

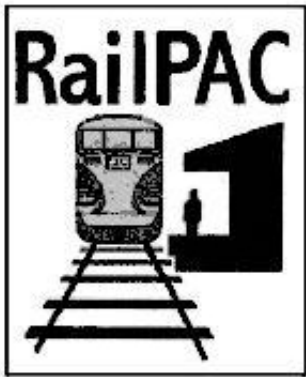
Subject: Big Boy leaves CA on 28th, More Money for Rail with Cap and Trade?
From: Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net)
To: ntbraymer@yahoo.com;
Date: Monday, April 21, 2014 9:32 AM

RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for April 21, 2014

Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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Rail Passenger Association of California
www.railpac.org
Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!



Downtown San Diego looking south from the north end of the Santa Fe Depot. Rail passenger service helps stimulates the economy and local development. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

[Poll finds California voters open to tinkering with tax-limiting Proposition 13](#)

Sacramento Bee-Apr 17, 2014

About half of California voters – 49 percent – generally support changing some parts of the law, while 69 percent of voters support indirectly increasing taxes on businesses by making it harder for commercial properties to avoid reassessments, according to the poll.

Because of Prop 13, commercial property owners gets major savings in taxes even when the property changes hands. If more assessment districts could be created in areas that benefit from rail and transit service, this could be a major source of construction funding for these services while stimulating more economical housing construction and job growth. NB

[Gasoline prices jump in California as refineries encounter trouble](#)

Los Angeles Times Apr 17, 2014

The statewide average for a gallon of regular has surged 13 cents in a week. Analysts differ on when prices will begin to drop.

[Big Boy steam engine to start journey to Wyoming on April 28](#)

Los Angeles Times-Apr 17, 2014

Union Pacific's vintage Big Boy 4014 steam engine goes on the road again April 28, leaving its current waystation near Colton to be towed across Nevada and Utah and then on to Cheyenne, Wyo., by May 8. There, it will be restored for several years.

The steam monster built in the early 1940s will be on display for a day in Las Vegas and a day in Salt Lake City during its journey.

[Union Station: A classic on both big screen and small](#)

The Source Apr 15, 2014

With its dramatic angles and dark corners, Union Station is a black-and-white noir fantasy. Yet like a character actor who is aging well, the building has played many types of roles over the past 75 years in hundreds of films, TV shows and commercials.

[Steinberg says California cap-and-trade money should be spent on housing, transit, high-speed rail](#)

Sacramento Bee-Apr 14, 2014

Housing and public transportation sit at the center of Steinberg's proposal. Forty percent of the cap-and-trade revenue would go to affordable housing, including communities built around transit options; 30 percent would subsidize transit projects; and 10 percent would fund basic transportation infrastructure like road and highway maintenance. All three would be administered through competitive grants.

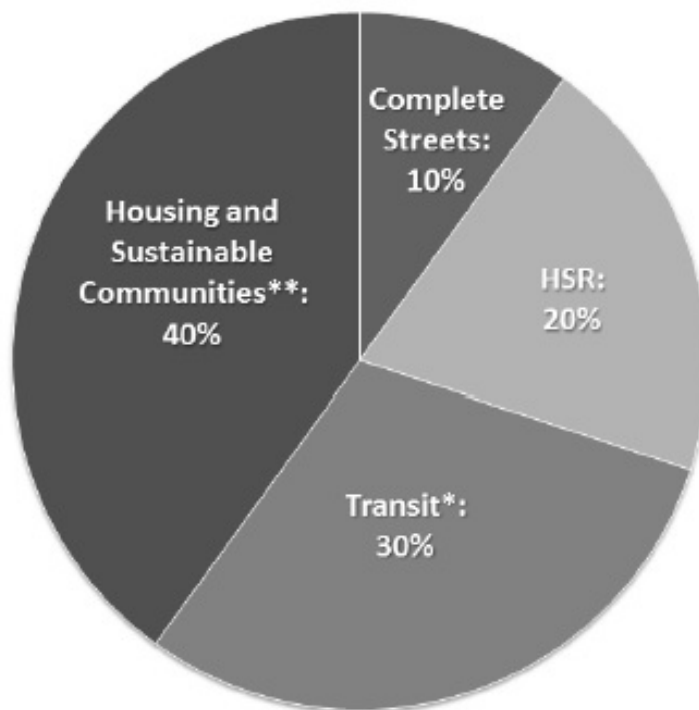
FINAL

APRIL 11, 2014

VISUAL SUMMARY

- \$200 million for natural resource, water, and waste.
- \$200 million for climate dividend for consumers.
- \$200 million for electric vehicle deployment
- \$10 million for green bank funding

