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**Subject:** Major Changes approved for LA Union Station by LA Metro Board

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**From:** Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net)

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**To:** ntbraymer@yahoo.com;

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**Date:** Monday, October 28, 2013 9:31 AM

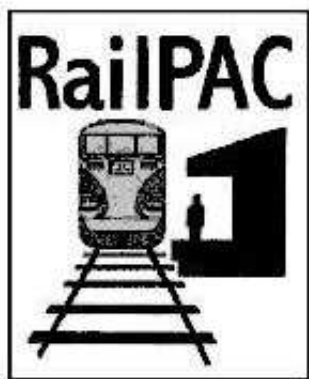
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## **RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for October 28, 2013**

**Edited by Noel T. Braymer**

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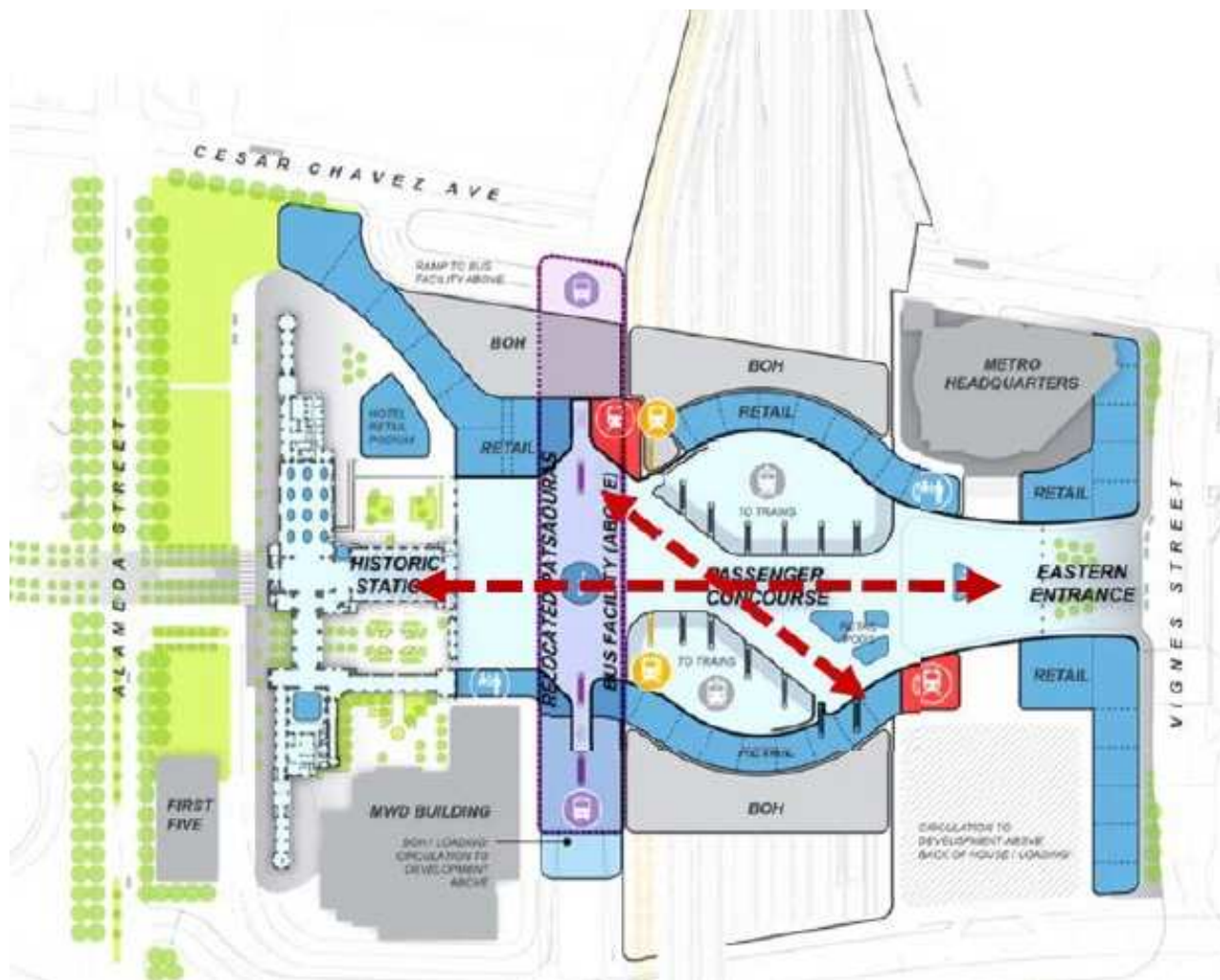
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**Rail Passenger Association of California**

**[www.railpac.org](http://www.railpac.org)**

**Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!**



This is the plan for overhauling Los Angeles Union Station just approved by the Board of LA Metro. The old pedestrian tunnel will be replaced with a large open area under the tracks to eliminate crowding and add more retail space at the Station. A new 2 story bus facility will be build along side of track one just west of the Gold Line Platforms. There will also be direct access under the tracks between the Gold Line to the Red and Purple Subway station as well as buses and the trains at original tracks. At the east end where the current bus area is will be use for more retail and office buildings.

