STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: South Coast Passenger\Commuter Rail Update

MEETING DATE: February 3, 2010

AGENDA ITEM: 9

STAFF CONTACT: Scott Spaulding

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on:

A. LOSSAN Activities
B. Rescheduling of Pacific Surfliner service to the South Coast
C. ARRA Stimulus Applications

SUMMARY:

With the adoption of 101 in Motion by the SBCAG board in July 2006, SBCAG began planning for how to improve passenger rail service in the Highway 101 corridor to provide an alternative to driving. The passage of Measure A in November 2008, which included $25 million for improving passenger\commuter rail, is an important step in expanding the options available to commuters between Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Although Union Pacific Railroad owns the rail corridor and must approve any track construction projects or service improvements, SBCAG staff continues to work with UP, Caltrans Division of Rail, the Ventura County Transportation Commission, and local agencies to plan for and fund regional passenger rail system improvements. SBCAG is also a member of the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency (LOSSAN), which assists Caltrans in coordinating passenger and commuter rail service in Southern California. Staff is currently pursuing several efforts to improve regional rail service, including participating in the negotiations among LOSSAN members to develop a more regional and consolidated administrative institutional structure for the LOSSAN corridor, requesting Caltrans adjust two state-funded Pacific Surfliner trains to serve peak hour commuters, and identifying and pursuing funding for rail infrastructure improvements to improve rail capacity between Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

DISCUSSION:

Background

With the adoption of 101 in Motion, it became SBCAG policy to improve passenger rail service in the Highway 101 corridor in order to reduce congestion and provide an alternative to driving. The focus of SBCAG’s rail effort for the next two years was to secure a dedicated funding source for rail improvements. The passage of Measure A in November 2008, which included $25 million over 30 years to improve commuter and passenger rail, is an important step in expanding the options available to commuters in the 101 corridor. In February 2009, the board approved the creation of an additional Planner position in the Programming and Project Delivery division and the position was filled with the former Traffic Solutions regional transit coordinator.
The new position’s responsibilities include overseeing regional commuter transit services, coordinating grant applications for corridor rail infrastructure improvements, interfacing with Caltrans Division of Rail, LOSSAN, UP, and Coastal Rail Coordinating Council staff, and developing Measure A rail program options, among other duties.

**Rail Program Update**

**LOSSAN Strategic Assessment/Integration Study**

SBCAG is an active participant in the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency, comprised of regional government agencies served by the state-supported Amtrak Pacific Surfliner rail service operating in the coastal rail corridor between San Diego and San Luis Obispo. Three passenger/commuter rail services operate in the LOSSAN corridor—the state supported Amtrak Pacific Surfliner, Metrolink commuter rail, serving Ventura, Los Angeles, and Orange counties, and the Coaster rail service operating in San Diego County. The rail tracks, stations, and facilities in the corridor are owned by a wide variety of government agencies and private freight railroads, and the passenger and commuter services are not well integrated, with each agency creating and maintaining their own fare structure and policies, marketing efforts, and schedules. In 2008 LOSSAN initiated a strategic assessment to develop options to better integrate rail service in the corridor, with the goal of providing service that appears more cohesive and seamless to rail customers and to more efficiently and effectively use the existing rail equipment and infrastructure. Although the South Coast is only served by one passenger rail service, the state-funded Pacific Surfliner, the SBCAG Executive Director has been heavily involved in agency CEO negotiations to develop an MOU intended to explore the possibility of creating a single corridor-wide administrative agency. The MOU commits the LOSSAN member agencies to taking early actions to better integrate the passenger rail services in the corridor. Of particular significance to our region is an early action to revise the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner schedule to better serve the Ventura—Santa Barbara peak period market.

The MOU was approved by the LOSSAN board at its October 28 meeting that was attended by SBCAG’s LOSSAN representative Supervisor Carbajal. Although many of the actions identified in the MOU address needs in the more heavily travelled south part of the corridor between San Diego and LA, Supervisor Carbajal has advocated with the LOSSAN board for the capital and service improvement needs in the north corridor.

The MOU was approved by the SBCAG board in December. Funding contributions by member agencies for developing a business plan for integrating service in the LOSSAN corridor are based on ridership from all three services (Amtrak, Metrolink and Coaster). SBCAG’s share is $20,119 over the next two fiscal years, with the bulk of the amount budgeted for FY2010-11 under the Measure A rail program.

Mayor Helene Schneider, who was appointed as SBCAG’s alternate member attended the LOSSAN board meeting at LAMTA on Feb 27. Highlights of board actions at this meeting include:

- The Board voted to have Art Brown continue as Chair and Jacki Bacharach continue as Vice-Chair for 2010.
- The Board voted to adopt amendments to the By-Laws. It now includes Amtrak as an Ex-Officio member (not a voting member) and requires that a quorum must consist of at least 5 members AND that at least one member must be from LOSSAN North (Ventura, SB and SLO Counties). The LOSSAN Joint Powers Agreement is being revised to
include these and other changes and will need to be approved by the governing boards of each member agency when it is finalized.

