



Metro

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
April 18, 2012

SUBJECT: REGIONAL RAIL PLANNING AND ENGINEERING BENCH AND REGIONAL RAIL UPDATE

ACTION: INITIATE PROCESS TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL RAIL BENCH

RECOMMENDATION

- A. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to establish a Regional Rail planning bench of qualified firms to conduct studies, engineering, and environmental work in support of passenger railroad efforts in Los Angeles County;
- B. Release a Request for Qualifications/Request for Proposals for the bench that will have a \$1,000,000 cap per project and a \$20,000,000 overall cap;
- C. Receive and file the Regional Rail Update through March 2012.

ISSUE

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

With the passage of Measure R, there is a dedicated funding source for capital projects in Los Angeles County along LACMTA owned right-of-way which can benefit the existing Metrolink commuter rail, Amtrak intercity rail and future high speed rail networks. Establishing a bench of qualified firms will enable LACMTA to think more strategically, do planning and conceptual studies, and advance projects to a higher state of readiness, thereby making them more competitive for funding opportunities.

BACKGROUND

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 43,000 riders per day throughout the Los Angeles basin.

LACMTA is also a member of the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) joint powers authority, which coordinates the passenger rail services of the three carriers (Amtrak, Metrolink, and COASTER) within this corridor. LOSSAN is

working towards gaining local management of the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner service in this corridor.

LACMTA is also instrumental in the planning and coordination efforts within the County of Los Angeles for the future high speed rail alignment connecting northern California to southern California.

DISCUSSION

LACMTA owns approximately 150 route miles or railroad right-of-way over which Metrolink commuter rail service, Amtrak intercity rail, and freight rail service operate. LACMTA manages and maintains this right-of-way. In addition, LACMTA is responsible for developing and managing capital improvement projects along this right-of-way.

LACMTA is in the process of instituting a county wide effort to establish shelf ready projects to advance the overall development of our right-of-way in Los Angeles County. As part of that work, LACMTA will be instituting project studies, project study reports, corridor analysis studies, and other work related to capital improvements. This work will enhance the overall passenger railroad experience by developing a more efficient system as well as enhancing the overall safety of the system.

The recent Antelope Valley Strategic Implementation emphasized the need for on-call engineering services from firms uniquely qualified in the field of railroad engineering. This specific criterion is necessary to establish an understanding of the passenger railroad environment. As part of this, qualified teams will have a clear understanding of the regulations, safety culture, and operations of passenger railroad systems. This Bench will provide LACMTA with on-call expertise necessary to complete the overall mission of the agency by enhancing the overall passenger rail operating environment. In particular, it is expected that the Bench teams will cover every aspect of railroad engineering. The goal is to establish a single Bench of qualified teams from which to draw from. It is expected that the bench will consist of four to five qualified teams that can be drawn from for expertise in any discipline related to railroad engineering.

The Request for Qualifications/Request For Proposals (RFQ/RFP) for this bench will be released in May of 2012. As part of this procurement, RFP will specifically seek qualifications from a complete team. It will be expected that the teams include qualified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and it will be expected that these firms are used throughout the contract. The requirements of the teams will be diversified in such a manner as to promote involvement from various firms on the team. Specific disciplines will include; civil engineering, planning, railroad modeling, station area planning, railroad operations, financial planning, corridor planning, among others.

As part of the RFQ/RFP, the respondents will be required to develop team qualifications demonstrating that they are proficient in the field of railroad engineering. As part of the proposal, the respondents will be demonstrating their ability to provide these services by proposing on the first project for the bench. This project will be a strategic study of a Metrolink line that will include most aspects of the disciplines on the bench.

Due to project engineering requirements, as well as the broad spectrum of disciplines utilized in a railroad engineering project it is believed that the cap for a project performed under this bench contract will be \$1,000,000. This will provide sufficient funding to ensure that there is a single project team with a single point of contact throughout. The overall contract value of the bench is \$20,000,000.