### [Roundup of today's meeting of the Metro Board of Directors; here's what the agency's deciders decided](#)

The Source Oct 24, 2013

With no discussion, the Board approved the concept of an east-west concourse and north-south bus terminal as part of the ongoing Los Angeles Union Station Master Plan. [Here's a recent Source post](#) explaining the concept.

### [A Secret Opera Erupts Inside California's Biggest Train Depot](#)

Gizmondo October 21, 2013

Invisible Cities is an opera by Christopher Cerrone based on the novel by Italo Calvino that's produced by The Industry and LA Dance Project and staged in public within the station. The show, which runs until November 8, is a fully immersive and sometimes extremely jarring

### [California bullet train work begins, angering some locals](#)

San Francisco Business Times-Oct 21, 2013

Engineering work on California's \$68 billion high-speed rail system has begun in the Central Valley, where

the project is meeting some ...

### [Another View: Walters misleads readers about high-speed rail](#)

By Dan Richard

Sacramento Bee Oct 23, 2013

Once-critical impartial observers, like the Legislative Peer Review Group and the California State Auditor, now commend our approach and progress. Even when congressional critics thought they could embarrass or impede the project by asking the Government Accountability Office for an audit, the finding instead was that our ridership and cost projections were sound.

### [Latest Calif. High-Speed Rail Defense Banks on Folks Not Grasping ...](#)

Reason -Oct 21, 2013

The work continues in the face of massive uncertainty. A judge in August ruled in a lawsuit against the train's construction that the current plan is in violation of the Proposition 1A, the ballot initiative authorizing the project.

**The Reason Foundation regularly opposes any form of rail passenger service and produces a great deal of negative publicity which is often misleading or wrong. The Reason Foundation is bankrolled along with other similar organizations by a small group of very wealthy donors with much of their wealth based on fossil fuels. The same backers of the Reason Foundation are in many cases also backers of the Tea Party. NB**

### [Calif. high-speed rail begins search for artifacts](#)

Sacramento Bee-Oct 21, 2013

An archaeological report prepared by the High-Speed Rail Authority indicates crews could find decades-old artifacts on several properties in the area. It also casts doubt on the existence of the tunnels, which it says are "questioned by scholars, cultural resource specialists, and the general public alike."

However, it does not totally rule them out.

### [High speed thru Manteca is down the tracks a ways](#)

Manteca Bulletin-Oct 20, 2013

It is more likely that Altamont Corridor Express trains employing newer, more fuel efficient traditional heavy rail trains will connect Sacramento with the high speed station planned in Merced could be in place by 2029 if not earlier.

Rail planners have said those ACE trains are likely stop at the downtown Manteca station and a future Modesto station to do double duty as a connector for Sacramento riders to Los Angeles and as a commute train for San Joaquin County workers heading to jobs in Sacramento.

### [Progress made on rail reroute](#)

Santa Clarita Valley Signal-Oct 21, 2013

City officials are asking state agency to put planned train through a tunnel or just avoid SCV

### [New LAX runway cracking, city sues airport contractors](#)

Los Angeles Times-Oct 17, 2013

The city of Los Angeles sued R & L Brosamer, HNTB Corp., CH2M Hill Inc. and a joint venture involving Tutor-Saliba Corp. and O & G Industries Inc. The case was filed last week in Los Angeles County Superior Court in Torrance.

**Tutor-Saliba is the lead contractor for the HSR construction between Fresno and Madera. NB**

### [Ryanair Poland Plans Fuel Railway High-Speed Train Bonds](#)

Bloomberg-Oct 21, 2013

The start of domestic flights by Ryanair Holdings Plc (RYA) is turning up the heat on Poland's state railway, which is spending 36 billion zloty (\$12 billion) over seven years to modernize as competition for customers picks up. ...

The 340-kilometer (211 mile) journey from Warsaw to Gdansk on board the Pendolino will be cut in half to 2 hours 40 minutes, compared with as little as 2 hours 15 minutes for the 495-kilometer rail route between London and Paris.

