



Metro

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TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON *PAW*
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: BRYAN PENNINGTON *Bnp.*
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL INTERCONNECTOR
PROJECT (SCRIP)

ISSUE

Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) is a major transportation hub for the southern California passenger rail network. The Board approved the advancement of the Southern California Regional Interconnector Project (SCRIP), formerly called the L.A. Union Station Run-Through Tracks Project, as part of the Regional Rail Capital Plan in July of 2012. The current configuration of LAUS is a stub-ended station with all trains entering and exiting through the five track throat immediately to the north east of the station. The SCRIP project is planned to extend up to six of the existing tracks in LAUS through the station and out of the south end of the station to connect with the mainline tracks south of LAUS. This will increase the capacity of LAUS by 40% to 50%.

The current plan for the environmental clearance of SCRIP is to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). In parallel with the SEIR/SEIS, a programmatic EIR/EIS is being undertaken on the entire LAUS Master Plan (LAUSMP). Originally, the SCRIP environmental process was scheduled to be completed in June 2016 while the LAUSMP Programmatic EIR is anticipated to be completed in October 2016.

The LAUSMP located the California High Speed Rail (CHSR) terminus station at Vignes Street near the Piper Tech building. Recent discussions between Metro staff and the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) staff have identified the possibility of bringing high speed rail (HSR) into the LAUS yard provided that there is sufficient infrastructure to maintain service for all operators requiring access to LAUS. The consequential impact of accommodating HSR in the heart of LAUS would change the environmental footprint for SCRIP as this will require a new environmental approach and a larger environmental scope for the amended SCRIP project.

Staff has been discussing the execution of the environmental work with the CHSRA and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as there are several environmental studies by Metro and HSR that will overlap. It is expected that both the CHSRA and Metro can clear their respective projects with coordination of the environmental studies. Discussions are underway with CHSRA and no recommendation is forwarded at this time. Currently, the SCRIP project is on hold until staff reports back to the Board in October 2015 with a recommendation.

BACKGROUND

Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) is a major regional rail transportation hub for the southern California passenger rail network. Five of the six Metrolink lines have origins and destinations at LAUS in addition to Amtrak intercity and long distance trains. The LAUS is also located on the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN corridor), the second busiest intercity passenger rail corridor in the nation.

Metrolink and Amtrak operate in a push-pull mode in southern California. The current configuration of LAUS is a stub ended station with all trains entering and exiting through the five-track throat. Considering LAUS as the hub; commuter, intercity, and long distance trains "push" into LAUS with the cab car forward. Conversely, they "pull" out, locomotive first. This configuration requires the trains that serve LAUS to idle collectively approximately 50 hours a day.

The SCRIP will take up to six of the tracks in the station, continue them south across the State Route 101 (SR-101) freeway and extend them to meet the mainline tracks along the Los Angeles River south of LAUS. This will allow trains to effectively "run-through" the station, changing the station for at least 50 percent of the trains to a dwell stop along the journey rather than an end to the journey thereby, creating one-seat rides. An additional connection at the L.A. River creates a loop which allows trains to go north, enhancing operational flexibility.

SCRIP was first advanced as the Los Angeles Union Station Run-Through Tracks Project and the final EIR/EIS was approved in December 2005. At that time, there was insufficient funding to advance the project. The project was on hold until it was advanced with the Regional Rail Capital Program in 2012, when funding became available for the project.

SCRIP provides the following benefits:

- Reduces travel times for 50% of the trains by reducing dwell times in LAUS.
- Increases operational capacity.
- Reduces locomotive idling times.
- Improves air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Allows one-seat rides throughout the region.
- Improves passenger circulation from the concourse to the platforms.

