

STEEL WHEELS

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IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Commentary

SB 742 Passes

Northern California Vision -

Steve Roberts

Bob Reynolds Heads For The Big Easy

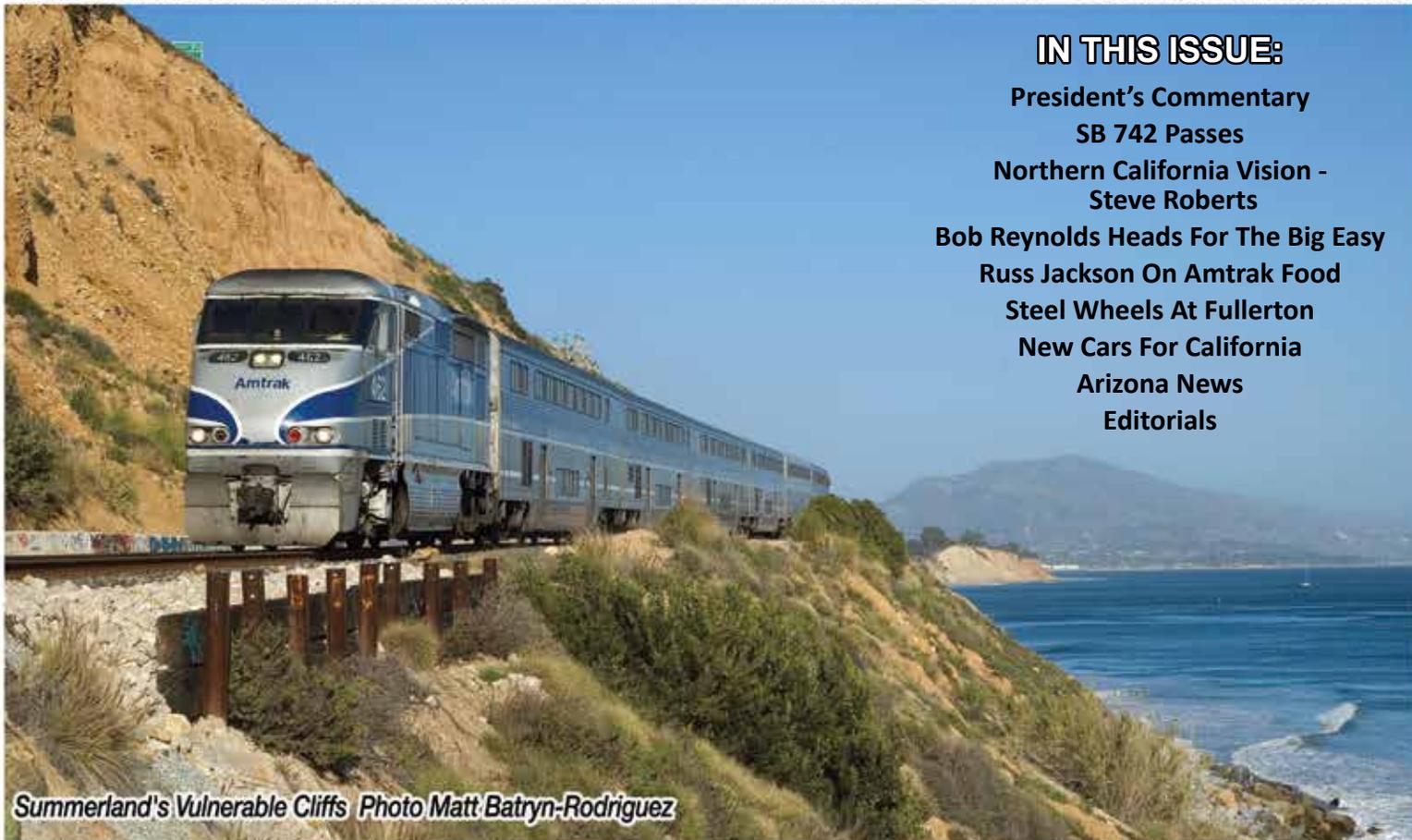
Russ Jackson On Amtrak Food

Steel Wheels At Fullerton

New Cars For California

Arizona News

Editorials



Summerland's Vulnerable Cliffs Photo Matt Batryn-Rodriguez



Sunset Limited at Cienega Canyon, AZ - Mark MacDougall



Senator Allen with Steve Roberts and Paul Dyson

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President's Commentary

By Steve Roberts – RailPAC President

Greetings!

Stalemate, gridlock, impasse, etc.; all terms that define the state of rail passenger service

today and in many ways for the last two decades. At some level it is driven by the lack of investment in infrastructure. The U.S. now spends half of what it used to spend on infrastructure. The result, every mode of transportation is gridlocked and lacking a state of good repair.

Recently in so many words Amtrak has begrudgingly admitted that yes, based on Congressional direction, it must operate the long-distance trains. So the great “convert the long-distance routes to corridors” bait and switch has basically run out of steam. Not that additional regional rail service is bad, but not at the expense of the National Network. So for advocates neither a win nor a loss because without the funding to re-equip and re-launch the National Network routes it is just the same muddle decade. After decade Amtrak’s disastrous roll-out of modified food service has been panned by both riders and the general press. Not only was it launched without the correct ovens in the diners (hence the boxed meals) but it appears that they did not consult food service professionals to learn that, no matter the quality of the pre-plated meal, the recipients first perception is defined by the presentation of the meal.

Another challenge is the Precision Schedule Railroad operating philosophy. Bypassing yards and operating all trains at 45 to 50 mph may save shipments time, but the uniform pace, which maximizes track capacity while minimizing capital investment, combined with trains longer than many sidings creates a real conflict with an 80 mph passenger operation. We can observe this in the on time performance of the National Network trains and in the decline of the Canadian. In a world where quarterly financial performance dominates, an obvious solution is not at hand.

So there is no resolution, only more hard work. Life is like that. The National Network is still operating. Rail supporters have changed the conversation and had an impact. There is now recognition that the financial benefits to local communities of the long-distance trains far outweigh their fully allocated costs.

But the job is not done. The near term focus is on the Amtrak and FastAct reauthorizations. The key issues that need to be addressed are:

- Funds for state of good repair for the Superliners;
- Funds for new locomotives and cars for the National Network trains;
- Repeal of the Mica Amendment (the food service amendment);
- Direction by Congress of the importance of the National Network trains for rural America.

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On the freight railroad side the on time performance metrics case, in which the Supreme Court upheld Amtrak and FRA involvement in setting metrics, is moving through the rulemaking process. That process is slow but eventually there should be a resolution. Lastly, another challenge will be the development of a public/private program, outside Amtrak’s budget, to increase railroad capacity in order to mitigate the operational impact of the speed differential between passenger and freight trains and to facilitate the operation of additional passenger train frequencies.

*Stay involved and active,
change while slow, does occur.*

Steve Roberts
President

A Victory for Common Sense and Statewide Mobility

Paul Dyson – RailPAC Vice President, Southern California

At last we have accomplished something that we set out to do nearly twenty years ago – repeal the 1999 bill by Senator Perata, SB 804, which regulated the use of the Thruway Buses in California.

By way of background, as the State Passenger Rail Corridors expanded together with the network of connecting

buses the intercity bus operators, most notably Greyhound, were concerned that these “subsidized” routes would subtract from their business. To minimize this as much as possible they lobbied successfully to have Senator Perata carry SB804 to put restrictions on the operations of the Thruway buses. The key provision was that only passengers completing part of their journey by rail and holding an Amtrak ticket were permitted to ride the connecting bus.

