

Regional Governance Initiative for the San Joaquin Intercity Rail Service

REVISED PRELIMINARY WHITE PAPER

SUMMARY

In 1996, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) was created to oversee the administration of the Capitol Corridor service under the provisions of Senate Bill 457 (SB 457). SB 457 authorized the State to enter into interagency transfer agreements with specified joint exercise of powers entities to assume responsibility for intercity passenger rail services and be allocated funds for that purpose. The local/regional agencies along the Pacific Surfliner and San Joaquin corridors chose not to take advantage of SB 457, and therefore the administrative responsibility for the San Joaquin and Pacific Surfliner services has remained with Caltrans Division of Rail. The deadline for forming a new joint powers authority (JPA) under SB 457 was the end of 1996.

Over the last 15 years, without direct financial contribution by member agencies, the CCJPA has successfully managed the Capitol Corridor. Capital investments, cooperation with Union Pacific (UP), and state support have allowed for dramatic increases in the frequency of service (increases of 400 percent), and they have the best on-time performance in the nation for intercity service. As a result the Capitol Corridor service has enjoyed substantial increases in ridership and revenue and is now the third most used intercity service in the nation.

This fall, acknowledging the success of the CCJPA, the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Joint Powers Board (LOSSAN Board) approved in concept a framework for a potential local authority to manage the "Pacific Surfliner" state-supported intercity passenger rail service and is in the process of drafting legislation using SB 457 as a model.

At the November 2011 meeting of the Central Valley Rail Working Group (CVRWG), staff discussed the LOSSAN Board's efforts towards regional governance of the Pacific Surfliner, and asked the CVRWG if there might be similar interest in the Central Valley for regional governance of the San Joaquin service. The CVRWG directed staff to move forward and set up a Subcommittee to work with other agencies to explore the concept of setting up a regional JPA and supporting legislation that would enable regional governance of the San Joaquin service.

The overall goal of a regional JPA would be to transform the existing San Joaquin intercity rail service from a State/Amtrak managed service to a service under local/regional authority that could be more responsive to local/regional needs, issues, and wishes of the riders of the service. In addition to more cost-effective operations, there are several other potential benefits to local authority management, including:

- Ability to have a stronger local/regional voice in Sacramento and Washington D.C. to promote service improvements and expansions
- Local decision-making that is more responsive and adaptive to passenger issues

- Joint marketing and partnerships with Local Member Agencies and taking advantage of local relationships with chamber of commerce, media outlets, etc.
- More engagement by local communities to support the service
- Service increases will result in more jobs, improve air quality, and will help promote sustainable development

Some of the key issues that need to be addressed before moving forward with a Regional Governance Initiative (Initiative) for the San Joaquin intercity rail service are:

- **Consensus for Regional Governance:** Can the majority of the jurisdictions served by the San Joaquin rail service reach consensus on forming a new JPA? See Figure 1, which shows the San Joaquin intercity rail service and the affected counties.
- **Making the Business Case for Cost Effectiveness:** A detailed Business Case must demonstrate that the Initiative results in lower costs than the current Caltrans oversight. The costs are currently being compiled, but an initial review indicates it is more cost effective if the Managing Agency role is assumed by one of the existing Member Agencies currently managing rail services.
- **JPA Member Agencies and Designation of a Managing Agency:** Identify Member Agencies and select the Managing Agency.
- **San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee (Committee):** An Initiative would not require any change to the Committee. The Managing Agency could take over the role of providing staff support for Committee meetings and the Committee could provide input to the San Joaquin JPA.
- **Enabling Legislation:** New legislation is needed to enable regional governance of the San Joaquin intercity rail service.

The CVRWG Subcommittee has made some very preliminary recommendations to facilitate further discussion about the initiative. Based on an initial meeting, the Subcommittee recommends that Member Agencies for the Initiative could include Sacramento RT, BART, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, and the entity serving as the regional transportation planning agency (RTPA) for the other Member Agency counties. They also recommend that Sacramento RT, and San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission could be considered as Managing Agency alternatives along with a new staffing agency alternative. The Subcommittee believes that the JPA Governing Board should include one elected official from each of the Member Agencies, and that the Committee would remain as it is and provide input to the San Joaquin JPA.

