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| Subject: | RailPAC Meeting News! CA-HSR won't need more Fed Funds- China-Japan fighting for HSR work |
| From: | Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net) |
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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for October 5, 2015

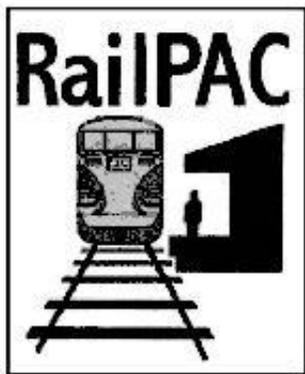
Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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Rail Passenger Association of California
www.railpac.org
Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!



San Diego Bay to Balboa Park

Skyway

Feasibility Report

Date: 06.19.15

Prepared for: **SANDAG**

San Diego Association of Governments
401 B Street Suite, 800
San Diego, CA 92101

This is a proposal to operate an aerial tramway 2 miles between downtown San Diego and Balboa Park at in 12 minutes at 13 miles per hour. There were reports in the Los Angeles Times of 3 other lines proposed like this including one between the Sorrento Valley Coaster Station and the UTC Mall in La Jolla. It helps when a County Supervisor supports the project.

[US railways warn of shutdowns as PTC deadline looms](#)

International Railway Journal-Sep 30, 2015

The railways have made considerable progress towards that objective and according to the Association of American Railroads (AAR) they have spent \$US 5.7bn on PTC so far. However, with two months remaining until the deadline the PTC programme is nowhere near complete and Washington has so far shown little inclination to give the industry more time.

[Durbin to Boehner: Pass highway bill before you hit the road](#)

The Hill Oct 1, 2015

Durbin and other Senate Democrats have sought to put pressure on House Republicans to pass a six-year highway bill after they rejected the Senate's bill during the summer because it only contained six years' worth of transportation commitments, but only three years' worth of funding.

The House instead passed a three-month highway bill that is set to expire on Oct. 29, which the Senate was forced to accept to prevent an interruption in federal transportation spending...

Durbin's office said Thursday it is time for the House to end a long streak of temporary transportation funding measures that has lasted a decade.

"Since the previous long-term transportation bill expired in 2009, Congress has passed 34 stop-gap measures to keep the country's major transportation and infrastructure programs from shutting down."

[Nevada High-Speed Rail Authority sets framework for choosing operator](#)

Las Vegas Review-Journal - Sep 29, 2015

If Nevada's planned high-speed rail system runs as swiftly and efficiently as the first Nevada High-Speed Rail Authority meeting, Southern Nevadans will be on beaches and Southern Californians in casinos in no time.

The newly appointed five-member board zipped through its agenda in 25 minutes Tuesday, appointing a chairman and establishing a process to select a franchisee to build a steel-wheels-on-rails train system connecting Southern Nevada with Southern California along the Interstate 15 corridor. Ten people attended what someday may be considered a historic meeting.

[As its first meeting nears, high-speed rail panel already behind schedule](#)

Las Vegas Review-Journal-Sep 28, 2015

Senate Bill 457 requires that a franchisee be selected on or before Thursday. It isn't likely anybody will squawk about missing that deadline, considering the authority board members were just announced in mid-September.

But the likely franchisee is a familiar name in local transportation circles. XpressWest, formerly known as DesertXpress, which has had a proposal to build high-speed rail to Los Angeles via Victorville and Palmdale, Calif., since 2010, has the inside track for the franchise.

That's because the specifications for a system described in Senate Bill 457 align precisely with XpressWest's proposed system — capable of sustained speeds of 150 mph, operating on dedicated and exclusive standard-gauge tracks allowing for interoperability with existing and planned rail systems.

[Foreign firms, consortiums interested in California rail work](#)

Reuters-Sep 29, 2015

Thirty-five construction companies, financiers, train manufacturers and operators from around the world have expressed interest in working on California's \$68 billion high-speed train.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) asked for input from interested parties to help shape the state's strategy to build, finance, and run the first stage of an 800-mile (1,287-km) high-speed rail line, considered the most ambitious infrastructure project currently planned in the United States.