This led to many anomalies. For example, a Caltrain or Metrolink passenger could not connect to a Thruway even though they had ridden by train part of the way because they did not have an Amtrak ticket. But worst of all for RailPAC and other advocates, it meant that as buses emptied out along the route away from the connecting rail hub those seats stayed empty even if they could have served communities along the way. RailPAC Board member Doug Kerr put it best with his testimony to the Assembly Transportation Committee. “I live in Healdsburg, Sonoma County. Let’s say I want to go to Fortuna in Humboldt County. The Amtrak Thruway buses serve both cities, but current law prohibits my using them. Private bus operators abandoned service to both these cities years ago. The only way for me to travel to Fortuna is by automobile.”

In other instances, some Thruway routes are the only buses operating in that corridor and yet were unavailable to local travelers. I remember being at the Bakersfield depot one afternoon. An elderly lady wanted to visit family in Oxnard and



SB742 - Greater mobility for all of California. A Thruway bus at the Capitol, Sacramento.

Photo - Paul Dyson

had been told that there is a bus. That part is true. The problem was that it was a Thruway bus and because of Perata she could not use it. She was told to take a Greyhound to Los Angeles and another from there to Oxnard!

While I had been determined for some time to do something about Perata, this was my “road to Damascus” moment. This made me angry that transit dependent folks should be

abused in this way. A few years ago, at the time the Passenger Corridor Joint Powers Authorities were being formed I felt that the time was right to try for repeal legislation. Intercity bus service was disappearing rapidly. Not only were some routes being discontinued, but more importantly, many “unproductive” intermediate stops on existing routes were being eliminated. Mobility options, especially for rural California, were being reduced year by year forcing greater reliance on automobile transportation.

However, I was shut down by both State and JPA staff as they did not want anything controversial to impede the passage of their own legislation. At the same RailPAC was increasingly concerned that the new JPA political appointees, at least some of them, did not recognize the value of the Thruway network and viewed them as a burden and a cost. We felt that the best way forward was to add revenue and make the services more valuable to the community rather than focus on the cost. Perata must go!

Passing over various machinations brings us to 2019. Senator Ben Allen had picked up on our campaign for reform from both Noel Braymer’s weekly E!News and from Steel Wheels. The San Joaquin JPA, which operates the greatest mileage of bus routes, had made the same assessment as RailPAC; that the best way forward was to make the Thruway buses more productive. With that momentum a number of other agencies, including the Capitol Corridor and LOSSAN, fell in line and

passed favorable resolutions. Senator Allen filed his bill and we were in business. While the California Bus Association made a proforma protest they quickly realized that they had no case. We demonstrated that private intercity operators had abandoned many communities and, in some cases complete routes.



Paul Dyson, Steve Roberts and Senator Ben Allen in the Capitol - Photo Ben Castillo Krings

As a result of working on this bill we have accomplished at least two more objectives. One was to forge a very close relationship with the San Joaquin JPA, notably Stacey Mortensen and especially Dan Leavitt. Dan wore out at least one pair of shoes walking the halls at the State Capitol. The other was to raise the profile of RailPAC at the State level and to give us some bragging rights. Our quarterly delivery of Steel Wheels to the Capitol offices has been a big help in earning us "brand recognition" especially among the staff.

The bill becomes law January 1, 2020. However, it will take a few more months to set up ticketing systems and in some cases to provide additional evidence that this will not harm private operators. RailPAC hopes that we will see joint ticketing and schedule coordination with what is left of the private bus operations. The real competition is the private car, and the more choices and convenience we can offer to prospective passengers the more successful will rail and intercity bus be.

Finally, a special word of appreciation to Zak Castillo-Krings. Zak is the very professional Senior Policy Consultant to Senator Allen. Zak nursed the bill through hearings, amendments, votes, more hearings, amendments, votes, and finally the Governor's signature. The bill was introduced February 22 of this year. It was signed by the Governor October 8. Congratulations to all for a great team effort.

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Northern California Rail Service Vision

Steve Roberts, RailPAC President

The Northern California megaregion, the 16th largest economy in the world, has seen a dramatic increase in jobs, population and economic growth. It is an increasingly inter-connected area that has seen an explosion of commuter travel but one now poorly served by its legacy transportation network. This is straining existing highways and transit systems all of which have seen little expansion over the past two decades and are barely maintained in a state of good repair. The passage of Senate Bill 1 is helping on the state of good repair issue, but to forestall gridlock from continued growth, more capacity is needed.

With expanded rail systems being the most efficient and perhaps the only way to both increase capacity and reduce greenhouse gases, RailPAC developed in 2018 a high-level vision for the Bay Area, Electrolink North. The proposed Electrolink North as envisioned transforms the Bay Area's passenger rail system into a high-capacity, high-frequency (service at least every 30 minutes), higher speed (110 mph), and reliable electrified rail network offering seamless connectivity (see Figure 1 on right).

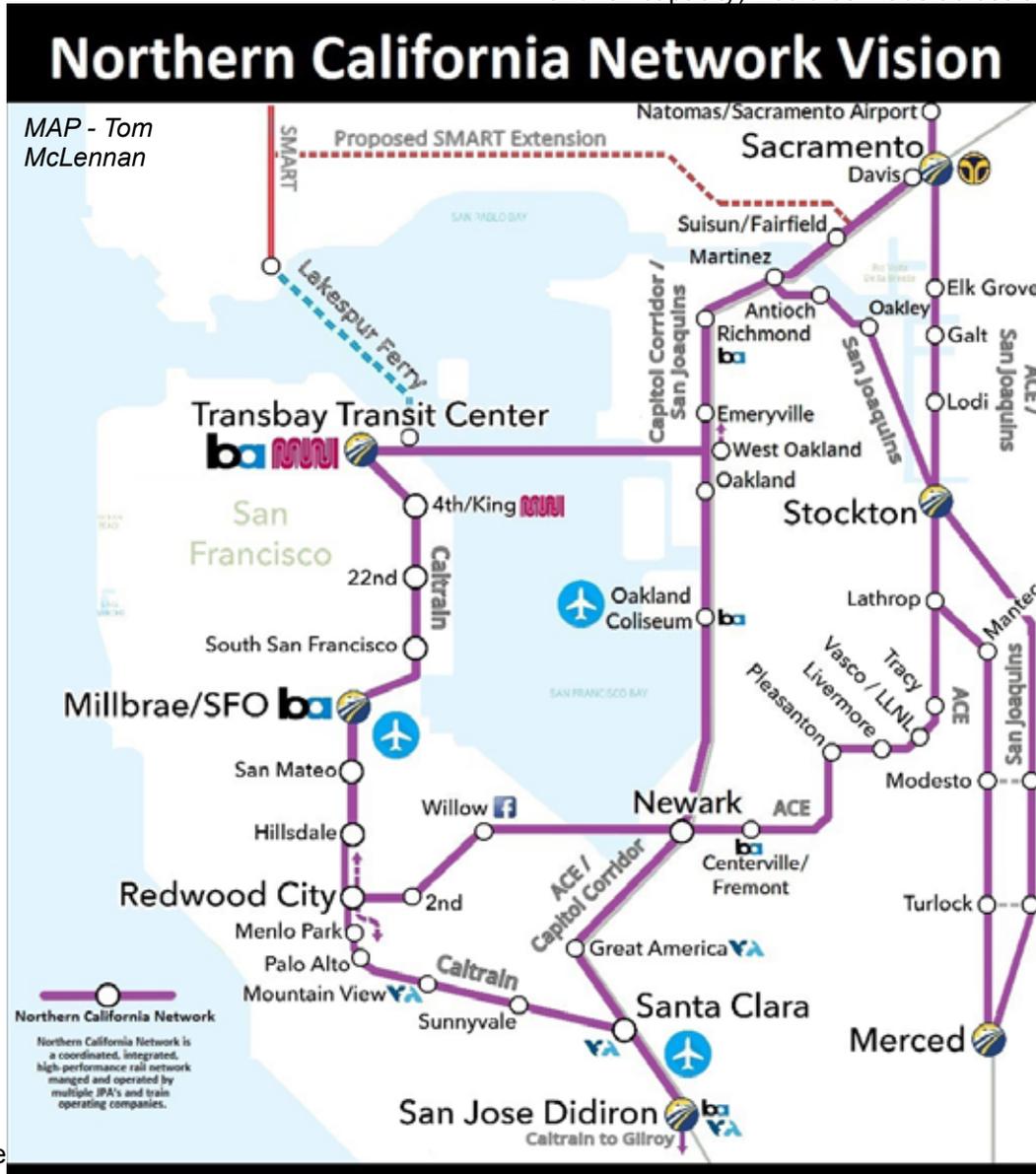
Driven by the factors noted above, the five Bay Area regional rail agencies have developed future visions that achieve most of the attributes of Electrolink North to deliver this critical increased capacity. These agencies are the Capitol Corridor, Caltrain, Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit, Altamont Commuter Express and Bay Area Rapid Transit District. By providing the specific projects that achieve the goals of Electrolink North; these agency visions take

