



EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
February 17, 2000

Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA
90012-2952

SUBJECT: INTERCITY RAIL VISION AND GOALS

ACTION: SUPPORT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INTERCITY RAIL GROUP (SCIRG) VISION AND GOALS, AND RECOMMEND AMENDMENT OF MTA LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM TO WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH SCIRG, THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY (SCRRA), AND THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (SCAG) TO SECURE FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

RECOMMENDATION

- A) Support the SCIRG Vision Statement, and Goals (Attachment A).
- B) Amend the MTA Legislative Program to work cooperatively with SCIRG, SCRRA and SCAG to secure funding for transportation projects in Los Angeles County (Proposed language in Attachment B).

ISSUE

MTA is a member of the Southern California Intercity Rail Group (SCIRG), which is a forum by which transportation agencies in the corridor between San Diego and San Luis Obispo cooperate with commuter and intercity rail providers to improve rail services. In Los Angeles County, the participating agencies are MTA, SCCRA and SCAG. At its December, 1999 meeting, SCIRG adopted a Vision Statement and Goals, Strategies, and Work Plan ("Vision and Goals"). These goals, among other things, seek to expand available funding for SCIRG, without impacting funding for the Southern California region for other surface transportation improvements and programs (See Strategies 6.1 and 6.4 in Attachment A). MTA's supporting actions will help SCIRG work to expand and integrate rail services in Southern California. Working together with SCIRG, SCRRA and SCAG, MTA has an enhanced ability to attract state intercity rail funding to Los Angeles. Many SCIRG projects benefit the Metrolink system as well, thus assisting MTA with its financial support to Metrolink. The Board's affirmation of the Vision and Goals also provides direction and clarification to the MTA representative and alternate serving on the SCIRG Board.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of the SCIRG Vision and Goals is to compile a set of legislative, financial, and technical objectives which the SCIRG members agree to mutually support and pursue. MTA staff will implement the Vision and Goals through an amendment in the MTA Legislative Program and other staff activities in concert with SCIRG and its member agencies. MTA's actions in support of SCIRG will be designed to optimize and expand the availability of travel by rail throughout Southern California, without negatively impacting the funding available to MTA for its programs.

OPTIONS

The Board could choose not to affirm the SCIRG Vision and Goals. This could negatively impact the ability of the MTA's representatives on SCIRG to clearly and confidently represent the interests of MTA. The Board could choose not to amend the Legislative Program as proposed in Attachment B, but could direct staff to work cooperatively with SCIRG to secure funding for transportation in Southern California.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommended actions will not impact the MTA budget. MTA pays annual dues of \$25,000 to SCIRG. These dues are used for the administration of the agency, and studies or other consultant work as needed. The funding flows through the Subsidies to Others Budget.

BACKGROUND

SCIRG was formed in 1996 through the passage of Senate Bill 457, the Kelley-Intercity Passenger Rail Act which sought to address the impact of rising costs and reduced funding available for the San Diegan Intercity Rail services running between San Diego and San Luis Obispo, via Los Angeles Union Station. The law includes an enabling provision for SCIRG to take over administration of the San Diegans from Caltrans and integrate San Diegan operations with Metrolink and/or Coaster services in Los Angeles and San Diego areas respectively.

SCIRG obtained consultant services to study the feasibility of a transfer and integration. The study indicated that significant cost savings were possible, much of which could be obtained without a full transfer and integration of rail services. Due to uncertainty in the funding environment for intercity rail operations and a lack of commitment from one of the counties along the corridor, SCIRG members voted to hold over a decision on a possible transfer, but to continue working as a group to achieve better coordination and potential cost savings among the

Caltrans San Diegan, Metrolink and Coaster services, while also cooperatively pursuing additional funding for these services.

There are frequently opportunities for intercity rail funds to be requested and used for projects in Los Angeles County which also benefit Metrolink, such as speed or capacity improvements on the lines which are used by Metrolink as well as intercity rail: the Ventura County Line and the Orange County Line. SCRRA has also been successful in working with SCIRG to implement a number of systemwide projects with intercity rail funding, such as joint Amtrak-Metrolink Ticket Vending Machines and train vehicle purchases. In each of two recent funding years, over \$20 million has been made available for projects within Los Angeles County, which would have been allocated to other parts of California had SCRRA and SCIRG been less successful. As an example of a current SCIRG opportunity, state funds are now eligible for the operation of state-supported and administered intercity rail but not for commuter or interregional rail services, such as Metrolink. Discussions are underway between SCIRG members and Caltrans regarding possible changes in the definition of intercity rail so that Metrolink could become eligible for some of the funding.