Firms hailed from around the globe, including Spain, Germany, France, Italy, Australia, Sweden, China, Japan and the United States.

[California high-speed rail could survive McCarthy as Speaker: official](#)

Reuters - Oct 2, 2015

This week, 36 construction companies, financiers, train manufacturers and operators from around the world expressed interest in working on the California train.

Morales said he was surprised by the high number of submissions, coming in at double what he expected. "The private sector is interested and ready to step in and be a partner," he said.

The authority plans to use the input it received to plan and package bids for rail line construction, trains and project financing.

"Almost any package would have a financing arm attached to it," said Morales.

[The establishment of the Chinese high-speed rail](#)

WantChinaTimes-Sep 30, 2015

The new conglomerate debuted on the Shanghai Stock Exchange and Hong Kong Stock Exchange on

June 8. Its price stood at 13.23 yuan (US\$2.08) per share after Monday's A-share trading. Cui Dianguo, CRRC's chair, said the corporation will help accelerate high-end equipment manufacturing in China, as well as the reform of state-owned enterprises. The corporation's general manager Liu Hualong said that CRRC aims to become the world's leading investment group with high-end manufacturing and diversified capital operations.

[Japan's rail firms fear eclipse by China in U.S.](#)

The Japan Times-Sep 28, 2015

China's U.S. announcement has raised alarm in Japan's railway industry, which plans to bid for the construction of a West Coast link from Los Angeles to San Francisco. There is now the possibility that a Chinese group could outmaneuver a Japanese bid — in a replay of a tender to supply railcars for the Boston subway last year.

[Eurostar suspended after migrants break through Calais entrance](#)

euronews - Oct 3, 2015

Eurostar train services between France and Britain were suspended for several hours early on Saturday after dozens of migrants stormed its terminal in Calais.

[All Aboard project the high-speed rail state always wanted](#)

Palm Beach Post-Oct 4, 2015

You can thank Henry Flagler, not a constitutional amendment or federal stimulus dollars, for Florida's best shot at a high-speed rail system.

Despite opposition, the All Aboard Florida project keeps chugging along with railroad and real estate construction in South Florida's signature downtowns. Railroad grades are being redone; new signals and switches are being installed, and concrete is being poured for stations and affiliated commercial real estate.

[Burbank OKs grant to study high-speed rail station at Bob Hope Airport](#)

Burbank Leader-Sep 29, 2015

The grant, largely made up of 2009 federal stimulus money, will be matched with \$400,000, mostly from a Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority grant. It will fund development of the city's planning around the potential station location as part of its Golden State Specific Plan and environmental review in the airport area...

However, a dozen rail opponents, mostly residents of communities in northern Los Angeles County, claimed that by accepting the grant, the city would be accepting the potential impacts and essentially consenting to terminal expansion at the airport, a suggestion council members rejected.

[Offers being sought for Bob Hope Airport 'opportunity' property](#)

Burbank Leader-Sep 30, 2015

The California High-Speed Rail Authority has proposed a potential rail station in the area of the property, which is located between the Ventura and Antelope Valley rail lines. Recent transit studies have also suggested the property might be the potential site for a stop on the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority's Red Line.

[HSR location fails to maximize economic development](#)

Bakersfield Californian Sep 28, 2015

The hybrid station alignment, U Street with access to both California and Truxtun avenues, offers: Greater walkability: The U Street station location is closer to everything great about downtown. It's a very short walk to Central Park, the Federal Courthouse and Mill Creek. It's approximately five blocks to the Convention Center and Rabobank Arena.

In contrast, in order to access downtown from the F Street-Golden State Avenue, you have to walk across a busy six lane state highway. The nearest “landmark” is the Department of Motor Vehicles! A half mile walk from the LGA station places you at 26th and F Street, miles from the civic center.

In other words, LGA is farther from downtown destinations and discourages walking.

