
Subject: Snow,Cold Stops US Trains, Cap and Trade can fund Ca HSR

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

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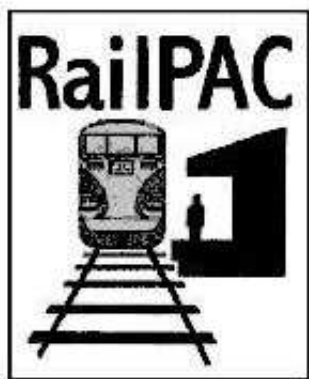
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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for January 13, 2014

Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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Rail Passenger Association of California

www.railpac.org

Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!



**The 2014 Annual Steel Wheels Conference
 Saturday, February 1, 2014
 Los Angeles Metro Board Room
 at Union Station, Los Angeles
 9:30 am – 3:30 pm • Doors Open 9:00 am**

[For More Information and Registration Click Here!](#)

Highlights include: Dan Richard, Chair of the California High Speed Rail Authority will talk about Cap and Trade funds and the status of the project. Panels will discuss the Future of the National Network, building locomotives in California, LOSSAN Under new management, how Metrolink can meet its potential, and more. Speakers and presenters include Senator Alex Padilla, (invited) L.A. City Council member Tom LaBonge, Glendale City Council member Ara Najarian, LOSSAN Chair Fred Strong and other distinguished guests from government and industry.

[Chicago Amtrak Passengers Stranded in Trains For 15 Hours After ...](#)

Headlines & Global News-Jan 7, 2014

Chicago Amtrak passengers who were forced to sleep on three trains that became stuck in the heavy snow of northern Illinois have slowly started trickling into their respective destinations.

The Southwest Chief from Los Angeles, the California Zephyr from the San Francisco Bay area and Quincy's Illinois Zephyr were locked in by piles of snow blowing onto the tracks, blocking trains from moving around 3 p.m. on Monday.

[500 passengers spend night on stranded Amtrak trains](#)

Chicago Tribune- Jan 7, 2014

More than 500 passengers spent the night aboard three Amtrak trains stranded 80 miles west of Chicago by ice and snow that had drifted over the tracks, officials said.

The trains -- the Southwest Chief from Los Angeles, the Illinois Zephyr from Quincy and the California Zephyr from the San Francisco Bay area -- were halted around 5 p.m. Monday near Mendota, according to Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari.

[Weather forces additional Amtrak cancellations](#)

The State Journal-Register-Jan 7, 2014

Weather woes continued for Amtrak on Tuesday with cancellation of more than 20 trains at the Chicago hub, including six of eight trains on the ...

[Cold weather continues to plague Metra, Amtrak](#)

WGNtv.com-Jan 9, 2014

The below-freezing temperatures have caused major problems and delays for Metra for a fourth straight day. By 7:30 a.m., three trains on ..

[Amtrak cancels 4 train runs with BN stops for Friday](#)

Bloomington Pantagraph-Jan 10, 2014

NORMAL — Amtrak service to Central Illinois remains incomplete Friday as the passenger rail service continues to recover from the harsh ...

[Cold weather still impacts Amtrak](#)

Washington Post (blog)-Jan 8, 2014

Amtrak said it is running Wednesday on a modified schedule on its Northeast Corridor lines because of the extreme cold weather that is ..

[Extreme Cold Has Amtrak, NJ Transit, SEPTA Making Some Changes](#)

KYW Newsradio-Jan 6, 2014

PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — Commuters who use AMTRAK trains may need to check the schedule in the morning, because fewer trains will be ...

[Minor Amtrak derailment near St. Louis; Passengers bused to Chicago](#)

ABC7Chicago.com Jan 9, 2014

The train partially derailed when two sets of wheels on train No. 302 lost contact with the track near Wood River, in between the St. Louis and Alton stations, just before 8 a.m., Amtrak said.