The history of SCRIP is as follows:

1939	LAUS opens.
2000	Run Through Track Project Study Report completed.
2002	Conceptual engineering and environmental analysis of the Run-Through track project begins.
2006	Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the Run-Through Tracks is approved.
2012	Metro Board approves funding to advance the project.
2013	California High Speed Rail Authority approves the Advance Investment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
2014	Preliminary Engineering and Supplemental Environmental Engineering work begins on SCRIP.
2014	L.A. Metro Board approves the Union Station Master Plan.

The benefits of SCRIP were modeled at a high level to determine the number of tracks needed to “run-through” the station. For this model LAUS was treated as a terminal with trains flowing in and out of the terminal. Specific track to track operations within the terminal were not modeled. The modeling showed that there are specific efficiencies within the terminal that can be achieved to create greater capacity.

DISCUSSION

In 2013, the Advance Investment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Metro, six other agencies, and the CHSRA was developed. This MOU included a prioritized list of projects that would be funded using \$1 Billion of Proposition 1A and other funds. The projects on this list include those that are located on and off Phase 1 high speed rail corridors in southern California. For this list, Metro, working with our southern California partners prioritized projects that have independent utility. That is to say, that the Metro projects will be compatible with the conventional regional rail system as well as high speed rail. SCRIP is the number one priority project on this list since it benefits the southern California region as a whole.

In 2014, Metro completed the LAUS Master Plan (LAUSMP). This plan was developed to shape LAUS thirty years into the future. The LAUSMP looked at the entire LAUS campus for passenger circulation, development, bus circulation, and transit access and a complete plan for the station was developed. Additional information regarding the LAUSMP can be found here <http://www.metro.net/projects/LA-union-station/>.

As part of the master plan work, it was determined that passenger circulation was a particular issue. The existing access to the passenger rail platforms is through a pedestrian tunnel that crosses under the tracks. Access to the platforms is through ramps and stairs. The ramps at the south side of the passageway were reconstructed at the time of the construction of the Red Line station and are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). However, the ramps at the north side were left untouched and were not upgraded to current ADA standards.

The SCRIP project will require the tracks that are running through the station to be raised to provide clearance over the El Monte busway and the State Route 101 (SR-101) freeway. Therefore, this will require the platforms that are served by these tracks to be raised as well. As part of the initial work on SCRIP, a study of the passenger concourse that was proposed in the LAUSMP was completed. This study is a more advanced engineering study of the requirements for the concourse and the passenger rail platforms than was previously conducted with the LAUSMP work. This study confirmed that vertical circulation is an issue and that the circulation elements such as elevators and stairs or escalators will need to comply with ADA standards. With the raised platforms, the existing ramps that are used for access to the platforms would not meet the required vertical circulation. Furthermore, the added complexity is that the layout of the passenger concourse is dictated by the height and the diagonal orientation of the underground Red Line station. These unique features force the elevators and escalators necessary for vertical circulation in a diagonal orientation outside of the limits of the Red Line structure which in turn, pushes the vertical circulation elements out past the boundaries of the existing passageway.

The study concluded that constructing SCRIP and the concourse together provides an integrated design that will:

- Minimize throw-away costs.
- Reduce construction schedule and impacts to passengers.

- Provide an opportunity to streamline the environmental process.
- Jump start the LAUS Master Plan vision.

The SCRIP concourse study showed that a limited portion of the new LAUSMP passenger concourse (under platforms 2 and 3) could be constructed with the SCRIP. While not a desirable condition, this did allow for the phasing of the construction of the new passenger concourse. Staff will continue to coordinate with County wide Planning on their efforts on the programmatic EIR for the LAUSMP and the 101 Freeway to 7th Street Rail Corridor Coordination Study.

California High Speed Rail

The California high speed rail system is expected to have its Initial Operating Segment (IOS) in service in 2022 prior to going to LAUS in 2029. However, the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) is looking at options that will speed up the timeframe, to get to LAUS, by as much as five years. In order to meet the needs of the high speed rail (HSR) system, Metrolink and Amtrak will be providing the link between the IOS terminus and LAUS. In order to meet the demand, SCRIP will have to be completed prior to the initial high speed rail revenue service in order to meet the needs of the rail system.