The station site by Amtrak was a more desirable location. The problem was too many people didn't want to lose their property to build it there. The best thing about this other location is people don't seem to mind if you put the HSR Station there. NB

[Brown Vetoes Wilk's 'No Secret Rail Meetings' Bill](#)

SCVNEWS.com-Sep 29, 2015

Assembly Bill 85, authored by Scott Wilk, R-Santa Clarita, was vetoed by Governor Jerry Brown...

Brown stated in his veto message that, “the more informal deliberation of advisory bodies is best left to current law.”

Annual RailPAC Members Meeting

Steel Wheels Conference
2016: A Year of Possibilities
December 5, 2015
Metro Boardroom, Los Angeles

Speakers:

Yvonne Burke, Board member, Amtrak.

Dave Golonski, Chair, LOSSAN

Served 20 years on Burbank City Council including four terms as Mayor.

Dan Richard, Chair, CHSRA, (invited).

Darrell Clarke, Chair Sierra Club transportation Committee, Los Angeles
Darrell leads Friends4Expo, the successful campaign for light rail in west
Los Angeles

Bruce Becker, NARP Board

Dave Cook, Rail Propulsion Systems
Hybrid diesels and after market emission systems.

Registration will open soon.

[Port commissioner pushes Amtrak fee to fund cross-Hudson tunnel](#)

Capital New York - Sep 30, 2015

Amtrak should levy surcharges on passengers traveling the Northeast Corridor as a way to help pay for the cost of building a new rail tunnel under the Hudson River, a Port Authority commissioner said Wednesday at an infrastructure event hosted by POLITICO New York.

Commissioner Kenneth Lipper, a financier and New York City former deputy mayor, said such a surcharge could help pay down whatever long-term debt is needed to fund the massive project, known as Gateway. Most of the initial money to pay for the tunnel will have come from the federal government — through direct grant dollars and through low-interest loans to New York and New Jersey, he said.

Of course this guy is from New York. The city of New York will benefit from construction to bring

**in more people to major land developments underway now in Manhattan near Penn Station. If the passengers pay for this, it will mostly be commuters from New Jersey on New Jersey Transit trains.
NB**

[MTA Spokesperson: East Side Access Project Stalled By Amtrak](#)

CBS Local - Oct 3, 2015 As WCBS 880's Sophia Hall reported, the construction work planned at the busy Harold Interlocking in Queens to help build the East Side Access project, which will connect the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Station, has been delayed for at least a few more months. An MTA spokesperson said the delay is because Amtrak, which shares the rail junction, has not provided the necessary employees.

[A look at the worst bottlenecks on the Northeast Corridor](#)

Yahoo News - Sep 29, 2015

These antiquated structures, which will cost billions to replace or upgrade, conspire to slow train travel in a variety of ways. They can limit the number and speed of trains that pass through at a given time, and aging parts can lead to malfunctions when bridges open to allow boats to pass under. Regular maintenance can be costly and time-consuming.

[Amtrak announces train cancellations along east coast](#)

WRAL.com-Oct 2, 2015

Amtrak said four train routes operating between Florida and New York will be canceled: the Carolinian, Palmetto, Silver Star and Auto Train. No alternative transportation will be provided, and some thruway bus connections will also be canceled.

[NJ Transit, Amtrak: We're ready for Joaquin](#)

Asbury Park Press-Oct 1, 2015

Depending on the track of the storm, Amtrak officials will also begin moving equipment and infrastructure to higher ground or destinations away from the storm, spokesman Craig Schulz said. Those decisions will be made in the coming days as the track of the storm becomes more clear, he said.

[Amtrak Gets Stricter on Baggage, But is Still is Very, Very Generous](#)

TIME-Sep 28, 2015

Effective October 1st, Amtrak will begin to enforce its long-standing baggage policy. From now on, passengers get 150 pounds of luggage gratis: two personal items up to 25 pounds each, and two carry-ons up to 50 pounds each. If you really need to, you can take two more pieces aboard for \$20 each. In other words, for \$40 you can transport up to 250 pounds of your stuff.