the Bay Area to the next level in its effort to provide a first class transportation network. RailPAC will work with these agencies as each of the individual projects is evaluated. Outlined below is a summary of the Electrolink North project at this point in time.

Capitol Corridor

Transforming the Capitol Corridor, the intercity rail service between San Jose and Sacramento, into a higher speed, high frequency electrified service requires significant capital projects. While currently completing the 3rd main track between Sacramento and Roseville, a key priority is the Oakland –San Jose route segment. The Capitol Corridor would shift to the far westward Union Pacific (UP) line (Coast Subdivision) between Oakland and San Jose. The line would be double tracked and significant capital investment (both environmental and rail capacity) would be made across the Alviso Wetlands.

UP freight trains would shift from the Coast Subdivision to a combination of eastern UP lines (Niles subdivision and former Western Pacific line). Created would be two specialized rail lines; one freight and one passenger. The new Capitol Corridor line would be more direct and faster allowing an increase in frequencies to San Jose matching the number between Oakland and Sacramento. Currently an environmental planning effort and some state-of-good repair construction activities are underway for this project. Because of the near term benefits in expanding Capitol Corridor frequencies from Oakland to San Jose and the potential for



expanded ACE frequencies, RailPAC is a strong advocate of this project and its priority for construction financing.

Between Oakland and Richmond, where there is significant freight traffic, the route would become a four track line with separate freight and passenger rail lines. Between Richmond and Martinez/Benicia a new direct alignment parallel to CA 4 through Franklin Canyon would be constructed avoiding the slow winding alignment along San Pablo Bay. A new high-level bridge (eliminating bridge openings) would be constructed over the Sacramento River between Martinez and Benicia.

Between Benicia and Sacramento the existing UP line would become a passenger railroad. A new freight rail line would be constructed branching from the current Pittsburg UP line utilizing a new bridge over the Sacramento River and using the old Sacramento Northern right of way to Sacramento.

Completing the transformation, the rail line would be electrified and a tunnel constructed (under 2nd Street) through Jack London Square, the single greatest bottleneck on the route, to avoid slow street running.

ACE San Jose

The core route of the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) is service from the San Joaquin Valley to the East Bay and Silicon Valley. Current travel by commuters on I-580/I-680 is almost 90,000 trips per day. The focus is on transforming today's legacy freight route into a higher speed (125 mph) passenger rail line with dramatically improved travel times and frequencies. Schedule times would be cut in half with clockface frequencies every 15 minutes (peak) 30 minutes off-peak.

Several major capital projects will be needed to achieve these goals. Two major tunnels are required, the first under Altamont Pass the second bypassing the environmentally sensitive Niles Canyon. These tunnels allow for a straighter alignment enabling higher speeds to be achieved. New passenger only alignments on the existing right-of-way would be constructed through Tracy, Livermore and Pleasanton. Two other network capital improvements complete the project - Capitol Corridor's Alviso Wetlands double tracking project and the rebuilding of the Dumbarton Transportation Corridor. The Alviso Wetlands project would allow for a full suite of ACE frequencies to San Jose and while a newly constructed Dumbarton Bridge allows expansion of ACE service to the Mid-Peninsular at Redwood City and connections with Caltrain.

ACE Valley Rail

Valley Rail is a vision, a new ACE regional rail route, under construction. The project consists of two distinct initiatives, the extension of ACE San Jose service from Tracy to Merced by adding capacity to UP's Fresno subdivision, and the conversion of UP's Sacramento Subdivision (former Western Pacific line) from Stockton to Sacramento/Natomas into primarily a passenger rail line.

Initially one existing San Jose round-trip will be extended from Tracy to Modesto/Ceres while one existing San Jose round-trip will be extended from Stockton to Sacramento/Natomas. Three daily round-trips will be operated Ceres/Modesto to Sacramento/Natomas. In addition two additional San Joaquin intercity frequencies will be operated to Sacramento.

Longer term, additional capacity and other track improvements will allow an expansion in frequencies with reduced running times. Service will be expanded to Merced where a joint station with high-speed rail will allow ACE to offer connections with that service.

Dumbarton Transportation Corridor

The Dumbarton Transportation Corridor, linking the East Bay to the mid San Francisco Peninsular, is one of the key "connectivity" projects in the Bay Area vision. The project involves new construction to replace the obsolete and life-expired former Southern Pacific infrastructure. The replacement design options are still under study. Service is projected to start as a diesel shuttle between Redwood City and a station at Newark with connections to the Capitol Corridor. Future extensions would take the shuttle to Centerville/Fremont for a connection with ACE and to a station at Shinn for a connection to BART. As ACE service frequency increases one seat ACE service would be offered from San Joaquin Valley cities across the new Dumbarton Bridge to Redwood City and Mid-Peninsular points. Currently an environmental study is underway for this project. Because of its connectivity value and large and growing travel demand from the East Bay to the mid-Peninsula, RailPAC has been actively supporting this initiative and its construction as an early step toward the Bay Area transit vision.

Caltrain

Currently Caltrain is focused on its top priority, its modernization program (primarily new equipment, service to the Salesforce Transit Center and electrification). However realizing that this capital program will not be sufficient to handle future growth nor would it fully utilize the potential of the Caltrain right-of-way, Caltrain undertook a 2040 visioning of the potential of the rail line.

