
Subject: Expo Line reduced LA Traffic, find out what's it like to get derailed on the Crescent!

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

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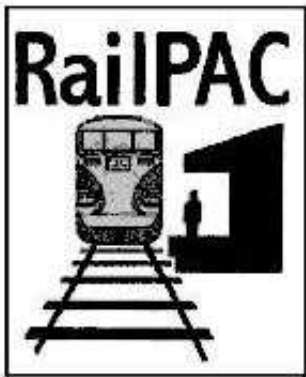
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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for December 23, 2013

Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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



A new Christmas wreath on the back wall of the Waiting Room of Los Angeles Union Station . Photo by Noel T. Braymer

[Expo Line leads to drop in driving](#)

USC News-Dec 16, 2013

Los Angeles residents who live near a Metro Expo Line station on Exposition Boulevard reduced the number of miles they drove and tripled their rail ridership since the rail line opened last year, according to a new USC study.

Residents living within a half-mile of the new station traveled 10 to 12 fewer miles daily by car — a 40 percent decrease — after the new rail line opened, the study showed.

[LA's New Light Rail Line Is Luring Angelenos Out of Their Cars](#)

Streetsblog Capitol Hill Dec 16, 2013

Researchers called the changes in travel behavior among residents near the new transit line “striking.” After the line opened, households within half a mile of an Expo station drove 10 to 12 fewer miles each day relative to the control group — a reduction of about 40 percent. Those households also reduced their vehicle carbon emissions about 30 percent.

[The Reason Foundation Still Isn't Happy About Expo](#)

Press Telegram Dec 19, 2013

Not so fast, said Adrian Moore, vice president of policy and an expert on transportation issues for the libertarian Reason Foundation. When we phoned him this morning to get a less-often-heard point of view, Moore said the USC research is credible but doesn't eliminate some important issues.

[Los Angeles transportation needs more bang for buck](#)

California Economy Reporting (blog)-Dec 18, 2013

Los Angeles itself poses a unique challenge. The metro area of L.A. is actually far denser than the metro area of New York City, and L.A.'s transportation network is already crippled by car use. To solve the

congestion problem, vehicles need to be taken off the street. It may sound an impossible task, but Jacobberger points to a Boston study that found that removing just a small percentage of the cars leads to congestion reduction...

Jacobberger points to the West Side of Los Angeles as an example where the common credo of not building developments in already congested areas doesn't fit the data. "We tend to oppose housing more than other developments," he said. "Over 300,000 people a day travel into the West Side, so a lot of that traffic isn't from too many people living over there, it's not enough people living there."

[I Hate Driving in LA!](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

I Love LA, and I love going to LA. But most people, particularly those who live in LA know that its traffic is a mess. I and others would love rail alternatives to driving to get around to more of LA. But the worst traffic in LA is where there are the fewest alternatives available to driving. This area can be called the Westside or the 405 Corridor. Just about every other freeway which junctions with the 405 such as the 5, Ventura, 10, or Century are where much of the traffic congestion is.

[PD editorial on high-speed rail was 'misguided'](#)

Santa Rosa Press Democrat-Dec 14, 2013

We continue to move this project forward in the way California voters envisioned. Your editorial states that the \$1 billion contract for the first segment of the project is on hold as a result of a ruling earlier this month by the Surface Transit Board. That is not true. The board's ruling does not affect the contract and or work now underway in the Central Valley.

[Soil drilling begins in Fresno in advance of high-speed rail ...](#)

Fresno Bee-Dec 17, 2013

Geologists began drilling holes and collecting soil samples Tuesday in downtown Fresno in preparation for the first stages of construction on California's proposed high-speed train project.

[5 Firms Seek Bids for Next Leg of Bullet Train](#)

KMJ Now-Dec 18, 2013

Rail Authority CEO Jeff Morales announced the applications Wednesday from five U.S.-based consortiums. If their qualifications are approved, the firms could bid to perform engineering and construction work on the leg between Fresno and Bakersfield.

The contract is expected to be worth \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion, depending on the bids.

[Japan's new Series E7 bullet train: Understated, luxurious](#)

CNET -Dec 17, 2013

Japan just can't get enough shiny, new trains.

