

**Board Report**

File #: 2015-1442, **File Type:** Plan**Agenda Number:** 61.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 14, 2015****SUBJECT: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL INTERCONNECTOR PROJECT (SCRIP)****ACTION: PROGRAM ADDITIONAL FUNDS****RECOMMENDATION**

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE FORWARDED WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION:

- A. APPROVING **expansion of the SCRIP to include the Los Angeles Union Station Master plan** passenger concourse and accommodate a high speed rail system in Union Station;
- B. PROGRAMMING \$15,000,000 in FY 16 Measure R 3% funds for the SCRIP environmental and preliminary engineering scope of work; and
- C. ACCOMMODATING high speed rail in Los Angeles Union Station as part of the implementation of the Los Angeles Union Station Master Plan.

GARCETTI AMENDMENT: approve subject to High Speed Rail written financial commitment on the Master Cooperative Agreement.

ISSUE

The Board approved the advancement of the Los Angeles Union Station Run-Through Tracks Project now called the Southern California Regional Interconnector Project (SCRIP), as part of the Regional Rail Capital Plan in July of 2012. The current configuration of Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) is a stub-ended station with all trains entering and exiting through the five track throat immediately to the north east of the station. The SCRIP project is planned to extend up to six of the existing tracks in LAUS through the station and out of the south end of the station to connect with the mainline tracks south of LAUS. This will increase the capacity of LAUS by 40% to 50%. The project is needed for the enhancement of capacity at LAUS and will be needed to serve the high speed rail system in southern California.

Recently, the California High Speed Rail Authority expressed a desire to come directly into LAUS rather than at the location on Vignes Avenue as shown in the illustrative approach in the Los Angeles

Union Station Master Plan (LAUSMP).

The consequential impact of accommodating HSR in the heart of LAUS would change the environmental footprint for SCRIP as this will require a new environmental approach for the amended SCRIP project.

The CHSRA has secured funding to aggressively accelerate the document for the southern California area. A timeline of 2017 has been established when the environmental document for the segment between Burbank and Anaheim, including the area surrounding LAUS, is complete. In order to meet the CHSRA timeline, and incorporate the LAUSMP passenger concourse and not preclude a high speed rail commuter system into Union Station, the SCRIP will need to be advanced along the same timeline. This creates the need to move forward with the environmental and preliminary engineering work in order for it to be completed by August 2017. The urgency of the project is created by the need to have SCRIP functional at the start of the Initial Operating Segment (IOS) of the California High Speed Rail (CHSR) system. The additional capacity gained by this project will be necessary to serve the IOS.

Staff has been discussing the execution of the environmental work with the CHSRA and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as there are several environmental studies by Metro and HSR that will overlap. It is expected that both the CHSRA and Metro can clear their respective projects with coordination of the environmental studies.

DISCUSSION

Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) is a major regional rail transportation hub for the southern California passenger rail network. Five of the six Metrolink lines have origins and destinations at LAUS in addition to Amtrak intercity and long distance trains. In addition, LAUS is located on the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN corridor), the second busiest intercity passenger rail corridor in the nation.

Metrolink and Amtrak operate in a push-pull mode in southern California. The current configuration of LAUS is a stub ended station with all trains entering and exiting through the five-track throat. Considering LAUS as the hub; commuter, intercity, and long distance trains "push" into LAUS with the cab car forward. Conversely, they "pull" out, locomotive first. This configuration requires the trains that serve LAUS to idle collectively approximately 50 hours a day.

SCRIP will take up to six of the tracks in the station, continue them south across the US-101 freeway and extend them to meet the mainline tracks along the Los Angeles River south of LAUS. This will allow trains to effectively "run-through" the station, changing the station for at least 50 percent of the trains to a dwell stop along the journey rather than an end to the journey thereby, creating one-seat rides. An additional connection at the L.A. River creates a northern loop track which allows trains to go north, enhancing operational flexibility.

SCRIP was first advanced as the Los Angeles Union Station Run-Through Tracks Project and the final EIR/EIS was approved in December 2005. At that time, there was insufficient funding to advance the project. The project was on hold until it was advanced with the Regional Rail Capital

Program in 2012, when additional funding became available.

SCRIP provides the following benefits:

- Reduces travel times for 50% of the trains by reducing dwell times in LAUS.
- Increases operational capacity.
- Reduces locomotive idling times.
- Improves air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Allows one-seat rides throughout the region.
- Improves passenger circulation from the concourse to the platforms.