[California's cap-and-trade program could fund high-speed rail](#)

Grist-Jan 7, 2014

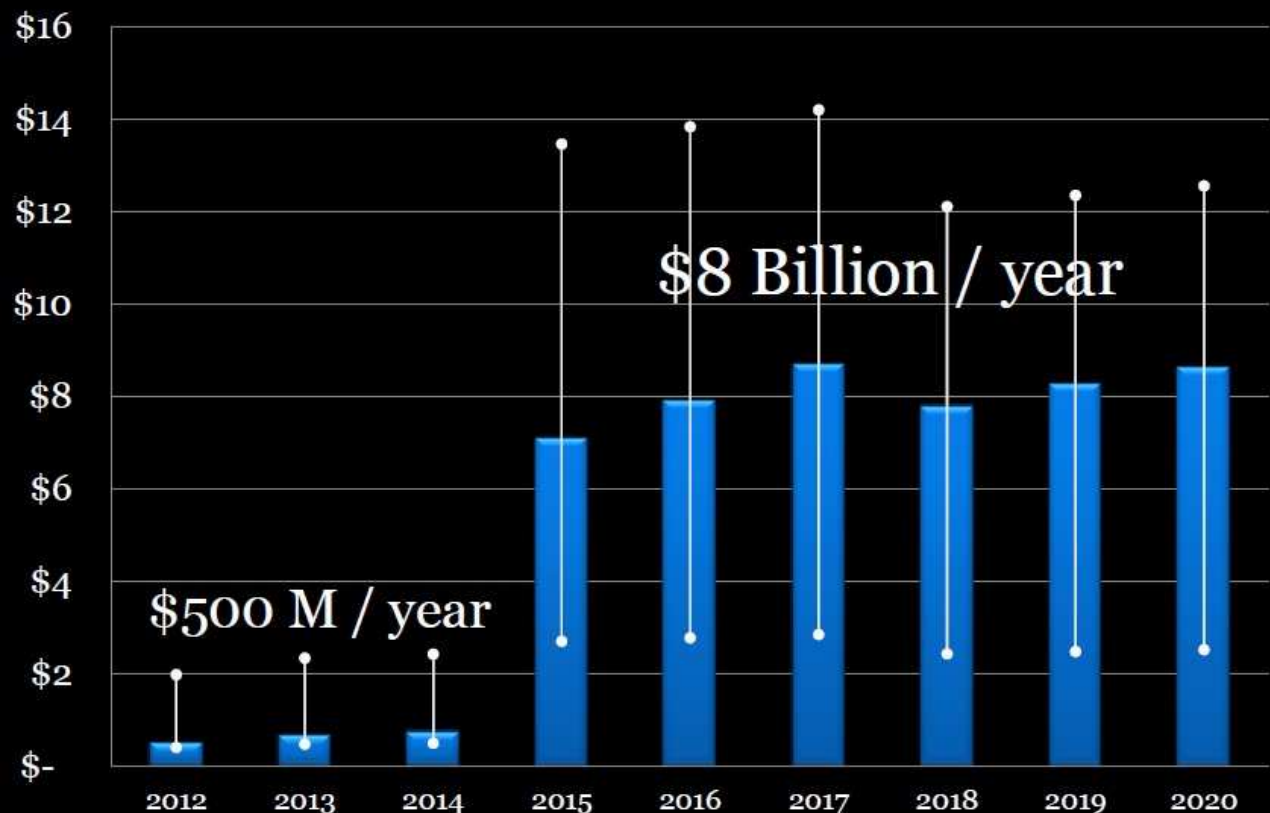
California Gov. Jerry Brown (D) wants to take \$250 million raised by the state's cap-and-trade program and put it toward high-speed rail. That plan is expected to be part of the budget he unveils on Friday

[Brown says cap-and-trade money for high-speed rail 'very appropriate](#)

'Sacramento Bee (blog)-Jan 9, 2014

"The high-speed rail is a reducer of greenhouse gases, an enhancement of the quality of California life and a bringing together of our various" communities around the state, Brown said. Given expectations that the state's population will grow by millions of residents, he said, "we need alternatives."

State Auction Revenue Projections (\$B)



This graph from the National Resource Defense Council (NRDC) shows the current and projected revenue to the State from the Cap and Trade program. Starting next year the program will be greatly expanded to more industries which is why the revenues are going to jump. Cap and Trade is expected to be around through 2050 or longer.