Chosen as the forward path was the moderate growth strategy with planning and coordination continuing for the option of a high-growth strategy. The moderate growth option would be scalable as other investments (i.e. high-speed rail) develop. Investments supporting this strategy would be discrete and incremental in nature and built as funding becomes available. In addition to the improvements needed to facilitate high speed rail in the corridor and a substantial number of grade separations, the moderate growth strategy would construct a series of short 4 track sections at stations and other key points for train overtakes (with some overtake schedule lengthening). The high-growth strategy would lengthen three 4-track overtake sections allowing more frequencies without any overtake delays.

Under the both the high-growth and moderate growth strategies Caltrain would offer the number of frequencies similar to BART and other transit systems. Customer travel time would be reduced vs today as a result of right-of-way improvements (allowing 110 mph speeds) and more frequencies (less wait time). Service to Gilroy would be dramatically expanded. Under the moderate growth strategy Caltrain would offer 8 peak hour frequencies with 4 limited-stop expresses (similar to today's Baby Bullets) and 4 local stopping trains. Off-peak there would be 6 frequencies per hour – 3 expresses and 3 locals. There would be a timed transfer between services at the four track Redwood City station. Departures would be

at clockface intervals which combined with the high level of frequencies would facilitate timed transfers to other regional rail services as well as local transit systems. Timed transfers reduce customer wait time and reduce travel time. Ridership on Caltrain would grow from 65,000 riders to 185,000 riders as a result all of the initiatives being planned and underway.

DTX

DTX is a project that dramatically expands Caltrain's ridership by extending Caltrain service from 4th and King to the Salesforce Transit Center (site of the Transbay Terminal). The project consists of three phases. Phase one is a tunnel linking the Mission Bay underground station (at 4th and King) with the Salesforce Transit Center. Phase two lengthens the train box to allow two high-speed trainsets to occupy a platform, purchases property and builds a "plug" on the lengthened train box for the future building of a loop track for future through operation and a regional rail connection to the 2nd Transbay tunnel. Phase three is moving the Caltrain line under Pennsylvania Avenue (a main street parallel to the current rail line) from the exit of historic tunnel one to Mission Bay station. This initiative would free up surface land for development while allowing additional street connections integrating the area south of the current Caltrain line with the fast growing Mission Bay.

The project is environmentally approved and is ready for detailed engineering, utility relocation and property acquisition. Bay Area voters approved a \$300 million down payment to begin construction but the project is being delayed by a lawsuit over funding. RailPAC has strongly supported this project because of its impact on Caltrain ridership and as a key step toward the Bay Area transit vision.

SMART

Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit is in fact the fulfillment of a vision. Current operations extend from Sonoma County Airport to San Rafael. Service began in 2017 and has been an overwhelming success. The upcoming extension (expected late 2019) from San Rafael to Larkspur, the connecting point to Golden Gate Ferry service to San Francisco, represents a major benchmark in integrating North Bay rail service into the wider Bay Area transit network. SMART is unique in that it is the construction of a passenger rail service (which also handles local freight service) along with a bicycle-pedestrian pathway sharing the right-of-way.

Managing and serving the ridership success of the service and financial challenges from an underperforming tax base represent the major near term challenges for the service. A longer term goal is extension of service to Windsor the next community north of Sonoma Airport and eventually Cloverdale as required in the original tax initiative. Finally, the longer vision for the region is new route from Novato to Suisun City with connections to the Capitol Corridor. This route parallels the heavily congested two-lane CA 37 a problematic route across tidal marshes subject to flooding and threatened by sea level rise.

BART

While not part of the Bay Area's regional intercity rail system, segments of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART, Figure



2), with significant distances between stops, long suburban routes and high average speeds, more resemble a commuter rail line than a transit line. It complements and connects with regional rail. And most importantly, BART's service attributes of high average speeds, a well aligned right of way, high frequency levels and electric power are the attributes the regional rail agencies wish to emulate. Stretching further into the suburbs are two feeder lines to BART, a line from Pittsburg/Bay Point to Antioch and Valley Link from Dublin/ Pleasanton BART to Tracy (under design). and eventually Stockton. In addition BART generally serves markets not well served by regional rail and provides current and potential connectivity.

Second Transbay Tunnel

Finally BART's does have a major vision project, a second Transbay Crossing. It is one of the major projects to create a more seamless interconnected rail network. The project is also driven by the critical cross bay capacity crunch as a result of economic and population growth. It would be a dual tunnel system serving both BART and regional rail trains (perhaps Caltrain, Capitol Corridor or both). The route would be slightly south and parallel to the current tunnel with the BART route serving Mission Bay and perhaps extending west under Geary Avenue, an avenue with one of San Francisco's highest bus ridership routes. The regional rail route would align and connect with Salesforce Transit Center.

Funding

While specific funding for these initiatives has not been identified at this point, efforts are underway to develop a new Bay Area region wide transportation tax proposal to fund these projects. This funding mechanism is expected to generate over \$100 billion over 40 years. Referred to as FASTER Bay Area, it would target connectivity and service improvement investments in an effort to create a seamless, auto competitive regional transit system. The goal is a general flow of unrestricted funds with efforts to limit set-asides for specific projects.

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Elk Grove, CA to New Orleans

Bob Reynolds takes buses and trains to the Big Easy

It's Friday, Labor Day weekend. Elk Grove California. We're sitting at the Amtrak bus stop and the 0730 bus arrives at...0730. Amazing on time performance for Amtrak? Not really, their connecting busses are unsung heroes in OTP, maybe not even measured publicly. Anyway, the bus is here and the driver expects us and calls us by name. The ride from Elk Grove to Stockton proceeds and is short enough to make it enjoyable. The Stockton – San Joaquin Street Amtrak station, an old Santa Fe Mission Revival style building over 100 years old was renovated in 2005 but looks old and weathered in need of some serious upkeep. We watch a westbound San Joaquin clear the premises and get on the platform to catch the Los Angeles bound San Joaquin. To my dismay, the rolling stock consist is refurbished ex-New Jersey transit Comet cars, to me a step down from the more comfortable San Joaquin double-deckers. Surprisingly, the expected Labor Day weekend mob doesn't show, and we're able to select great seats. Nice inside. The Comets



The Imperial Brewing Company at Los Angeles Union Station - In the old Harvey House Restaurant - a good place to pause for refreshment after the Thruway bus from Bakersfield. Photo Kathy Reynolds



Horizon Coach Interior - When nothing else is available. Caltrans picture

ride very poorly and so the mid-morning train jumps and jerks down the BNSF ROW. At least, we're on time; and we pass a surprising number of freights, I'd guess every third or fourth siding being occupied. We are only delayed twice for some obvious hot shot stacks.

Detraining at Bakersfield,

we stumble around in the heat trying to find the bus numbered on our tickets. Not there, bad number. After a little searching, and some timely help on the platform, we finally find a bus bound for Los Angeles Union Station and on to San Pedro. The bus connections must be making money because they're always uncomfortably full. We never enjoy the bus ride from Bakersfield and this trip is no exception. We endure it like a visit to the dentist. At the end of summer, the Grapevine looks burned out.