**“Bonds sold to finance specific projects will always find buyers,” Malgorzata Kolakowska, CEO of ING Slaski, said in an interview in Warsaw on Oct. 18. “The condition is that the projects should be profitable.”** emphasis added

### [A train trip from LA to Sacramento starts on a bus](#)

Sacramento Bee- Oct 24, 2013

Getting on a bus at an airport train station might seem like a strange way to begin a train trip, but if you want to go from anywhere in Southern California to the Central Valley by train, you have to take a bus to Bakersfield first. Only a single track goes through the Tehachapis, and it's jammed with freight trains. And even if you could clear that track of freight trains, the speed limit of the winding route is just 25 mph.

### [How To Build a New Railroad Without Federal Money](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

The most critical segment for decent passenger rail service in California is a new alignment between Los Angeles and Bakersfield. The current route built mostly by hand with mules and black powder would still take around 4 hours even if millions for track improvements were spent to get between Los Angeles and Bakersfield. With a new fast link instead rail passenger service can run quickly and economically serve most of California. Lack of a decent alignment on this segment is what is preventing massive ridership growth on California rail passenger service. Until such a link is built investors are not willing to invest in California High Speed Rail.

### [NTSB Announces Effects Of The Government Shutdown](#)

AvStop Aviation News-Oct 23, 2013

Since reopening last Thursday, the Board has evaluated the impact that the shutdown had on current accident investigations and the agency's ability to launch investigators to the dozens of accidents that occurred during the furlough period. The impacts on major investigations include:

Metro-North Derailment and Track Worker Fatality: A two-day investigative hearing on the May 17, 2013, derailment and collision involving two Metro-North commuter trains in Bridgeport, Conn., and the May 28, 2013, accident in West Haven, Conn., in which a rail worker was struck and killed by a Metro-North passenger train, was canceled during the shutdown. The hearing has been rescheduled for November 6 & 7 ...

### [BART, unions end strike with tentative agreement](#)

San Francisco Chronicle- Oct 22, 2013

It's over - and just in time to ease Tuesday morning's commute. The four-day BART strike ended Monday night with a tentative agreement ...

### [BART workers on tracks don't get train warnings](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Oct 22, 2013

The two BART workers struck and killed by a train Saturday told supervisors they were using a safety procedure that the agency sought to improve after state regulators said it contributed to the death of a track inspector in 2008, according to BART officials.

Under the procedure, employees who go on or near tracks assume full responsibility for their own safety

- to the point that BART will not tell them when trains are coming, in order to force them to remain vigilant.

### [BART suspends practice of not warning of trains](#)

San Francisco Chronicle- Oct 24, 2013

Under the order, operators will either have to slow down to 27 mph or bring their trains to a halt until work is complete, depending on the circumstances, or be rerouted around job sites via single-tracking.

### [BART strike could have long-term impact on unions](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Oct 21, 2013

And, like the Republican Party in Washington, the unions appear to have suffered some serious damage. "The danger to labor is if the strike goes on for a while, then the unthinkable begins to be discussed - like banning all mass transit strikes," said Harley Shaiken, a labor economist at UC Berkeley.

### [Bikes get permanent spot on BART trains](#)

San Francisco Chronicle Oct 24, 2013

After three experiments with eliminating a commute-hour bicycle blackout- and much discussion - the BART Board of Directors voted unanimously to allow bikes aboard BART trains at all stations at all times.

### [Pen in Hand: The four monuments at the Tehachapi Loop](#)

Tehachapi News-Oct 22, 2013

Most people are aware of the Tehachapi Loop, the railroad engineering feature near Keene in which the tracks pass over themselves in a big circular loop to allow trains to gain elevation in a steep area without exceeding a 2.2 percent grade. Few residents realize, however, that there are not just one but actually four different monuments near the Tehachapi Loop, each one placed there by a different entity...

### [County supports Amtrak service, backs stop in Pueblo](#)

Pueblo Chieftain-Oct 22, 2013

Pueblo County has officially signed on to the effort to keep Amtrak's passenger train running through Southeastern Colorado, and to make ...

### [Shreveport, DART discuss possible high-speed rail service](#)

Bayoubuzz-Oct 21, 2013

Dallas Area Rapid Transit is discussing possible high-speed rail service between Dallas and Shreveport, according to a spokeswoman for the ...

### [A late arrival, Amtrak coming to Union Depot](#)

Pioneer Press-Oct 22, 2013

Crews on Monday prepared the rails before the final 150-foot section of track was moved into place to connect St. Paul's Union Depot to tracks of the Canadian Pacific and Union Pacific railroads. The connection of old and new track brings regularly scheduled Amtrak service to a passenger-loading platform at Union Depot closer to hand.