MTA works cooperatively with a variety of other public agencies to secure funding, as well as on other legislative issues. SCRRA and SCAG are MTA's regional partners on passenger rail issues in Los Angeles County. In amending the MTA 1999-2000 Legislative Program, Government Relations staff recommends also acknowledging and recommending cooperation with SCRRA and SCAG.

NEXT STEPS

MTA Planning staff will work through the SCIRG Technical Advisory Committee, in coordination with MTA Government Relations staff, to develop a legislative program to implement the SCIRG Vision and Goals. MTA appointees to the SCIRG Board can take action to approve or amend the program. Other SCIRG actions will include the development of a request for STIP intercity rail funding for projects to benefit rail services in Southern California. MTA staff anticipates returning to the Board by June, 2000 to request approval for continuing membership in SCIRG, as the MTA 1998 Board authorization to participate in SCIRG was for a two-year period.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A: SCIRG Vision Statement and Goals

Attachment B: Proposed Amendment to MTA Legislative Program


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SCIRG Vision Statement, Goals, and Implementation Strategies, Including Six-Month Work Program

Adopted at the December 10, 1999 SCIRG Board Meeting

VISION: The Southern California Intercity Rail Group works to advance an integrated and cost-effective network of all Southern California rail services, including Amtrak, Metrolink, Coaster and future high speed rail services with the goal of optimizing and expanding the availability of travel by rail throughout the region.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES:

The goals and implementation strategies that follow provide the basis for a work program for the next 6 months for the agency. Specific work program activities are capitalized.

Goal 1. Improve the integration of existing Southern California passenger rail services so that they are as seamless as possible.

Strategies:

- 1.1 Through ticketing across the network to all destinations from all origins including universal transfers between systems - STATUS REPORT ON PROGRESS OF TICKET VENDING MACHINE PROJECT.
- 1.2 Improved customer information, displays, and marketing - REVIEW CURRENT MATERIALS
- 1.3 Integrated feeder service - EACH SCIRG AGENCY TO PROVIDE REPORT OF FEEDER SERVICES IN THEIR COUNTY - INCLUDING PARKING AVAILABILITY AND OTHER POSSIBLE CONSTRAINTS. STANDARDIZED FORMAT TO BE PROVIDED

Goal 2. Expand current Southern California passenger rail services to add additional service to increase the penetration of the travel market.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Increase train frequency and add additional peak and off peak service where warranted - REVIEW AMTRAK RIDERSHIP DEMAND PLANNING ANALYSIS & PROMOTE RIDERSHIP MODELING BY SCAG OF ALL SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES.

- 2.2 Consider new direct regional services where warranted and required to fill gaps within the regional travel network - REVIEW AMTRAK RIDERSHIP DEMAND PLANNING ANALYSIS & PROMOTE RIDERSHIP MODELING BY SCAG OF ALL SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES.

Goal 3. Develop new Southern California passenger rail services to add new corridors and serve new markets.

Strategies:

- 3.1 Develop a plan to initiate passenger rail services through the Coachella Valley to Palm Springs - REVIEW AMTRAK'S EMERGING CORRIDORS' PLAN FOR THIS SERVICE AND DEVELOP IMPLEMENTATION STEPS.
- 3.2 Coordinate with the Coast Rail Coordinating Council to implement new passenger rail service on the Coast Route to the San Francisco Bay Area.

Goal 4. Improve train performance of every segment of the network.

Strategies:

- 4.1 A standard passenger rail infrastructure design should be adopted for planning that permits, where practical, a double track infrastructure with bi-directional signaling and sufficient interlockings to permit express trains to pass locals at critical points. - REVIEW AMTRAK SERVICE PLANNING ANALYSIS.
- 4.2 Capacity should be provided to accommodate current and future levels of freight train traffic and passenger train traffic without a decline in performance for freight or passenger trains. - REVIEW AMTRAK SERVICE PLANNING ANALYSIS.
- 4.3 Station investments should be designed to maximize train speeds and overall access to passenger rail services. - REVIEW AMTRAK PLANNING ANALYSIS AND PARKING ASSESSMENT TO BE PERFORMED BY SCIRG AGENCIES.
- 4.4 Train control and signaling improvements to permit higher speed running and improved passenger train safety should be a priority for future funding. - REVIEW AMTRAK PLANNING ANALYSIS.