Next Steps Recommended by the CVRWG Subcommittee:

1. Develop a White Paper to Describe the Purpose of the Regional Governance Initiative
2. Present the White Paper and Solicit Feedback with the Valley RTPA Director's Committee
3. Present the White Paper and Solicit Feedback with the Central Valley Policy Council
4. Based Upon Valley Consensus, Present the White Paper and Solicit Feedback from BART and Others in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties

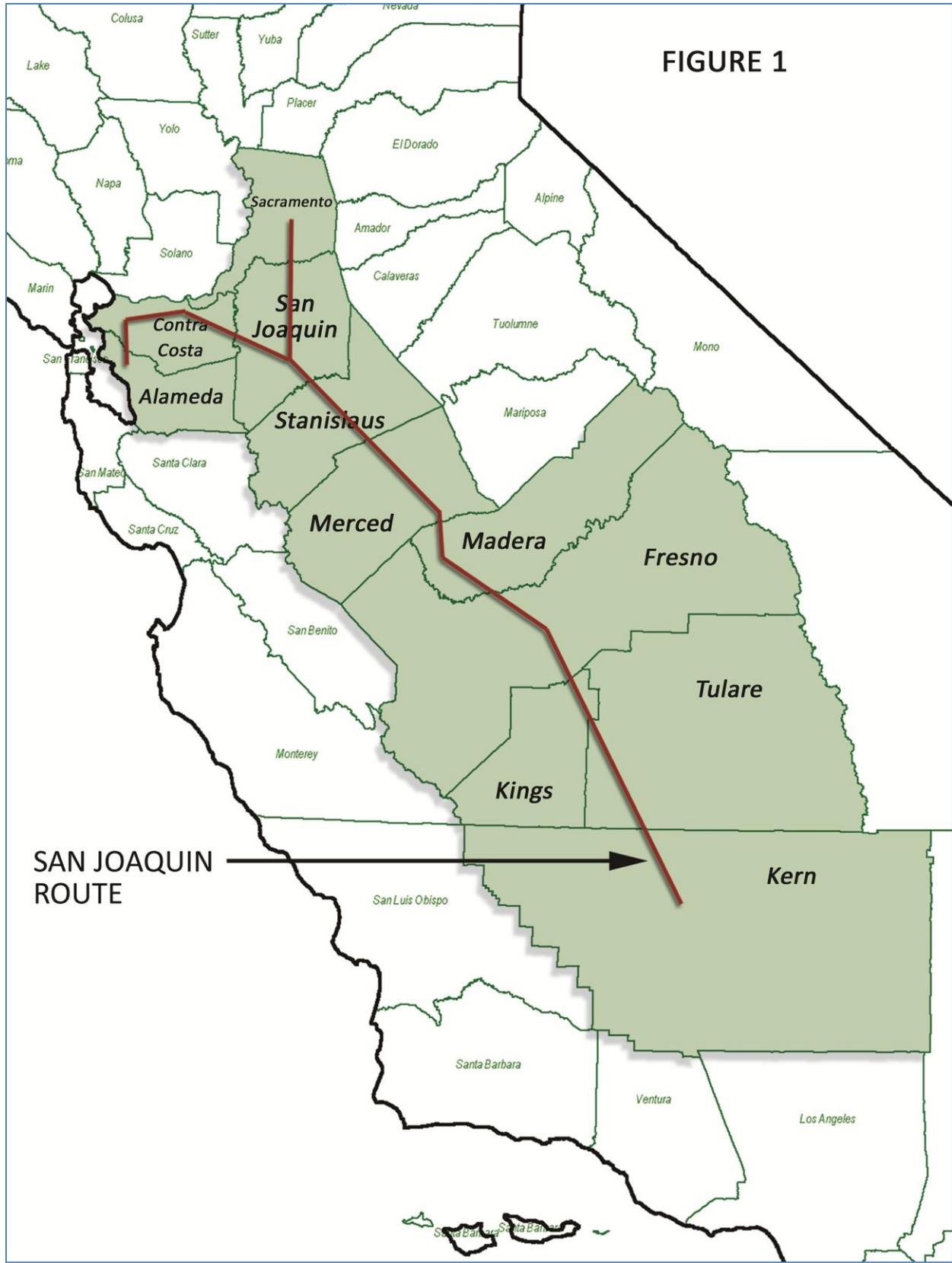


FIGURE 1

1. Introduction

In 1996, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) was created to oversee the administration of the Capitol Corridor service under the provisions of Senate Bill 457 (SB 457). The local/regional agencies along the Pacific Surfliner and San Joaquin corridors chose not to take advantage of SB 457, and therefore the administrative responsibility for the San Joaquin and Pacific Surfliner services has remained with Caltrans Division of Rail.

This fall, acknowledging the success of the CCJPA, the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Joint Powers Board (LOSSAN Board) approved in concept a framework for a potential local authority to manage the “Pacific Surfliner” state-supported intercity passenger rail service and is in the process of drafting legislation using SB 457 as a model.

At the November 2011 meeting of the Central Valley Rail Working Group (CVRWG), staff discussed the LOSSAN Board’s efforts towards regional governance of the Pacific Surfliners, and asked the CVRWG if there might be similar interest in the Central Valley for regional governance of the San Joaquin service. The CVRWG directed staff to move forward and set up a Subcommittee to work with other agencies to explore the concept of setting up a local joint powers authority (JPA) and supporting legislation that would enable regional governance of the San Joaquin service.

The overall goal of a local joint powers authority (JPA) would be to transform the existing San Joaquin intercity rail service from a State/Amtrak managed service to a service under local/regional authority that could be more responsive to local needs, issues, and wishes of the riders of the service.

