

[Re: Ralph James Auburn-Bakersfield Trip](#)

Ralph James, Alta, CA, continues the discussion.

An interesting longer term possibility once additional schedules are authorized east of Sacramento would have the San Joaquin equipment from northbound train 703 travel to Auburn at midnight as a connection from the Starlight and return in the morning as train 702 for direct service to the San Joaquin Valley as well as a southbound connection to the Starlight from the foothills. The Starlight schedule is ideal for travel to the Central Coast and points east of Los Angeles on the Sunset/Eagle route, but currently has no connections beyond Sacramento at all.

Thanks again to Mr. Heywood for a good suggestion to get around an existing roadblock.

[Las Vegas: Party train service apparently is delayed again](#)

Los Angeles Times- Aug 2, 2013

The Xtrain, which would offer passenger train service between Fullerton's Amtrak station and a planned, yet-to-be-built depot in North Las Vegas, won't begin until "late 2014," according to the latest news release from Las Vegas Railway Express.

[Some Interesting Things about Freight and Passenger Trains](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

But compared to the past the railroads have much less double tracking today. Yet the railroads are carrying much more freight today. They are able to do this by running much longer, heavier and fewer freight trains than in the past. This has both good and bad news for rail passenger service.

[Oregon DOT unveils new Talgo train for Amtrak Cascades route](#)

Progressive Rail Roding-Jul 30, 2013

A Talgo-made passenger train made its official debut late last week in Oregon, where it will operate as part of Amtrak Cascades service.

[Woman accused of pulling knife on Amtrak conductor arrested in Davis](#)

Sacramento Bee (blog)- Jul 31, 2013

During their investigation, officers determined that she had been asked to exit the train at the Davis station because she had not paid for a ticket.

[RailPAC PHOTOS of the Month](#)

(June-July, 2013)

Here are 5 photos by RailPAC photographers. *Click on each photo to see it full size!* Contributions to this page are welcome. Send your jpg rail photos to RailPAC Photo Editor, at info@railpac.org.



2013 Steel Wheels Conference Joint RailPAC-NARP members meeting

Saturday, October 5, 2013
Port of San Francisco Community Room
Pier 40 • Embarcadero, San Francisco

10:30 am-3:00 pm with a break for lunch (*not provided*)

Doors Open 10:00 am

RailPAC members business meeting 3:00 pm

2013 Conference Program Includes

High Speed Rail – Dan Richard, CHSRA

Northern California Regional Rail – Dan Leavitt, SJVJPA

Caltrain Modernization – Marian Lee, PCJPB

Amtrak and the National Network – Robert Stewart, Chairman, NARP

[2013 Steel Wheels Conference, October 5th](#)

[GOING MORE PL\(ACE\)S](#)

Manteca Bulletin- Jul 31, 2013

Darryl Bain is thrilled at the possibility of the Altamont Corridor Express rail coming into downtown Manteca in the not-so-distant future.

[ACE looks to expand, speed up service](#)

Stockton Record- Aug 4, 2013

Instead setting a goal for electrified tracks, it plans to upgrade the diesel-powered locomotives currently used and adding passing tracks and other changes to shave about a half-hour off the trip between Stockton and San Jose. Currently it takes 2 hours and 12 minutes. Improvements would take that down to about 1 hour and 45 minutes.

[ACE studies expanding train service in Tracy](#)

Tracy Press- Aug 2, 2013

ACE officials were available Tuesday for three hours at the Tracy Transit Station, 50 Sixth St., to discuss the ACEforward expansion project, which includes six round-trip trains from Stockton to San Jose by 2018 and 10 round-trip trains by 2022, according to Dan Leavitt, manager of regional initiatives for ACE. ACE now offers four round trips on weekdays.

[In 1968, San Francisco's BART Was Billed as a 'Dream for Tomorrow](#)

The Atlantic Cities Jul 31, 2013

The late 1960s was a decidedly more optimistic time in the history of San Francisco's BART system. There's something almost hypnotic about this 1968 promotional video for the transit agency, titled "Along the Way." In it, viewers are hyped to the then-under construction system with a hippie-lite jingle about how BART will make life better for Bay Area residents

[BART budget outlook rosier than anticipated but capital needs remain a priority](#)

San Francisco Examiner - Jul 31, 2013

BART plans to direct \$384 million in operating surplus over the next five years toward capital improvements, such as the \$1.3 billion it needs to buy new rail cars and build a new train control center and maintenance yard.

[BART strike: Marathon negotiations conclude after nearly 14 hours; talks to ...](#)

San Jose Mercury News - Aug 4, 2013

OAKLAND -- Marathon negotiations between the two largest unions representing BART employees and management concluded shortly after 11:30 p.m. Saturday, with encouraging signs that the two sides were making progress to avert a Monday strike that ...

