

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



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MEETING OF THE TRANSIT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, September 28, 2011
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**SCAG Offices
818 W. 7th Street, 12th Floor
Policy Committee Room B
Los Angeles, California 90017
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**Teleconferencing Available:
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If members of the public wish to review the attachments or have any questions on any of the agenda items, please contact Steve Fox at (213) 236-1855 or Fox@scag.ca.gov.

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TRANSIT TECHNICAL ADVISORY AGENDA September 28, 2011

The Transit Technical Advisory Committee may consider and act upon items listed on the agenda regardless of whether they are listed as in action items.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

(Linda Wright, Caltrans D7, Transit TAC Vice-Chair)

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - Members of the public speak on items on the agenda, or items not on the agenda, but purview of the Transit Technical Advisory Committee, must present a speaker's card to the assistant prior to speaking. Comments be limited to three minutes. The chair may limit the total comments to twenty (20) minutes.

3.0 CONSENT CALENDAR

3.1 Approval Items

3.1.1 Minutes of the June 29, 2011 Transit TAC Meeting

4.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

4.1 SCAG High-Speed Rail Update
(Steve Fox, SCAG Staff)

4.2 2012 RTP Transit Alternatives
(Steve Fox, SCAG Staff)

4.3 Big Bear Modal Alternatives Analysis
(Ryan Kuo, SCAG Staff)

5.0 ADJOURNMENT



Transit Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)
of the
Southern California Association of Governments

June 29, 2011

Minutes

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE TRANSIT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TTAC). AUDIOCASSETTE TAPE OF THE ACTUAL MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR LISTENING IN SCAG'S OFFICE.

The Transit Technical Advisory Committee held its meeting at SCAG's office in downtown Los Angeles. The meeting was called to order by Linda Wright, Vice-Chair.

Members Present:

Linda Wright	Caltrans
Wayne A. Wassell	MTA
Christopher Mackechnie	Long Beach Transit
Lori Abrishami	MTA
Paula Faust	City of Gardena
Paul Casey	Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus

Tele Conference:

LaShawn Gillespie	Foothill Transit
Diana Chang	Culver City Bus
David Salgado	ICTC
Jeremiah Bryant	Omnitrans
Kevin Kane	Victor Valley Transit Authority
Joe Walcheck	SANBAG
Myra Montejano	VCTC
Vic Kamhi	VCTC
Helene Buchman	Gold Coast Transit

Video Conference:

John Proctor	SCAG staff
Mark Stanley	RTA
Lorelle Luna	RTA

SCAG Staff:

Naresh Amatya	Steve Fox
Ryan Kuo	Matthew Gleason

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Linda Wright, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

3.0 CONSENT CALENDAR

3.1 Approval Items

3.1.1 Minutes of the April 27, 2011 Transit TAC Meeting

Motion was made to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Motion passed.

4.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

4.1 SCAG Region Rail Update

Steve Fox, SCAG staff, provided members with a brief update on recent commuter and high-speed rail developments within the region. Mr. Fox reported on Metrolink and Amtrak's new express trip services as well as high-speed rail developments.

Mr. Fox also announced the creation of SCAG's Ad-Hoc High-Speed Rail Subcommittee which was formed by the Regional Council to help guide high-speed rail projects for consideration in the Draft 2012 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Developments within these areas will continue to be monitored and updates will be presented at the next Transit TAC meeting.

4.2 Updated Findings of Regional O&M Performance Benchmarking Exercise

Matthew Gleason, SCAG staff, presented members with an update on the Regional O&M Performance Benchmarks. Mr. Gleason reported that data for the Demand Response mode were analyzed for operating expenditures per passenger mile, passenger trip and service hour. Additionally, Mr. Gleason presented findings on the cross modal comparisons and an update on the review of the initial findings of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Bay Area's Transit Sustainability Project (TSP).

4.3 2012 RTP Transit and Rail Analysis

Steve Fox, SCAG staff, presented members with three draft alternative scenarios of investments, policies, strategies and assumptions for the Constrained Plan of the 2012 RTP. These draft alternatives are designed at the conceptual policy level and are aimed at initiating discussions with key decision makers and stakeholders. A single alternative scenario or a combination of the three will be selected for the

Constrained Plan. Mr. Fox provided a brief explanation of each of the alternative scenarios.