This draft “white paper” includes a brief description of the existing state-supported intercity rail services, summarizes the provisions of SB 457, describes the CCJPA and compares the system growth and ridership of the Capitol Corridor in comparison with the San Joaquin and Pacific Surfliner services. The status and progress of the LOSSAN Board’s Regional Governance Initiative is summarized and the implications of regional governance for the San Joaquin service is discussed. This paper concludes with discussion of key issues for a Central Valley Regional Governance Initiative for the San Joaquin service, the status the current discussions for this potential initiative, and the next steps necessary to move this concept forward.

2. California’s State-Supported Intercity Rail Services

California has three state-supported intercity passenger rail routes: the Pacific Surfliner, Capitol Corridor, and the San Joaquin. Each of these intercity services were initiated and/or expanded largely as a result of the voter-approved bond measures passed in 1990. As a result, this financial support helped transform these services into some of the most successful intercity passenger rail services in the nation. With over 5.45 million annual passengers for fiscal year 2010/11, California has more than 20 percent of

all the nation's intercity riders. Since 1990, the state has invested more than \$1.3 billion in infrastructure and equipment for intercity passenger rail and about \$1 billion in operating support.¹

The San Joaquin rail service extends 365 miles and provides direct rail service to 10 counties (see Figure 2). Between Oakland and Bakersfield the San Joaquin route is 316 miles long and has 13 intermediate stops. The San Joaquin route is 49 miles between Sacramento and Stockton with one additional intermediate stop. The service utilizes freight tracks/right-of-way owned by BNSF and UP. UP owns the 49 miles of track used by the San Joaquin service between Stockton and Sacramento, and 39 miles between Oakland and Port Chicago, whereas the remaining 277 miles (between Port Chicago and Bakersfield) are owned by BNSF. The current minimum scheduled San Joaquin running time between Oakland and Bakersfield is 6 hour 6 minutes, averaging 52 mph. Between Sacramento and Bakersfield, the San Joaquin service has a minimum 5 hour 12 minute running time, and an average speed of nearly 55 mph.