[Amtrak's Great Dome Car returns to the Northeast for fall foliage runs](#)

mySanAntonio.com-Oct 2, 2015

Passengers aboard Amtrak's Adirondack service between Albany and Montreal can view upstate New York's fall foliage from the line's historic Great Dome car, which returns to the Northeast each year for a six-week run. This year, it started Sept. 25 and runs through Nov. 3.

[Lawmakers call for Winona Amtrak station to remain staffed](#)

KTTC-Oct 1, 2015

WINONA, Minn. (KTTC) -Minnesota lawmakers are calling for bringing a ticket agent back to the Amtrak station in Winona.

Senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken, along with Congressman Tim Walz called for the continuation of passenger services at Winona's Amtrak station Wednesday.

[Blue Ribbon Panel: How to unclog Chicago](#)

RailwayAge Magazine - Oct 1, 2015

A Blue Ribbon Panel convened by Amtrak is recommending co-located train dispatchers, improved operating practices, and capital improvement projects to help relieve rail gridlock in and around Chicago and prevent an estimated \$800 billion in nationwide economic impacts resulting from the congestion.



The Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Metrolink Station with a layover track for terminating trains . This would be a great place to make connections between the Orange County and Inland Empire/ Orange County Line trains, if we had more scheduled connections. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

[Metrolink aims to boost ridership with fare cuts, student discounts](#)

OCRegister-Sep 30, 2015

The one-way fare to travel between Metrolink stations could drop 45 percent on average and student and youth fares could slide by 25 percent under a plan Metrolink is considering to boost ridership.

The cuts could take effect as early as Nov. 1 if the board of the Southern California commuter railroad agrees, the agency announced Tuesday. The public is invited to weigh in at a hearing Oct. 6 at One Gateway Plaza in Los Angeles.

[How Metolink can get more Passengers on their Trains](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

Metrolink ridership has been in a slump for several years. Efforts are being made to boost ridership with discounted tickets. Metrolink though needs to increase revenues too, not just to get higher passenger totals. Are there any models to copy that Metrolink can use to increase ridership as well as revenues? Of course there are. And you can find them here in California, with local passenger trains such as the Pacific Surfliner, San Joaquin and Capitol Corridor.

[Metrolink to receive additional funds for Tier 4 locomotives](#)

Progressive Rail Roading-Oct 1, 2015

The South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) board earlier this month approved a \$22.85 million contract with Metrolink to help pay for locomotives that meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Tier 4 emission standard.

During the same meeting, the board agreed to consider an additional \$36 million over four phases to help the commuter railroad purchase Tier 4 locomotives in the future, according to a Metrolink news release.

[What does the National Transportation Safety Board know that we don't?](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

So far the NTSB has not publicly given the reason for this decision. The most likely problem would be with the Pilot, which on locomotives and cab cars is the plow at the front which is used to push away debris off the tracks to prevent derailments. It appears that a major problem during the February 24th crash in Oxnard may have been from debris from the crash with a large pickup truck and trailer on the tracks.

[Cummins completes first QSK95 rail engine](#)

International Railway Journal-Oct 2, 2015

CUMMINS has dispatched its first production QSK95 diesel engine for the rail market to Siemens' plant in Sacramento, California, where it will be fitted into a 200km/h Charger diesel locomotive.

The 95-litre 16 cylinder engine is rated at 3.28MW and is equipped with Cummins' Modular Common Rail Fuel System (MCRS) with quad-turbocharging. The QSK95 is also equipped with Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) exhaust aftertreatment, enabling it to meet US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Tier 4 emissions standards.

This locomotive will be used with the new Surliner style cars also now on order for several States including California on State supported Amtrak routes. NB

[Meet The Electric Bus That Could Push Every Other Polluting Bus Off the Road](#)

Co.Exist-Oct 2, 2015

Proterra, the startup Popple runs, designed a sleek new electric bus that drove 258 miles on a single charge in a recent test. That's farther than most tiny electric cars can go and also farther than a daily city bus route.

