

## SAN DIEGO BENEFITS FROM HIGH-SPEED RAIL

*“High-speed trains are uniquely suited to improve mobility in a way that is fast, safe, convenient, comfortable, economical and environmentally efficient. Building a high-speed train system would cost two to three times less than the cost of expanding our airports and highways to meet California’s expected travel demand. And we must honestly ask ourselves: How much more road expansion are we willing to accept before we irreversibly scar the California landscape we so dearly treasure?”* – Lynn Schenk, former San Diego congresswoman and author of the Federal Swift Rail Bill and board member of the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

**Employment** – San Diego employment is projected to be higher with development of a state-wide high-speed train (HST) system. The HST would stimulate a 2.4 percent gain of employment in San Diego by the year 2030 than the County would otherwise gain, representing 45,250 more jobs.

**Population** – Along with increased economic activity, the HST would lead to 4.8 percent more population growth in San Diego by the year 2030 than if the system is not developed. This translates to 141,615 more residents for San Diego County with the HST.

**Land Efficiency** – Because the HST encourages greater compactness in the development of jobs and housing, projections show the high-speed train would allow 9.5 percent more efficient land use than the not building alternative.

**Travel Benefits** – The HST system not only provides travel time savings, cost reductions, accident reductions and accessibility improvements for San Diego users of the system, but allows less congested highways and airports with fewer travelers using them. Traveler benefit savings could total \$2.1 billion from less auto and air travel delays, fewer accidents, and less air pollution.

**Traffic** – Demand for auto travel in San Diego is projected to decrease 9.1 percent with high-speed train service, resulting in a 4.1 percent savings of travel time for auto trips along the corridors where the HST is located. Because of these savings, the capacity on the San Diego freeways paralleling the HST is projected to improve by 22 percent.

**Airport** – It is widely recognized that the San Diego Airport at Lindbergh Field is rapidly reaching operational capacity and expansion is limited at the current location. This places significant limitations on San Diego’s economic viability for both business and recreational travel demands, which are already constrained by current congestion at the airport. Alternative sites to relocate the airport in the County have not been found viable and other options have all but disappeared. The HST would significantly help alleviate San Diego’s airport congestion and demands. An estimated 2.15 million airline passenger hours would be saved with the HST service available.

**Environmental Benefits** – Electrically propelled, high-speed trains use one-fifth the energy of cars in traffic and one-third the energy of airplanes. It is recognized that high-speed trains in California would reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by more than 12 billion pounds per year over the no-build alternative. That is equivalent to removing a million vehicles from state roads annually and reducing dependence on foreign oil consumption by approximately 12 million barrels (660.4 million gallons) per year.

**Modal Alternative** – building an alternative infrastructure system that has the same capacity as the HST would be difficult if not impossible to complete in San Diego. Even if the resources were available to improve the airport and major interstate highways, the system would not likely be available by 2030, as it would require expanding north-south freeways beyond current plans, and building additional gates and a second runway at the airport that may not be possible.