While California is up to its eyeballs in legal battles over its proposed high-speed railway, Japan is adding another branch to its extensive bullet train network, which celebrates its 50th anniversary next year.

Operator JR East has begun tests of its swishy new Series E7 bullet train, which starts runs from Tokyo to Nagano in the spring, then the Sea of Japan coastal area in 2015, and possibly Osaka after 2025.

[Spain: 30K tickets sold for Barcelona-Paris high-speed train](#)

ANSAméd- Dec 16, 2013

The tickets ranging from 59-170 euros were sold in two weeks, Renfe said.

The new line has five round-trip connections daily, taking just 6 hours and 25 minutes. Two more international rail links were inaugurated yesterday: Madrid-Marseille (7 hours, tickets at 89-171 euros) and Barcelona-Toulouse (3 hours).

[Fourth Railway Package: lifting market entry barriers to improve ...](#)

European Parliament (press release)-Dec 17, 2013

Measures to improve domestic rail passenger services by opening up public service contracts to more competition, giving operators fairer access to infrastructure and harmonizing safety certification to improve interoperability and get innovative new rolling stock on the rails faster were approved in the Transport and Tourism Committee on Tuesday.

[High-speed rail construction will have effect on downtown buildings](#)

The State Journal-Register-Dec 16, 2013

Construction to allow for faster trains on the Third Street line in Springfield likely will mean building purchases and relocations. Just how many and where on the section of rail between Ash Street and Ridgely Avenue is unknown.

[Siemens lands high-performance passenger locomotive order](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Dec 19, 2013

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has issued a Notice of Intent to Award to Siemens Rail Systems USA for approximately 35 high-performance diesel-electric locomotives for several Midwestern and West Coast states using funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation. IDOT is leading the multi-state locomotive procurement on behalf of the Departments of Transportation from Illinois, California, Michigan, Washington, and Missouri.

[Siemens Sacramento to build 35 diesel-electric locomotives](#)

Sacramento Business Journal-Dec 20, 2013

In all, Siemens will be building 35 diesel-electric locomotives on behalf of transportation agencies in California, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and Washington, all of them capable of reaching 125 mph and meeting the most strict federal standards for emissions possible.

[EU triples funding for rail innovation](#)

EUROPA - PRESS RELEASES 16 Dec 2013

That means that over the next 7 years, almost €1 billion of public and private funds will be spent on research and innovation to get more passengers and freight onto Europe's railways..

To increase rail traffic, the industry must deliver better services and provide an attractive alternative to passengers and businesses.

To help achieve this, the Commission has adopted "Shift2Rail" a new public-private partnership to drive innovation in rail. The goal is to reduce rail operating costs by up to 50% ; to increase capacity by up to 100% and increase reliability by up to 50%.



A recent view of construction of the new transportation center under construction in Anaheim next to the current train station. In the background is the Honda Center Arena which with Angels Stadium will be served by the new transportation center. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

[Amtrak Monthly Performance Report](#)

Reported by Anthony Lee, RailPAC Associate Director

Each month Amtrak compiles a Performance Report, covering many financial and financial items. Their full (unaudited) report can be found on www.amtrak.com by going to the list of items at the bottom of the home page and selecting “News & Media” then select “Reports & Documents” and then look at the items at the bottom of the page. In this report we have selected certain items that highlight what is on that 61 page report for the month of October, 2013.

[Efforts for Amtrak passenger rail in Shreveport continue](#)

Shreveport Times-Dec 19, 2013

Louisiana’s transportation department announced plans this month to study a potential Amtrak route across north Louisiana, connecting Texas to Mississippi. Similarly, Texas is studying additional stops connecting Shreveport and Dallas-Fort Worth. Both studies are based on the use of existing freight tracks — Union Pacific or Kansas City Southern Railway — to transport passengers. But Texas’ also calls for a long-term plan to establish double tracks so passenger and freight traffic can travel simultaneously.

[Amtrak Rolls Back Refund Policy for Some Passenger Tickets](#)

NBC 10 Philadelphia-Dec 17, 2013

Amtrak is putting the brakes on a ticket refund policy that allows certain “no show” passengers on the rail system to get their money back if they ...