[Golden State Could Be Sitting on Livable Streets Gold Mine](#)

Streetsblog Los Angeles (blog)-Jan 7, 2014

The program is just wrapping up its first year and applies only to large power plants and industrial operations. Starting in the 2014-15 fiscal year, however, it will apply to distributors of fuel, including fuels used for transportation — a sector that accounts for 38 percent of GHG emissions statewide. The revenue potential is substantial: a Natural Resources Defense Council analysis, presented at a UCLA conference last February, estimates that total revenues could be as much as \$8 billion annually once the program is fully up and running.

[Editorial: Use cap and trade auction proceeds wisely](#)

Sacramento Bee-Jan 11, 2014

...the Air Resources Board did in its May 2013 investment plan. With the state on target to meet the 2020 target with existing state strategies, the need is to go further: “Reaching the 2050 goal (80 percent below 1990 levels) will require far-reaching new approaches to how we plan our communities, how we move people and freight, how we power our state, how industries produce their products, how successful we are in treating waste as a source of energy, and how well we preserve California’s lands and natural resources that sequester carbon,” the board said.

High-speed rail is part of that.

[CHSRA CEO Jeff Morales Answers Important High-Speed Rail Questions](#)

NBC Bay Area Dec 13, 2014

(Judge) Kenny said the Authority must show in court it can identify the funding for all 300 miles of the project's initial operating segment, from Merced to the San Fernando Valley, at an estimated cost of \$31 billion...

Currently, the agency has staked out \$6 billion for the first 120 miles of that segment, well short of the requirement.

Despite the often misleading headlines about the court's rulings, it doesn't shut down the project or ask for a funding plan for the entire project. Current construction in the San Joaquin Valley is about 6 billion dollars. To build a new right of way between Bakersfield and Palmdale is estimated to cost 10 billion dollars. Four billion of that is expected to come from Prop 1A bonds. With Prop 1A and Federal funding that's 13 billion dollars that should be available now for High Speed Rail. To finish the entire 300 miles between Merced and Burbank to run electrified HSR will require an additional 18 billion for a total of 31 billion dollars. With the State's Budget in the black with over 100 billion dollars of spending annually, spreading \$18 Billion dollars of additional funding to complete High Rail over 10 years or more is feasible. Once the 300 miles of HSR (some of it "blended" with existing railroads) is built, the CHSRA is on its own according to Prop 1A to finance the rest of the project from its own revenues. NB

[Despite recovery, fiscal restraint urged in California budget plan](#)

Reuters - Jan 9, 2014

Jan 9 (Reuters) - California Governor Jerry Brown continued his message of fiscal restraint in his state budget plan, which would increase funding for education but not restore many recession-era cuts, including healthcare services for the poor. Brown's plan ...

[California Can't Have High-Speed Rail Because Of Obamacare ...](#)

Huffington Post-Jan 8, 2104

The New York Times published a piece this week about the plan. Wedged in the middle is a quote that was seemingly included to reflect the most asinine take on the matter:

Joe Nation, a professor of public policy at Stanford University and a critic of the plan, said Mr. Brown would have to grapple with this decline in support, which he argued reflected voters' growing doubts about the basic competence of government. "Obamacare has leached over into this," Mr. Nation said. "You have people saying, 'The federal government that can't build a website — how can we expect them to build a multibillion-dollar train?'"

For the record, the website for the Affordable Care Act was originally designed by a private contractor. In the name of greater efficiency many government jobs have been "privatized" since 2000 such as website construction. This comment like many on rail passenger service reflect highly partisan thinking, not a well thought out argument. NB

[High-Speed Train](#)

New York Times-Jan 8, 2014

The government has managed many large projects ranging from the Interstate highway system to the Apollo moon program. All large projects ...

[Tale of two bullet-train cities: Hanford, Visalia spar over \\$68 billion ...](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Jan 10, 2014

"Farmers see the project as a big government boondoggle that will harm their way of life," said Thomas Holyoke, an associate professor of political science at Fresno State. "Urban areas desperate for a little economic growth see it as a rare opportunity. There's a clear divide."

[Foxx Sees Future for Texas High-Speed Rail](#)

Bond Buyer-Jan 8, 2014

U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx lent his support to Texas' high-speed-rail plans at the annual Texas Transportation Forum.