The history of SCRIP is as follows:

1939 LAUS opens.

2000 Run Through Track Project Study Report completed.

2002 Conceptual engineering and environmental analysis of the Run-Through track project begins.

2006 Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the Run-Through Tracks is approved.

2012 Metro Board approves funding to advance the project.

2013 California High Speed Rail Authority approves the Advance Investment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

2014 Preliminary Engineering and Supplemental Environmental Engineering work begins on SCRIP.

2014 L.A. Metro Board approves recommendations moving the Union Station Master Plan from planning to implementation.

The benefits of SCRIP were modeled at a high level to determine the number of tracks needed to “run-through” the station. For this model LAUS was treated as a “terminal” with trains flowing in and out of the station. Specific track to track operations within the terminal were not modeled. The modeling showed that there are specific efficiencies within the terminal that can be achieved to create greater capacity. In addition, it was shown that SCRIP is needed to address capacity needs at LAUS in the near term as well as the long term.

The Board of Directors approved moving the LAUSMP from the planning phase into implementation in October 2014. The LAUSMP sets the framework for the development of LAUS into the future. The work on the master plan showed that pedestrian circulation was an issue at LAUS, particularly between the conventional rail platforms and the under track passageway that connects these platforms to the rest of LAUS. The LAUSMP showed that an enlarged concourse was needed with vertical circulation elements such as escalators or stairs and elevators in order to meet the increasing passenger need within the station.

The SCRIP project will require the tracks that are running through the station to be raised in order to provide clearance over the El Monte busway and the US-101 freeway. Therefore, this will require the platforms that are served by these tracks to be raised as well. As part of the initial work on SCRIP, a study of the passenger concourse that was proposed in the LAUSMP was completed. This study is a more advanced engineering study of the requirements for the concourse and the passenger rail platforms than was previously conducted with the LAUSMP work. This study confirmed that vertical circulation is an issue and that the circulation elements such as elevators and stairs or escalators will

be needed for pedestrian flow as well as to comply with ADA standards. With the raised platforms, the existing ramps that are used for access to the platforms would not meet the required vertical circulation. Furthermore, there is the added complexity that the layout of the passenger concourse is dictated by the height and the diagonal orientation of the underground Red Line station. These unique features force the elevators and escalators necessary for vertical circulation in a diagonal orientation outside of the limits of the Red Line structure which in turn, pushes the vertical circulation elements out past the boundaries of the existing passageway.

The study concluded that constructing SCRIP and the concourse together provides an integrated design that will:

- Minimize throw-away costs.
- Reduce construction schedule and impacts to passengers.
- Provide an opportunity to streamline the environmental process.
- Jump start the LAUS Master Plan vision.

The SCRIP concourse study showed that a limited portion of the new LAUSMP passenger concourse (under platforms 2 and 3) could be constructed with the SCRIP. While not a desirable condition, this did allow for the phasing of the construction of the new passenger concourse.

The LAUSMP showed an illustrative approach to the California High Speed Rail Project within a separate station across Vignes Street at the Piper Tech building. This would be an underground station connected to LAUS through an underground passageway. This determination was made due to the needs that were expressed by the CHSRA at the time of the development of the LAUSMP. Since the completion of the LAUSMP, the CHSRA has expressed a strong desire to be located within the footprint of LAUS. The co-location of HSR within the yard will enhance the connections with local transit and regional rail. This configuration has been examined and determined to be feasible. In addition, this would maximize connectivity with the regional rail and transit system.

Metro released the LAUSMP Programmatic Environmental Impact Document Request for Proposals in February 9, 2015. The task order was awarded to Kleinfelder in June 2015. The work on the programmatic environmental document is expected to be complete in November 2016.

The current scope for the environmental work for the SCRIP is a supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and a subsequent Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The current scope was intended to supplement the studies that were performed as part of the original environmental work for the Los Angeles Union Station Run-Through Tracks Project in 2006. However, by adding the passenger concourse and not precluding HSR in SCRIP, it will require a new EIR/EIS rather than a supplemented EIR and subsequent EIS. Furthermore, additional modeling work will be necessary to develop the phasing of the project and determine the number of tracks that are needed for conventional rail in LAUS with future service expansion.