That means it's ready to start to replace the hundreds of thousands of diesel buses in the country, most of which average less than five miles to the gallon and pump out carbon pollution, soot, and carcinogens like arsenic.

This could also have implications for rail service too. NB

[See how SunRail phase 2 south stations may shape up](#)

Orlando Biz Journal Oct 1, 2015

We're about a month or so away from the planned construction start on the southward extension of Central Florida's \$1.3 billion commuter rail and plans for parcels surrounding the four new stations are still in their infancy.

But SunRail officials have an idea of what these stations — in south Orange County's Meadow Woods neighborhood, near the Tupperware Brands Corp. (NYSE: TUP) headquarters in Osceola County, downtown Kissimmee and Poinciana — might turn out to look like.

['Ales on the Rails' Brew Sampling Event Tonight](#)

The Sacramento Press-Oct 2, 2015

Cheers to Sacramento's impressive railroad legacy and long brew history, too!

Celebrate the beginning of autumn in rail-related style with the California State Railroad Museum Foundation during a one-night-only "Ales on the Rails" brew sampling event on Friday evening, October 2, 2015.

[Developers formally acquire downtown Sacramento railyard](#)

Sacramento Business Journal Sep 30, 2015

Developers of Sacramento's downtown railyard have closed escrow on the property — a long-awaited formality that opens the door to work on the 200-acre site.

Downtown Railyard Venture LLC partner Denton Kelley said getting the sale closed was a two-year-long process, but there's a lot more work that now gets underway.

[Weekend Rail Closures to Affect Amtrak, Coaster](#)

Times of San Diego-Sep 29, 2015

Transit officials announced Tuesday that there will be no rail service along the North County coastline over the next three weekends, with the closures affecting Amtrak and Coaster passengers.

Trains will come no farther south than Oceanside this upcoming Saturday and Sunday, and also Oct. 10-11 and Oct. 17-18, according to the San Diego Association of Governments. Normal service will resume on Monday mornings each week.

[BART improves service with 'Fleet of the Future'](#)

The Inquirer-Sep 29, 2015

A new standard model train car for Bay Area Rapid Transit will replace the original fleet that has been in service longer than any other public transportation fleet in the United States.

The Bombardier Transportation Services designed the new train cars for the BART fleet, and the first 10 official pilot cars have been completed. They are set to be tested for the BART system this Fall. Since 2009, the 'Fleet of the Future' was designed with the feedback of the public riders of BART.

[ACE-BART Connection Could Attract Federal Funds](#)

The Independent-Oct 1, 2015

Connecting BART to ACE Train in Livermore ranks as a factor that could open up new funding sources, according to Congressman Eric Swalwell.

The connection would help to alleviate congestion along the I-580 corridor by taking more cars off the road.

There are hurdles to overcome, such as the view that people do not commute into the Bay Area from the Central Valley. It is a view that determines much of the funding decisions.

The estimated cost to Isabel is \$1.2 billion; the cost to Greenville \$3.2 billion. The federal government is potential source of needed funds.

[Law enforcement officials investigating after report of stolen BART Tickets...](#)

abc7news.com-Sep 28, 2015

OAKLAND, Calif. (KGO) --

Officials are investigating a report that a large number of BART tickets were stolen from a busy station in Oakland and sold on the underground market.

BART is releasing few details about the incident, but the focus is on the theft of tickets and the underground market.

[City explores new streetcars: Redwood City studies service down ...](#)

San Mateo Daily Journal-Sep 28, 2015

Redwood City is exploring whether to resurrect the streetcar as a way to efficiently move commuters from downtown to other parts of the city.

The City Council approved a contract Monday night with a consulting firm to study the feasibility of adding a streetcar line on Broadway from the Sequoia Caltrain station south to the Stanford Medicine Outpatient Center next to Highway 101 to the east.

Streetcars were once popular with area commuters before the dawn of the automobile age. Tracks once ran from San Francisco to downtown San Mateo but service in the county ceased in 1949 and the tracks were torn up.

