossings, and modifications to three stations, including possible pedestrian grade separations. The project will be designed to be compatible with the potential future high speed rail alignment. Once completed, there will be continuous double track between Los Angeles Union Station and CP Balboa, in the Sylmar area.

The Metro Board awarded the contract for design on July 23, 2015. Notice to Proceed (NTP) was issued on September 1, 2015. The consultant is currently working on Phase-1 (Environmental Clearance and Preliminary Engineering). The utility notification letters have been sent out to impacted utility companies and development of the aerial base map has been initiated. The concept plan drafts and cost estimates for the 3 bridges (Hollywood Way, Tujunga Wash, & Pacoima Wash) and project definition reports for Bob Hope Airport / Hollywood Way Station, and Sylmar / San Fernando Station were submitted; the consultant has also initiated design of track plans/profiles and grade crossings.

Doran Street and Broadway/Brazil Safety and Access Project

The Doran Street grade crossing has been identified by the California Public Utilities Commission as one of the most hazardous crossings on the Metrolink system. This project grade separates the crossing and enhances safety and mobility into the area. The project is currently in the Alternative

Analysis (AA) phase.

A Project Study Report Equivalent (PSRE) was completed in April 2014. The locally preferred Alternative 2 was approved by the Board in June 2015. This approval required Metro Staff to replace the proposed Fairmont Connector option near the Doran crossing with an option that meets the needs of the community. Metro staff is working with the design consultants and the cities of Glendale and Los Angeles to study options for a solution. Metro staff will report back to the Board with results of findings from deliberations with all stakeholders and designers. Meetings have begun with property owners affected by the project. A contract amendment was issued to the Contractor in September 2014 to complete the engineering of the interim condition at Doran Street. This one - way westbound configuration will be in place through the development of the grade separation. Meetings have been conducted with emergency responders and the CPUC and a consensus has been reached on the design of the crossing. On December 7, a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) notice of exemption was filed with the Los Angeles county Clerk's office for the interim one-way westbound construction for Doran Street. The general order (GO-88B) application to modify the existing Doran Street rail crossing was submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in December, 2015. Metro will begin the construction procurement process in middle 2016 and anticipates that construction of the interim one - way westbound configuration will commence in late 2016. Staff are presently assessing any impact on this project related to the March 2016 board motion.

- L.A. County Grade Crossing and Corridor Safety Program

This is a comprehensive grade crossing and corridor safety program. This project will analyze 110 at-grade crossings and 160 miles of LACMTA owned and Metrolink operated right-of-way. A strategy for the development of enhancements to the at-grade crossings and the railroad corridors will be part of the work. The program will include recommendations for advancing grade crossings for grade separation. Work has begun in developing the methodology for the effort.

Meetings have begun with the cities to discuss the process. The intention is to meet with each individual city to discuss issues and to provide a framework for the work.

As part of the scope, the team is analyzing the available technology for safety and security at grade crossings and along the corridor. The initial finding from this work will be available in May.

- Raymer to Bernson Double Track

This project is currently on hold due to board motion.

Six miles of second main line track is proposed to be constructed between Van Nuys and Chatsworth, completing double tracking between the Los Angeles/Ventura County Line and Los Angeles. A second side platform is proposed at the Metrolink Northridge Station as well as enhancements to nine at-grade crossings in the corridor. Preliminary engineering and environmental work is complete. In January 2014, LACMTA received an allocation of \$6.5M from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for final design. Final design started in August 2014.

A public meeting was held in April 2015 to discuss the project progress and to receive input from the community. A second public meeting with the community was held on August 25, 2015. Staff attended another community meeting with the Sherwood Forest Homeowners Association on September 16, 2015. Residents in the community have raised concerns about placing a second mainline track within Metro right-of-way abutting a residential area. Some of the concerns raised include noise and vibration, transport of oil cars by freight railroads and safety of trains on double tracks. Staff responded to the specific concerns received from the community with answers to frequently asked questions. This document was sent to the community in December. On December 2, Staff held two community meetings with the residents' local steering committee and the Sherwood Forest Homeowners association.

Metro met with the community on January 13, 2016. The results of the noise and vibration study as well as other information were shared with the community at this meeting. Staff will continue to inform the board of ongoing outreach efforts to the community.

In response to community requests, Metro hired a consultant to conduct field noise and vibration studies in October. The noise and vibration measurements were conducted at the home of ten volunteers near the Metro right of way in Northridge and at other locations along the railroad right of way in Glendale.

- The field noise and vibration studies showed:
- Existing train noise and vibrations are already high
- Highest noise levels found near crossing (train horns)
- Existing vibration levels exceed FTA criteria at some locations
- Readings consistent with earlier modeled estimates

In response to concerns of residents within the project limits, Metro has proposed a project re-configuration that avoids building the second mainline track at the residential neighborhood between Lindley Avenue and Balboa Boulevard. Metro is currently working with the design contractor to model and quantify the railroad operational benefits of the proposed re-configuration. The modeling and reporting of operational benefits will be completed by May 2016. Metro Staff will report results of the modeling to the Board as they are available. The other alternative is potentially to reallocate the funding. Staff will seek Board direction in due course.

