

While NJ Transit sends Amtrak about \$70 million a year to cover operating costs, like electricity, for running commuter trains on the corridor each day, NJ Transit's contribution to funding that targets capital projects sits near 1996 levels.

[Can a deal be worked out to put Amtrak on the Trinity Railway Express?](#)

Fort Worth Star Telegram (blog) - Aug 7, 2012

North Texas officials would like Amtrak to begin running the daily Texas Eagle route on the TRE line through Northeast Tarrant County and west Dallas, rather than on the crowded Union Pacific line through Dallas, Arlington and Fort Worth (where Amtrak is known to routinely experience delays of an hour or more because of freight train traffic). But a \$7.2 million grant to double-track the TRE line and help speed up the switch of Amtrak service will instead go back to Washington unspent if...

[DOWNEY: From simple beginnings](#)

North County Times (blog)-Aug 6, 2012

You may recall that a month ago, I shared my experience riding the train to Seattle ---- and how I mentioned the National Park Service volunteers who explained, in great detail, what passengers were seeing along the California coast and Washington's Puget Sound.

It turns out that the Trails & Rails program is a pretty big one.

[Southern mayors to discuss regional train service](#)

The Daily Advertiser-Aug 11, 2012

The service from Jacksonville, Fla., to New Orleans was at one time part of Amtrak's Sunset Limited line from Los Angeles to Jacksonville. It was discontinued after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 wreaked havoc in the area, destroying lives and damaging homes, businesses and railroad tracks.

Officials believe reviving the train service would be a boost to tourism and would help the economies of communities across the Gulf Coast still recovering from Katrina.

[Four Small Projects that would Rejuvenate the Long Distance Trains.](#)

Opinion by Noel T. Braymer

In Washington the Long Distance Trains get very little love or respect. There has been no service expansion of Long Distance Rail service since W. Graham Claytor retired as Amtrak President in 1992. In fact there is less Long Distance Rail service now than in 1992. There are no lack of worthwhile projects. These include among others a Daily Sunset, Daily Cardinal with a section to St Louis and Kansas City, the California Zephyr extended to Los Angeles overnight on the Coast, a section of the Southwest Chief to the San Joaquin Valley and San Jose, a combined new Pioneer and Desert Wind from LA to Salt Lake City and Seattle, a connection at Denver from the Zephyr to the Southwest Chief at Raton and extending rail passenger service from St. Louis- Kansas City to Omaha.

[Congress' \\$20 Billion Tech Mandate: Make Trains Safer](#)

Information Week

Union Pacific is spending hundreds of millions on IT each year for the federal plan aimed at making train accidents less likely.

[Businesses Step Up Fight Against Regional Connector](#)

LA Downtown News Online-Aug 7, 2012

The companies say Metro's plan to dig a 70-foot-deep trench down Flower Street between Fourth Street and Wilshire Boulevard will have disastrous effects on property values, traffic and, potentially, the structural safety of their buildings in the event of an earthquake. The groups have been lobbying Metro since February to instead use an underground tunnel-boring machine.

[Metro Planning Pedestrian Bridge Over Lankershim Near Universal Red Line Station](#)

("The news comes soon after an announced plan to build a tunnel near the North Hollywood Metro Station.")

[Maglev Tube Transit Company Wants to Build Pilot in WeHo](#)

Curbed-Aug 8, 2012

the WeHo News reports. Nick Grazilli, a local, told the council that WeHo is the perfect testing ground for a maglev personal rapid transit pilot program-- **WeHo stands for West Hollywood NB**

[Access to Public Transit Reduces Obesity](#)

Care2.com (blog)-Aug 7, 2012

Need another reason to ditch the car? A study published last year in the American Journal of Preventative Medicine showed that those living ...

[August 9: This Date In Los Angeles Transportation History](#)

(The Southern California Regional Rail Authority, parent agency of Metrolink, is formed)
Metro Transportation Library Primary Resources Blog

['Operation Lifesaver' Targets Railroad Crossers](#)

KGTV San Diego-Aug 7, 2012

"Evidently, I ran in front of a train ... apparently it's illegal," said a man ...According to the Federal Railroad Administration's Office of Safety Analysis, between 2001 and 2011, 1,083 people were killed on railroad tracks throughout California from 8,667 total railroad-related collisions.



It is August and it is hot so how about a nice cool picture like of the South Shore back in the early 80's somewhere in Indiana. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

We Get Emails

Re: "Amtrak's Food Lost Taxpayers \$834 Million in 10 Years, Mica Says"

I've ridden Amtrak for years, and in my opinion Amtrak - with its outdated policies, practices, and procedures- does not truly give serious thoughts on its actual accounting procedures. On the one hand, Amtrak wants to eliminate food for sale (which would be a huge mistake), but on the other hand - Amtrak wastes food in astonishing amounts! For instance, one of their dinner menu items is "Half-Chicken". ...HALF-CHICKEN! -

Can this be truly consumed by a human being? Highly unlikely. In fact, I've seen more than a half of this poor "half-chicken" being trashed, because not a single person can eat such a large portion at once. I wrote to Amtrak repeatedly asking to REDUCE their sizes of certain meat items- "Half-chicken" especially. Instead of "Half-chicken", only a "Quarter-chicken" would be perfectly sufficient as a dinner item. This would eliminate enormous food wastes while saving money for Amtrak. But to this day, I still haven't seen changes in that regard; that same humongous "Half-Chicken" portions are still being served. Isn't it time for Amtrak to seriously look at their portion sizes, and consider reducing them? Isn't time Amtrak stop their outdated rubber-stamped procedures and actually WORK on certain issues that will help them save money and eliminate waste?

Alexander Friedman
Hollywood, California

I can't comment on Amtrak's Food Service but I recommend the link to the article in this issue [Amtrak food and beverage service; real facts and figures](#) . The problem with the cost of food service is we don't know what costs are being charged by Amtrak for it. This is a quote from *The High Cost of Amtrak Accounting* by Andrew C. Selden and E. P. Hamilton III printed by *Passenger Train Journal*, 1984.

As early as 1975, the late Joseph V. McDonald, an Amtrak board member, discovered Amtrak's route accounting was arbitrarily charging train (not service) crew costs to the Montrealer at a rate sufficient to pay for 26 enginemen and trainmen per crew, rather than the actual complement of five men. He concluded that Amtrak route accounting was arbitrary and misleading.

Re: New Bridges over Los Angeles River for LAUS Run-Through Tracks

The multiple new bridges and connecting tracks for LAUS seem to exceed the original plans I saw a while ago. My concerns now are with the efforts to bring back the LA River. May be some conflicts with this or environmental issues to deal with.

Mark Johnston

There is no question that there will have to be revisions to the Environmental Impact Report approved for the Run-Through Tracks from back in 2004 for the current project. I'm not worried that this would prevent building new bridges. The First Street Bridge was recently nearly doubled in width to replace lanes used by the Gold Line crossing the river. It wasn't that long ago that new bridges were built for the Alameda Corridor Project and for the rail passengers service fly over the Alameda Corridor and the river. Los Angeles sooner or later will have to replace some of the current bridges over the Los Angeles River as they decay. NB