

SB 1390 (Portantino)

Montclair to Ontario Airport Construction Authority.

PROBLEM

Today, communities in western San Bernardino County and eastern Los Angeles County have limited transit options. These communities, from Ontario and Rancho Cucamonga on the east to La Verne and Pomona on the west, experience nearly 3 million trips every day with only 3% conducted by transit. Residents, workers and students are eagerly seeking reliable and sustainable transit options, alternatives to driving on the congested I-210 and I-10.

Importantly, Ontario International Airport (ONT) – which sits on the southeast end of this congested corridor - is the fastest growing airport in the region. It is expected to grow from just over 5 million annual passengers (MAP) per year in 2018 to nearly 30 MAP by 2040. Of those future trips, nearly 60% are projected to originate from Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties combined (30% from Los Angeles, and 29% from San Bernardino, respectively). While the number of daily trips to ONT originating from all surrounding counties is increasing over the next few decades, the proportion of airport trips originating from Los Angeles County is projected to nearly double by 2040 (from 18% to 30%). In fact, Los Angeles County is the only county in the region projected to significantly increase its proportion of airport trips to ONT. The proportion of trips originating from San Bernardino County is the only county that is projected to decrease (from 44% to 29%).

The Metro Gold Line light rail system has become a very critical transit option for connecting communities within the San Gabriel Valley to each other and to the greater Los Angeles area. The line currently terminates in the City of Azusa, but construction is underway to ex-

tend the line to Pomona, with plans to terminate the line at the Montclair TransCenter in San Bernardino County in the future.

It has become clear that San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) officials no longer support an extension of the Gold Line from Montclair to Ontario. This is the case despite a recent regional study of potential alternatives for expanding transit options between eastern San Bernardino and western Los Angeles Counties that found extending the Gold Line to Ontario would result in the greatest ridership and largest vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction of any other alternative studied. Additionally, SBCTA also conducted their own, separate study from the one discussed above and found that while a Gold Line connection to ONT would generate the greatest ridership of the transit alternatives reviewed, the Gold Line would mainly benefit Los Angeles County and therefore should not be the preferred alignment. Since that study, SBCTA has moved forward with selling off land that could seriously impede the ability to extend the Gold Line east of Montclair.

Therefore, a separate construction authority is needed to ensure the tens of thousands of potential transit users in western San Bernardino and eastern Los Angeles Counties can access the Gold Line for their transportation needs. A separate construction authority will ensure the line gets built to ONT, benefitting both San Bernardino and Los Angeles Counties as well as the region overall by increasing transit ridership, reducing VMT and greenhouse gas emissions, and ensuring a transit connection to the fastest growing airport in the region from the county expected to generate the greatest growth in trips to the airport in the coming decades.

BACKGROUND

SB 1390 is modeled after existing law that created the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority in 1998. The proposed construction authority would be similar in nature and program to the existing agency, which has been very successful at finalizing the planning for, and design and construction of, two of three project segments (the third and final segment is currently under construction). The success of the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority in completing its mission is a model for the new construction authority to be replicated in San Bernardino County to extend the Gold Line from its currently planned terminus in Montclair to the Ontario Airport.

SUMMARY

SB 1390 would create the Montclair to Ontario Airport Construction Authority for purposes of awarding and overseeing all design and construction contracts to complete an extension of the Metro Gold Line light rail project from Montclair to Ontario International Airport.

SB 1390 would require the construction authority be governed by a board consisting of seven voting and one non-voting member. The Cities of Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, and Upland would each appoint one member to the governing board, and the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA), Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA), and Ontario International Airport Authority (OIAA) would each appoint one member. The Governor would appoint the non-voting member.

SB 1390 would require the construction authority and SBCTA to enter into an agreement for the construction authority to hold in trust all real property interests held by SBCTA that are necessary for the planning, design, and construction of the project at no cost to the

construction authority. SB 1390 would require SBCTA to transfer the unencumbered balance of all local funds programmed for completion of the project, the unencumbered balance of all funds identified by a local transaction and use tax measure, and an unspecified source of funding to the construction authority for completion of the project.

SB 1390 would authorize the construction authority to receive allocations of state and federal funds for the project, and would require the unencumbered balance of funds programmed or allocated by SBCTA for completion of the project and that have been identified in unspecified documents to be allocated to the construction authority for completion of the project.

SB 1390 would require the construction authority to enter into a memorandum of understanding with LACMTA that specifically authorizes LACMTA to review any significant changes in the scope of the design or construction, or both design and construction, of the project, as specified. The bill would require the construction authority to coordinate its work in the City of Montclair with the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority, as specified, and would require the construction authority to coordinate its work in the City of Ontario with the OIAA.

SB 1390 would prohibit the construction authority from encumbering the project with any obligation that is transferable to LACMTA or SBCTA upon completion of the design and construction of the project without the consent of those entities, except the bill would require LACMTA to assume responsibility for operating all completed phases of the project and would require SBCTA to reimburse LACMTA for the costs of operating the project.

SB 1390 would require the construction authority to be dissolved upon completion of the project.

SUPPORT

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