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SANBAG Completes Draft Long Range Transit Plan



Light Rail Transit: Metro Gold Line



San Bernardino Express (sbX)



Redlands Rail Line

In August, San Bernardino Associated Governments completed a draft Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP) for San Bernardino County. The LRTP establishes a vision for transit for the next 25 years and prioritizes goals and projects for transit growth, as well as connections with land use and transportation strategies. The LRTP also meets legal mandates for planning and programming set by SB 375.

SB 375 is a housing, land use and air quality bill aimed at implementing Green House Gas (GHG) reduction goals by integrating land use, housing and regional transportation planning. The LRTP identifies premium transit routes and station locations that can help in the development of a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) in the county.

The purpose of the LRTP is to address the county's current and future travel challenges and create a system that can increase the role of transit in the future. By the year 2030, the San Bernardino Valley will experience explosive growth:

- 36 percent more people
- 42 percent more households

-More-

- 77 percent more jobs
- 53 percent more travel trips

The Victor valley also will experience considerable growth; with population and employment being doubled by 2035. Given these growth estimates, mass transit must play a larger role in serving travel demands and lessen the burden on freeways and roads. As future travel demand grows on the existing road network and traffic congestion increases, transit services suffer a decrease in reliability and an increase travel times.

Premium transit service, such as rapid buses and rail modes can offer a solution to current and future travel demands by providing competitive travel times and increased reliability, mobility and accessibility. Premium transit will save drive time, reduce dependence on cars and encourage community revitalization. A premium transit system can encourage more balanced “transit-oriented” land use development, as required by SB 375. Mass transit also is a “green solution” for transportation because it attracts car drivers to switch to transit, thereby lessening air pollutants and energy consumption.

The development of LRTP began with creating and analyzing a wide range of alternatives that address the county’s mobility needs. Coordination with transit agencies, local governments and input from the community led to the development of four alternatives. They are as follows:

- The **Baseline Alternative**, which includes existing transit service only;
- The **Plan Alternative**, which includes existing service and currently planned transit improvements designed to serve the future growth in the region;
- The **Vision Alternative**, which includes existing transit, currently planned improvements and rapid bus and rail; and
- The **Sustainable Land Use Alternative** redistributes population and employment growth to transit corridors and creates Transit Oriented Development at station areas for implementation of SB 375.

The four alternatives are evaluated based on the ability to serve key markets, total ridership, cost effectiveness, economic development potential, integration of plan into existing transit systems, ability to meet the goals of SB 375, and public input.

Transit Oriented Developments (TOD’s), which may be part of the chosen plan, feature compact, mixed-use developments near transit stations. TOD’s are within walking distance (five to ten minute walk) from transit stations, attract economic development, improve transit ridership, increase activity and safety, and are in sync with SB 375 implementation guidelines.

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