Los Angeles Union Station. What a place! Truly worth the visit. An art deco gem opened in 1939. Old geezers like me almost expect Marilyn Monroe to walk through at any time, but the crowds connecting with the southern California giant Metrolink and Amtrak's busy coast lines pass by in a never-ending panorama of the normal and paranormal – we're talking southern California here. You could do well to get a table at Café Crêpe and watch the world walk by (or skate). We tourists from the north boonies might even feel the temptation to do just that. Our fortunes improve as the baggage room attendant directs us to the Amtrak first class lounge where we stash bags, checking the larger one through to New Orleans. We opt to kill the five-hour lay-over by visiting the recently renovated Harvey House, now the Imperial Western Brewery, for some suds and light victuals. I recommend the Cauliflower with brown butter. Noisy, but nice. Friday happy hour and that applies to everyone, you "gotta" be happy. Dollar each fresh oysters! Harvey House historical touches not prominent but visible to Harvey House fans. Nice addition to the station but not a substitute for the recently closed Traxx restaurant. My favorite eatery in LA. Some sort of rent dispute and the travelling world suffers for it. Oh, Hell, they're just passengers passing through...

We're lucky. The Amtrak lounge floods with passengers for the Southwest Chief, much delayed. Hot and sticky and practically information free. I say this often: "Doesn't anybody at Amtrak know how to take care of their customers?" The Chief's passengers finally get to go three hours late. No explanation offered for the delay. After about an hour and a "hurry up and wait", the Red Caps drive us out to an empty platform where we hold our bladders while our train holds itself for a half an hour just outside of the station. Reason? Never explained. "Doesn't anybody at Amtrak know how to take care of their customers?" Finally, about 2215, we board the Sunset and make our way to our bedroom with its welcome toilet. Much relieved, we settle in for the night. Compared to our usual Roomette, a Bedroom offers

“almost” luxury. We spoil easily and answer the call of the rack monster immediately. We’re two cars back from the locos, so the first hour or so of “beep, beep, be, beep” makes sleep hard to find and the track bounces to and fro’ at every switch. Eventually the Sandman wins.



Sunset Limited at Picacho AZ - Moe Bertrand

A brief early morning awakening in Maricopa, Arizona, the Sunset connection to Phoenix (forever banished from mainline rails because it’s so sparsely populated). That precedes a snoozing ride into Tucson. Up and at ‘em! My wife jumps off almost immediately to get in a little morning walk and visit the 1907 Southern Pacific built Spanish Colonial station. Nicely renovated and now owned by the city. Very well collected railroad museum, not open while we’re there but it looks fascinating. One nice feature of a bedroom is the extra roominess to get dressed without the unnatural contortions roomettes require.

No feature of an Amtrak train surpasses breakfast early in the morning on the train! The Amtrak menu offers indifferent, basic food and very good coffee. Nothing different today. However, the dining car crew makes all the difference! Great service and very friendly, they made us feel like family. “Doesn’t anybody at Amtrak know how to take care of their customers?” I’d say: “Ask the dining car crew, they do.” We leave Tucson while eating and linger over coffee. I wonder why the usual commotion at breakfast on other long-distance trains doesn’t appear. There are only a small number of passengers aboard today.

The parade of small towns, native American reservations and trackless desert fills the window. I spend my day looking in vain for snake tracks. The Sunset is a “limited train” and stops are few. I know there’s a raging argument over end-to-end travel, but I see almost no embarkation/debarkations on this train. How does it fill anyone’s intertown travel needs as it’s currently run? We ate an early breakfast and take a later lunch reservation and order up one of the largest, freshest salads seen in a long time.

The ride into El Paso provides a chance to see “the (controversial) wall.” Interesting contrast for anyone who’s seen the walls in Israel. Mostly a medium-high, wrought iron fence. Must be there to funnel people to ports of entry rather than completely deter them. The tracks skirt it for several miles. My wife takes the El Paso stop as a chance to get some walking in, rejoining her new-found (Tucson) platform buddy. Long distance trains offer lots of opportunities to meet new folks. They tour, briefly, the landmark station built in 1905, designed by Daniel Burnham who also designed Washington Union Station.

After leaving 96° El Paso, Texas (on-time at 1535, BTW) we heard from the Dining Car that reservations would no longer be necessary because of the reduced number of passengers. How can we argue for a daily schedule when the train doesn’t fill up three times a week, especially on a holiday weekend? I’m aware of the matrix methods but can’t say whether they work well for less than daily service, but my question still stands.

Leaving El Paso we’re on time but that ends about an hour east. We sit there for: a half-hour; no, an hour; no, an hour-and-a-half. Trackwork. Not a word from the “skeletonized” crew. “Doesn’t anybody at Amtrak know how to take care of their customers?” A short explanation came an hour into the ordeal. Very welcome but quite tardy. The dining car crew certainly showed their skills at supper. Surf and turf seemed to be a new entrée, a delicate shrimp cake and a nice steak, served by an enthusiastic crew.

One of features of west Texas railroads: you can see traffic way far away. We split the sidings between us and freight trains. Getting late. Getting later. Late enough that my hopes to see Alpine, Texas at sunset fly out the vestibule. We’re bed bound at least two hours before the arrival at Alpine.

“Is anybody goin’ to San Antone”? This is our favorite city in America. Arrive verrrry early Sunday morning. We’ve made up some time but we’re still two hours late. We plan on a short visit. My wife walks from the station to the Riverwalk (worth a visit) but hears a train horn and has to run back to the Sunset. The horn was for the Lone Star (Los Angeles to Chicago but part of the Sunset from LA to San Antonio.). We settled in for breakfast thinking “we’re on our way”. “Nada” (as they might say in San Antonio). About two hours later the Conductor announces that they had a “locomotive warning light” to take care of. “We’ll go soon but have to stop for fuel in Kirby”. I was surprised at how long it took to refuel. About 20 minutes later we rolled out of the fuel pits and we’re on our way.

Kirby, Converse, Universal City lay on the route. They were old “stompin’ grounds” so we sit at our window looking for touchstones. I find none. “Man, things change in 37 years. Can you believe it?” I can’t even find that old barbecue place trackside in Marion (east of San Antone’).

Houston. Two or so hours. Late! The couple that joined us at table for lunch had planned to hit a favorite restaurant in Houston but gave that up and ate in the diner. Many passengers got off in Houston, few new people got on. Certainly enjoyed some picturesque terrain in the coastal lowlands. There’s very busy freight service along the Gulf coast. This train crew informed us very often that we were going to sit in a siding, a nice touch after the taciturn experience up to Houston. The damage to the schedule grew but at least we knew why. As darkness fell we sat almost alone in the diner but the onboard crew served us cheerfully even though they faced a long duty night with a short turnaround. Good folks, they, and they’re the difference between a good experience and a less idyllic one. Many appear close to retirement, they’ll be hard to replace.



New Orleans Union Station - Kathy Reynolds

If on schedule we should be approaching "N'Orleans" in the twilight. This time we're still hours away as darkness falls. The Car Attendant asks if we want the bed made up, and we decline. We still harbored a rookie's hope that we could make up time and at least arrive around midnight, or 2 hours and change late. Not to be. We pass many waterways in the dark, clattering across bridges and listening to an almost continuous beep, beep, be, beep. Very intrusive but,

I suppose, it's safer than silent zones. My wife sleeps on the sofa as we traverse western Louisiana and cross the Big Muddy at 0230. It would be a great view from the Huey Long Bridge, but it's too late. The last thing the Sunset does is back into the station. Slowly. Well, we're here, and it's the middle of the night. But nous sommes arrivés! Laissez les bon temps rouler! New Orleans never sleeps so many taxis wait for us.

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Yes, there still is food on Amtrak trains, but....