Mr. Fox encouraged members to review the proposed alternatives and to provide feedback.

4.4 Review of Agency and Operator Planning Documents

Steve Fox, SCAG staff, stated that as part of the RTP process, staff has conducted a comprehensive review of transit operator planning documents in the region with the intention of compiling an inventory of the goals, policies and programs that operators have in order to improve service. The intention is to review these and include in the 2012 RTP. Mr. Fox presented a summary of the goals and policies as well as San Diego Association of Government's (SANDAG) and MTC's proposed programs.

Mr. Fox encouraged members to review the goals and policies and to provide feedback.

5.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m. The next meeting of the Transit Technical Advisory Committee is to be determined.

MEMO

DATE: September 15, 2011

TO: High-Speed Rail Subcommittee

FROM: Steve Fox, Senior Regional Planner

SUBJECT: Preliminary Staff Recommendations for Constrained Plan HSR Projects

BACKGROUND: At the August HSR subcommittee meeting, staff presented subcommittee members with the proposed decision-making approach and a preliminary recommendation of which HSR projects should be included in the Strategic Plan of the 2012 RTP. A memo and presentation detailed the proposed decision-making approach for considering which HSR projects should be included in the RTP. Subcommittee members generally agreed with this proposed approach, however no action was taken on the Strategic Plan staff recommendations. The subcommittee directed staff to further refine the analysis and summary materials to a more detailed level for the next meeting while subcommittee members have had a chance to consider what was presented at the second meeting. This memo provides preliminary staff recommendations regarding which projects should be in the Constrained Plan.

DISCUSSION: This memo discusses the preliminary staff recommendation for which HSR projects should be included in the Constrained Plan of the RTP. These projects are a subset of the preliminary staff recommendation of which projects should be included in the Strategic Plan presented to the subcommittee last month.

For project evaluation, it is important to note the difference between the Constrained and Strategic Plans. For example, for a project to be considered for inclusion into the Constrained Plan, funding must be reasonably available with appropriate documentation on how, or from what sources, the funds will become available to construct and operate the project. The project would also need to demonstrate that there is broad public and regional stakeholder support and consensus, and that including the project in the Constrained Plan does not pose an undue risk of potentially placing the RTP out of conformity. On the other hand, for a project to be considered for inclusion into the Strategic Plan there should be no fatal flaws, but still a broad and regional stakeholder support for the project even if no funding has been identified. Projects, strategies, or proposals included in the strategic plan should also have definition beyond the conceptual level. It is important to note that some projects are inter-regional, for example connecting the SCAG region with Las Vegas or the Bay Area; while others are intra-regional. This must be considered in the evaluation.

Further, some of the proposals in our region are incremental; they consist of a program of improvement to existing corridors and services. Other proposals consist of an entirely new project or group of projects. In the first case, the region must come to consensus on questions of degree: how many improvements will we pursue, and what are our goals for these improvements? In the latter case the region must come to consensus on whether or not these proposals are the most effective way to meet our regional transportation needs.

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As discussed previously, the decision-making approach to a final recommendation of HSR projects to include in the RTP has three steps. The basic approach proposed by staff entails three steps. The first step narrows down the projects to Strategic Plan elements based on a set of criteria such as public support and consensus on the project, project readiness, regional connectivity, ridership potential, cost and funding status. The second step narrows down the projects further to those that should be considered for the Constrained Plan using similar criteria with more detailed information. The third step will evaluate the proposed HSR system in the full context of the proposed RTP transportation network. Staff will provide the results of this evaluation prior to the subcommittee finalizing its recommendation to the RTP Subcommittee. Based on this and further direction from the subcommittee, staff will recommend any appropriate adjustments needed to maximize total system potential.

The criteria that staff is using to formulate the preferred rail alternative include: reasonableness of available funding, level and amount of costing details, current project status, level of stakeholder and public support, stakeholder consensus of project's alignment and operational characteristics, degree of regional connectivity, and ridership potential. At the last subcommittee meeting, it was agreed to add an additional criterion which is the ability of a project to serve as a commuter rail service. Following is a recap of project descriptions with preliminary staff recommendations for Constrained Plan projects.