[Just How Screwed Are We When the Sea Levels Rise?](#)

LACurbed Jan 7, 2014

The city tasked USC's SeaGrant program with finding out how ready the coast is to handle higher sea levels (estimated at anywhere from 0.3 to two feet from 2000 to 2050),...

Bad news: Roads, water utilities, and some beach neighborhoods are at risk. Pacific Coast Highway was called "the the most vulnerable part of the entire City shoreline."

In San Diego County many of the rail bridges are near sea level. Many are or were old and single tracked and have or are being replaced with new, double tracked bridges. At the same time they are being built higher to withstand higher flood levels which are predicted. NB

[Taos lawmaker proposes funds to upgrade tracks, protect Amtrak route](#)

Santa Fe New Mexican.com-Jan 9, 2014

A Taos lawmaker plans to introduce legislation that would fund rail improvements intended to keep Amtrak's Southwest Chief running on its ...

[Tulsa-OKC line could derail Wichita's passenger rail plans ...](#)

Kansas City Start Jan 11, 2014

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation is taking bids until Jan. 30 on a 97-mile stretch of rail between Oklahoma City and suburban Tulsa called the "Sooner Sub." It's largely a freight line but could potentially take a future chunk of the Heartland Flyer route away from Wichita.

[Metrolink train fatally strikes bicyclist who rode around gate](#)

Los Angeles Times-Jan 9, 2014

A Metrolink train bound for downtown Los Angeles fatally struck a bicyclist Thursday during the morning commute in Santa Fe Springs, officials ..

On this train were several people headed to a LOSSAN TAC meeting in Los Angeles. Because the train was held to wait for the arrival of the coroner people on the train were hours late, including those going to the TAC meeting. There was a time when with incidents like this, when trains would be released shortly after the police arrived. With the police on the scene they can secure the area of a death for an investigation. Changes in State Law should bring this back and make this standard around the State. This and perhaps greater use of cameras to record what happens at grade crossings during accidents would insure a proper investigation can be made without stopping trains and blocking streets for long periods of time. NB

[California expects more crude oil by rail, seeks to beef up spill ...](#)

Sacramento Bee- Jan 10, 2014

The state budget plan Gov. Jerry Brown unveiled this week bolsters the state Office of Oil Spill Prevention and Response, increasing its budget by \$6.7 million and adding 38 staff members, "to address the increased risk of inland oil spills."

The move comes as California's Energy Commission projects that rail deliveries of crude oil could increase to as much of a quarter of the state's total by 2016. In 2012, only 0.2 percent of the 598 million barrels of oil received by state refiners came by rail, according to the commission. Nearly two-thirds arrived by ocean-going vessels, and another third by pipeline.

[Is Shipping Oil by Rail a Good Idea?](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

There is a boom of drilling of unconventional oil in Alberta, North Dakota and Texas. With this there is a

dramatic increase in rail transport of these unconventional oils to refineries from both Canada and the upper Mid-West . This has affected service for other users of rail service. The Empire Builder passenger train which runs from Chicago to the Pacific Northwest through North Dakota has seen an increase of ridership from workers headed to the oil fields of North Dakota. But also in large part because of increased oil train traffic the on-time performance of the Empire Builder in recent months has gone to near zero. During December of 2013 several Empire Builder trains were cancelled because traffic congestion on its route. This was before the fire at the end of December which created further delays for the Empire Builder.

[Metro Blue Line to undergo six-year, \\$1.2 billion overhaul](#)

Long Beach Press-Telegram-Jan 8, 2014

City, county and transit officials announced a \$1.2 billion systemwide overhaul of the Metro Blue Line on Wednesday morning, which officials say will bring added security, faster arrivals, 78 new light-rail cars and other improvements.

[Agencies consider plans to reduce ONT car congestion](#)

San Bernardino Sun-Jan 7, 2014

ONTARIO >> Despite lackluster air traffic at LA/Ontario International Airport, officials are looking at ways to reduce car congestion in the future...

The board of directors of the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority has asked staff to initiate an alternative analysis that would study how to connect its riders to the airport, said Lisa Levy Buch, spokeswoman for the construction authority.