[Wilshire traffic lanes to be reconfigured at La Brea for Purple Line construction](#)

The Source Sep 29, 2015

The Purple Line Extension will add nine miles of track to the subway from the current Wilshire/Western Station to the VA Hospital in Westwood. The project is being built in three phases. The first segment — the one currently under construction — will extend the subway to Beverly Hills with stations at Wilshire/La Brea, Wilshire/Fairfax and Wilshire/La Cienega. The project is funded by the Measure R half-cent sales tax approved by L.A. County voters in 2008 and federal grants.

[Renderings Revealed for West LA Development](#)

Proposed development would be located near future Expo Line station.

Oct 1, 2015 Urbanize LA

An initial study published by the Los Angeles Department of City Planning has unveiled renderings for 11916 Pico Boulevard, a proposed residential-retail complex near Metro's upcoming Expo/Bundy Station.

[San Marcos Is Quietly Schooling the County on Smart Growth](#)

Voice of San Diego Sep 28, 2015

San Marcos, more than any other North County city, has embraced focusing growth around light-rail stations for the Sprinter, transit advocates say. Ridership is spiking as new projects are being built that connect the light rail to the city's major destinations with housing at a mix of prices, and officials lay out plans to continue to get the most out of the regional investment.

[San Diego Planners Envision a Future With More Driving](#)

StreetsBlog LA Oct 1, 2015

To summarize, SANDAG's own plan won't meet the governor's order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. SANDAG continues to build freeways and increase road capacity for drivers while failing to push for either a means to pay for driving use or provide an alternative that would induce San Diegans to shift travel modes.

[San Diego's Dueling Transportation Plans Under Fire](#)

KPBS Oct 1, 2015

In the report, New Climate for Transportation, Circulate San Diego and the Climate Action Campaign said they used SANDAG data to compare the goals for the number of residents commuting by walking, biking and taking public transit by 2035 in the city of San Diego. The city's Climate Action Plan goal is to have 50 percent of city residents who live in the transit priority area commute by foot, bike or transit by 2035, while the goal of the transportation system in SANDAG's San Diego Forward plan is for 15 percent to commute without a car.

[Guest editorial: a fair road tax](#)

Streetsblog LA Sep 25, 2015

A couple of years ago, I wrote an essay called "Who Pays, Who Plays: the Gas Tax Fallacy," which explores the cherished delusion most drivers cling to that they pay for the roads through the gas tax. Now, this wasn't true even in the days when eight-miles-a-gallon behemoths crowded our nation's roads, and it's even less so in these days of gas-sipping imports and hybrids and the occasional electric vehicle, as well as millennials' disinterest in driving. In fact, the city of Los Angeles receives only \$15 million from the California gas tax—and uses \$60 million from other taxes, mostly from the general fund, to fix our streets.

There are also opportunity costs to road-building: All that broad asphalt displaces homes and businesses that would pay property, sales, and payroll taxes if they had room to establish themselves in our city.



Recent photo of test trains running at the Santa Monica end of the line on the almost completed Expo Line extension from Culver City. Revenue service should be running early next year. Photo by Dave Vornberger

We get Emails

Re: Terminals and Stations

Indeed, the new Transbay Center will not be the West Coast equivalent to Grand Central Station. Grand Central Station is the USPS substation within Grand Central Terminal. We do need to keep these things straight. San Francisco will have a terminal, a well deserved distinction. I presume Los Angeles will also have a terminal, although it has presently abandoned its earlier distinction in favor of the vapid "Los Angeles Union Station" instead of retaining the vaunted LAUPT designation.

Ken Harrison

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Rail Passenger Association of California.

The RailPAC Mission: Passenger Rail advocacy, Publications... both print and electronic, Representation at regional meetings, and Rail education.

Join us! More memberships increase our strength in presenting the case for rail to policymakers at all levels!

You can send your comments to me at nbraymer@railpac.org

For those who would like an additional copy of the eNewsletter with plain text

(minus photos and graphics) just email me at nbraymer@railpac.org with your name and email address. NB

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