Remaining balance distributed as follows:



**Of Transit amount, at least 5% shall be used for transit connectivity projects and at least 5% shall be used for direct transit assistance to consumers.*

***Of the Housing and Sustainable Communities amount, at least half shall be used for affordable housing.*

This graph was issued by State Senator Steinberg's Office on this proposal for future Cap and Trade Funds.

[California appeals court denies petition, clears way for high-speed rail trial](#)

Fresno Bee-Apr 16, 2014

Three justices with the the 3rd District Court of Appeal in Sacramento issued an order late Tuesday summarily denying the rail agency's March 21 request related to a lawsuit by high-speed rail foes in Kings County. The rail authority had asked the appeals court to overturn a Sacramento County Superior Court's decision ordering a trial on one part of a lawsuit while another portion of the case is pending an appeal.

The 3rd District Court of Appeal is also mulling appeals from the rail authority of two other rulings by Kenny over the high-speed rail project: the first piece of the Kings County lawsuit on the 2011 financing plan, and Kenny's refusal to validate the sale of Prop. 1A bonds needed to pay for the first phases of construction in the San Joaquin Valley.

This latest legal issue is just one of many still in store for High Speed Rail. State Senate President Steinberg's proposal might look like a setback for High Speed Rail since this proposes less direct funding from Cap and Trade than what the Governor was proposing. But this is what is in the fine print.

III. A Permanent Source of Funding for High Speed Rail (20%)

- a. **Purpose:** Ongoing source for construction of HSR.
- b. **Allocation method:** Continuously appropriated. Could be securitized.

If the funding is "securitized", that means the High Speed Rail Authority could leverage the Cap and Trade funds with bonds to greatly increase funding. This could be the basis of a financial plan needed to release Prop 1A funds for High Speed Rail to build the 300 mile Initial Operating Segment (IOS). Judge Kenny has said he would release the Prop 1A funds for High Speed Rail when there is a financial plan that spells out how the IOS would be financed. NB

[High-speed rail agency issues final environmental report for Fresno -Bakersfield route](#)

Fresno Bee-Apr 19, 2014

The 20,000-page report, released Friday afternoon by the California High-Speed Rail Authority, details the anticipated effects that construction of the rail line and operation of the bullet train would have on homes, businesses, farmland and wildlife habitat on the 114-mile route from downtown Fresno to downtown Bakersfield.

[Mobile needs to keep trying to get Amtrak](#)

al.com-Apr 16, 2014

For years Mobile has tried to get Amtrak to reinstate the Sunset Limited from Jacksonville to New Orleans through Mobile. The Crescent currently runs to and from New Orleans to Birmingham. Why not suggest to Amtrak that they change that route to and from New Orleans to Birmingham through the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Mobile and Montgomery?

This would work better as a section rather than a reroute of the Crescent. NB

[Travel booking site adds Amtrak alongside airlines](#)

USA TODAY-Apr 17, 2014

The next time you go to book a flight on CheapAir.com, you might also consider the train. The booking site is now also offering reservations on Amtrak, the first online travel portal in the U.S. with that option, says CheapAir.com's CEO Jeff Klee.

[Michigan May Get Talgo Trains](#)

urbanmilwaukee-Apr 15, 2014

Trains still in storage in Milwaukee could go to high speed line in Michigan -- if the Talgo lawsuit against Wisconsin is ever settled.