The Pacific Surfliner (see Figure 2) extends 350 miles between San Luis Obispo and San Diego (128 miles between Los Angeles and San Diego). This service has 27 intermediate stations and directly serves 6 counties. The Pacific Surfliner shares track with two commuter rail services. Since 1993, Metrolink has operated commuter rail service from Los Angeles to Oceanside and from Los Angeles to East Ventura using the same tracks as the Pacific Surfliner. The Coaster commuter rail service has also shared tracks with the Pacific Surfliner from Oceanside to San Diego since 1995. To facilitate these commuter services, regional and local agencies in Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties purchased most of the rail line between Moorpark (Ventura County) and San Diego. The UP continues to own 175 miles of the route between San Luis Obispo and Moorpark, while the BNSF owns 22 miles between Redondo Junction in Los Angeles and Fullerton. The current Pacific Surfliner running time between Los Angeles and San Diego is 2 hour 45 minutes, averaging 46.5 mph. Between Santa Barbara and Los Angeles the Pacific Surfliner takes a minimum of 2 hour 40 minutes, averaging 39 mph.

The 170-mile Capitol Corridor service operates between Roseville and San Jose directly serving seven counties along the I-80 Corridor (see Figure 2). There are 14 intermediate stops along the Capitol Corridor. The Capitol Corridor tracks and right-of-way are owned by UP except for three miles between Santa Clara and San Jose (which are owned by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board and are used by the Caltrain commuter rail service). The current minimum scheduled Capitol Corridor running time between Sacramento and San Jose is 3 hour 5 minutes, averaging 43 mph. Between Sacramento and Oakland the Capitol Corridor takes 1 hour 58 minutes averaging 46 mph.

The annual state budget includes a line item for the operating costs of the three state-supported intercity rail services. For each service, the state budget provides funding for intercity train operations, a marketing budget, certain capitalized maintenance projects/equipment overhauls, and the administrative staff budgets. State transportation funds have provided the full annual operating

¹ Amtrak California (<http://amtrakcalifornia.com/index.cfm/news/press-releases/record-ridership-for-californias-san-joaquinc2ae-trains/> & <http://amtrakcalifornia.com/index.cfm/news/press-releases/amtrak-californias-san-joaquin-corridor-reaches-more-than-a-million-riders/>)

financial support for the San Joaquin and Capital Corridor. Both the Capitol Corridor and San Joaquin services use state-owned rolling stock. All three state-supported intercity services have extensive connecting bus services which greatly extend the populations served by each intercity rail service, and all three services are operated by Amtrak.

3. Senate Bill 457, the CCJPA, and Comparison of State Support Intercity Service Growth

Senate Bill 457 of 1996 (SB 457)

Chapter 263, Statutes of 1996 (SB 457 – Kelly) was approved by the Governor Wilson in July 1996. SB 457 authorized Caltrans, upon approval of the Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, to enter into interagency transfer agreements with specified joint exercise of powers entities to assume responsibility for intercity passenger rail services and be allocated funds for that purpose. The bill specified various terms to be included in the agreement and required that a business plan be prepared by the JPA pursuant to the adoption of an Interagency Transfer Agreement (ITA). The bill allowed for regional management of each of the three existing state supported services (Pacific Surfliner, San Joaquin, and Capitol Corridor). In 1996, taking advantage of the provisions of SB 457, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) was created to oversee the administration of the Capitol Corridor service. Since 1998, the CCJPA has been administratively managed by the CCJPA.

A key provision of SB 457 is that it was permissive legislation, not mandatory. SB 457 did not require local authorities be created to take over management of the state-supported intercity rail services. SB 457 permitted local authorities to be formed to do so. The local/regional agencies along the Pacific Surfliner and San Joaquin corridors chose not to take advantage of the provisions in SB 457, and therefore the administrative responsibility for the San Joaquin and Pacific Surfliner services has remained with Caltrans Division of Rail for these services.

