

I-15 INTERREGIONAL PARTNERSHIP LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES – DRAFT

Potential Long Range Transportation Strategies for the San Diego/Western Riverside Interregional Partnership (IRP) were discussed at the May and June Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting. The comments made at the TWG meetings and additional comments made by transportation agencies have been incorporated in the following draft strategy descriptions.

Several comments suggested that additional transportation strategies be added. Many of the suggested transportation strategies have already been approved as part of the early implementation Short Range Strategies. These strategies, approved by the IRP Policy Committee on February 21, 2003, are listed below.

Table 1
I-15 IRP Short Range Strategies

- SR1: Interregional Coordination of Vanpool and Carpool Programs
- SR2: Expand Park-and-Ride Lots and Improve Rideshare Information Signage
- SR3: Joint Outreach and Marketing for Transit, Vanpool and Ridesharing Programs
- SR4: Implement Interregional Public Transit Commuter Services
- SR5: Collaboration among Transit Providers
- SR6: Advocate Employer Based Rideshare Incentives
- SR7: Encourage the Adoption of Alternative Work Schedules
- SR8: Encourage Tele-work

In the Strategy descriptions, the agencies that have the authority and would be responsible for implementing a Strategy are identified as the “primary” responsible agencies. Other agencies, which would provide funding or need to cooperate in the implementation of the Strategy, are identified as “support” agencies.

On June 12, the TWG recommended five Long Range Transportation Strategies to the I-15 IRP Policy Committee for approval for final evaluation.

The complete IRP Strategy program will include Transportation, Housing, Economic Development and Jobs/Housing Balance Strategies. This full program will be revised and finalized in early 2004.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY T1

STRATEGY: Support High Speed Rail Transit Service in the I-15 Corridor

CATEGORY: Transportation

RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES: Primary: Caltrans, SCAG, SANDAG, RCTC, WRCOG

Support: California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA –the legislatively-established authority to finance and build the system), Transit Operators, (RTA, NCTD, MTDB), Land Developers

AUTHORIZATION/FUNDING:	New State Legislation	Legislation in Place
	State or Federal Funding Grant	Significant
	Joint Powers Agency	None
	Local Agency Action	Secondary
	Private Sector	Secondary

DESCRIPTION:

The State legislature created the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) to design, finance, build and operate a high-speed passenger rail system to connect California’s major urban areas. The first-priority corridor identified by the Authority connects the San Francisco Bay Area with Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS). To help fund this “backbone” high speed rail system, the CHSRA plans to place a \$9.95 billion bond measure on the November 2004 statewide ballot. Nearly 10% of this funding will be available for the construction of rail and bus feeder services.

When this priority corridor opens for service, most passengers would travel to High Speed Rail stations on conventional rail or highway-based transit. Beyond the year 2010, high speed rail service would be extended north to Sacramento and south to San Diego. Based on studies completed by the CHSRA, the preferred route for high speed rail service from LAUS to San Diego would be through Riverside County and then south on I-15.

The SCAG long range transportation plan also includes a high speed rail service. SCAG identifies Magnetic Levitation (Maglev), an evolving electrically-powered vehicle and guidance system, as the technology to be used to provide both passenger and limited freight service in identified corridors. The primary corridor identified by SCAG connects the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) with downtown Los Angeles. Several Maglev system extensions are identified. One future corridor would connect east into Riverside County, and could be extended south into the San Diego region.

Both of the proposed high speed rail systems would operate at speeds above 100 miles per hour. Because of the high speeds and focus on interregional travel, this service would stop infrequently. In the CHSRA proposal, the system would serve stations near Temecula, Escondido, Miramar (North City San Diego) and central San Diego.

In 2001, CHSRA screened the Maglev technology from further evaluation in its project, primarily because it could not share track with existing train systems that use steel-wheel-on-rail technology. For its environmental and financial evaluation, the Authority is assuming a fully grade-separated,

electrified high speed system using steel-wheel-on-rail technology. The CHSRA is scheduled to release a draft state-wide Programmatic Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement (PEIR/EIS) in August 2004. This document is being written to meet both federal and state environmental requirements.

Following the completion of the environmental process, land use and transportation agencies would continue to work with the CHSRA to refine station location and access. It is important that HSR stations integrate with highway, airport and transit facilities. It is also important that the stations serve major activity centers and residential communities. The I-15 IRP would encourage local jurisdictions to review their general plans to maximize access to the system by increasing intensities near the stations wherever appropriate.