[High-speed rail service eyed for upstate](#)

The Journal News Apr 18, 2014

Cutting down time significantly would likely cost billions, but that's exactly the idea that New York state

and the Federal Railroad Administration are considering for Amtrak's 463-mile Empire Corridor. As part of the effort to bring faster rail service to the United States, the state and FRA are weighing five alternatives, including one that could cut more than three hours off the cross-state Amtrak trip from Manhattan to Niagara Falls, now a trek of about nine and a half hours.

[Action Report: Amtrak foreman changing lives by giving kids trip to DC](#)

WWL-Apr 16, 2014

NEW ORLEANS -- Amtrak foreman Gilbert Isaac makes sure the passenger trains are in top condition.

But in his off hours, Gilbert changes lives.

He's taking vacation time in June to lead a group of 14 young people on a trip to Washington D.C. "Very excited, because I love to reach out to children," Isaac said.

Gilbert and his chaperones will take the 10- to 14-year-olds to Washington by train, of course, and give them the trip of a lifetime.

[Passenger assaults Amtrak conductor near Whitefish](#)

KAJ18 Kalispell Montana News-Apr 18, 2014

WHITEFISH - An Amtrak train was halted unexpectedly near Whitefish after a passenger was forcibly removed for allegedly hitting the train's conductor. A male passenger was removed from an Amtrak train near this intersection in Olney after allegedly assaulting the conductor and some other incidents aboard the train. And that is something that BNSF and Amtrak officials say they will not tolerate.

[Crash stops railroad service in Paso Robles](#)

KSBY San Luis Obispo News-Apr 14, 2014

CHP says shortly after 2 p.m., a truck overturned near the railroad tracks at Highway 101 North near the Spring Street off-ramp.

[Assemblyman Roger Dickinson wants more disclosure on crude oil transport](#)

The Tribune Apr 17, 2014

Pointing to the catastrophic derailment in Quebec of a train transporting oil and similar accidents, Assemblyman Roger Dickinson, D-Sacramento, proposed legislation Thursday to get emergency responders more information about crude-carrying trains that roll through California.

[Rail workers' health issues are a growing safety concern](#)

Los Angeles Times-Apr 19, 2014

Near the farming town of Goodwell, federal investigators said, the 56-year-old engineer sped through a series of yellow and red signals warning him to slow down and stop for a Los Angeles-bound train moving slowly onto a side track.

The 83-mph collision killed Hall and two crewmen. Dozens of freight cars derailed, and the resulting inferno sent towers of black smoke over the plains, prompting the evacuation of a nearby trailer park. As it turned out, Hall was colorblind.

[Freight Train Industry to Miss Safety Deadline](#)

ABC News-Apr 16, 2014

Only one-fifth of its track will be equipped with mandatory safety technology to prevent the most catastrophic kinds of collisions and derailments by the deadline set by Congress, the freight railroad industry said Wednesday.

[Amtrak, Maryland DOT, FRA partner on Susquehanna River Bridge ...](#)

Railway Track & Structures-Apr 14, 2014

The existing two-track bridge, which is owned by Amtrak, is a crucial link along the busy Northeast

Corridor (NEC), but is nearing the end of its useful life. Along with Amtrak and Maryland's MARC Commuter Rail passenger trains, this section of the NEC is used by Norfolk Southern to carry freight across the Susquehanna River.

[Overcoming obstacles: The Carlsbad Double Track and Bridge Project](#)

Railway Track & Structures-Apr 15, 2014

Creating capacity within an existing infrastructure footprint can be a tricky task, but one the Carlsbad Double Track and Bridge Project succeeds in

[New commuter rail link ready to roll in central Florida](#)

Virginia Gazette-Apr 13, 2014

ORLANDO, Florida (Reuters) - Central Florida is scheduled to roll out a commuter rail system on May 1 along a major interstate corridor that runs through downtown Orlando, becoming the first new system to open in the United States in three years.

SunRail will extend a total of 61 miles at a cost of \$1 billion by the time a second phase is completed in 2016.

[Ontario vows to electrify whole GO rail network](#)

The Globe and Mail Apr 17, 2014

The Ontario government is vowing to go ahead with electrifying the entire GO rail network and boosting service sharply so a train arrives every 15 minutes, while saying little about how much it might cost or where the money will come from. The plan involves shorter trains moving more frequently and is projected to double ridership in GO in a decade, according to the government.