Commentary by Russ Jackson – RailPAC Editor Emeritus

What a summer Amtrak had! While every summer, winter, spring and fall, have been adventures in survival for America's "national" passenger railroad, this summer of 2019 was an adventure in speculation as to what the current Amtrak administration was going to do about the long distance trains that cross "flyover country" and serve the population therein with very popular transportation alternatives. You readers all know that, and so does this writer who continues to pour out commentaries with provocative headlines like appear above. So, you ask, what's new? Well, I'll try not to be redundant when this summer saw an outpouring of articles about the changes ahead for these trains that have been published not only in the railfan press, but have been picked up by local newspapers, radio and TV stations, as something that made a good story and affected the area where they serve as news outlets. Amtrak's announcement of the changes that would take place in the Dining Cars in the east starting October 1 went viral...that is, nationwide. Good publicity you say! Yes and No. Perhaps it convinced potential riders that they should ride "while they can," as the inference was that the "experience" of eating on board might be going away.

What was really being said, of course, was the dining "experience" was changing for riders East of the Mississippi River on trains that travel one overnight on their routes. I hasten to say that the Superliner Dining Cars that ply the rails West of the Mississippi and travel two nights are NOT affected. And I further hasten to add, YET. That's the rub as we go into the new Amtrak Fiscal Year, the word 'YET' remains viable. Chances are readers of this article already know what those changes are but if you don't I recommend you read almost anything that has appeared under the subject line of "Amtrak Food." AND, I strongly suggest you read the fine articles by Andrew Selden, Dick Spotswood, and the other contributors to Railway Age, Trains, Passenger Train Journal, etc., that outline the huge mistake that Amtrak has embarked upon regarding its Food and Beverage future and the financial outlook of the railroad. Writer Graham Rapiere writing for Business Insider said after his coast-to-coast trip, "A custom-cooked steak on an Amtrak train seemed too good to be true, but it wasn't."

If the plan, as many of us fear, is to slowly, inch-by-inch diminish the quality of the passenger experience on board the trains it isn't working yet. By all counts passenger loads on the western long distance trains are high, and the passengers are happy with their experience. A recent traveler who rode just from Barstow, CA, to Lamy, NM, (try that by air) had "many complements for staff in the dining room" when his Southwest Chief encountered a day-long delay due to a BNSF freight train derailment east of Flagstaff, "great morale builders" and his sleeping car attendant was "full of energy and enthusiasm." This despite a bus bridge from Flagstaff to Albuquerque. Does Amtrak administration ever think about this aspect of their on-board service? The food is important, and the current Superliner Diner menus are quite acceptable for the infrequent traveler even though mostly unchanged this fall.

All this leads us to speculate as to what Amtrak thinks is its future, which has now been formally stated as being with the Millennials. What about those of us who want to continue to ride and are older than dirt, to coin a phrase. By that, I mean anyone over 50. I'm a geezer at the top end of that scale after 50, but I look at fellow passengers on the long distance trains and NOT everyone riding is in "our" age group. A recent New York Times opinion piece, "The Sterile, Efficient Life of a Millennial," by 26 year old Reineford Staffer, summed it up: "I'd love a dining car on the train...Or any chance to slow down." Sometime just look at the Virtual Railfan sites and see who is boarding the Southwest Chief at Flagstaff or LaPlata and you will see a wide range of ages of folks who have chosen to ride, many in the Sleeping Cars, but also in the Coaches. Andrew Selden rode the Empire Builder #7 from the Twin Cities to Seattle: "It was completely full--four coaches and four and a half sleepers--with 350 +/- on board at any moment, and heavy turnover all across the line. I swear I did not see ANY passengers, including me, who fit (CEO) Anderson's fantasy description. I DID see a lot of people USING the train to get somewhere. Anderson, of course, wouldn't know that because he's never ridden one of these western trains to get somewhere."

So, what can we fearfully expect in the coming year? If I'm wrong I'll lead the celebration, but Amtrak has now declared that all the Food & Beverage changes they have just made are destined to save them \$2 million a year, or just \$1 in every \$3,450 based on the Amtrak budget. If that \$2 million amount turns out to be correct (good grief, how can it not be, what with their accounting system being what it is) the next step will be to "convince" everyone that they can save a whopping amount more if they diminish the western long distance trains dining "experience" to the equivalent of what the eastern trains are doing. And, for that matter, the idea of getting rid of "unprofitable" trains may already be in the works. Have you seen the Amtrak list of western trains that they are touting as "keepers"? Notice which one is always missing from that list? You guessed it, the Sunset Limited. I know there is a grassroots organization working with local station stop communities along the Sunset Route to build support for retention of this service. I urge them to HURRY. Time is running out!

Yes, I've left out the continuing problem of On Time Performance. While the freight railroads and Amtrak debate who is at fault, we know it's "all of them." If there's any solution, a realistic solution that is, please come forward and convince those responsible for train operations that it can be done. End of report for this time...so, until next time this writer says: "keep riding, keep eating, and enjoy the experience." Support RailPAC's Western Interstate Trains Coalition, and, stay alert to what might happen next as Amtrak continues to cut and is not interested in GROWTH as a way out of their problems. Leave the dining "experience" alone on the western trains!

Fullerton Hosts the 2019 Steel Wheel Conference of the Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada.

Brian Yanity – RailPAC Board member, Orange County



Cleve Cleveland of OCTA describing the OC Streetcar project
Photo Brian Yanity

On September 28th, over 50 rail transportation advocates from around the state gathered for the annual 2019 Steel Wheels Conference of the Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC) at the Fullerton Old Spaghetti Factory (the former Union Pacific depot).

RailPAC promotes the development of a modern, sustainable, environmentally friendly passenger rail system through education of the public and government officials. Fullerton city council member Ahmad Zahra, whose district includes the train station, welcomed the attendees and described the role of Santa Fe Railway in the establishment of Fullerton. Zahra said “we are trying to improve public transportation, and part of it is looking at our trains, and our train station... We want to encourage people to ride trains more”. He emphasized the role of local government in improving the passenger’s experience at the train station with adequate pedestrian infrastructure and connecting bus service.

Carrie Schindler, Director of Transit and Rail at San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, gave a

presentation on the ‘Arrow’, a 9-mile passenger rail line under construction between Redlands and San Bernardino, scheduled to start running in 2022. The Arrow will start with three new diesel-powered small ‘multiple-unit’ trains, along with one experimental hydrogen-powered train, made by Swiss manufacturer Stadler Rail.

Rick Meade, Senior Executive Officer – Program Management at the LA Metropolitan Transportation Authority, presented on the 13 large-scale rail transit projects in Los Angeles County planned to be completed before the 2028 Olympics. Cleve Cleveland, Department Manager for Orange County Streetcar Operations for OCTA, spoke about the construction of the OC Streetcar project, which is now under construction between Santa Ana and Garden Grove. Expected to begin operations in 2022, the OC Streetcar will be the first electric rail transit system to run in Orange County since the last Pacific Electric “Red Car” to Santa Ana ran in 1950.

RailPAC president Steve Roberts described efforts by rail passenger advocates in different states collaborating on saving the nation’s long distance trains, such as the Southwest Chief which stops in Fullerton, from cancellation by Amtrak management. Congress continues to provide funding for Amtrak long-distance trains, despite opposition from the Trump administration. Roberts and former RailPAC president Paul Dyson also gave updates on the LOSSAN (or Pacific Surfliner) corridor rail Los Angeles-San Diego services which serve Fullerton. Over the next year, the number of daily Amtrak Surfliner trains which stop in Fullerton will soon increase to 13, up from 12 currently, and several more Fullerton-LA daily trains on Metrolink will be added.

