



**The
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Metro Committees To Decide Fate of Lankershim Depot

By **Numan Parada**

Two Metro Committees will decide whether to move forward with the restoration of the Lankershim Depot, a cornerstone of the revitalization of North Hollywood.

The depot sits on the west side of Lankershim Blvd. next to the Metro Orange Line station. The restoration would fulfill the vision of the Metro Board when it adopted the

Final EIR for the Orange Line in February 2002.

The depot would provide a transit linkage between the Orange Line, the Red Line subway, the Chandler bikeway, local bus service, and the NoHo Arts District.

Specifically, the motion to be voted by the Planning and Programming Committee and the Construction Committee calls for changing the responsibility of the Lankershim Depot Transit Center Project from the city Community Redevelopment Agency to Metro.

When the motion was first brought up to the Metro Board in March 2006, the

Board directed staff to continue searching for funds for the project.

Since then, the City of Los Angeles and the CRA have agreed to recommend to both the CRA board and the Los Angeles City Council to reprogram funds from a Call for Projects grant that would have been used for a mixed-use transit-oriented development in San Pedro.

The project would have a total budget of \$3.6 million, of which \$817,000 in Proposition C 10% funds were previously programmed through the Call for Projects, and the original CRA match was 30.9%.

CRA has already expended \$215,236 of this match on professional services, resulting in a complete set of construction plans and specifications.

This would fund the remaining \$2.418 million required to move forward with the project.

Once restored, Metro would use the facility as a much-needed customer service center and will feature restrooms for Metro operators, bicycle parking and a concession stand for visitors. Also, as a result of dialogue between LA City Councilmember Tom LaBonge and Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Metro assured LaBonge that the (See **DEPOT**, Page 4)

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Want to make a difference in changing the face of transportation in Southern California? Then become a member of The Transit Coalition! Annual membership includes a subscription to our monthly printed newsletter, which features news on current projects and upcoming events.

You also get access to our weekly e-mail newsletter, which focuses on behind-the-scenes action with political, community and industry leaders not reported elsewhere.

Fill out and send our **Membership Form on Page 7** along with your donation to The Transit Coalition and be part of the solution!



The Lankershim Depot is shown during its heyday as part of Southern Pacific. Will Metro revive its use?

Lawmakers Launch Palmdale Airport Coalition

By Numan Parada

State Senators Richard Alarcon and George Runner sponsored the first meeting of the "Coalition to Explore the Development of New Regional Airport in Palmdale" on Friday, October 13. The meeting featured presentations from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and a discussion what is needed to bring passenger air service to Palmdale.

SCAG gave a summary of present and future airport demand in Southern California. Currently, Los Angeles International Airport serves 63 million annual passengers, or 70% of the region's air passengers. John Wayne Airport (SNA), Ontario International Airport (ONT), Bob Hope Airport (BUR), Long Beach Airport (LGB) and Palm Springs Airport (PSP) serve the remaining 30%. Airports with no passenger service include Palmdale (PMD), March Airport in Riverside County (MAR), Southern California Logistics near Victorville (SCL) and San Bernardino (SBD). According to SCAG, "the problem is that most of these airports are distant from the primary air travel markets of Los Angeles and Orange County," even as Riverside and San Bernardino Counties are experiencing rapid growth.

The challenge will be to decentralize airport traffic from LAX and other urban airports to places such as Ontario and Palmdale, as most urban airports have passenger capacity limits. One daunting problem that would make regionalization difficult is inadequate ground infrastructure that overly relies on the unreliable freeway system. Palmdale Airport in particular has the Antelope Valley Freeway (State Highway Route 14), which experiences heavy traffic at all hours of the day. Public transportation does not exist, even as Metrolink tracks run in the general vicinity. As a result, commercial airlines are reluctant to serve it.

Ontario is similarly stunted, since the four freeways serving

it are heavily congested.