Findings

As part of the SCRIP work, it was determined that HSR can fit within the LAUS yard but would require that the throat be reconfigured and the entire yard be raised. The initial modeling of SCRIP

has shown that ten conventional tracks at five platforms are needed at LAUS. Of these, five to six (depending on the configuration) will be needed as run-through tracks. In addition, the CHSRA has asked that they have four tracks, two platforms, within LAUS. These HSR platforms will have to be dedicated due to the height of the platform of 48 inches above the top of rail versus 15 inches above top of rail for conventional passenger rail. Additional engineering is needed to ascertain the configuration of the yard that will allow for a total of fourteen tracks into the station. Also, additional modeling is needed to ascertain the yard layout and confirm the need for the number of tracks and platforms at the station based upon a rationalized service requirement.

The addition of the HSR tracks into LAUS raises a variety of technical issues, some of which are:

- Number of conventional rail tracks needed at LAUS.
- Increased footprint south of LAUS needed for trackwork.
- Overlapping environmental documents.
- Coordination with the West Santa Ana Branch Light Rail Project.

Furthermore, the addition of HSR into LAUS “pushes” the conventional run-through tracks east. This results in a change to the track curvature south of LAUS. This configuration will “push” the SCRIP tracks and the high speed rail tracks south of Commercial Street resulting in additional property issues.

Funding

Staff has applied for \$32 Million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds from the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA). These funds were originally programmed for southern California. The CHSRA has expressed a desire to use these funds for SCRIP. Staff requested at least \$12 million from CHSRA to apply towards the cost of the environmental and preliminary engineering. The discussions are continuing regarding the ARRA funding and staff expects to apply these funds to cost of environmental clearance and other associated costs of the project.

Considerations

None

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The project is being designed in accordance with Metrolink standards, federal requirements, and state requirements and will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. There are no pedestrian crossings of the proposed tracks so no safety impacts are expected.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

In July 2012 the Metro Board approved \$4 million for the development of the project. In July 2014 the Metro Board approved \$6 million for the project within the Metro annual budget.

With Board approval of the additional Measure R 3% funds, the project will be funded through FY 2015-16.

Since this is a multi-year project, the Executive Director, Program Management and Executive Officer, Regional Rail will be accountable for budgeting the costs in future years.

Impact to Budget

A. Source of funds: \$15,000,000 in Measure R 3% funds.

Measure R 3% funds are designated for Metrolink commuter rail capital improvements in Los Angeles County. These funds are not eligible to be used for Metro bus/rail operating or capital budget expenses.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

An alternative would be to not advance the Project. However, this will not increase the commuter and intercity rail capacity at LAUS causing significant delays and operational challenges.

The Board could elect to allow SCRIP without the passenger concourse and preclusion of HSR. This will likely cause a significant reduction in the available funding for the project as well as increase the throw-away costs by not incorporating the passenger concourse with the SCRIP. In addition, this would not provide for seamless transportation connections at Union Station and would likely preclude high speed rail from LAUS.

The CHSRA could incorporate and environmentally clear SCRIP as part of the high speed rail corridor program (from Burbank to Anaheim). However, the SCRIP will be at risk if anything was to happen to the high speed rail corridor program (from Burbank to Anaheim). Metro owns LAUS and should continue to take the lead role in development of the station that will affect future transit ridership, transportation modes within the station, and the overall operations of Los Angeles Union Station.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, staff will develop the MOU and Term Sheet with the California High Speed Rail Authority for the funding agreement for SCRIP and the development of Union Station.

Staff will consider a contract modification with the SCRIP consultant or a new solicitation to address the revised scope of the project and return to the Board for the appropriate approval.

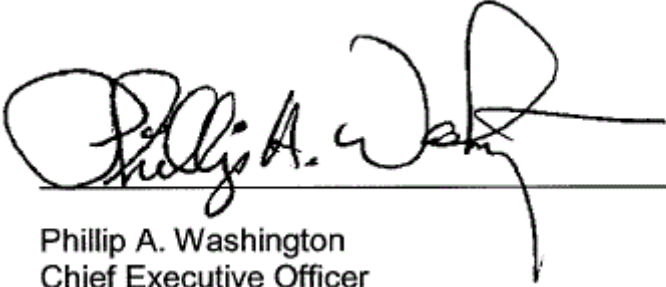
Staff will form a steering committee consisting of all stakeholders involved with the project.

Prepared by: Don A. Sepulveda, Executive Officer, Regional Rail (213) 922-7491

Reviewed by:

Bryan Pennington, Deputy Executive Director, Program Management (213) 922-7449

Richard Clarke, Executive Director, Program Management (213) 922-7557



Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer