



## Board Report

**File #:** 2017-0458, **File Type:** Informational Report

**Agenda Number:** 15

### PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE JULY 19, 2017

**SUBJECT: REGIONAL RAIL**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE status report on the Regional Rail Update through June 2017.

#### **ISSUE**

The Regional Rail unit of the Program Management Department is responsible for providing overall coordination, management, and the programming of funds for Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency's (LACMTA) 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 40,000 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.

The Regional Rail unit is actively managing 9 capital improvement projects. These projects range from planning studies to the design of capacity and safety related projects through construction. There are two regional rail projects currently on hold, Raymer to Bernsen Double Track and Bob Hope Pedestrian Bridge.

1. Bob Hope Airport/Hollywood Way Station (Station), Antelope Valley Line

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This project will add a new Metrolink station on the Antelope Valley Line, to provide better access to the Bob Hope Airport. Construction contract award and Notice to Proceed were issued on January 5, 2017 and March 1, 2017 respectfully. A successful pre-construction community meeting was held on March 13, 2017 to discuss construction related information including construction hours, lane closures, and duration. Over 70 people attended the meeting. Construction is in progress and is anticipated to be completed by May 2018. Revenue operation is anticipated by June 2018 or sooner. A newsletter providing an update to the construction progress is in process and will be completed by August 2017.

## 2. Brighton to Roxford Double Track (B2R) Project

This project proposes to add a second main line track on approximately 11 miles of the Antelope Valley Line (AVL) between Burbank and Sylmar which will result in over 25 miles of continuous double track rail from Los Angeles Union station to the San Fernando Valley. The goal of project is to improve regional rail service while enhancing safety for the corridor communities and commuters on AVL. The addition of second main line track will allow for opposing traffic to run on separate tracks improving the overall flow of trains by effectively creating a “2-way street” for train operations and avoid any potential temporary halt of service due to an incident that may occur on the existing single track.

Following the passage of Measure M in November 2016, Metro is planning five major transit projects in the San Fernando Valley that will significantly improve and expand mobility options for Valley residents. Of the five Measure M-funded projects, the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Project (ESFVTC Project) could have the greatest impact on the B2R Project, as these two projects would partially share the same right-of-way. Metro Regional Rail is working to coordinate the BR2 with the ESFVTC to ensure maximum potential benefits of these two projects. Metro is therefore planning to complete the environmental process for the ESFVTC Project before further advancing the planning and environmental process for the B2R Project.

Additional funding will also need to be identified for construction of the B2R Project, as it is currently only funded through final engineering and design. As such, Metro Regional Rail is planning to further reevaluate the B2R Project the in Spring of 2018, once the ESFVTC Project is environmentally cleared in order to more accurately reflect a new “baseline condition” (or, new “existing condition”) in the B2R final design.

## 3. 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. The Metro Board in January 2017 approved Alternative 2 Salem/ Sperry Overpass and a Northerly Point of Access (P or J Hook Options) to start preliminary engineering and environmental work.

The consultant is currently working on revising the safety improvement plans for Doran Street from one-way into two-way interim conditions. The proposed new two-way interim conditions on Doran Street include quiet zone improvements so that the City of Glendale may apply for a quiet zone at the Doran Street crossing to the Federal Rail Administration.

In partnership with the City of Glendale and Los Angeles, staff is also working upgrading the traffic signal at the intersection of San Fernando Road and Brazil/Broadway Street, completing a revised traffic study as well as proposing to include active transportation elements. Staff is planning on the next community meeting in Fall 2017. A draft environmental document is expected to be completed in Spring 2018.

4. L.A. County Grade Crossing and Rail Corridor Study

This study includes 110 at-grade railroad crossings along 132 miles of Metro-owned railroad right-of-way that Metrolink operates commuter rail service in Los Angeles County. The study includes two phases of work: Phase 1 includes development of an inventory of Metrolink-operated grade crossings and rail corridors and identification of the scope and priority for safety enhancements; Phase 2 includes development of a Project Study Report Equivalent (PSRE) report for each of the four (4) grade crossings to be evaluated for potential grade separations.

Staff has completed the Phase 1 work, which includes a planning level cost estimate for safety enhancements, priority rankings for near term grade crossing and pedestrian improvements, and priority rankings for long term grade separation candidate projects. Based on the findings from the Phase 1 work and discussions with staff from cities that have jurisdiction over the crossing roadways, staff has identified the four grade crossings that will be further evaluated in Phase 2 (PSRE report): 1. Palmdale Boulevard in City of Palmdale, 2. Van Nuys Boulevard in City of Los Angeles, 3. Indian Hill Boulevard in City of Claremont, 4. Garey Avenue in City of Pomona. The anticipated completion date for Phase 2 work is May 2018.