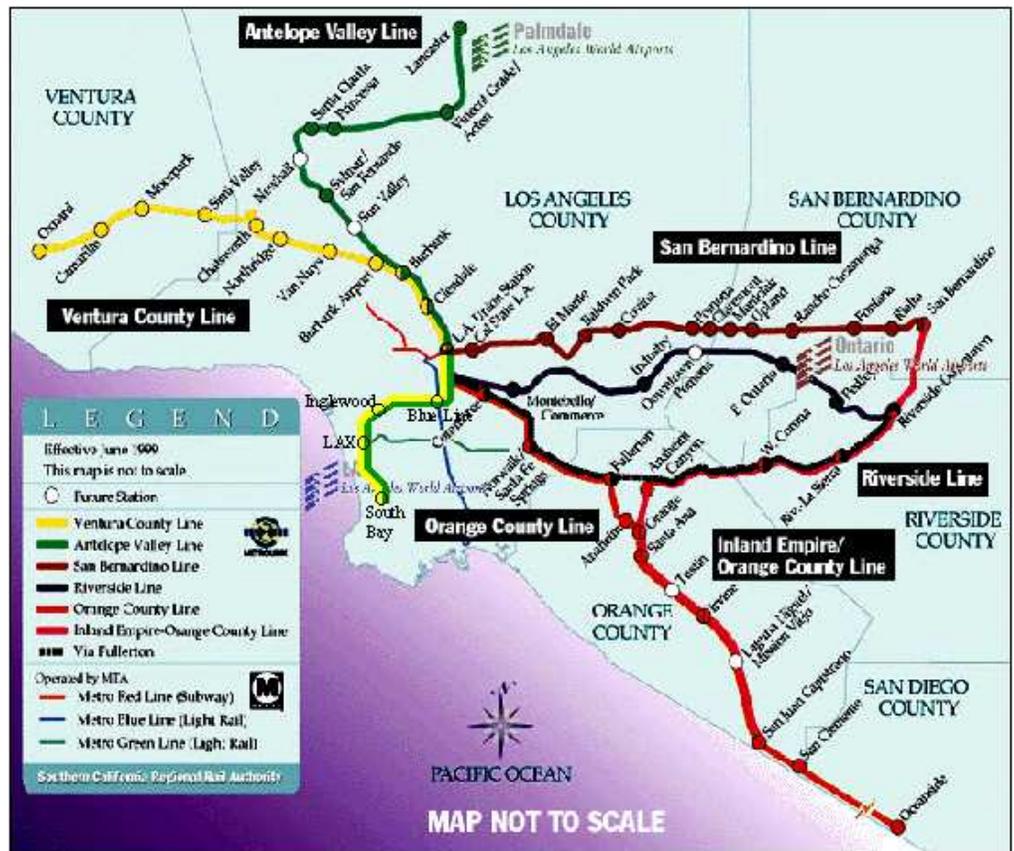
SCAG produced a Regional Aviation Plan in 2004, which outlined strategies such as increased participation by Los Angeles World Airports in attracting more flights to Ontario and Palmdale and increased cooperation between airports in the region through integrated master plans. SCAG estimates that meeting the forecasted demand of 170 million passengers in the region by 2030 would yield \$18 billion in economic benefits and 131,000 jobs. SCAG believes that high speed ground transportation is necessary to make regionalization possible and that public-private partnerships would help build such a network quickly.

After the presentations, Coalition members discussed what is needed to develop a new regional airport in Palmdale and how such an airport would benefit the Los Angeles region. One point that was discussed was the ground infrastructure needed to supply the airport with passengers. Possibilities mentioned included additional freeway lanes on the 14 Freeway, and utilization of the full

Metrolink system. One possible benefit of a Palmdale airport is that it may reduce traffic on the 405 Freeway.

Participants believed that the airport would also be a major provider of jobs in construction, transportation and passenger services. A boom in new business opportunities focusing on the transport of goods and services was also envisioned.

Coalition members also discussed the structure of the new group. Four committees will be formed; each committee will meet monthly, while the Coalition will meet quarterly. The Strategy/ Outreach Committee will identify allies and opponents of the Palmdale airport proposal, as well as solicit support from government leaders. The Media/ Website Committee will develop a media strategy and message, while also establish a website with the aid of a web page consultant. The Legislation Committee will identify laws that would be necessary to build Palmdale Airport. The Infrastructure Development Committee will identify ground access projects for the new airport.





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How Can You Help Grow Rail Project Advocacy?

The Transit Coalition engages in many activities for the improvement of transit and the betterment of Southern California in its role as a policy framing and advocacy group. Each month, the print newsletter you are reading is published and a weekly eNewsletter is distributed.

Additionally, Coalition members attend various transit related meetings where they engage in public comment and speak to board members to make our views known. But in running the Coalition comes the financial challenge to pay our costs. A volunteer may go to

Washington or Sacramento and whose expenses need to be covered. Publishing a newsletter incurs printing and postage costs. That's where we need your help. Whether it's a small donation or a large gift, it all helps us grow. Can we count on your contribution?