The projects that are expected to be let under this contract include: strategic studies of Metrolink lines in Los Angeles County, grade separation project study reports, Countywide rail station analysis, smaller scale engineering projects, and corridor planning studies. A detailed plan focusing Measure R expenditures for fiscal year 2013 will be presented in June.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Establishing a bench has no direct impact on safety. However, many of the capital projects to be implemented will be for grade crossing enhancements, grade separations, and other safety enhancement projects that will lead to overall long-term improved operating conditions along the LACMTA-owned commuter and inter-city rail corridors in Los Angeles County.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Measure R 3% (Project 460064) is a dedicated funding source for Metrolink capital improvements within Los Angeles County. Recommendation A will establish a bench; however, no contracts will be awarded until FY 2012-13. There is no financial impact for FY 2011-12. A detailed Measure R 3% budget for FY 2012-13 will be developed and presented to the Board in June 2012 as part of the Metrolink Annual Work Program item for FY 2012-13.

Future funding will come from Measure R 3% funds and other funding opportunities. No other sources of Metro allocated funds were considered because Proposition C 10% funds are fully allocated for Metrolink operating, rehabilitation/renovation, and the Call for Projects. Measure R 3% funds are designated solely for Metrolink capital improvements within Los Angeles County. This activity will not impact ongoing operating costs because these funds are not eligible to be used for Metro operations.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

LACMTA could choose to not establish a Regional Rail Planning and Engineering bench. Staff advises against this as there is now a dedicated source of funding for Metrolink capital improvements in Los Angeles County generating approximately \$19 million per year (2012 dollars). Until now, LACMTA has not had an adequate process to identify and prioritize projects, their associated costs, benefits, and move them to the design stage. Establishment of a Regional Rail planning and engineering bench will develop projects to levels that will make them more competitive for grants. In addition, the existing Planning and Highway benches do not meet the need for regional rail projects due to the expertise specified on those benches.

REGIONAL RAIL UPDATE

- Metrolink Commuter Rail

Annual Budget Process for FY 2012-13

On April 13, 2012, the SCRRA Board transmitted the preliminary budget for FY 12-13 to the member agencies. SCRRA is anticipating a \$16 million (9%) increase in operating expenses for FY 12-13. The contributing factors are fuel, Amtrak contract costs, equipment maintenance costs, and various other costs. This is a significant increase and SCRRA is assessing ways to reduce the impact to the member agencies. SCRRA is considering a variety of options, including fare increases and increased member agency subsidies and/or service reductions for FY 12-13. SCRRA has also requested a significant increase in its rehabilitation/renovation budget for FY 12-13.

Staff continues to work closely with SCRRA staff to assess service level, ridership and revenue assumptions plus rehabilitation and capital needs for the coming year. In June we will take a separate action to the board to adopt the Annual Work Program for FY 2012-13.

Ridership and Revenue Update

Metrolink ridership and revenues are tracking close to expected for FY 2011-12, in spite of the continued high unemployment rate in LA County. Ridership for July thru February is up 9% year-over-year and revenues are up 6%. Ridership is 1% over budget for FY 2011-12 and revenues are down 2% compared to the budget for FY 2011-12.

| METROLINK FY 2011-12 YEAR-TO-DATE THRU 2/29/12 | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | RIDERSHIP (Millions) | | | REVENUES (Millions) | | |
| | FY 11 | FY 12 | CHANGE | FY 11 | FY 12 | CHANGE |
| TOTAL | 7.2 | 7.8 | + 9% | \$ 49.5 | \$ 52.4 | + 6% |

- LOSSAN Intercity Rail (Amtrak Pacific Surfliner)

LOSSAN Governance Issues

The LOSSAN agency CEOs continue to work on governance issues that will lead towards a strong local authority to better manage the state-supported intercity passenger rail service (Amtrak Pacific Surfliner). Local governance will provide for better coordination and integration of intercity, commuter and freight rail operations, and appropriate institutional and organizational structure for the future success of the LOSSAN corridor.