### [Amtrak offers preview of new long-distance rail cars](#)

Washington Post (blog)- Oct 24, 2013

New Amtrak long distance cars being built by CAF USA at its Elmira, N.Y., facility.

Amtrak officials are offering a preview of the rail system's new long distance passenger cars — set to begin field tests this winter.

### [Amtrak's Great Dome car will return to the rails](#)



RailwayAge Magazine-Oct 24, 2013

Passengers riding Amtrak Illinois Zephyr trains between Chicago and Quincy will have a unique opportunity this fall to view the change of seasons when the historic "Great Dome" railcar is part of Trains 380 and 383 from Nov. 5 to Nov. 22.

### [Oakland: Man assaults two women and Amtrak employee near train ...](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Oct 24, 2013

OAKLAND -- A man who randomly walked up to two women and punched them in the face, punched a train conductor, then pulled a knife on a ...

### [Miller: Wooing Hispanics to ride Amtrak](#)

Fresno Bee-Oct 24, 2013

The non-resident driver's licensing law recently signed by Gov. Jerry Brown could help to provide a safer and more secure means for Hispanics to use Amtrak without fear of being jailed, deported or otherwise harassed for their racial background.

### [Amtrak rolls on 40 years later, destination still uncertain](#)

Fort Worth Star Telegram- Oct 25, 2013

However, Amtrak has struggled for survival nearly every year since its first trains left the station on May 1, 1971. Now it's caught in the middle of the fight in Washington to cut federal budget deficits and spending. Some lawmakers want to eliminate it altogether. Others want to turn over pieces of its 22,000-mile network to private operators, an effort that some Amtrak supporters say could spell the end of the national passenger rail network.

### [The Shocking Things I've Overheard on the Acela](#)

Slate Magazine-Oct 25, 2013

On Amtrak, powerful people talk loudly and spill secrets.

This is conclusion based on five years' field research commuting on Amtrak's Acela between cities along the East Coast.

By now, you've heard about former NSA director Michael Hayden, who on Thursday talked nonstop to a reporter—on background—as the train went north from Washington, D.C. toward New York City. A few seats behind Hayden was Tom Matzzie, former Washington director of political group MoveOn.org, who started live-tweeting his eavesdropping.

### [How Utah Turned Its Unpopular Public Transit System Into a Hit](#)

The Atlantic Cities Oct 21, 2013

It wasn't always the case that Utah was in a hurry to build public transit. In 1992, voters rejected a tax measure that would have funded a light rail line in Salt Lake Valley. In 1997, at the groundbreaking for what would become the successful TRAX system, protestors held up signs that read: "Light Rail Kills Children." Not exactly a warm welcome.

### [Dick Spotswood: Regional government is changing Marin's landscape](#)

Marin Independent Journal-Oct 23, 2013

Many transit advocates are demanding state legislation to prohibit bus, rail and ferry workers from striking. That's already the norm in labor-friendly New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

### [Transient accused of vicious attack on woman at San Mateo Caltrain station](#)

San Francisco Examiner - Oct 23, 2013

The woman managed to break free of the suspect and call police. Chamale-Boch was located later that evening with "scratches on his face," prosecutors said.

### [Construction Authority Kicks-Off Engineering Phase Of Metro Gold ...](#)

Sacramento Bee-Oct 24, 2013

Today, the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority (Construction Authority) hosted a kick-off meeting for the much-anticipated Azusa to Montclair segment of the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension light rail line. The 12.3-mile project will extend light rail service from the current terminus under construction in the city of Azusa, to the cities of Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Pomona, Claremont and Montclair.

### [Whittier Council hires lobbyist for light rail extension](#)

Whittier Daily News Oct 24, 2013

M Advisors of Los Angeles will be hired for \$90,000 to advocate on behalf of Whittier and the Washington Boulevard Coalition before the Metropolitan Transportation Authority makes a decision in the spring of 2014. Other coalition members include the cities of Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs and Commerce.

### [Metrolink Cancels Holiday Toy Express for 2013](#)

Patch.com-Oct 24, 2013

Decked out with holiday decorations, music and the Christmas spirit, the annual Holiday Toy Express won't be making a stop at the Chatsworth Station due to a tight Metrolink budget.

### [Train wreck in Ludlow still under investigation](#)

Daily Press Oct 23, 2013

According to Kent, 14 railcars derailed on a westbound train destined for Fresno and nine railcars from an eastbound train destined for Kansas.

A small fire was confined to the railroad ties along the track, according to a news release from San Bernardino County Fire Department.