[Getting Derailed on the Crescent for Thanksgiving!](#)

Story and Photos by RailPAC member Alexander Friedman

I love traveling cross-country by train and I have done so every year for over a decade. For this

Thanksgiving holidays I decided to take, for the first time the Sunset Limited. Then after visiting New Orleans for a day, I planned to transfer onto the Crescent for a trip straight to Washington D.C. I was also going to visit my father who lives just west of our nation's capital, for a nice Thanksgiving celebration. I was truly excited about riding these two routes, the few that I haven't traveled yet.

[Transpo Agencies Are Terrible at Predicting Traffic Levels](#)

DC.STREETS.BLOG.ORG Dec 17, 2013

Americans' travel behavior is changing dramatically. It seems like not a week passes without a new report about the decline in driving. But are state and local transportation agencies — which are responsible for much of the nation's highway and transportation planning — keeping up with the facts on the ground? A review of the evidence by the State Smart Transportation Initiative finds the answer is a definitive “No.”

[Even an 85-mph toll road can't fix Austin's traffic tangle](#)

NPR Dec 17, 2013

Austin is the largest city in America with only one interstate running through it. Just six lanes wide through downtown, Interstate 35 backs up for miles regularly. A tolled bypass to the east of Austin was supposed to help relieve the bottleneck. But Texas state Highway 130 was built so far to the east that practically nobody uses it.

In desperation, the state raised the toll road speed limit to 85 mph, the fastest in the nation. The idea was that drivers could drop the top, drop the hammer, crank the music and fly right past Austin.

It's a beautiful, wide-open highway — but it's empty, and the builders are nearly bankrupt. So now, the state is considering tolling Interstate 35 and making the toll road free — as well as building a light-rail system and putting in more bike lanes.

[Chicago's smart card debacle and privatization](#)

The Nation Dec 10, 2013

Why, indeed, was this massive change in how Chicagoans pay for their bus and train fares initiated in the first place? “What was wrong with the old system? It worked fine,” ran the first comment on the Chicago Tribune's article on all the abuse the poor bus drivers are facing from frustrated customers.... Chicagoans who choose to turn bus cards into bank cards will be socked with hidden fees: \$1.50 every time they withdraw cash using your bus-card-cum-bank-card from an ATM, \$2.95 every time they add money using a personal credit card. Two dollars for every phone call with a service representative (or, oops, each “Operator Assisted Telephone Inquiry”). Two bucks for a paper copy of their account. An “account research fee” of \$10 an hour.

[California commission allocates millions for transportation projects](#)

Progressive Rail Roding- Dec 16, 2013

The latest round of funding drives the total amount of transportation funding allocated in 2013 beyond the \$3 billion barrier, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) officials said in a press release...

Highlights of the most recent allocation include \$1.3 million to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority for safety improvements to the Branford Street grade crossing.

[SMART lands funds to extend service; board OKs new station](#)

Progressive Rail Roding- Dec 19, 2013

SMART lands funds to extend service; board OKs new station for Sonoma County Airport

[Trains could be key route to downtown arena](#)

Merced Sun-Star - Dec 18, 2013

The proposal comes as the Kings and the city circulated an arena environmental impact report this week

analyzing traffic and other potential impacts from the planned project at Downtown Plaza. While nearly 100 percent of event-goers at Sleep Train Arena in Natomas arrive in cars, the downtown arena opens up a variety of new transportation possibilities. Some arena-goers are expected to come over on foot from downtown offices and restaurants. Others may arrive on Capitol Corridor trains at the depot a few blocks north of the proposed arena. A small number are expected to bike to events.

[Trolley car question: Who will pay?](#)

Sacramento Bee-Dec 18, 2013

More than a half-century after streetcars disappeared from local thoroughfares, leaders in Sacramento and West Sacramento want to bring them back to help reshape downtown as a more convenient and vibrant place to live, work and play. But to do it, they likely will need financial help from hundreds of property owners.

[Ripon might secure ACE rail service](#)

Manteca Bulletin-Dec 18, 2013

ACEforward currently has goals that call for improving the existing service between Stockton and San Jose, from adding frequencies and reducing travel time, to improving service liability and safety.

Leavitt, during his presentation, indicated that extended services call for adding downtown Manteca and downtown Modesto in the near term and, subsequently, downtown Turlock and downtown Merced.

This plan integrates ACE into a unified Northern California rail service, extending to and connecting with the high-speed rail system.