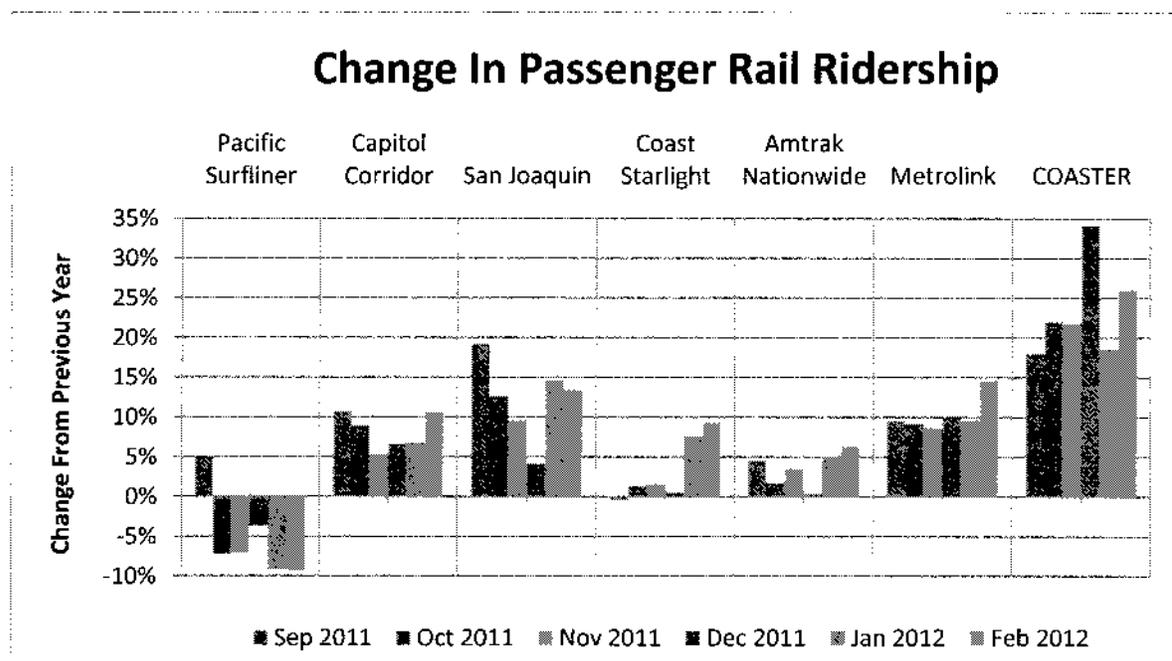
On February 23, 2012, SB 1225 (Padilla) was introduced into the State legislature. This bill establishes a governance framework for the LOSSAN corridor. The bill

does not mandate that a local agency be formed, should agreement not be reached between the State and the local authority. The bill does require the State to determine that transferring control of the LOSSAN corridor would result in administrative savings. The term would be for five or more years, and the level of service funded by the State would be not less than the current number of intercity trips currently operated. The bill will be refined as it goes through the committee process. If the bill is signed by the Governor this year, the new LOSSAN agency could be operational by December 31, 2013.

In March the Metro members of the LOSSAN Board took a tour of the Capitol Corridor. The tour involved an overview of the management of the service from David Kutrosky, the managing director and a tour of their facilities