5. Los Angeles County Metrolink Station Assessment and Improvement Plan

The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) operates Metrolink passenger rail service in six southern California counties, including Los Angeles County. There are 25 Metrolink Stations in Los Angeles County that are either owned and/or maintained by the city where they are located, Caltrans, or Los Angeles County. Some of the stations serve as “shared stations” for Metrolink and Amtrak service. This study looked into opportunities to upgrade the 25 existing Metrolink stations in Los Angeles County to improve the passenger experience. The team completed assessment of the Stations and identified improvements that will provide passengers with convenient, safe, and user-friendly services at the Stations. The draft study was submitted for review by Metro staff in March 2017 and review comments were provided to the our consultant in April 2017. The final study will be ready by Fall 2017.

6. Rosecrans/Marquardt Grade Separation

This project will grade separates the existing at-grade crossing at the Rosecrans and Marquardt intersection in City of Santa Fe Springs, which has been ranked No. 1 on the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Section 190 list as the most hazardous crossing in the state. The CPUC approved the grade separation application (General Order 88-B) in March 2017.

In the Summer of 2016, Metro was awarded \$15 million in TIGER grant for the Project. Based on the 65% design plans, Metro is proposing a life of project budget of \$155.3 million. Once all the funding has been determined to support the proposed LOP budget, staff will seek Board approval of the LOP budget for the Project. Metro conducted a project site visit with Federal Rail Administration (FRA) and California High Speed Rail (CAHSR) team on June 8th. The CAHSR Board approved the funding plan of \$76.665 million on June 14, 2017 for the project. On June 22, 2017, the Metro Board

approved the administrative settlement in the total amount of \$11,368,500 for the acquisition of three properties located at 13,720 Rosecrans Avenue, 13750 Rosecrans Avenue and 13900 Rosecrans Avenue in the city of Santa Fe Springs. Staff has proceeded with the acquisition of property located at 13720 Rosecrans Ave with a closing date by the end of June 2017.

CAHSR is hosting a Value Engineering (VE) workshop on July 10-12, 2017 in the City of Santa Fe Springs. Metro is currently working with BNSF and City of Santa Fe Springs to execute the Construction and Maintenance agreement as well as a Corporate Agreement with the City of Santa Fe Springs. Staff is also working on executing a Project Management and Funding Agreement with CAHSR. Staff is working on the 90 percent design plans which are anticipated to be completed by December 2017. The FRA has completed their review of the draft NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA is anticipated to be released for public review by August 2017. In partnership with the City of Santa Fe Springs, staff will be scheduling community meeting in September 2017.

#### 7. Link Union Station (Link US)

The Link US project will convert the stub-ended rail yard at Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) to a run-through rail yard which will significantly expand rail service capacity and enhance operational flexibility. Link US will include up to 10 new run-through tracks over US 101, reconstruction of the rail yard and the throat, addition of a northern loop track, and a new expanded multi-modal passenger concourse designed to meet the demands from the growing ridership at LAUS. Link US will significantly reduce greenhouse gases associated with idling locomotives and provide the infrastructure needed to support potential one-seat rides to key destinations in Southern California. Lastly, Link US will be designed to accommodate the future California High Speed Rail (HSR) and West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) Line Light Rail services.

The project is currently in the Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Clearance phase. The Draft EIR and EIS are scheduled to be released to the public in first quarter of 2018 and EIR Certification and FRA's Record of Decision are scheduled for fourth quarter of 2018.

Staff continues to refine the Board Approved Staff Recommended Alternative (6+2 phased construction) working closely with WSAB project team, Metrolink, Amtrak, LOSSAN and CHSRA. In parallel staff has developed several concepts for the above-grade passenger concourse alternative per the March Board Motion and will continue to evaluate the feasibility of the above-grade concourse alternative.

In late April 2017, City of Los Angeles Council District 1 and Housing Authority of City of Los Angeles (HACLA) hosted a community workshop for the residents of the William Mead Homes property to receive feedback regarding the project. A total of 58 people attended the workshop, including Councilmember Gil Cedillo and his staff, HACLA representatives, as well as William Mead Homes residents. On June 8, Metro along with Metrolink staff facilitated a project tour for staff visiting from FRA and USDOT Volpe Center's offices in Cambridge Massachusetts and Washington D.C. The group visited the railyard throat, US 101 and Commercial Street, as well as the historic Union Station including the passageway to the East Portal.