Proposed Inter-regional Projects

California High-Speed Rail Phases One and Two

The CA HSR project Phase One is planned to operate from San Francisco to L.A. Union station with a spur to Anaheim. Phase Two includes Merced to Sacramento and L.A. Union station to San Diego via the Inland Empire. The project is being planned in segments all with different degrees of project readiness. In November 2008 state voters passed Proposition 1A, allowing the state to sell up to \$9 billion in bonds for Phase One of the project. Since the beginning of 2010, the project has received \$3.6 billion in federal funding. Using the state funds to match this amount, the project has \$6.3 billion to start construction on the initial operating segment in the San Joaquin Valley between Merced and Bakersfield. The DEIR/DEIS was just released last week and construction is expected to start late next year. On the other hand, initial costs for Phase One were \$43 billion, but are now estimated to be \$67 billion, and the balance of the \$43 billion is supposed to come from local, federal and private sources. The current political environment in Washington has stalled any further federal allocations and no local or private sources have been identified to date. In our region, the Palmdale to L.A. and L.A. to Anaheim segments have completed the supplemental alternatives analysis process and the L.A. to San Diego segment has completed the preliminary alternatives analysis process.

Project consensus and stakeholder support is generally good. Cities that have planned stations provide a strong level of support, although there are still some alternative alignments being considered and some stakeholders along the alignments have objections to the project due to negative impacts, especially if their community will not benefit from a station.

Regional connectivity and ridership potential are good provided the regional transportation network is adjusted where necessary to complement the proposed HSR system thereby serving as a strong feeder system. In our region the planned HSR stops will readily connect with a robust network of inter-city

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and commuter rail, subway and light-rail, and fixed-route transit systems. When both phases are complete, the system will offer connectivity to Palmdale, Bob Hope Burbank, and Los Angeles Ontario International Airports, helping to meet SCAG's long-term goal of regionalizing air travel in Southern California. It can also be reasonably expected that many inter-regional trips will be attracted from trips now made by car or airline.

While Phase 2 is unfunded, Phase 1 is partially funded and is progressing along with strong public and stakeholder support. The project also has a detailed business plan which is currently being revised and is due out in October. Staff will incorporate that plan's financial information in to the analysis to confirm the project remains viable. Therefore, staff feels it is reasonable at this time that at least Phase 1 of the project will be built and become operational by the horizon year of the RTP.

- Staff recommends that Phase One be included in the Constrained Plan, and Phase Two of the CA HSR project be included in the Strategic Plan.

DesertXpress

The DesertXpress would connect Las Vegas to Victorville using steel wheel on steel rail technology. There are no intermediate stops. The project has completed the environmental process and the FRA issued a record of decision (ROD) on July 8, 2011. DesertXpress Enterprises has applied to the FRA for a \$4.9 billion loan to start and complete construction of the project. The company also states that they can acquire the necessary private funding to complete the project.

Project consensus and stakeholder support is low. Not extending the alignment through the Cajon Pass into the urban centers of Southern California puts the financial viability of the project in question. It also is a competing project with the California/Nevada Super-Speed Train project, so it is not reasonable to have both projects built. There would be greater project consensus and stakeholder support if the project connected to the CA HSR project in Palmdale. While this is mentioned on their website, it is not part of the project at this time and would have to go through an additional environmental process and would need additional funding.

Regional connectivity is low due to the southern terminal being Victorville. Ridership is considered low to moderate as top speeds are projected to be 150 mph thereby making the trip in 80 minutes for a \$50 dollar one-way fare. This trip can be made by auto in a little over two-and-a half hours and the 80 minute DesertXpress travel time does not include the time involved in car-to-train transfer in Victorville and station-to-destination transfer in Las Vegas.

The last published ridership forecast for the project was completed in 2005, with a review of that forecast completed in 2007. Both of these efforts were before the recession and a more current forecast is not available.

- Due to the lack of a recent published business plan, and a lack of secured funding for construction, staff recommends that this project not be advanced to the Constrained Plan, but be included in the Strategic Plan.

MEMO

California/Nevada Super-Speed Train Project

The California/Nevada Super-Speed Train (CNSST) project would connect Las Vegas to Anaheim using maglev with intermediate stops in Primm, Barstow, Victorville, and Ontario. A Programmatic EIR/EIS was initiated in 2004 but has not been completed to date, and \$45 million of federal funding was earmarked for the environmental review. Plans call for building the first 40-mile segment either from Las Vegas to Primm or Anaheim to Ontario. To date, no funds for construction have been identified.

