
Subject: We Take the Hype out of the Hyperloop!

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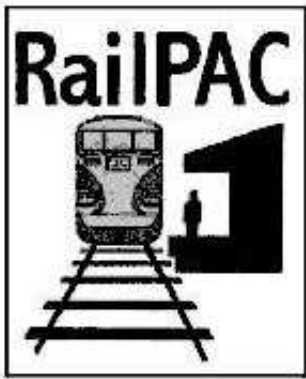
Date: Monday, August 19, 2013 9:30 AM

RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for August 19, 2013

Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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



Figure 32. Suggested Hyperloop route map (map courtesy of Google Maps).

This is a Google Based Map from the report posted by SPACE-X about the [Hyperloop proposal](#) for California. As you can see the site of the assumed Los Angeles station is in Sylmar, in the city limits but miles from downtown LA and the San Francisco station looks to be in Oakland.

[Elon Musk unveils plans for the Hyperloop, a futuristic transportation system](#)

San Jose Mercury News - Aug 12, 2013

Taking direct aim at the state's plan for a \$69 billion high-speed train, Musk said the Hyperloop would cost merely \$6 billion and move people between San Francisco and Los Angeles in about a half-hour rather than three hours

[Musk's Hyperloop math doesn't add up](#)

Greater Greater Washington Aug 14, 2013

Musk suggests that for less than 10% of the cost of building the long-planned high-speed rail line between Los Angeles and San Francisco, we can invent and build an entirely new technology. But the Hyperloop doesn't actually make it to downtown LA or downtown San Francisco. It also has a maximum passenger capacity of just 10% of the HSR line. And it bypasses all of the intermediate population centers in central California that HSR will serve....

According to Musk, pods would depart LA and San Francisco every 30 seconds during peak periods. Each pod can carry 28 passengers. That means that under the maximum throughput, the Hyperloop is capable of carrying 3,360 passengers each hour in each direction. ...

That means that Musk's proposal can carry only 20-25% of the passengers of the California High-Speed

Rail under ideal circumstances. But are those ideal circumstances reasonable? Probably not. ...

The Hyperloop pods will travel at up to 760 miles per hour, just under the speed of sound, with pods traveling about 30 seconds apart in the tube. They will have a maximum deceleration of 0.5 gs, which is equivalent to 10.9 mph per second. At that rate of braking, it will take a pod 68.4 seconds to come to a full stop.

That's a pretty significant issue because safe vehicle operation means never getting closer to the vehicle ahead than the distance it will take you to stop. If pod A were to experience a catastrophic air-skid failure, crash into the tube wall, and disintegrate, pod B, 30 seconds back, would not be able to stop short of the wreckage. In fact, pod C would also likely hit the wreckage of pods A and B. ...

But the Hyperloop won't start in Los Angeles, and it won't end in San Francisco. Instead, it's proposed to start in Sylmar, 38 minutes north of Los Angeles Union Station aboard the Metrolink commuter train.

That means it takes longer to get to the Hyperloop from downtown LA than it would take to go to San Francisco.

It's unclear where the Hyperloop would end. Some maps show the line crossing the San Francisco Bay either on or adjacent to the Bay Bridge. But his cost projections don't mention the expense of crossing the bay. Other maps show a terminal south of Oakland. So either his Bay Area station will be in the East Bay, requiring a transfer to BART to reach San Francisco, or he's lowballing the cost of the project. The 11-year long effort to rebuild the eastern span of the Bay Bridge has cost \$6.3 billion, so another crossing won't be cheap.

In a brilliant display of self-promotion, Mr. Musk gave on a slow news month a massive dose of sensational distraction the media was hungry for. However a high speed shuttle from kinda close to Los Angeles and somewhere in the Bay Area is not a State wide transportation system. As it is there isn't a prototype let alone a working scale model of this proposal to see how well it will work or how much it will really cost. It will be considerably more complicated and expensive to build and run such a system serving the entire State than a single shuttle in between 2 cities. NB

[Big setback for California high-speed rail project](#)

SFGate Aug 16, 2013

Dealing a major blow to California's high-speed rail project, a Sacramento County judge ruled Friday that the agency overseeing the bullet train failed to comply with the financial and environmental promises made to voters when they approved initial funding for the project five years ago...