Rail Passenger Association of California and Nevada (RailPAC):
<http://www.railpac.org/>

OC Streetcar: <https://www.octa.net/Projects-and-Programs/All-Projects/Rail-Projects/OC-Streetcar/>

LA Metro Capital Projects:
<https://www.metro.net/projects/capital-projects/>

Redlands Passenger Rail Project:
<http://www.redlandsrailproject.org/>

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If you have a collection of hi-res jpeg photos, especially of passenger trains in California, or enjoy taking them, contact the Editor,
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pdyson@railpac.org

An advertisement for photographers. It features a large camera on the left, a film strip running across the middle, and a small image of a train on the right. The text is in various fonts and colors, including red and black.

Don't forget to check your subscription expiration date on the mailing label and renew your membership if it is due.

Thank you for your continued support for RailPAC and passenger rail.

New Passenger Cars for the California Corridors

by Paul Dyson”

Photos are of Brightline Coaches built by Siemens. Will California's cars match up?



As we know the State of California is purchasing new passenger cars for the intercity corridors. Siemens has taken over the contract after the Nippon Sharyo debacle with the high-

level design. While we know that the new cars will be based on the Florida “Brightline” car I was concerned about the interiors and passenger amenities. We have seen drawings and artist’s impressions at the Oakland rail conference and that’s what prompted the questions. I (SW) sent these questions to Caltrans Division of Rail’s Momoko Tamaoki (MT) who is heading the program, and these are her responses.

MT: Please note these answers reflect Caltrans’ position only and do not reflect the position(s) of partner agencies to the procurement.

SW: Seat pitch: Do you propose to use the same seat spacing as the Brightline cars or will you have more seats per car?

MT: *The seat pitch or distance between seats for the Caltrans trains measures 36.7 inches, designed for passenger convenience and safety while providing 70 seats per standard Coach Car. The seats are mounted to a common rail system so that the pitch and seat count could be modified in the future. Caltrans has multiple car types that have configurations different than Brightline/Virgin Trains so seat counts and configurations will vary. The integrated*



seat design also allows ample dedicated wheelchair parking and stowage areas on each car. Accessibility is further enhanced by open gangways which allow end to end ADA access between cars throughout the entire train. It should be noted that the new railcars will be extremely beneficial to our passengers who are wheelchair users and other ADA passengers, with the wide aisleways and gangways allowing for unimpeded wheelchair passage from end to end, spacious Accessible Toilet Rooms

in each car, and wheelchair seating spaces in each car. Caltrans and SJJPA have worked closely with the disability rights community to provide a state of the art passenger rail experience for our ADA passengers.

SW: Will the seats be aligned with the windows or will some seats be adjacent to “blank walls” with no view?

MT: *The seating layout has been optimized by the builder to avoid the “blank walls” scenario as much as possible. As noted above, the seats are mounted to a rail system so the locations of seats could*

be modified at a later date if Caltrans or their operating agency chooses.

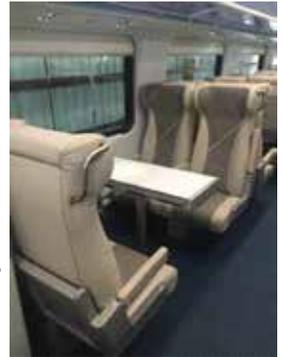
SW: We note that there does not seem to be a design for a business class car. Has this been discussed with the corridor boards and is it still an option?

MT: *The California corridor where these cars are planned to operate does not utilize a separate business class service. Therefore, at this time, Caltrans and the SJJPA are not considering procuring a business class car.*

SW: Is the vending machine the chosen mode for provision of food service, or is this just for discussion purposes?

MT: *We are working with Siemens to design a multi-functional space to accommodate future food and beverage service which could include vending machines or a small café setup.*

SW: Seats: Given that many passengers make quite long journeys on the San Joaquins, we are concerned about seat design and comfort. Are you evaluating different designs? Will you be testing prototypes in existing train sets prior to making a decision? Will you be inviting members of the public to provide input?



MT: *The seats are designed and built by a premium Italian manufacturer who serves the luxury car market as well as rail. This project allowed the manufacturer to open a manufacturing facility in the USA, bringing additional jobs to the United States. The seats were selected as a further improvement in reliability, comfort, and style to the positively received seats utilized on the Brightline and Virgin Trains services. Experience with Virgin Trains was used as input to the selection and design of the seats for this fleet.*

SW: Window shades: What type of window shading is under consideration, e.g. variable tinting, curtains, blinds?

MT: *Windows will have woven fabric rolling shades/blinds that are integrated within the sidewall liner. The blinds will block over 90% of light transmission and are designed to stay where positioned without inadvertently rolling up because of train motion. The shades are a marked improvement over curtains.*

The design is not final, and there may well be variations between the initial San Joaquin delivery and later versions for Capitol Corridor. We are also concerned about provision for bicycles and checked baggage, which have not been addressed. You can be sure that we will make the passengers’ voice heard if decisions are made that sacrifice the customer experience for the sake of a few dollars.



All Aboard Arizona

– Tony Trifiletti –

The Voters Of Phoenix Spoke – No, They Shouted –

“That Rail Is The Future Of Our Region!”

Proposition 105 was placed before the voters of Phoenix by outside “dark money.” The players had succeeded in killing light rail in Nashville, and their campaign in Phoenix was intended to be the knockout blow to the light rail revival that began in San Diego in 1979. Prop 105 would have killed expansion of Valley Metro Rail, prevented the renewal of rolling stock, and forbidden Phoenix from participating in future commuter rail and intercity rail projects. Passage of Prop 105 would have ended All Aboard Arizona’s attempts to restore Amtrak service to Phoenix via the *Sunset Limited* and establish service via Phoenix between Los Angeles and Tucson. THIS WAS FOR ALL THE MARBLES.

I wrote an argument against Prop 105 for the voters’ pamphlet and introduced our hook: Prop 105 would kill any and all rail in Phoenix. Our ballot argument made it into the pamphlet, but more importantly, members of the Transportation Choices Coalition used it as a template for their own ballot arguments.

I reformatted the argument into a letter to the editor to the *Arizona Republic*. By a stroke of luck, Amtrak officials had just visited Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego to discuss Phoenix-Tucson and Los Angeles-Phoenix-Tucson services. This added a sense of urgency. The *Republic* published it.

Our argument played a significant role in turning the Prop 105 vote into a landslide for rail. The proposition was defeated 62-38, a genuine blowout. Outside money will think twice before coming to Phoenix again. The Rail Passengers Association (RPA) acknowledged our role in defeating it. We made a difference.

Back in April we developed a campaign to stop Amtrak from killing the national network of long-distance trains. A project team was assembled.

RailPAC produced letter templates for local and federal officials, I built a work plan and spreadsheet using Mike



Phoenix Region Light Rail - Saved by the Voters Photo - All Aboard Arizona

Garey’s and Doug Kerr’s “Our Train Stations” website, and RPA supplied full-color posters and statistical sheets. I contacted RPA state representatives to solicit their participation.

John James produced, and I narrated, an educational video that was loaded to You Tube. It has garnered 2500 views and some financial support: (<https://youtu.be/20hOAFiWk8Q>).

RPA did not provide financial support; RailPAC provided substantial financial support for several months. As of now, 7 states are actively on board and 3 more have agreed to participate. I issue weekly bulletins to keep our participants on track.