[Freedom Train to Run Once Again for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day](#)

Patch.com-Jan 8, 2014

Continuing an annual tradition, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Santa Clara will charter Caltrain as part of its "Freedom Train" celebration on Monday, Jan. 20.

[BART offers peek at new railcars - canopy test OKd](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Jan 9, 2014

BART riders, having survived a year with two strikes and some major breakdowns, can finally look forward to something encouraging beyond ...

[Roadshow: How to fix BART's parking woes](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Jan 10, 2014

BART can solve its parking problems -- which your "Dirty Dozen" listed as the No. 1 gripe -- easily and quickly. Read Donald Shoup's book: "The High Cost of Free Parking." He is a professor of planning at UCLA....His solution is to raise the price of parking until there is always a certain amount (15 percent) of space available in the parking lot so that everyone who is willing to pay the price is guaranteed of finding an open spot.

The real solution is housing walking distance to stations. Also the stations should have stores and services so you can go places without needing to drive. NB

[Caltrans highlights key infrastructure projects of 2013](#)

Redwood Times-Jan 7, 2014

This year, Caltrans also furthered its goal of building a more sustainable transportation system. During the 2012-13 fiscal year, ridership rose to a record 5.6 million passengers on three intercity passenger rail lines funded by the state, and over the past ten years ticket revenues from the three lines have skyrocketed from \$44 million to \$102 million. Caltrans also released the California State Rail Plan, which lays out a long-term vision for freight and passenger rail. In 2014, Caltrans will build on this momentum by

implementing the new Active Transportation Program to fund human-powered transportation projects and programs. The new program is the nation's largest state commitment to bicycling, walking and other active transportation.

[Dick Spotswood: Column](#)

Marin News Jan 8, 2014

THE RECENT EFFORT by the National Park Service to create additional parking for tour buses and autos at Muir Woods National Monument was a major error...There's little doubt that Shoreline Highway from Highway 101 through Tam Valley and on to Muir Woods is incapable of handling more traffic....

Coastal and Central California already have the density needed to support British-like "fast rail." While technically not high speed, "fast rail" operates over existing upgraded lines at speeds up to 125 mph. "Fast rail" is much better than what most of America does at present. It's something the Golden State should emulate at a cost far less than the present high-speed rail plan.

[Union Pacific Big Boy 4014 gets ready to make its journey east](#)

The Source Jan 9, 2014

The above video shows the Big Boy's slow move through the parking lot. Rail fans will have a chance to see the locomotive on working train tracks at the Metrolink Covina Station on Sunday, Jan. 26.

[DESIGN: Those Were The Times No.25 – 1954 Disney ...](#)

MiceChat-Jan 8, 2014

In addition to the drafters and camera technicians, Roger had hired experienced railroad equipment fellows to work in the adjacent old Hyperion Zorro building (home of today's Mickey's of Glendale on the studio lot). Earl Vilmer was in charge of the railroad, Ed Lingenfelter was drafting up two locomotives, while Eddie Sargeant drew plans for the rail cars. Dick Bagley did all the drawings for the Mark Twain riverboat steam engine. I shared office space with these highly experienced gents in the Zorro building also, where they told me endless tales of railroad life in the late 1800s.



Seen here at Moorpark are some of Metrolink's surplus cars . Caltrain has recently ordered 11 of these of old Metrolink cars to address overcrowding on the Peninsula. **I personally hate to see them go, but at least they will be put to work in California. These cars are a valuable resource that should be used to carry more people by rail in the State now. NB** Photo by Noel T. Braymer

We Get Emails

Re: Lack of trains and parking at Levi Stadium in Santa Clara

I live within one mile of Levi Stadium and am extremely concerned about the event attendee parking situation. There are two serious infrastructure problems with those two transit options, namely both are limited to single track mainlines.

I can't imagine more than 500 people on each of those southbound trains, but let's say they are overwhelmed and manage to cram 1,000 people on each train for a total of 3,000 fans delivered between 8AM and 1PM. There is no chance of any northbound Capitol Corridor trains permitting fans to board in San Jose or Santa Clara and get off at Great America as that is currently not permitted by policy (logistics nightmare to board and check all tickets in such a short distance). I've been a RailPAC member long enough to know that the UP Railroad won't permit any "special" or "limited" trains in either direction until the ROW is double tracked. Oh yeah, NO ACE trains operate on weekends and are southbound on weekdays before 10AM and northbound after 3PM, so no help there either.

