

And statistics for the other California Corridors

By David B. Kutrosky, Managing Director, Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority

### [Caltrain Sending Mixed Signals?](#)

NBC Bay Area- May 16, 2013

“The fare revenue covers about 60 percent of our budget, which is a significant amount,” said Ackemann. “But it doesn’t cover the entire budget. And that 40 percent hole, roughly, that we’re looking at is the part of our budget that’s difficult to fill every year.”

### [Deputies stop another suicide on Caltrain tracks](#)

San Francisco Chronicle (blog)- May 17, 2013

Deputies Brandon Hensel and Sal Zuno dashed over to the Hillsdale Caltrain Station early in the morning after an anonymous caller phoned ...

### [Man runs amok at BART station; long delays](#)

San Francisco Chronicle- May 16, 2013

The man, identified as Rodney Jenkins, 29, of Oakland, was taken away for psychiatric evaluation after officers grabbed him.

### [Tunnel slide jeopardizes Skunk Train from Fort Bragg to Willits](#)

Santa Rosa Press Democrat- May 17, 2013

FORT BRAGG -- Train tunnel Number One on the old California ... But now it is facing a threat that could shutter the 128-year-old rail line and ...

### [Brown's Budget Sends Cap And Trade Funds To Black Hole Of General Fund](#)

StreetsBlog LA May 15, 2013

When California passed it’s land-mark Greenhouse Gas reduction laws in 2006, residents and businesses were assured that funds raised through the controversial “cap and trade” program would be invested in programs and projects that would further reduce emissions.

### [The Incredible Shrinking Budget Deficit](#)

Businessweek May 15, 2013

The updated budget projections from the Congressional Budget Office show that the nation’s finances are healing much faster than anyone anticipated. Thanks to increased tax revenues, the budget deficit will shrink to \$642 billion this year, or 4 percent of GDP. That’s the lowest aggregate deficit since 2008 and less than half the size of 2009’s deficit, which was 10.1 percent of GDP.

**Maybe it is time to talk about spending tax money for transportation projects including passenger rail that will pay for themselves with economic growth? NB**

### [Young Americans Lead Trend To Less Driving](#)

New York Times May 13, 2013

For six decades, Americans have tended to drive more every year. But in the middle of the last decade, the number of miles driven — both over all and per capita — began to drop, notes a report to be published on Tuesday by U.S. PIRG, a nonprofit advocacy organization.

### [U.S. PIRG: The Driving Boom Is Over But The Road-Building Binge Continues](#)

StreetsBlog DC May 14, 2013

After decades of steady growth, U.S. driving rates have stagnated and even fallen. Per capita driving is as low as it was in 1996. And yet, federal and state government estimates continue to predict inexorable growth, relentlessly building expensive new highways for drivers who might not materialize.

## **The big problems now is repairing the roads we have now which are falling apart. NB**

### [Council approves LAX runway move, again; litigation is next major step](#)

Inland Valley Daily Bulletin- May 14, 2013

Rosendahl, who represents the LAX area and has fought the runway plans, tried to persuade the council to reverse its earlier action and halt the runway move - a project opposed by residents around the facility, who say the change is not needed.

"I question the politics of this," Rosendahl said... "We need to make better use of Ontario. We need rail lines that go directly to the airport so people can get off a jumbo jet and jump on a train. "

### [Struggling Ontario Unimpressed With LA's Efforts To Help](#)

Curbed LA May 8, 2013

Officials in the Inland Empire threatened to sue Los Angeles a few weeks back in an attempt to wrest away control of the beleaguered LA/Ontario International Airport (which is run by LA-based Los Angeles World Airports

## **Reply from Metrolink on some questions from RailPAC**

**I recently wrote to the Metrolink on their Website Feedback page about a question recently asked by RailPAC eNewsletter reader Rolland Graham. Here is the question and answer from Metrolink. NB**

**“ To my dismay, I just discovered that Metrolink has re-programmed its TVM's to delete the option of purchasing a ticket from a station different from the location of the TVM. Now you can only purchase a ticket from the station where the TVM you are using is located.**

**Thus, when I went to Irvine to purchase tickets from Rancho Cucamonga, I could not longer do so. I called Metrolink and the agent told me that I had to drive to Rancho Cucamonga and use the TVM there to purchase the tickets!**

**Apparently Metrolink is clueless to the fact that customers may want to obtain their tickets in advance, and are not located near the Metrolink station they will be traveling from. (example: arriving Fullerton on Amtrak #3 and connecting to Metrolink to Irvine, with a tight connection and no time to purchase a ticket--as happened to five of us recently. Another example: need to obtain tickets for a person who is not capable of using the TVM (child, elderly, disabled) going from A to B on one day, and returning from B to A on a different day).**

**Metrolink's reply was :**We appreciate you taking the time to forward us of a concern about the “buy ticket from a different origin” option being removed from the Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) purchasing selections. Please know that we plan to restore the option next week.

Removal of the purchasing option was implemented primarily to address fare evasion issues. However, after evaluating the program and customer feedback, we decided to reinstate the program. Instead of reducing ticketing options for our customers, we plan to increase fare inspections at the stations and on the trains in order to address fare evasion issues. Our goal is to inspect 100% of passenger tickets. Note: we will send notifications, via social media and our website, when the purchasing option is reinstated.

In response to the comments related to online ticketing. Please know that we plan to offer online and mobile ticketing within a year. We have yet to establish a projected date of implementation since our recent focus has been the development of TAP enabled Metrolink passes/tickets in order to protect our transfer rights to the Metro light rail once the TAP system executed.

**People don't realize that when there are ticket inspections, train revenues increase as more people skip buying tickets and are fined than if all people paid for their tickets. The fines have to be high enough to cover the cost of the people who aren't caught.**



A converted F-40 as a combination Cab Car and Baggage Car or Cabbage Car seen here in 2008 in San Luis Obispo. These are usually used on low level push pull trains sets. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

### Re: Has Amtrak started a War with cyclists over the Surfliners?

I wouldn't call this a war with cyclists, as more a "war with militant, entitlement cyclists."

There is a bike subculture of militants - messengers, skinheads, etc., - that has a sense of entitlement that is manifested by Critical Mass. Even normal cyclists dislike this subculture. Normal cyclists realize bikes are big, and welcome a reservation system that guarantees a space in a finite resource. And paying for it keeps out 'riff raff'.

Mike O'Dorney

**You are right that there are problems with people who feel they are "entitled" to expensive services for "free" A bigger entitled group than radical cyclists though are drivers who feel entitled to "free parking". Parking is very expensive! Employers and colleges are subsidizing their employees and students to use alternatives to driving to save money by avoiding having to build more parking. This is critical at transportation centers and train stations which usually don't have enough parking. We literally can't afford to build enough parking structures (which are very expensive) for all the people who could ride trains. Building housing that is walking distance to stations and encouraging bike riding are two ways to increase ridership without more parking. While there are costs to storing bikes at stations and on trains, this has to be measured against the costs of providing more parking for cars. Many more bikes and the people who ride them can be stored for less money than building more parking. NB**

### Re: Has Amtrak started a War with cyclists over the Surfliners?

For what it's worth, the Surfliner bike policy seems to me to be designed primarily for the convenience of the conductors, and perhaps secondarily at an attempt at on-time performance. Not long ago, I traveled