We hosted Chef Madison Butler for RPA, setting her up with meetings in Phoenix and Tucson as part of our mission to support Amtrak.

Thus far, we’ve held meetings in Yuma, Maricopa, Tucson and Flagstaff with local officials, chambers of commerce, tourism and economic development people, and local media. We’re attempting to set up similar meetings in Phoenix and Benson. Meetings in Kingman and Winslow are set for October 29 and 30 respectively.

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Santa Barbara Car Free is a cooperative project founded and led by Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District for cleaner air and a healthier planet. See OurAir.org.

Editorial – Paul Dyson

2020 and Beyond



*Overkill? Is High Speed and Electrification Really Necessary for First Phase of High Speed Rail?
Siemens Velaro Train - Photo - Siemens*

It seems to me that, with a new California Governor, and the possible start of construction of a new railway linking California to Nevada, we are at something of a pivot point in passenger rail. While many of the issues have been with us for some time, newly recognized factors such as rising sea level will have a significant role in transportation policy in the coming years.

In the coming year Steel Wheels will attempt to throw some light on these topics and, I hope, provoke some thinking and discussion about the way we spend transportation investment dollars for the next ten years and beyond. Here is my laundry list:

- California High Speed Rail Funds – How to get the best from limited dollars
- Rising Sea Level – The vulnerability of the Coast Route.
- Recognition of the role of Regional Rail - Big Ticket Regional Projects
- National Network of Sleeper Trains – Superliner Fleet
- Punctuality on shared track - Long Freight Trains
- Minimum standard for passenger routes – double track

I'm starting in this issue with High Speed Rail and with Sea Level rising, as both have become topical in Southern California. (Steve Roberts has written a very comprehensive overview of Northern California Regional Rail, starting on page 6.)

A Los Angeles Times story reported the attempt of some southern California State representatives, including my own Assembly Member Laura Friedman, to reprogram HSR funds from the Central Valley to the Burbank-Anaheim corridor. (LA Times July 30, 2019) Of course Northern California will also be looking for its share. So the questions I'm raising are, where should the dollars be spent, or should they even be spent at all?

With the publication of the latest Business Plan from the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) came reaction from both expected and new quarters as to how to proceed

with the project. With a lot of nuances notwithstanding, we can boil the options down to these four:

- A. Follow the plan, full build out of San Joaquin Valley segment and operate High Speed Electric service between Merced and Bakersfield. Complete Caltrain electrification and operate local electric service on the peninsula between San Jose and San Francisco.
- B. Build central segment (Merced–Bakersfield) without electrification, operate through diesel services between Bakersfield and Sacramento and the Bay Area, spend the money saved from electrification in Southern California.
- C. Build out both bookends as well as San Joaquin segment based on new funding plan.
- D. Abandon the project. This option would require the return of over \$3 billion of Federal grants.



125mph Virgin Brightline Florida Train. 125mph and and no need for a connection. Photo - Siemens

Option A, Follow the plan means not only building the right of way and laying the track between Merced and Bakersfield, but also erecting overhead catenary i.e. electrification, purchasing or leasing trainsets, and establishing a maintenance and repair facility for these trains.

Electrification is an industrial process, best done in long production runs. That way the supply chain for components can be refined, the skilled workforce can be held together for a longer period, and overall costs can be reduced. In contrast, Caltrain electrification, which has no follow up project programmed and is only 51 route miles, has become horribly expensive. Likewise, the provision of just three or

four high speed trains, with a long intermission before more trains are ordered, is surely the least efficient way to procure this specialized equipment. This option hinges on whether you believe high speed service will attract legions of new passengers between Fresno and Bakersfield and other Valley cities, passengers who are prepared to make an inconvenient transfer at Merced to make longer journeys.

Option B, while not having the buzz of 200mph trains, does at least as much to reduce journey times for longer distance passengers. To take full advantage of the improved engineering of the new track segment higher speed trains would be required. These could be 125mph Siemens Charger Locomotives and "Brightline" style coaches, or they could be multiple unit trains with hybrid power trains and alternative fuels. The negative is that there will not be the excitement of very high speed. On the positive side the trains will offer more convenient, single seat rides for the majority of passengers.

Option C is the hope of those optimists that think that Option A will come in on budget and that more money will be available from various taxes and fees to enable the Authority to embark on construction at both ends of the line at the same time. This could include the vital extension of Caltrain to the Trans Bay Terminal, as well as Los Angeles Union Station reconstruction and other improvements on the Burbank to Anaheim Corridor. I have heard no mention of starting on the really important tunnel links.

Option D, no project, is still out there and very much on the minds of those who want money for other purposes, or who simply are hostile to rail transportation.

What would you choose? Email me at pdyson@railpac.org with your preference.

It's a difficult puzzle and you can be sure that there will be a lot of arm wrestling before it's all over. The biggest unknown is how big the money pot will be. When funds are raised from auctioning pollution credits, sales taxes, the Federal Government, and other highly elastic sources, it's almost impossible to come up with an annual budget, let alone a twenty-year investment plan, which is what we sorely need.



*Elkhorn Slough, four feet above sea level, today...
.Photo - Chris Mohs*

Rising Sea Level – What Future for The Coast Route?

It's easy to dismiss climate change and rising sea levels as a problem for the next generation. Some regard it as a non-issue. If you are sitting below the bluffs at Del Mar, or on a train crossing Elkhorn Slough, then I maintain that it is a very real issue which we need to address in this generation.

We have to acknowledge the fact that most railroads in California were built cheaply to link much smaller cities than they are today. The priority was to plant your flag and claim the franchise, never mind that your route went up hill and down dale. One of the results of this is that we have miles of route along cliff tops and at beach level that are extremely vulnerable to weather events. February 15, 2019 saw a major slip at Del Mar, followed by another on April 22nd. This is not the first at that site, but the February 15 incident caused the suspension of Surfliner and Coaster service and served as a wake-up call to transportation agencies as well as the community.

The need for radical and rapid action to protect the Surfliner route between Los Angeles and San Diego could be the catalyst for major improvement to service between the two largest cities in the State. While barrier rocks and other palliatives might afford some interim solution, no amount of investment will change the fact that you still have a slow, single track railroad through these sensitive areas. Moving sections of the main line inland (Laguna Niguel to San Onofre, and south of Solana Beach into San Diego) will put the line well above sea level, and provide a faster, more direct double track route for intercity trains. Local service could be maintained on the existing line while still feasible and if there is demand.

North of Los Angeles, while there have not been any major landslips along the Santa Barbara coast, the line is still vulnerable to cliff erosion. We well remember the tragic landslide at La Conchita between Ventura and Carpinteria in 2005 that killed 10 people. While a few hundred feet from the Coast main line, it clearly showed how vulnerable are other sections of the track. In case you haven't noticed, California is not blessed with rugged, granite cliffs. These are soft, sedimentary rocks very vulnerable to weather and tide.

Over the years, studies have identified capital projects that are necessary to increase capacity and improve service along the LOSSAN corridor and north all the way to San Jose, but to my recollection none have specifically addressed the coastal erosion issue and the slow but inexorable rise in sea level. It's time to change that. We don't need a new set of studies, but a review of capital projects, likely with new priorities based on ensuring long term protection from "time and tide", is urgently needed. If we are serious about passenger rail, we need to address this issue.

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