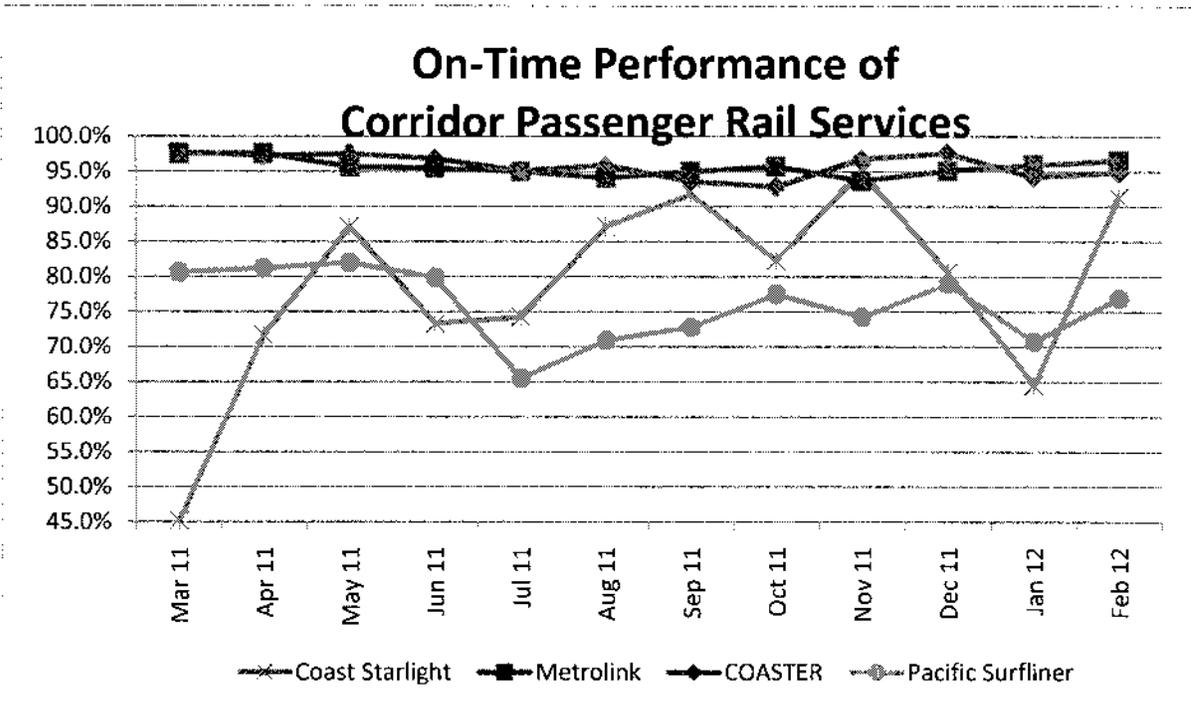
- Amtrak Pacific Surfliner Operating Statistics

Ridership on the Pacific Surfliner has been consistently down for FY 2011-12. For October 2011 thru February 2012, ridership has declined for five consecutive months, compared to the prior year. This may be attributable to a variety of factors, including poor on-time performance (OTP), weekend service disruptions, the elimination of seasonal fare discounts and the elimination of one train. Staff is working closely with Amtrak staff to determine the root causes of the reduced ridership. The following chart illustrates recent Pacific Surfliner ridership performance compared to other operators.



On Time Performance (OTP) on the Pacific Surfliner continues its downward trend. It has not been above 80% since May 2011. The other commuter services along the corridor are well over 90%. Much of the delays to the Pacific Surfliner are due

to on-going trackwork and slow orders, which occur primarily on the weekends, thus impacting the Pacific Surfliner more than Metrolink and Coaster commuter services.



High Speed Rail (HSR)

Metro staff has been working closely with the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) on this program in Los Angeles County. Specifically, the following items are moving forward:

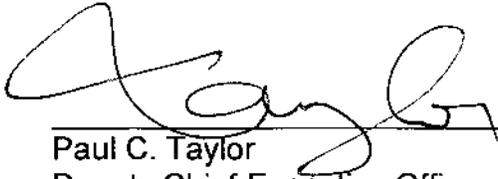
1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): At the January 2012 Board meeting the CEO was authorized to negotiate an MOU between CHSRA and seven other southern California agencies. The project list and performance criteria associated with the MOU are under development.
2. Project Phasing: Staff has been working with CHSRA to develop a means of closing the gap between Bakersfield and Los Angeles. The high speed train system will go through Palmdale to reach Los Angeles.
3. Advance Investment: Aside from the work on the MOU, staff continues to work with the CHSRA to develop grade separation projects in Los Angeles County.
4. Staff has been working with CHSRA to develop advance investment in the Antelope Valley Line to meet the high speed system as it reached Palmdale. In addition, staff has been involved with discussions to close the passenger rail gap between Bakersfield and Palmdale.

NEXT STEPS

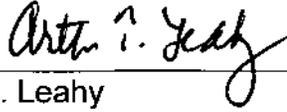
Staff will release an RFP/RFQ in May 2012 for a Regional Rail planning and engineering bench. Staff intends to select the bench of qualified vendors in Summer 2012. In the Summer of 2012, staff intends to initiate a study of capital improvements to the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, to be completed by March 2013. LACMTA will partner with the San Bernardino Associated Governments on that study.

Staff will also return to the Board in May 2012 with the Regional Rail update.

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