[The Biggest Problem With Forcing Commuter Trains to Use Two ...](#)

The Atlantic Cities-Apr 15, 2014

No further details have been offered on the FRA's brief announcement, and an "intention to issue a proposed rule" is far from a done deal. But requiring a two-engineer crew on commuter or intercity trains could be a game-changer for cities — in a negative way. Many major operators use only one engineer at the moment, and adding a second could increase expenses enough to impact service without any clear safety benefit.

[A Tough Week For Metro-North](#)

Hartford Courant - Apr 18, 2014

Another politically tough week for Metro-North peaked Friday afternoon when U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal said that he was "appalled" to find years worth of lightly punished safety violations, and Gov. Dannel P. Malloy warned the railroad that it must meet on-time standards while running safely.

Just a day earlier, the beleaguered railroad announced the hiring of three new senior managers — but it was slammed in a New York blog because one of them had been among the former NJ Transit executives blamed for leaving much of New Jersey's rail fleet to be flooded in storm Sandy.

[Close Call for Sen. Blumenthal at Conn. Press Conference](#)

abc40 - Apr 18, 2014

Ironically, he was holding a press conference about increasing railway safety across the state. That's when a passing train sped by, just inches away from Blumenthal's back.

As you can see in the video, Blumenthal was not fazed, but the press conference was temporarily interrupted.

[Another sign of housing recovery: New homes going up again in the exurbs-](#)

Inman News Apr 18, 2014

Silicon Valley bedroom community could see population double ...
But not all Tracy residents will be commuting alone in cars.
Maplewood's developer notes that it will also be "within easy reach" of the Altamont Commuter Express Train, which runs from Stockton to San Jose.

[Atherton challenges Caltrain electrification report](#)

The Almanac Online-Apr 18, 2014

Less than a mile of train tracks runs through Atherton, but that hasn't stopped the small town from making an outsized effort to fight changes in rail service.

In its latest effort to derail proposed train service modifications, on April 16 Atherton's council unanimously approved a four-page letter pointing out problems in the draft environmental report for Caltrain's plan to electrify its trains.

[\(BART\)California rail line fined for worker deaths](#)

Bellingham Herald-Apr 17, 2014

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health said a high-ranking manager who was supposed to be instructing the driver of the fast-moving, four-car Bay Area Rapid Transit train was not in the cab with the trainee when the incident occurred on Oct. 19.

[Niners fans unhappy: New BART trains bear Seahawks colors](#)

KOMO News-Apr 19, 2014

While the majority of San Franciscans probably don't care about the color scheme, the Seahawks semblance hasn't gone unnoticed. Someone even started a Change.org petition for the BART authority to change the seats to different colors:

[Proposed Sacramento Train Expansion Met with Resistance](#)

KTXL-Apr 15, 2014

Hundreds of concerned residents and proponents of a new possible addition to the city's tourism initiative attended a public hearing at the California State Railroad Museum in Old Sacramento Tuesday.

[VTA Public Transportation Plan for Levi's Stadium To Go Live for ...](#)

Santa Clara Weekly-Apr 17, 2014

VTA plans to run full service for the first stadium event, the Earthquakes soccer game on Aug. 2. "We want to make sure we have plenty of capacity out there for the first games," VTA Deputy Director of Operations and Planning Jim Unites told the Santa Clara City Council at last week's meeting, in his overview of the transit agency's bus and light rail plans for the stadium, and coordination with Caltrain and other regional transportation systems.

[MPO backs SMART Larkspur funding plan](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Apr 15, 2014

Sonoma-Marina Area Rail Transit (SMART) has maintained that success of its passenger rail startup in its California namesake counties was ultimately linked to ferry service to and from San Francisco. That vision now has been endorsed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Bay Area's metropolitan planning organization (MPO).

[San Diego and Tijuana plan cross-border LRT](#)

International Railway Journal-Apr 14, 2014

MUNICIPAL authorities in San Diego, California, and the neighbouring city of Tijuana in the Mexican state of Baja California have revived plans for a light rail line spanning the US-Mexican border.