- Rosecrans/Marquardt Grade Separation

This project will grade separate the existing at-grade crossing at the Rosecrans and Marquardt intersection in Santa Fe Springs. This crossing has been ranked No. 1 on the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Section 190 list as the most hazardous crossing in the state. This project is related to the 14.7 mile triple track project that the BNSF Railway is constructing in the area. This project will allow the completion of the triple track project and adds capacity to the corridor. This will relieve a significant operational constraint in the corridor. Currently, there are 21 cumulative hours of traffic warning gate down time per week at this crossing.

The LACMTA Board awarded the contract in March 2015 and Notice to Proceed was issued on April 15, 2015. The consultant has completed the Alternative Development Report, Preliminary Environmental Study, aerial mapping, right-of-way mapping, as well as utility mapping. Public

outreach, including public workshops and city council meetings, has occurred with the cities of Santa Fe Springs, La Mirada, and Gateway Cities. Alternative 2 was approved by the City of Santa Springs in December 16, 2015, and by Metro Board on February 25, 2016. Notice of Exemption for the CEQA was filed on February 29, 2016. A community outreach public meeting was conducted on March 1, 2016.

Outreach has begun to the affected property owners. There are several properties that are impacted by this project. Metro is seeking appraisals of the properties and will quantify the results into the cost estimate.

The team is currently working on the Bridge Type Selection Report and the 35% bridge and retaining wall plans and estimate.

- Southern California Regional Interconnector Project (SCRIP)

Four to six tracks from the south end of LAUS will be extended across the 101 freeway to connect with the main tracks along the Los Angeles River. This will complete a loop that will allow trains to enter and exit the station at either end, as opposed to the current single entrance and exit point. With this project, the capacity of the station will be significantly increased as well as sharply reduce greenhouse gases associated with idling locomotives.

Modeling of a four-track or six-track configuration has been completed. Both options are seen to provide substantial benefit to the station capacity by doubling the peak period capacity at the station.

SCRIP was previously developed with the raising of just two platforms and related tracks, showing that the project can be completed and operated without raising the entire yard. However, a separate task was added to the engineering contract to study the effects of raising the entire yard to accommodate the concourse that is part of the Union Station Master Plan as well as identifying any associated operational benefits. The study of the concourse is complete.

The results of the Concourse study and the addition of high speed rail into the station have created a significant change to the project. In October 2015 the Metro Board approved the addition of high speed rail into LAUS with the understanding that an agreement had to be completed with the CHSRA. The addition, of HSR into the station has created significant impacts to the project, including the size and scope. This will require a complete environmental document where before it was determined that a supplemental of the previous document was adequate.

Staff is continuing to coordinate the development of SCRIP with the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA). Regular meetings are occurring between the SCRIP team and the CHSRA about accommodating the high speed rail program into the footprint of Union Station. Modeling has been done that shows that this high speed rail can be incorporated into the Union Station rail yard. Discussions are underway as to what this would look like and other issues regarding the joint use of the yard. Further meetings will discuss this further. In February 2016, the CHSRA Board approved the allocation of \$15 million for a portion of the engineering costs associated with the project. In addition the Metro Board approved Contract Modification No. 3 for the Contractor that will complete the preliminary engineering and environmental work necessary for the project. Staff continues to work with the CHSRA on the necessary agreements regarding Union Station.

- Van Nuys Second Platform

Currently, there is only one single side platform serving the two main line tracks at the Amtrak/Metrolink Van Nuys station. A center platform will be constructed, along with a pedestrian underpass to the platform, providing safe access to both main tracks. Preliminary engineering and environmental work are complete. In December 2013 LACMTA received an allocation of \$4M from the CTC for final design. Final design started in July 2014 and ready for bid documents were completed in November 2015.

In January 2016, the CTC allocated \$30.5M to Metro to construct the Van Nuys Station. Metro anticipates construction will start in fall 2016. Subject to board approval, staff is working with Metrolink to investigate the feasibility of transferring construction of the station to Metrolink.

- Lone Hill to CP White Second Track

The work will add a second track in this segment of the San Bernardino Line. That line is currently 70% single track. This project will help to alleviate a bottle neck and create operational efficiency in the corridor.

The Board awarded the contract for the environmental and preliminary engineering necessary to advance the project. This project is being led by a small business prime. The project should kick off in mid-April 2016.

Metrolink Commuter Rail

Metro's Ad Hoc Regional Rail Committee requested an action plan from Metrolink to address on-time performance on the San Bernardino. Metrolink has said that they are working on this plan.

Metrolink Financial Update

- FY 2014-2015 CAFR and Audit

Metro received the FY 2014-2015 CAFR and single audit results from Metrolink on March 9, 2016. This information was due in December 2015 despite Metro auditors (Simpson & Simpson) and staff making several attempts to obtain the information timely. Metro auditors and Metro staff are currently reviewing these reports.

Simpson & Simpson began field work for the FY 2014-15 Metro audit of Metrolink on March 14, 2016, and will keep Metro staff informed of their progress.