[Altamont Corridor Express train service welcomes millionth passenger](#)

Lodi News-Sentinel-Dec 19, 2013

The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission celebrated a milestone Wednesday as the Altamont Corridor Express welcomed aboard its one millionth passenger late Tuesday, somewhere between San José and Stockton.

[Bay Area sets transit spending targets](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Dec 18, 2013

After 2 1/2 hours of debate, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission approved a framework that dedicates about \$10 billion in expected local, state and federal transit revenues through 2040. The strategy follows the blueprint outlined in the recently adopted Plan Bay Area, which links transportation and land-use planning. About \$3.2 billion of that money is to come from California's cap-and-trade revenues. At this point, those revenues are projections, but they are expected to be shared with metropolitan transportation organization.

[Farewell to Candlestick](#)

Pleasanton Weekly Dec 19, 2013

After having dealt with Candlestick Park and its miserable freeway access since he arrived in San Francisco as team president, he can rattle off the advantages of the new Santa Clara location. It has 13 freeway interchanges within four miles (Candlestick has two to Highway 101). It also offers light rail connections throughout Silicon Valley, plus a CalTrain or ACE connection to the Central Valley.

[What Is Happening In Oakland? A Ballpark Roundup](#)

Athletics Nation-Dec 18, 2013

In entirely separate news, a group of Bay Area political and business figures announced a proposal for a baseball stadium near Jack London Square, at the site of Howard Terminal within the Port of Oakland. ... Potentially the biggest issue for the Howard Terminal Site is transit accessibility. Currently, the closest BART Stations are 12th St and West Oakland, each of which is located roughly a mile from the ballpark.

But let's be honest — unless some major safety improvements are made, most people aren't going to want to walk a mile from either station to Howard Terminal, especially West Oakland. There have been discussions of a potential infill station along the San Francisco-Richmond line, which would allow for a one-seat ride from anywhere in the system to a new Jack London Square station, but the station would be a solid five blocks from Jack London Square itself.

[Caltrain...at Capacity](#)

The Almanac Online (blog)- Dec 16, 2013

Which is a tough sell in this hyper-individualistic era. But, yes, Caltrain's difficulties affect everyone in the region. When the commuter line reaches capacity, its overflow...flows right back onto the roads. The same traffic-clogged roads everyone complains about. If you are a commuter, or simply a local resident, there is no ignoring Caltrain.

[BART labor talks snag on new glitch](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Dec 17, 2013

Just when it looked like things couldn't get worse at BART, it turns out the district messed up yet another contract already approved by one of its ...

[BART and unions reach contract deal](#)

San Francisco Chronicle - Dec 21, 2013

BART and its labor unions have reached a deal that resolves all contract issues and brings to an end a nine-month dispute, agency officials said Saturday.

[Killed BART workers had backs turned to oncoming train](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Dec 16, 2013

Neither of the two BART workers who were struck and killed by a train while working on the tracks near Walnut Creek was acting as a lookout ...

[City Makes Move for Taylor Yard, Open Space for River Revitalization](#)

EastsiderLA Dec 19, 2013

City staff has been directed to “immediately enter” into negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad Company to purchase what is known as Taylor Yard parcel G2, a 42-acre wedge of riverfront that sits between the L.A. River and Rio de Los Angeles State Park. The city has been interested in purchasing the property, which has been described as a “crown jewel” of riverfront properties, for more than a decade.

[Take Metrolink and Metro to 2014 Tournament of Roses celebrations](#)

The Source Dec 20, 2013

Metrolink will operate a Sunday schedule on the San Bernardino and Antelope Valley lines on Christmas Day, Wednesday, Dec. 25, and operate a modified schedule on New Year's Day, Wednesday, Jan. 1, which will allow people to attend the 2014 Tournament of Roses Parade® in Pasadena...

From L.A. Union Station, passengers can transfer without additional charge to the Metro Gold Line and get off at the Del Mar, Memorial Park, Lake or Allen stations. The parade route is just a short walk from the stations.

[Portland Streetcar Company Hired to Oversee DTLA Streetcar](#)

LA CURBED Dec 18, 2013

The beleaguered Downtown streetcar project, which doesn't yet have a confirmed pricetag or opening date, is getting back on track with a new project manager and a possible infusion of federal cash.