Staff is continuing to coordinate the development of Link US with the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA). Regular meetings are occurring between the Link US team, SCRRA, LOSSAN and the CHSRA about accommodating the high speed rail program into the footprint of Link US EIR

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and EIS. Staff continues to work with the CHSRA on the necessary agreements including a full funding agreement and operations and maintenance agreement that addresses the implementation phase of the project (right of way acquisition and construction).

8. Lone Hill to CP White Second Track

The Metrolink San Bernardino line is mostly single track. This capacity project will complete environmental clearance and 30% design for a 3.9 mile section of additional second track in the cities of La Verne and San Dimas. All 12 crossings will be designed to be quiet-zone ready.

Environmental studies and 30% design were completed and have been submitted to Metro. The team is evaluating whether the project qualifies for an exemption under CEQA and an exclusion under NEPA.

In May 2017 community meetings were conducted in the cities of La Verne and San Dimas. The meetings were well attended, and feedback from the communities was mixed. The project was favorably received at the City of La Verne community meeting. Several residents of the City of San Dimas voiced concern regarding quiet zones, sound walls and other impacts to the community.

Both cities have expressed comment regarding quiet zone liability, insurance and risk management issues, which require further analysis. The cities have indicated that they will return to their city councils this summer to take formal positions on the project.

Since the environmental studies and 30% design have been completed, staff is awaiting formal comment from both city councils. Once formal comment is received, staff will report back to the Metro board with a project update this fall.

9. Metrolink San Bernardino Line Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) Study

Metro is partnering with San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) perform a study to assess the feasibility of operating Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) service on the Metrolink San Bernardino Line between Redlands in San Bernardino and Los Angeles Union Station. The DMU study presents unique opportunities to operate additional transit service and/or achieve cost savings for commuter rail operations. A kick off meeting was held in June. The study should be completed spring 2018.

Listed below are the Regional Rail projects currently on hold:

10. Bob Hope Airport Pedestrian Grade Separation, Ventura Line

The Bob Hope Airport Pedestrian Bridge project is a pedestrian safety enhancement project that provides a direct plane-to-train connection between the regional rail network and the Hollywood Burbank Airport. This project was then placed on indefinite hold because Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport Authority, LOSSAN, and City of Burbank have declined to operate and maintain the pedestrian bridge. Metro and the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) does not maintain Metrolink stations or related improvements such as pedestrian bridges.

11. Raymer to Bernson Double Track

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Six miles of second main line track is proposed to be constructed between Van Nuys and Chatsworth. Metro has secured a total of \$80.3 million for the project with \$60.82 million from the California State Transportation Improvement Program and \$19.48 million California State Proposition 1B Intercity Rail. In November 2015 Metro Board placed the project on hold. As of June 2016, Caltrans ended the funding contract for the design phase of the project. The California Transportation Commission has postponed the funding of the project until fiscal year 2019. If the funding will still be available in fiscal year 2019, then staff will report to the board for a recommendation.

#### Metrolink Commuter Rail Operations

##### 1. Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) Update

SCRRA has informed the member agencies that their proposal is almost complete and is anticipated to be released in October 2017. Metro staff continues to emphasize our Board's request for a TVM cash option in Los Angeles County at the stations detailed in the station list previously provided to Metrolink. Metro's TAP, OMB and Regional Rail departments meet regularly with Metrolink to provide input on the TVM procurement.

##### 2. Metrolink Request for Additional Rehab Funding

WSP, Metrolink and Metro staff conducted site visits on the urgent structure and rail Priority B projects April 25, 2017 through April 27, 2017, to continue due diligence efforts on the remaining Metrolink "slow order" and state of good repair projects. In addition, two Priority A bridges which were not assessed as part of the April 2017 board item due to accessibility issues were evaluated as well.

WSP is preparing their draft report which will include a condition risk assessment of all the urgent structure and rail "slow order" projects for Metro staff review. Staff will return to the Board in December 2017 or earlier with our recommendation for additional rehabilitation funding to ensure the highest priority rehabilitation projects are funded. This effort will be the first step towards developing an overall Metrolink state of good repair funding plan.

Metro staff continues to work collaboratively with Metrolink and will monitor Metrolink's progress on completion of these projects. Metro staff will report back to the Board on a quarterly basis with project status updates.

##### 3. FY 2015-2016 CAFR and Audit

Metro's auditor Vasquez and Company made a finding regarding Metrolink's Deferred Revenue account and Metrolink's inability to itemize the funds balance. In response, Metrolink has informed Metro that they are in the process of hiring a consultant to reconcile their Deferred Revenue account. The results of this reconciliation will provide details of the approximately \$11M of Metro funds held in that account and whether these funds are surplus funds which can be used towards other Metrolink funding requests or returned to Metro.

