



8th September, 2014

Hon. Eric Garcetti
Chair, and Board of Directors
LACMTA

Hon. Larry McCallon
Chair, and Board of Directors
SCRRA

Mr. Dan Richard
Chair, and Board of Directors
CHSRA

HIGH SPEED AND REGIONAL RAIL INTEGRATION – SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Dear Chairs and Board Members:

RailPAC is concerned that the proposed interim High Speed Rail terminus at Burbank and diesel shuttle service to LAUS and beyond is far from being the best option. I believe we share the same objective, which is for California High Speed Rail and Southern California regional rail to be successful and attract large numbers of passengers from other modes. Forcing a transfer between modern High Speed Trains and slow, 20th century diesel-hauled commuter rolling stock is neither commercially attractive nor is it environmentally advantageous. We can, and must, do better.

We note that California EPA recently published maps of air pollution “hot spots” in southern California. Unsurprisingly these show particularly severe pockets of poor air quality along the Interstate 5 corridor from Sylmar to southern Orange County. Continuing to use diesel haulage for commuter trains under these conditions is unacceptable, even with Tier 4 diesels. We further note that the region has built and is expanding transit systems. These include Metro’s Red, Purple and Gold lines, and the Regional Connector as well as the FlyAway Bus and Intercity and Metrolink rail systems which are focused on Los Angeles Union Station. No such facilities exist at Burbank.

It is time to start a program of electrification of key Metrolink routes that will enable High Speed Train sets to take travelers to and from Orange County and Los Angeles from day one of High Speed service. The template is that of the Caltrain electrification and blended service between San Jose and San Francisco. While dedicated high speed tracks may well be required at some future date, for the initial years of service Caltrain regional electric trains will share the tracks with long distance high speed trains at speed up to 125mph. We urge you to consider the same program for southern California. The objective is to bring immediate benefits of clean air and reduced carbon footprint, as well as the commercial advantage of a single seat ride, by providing through service from northern and central California to Los Angeles, Anaheim and Irvine. The same tracks would be shared with a modernized and electrified Metrolink service, initially between Palmdale and Laguna Niguel, followed by San Bernardino to Los Angeles and Chatsworth. (See map on page 2)..

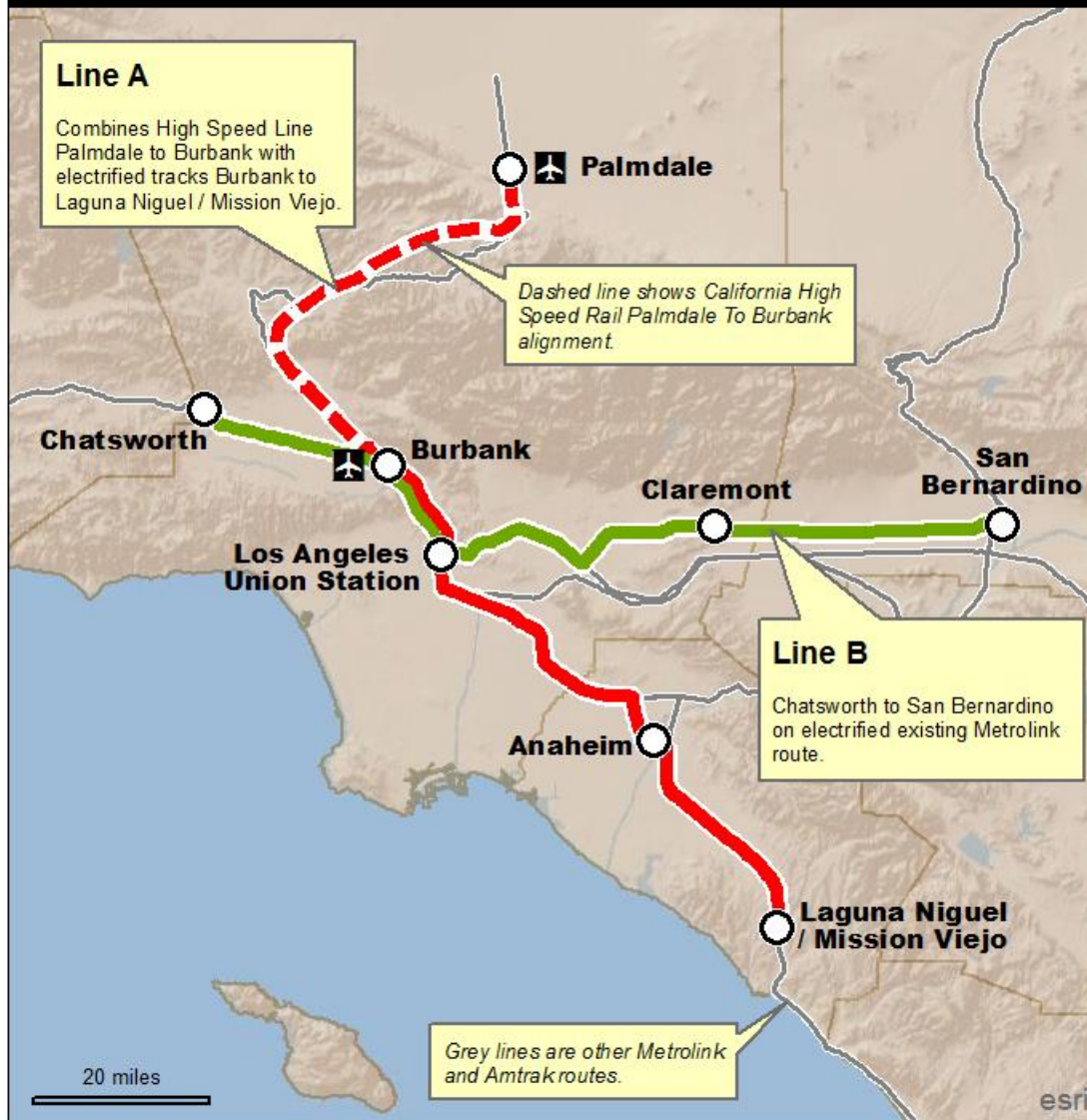
This project needs to be designed as soon as possible. Decisions are being made for the Caltrain service regarding equipment specification, especially platform heights, signaling and rolling stock. We urgently need standards to be set to avoid excessive cost to the taxpayer of incompatible systems.

Southern California needs and deserves a modern, electrified, regional rail system built to standards that are compatible with High Speed Rail, to be successful in helping to solve our environmental and mobility challenges in the twenty first century.

Electrolink: Zero Emission Electric Regional Rail for Southern California



Rail Passenger Association of California & Nevada
www.RailPAC.org



Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with staffs to develop these ideas.

Yours sincerely,

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