Project consensus and stakeholder support is uncertain at best. The stop in Primm was designed to serve the new Ivanpah Valley Airport (IVA), which is planned to relieve Las Vegas' McCarran airport when it reaches capacity. Planning for IVA was put on hold last June due to the economic recession, which led to decreased demand at McCarran Airport. In addition, the DesertXpress project has emerged recently as a competing project (albeit without the intermediate stops between Las Vegas and Victorville) and it is not reasonable to assume that both projects would be built in the same corridor. However, there is support among some local stakeholders for the Anaheim to Ontario segment to be constructed first and serve as the initial operating segment (IOS), if not a stand-alone segment. So this segment rates better for project consensus and stakeholder support.

Regional connectivity and ridership potential would be good if the project is built, especially for Southern California to Las Vegas trips. But this would also depend on pricing compared to auto and airline travel and the project has no business plan at this time. The Anaheim to Ontario segment would provide good regional connectivity to CA HSR, Amtrak, Metrolink and fixed-route transit service, and it could be reasonable to assume that the travel demand between an under-utilized Ontario airport and the Anaheim resort area could make this segment viable.

- Due to a lack of progress in funding and project readiness, staff recommends that the CNSST project in its entirety not be included in the 2012 RTP. However, due to the potential benefits of the Anaheim to Ontario IOS to the SCAG region if funding becomes available, staff does recommend that this segment be included in the Strategic Plan.

Proposed Intra-regional Projects

Orange Line

The Orangeline is a proposed HSR project connecting Santa Clarita to Cerritos via Glendale, downtown L.A., the Gateway cities and a connection to Bob Hope Airport. Currently, SCAG in conjunction with LACMTA, OCTA and OLDA, are working together on an alternative analysis that is looking at the corridor from the Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center to Downtown Los Angeles with potential connections to Santa Clarita.

Project consensus and stakeholder support for project options among OLDA members is high. Many of the communities located in the southern half of the OLDA corridor (Paramount to Downtown Los Angeles) are presently underserved by transit based upon the transit dependent demographic and current transit service, and have very limited regional connectivity and transportation options. The northern OLDA corridor (Downtown Los Angeles to Santa Clarita) requires integration with existing

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uses (Metrolink, Amtrak, and freight) and the proposed CA HSR project. This may cause potential capacity issues and necessitate use of shared track options in the corridor that can support different user markets. This will be studied as part of the Burbank Bob Hope Airport Ground Access Study and the Metro Antelope Valley Line Study.

Regional connectivity and ridership potential are good if the project gets built. The planned stops readily connect with CA HSR, Amtrak, Metrolink, Metro Rail, Bob Hope Airport and fixed-route transit systems. The planned stops are integrated into major destinations in the corridor.

- Due to this project being only partially funded for the southern segment of the alignment through Measure R, staff recommends that it remain in the Strategic Plan and not advance to the Constrained Plan.

Proposed Improvements to Existing Intra-regional Services

Amtrak LOSSAN Corridor

Amtrak is the inter-city rail provider in the SCAG region covering Ventura, Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Amtrak and the LOSSAN JPA are continuously working towards speed and service improvements and many capital projects to improve speed have been identified and planned with estimated costs. Funding is currently being lobbied from a variety of sources and is reasonably expected at least on an incremental basis for the 2012 RTP.

Project consensus and stakeholder support is very high. There is a strong interest amongst the CEOs of Metro, OCTA, SCAG and SANDAG to pursue significant improvements to the LOSSAN corridor that will enable operation of HSR services that would meet the FRA criteria for high-speed (110 mph or above). This could be the most viable way to expedite HSR operation in our region providing connection to and phasing in with the CA HSR that will begin construction in the Central Valley. For our region, this corridor could serve as a preliminary Phase One of the CA HSR system. Similar efforts to bring HSR operation sooner rather than later by improving existing corridors is happening in the Bay Area for the Capitol Corridor. In fact, much of the federal high-speed rail appropriation awards are funding existing Amtrak inter-city rail corridors. The alignments and ROW already are in operation and higher speeds would provide benefits to the entire region.

Regional connectivity and ridership potential is high as existing stations already connect to an array of rail, airline and public transit connections, and higher speeds would increase ridership that already grows at significant levels on a yearly basis.