##### 4. \$18 Million Loan - PAID IN FULL

Metro staff is pleased to report that Metro received SCRRA's final payment of this loan on June 16, 2017.

##### 5. Metrolink Invoices and Billing Issues

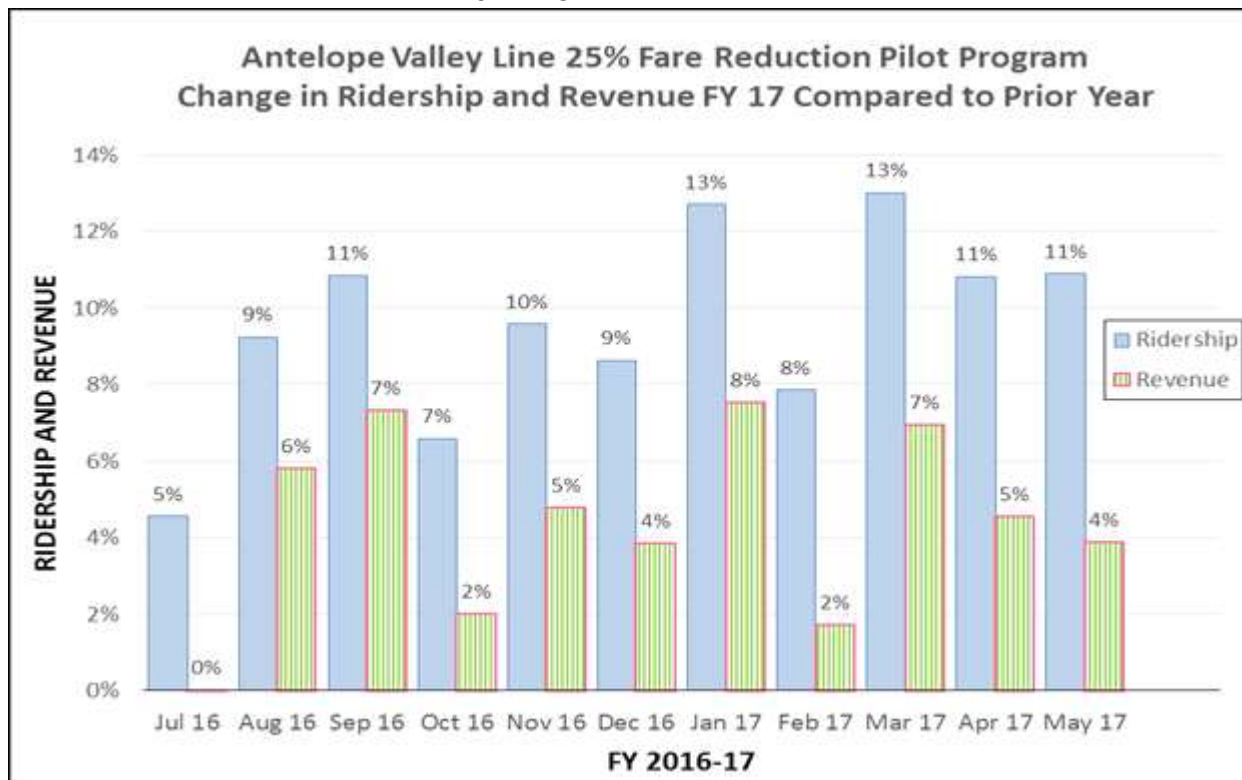
Metrolink has made significant progress toward invoicing Metro for fiscal years 2011, 2012 and 2013 reimbursements as a result of Metro's Board extending the funding lapsing dates to June 30, 2017. Staff is working with Metrolink to reconcile these MOUs and determine if there are surplus funds that can be reprogrammed. Staff will continue to monitor Metrolink's invoicing progress and will continue to meet with Metrolink management to decrease invoicing lag time.

#### 6. Metrolink Ridership and Revenues for FY 2016-17

For FY 2016-17 (July 2016 thru March 2017) Metrolink ridership was 8.7 million boardings, a 1.2% increase over FY 16 levels. The Antelope Valley Line continues to experience strong ridership growth, up 10% over FY 16, mostly due to the 25% fare discount program (see below). The San Bernardino Line continues to experience ridership loss, down 8% compared to FY 16, mostly due to the Gold Line extension to Azusa. Ridership at the Covina station was down 25% third quarter, compared to FY 16. Revenues for July 2016 thru March 2017 are \$62.2 million, at 99.2% of FY 16's \$62.7 million total.