Dan Richard, the Brown-appointed chairman of the authority's board, said work on the project will continue until the judge determines the remedy.

In the meantime, he said the Legislature's financial appropriation remains valid.

This means that the monies the Legislature approved for rail construction last year the Judge accepts as legal and can be spent. NB

['Shovel-ready' bullet train construction delayed again](#)

Los Angeles Times-Aug 11, 2013

The start of construction on California's bullet train, one of the nation's largest "shovel ready" public work projects that was awarded stimulus funding three years ago by the Obama administration, is slipping past already-delayed target dates, interviews show.

[LA-to-SF high-speed rail plan delayed again](#)

Take Two KPCC Aug 12, 2013

The long-awaited high speed rail that is supposed to connect LA to San Francisco looks like it's delayed again. Fresno Bee reporter Tim Sheehan joins the show with an update.

This is a link to a radio show with an interview with Tim Sheehan, one of the best reporters on the High Speed Rail Project. A major problem is there are no final designs yet for construction for this project. The contractors are suppose to do the final designs which are needed before

construction can begin. As it is the contract with first set of contractors has yet to be signed. The land buying for even the first segment is going slowly. The easy part which is where High Speed Rail would share right of way with the BNSF has yet to be accepted by the railroad. NB

[Tata Steel wins deal for Saudi high-speed rail plan](#)

ArabianBusiness.com Aug 12, 2013

Tata Steel Europe has won an order to manufacture 60,000 tonnes of high-quality rail for a new high-speed line linking the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah in Saudi Arabia.

The new railway will allow millions of pilgrims to cross the 444km **(276 miles)** between the two cities at speeds of 320kmh **(199 miles per hour)**....

Work on producing the rail will start at the end of this year and is expected to continue throughout 2014.

Last year the Saudi Railways Organisation awarded the contract for the final phase of completing, running and maintaining the Haramain High-Speed Rail Project to a group of Spanish infrastructure, construction and technology companies.

What is it that people in Saudi Arabia know that we don't? The Spanish came in second for the contract for the work around Fresno with a higher competency score but at a slightly higher price. NB

[High-speed rail makes incremental progress on Chicago-St. Louis ...](#)

Progressive Rail Roding- Aug 14, 2013

The Chicago-St. Louis project is significant because of its scope and size, the number of stakeholders involved, and the fact that it was among the first to begin construction under the federal High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program.

[FRA issues RFP for next-gen railcars](#)

METRO Magazine Aug 12, 2013

The Request for Proposals (RFP) to manufacture approximately 35 new diesel-electric locomotives in America comes from a groundbreaking multi-state effort to jointly purchase standardized rail equipment to be used on state corridor routes in Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and Iowa in the Midwest and Washington, California and Oregon on the West Coast...

Selection of the manufacturer will occur in early 2014. Delivery of the locomotives is planned for 2016.

[Amtrak San Joaquin line to get new engines](#)

Fresno Bee- Aug 12, 2013

Amtrak's San Joaquin and Capitol Corridor routes will be among the rail lines that will eventually get newer, faster and cleaner locomotives for their passenger trains.

[Ex-Macomb mayor again on Amtrak board of directors](#)

Sacramento Bee- Aug 17, 2013

WASHINGTON -- A businessman from western Illinois is back on the board of directors at Amtrak. The passenger railroad said this week that ...

[Top 10 busiest Amtrak routes](#)

Greater Greater Washington-Aug 16, 2013

Rail use in America continues to climb ever higher. In July, Amtrak posted its busiest ridership month ever. But what are the busiest individual ...

These numbers only give passenger counts. The Surfliners for July was very close to the ridership of the Acelas. But what is more meaningful in transportation are the Passenger-Miles for a particular line and the revenue generated. These are much higher on the Long Distance Trains and longer distance corridor services than short distance trains. NB