At the August LOSSAN Board meeting the formation of a new locally-controlled JPA was unanimously approved in concept. The Board directed LOSSAN staff to continue developing conceptual JPA organization and structure to be presented in the near future. Therefore it is possible that this JPA could be formed within the next year and a half, and this would bring further momentum for speed and service improvements in the corridor. It should be noted that these discussions by Board members and the CEOs of the represented transportation commissions and councils of government include discussions with the CHSRA to lobby the Brown administration to use high-speed rail funds for existing inter-city and commuter rail services.

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- Based on the strong increasing support to bring Amtrak LOSSAN service under local control, and an array of improvements on the books ready to go with funding, staff recommends that Amtrak LOSSAN corridor improvements that would allow HSR operation in this corridor be advanced to the Constrained Plan.

2008 RTP Regional High-Speed Transport System (HSRT)

The current 2008 RTP contains a regional HSRT System designed to connect our regional airports. The proposed regional HSRT system is a conceptual project that is technology neutral. Only the IOS connecting West L.A. to Ontario Airport with a spur to San Bernardino Airport, and the freight component of the proposed HSRT system connecting the ports with Hobart Yard in downtown L.A. are included in the Constrained Plan. Inclusion of this system in the constrained plan in the 2008 RTP was predicated on a conceptual level business plan that assumed the system, particularly with the freight service to the ports, would generate enough revenue to support its construction and operation. However, a number of things have changed since the adoption of the 2008 RTP, particularly:

- California voters passed the HSR bond measure in 2008, thus making the proposed CA HSR a much more likely and viable option to implement HSR in our region. The Phase II of the CA HSR system in our region will be serving the same corridor connecting Union Station with Ontario Airport, thereby making the proposed IOS in the 2008 RTP redundant.
- Significant freight improvements are moving forward in our region, such as the I-710 freight corridor improvement that would render the freight component of the proposed regional HSRT redundant, and thereby remove the fundamental premise in the 2008 RTP that revenue from the freight operation would partially pay for the HSRT system.
- Subsequent to the 2008 RTP, the HSRT Alternatives Analysis was completed which found that the system would not pay for itself.
- Given these developments, and that there has been no active planning in the last couple of years, staff recommends that the HSRT system not be included in the 2012 RTP.

Metrolink

Metrolink is the commuter rail provider in the SCAG region, and operates approximately 150 weekday trains on seven corridors with weekend service on four corridors. Metrolink is currently working on capital improvements to improve speed and service, especially in Orange County where the daily number of trains will increase significantly. As with Amtrak's LOSSAN corridor, directing resources to Metrolink's corridors to speed up service makes sense, as the existing alignments and ROW are currently operating, and minor to modest capital investments will greatly benefit the region by making the service more competitive to single-occupant vehicle travel. Metro and Metrolink are currently working on a study of the Antelope Valley Line regarding what improvements would be necessary to greatly speed up service. The Metro Board motion that initiated this study calls for studying the other Metrolink corridors when this one is completed.

Project consensus and stakeholder support is high. Improvements to bring Metrolink service up to 110 mph in certain segments would lead to greater average speeds for the entire system.

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Regional connectivity and ridership potential is also high as existing stations already connect to an array of rail, airline and public transit connections and higher speeds would increase ridership that already grows on a yearly basis and offer increased attraction to the single-occupant-vehicle commuter. While Metrolink has a different travel market than the CA HSR, both systems will complement each other acting as feeders to one another.

- As with the Amtrak LOSSAN corridor, Metrolink has an array of identified projects on the books to improve speed and service. Further, many of the stakeholders involved in the LOSSAN discussions consider improvements to Metrolink of equal importance and that those improvements should be implemented concurrently. Funding is currently being lobbied from a variety of sources and is reasonably expected at least on an incremental basis for the 2012 RTP. Therefore, staff recommends that Metrolink corridor improvements also be advanced to the Constrained Plan.

NEXT STEPS: With HSR Subcommittee concurrence, staff will include these projects in the Constrained Plan of 2012 RTP. Once the subcommittee has decided on its Constrained and Strategic Plan projects, staff will evaluate this proposed HSR system in the full context of the RTP's transportation network. Staff will provide the results of this evaluation prior to the subcommittee finalizing its final recommendation to the RTP Subcommittee.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. HSR Alternatives Matrix
2. HSR Projects Fact Sheets