The CHSRA service would be scheduled to meet the total interregional demand for travel. Although the trip to work is a relatively small part of interregional travel, a high speed rail system could schedule additional service during commute hours. In addition, the CHSRA has discussed the option of allowing regional transit providers to use its transportation rights-of-way to provide regional transit and freight services. These regional services would be designed to stop more frequently. The San Diego Regional High-Speed Rail Task Force, a working group of SANDAG Board members, is interested in pursuing this option over the next few years.

COST:

The capital cost of the priority corridor is nearly \$20 billion, about \$40 million/mile. The CHSRA proposes to finance half of this cost through bonds that need to be approved by voters in a State-wide ballot measure. The capital cost of any extensions would probably be estimated in this same cost range as well, although less tunneling would be required in the Riverside to San Diego segment. The CHSRA estimates that the operating cost of the State-wide service will be paid by passenger fares. A need for a subsidy of the operating cost for regional services has not been estimated. Feeder transit service and other local support costs have not yet been quantified.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

1. IRP and its member agencies (including SANDAG, SCAG and WRCOG) monitor the ongoing CHSRA Project in the I-15 corridor.
2. IRP and its member agencies review and comment on the draft PEIR/EIS.
3. As appropriate, the IRP and its member agencies would advocate in support of high speed rail in the I-15 Corridor.
4. IRP and its member agencies would work with CHSRA on implementation issues, including right-of-way, station location and station access.
5. IRP and its member land use agencies should review and revise land use policies and plans to maximize access to the HSR system, increasing intensities near the HSR stations where feasible.

TIME FRAME:

It is likely that any extension of high speed rail would be at least 10 years in the future. However, decisions regarding alignments and operating plans will occur much sooner. The I-15 IRP must closely monitor progress and respond when appropriate.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY T2

STRATEGY: Implement Transit Shuttle Services to Interregional Transit

CATEGORY: Transportation

IMPLEMENTATION AGENCIES: Primary: Transit Operators (RTA, NCTD, MTDB)
Support: Transportation Funding Agencies (RCTC, SANDAG), Land Developers, Private Transit Operators

AUTHORIZATION/FUNDING:	New State Legislation	None
	State or Federal Funding Grant	Secondary
	Joint Powers Agency	None
	Local Agency Action	Primary
	Private Sector	Possible Contract Operator Potential Funding as a Condition of Development

DESCRIPTION:

The Implementation of Interregional Commuter Transit Services is a short range strategy (ST4) approved by the I-15 Policy Committee. Interregional services would operate primarily on the freeway system, connecting relatively distant residential areas with employment centers. Interregional commuter routes can be designed to pick up some of their riders near their homes and distribute them to their job sites.

However, in most cases, local transit shuttle services may be needed to collect interregional commuters from their residences and, less commonly, deliver them to work. While some shuttle services already exist in the I-15 corridor, more will be implemented in the near term.

Strategy T2 is proposed for long range implementation following the implementation and refinement of the interregional routes. Shuttle services under this Strategy would be specifically designed to serve the interregional commute. The City of Temecula has successfully required developers to fund transit shuttles as a condition of development. Similar service could be required as an element of the Congestion Management Program (CMP) in congested areas.

Shuttle services would circulate within residential neighborhoods, picking up riders near their homes. The shuttles would deliver riders to transit centers or other Interregional Commuter Service bus stops. Depending on the intensity of the employment center, the Interregional Commuter vehicle can operate in a distributor mode at the destination-end of the route. However, shuttle services may be needed to deliver riders in geographically large employment centers.

Shuttle services will be cost-effective only in communities where residential and employment densities are reasonably high. In addition, the design of these areas must support transit service, with buildings located relatively close to the street and with adequate pedestrian access.

In areas that lack these characteristics, other ways to distribute interregional transit passengers may be possible. Currently, SANDAG is evaluating the "station-car" concept, where vehicles can be rented for short periods of time at major transit centers. Once this concept has been evaluated, it could be considered as a strategy for access to interregional transit services.

In addition to the vehicle, capital cost for shuttle services can include the creation of transit centers, special access lanes to these centers and traffic signal changes to provide priority for buses. Depending on the service demands in the residential or employment areas, shuttle service may be provided all day or only during peak commuting hours.