Second, VTA light rail operates on 20 minute head-ways in each direction due to single tracking through Mountain View with 3 car trains the maximum size to fit a platform. The rated capacity of each car is posted as 80, but let's say they'll cram 100 in each of the three cars. So that means VTA can deliver 3 trains of 300 fans from each direction per hour, or 1,800 people per hour.

How can we get over 40,000 fans to and from the event on rail transit in less than say, two hours? It's only about a 3.5X increase in delivery rate in half the time or just under 16,000 fans per hour on light rail and over 10,000 per hour on the Capitol Corridor line. Does that sound realistic? What am I missing here?

Best regards,
Mark Hofmeister

Clearly there are going to be impacts in your neighborhood with a new stadium. But adding more parking to encourage more cars will make the impacts worse. Levi Stadium is opening this year for the start of the 2014 football season. Any business would be crazy if they built something which the majority of its customers couldn't access. I did a little research on this issue. ACE is planning to run special football trains when Levi Stadium opens independent of their current schedule. There are plans to run VTA connections to Caltrain which would be possible at the joint station at Mountain View. Capitol Corridor already runs special football trains for college and Raider football games and is in talks to run special trains to Levi Stadium. News reports state that parking at Levi Stadium will be expensive which will encourage transit use and people who drive are expected to arrive in car pools. Few people go by themselves to events like a football game. Since most games are on Sunday, the plan is to use empty parking lots at nearby office buildings for overflow stadium parking.

You underestimate how many people can ride by train. For example the bi-level cars used on ACE and the Caltrain "Baby Bullet" trains seat just over 130 passengers. But these cars are designed to carry over 400 passengers with standees. Not the most comfortable way to travel but it is done. I know, I've ridden these cars under such conditions. A 10 car train for game day could carry up to or more than 4,000 football fans and you could double that by running 2 sections a block or 2 apart. This can be done to increase capacity on a single track railroad. This is not a problem with one way traffic if you can store equipment between runs. Additional trains can also be run as sections and seats could be taken out of cars to greatly increase capacity with standees on VTA. I looked up the capacity of the VTA cars which have seating for 64 and 170 passengers with standees. That is up to 510 passengers on a 3 car train.

There are plans and the need to double track most of the UP that the Capitol Corridor and ACE trains run on even without Levi Stadium. Even if your worst case scenario does occur at the first game at Levi Stadium; resources will be found and deals quickly made to increase rail and bus service to carry passengers from park and ride lots. That will be faster and cheaper to do than creating more parking at the stadium. NB

[Capitol Corridor Trains Get On Board](#)

Oct 11, 2013

As always, Capitol Corridor will be there to provide passenger rail service to many different Bay Area sporting events including college football with the Cal Bears, NFL football with the Oakland Raiders, and for next year Capitol Corridor and the 49ers are working together to bring fans to games at the new Levi's™ Stadium in Santa Clara.

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

Manteca Bulletin Jul 31, 2013

,,,ACE does have weekend runs but only for special events such as the San Jose Jazz Festival. Next year, Santa Clara services to Levi Stadium, the new home of the San Francisco 49ers football squad, will kick in on game day

[Mr Roadshow](#)

San Jose Mercury News Aug 5, 2013

By kickoff next season, the Valley Transportation Authority hopes to double-track its line through Mountain View and add a third track on Tasman Drive in Santa Clara, improving the connection with Caltrain.

Then, by the 2016 season, the single track from Highway 85 across Central Expressway to Whisman station will get a second track. This will allow VTA to run express trains between Mountain View and Alum Rock to connect with future BART service at the Montague station in Milpitas. The BART line could be operating in 2017.

Plans are underway to improve pedestrian access to and from VTA's Great America station. The 49ers will expand the Great America light-rail platform and a game day-only pedestrian crossing to serve Santa Clara's new parking garage on Tasman.

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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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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