Based on the initial criteria set forth by the CHSRA, it was decided as part of the development of the LAUSMP to place the HSR terminus at Vignes Street across from LAUS. However, since then, the CHSRA has relaxed their criteria and has expressed a desire to come directly into LAUS for maximum connectivity with the regional rail and transit systems. Staff met with CHSRA staff in April 2015 to determine how HSR can fit into LAUS and examine the needs of the CHSRA in consideration of the ultimate commuter and intercity system. Incorporating HSR into the LAUS campus (in lieu of a station on Vignes Street) will provide a number of benefits, including substantial cost savings and passenger convenience.

As part of the SCRIP work, it was determined that HSR can fit within the LAUS yard but would require that the throat be reconfigured and the entire yard be raised. The initial modeling of SCRIP has shown that ten conventional tracks at five platforms are needed at LAUS. Of these, five to six (depending on the configuration) will be needed as run-through tracks. In addition, the CHSRA has asked that they get four tracks, two platforms, within LAUS. These HSR platforms will have to be dedicated due to the height of the platform of 48 inches above the top of rail versus 15 inches above top of rail for conventional passenger rail. Additional engineering is needed to ascertain the configuration of the yard that will allow for a total of fourteen tracks into the station. Also, additional modeling is needed to ascertain the yard layout and confirm the need for the number of tracks and platforms at the station based upon a rationalized service requirement.

The addition of the HSR tracks into LAUS raises a variety of technical issues, some of which are:

- Number of conventional rail tracks needed at LAUS.
- Increased footprint south of LAUS needed for trackwork.
- Overlapping environmental documents.

The addition of HSR into LAUS “pushes” the conventional run-through tracks east. This results in a change to the track curvature south of LAUS. This configuration will “push” the SCRIP tracks and the high speed rail tracks south of Commercial Street resulting in additional property takes.

The current plan for the environmental clearance of SCRIP is to do a Supplemental EIR/EIS on the SCRIP project and do a Sequential EIR/EIS on the entire Concourse. This would coincide with the program level environmental clearing of the Union Station Master Plan. However, with the advent of HSR into LAUS, and the consequential impacts, the environmental footprint has changed and will necessitate a new environmental document on the project.

Project Funding

Metro and other southern California agencies signed an MOU with the CHSRA in 2012 that provided up to \$1 Billion in advance investment in projects in southern California. This funding is to be provided to a prioritized list of projects of which SCRIP is noted as number one. This funding is to come from Proposition 1A and other funds. In addition to the state funding available for this project, an initial amount of \$6 Million was funded from Measure R. Furthermore, the project has \$32 Million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (of 2009) funding that is being reprogrammed through the CHSRA.

The inclusion of HSR into LAUS changes the costs of the SCRIP project significantly. The construction of the new LAUSMP passenger concourse along with the additional required property acquisitions would increase the total cost of the project to over two billion dollars which is anticipated to be offset by funding yet to be identified by CHSRA for its share of LAUS costs.

Staff is talking with the CHSRA regarding the funding of this project and how the goals of both agencies can be achieved with the change in scope of the SCRIP. It is expected that the CHSRA will be responsible for a considerable portion of the funding that will be necessary to complete the SCRIP with the inclusion of the HSR project. The business relationship of the Metro and CHSRA, the funding responsibilities, the respective technical and environmental scopes of work and future access, operation and maintenance rights and responsibilities will need to be included in a new MOU and/or term sheet.

NEXT STEPS

Staff is continuing to work with the CHSRA and the Federal Railroad Administration regarding the approach to engineering and the environmental clearance. In addition, staff is in discussions with the CHSRA regarding the funding of the project. Staff will be coming to the Board in October 2015 with a recommendation regarding the configuration of the project and the scope of CHSRA involvement.