COST:

Especially in newer, automobile-oriented employment centers, shuttle services can have a relatively high cost per rider. The shuttle service would probably operate only during peak periods. While lowering the overall costs, this type of operation increases unit (per-mile, per-hour) costs. In addition, newer industrial areas are often difficult to serve with transit because of their large, on-site parking areas. Several cities in Riverside County have required residential developers to provide shuttle service to major activity centers, potentially including transit centers, as a condition of development.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

Within the existing transit planning process,

1. Identify I-15 interregional commuter service access locations (express bus stops),
2. Identify areas of the rider-shed that can not be directly served by the interregional bus or walking at either the trip-origin or destination ends of the work trip,
3. Prepare and evaluate potential transit service alternatives,
4. Market the most cost-effective services in the major employment areas,
5. Finalize the proposed route(s) based on the marketing activities,
6. Secure funding through (a) the normal government process or (b) special grant applications,
7. Select service operator (public transit operator or a private company that would operate under contract with the public agency responsible for the service), and
8. Initiate service.

TIME FRAME:

Transit service improvements are implemented by public transit operators several times a year, with Short Range Transit Plans, funding decisions and other short range improvement programs made annually.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY T3

STRATEGY: **Preserve Transportation Rights-of-Way and Implement Priority Measures through the Development Process**

CATEGORY: Transportation

IMPLEMENTATION AGENCIES: Primary: Local Land-Use Agencies (cities, etc.)
Supporting: Public Transit Operators (RTA, NCTD, MTDB), Regional Funding & Planning Agencies (SCAG, RCTC, SANDAG, WRCOG), Land Developers

AUTHORIZATION/FUNDING:	New State Legislation	None
	State or Federal Funding Grant	Secondary
	Joint Powers Agency	None
	Local Agency Action	Primary
	Private Sector	Land Developers

DESCRIPTION:

As required by state law, public land use and transportation agencies prepare long range facilities plans to serve their jurisdiction for the next 20 years. Even if the locations of facilities are not identified in an environmental process, appropriate rights-of-way can be preserved through the development process. However, this process should include an environmental analysis. An example of this Strategy is the preservation of a right-of-way for State Route 125 South in the Otay Ranch area of San Diego County.

In addition to the preservation of rights-of-way, transit-related facilities could improve the speed and convenience of bus use in the short range. For example, the installation of “queue-jumpers,” transit-only lanes which allow buses to by-pass a line of cars stopped at red signals, can speed transit travel times. Transit Centers and transit stop improvements such as shelters can improve the comfort of the transit patron. The types of facilities should be identified in the IRP program, Short Range Transit Plans and local General Plans.

COST:

There are no immediate direct costs for this Strategy T3, but both government and developer expenditures would be needed in the development approval process.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

This process is already in place in most jurisdictions and has been implemented as part of the development process. As Strategy T3 is refined, the types of facilities to be implemented should be identified.

TIME FRAME:

The conditional approval of development projects is currently in place in all jurisdictions. However, the types of projects which can be recognized in the approval process must be identified in the preparation of this strategy and acknowledged by transit agencies and local jurisdictions.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY T4

STRATEGY: Reduce Parking Requirements in Transit Nodes and Mixed-Use Centers

CATEGORY: Transportation

IMPLEMENTATION AGENCIES: Primary: Local Land Use Jurisdictions
Cooperating: SCAG, WRCOG, SANDAG

AUTHORIZATION/FUNDING:	New State Legislation	None
	State or Federal Funding Grant	None
	Joint Powers Agency	None
	Local Agency Action	Primary
	Private Sector	Secondary

DESCRIPTION:

Even in rural areas, free employee parking is often a hidden cost of doing business. Local development regulations require developers provide off-street parking for an anticipated number of workers. These parking facilities must be built, maintained and insured against injury and loss. These costs are usually an undeclared benefit for employees who drive to work.

If a reasonable level of existing transit serves an employment site, or ridesharing facilities and the opportunity for ridesharing exists, the number of parking spaces per employee can be reduced. A reduction in the amount of parking provided would encourage employees to rideshare to work.

Some cities have had difficulty with programs to reduce parking in both residential and employment areas. The City of San Diego allows a reduction of required parking in areas served by a high level of transit service. Residents complain that this reduction causes a shortage of on-street parking in these areas.