[Nevada Co-op Hopes to Fast Track Rail Power](#)

Electric Co-op Today-Apr 15, 2014

Valley Electric Association has agreed to host a \$40 million project designed to add 50 megawatts of rail energy storage to California's electric grid. The proposal calls for construction of 8,000 feet of track bed in Nevada's Nye County...

"This will be new rail, at a grade of about 7 to 8 percent," said Tom Husted, CEO of Valley Electric Association, Pahrump, Nev. "The technology will be scalable with some trains rolling downhill as others are running up."...

According to Kelly, projects with up to 3 gigawatts of capacity, providing as much as 24 gigawatt hours of energy storage, are feasible.

[Remembrance of trains past: the Santa Monica Air Line](#)

The Source

To some the remaining infrastructure might just be pieces of rusty metal, but to me they are an interesting representation of our urban environment and history. So I grabbed my camera and hopped on my bike to document what was still left in the Phase II segment — focusing on the area between 17th Street in Santa Monica and the 10 Freeway.

[LACMTA recommends Skanska joint venture for Regional ...](#)

Progressive Rail Roding-Apr 15, 2014

LACMTA's board is scheduled to consider the contract on April 24. When awarded, the Regional Connector will become the agency's fourth rail project under construction. The others are the Crenshaw/LAX Line, Expo Line Phase 2 and the Gold Line Foothill Extension. Agency officials anticipate the Purple Line Extension contract will be awarded this summer, according to the blog.

[A Better Blue Line: major track improvement work on Blue Line set to start](#)

The Source Apr 15, 2014

A few months ago, Metro announced a \$1.2 billion overhaul taking place on the Metro Blue Line. Some of the updates have already been completed, and many others—including major track improvement work—are now getting underway.

[Congressional Inaction on Road Funding Hits the States](#)

Governing.Com Apr 14, 2014

Around the country, state transportation leaders are marking their calendars for July, when federal money for highways and other transportation projects could dry up without congressional intervention.

[Is the Dumbarton Rail Bridge a Lost Opportunity?](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

On April 9th the Metropolitan Transportation Commission had a committee meeting to reallocate money from stalled projects to others ready to go. Among the stalled projects in the Bay Area is the effort to repair the Dumbarton Rail Bridge between Redwood City and Fremont and establish rush hour commuter rail service from the East Bay to both San Francisco and San Jose. The biggest "winner" in this budget reallocation was BART which was forgiven 91 million dollars from a "loan" of Dumbarton Bridge money. What led to this decision was the failure back in the November election of 2012 of a transit sales tax for Alameda County to be passed by less than one percent of a 2/3 majority needed for passage. Without Alameda County's funding the projects had less than half of the minimum \$700 million dollars needed for this project.



Aerial view of the existing alignment

This is from a Fact Sheet on the Dumbarton Rail Bridge from the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. The bridge has been out of service for years and the main span left open for ship traffic.

We Get Emails

Re: Dumbarton Rail Bridge

Projects need sponsors. The Dumbarton project, being a regional project, needed a regional sponsor. Absent support from MTC, Dumbarton Rail stalled. In the Bay Area no one plans regionally and no one pays attention to BART's impending transbay capacity crunch.

Jerry Cauthen

Re: Downtown S.F. traffic may seem worse, but actually getting better

If there has actually been a reduction in SF traffic, the reason is probably the higher parking charges coupled with increased BART ridership. Muni ridership is up slightly. SamTrans, Golden Gate ridership are flat. AC Transit ridership is down, and its transbay ridership remains at a dismally low 11,000 riders a day. More people may be walking.

Moreover, with both MTC and the Alameda County Transportation Commission still intent on expanding Bay Area freeways, any discernible reductions in traffic in SF or elsewhere are likely to be temporary.

Jerry Cauthen

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Rail Passenger Association of California.

The RailPAC Mission: Passenger Rail advocacy, Publications...both print and electronic, Representation at regional meetings, and Rail education.

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You can send your comments to me at nbraymer@railpac.org

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