[BART strike: Roadshow's guide for the thinking commuter](#)

San Jose Mercury News- Aug 4, 2013

Buses from the East Bay will be jammed, and for Caltrain, "standing room only" will take on new meaning. For those solo drivers who insist on ...

I wonder if at times like these anyone regrets not rebuilding the Dumbarton Rail Bridge and adding rail service from the East Bay to San Francisco? NB

[Here's the presentation and video from last night's Union Station Master Plan community workshop](#)

The Source Aug 2, 2013

Couldn't attend last night's community workshop for the Union Station Master Plan? Above is the presentation given at the meeting and here is a 27-minute video that includes the presentation and commentary from Master Plan staff.

[Metrolink to Double Antelope Valley Line Sunday Service](#)

The Source Jul 30, 2013

Twice as many Metrolink trains will provide Sunday service on the Antelope Valley line beginning Aug. 17 with an increase from six to 12 trains, officials of the regional commuter rail service announced today. The service enhancement is designed to improve connectivity with trains going to and from Orange, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. The additional service is funded by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro).

[PERRIS VALLEY LINE: Judge signs off on settlement](#)

Press-Enterprise- Jul 31, 2013

The project is a 24-mile extension of Metrolink's six-county commuter train system. The plan is to send trains already running on Metrolink's 91 Line between Los Angeles Union Station and downtown Riverside farther east and south in Riverside County.

[The TAP card, discouraging mass transit one card at a time.](#)

City Watch Jul 29, 2013

There are too many unneeded difficulties in using the card, and they are very large and very annoying. Two of most glaring are the purchase of the TAP card, and later adding more money to the card. My latest travails of a TAP card started when it was suddenly no longer accepted on Culver City buses. Thinking it could be their mistake or computer glitch, I tried to use the card on a Metro Bus, but it was also denied.

[Monrovia hopes its 'Gold Town' will complement its 'Old Town'](#)

Pasadena Star-News Jul 26, 2013

The improvements will be based around the city's future Gold Line Station and will include a intermodal bus facility, open space and restoration of the historic Sante Fe Depot, which has been long abandoned and fallen into disrepair.

[Trolley Expansion Will Remap Ridership – and Land-Use Decisions](#)

Voice of San Diego Jul 23, 2013

San Diego's trolley service will soon connect the city's two densest areas, but the expansion's success depends on flipping development patterns in the communities in between....

It also extends the trolley's most-used leg — the blue line, which runs from San Ysidro to downtown. That means connecting the working-class communities north of the border and south of downtown to a major employment center, and to regional resources like UCSD.

[Fact Check: 'One of the Best Light Rail Lines' In the Country](#)

Voice of San Diego Aug 1, 2013

The blue line itself has a farebox recovery ratio of 76.4 percent, compared with the overall trolley system's 57 percent. Boston, the next highest performing system in the nation, has a 49 percent recovery ratio. Los Angeles comes in at 21 percent.

The blue line, clearly, does a great job of recouping its operating expenses.

So, how does that metric fare as a single, catch-all description of a transit line's effectiveness?

[Skunk Train clears tunnel, expands service](#)

Santa Rosa Press Democrat- Jul 30, 2013

Mendocino County's famed Skunk Train will resume operations from Willits on Wednesday, four months after a tunnel collapse near Fort Bragg largely closed the historic railroad.

[Why Mega-Projects Always End Up Costing More Than Expected](#)

The Atlantic Cities Jul 30, 2013

One thing's for sure: the people who predict the cost of urban mega-projects do a terrible job. Several years ago the University of Oxford scholar Bent Flyvbjerg, who's made a career researching mega-project mismanagement, analyzed 258 transportation infrastructure projects from around the world and found that nine in ten exceeded their cost estimates. The overruns were greater on rail projects than road projects but averaged 28 percent across the board.

[Railroad Bill Likely to Be Pushed Off Until Next Year](#)

Roll Call Policy Jul 29, 2013

Rail bills have yet to be introduced in either chamber — leaving insufficient time for lawmakers to take up the complex legislation in the brief window for congressional action in September. While the future of Amtrak has dominated early discussions about a rail bill, a fight between freight railroads and shippers who rely on the carriers is shaping up as a bigger stumbling block to a rail bill.

[House pulls its disastrous transportation spending bill](#)

D.C. Streetsblog Jul 31, 2013

While the Senate continues to consider amendments to its transportation budget bill, expected to pass this week, House leadership has canceled a vote on its own version. The bill, which passed the full Appropriations Committee a month ago, was scheduled to hit the floor this week for a vote by the entire House.

Though the House may do as Cantor says and vote on the bill in September, the conventional wisdom is that a continuing resolution will be necessary anyway, since the House and Senate bills are so disparate that a compromise is nearly impossible before the September 30 deadline.