### [United Airlines fined \\$1.1 million for O'Hare tarmac delays, largest ever](#)

Chicago Sun-Times - Oct 25, 2013

United Airlines Inc. was fined a record \$1.1 million Friday for stranding 939 passengers for more than three hours on the tarmac at O'Hare International Airport during a bout of severe storms. Fifty-one of the trapped passengers were unable to access ...

### [BoltBus to launch Bay Area-Los Angeles service](#)

Contra Costa Times-Oct 18, 2013

The California bus wars will heat up Oct. 31 when BoltBus starts making runs between the Bay Area and Southern California. BoltBus, a subsidiary of Greyhound, will hit the highways with such extras as free Wi-Fi and power outlets, leather seats and added legroom ...

**The stops for this new service are at Los Angeles Union Station, the San Jose Diridon Station and the West Oakland BART Station.NB**

### [Was TIGER Eliminated in the Shutdown Deal?](#)

DC.STREETBLOG.ORG Oct, 24, 2013

Soon after the government shutdown ended, we heard murmurs that the TIGER grant program for innovative transportation projects had been a casualty of the negotiations.

### [TIFIA-Backed, Privately-Operated Texas Toll Road Flirts With Default](#)

DC.STREETBLOG.ORG Oct 23, 2013

It's been nothing but headaches for Texas State Highway 130. The road — or rather, SH 130 Concession

Company LLC, which operates the road — got a credit downgrade to junk bond status in April, and now it's been deemed even junkier with another downgrade from Moody's last week. Traffic projections for the road failed to materialize, and so did the expected revenue. Now, the road could end up defaulting on its debts — including a \$430 million federal loan.



This is a view of what is being planned in the near future around Los Angeles Union Station. This includes run-through tracks at the station, a new bus station parallel to the tracks by track one and greatly improved access to the trains replacing the existing tunnel under the tracks. The semi-transparent buildings in this drawing represent locations for potential new commercial buildings at Los Angeles Union Station.

## We Get Emails

### Re: Rant about problems with Caltrain

You mention that Caltrain costs less than BART, but the quality of service is awful. Allow me to vent. I've been a commuter on Caltrain for a couple different periods starting before the introduction of the "baby bullets." Caltrain cannot--and does not--handle the amount of people who actually WANT to take the train. Every day during rush-hour there are some trains that are packed to the gills, and I'm not against having to stand up for a few miles, but the problem is the small doors and walkways cannot efficiently unload and load, so there are trains that for the past several months are late every day Mon-Thurs. Instead of adjusting the schedule, they just pretend they are offering faster service than they really are.

Whenever there is a suicide, accident, or break-down, we suffer massive delays and basically imprisonment inside stuffy stopped trains. The local media will report that service was restored in two hours, which sounds bad enough; however delays linger for much longer than that during commute times because subsequent trains become late and don't make up any time. There is almost never adequate



information announced onboard or at stations. The P.A.s at platforms are almost never used in these situations, and conductors usually don't know what's going on either. Twice I have been stranded at a multi-platform station when, after an hour of waiting, one train finally got going but from a different platform, without any announcement.

The break-downs have most definitely increased in the past year compared to the past. I realize that they plan on having new engines for the electrified service coming in several years, but what about all the torture we will have to suffer in the meantime? They are turning off a lot of people and losing a lot of future riders.

I would love to see some statistics not just for on-time performance, but indicating how often in 2013 there have been trains that are 20 minutes late or more--the kinds of delays that any other rail service owning its own double tracks does not do to its riders with nearly such frequency.

Thomas Travers

**The problem in the Bay Area for rail service is one of priority. BART is doing fine financially and is getting money to build extensions in outlying area. But Caltrain has struggled year to year for funding just to continue to operate. Money which could have been used to rebuild the Dumbarton Rail Bridge and expand service to the East Bay instead went to expand BART and then some. The main problem for rail transit in the Bay Area and most places is each agency is like a little kingdom and they are all fighting each other for funding and think they are competing with each other for riders. What passengers want is seamless service with single ticketing and easy well timed connections to different services. That doesn't exist in the Bay Area. The connection to SFO via Caltrain is not good in either direction. The BART connections at SFO leaves much to be desired. Making transfers between just Caltrain, BART and Muni is in no way user friendly. An outside agency like the MTC needs to coordinate the ticketing and connections between the different services. Something like the MTC also needs to prioritize spending according to need not politics. NB**



At the San Francisco Caltrain Station the gates are locked right up to boarding time and passengers back up into the station as one passenger at a time has their ticket inspected before being allow on the train.

Photo by Noel T. Braymer

**Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Rail Passenger Association of California.**

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