There are several other key provisions of SB 457. SB 457 deleted provisions in state law that required intercity rail service to maintain a ratio of fare revenues to avoidable costs of at least 55% in order to receive state funding. SB 457 included a deadline for interagency transfer agreements, mandating that the ITAs must be executed by December 31, 1996. SB 457 also required the JPA to report fiscal results and permits the JPA to use any cost savings or farebox revenues to provide service improvements related to intercity service. The bill also guaranteed that the level of service funded by the state shall be no less than was currently provided, that state funding would include funds for the feeder bus services, and did not preclude expansion of state-supported intercity rail service.

Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority

Under the provisions of SB 457, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) was established in 1996. The CCJPA is comprised of a 16 member board with 2 members from eight counties (Placer, Sacramento, Yolo, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, San Francisco, and Santa Clara). Each member has one vote. There are six Member Transit Agencies (Placer County Transportation Agency, Sacramento Regional Transit District, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Solano Transportation Authority, and Yolo County Transportation District) within the CCJPA.

Each CCJPA board member is an appointee of one of the Member Transit Agencies. Members of the CCJPA Board must be a sitting member of the Board of their appointing Member Transit Agency and reside in the county that they represent.

There are no employees of the CCJPA. The CCJPA contracts with BART (the “Managing Agency”) to provide a dedicated, railroad management team which functions as the CCJPA staff. BART provides office spaces and administrative support. The BART employees who serve as CCJPA have technical expertise in management and administration, transportation/operations, rolling stock, engineering (railroad construction, track, signals, structures, etc.), finance, and marketing. They negotiate and administer contracts for operations, maintenance, and capital projects. They also prepare the CCJPA Annual Business Plan Update. This annual report is used by Caltrans and Business Transportation and Housing Agency to establish the annual state funding allocation to the CCJPA for the Capitol Corridor service. As the Managing Agency, BART utilizes support staff from their larger organization for functions such as accounting/payroll, legal, human resources, procurement, and finance.

The initial InterAgency Transfer Agreement (ITA) negotiated to transfer the management to the CCJPA initially provided for the equivalent of 6 full-time positions. Today, the BART staff managing the CCJPA has increased to 16.5 dedicated positions (including four mechanical positions based within the Amtrak Oakland shop). An additional 7 positions were created within BART for Capitol Corridor telephone information services. The funds to support this service were reduced from the Amtrak operating budget. The CCJPA determined that it could deliver this customer service more cost-effectively while better serving the needs of the corridor (using customer service with knowledge of local transportation conditions).

SB 457 initially designated BART as the Managing Agency for the Capitol Corridor for the first three years (1996-1999). In subsequent years, the decision of the selection of the Managing Agency has been determined by consensus of the CCJPA Board. BART has been retained since the inception of the CCJPA and is currently serving a 5-year term (2010-2015) agreement with the CCJPA Board. In the 15 year existence of the CCJPA, there has never a local assessment or direct contribution by member agencies to support the operations of the Capitol Corridor. BART estimates that the up-front costs that they incurred for negotiating with the state and setting up the new CCJPA were about \$700,000.²

Comparison of System Growth and Ridership by Corridor: Capitol Corridor, Pacific Surfliner, and San Joaquin

In 1997/98, before the CCJPA took over responsibility for the service, the Capitol Corridor train service consisted of 4 daily round-trips (or 8 daily trains). Today, the Capitol Corridor service consists of 16 daily round trips (32 weekday daily trains). This represents a 400% increase in service since management was transferred to the CCJPA. The Capitol Corridor is now the second most frequent intercity passenger rail service in the nation (after the Northeast Corridor serving Boston-New York-Washington D.C.) and has the third highest ridership. In 1997/98, ridership for the Capitol Corridor was nearly 462,500 with about

² LOSSAN Agency, Agenda Item 7B Nov. 16, 2011

\$6.2 million in passenger revenue.³ By 2010/2011 Capitol Corridor ridership had increased by about 270% to 1.7 million with \$27.2 million in passenger revenues.⁴ Currently the Capitol Corridor is operating at 95% on-time service and has led the nation in the Amtrak system for the past two years in on-time performance.