[L.A.'s Union Station in black-and-white](#)

L.A. Times

Los Angeles Times photographer Mark Boster spent several days shooting video and stills of Union Station in November.

[FlyAway bus fare goes from \\$7 to \\$8 for Union Station-LAX trip](#)

Daily Breeze - Dec 17, 2013

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners today approved a one-way fare increase from \$7 to \$8 for travelers taking the FlyAway bus between Union Station and Los Angeles International Airport. The airport shuttle service racked up ...

December 19, 2013, Amtrak opens the Los Angeles Metropolitan Lounge



Amtrak VP Operations D.J. Stadler performed the ribbon cutting together with L.A. City Council member Tom LaBonge for the new sleeping car passenger lounge at LAUS. Art Leahy, CEO of Metro, owner of LAUS and RailPAC President Paul Dyson were guests at the opening. The lounge will be open from 5.00am to 10.00pm daily. Photo by Alex Gillman

We Get Emails

Re: Now you need a ticket to sit at Union Station,

So you cannot sit at the station and wait for someone?

So... how do you wait for your aunt to arrive on the Chief?

And, why is America turning into a police state.

William Lindley

Homelessness is a social problem, and like most social problems it is difficult and expensive to deal with. Many people don't want to spend money to deal with homelessness and so the police gets stuck with this and many other social problems. This doesn't save money and the police are not thrilled to be stuck with these problems. I have in my job over the years dealt with many

homeless. Many don't look "homeless", they work very hard to look clean, neat and normal. A healthier economy would help many homeless. But for many homeless I've met their problem isn't being homeless, their problems led to them becoming homeless. Many have been through the "system" often being arrested, some sent to prison. Many even though they don't look or sound "crazy" have been through the mental health system and are often proscribed "Medication" which mask symptoms but don't cure them. Often they go off their meds because the side effects are worse than their symptoms. Many homeless also have drug and alcohol problems. In the past we didn't see as many homeless because they would have spent most of their life in mental hospitals. Most wouldn't want to go back to mental hospitals, many prefer jail but since the 1980's most mental patients have been released and given medication to save money. Until there is a demand to find cures for the problems that cause homelessness, unless you have a ticket you won't be able to sit in the Waiting Room of Union Station. NB

Re: Vegas Rail Service

Whatever happened to plans for a train between L.A and Las Vegas? Such a good idea!

Rosegood

Which Vegas Train do you mean? There are 2 companies working on running luxury trains from Southern California to Las Vegas. Most of the publicity has been for Las Vegas Railway Express or the X trains. They claimed they had a trainset and agreement with the UP to run a service from Fullerton to Las Vegas. This summer the UP announced they cancelled the agreement for the X Train and would keep the money the X Train company had given them. Most people have written off the X Train after that. The company is still around and doing what they do best: issuing Press Releases. They now hope to work out a deal for Amtrak to operate their train. There is also Xpresswest which is seeking to operate High Speed Trains over I-15 from Victorville to Las Vegas. There are proposals to extend this train from Victorville to Palmdale and then Los Angeles. They were planning on getting a loan to build this project from the Department of Transportation. This year their application was rejected on the grounds that their trains wouldn't be built in this Country, which is a requirement for the loan. This company which has support from some of the casinos is still around. Senator Harry Reid of Nevada who is the Senate Majority Leader is still trying to get a government backed loan for this project. NB

Los Angeles residents who live near a Metro Expo Line station on Exposition Boulevard reduced the number of miles they drove and tripled their rail ridership since the rail line opened last year, according to a new USC [study](#).

Residents living within a half-mile of the new station traveled 10 to 12 fewer miles daily by car — a 40 percent decrease — after the new rail line opened, the study showed.

- See more at: <http://news.usc.edu/#%21/article/57789/expo-line-leads-to-drop-in-drivin>

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

The RailPAC Mission: Passenger Rail advocacy, Publications...both print and electronic, Representation at regional meetings, and Rail education.

Join us! More memberships increase our strength in presenting the case for rail to policymakers at all levels!

You can send your comments to me at nbraymer@railpac.org

For those who would like an additional copy of the eNewsletter with plain text (minus photos and graphics) just email me at nbraymer@railpac.org with

your name and email address. NB

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