Regional Airport Authority Restarts with Hope

By **Numan Parada**

The Southern California Regional Airport Authority (SCRAA) held a meeting for the first time in two years on Thursday, October 12. Board members gathered to express the importance of regionalizing air traffic across various airports and clarifying the duties and powers of the reconvened Authority.

Congressmember Jane Harman opened the meeting by giving thanks to those in attendance. Harman believed that the growth of airports across Southern California has lacked strategic planning and vision. According to Harman, the result has been an airport system that is subject to the municipalities they serve and not to the region as a whole. Harman expressed desire to spread airport traffic across the region from overburdened airports such as LAX and, in turn, reducing the impact of a terrorist attack on aviation.

Harman also shared the benefits of regionalizing airports, which among other things would provide jobs across the region. Other goals that should be pursued by the SCRAA, according to Harman, are to bring intermodal transporta-

tion at the airports, such as the Green Line extension to West Los Angeles with a connection to LAX, and keeping LAX capacity at level.

Many of the board members also reminded participants that airports in their areas are limited in growth and are in need of alternatives. Los Angeles City Deputy Mayor and Board member Jaime de la Vega said that the region cannot rely solely on LAX and that no one jurisdiction should dictate the future of aviation in the region. Riverside County Supervisor and Board member Bob Buster said that March Airport, a joint use facility, is constrained and that residents surrounding the airport cannot sleep at night.

UC San Diego doctoral candidate Scott McKenzie gave a history of the Authority and an outline of internal challenges it must solve. The SCRAA was the result of efforts by the late Clifton Moore, who headed the Los Angeles City Department of Airports until 1992. The Authority was launched in 1985 in hopes that it would achieve a workable regionalization plan. Orange County joined the SCRAA in 1992, but

on the condition that each member had veto power over the decisions of the Authority. Battles regarding the LAX Master Plan and the El Toro Airport in Orange County soon overwhelmed the Authority with internal bickering, and the SCRAA disbanded.

It was revived in 2001, but Orange and Riverside Counties withdrew their membership after conflicts arose. The City of Los Angeles failed to send a representative to the Authority, since Los Angeles County would use the Authority to oppose the LAX Master Plan. As a result, the SCRAA became dormant again in 2004 due to a lack of a quorum.

McKenzie dissented that the early failure of the SCRAA was due to a change of purpose from developing airport capacity in the region to merely serving as a tool to stop the LAX Master Plan and development of El Toro Airport.

SCRAA also devolved to a proponent of "airports without runways", meaning that ground transportation at airports would be improved. According to McKenzie, the SCRAA failed because (see **SCRAA**, Page 4)

Will SCRAA Make Air Regionalization a Reality?

(from **SCRAA**, Page 3)
 its broad powers created confusion and distrust, straightjacket voting inhibited decision making, and perceived threats to local airport autonomy led to inactivity.

McKenzie suggested that the success of the Authority is dependant on the participation, but not domination, of the Los Angeles area and that the Author-

ity should reevaluate its goals. Currently, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and Orange Counties are members of the SCRAA.

Attendees expressed hope that Ventura, San Diego and Imperial Counties may also join. San Diego in particular may benefit from participating, especially in light of intense debates regarding the

future of Lindbergh Field, according to some. One attendee even suggested that Kern County should join.

However, Board members were not lost on the fact that Orange County did not send a representative to the meeting.

The next meeting of the SCRAA Board will be held on Thursday, January 11, 2007.

(from **DEPOT**, Page 1)
 depot will not be relocated and landscaping will be performed.

Public restrooms will be provided and the CRA will be credited for the funds it has already spent on the project.

If approved by both committees on October 18 and 19, the Metro Board will discuss the motion on Thursday, October 26.

Should the Board approve the plan, Metro can issue bid documents as early as Spring 2007.

LAX Specific Plan on the Table

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) welcomes the public to attend the next meetings in the community-based planning process for the modernization of LAX. The meetings will discuss the North Airfield Preliminary Concepts.

This is your chance to voice airport officials on the importance and necessity of bringing Green Line service to Lincoln/Sepulveda with access to LAX!

The next set of meetings to be held as follows: **Wednesday, October 25, 2006, 6 p.m.** and **Saturday, October**

28, 2006, 9 a.m. Attendance is not necessary at both meetings as the same material will be presented. Both meetings will be held at the **Proud Bird Restaurant, 11022 Aviation Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90045-6105.** Free parking is available.

To view the LAX Specific Plan and learn about the Amendment Study, visit www.laxmasterplan.org. For more information on the outreach meetings, please contact Los Angeles World Airports at (800) 919-3766.