In 1997/98, the San Joaquin service had 4 daily round trips (8 daily trains) with a ridership of just over 702,000 and passenger revenues of \$15.23 million. By 2010/11, the San Joaquin service had been increased by 50% to 6 daily round trips (12 daily trains)⁵ with ridership increasing by about 42% to just over 1 million passengers, and revenue increasing to \$36.5⁶. The San Joaquin service is currently the fifth most used intercity service within the Amtrak system.

The Pacific Surfliner had 10 daily round trips (20 daily trips) in 1997/98 between Los Angeles and San Diego (with 4 of these daily round trips extending to Santa Barbara and one all the way to San Luis Obispo). By 2010/2011, between Los Angeles and San Diego, one additional daily round trip had been added between Los Angeles and San Diego (11 daily round trips) for the weekdays, and two additional round trips for Fridays and weekend service (12 daily round trips). Currently five of the round trips extend to Santa Barbara (with two of these round trips extending to San Luis Obispo). Ridership for the Pacific Surfliner in 1997/98 was over 1.62 million passengers with revenue at \$15.2 million. By 2010/11, ridership on the Pacific Surfliner had increased 70% to 2.75 million with revenues at \$55.3 million. The Pacific Surfliner is the second most used intercity service in the Amtrak system.

The 2010/11 state costs for state-supported intercity rail services was just over \$90 million (\$27.5 million for Pacific Surfliner, \$33.6 million for San Joaquin, and \$29.2 million for Capitol Corridor).⁷ However, Amtrak pays 30% of the Pacific Surfliner total service cost as part of Amtrak's basic system.⁸ By comparison, in 1997/98, the total state costs for the state supported intercity rail services was \$48.4 million (\$20.4 million for the Pacific Surfliner, \$17.2 million for the San Joaquin, and \$10.8 million for the Capitol Corridor).⁹

4. Current LOSSAN Regional Governance Efforts

On August 24, 2011 the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Joint Powers Board (LOSSAN Board) approved in concept a framework for a potential local authority to manage the "Pacific Surfliner" state-supported intercity passenger rail service. At subsequent board meetings in September, October, November, and December, the LOSSAN Board reviewed possible governance frameworks, the

³ Business Plan Update FY 2009-10 – 2010-11, Appendix A

⁴ Capitol Corridor News (<http://www.capitolcorridor.org/news/press/capitol-corridor-popularity-shatters-ridership-records/>)

⁵ The fifth (added 1988/89) and sixth (added 2001/02) daily round-trip trains added between Sacramento and Bakersfield (Caltrans State Rail Plan, 2007-8 to 2017-18, page 119)

⁶ Caltrans, Sept 2011; Memo from William Bronte to CTC (FY 2010 Fourth Quarter Intercity Rail Operations Report)

⁷ Caltrans, Oct 2011; Memo from William Bronte to CTC (Financial Allocation for FY 2011-12)

⁸ Note: Under Section 209 of PRIIA, state will be required to pay 100 percent by 2013/14. The LOSSAN Agency estimates that this will cost the state an additional \$25 million annually for the Pacific Surfliner service annually by 2013/14.

⁹ Caltrans, California State Rail Plan 2007-08 to 2017-18

current applicability of the major provisions of SB 457, new draft legislation, and the business financial case for regional governance of the Pacific Surfliner service. Staff and the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the member agencies of the LOSSAN Board recommended that the Board pursue legislation for regional governance.

The LOSSAN Board approved moving forward with legislation meeting at their January 25, 2012 board meeting. The Board directed staff to provide a draft version of the bill to the Legislative Counsel for review on or before their deadline of January 27, 2012. They have also retained the option to introduce a spot bill (by February 25) in which details could be provided at a later date. A key provision of their potential draft legislation is that it is to be permissive and not mandatory (like SB 457). The bill would not require a local authority but would permit one to be formed. The draft legislation would use much of the language and provisions of SB 457. However, while SB 457 authorized local agencies the opportunity to assume responsibility for each of the existing state-supported intercity services (Capitol Corridor, Pacific Surfliner, and San Joaquin), the LOSSAN Board's current draft legislation only addresses local governance of the Pacific Surfliner service.