The fear of insufficient parking can be minimized by requiring the developer to retain land within the development to accommodate the full number of required parking spaces. During the time that parking adequacy is being determined, this area would remain as open space. If the reduced number of parking spaces proves to be adequate, this area could be converted to other uses or retained as open space.

In addition, financial institutions which loan money for the construction of new employment sites or housing often require a minimal level of parking before they will finance a new development. Similarly, some tenants demand a high level of parking as a condition of renting a business site. The benefits and limitations of this Strategy should be discussed further.

COST:

There is little direct capital or operating cost for Strategy T4; nevertheless, the program's success depends on the provision of a high level of transit service to job-locations and the availability of rideshare services. If employment intensities are low, providing these services may not be cost-effective.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

1. Identify target employment areas with:
 - a. a high occurrence of long-distance commuters,
 - b. good levels of existing or proposed interregional transit service and
 - c. effective ridesharing programs.
2. Estimate the percentage and number of commuters who could effectively rideshare and use transit by area.
3. Recommend to the responsible land use agency a reduction in the required on-site parking. The size of this reduction should be based on anticipated transit use and ridesharing.
4. Work with employers to encourage them to pass along at least part of the cost of providing and maintaining parking facilities for those workers who use transit or rideshare. This “parking buy-back” could be included as a required part of the program to reduce the amount of required parking.

TIME FRAME:

While zoning ordinances can normally be revised within a six-month period, the effect of this strategy would not be achieved for many years. This period will vary based on the existing land uses in the area and the quality of transit services. Providing adequate transit services into developing areas can take years and initially high transit subsidies. The modified regulation would only impact new or rebuilt employment sites. Nevertheless, these types of ordinance revisions are needed if developing areas are to move away from near total automobile reliance.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY T5

STRATEGY: Implement the I-15 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) System

CATEGORY: Transportation

IMPLEMENTATION AGENCIES: Primary: CALTRANS
Cooperating: SANDAG, RCTC, Transit Operators

AUTHORIZATION/FUNDING:	New State Legislation	None
	State or Federal Funding Grant	None
	Joint Powers Agency	None
	State Agency Action	Primary
	Local Agency Action	Secondary
	Private Sector	Secondary

DESCRIPTION:

In the summer of 2002, a survey by the I-15 Interregional Partnership estimated that approximately 29,000 individuals commute to work in the San Diego region from Riverside County on a daily basis. Approximately 85 percent of those workers drive alone. This survey also revealed that a significant percentage of those commuting into the San Diego region are interested in vanpooling and carpooling. The number of interregional commuters interested in alternative transportation modes increases when the potential of HOV lanes running the length of I-15 from southwestern Riverside County into San Diego County is discussed.

Strategy T5 would take advantage of the interest in alternative transportation, developing a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) system. The HOV system carpool lanes can move interregional commuters efficiently through what will eventually become congested freeway traffic between Southwest Riverside County and Escondido along I-15.

Current plans show I-15 expanding by one or two lanes in each direction in southern Riverside County. In the San Diego region, the addition of one HOV lane in each direction north of Escondido has been identified in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), but only under the most optimistic funding scenario. Because I-15 congestion currently only exists from Escondido south, the addition of more flexible "managed lanes" have been programmed. Given projected funding levels and more urgent highway improvement projects, the funding needed to add HOV lanes on I-15 north of Escondido is anticipated only under the most favorable funding scenarios.

COST:

In Riverside County, the addition of HOV lanes was included in Measure A, a ballot proposition approved by the voters in 2002. At an estimated cost of \$359 million these HOV lanes are programmed for construction before 2020.

In San Diego County, the managed lanes south of Escondido are anticipated to be open for traffic in 2010 at a cost of \$660 million. The addition of HOV lanes north of Escondido is estimated at \$300 million. This project has not been programmed for construction.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

1. Document the benefits, existing and future, of a HOV system along the I-15 Corridor.
2. Identify alternative funding sources.
3. Implementing agencies collaborate on system design.

TIME FRAME:

Funding is clearly the key to implementing this strategy. Given the forecasted free flow of traffic along the southern Riverside County/northern San Diego County portion of I-15 over the next 5 to 10 years, immediate implementation is not as critical as developing a coordinated and comprehensive system. It is important that agency staffs begin jointly investigating funding sources and system designs.