- \$18 Million Loan

Metrolink's internal audit department performed an audit on the Proposition 1B CTSGP funds designated to repay Metro the \$18 million loan. The audit findings determined that Metrolink comingled these grant funds with Metrolink's operating funds. Metrolink's auditor's also concluded that they could not determine if Metro's \$18 million loan was used exclusively for the Option #4 rail car purchase. To alleviate this from happening in the future, Metrolink management will establish a separate bank account for future loans. Lastly, Metrolink stated that they have exhausted the CTSGP funds. Phil Washington and Metro staff questioned the source of the \$18 million repayment

and whether Metro will be paying itself back by using operating funds.

Metro received a repayment plan from Metrolink on January 27, 2016, outlined as follows:

\$5 million on or before March 31, 2016
\$5 million on or before May 31, 2016
\$1 million on or before August 31, 2016
\$1 million on or before November 30, 2016
\$1 million on or before February 28, 2017
The balance on or before June 30, 2017

This will achieve final payment by the loan maturity date of June 30, 2017.

- Metrolink Invoices and Billing Issues

Since the Metro board approved staff's recommendation to withhold rehabilitation and renovation funding for FY 2015-16, Metrolink has made very little progress in submitting invoices to draw down on the \$30M plus existing backlog of funding nor has Metro received consistent or timely quarterly reporting as required pursuant to the terms of our executed MOU with Metrolink. Staff will continue to meet with Metrolink management to resolve this issue and utilize previously approved funding for priority projects.

- Metrolink Ridership and Revenues for FY 2015-16

For the first quarter of FY 2015-16 (July thru September) Metrolink ridership was 1% above budget. Revenues were 2.5% below budget. Much of this revenue loss is attributable to the Antelope Valley Line, which has seen a drop in revenue of \$444K due to the AVL 25% fare reduction program.

- Antelope Valley Line

The Antelope Valley Line 25% fare reduction program has been successful in attracting riders to the Metrolink system. The results through December show that the ridership is up 19% over the previous year and the revenues are down only 9%.

The 100% fare enforcement program has also been successful. The L.A. County Sheriff's report that fare evasion is at 0.5% or lower. This is down from the estimated 3.5% prior to the program.

- LOSSAN Intercity Rail (Amtrak Pacific Surfliner)

The LOSSAN corridor is the second busiest intercity rail corridor in the nation (see Attachment C). There are 41 stations and more than 150 daily passenger trains, with an annual ridership of 2.7 million on Amtrak Pacific Surfliner plus 4.5 million on Metrolink and Coaster commuter rail.

Amtrak Pacific Surfliner intercity rail service increased during the second quarter of FY 2015-16 by 3.7% compared to the prior year. Revenues on the Pacific Surfliner were up 2.4% compared to the prior year. This is favorable compared to Amtrak nationwide, which saw declines in ridership in revenues for second quarter of FY 2015-16. See Attachment D for more detail.

The LOSSAN Joint Powers Authority (JPA) continues to transition management of the Pacific Surfliner from the State to local control. LOSSAN is in the process of hiring staff and working to

implement a coordinated marketing and awareness campaign for 2016.

- High Speed Rail

The Governor's budget allocates 25% of Cap and Trade funds to high speed rail. This allows acceleration of the program.

The Supplemental Alternative Analysis work is underway on the Burbank to Palmdale and Burbank to Anaheim segments in L.A. County. The California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) is evaluating an alternative that partially includes LACMTA owned right-of-way as well as one that takes a more direct route between Palmdale and Burbank. LACMTA is developing the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project in a manner that would be usable under any high speed rail scenario for this corridor. This will minimize or eliminate throw away work.

The Draft 2016 Business Plan has been released by the CHSRA. This Plan has redefined the Initial Operating Segment (IOS) to be between the Central Valley north to San Jose. This is a departure from the previous plans that showed the IOS to be between the Central Valley and Burbank. In addition, the plan discussed an investment of \$4 billion dollars into southern California in advance of high speed rail. Staff is reviewing the Business Plan and will be providing comments to the CHSRA.

NEXT STEPS

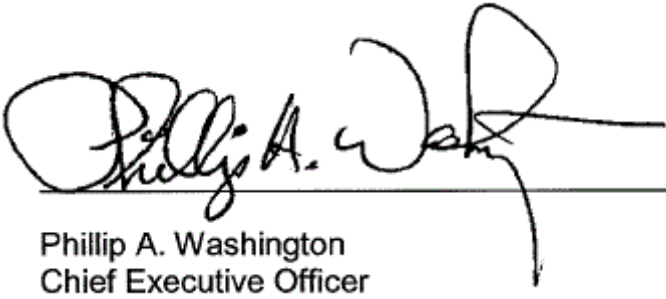
- Continue to develop the projects defined in Attachment A1
- Develop projects for funding under the High Speed Rail MOU.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A-1 - Regional Rail Capital Projects Status Report
Attachment A-2 - Regional Rail Capital Projects Budget
Attachment B - Metrolink Ridership Trends
Attachment C - LOSSAN Corridor Map
Attachment D - LOSSAN Corridor Trends

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