Cost-effectiveness will be essential to the LOSSAN Board's decision to pursue draft legislation. Their analysis concludes that it is more cost-effective for a member agency of the LOSSAN Board to manage the Pacific Surfliner service than the current management by Caltrans Division of Rail. They estimate that nearly \$640,000 could be saved annually from the over \$4.5 million estimated for current management of the Pacific Surfliners by Caltrans Division of Rail.¹⁰ The Board did analyze an alternative governance option where a new independent agency would manage the Pacific Surfliner service. However they will most likely reject this alternative since they concluded it would cost over \$700,000 more annually than the current management by Caltrans Division of Rail because this alternative lacks the economies of scale associated with sharing positions under the member agency alternative.

The LOSSAN Board anticipates that once the legislation is passed and signed, the effective date will be January 1, 2013. Once the legislation becomes law, the Managing Agency and Caltrans will begin formal work on the ITA. The ITA would need to be negotiated with the State of California to transfer responsibility for the administrative management. The ITA would also transfer the funding for operations and equivalent staff positions. The LOSSAN Board estimates that the transfer of responsibilities and funding would be likely take up to a year to complete.¹¹

5. Implications for the San Joaquin Intercity Rail Service

The overall goal of a local joint powers authority (JPA) would be to transform the existing San Joaquin intercity rail service from a State/Amtrak managed service to a service under local/regional authority that could be more responsive to local needs, issues, and wishes of the riders of the service. In addition to more cost-effective operations, there are several other potential benefits to local authority management, including:

¹⁰ December 14, 2011, LOSSAN Board Agenda Item No. 7 page 3

¹¹ LOSSAN Agency, Agenda Item 10 Sept. 28, 2011

- Ability to have a stronger local/regional voice in Sacramento and Washington D.C. to promote service improvements
- Local decision-making that is more responsive and adaptive to passenger issues
- Improved coordination/collaboration on service changes and ability for public to comment on service changes
- Joint marketing and partnerships with Local Member Agencies and taking advantage of local relationships with chamber of commerce, media outlets, etc.
- More engagement by local communities to support the service

Information from the CA State Rail Plan indicates very modest growth of the San Joaquins to include three additional trains through 2032. As CCJPA and LOSSAN advocate strongly for scarce funding to expand and improve those services, the San Joaquins are likely to fall further and further behind without strong local and regional leadership and advocacy. In contrast, with more efficient administration and stronger local/regional support, a regionally managed San Joaquin rail service can result in much higher frequencies of service (like experienced by the Capitol Corridor) resulting in more jobs, improved air quality and would help promote more sustainable development – particularly in the Central Valley.

6. Key Issues for a Central Valley Regional Governance Initiative for the San Joaquin Service

Some of the key issues that need to be addressed before moving forward with a Central Valley Regional Governance Initiative (Initiative) are: consensus for regional governance, cost-effectiveness of regional governance, selecting Member Agencies and representation of the JPA, designating a Managing Agency, the role of the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee, and how to move forward with necessary legislation. These issues are briefly discussed below.

a.) Consensus for Regional Governance

The first issue for a potential Central Valley Regional Governance Initiative (Initiative) is whether the majority of the jurisdictions served by the San Joaquins rail service can reach consensus on forming a new JPA. Based upon the CCJPA model, the Initiative would assume governance of the rail service, and the connecting bus service network. This consensus must be developed through outreach to, and feedback from, the 11 affected counties along the service corridor. See Figure 1, which shows the San Joaquin rail service and the affected counties.

