



BRIEFING: APRIL 12, 2016 BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM #9

TO: Chairman Richard and Board Members

FROM: Michelle Boehm, Southern California Regional Director

DATE: April 12, 2016

RE: Report on the Los Angeles to Anaheim Supplemental Alternatives Analysis

Purpose

The purpose of this agenda item is to update the Board and public on work accomplished on the Los Angeles to Anaheim project section since the release of the July 2010 Supplemental Alternatives Analysis (SAA). This work is presented in the 2016 SAA that is included as an attachment to this Board item.

The 2016 SAA reflects the shared corridor concept selected in 2005 following Authority certification of the 2005 Program environmental document. It also reflects the Authority's adopted plans and projects for the corridor, including the 2012 and 2014 Business Plans which define a "blended" approach to system construction and operation in order to achieve optimal integrations with existing systems. The proposed alternatives have been developed and refined based on additional data collection and field studies, as well as outreach to communities, agencies, and stakeholders. This process, and the refinement of the alignments, are documented in the aforementioned 2016 SAA and presented here to inform the Board and public about the process and the current status of activities on the Los Angeles to Anaheim project section.

This is an information item only. Staff work efforts on this section are being presented to the Board for its information, but no Board action is involved at this time.

Background

In 2001, the Authority, in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), started a tiered environmental review process for the statewide high-speed rail system. The approved 2005 first-tier California High-Speed Rail Program Environmental Document described the program alignment, which included a corridor between Los Angeles to Irvine. The Authority and FRA also selected station locations at Los Angeles Union Station, Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs, Anaheim, and Irvine. The timeline of activities since then includes the following:

- The 2007 release of public scoping notices and scoping meetings presented the proposed Los Angeles to Anaheim Project Section study area to receive agency and public comments on the issues that should be analyzed in the environmental document. In March 2007, the publicly circulated Notice of Preparation (NOP) and the FRA's Notice of Intent (NOI) stated that the Los Angeles to Orange County project-level environmental document would only consider high-speed rail service between Los Angeles Union Station and Anaheim.
- The Authority and FRA initiated project-level environmental review for the Los Angeles to Anaheim project section in 2007, engaged in project scoping, and completed a preliminary AA Report in 2009 and 2010.
- The 2016 SAA included as an attachment to this board item presents the latest project refinements and alternatives under consideration.

In addition, the Authority has continued to coordinate with regional agencies and corridor operators to advance early investment projects within the Los Angeles to Anaheim section that will eventually be necessary to facilitate high-speed rail service. This collaboration focuses on improving the corridor for all stakeholders including passenger and freight rail providers with safety and mobility projects that deliver immediate benefits. This approach will modernize the existing urban rail corridor from Los Angeles to Anaheim making it safer, quieter, more efficient, and more connected to the transportation network. These improvements will support high-speed rail service, increase mobility in and around some of our most vulnerable communities, and improve air quality.

For example, the Authority is collaborating with Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to advance the Rosecrans/Marquardt Grade Separation Project. This critical grade separation will provide immediate operational and safety benefits that would be shared by Metrolink, BNSF, and Amtrak (and eventually high-speed rail), as well as the local traffic along the corridor.

The Southern California Regional Interconnector Project (SCRIP) is another project on which the Authority is partnering with Metro to optimize and modernize Los Angeles Union Station for existing service and future high-speed rail service, including the connections to and from of the platform area. Identifying and advancing opportunities for shared corridor coordination is highlighted as an objective in the Authority's Draft 2016 Business Plan. Where applicable, these improvements will be considered in the Los Angeles to Anaheim environmental clearance.

Discussion

Since the 2010 SAA was published, the Authority has held more than 450 individual and group meetings for the Los Angeles to Anaheim project section. These meetings have included: corridor city and agency briefings, open houses, technical working groups, community & business presentations and information tables. These community engagement activities help to share information, gather input, hear concerns, and identify potential alignment refinements.

2016 SAA Key Considerations	
Los Angeles to Vernon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects to adjacent rail yards • Impacts to the Los Angeles River • Connection to Los Angeles Union Station
Vernon to Fullerton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize impacts to adjacent residential, commercial, and industrial properties • Intermediate station options at Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs and Fullerton
Fullerton to Anaheim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodating connections into the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC) • Minimizing impacts to adjacent residential, commercial, and industrial properties

The April 2016 SAA analyzes two project build alternatives in addition to the No Project Alternative: Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. Both alternatives meet travel time and ridership objectives, provide mass transit, highway, and airport connectivity to major urban centers, and maximize ridership and revenue potential. As evaluated in the attached SAA, Alternative 2 would have up to two new shared passenger tracks. This alternative would have fewer right-of-way (ROW) impacts, have lower capital costs, have less impact on parks, trails and bikeways, schools, historic architectural resources, and generally have less impacts on wildlife, waters and wetlands than Alternative 1, and satisfy the needs of the blended system implementation. Therefore, the No Project Alternative and Alternative 2 will be carried forward for further analysis.

The development of the environmental document for the Los Angeles to Anaheim project section will advance based on the information collected and presented in all of the documents described above. Currently, the draft of this document is anticipated for release in December 2017. The release of the draft environmental document will be accompanied by public meetings as well as agency and public comment as required. Throughout this process comments from the public are collected and used, in conjunction with resource agency comments and technical studies, to support the development of the alternatives and ultimately the selection of a preferred alternative.

Next Steps

- Complete technical studies on the range of alternatives presented in 2016 SAA (subject to regulatory agency concurrence) and prepare draft environmental document.
- Engage regulatory agency partners, stakeholders, and the community during the preparation of the technical studies and environmental documentation to support work activities.

Attachments

– *Supplemental Alternatives Analysis Report: Los Angeles to Anaheim (April 2016)*

Exhibit 1 – Los Angeles to Anaheim Project Section Map