#### 7. Antelope Valley Line (AVL) 25% Fare Discount Program

Since this program's inception in July 2015, the AVL fare discount program has been highly successful in attracting new riders to the AVL. Ridership growth for FY 2015-16 was 16% higher than in FY 2014-15. For FY 2016-17 thru May 2017, ridership growth continues to be strong, at 10% growth over FY 2015-16 levels. Cumulative ridership growth for FY 2016-17 is 26% higher than FY 2014-15. Fare revenues have increased, and the program is recovering 75% of the original budgeted costs. If ridership and revenue trends continue, it is likely that the "break even" point for revenues will be reached in FY 2017-18.



8. Metrolink Special Service

a. Glendale Ciclavia

Metrolink added extra bicycle capacity on its Antelope Valley Line trains to support the Glendale Ciclavia event on June 11, 2017. There was a significant increase in bike utilization on the Antelope Valley Line and systemwide bike usage was up 70% compared to the prior Sunday.

b. Rail Series

Metrolink ran special late night service from Union Station back to Orange County in support of the Dodgers vs. Angels freeway series at Dodger Stadium on June 26-27, 2017. Ridership averaged 110 boardings per train. The extra service was funded by a Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC) special event grant.

c. Angels Express

For the 2017 Angels season, Metrolink has been operating a late night train from Anaheim Stadium back to Union Station after Angels night homes games. The late night train averages 50 passengers, will continue thru September 2017, and is funded with a MSRC grant.

d. Rams Trains

For the 2017 season, Metro is in discussions with Metrolink to operate additional service on four Metrolink lines, in support of LA Rams homes games later this year. This partnership would be similar to the highly successful program that was operated during the 2016 season.

9. LA County Fair

Metro is in discussions with Metrolink to operate additional weekend service on the San Bernardino Line in support of the LA County Fair in September 2017. This would be similar to the program, in place since 2014, to provide more weekend evening service from the LA County Fair back to Union Station.

10. LOSSAN Intercity Rail (Amtrak Pacific Surfliner)

The LOSSAN corridor is the second busiest intercity rail corridor in the nation (see Attachment A). There are 41 stations and more than 150 daily passenger trains, with an annual ridership of 2.9 million on the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner plus 5.1 million on Metrolink and Coaster commuter rail.

For the 12 months ending March 2017, Amtrak Pacific Surfliner intercity rail ridership was 2.9M boardings, a 2% increase over prior year, and the most in fiscal year history since inception in 1977. Revenues on the Pacific Surfliner were also up 3% compared to the prior year. Farebox recovery continues to be strong, at 75%.

LOSSAN and Metrolink are in negotiations to extend the terms of the Rail-2-Rail Program. Metro, Orange County and Ventura County have agreed to a budget increase to raise the reimbursement rate from \$4.50 per boarding to \$7.00 per boarding for Metrolink riders that take the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner.

11. High Speed Rail (HSR)

The Supplemental Alternative Analysis work is underway on the Burbank to Palmdale and Burbank to



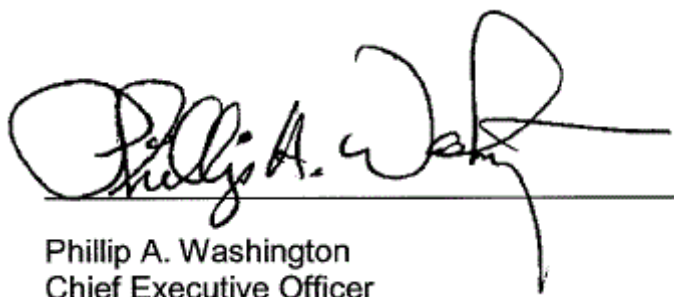
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Anaheim segments in L.A. County. The California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) is evaluating an alternative that partially includes LACMTA owned right-of-way as well as one that takes a more direct route between Palmdale and Burbank. Regional Rail is coordinating with CHSRA on the Brighton to Roxford Double Track Project, Doran and Broadway/ Brazil Grade Separation and LINK US on design options that would be usable under any high speed rail scenario for this corridor to minimize or eliminate throw away work.

The Governor's budget allocates 25% of Cap and Trade funds to high speed rail. This allows acceleration of the program. The Governor issued a letter to Metro for a funding commitment of up to \$500 million for the Link Union Station and Rosecrans Marquardt Grade Separation Project (refer to Attachment C). On June 14, 2017, the HSR Board approved the funding plan for the Rosecrans Marquardt Grade Separation Project in the amount of \$76.665 million. Staff is also working with HSR on a funding term sheet for the Link US project. Staff anticipates executing an initial funding agreement with HSR for the Link US project by the end of the year.

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