b.) Making the Business Case for Cost Effectiveness

Similar to the analysis of the LOSSAN effort, a detailed Business Case must demonstrate that the Initiative results in lower costs than the current Caltrans oversight. The costs are currently being compiled, but an initial review indicates a more cost effective option if the Managing Agency role is assumed by one of the existing member agencies currently managing rail services. This allows for an assignment of incremental costs to the Initiative, rather than the full costs of a dedicated agency.

c.) Options for the JPA Member Agencies and Designation of a Managing Agency

Upon consensus for pursuing the Initiative, the Member Agencies to the JPA will need to be defined. For the CCJPA model, transit agencies are the Member Agencies. For the Initiative, rail transit agencies and regional transportation planning agencies (RTPAs) from counties along the service corridor could be considered as potential Member Agencies.

A Managing Agency would need to be designated to serve at the policy direction of the JPA. As indicated above, the designation of one of the Member Agencies to be the Managing Agency would be the most cost-effective alternative because it would result in incremental costs rather than the full cost of a new dedicated agency.

d.) San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee

The San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee (Committee) consists of representatives from each county served by the San Joaquin trains and key counties served by feeder buses. Agency associate members of the committee represent Caltrans, Amtrak, CPUC, UP, BNSF, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the Southern California Association of Governments. Section 14074.8 of the Government Code provides that the Committee “may confer with the Secretary of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency (BTH) to coordinate intercity passenger rail service for the San Joaquin Corridor.”¹² The Committee meets regularly, receives staff support from Caltrans Division of Rail, and provides input to Caltrans Division of Rail on all significant matters related to the San Joaquin service.

An Initiative would not require any change to the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee. The Managing Agency could take over the role of providing staff support for Committee meetings and the Committee could provide input to the San Joaquin JPA.

e.) Enabling Legislation

Since SB 457 included a deadline for interagency transfer agreements, mandating that the ITAs must be executed by December 31, 1996, new legislation will be required in order to enable regional governance of the San Joaquin intercity rail service. A spot bill would need to be introduced by February 25th in order to preserve the opportunity to pass legislation for the Initiative this year. If the LOSSAN Board introduces a bill or a spot bill, then another alternative would be to work in partnership to amend their legislation to include the San Joaquin service and support that legislation.

7. Status of Central Valley Regional Governance Initiative Discussions

At the November 2011 meeting of the Central Valley Rail Working Group (CVRWG), staff discussed the LOSSAN Board’s efforts towards regional governance of the Pacific Surfliners, and asked the CVRWG if there might be similar interest in the Central Valley for regional governance of the San Joaquin service.

¹² Caltrans, California State Rail Plan 2007-08 – 2017-18

The CVRWG directed staff to move forward and set up a Subcommittee to work with other agencies to explore the concept of setting up a regional JPA and supporting legislation that would enable regional governance of the San Joaquin service. The Subcommittee consists of: Andrew Chesley (Executive Director, SJCCOG), Jesse Brown (Executive Director, Merced COG), Vince Harris (Executive Director, StanCOG), Mike Wiley (Director, Sacramento RT), and Stacey Mortensen (Executive Director, SJRRC).

On December 16, 2001 the CVRWG Subcommittee met and discussed potential structures and processes for the potential Initiative and JPA. The Subcommittee outlined the following very conceptual Structure for the Regional Governance Initiative to facilitate further discussion:

- Member Agencies to potentially include; Sacramento RT, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, BART (representing Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), StanCOG, Merced County Association of Governments, Madera Transportation Commission, and the appropriate RTPAs from the other counties
- Governing Board to include one elected official from each of the 11 agencies
- Managing Agency Options include; Sacramento RT, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, or a new agency staffing for the JPA

The next steps recommended by the CVRWG Subcommittee are:

1. Develop a White Paper to Describe the Purpose of the Regional Governance Initiative
2. Present the White Paper and Solicit Feedback with the Valley RTPA Director's Committee
3. Present the White Paper and Solicit Feedback with the Central Valley Policy Council
4. Based Upon Valley Consensus, Present the White Paper and Solicit Feedback from BART and Others in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties

FIGURE 2



Source: Amtrak California