Goal 5. Assure that capital investments to achieve improved Southern California passenger rail services are prioritized with respect to performance impact and the overall benefits provided to all network users.

Strategies:

- 5.1 A balanced annual investment program should be adopted to achieve performance and service objectives across the entire network. - MAINTAIN CURRENT LIST OF PROJECTS FOR FUNDING & REVIEW AMTRAK DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CAPITAL PROGRAM.
- 5.2 Where possible, the investment program should include all users and give effect to the individual priorities of each of the operators (Metrolink, Coaster, Amtrak, BNSF and Union Pacific). -

MAINTAIN CURRENT LIST OF PROJECTS FOR FUNDING & REVIEW AMTRAK DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CAPITAL PROGRAM.

- 5.3 Analyses that are underway with respect to Southern California Passenger rail services should enable the development of performance impacts for all proposed capital investments and every investment should be described in performance terms agreed to by everyone. - MONITOR CURRENT ANALYSES AND REACH AGREED UPON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

Goal 6. Define a unified funding strategy to improve and expand Southern California passenger railroad services.

Strategies:

- 6.1 Resources available for operations and capital investments need to be significantly increased. - WORK WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATORS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR RAIL WITHOUT IMPACTING THE FUNDING AVAILABLE TO THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION FOR OTHER SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS AND PROGRAMS.
- 6.2 The burden of providing required additional funding needs to be shared among regional, State and federal sources. - DEVELOP A FUNDING PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR PROJECTS AS THEY ARE IDENTIFIED.
- 6.3 Changes to current funding restrictions should be considered to remove funding obstacles and provide sufficient funds to meet the passenger railroad requirements of Southern California's expanding population. - REVIEW CURRENT RESTRICTIONS AND DECIDE WHETHER MODIFICATIONS ARE DESIRABLE.
- 6.4 An equitable allocation of passenger rail funding at the State level should take into account the regional needs and regional populations served and permit funding for intercity or regional rail services as long as current funding levels are not affected. - WORK WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATORS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR RAIL WITHOUT IMPACTING THE FUNDING AVAILABLE TO THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION FOR OTHER SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS AND PROGRAMS.
- 6.5 Consideration should be given to define and secure federal funding for a major passenger rail investment package for Southern California, which can be placed as a national priority along with the Northeast Corridor program. Such a funding package should include investments that improve all of the segments of the entire Southern California Passenger Rail network. - WORK WITH AMTRAK TO FUND OUTCOMES OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PLANNING ANALYSES.

Goal 7 Establish the SCIRG vision as the policy framework within which new initiatives such as high speed rail are evaluated within the region in order to insure the integrity of the regional system.

- 7.1 SCIRG should coordinate a legislative advocacy program to fulfill its mission and advocate for the program before its member agencies as well as at the state and federal levels. - ONGOING - MONITOR PROPOSED LEGISLATION AND TAKE POSITIONS AS WARRANTED. DEVELOP LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM TO FURTHER SCIRG VISION AND GOALS.

Proposed Amendment to MTA Legislative Program

The following language amends a passage in the eighth bullet under Goal #1 on page 1 of the 1999-2000 Legislative Program - Second Session.

“Work cooperatively with ~~other~~ regional transportation partner agencies, including the municipal bus operators, the Southern California Intercity Rail Group (SCIRG), the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and other transportation interests to secure funding for transportation projects in Los Angeles County.”

Motion by Director Oropeza
January 27, 2000

Amendment to Item #44

I move that the MTA shall not approve the creation of any transportation zone unless the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) governing the zone assumes the collective bargaining agreements, rights, and obligations that currently exist between the MTA and the labor organizations representing employees who will be affected or displaced by the creation of the zone. The JPA operating the zone will be obligated to employ those employees of the MTA who are currently performing functions for the MTA who will be displaced when the JPA governing the zone begins to provide transportation services previously provided by the MTA.