- LOSSAN is moving forward with a recruitment for a Project Manager to help develop and implement the Business Plan specified in the adopted MOU. The Board included an ad-hoc committee consisting of interested Board members to be a part of the recruitment process for the new Project Manager position.

- Vice Chair Bacharach presented a letter that was sent to Senator Boxer from LOSSAN requesting that the next Amtrak Board member appointment be someone from the State of California. Currently there are no Amtrak Board members who reside west of Chicago.

- The board is opposing the gas tax swap proposal in the Governor’s FY 10/11 proposed budget plan. It would permanently eliminate the only state source of funding for public transportation including intercity rail operations. The state support for the Pacific Surfliner service in future years would have to compete with other general fund appropriations.

- During the Pacific Surfliner update, the Amtrak rep presented their survey results from passengers regarding satisfaction with on-time performance and overall satisfaction with the service. Mayor Schneider requested that the results be split between the LOSSAN South and LOSSAN North corridor, since they are so different to determine whether the satisfaction rate is similar or not. The Amtrak rep indicated she could give that information to us in future reports.

**Pacific Surfliner Schedule revision**

One near term option for improving regional passenger rail service in our region explicitly identified in the LOSSAN service integration MOU is to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule to better serve commuters traveling from Ventura County to Goleta and Santa Barbara. Currently one northbound Surfliner train arrives in Santa Barbara at 10:12AM (Surfliner #799) and one southbound train departs at 4:31PM (Surfliner #798). The current schedule does not serve a standard workday, but if the schedule were modified slightly to better serve the commuter market, there is little doubt train boardings would increase in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Caltrans Division of Rail has been reluctant in the past to adjust the schedule because of their concern that moving the morning train’s Los Angeles departure (#799) earlier might reduce boardings in Los Angeles County, though doing so could also increase ridership if it attracts early morning commuters traveling from Los Angeles to the San Fernando Valley, a market not currently served by Metrolink. SBCAG staff continues to pursue discussions with the Division of Rail to explore the possibility of adjusting Surfliner #799—which has the lowest ridership of all Pacific Surfliner trains—by offsetting any loss of riders in Los Angeles with gains in Camarillo, Oxnard, and Ventura. Given the state’s dramatic budget deficit, Caltrans is currently evaluating all state-funded rail service for potential ways to increase ridership and efficiency. The City and County of Santa Barbara, the City of Goleta, SBCAG, the Ventura County Transportation Commission, the City of Ventura, and LOSSAN have all publicly endorsed adjusting the Pacific Surfliner schedule to better serve commuters between Ventura and Santa Barbara.

To underscore our region’s commitment to improving peak hour rail service, the SBCAG board authorized the chair to send a letter to Caltrans Division of Rail requesting #799 and #798 be adjusted to better serve commuters who currently have no alternative to the congested Highway 101 corridor between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. SBCAG has received several letters of support advocating for a revision to the Surfliner schedule, and more are expected from government agencies, chambers of commerce, and local employers.
ARRA Stimulus Applications

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Federal Railroad Administration’s High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Program (HSIPR) was infused with $8 billion in funding to help stimulate the economy. Although LOSSAN staff identified over $2.5 billion in rail improvements and prepared individual applications for over 50 projects in the LOSSAN corridor alone, Governor Schwarzenegger submitted just 22 LOSSAN rail improvement project applications, totaling $380 million. The governor included four applications for projects in our region: 1) engineering, design, and environmental clearance to extend the existing Seacliff siding and realign the tracks to reduce curvature and increase train speed; 2) engineering, design, and environmental clearance to reestablish the Ortega siding destroyed by storm damage in the 1990s; 3) crosstie replacement in north Santa Barbara County; and 4) rehabilitation and switch improvements for three sidings between Lompoc and San Luis Obispo. The emphasis of the governor’s application was to support the development of the state’s future high speed rail program rather than improve existing inter-city rail service.

The Federal Rail Administration released the results of their selection process on January 29. The FRA unexpectedly exhausted the entire $8 billion in stimulus funding rather than reserve some of the funding for future rounds of applications, although an additional $2.5 billion for the same federal rail program was approved as part of the FY2010 Transportation Authorization Bill signed by the President in December. Of the four applications for projects in our region, only the engineering and environmental work for the Ortega siding received funding. Although construction funds have not been specifically identified, receiving funds to complete design and environmental clearance is key to beginning the project and will significantly improve the ability for the project to compete for funds in the future. Caltrans Division of Rail will be the lead agency for the project.

Although the Seacliff siding and extension project did not receive funding under the ARRA stimulus program, $19 million in State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds have been programmed to construct rail sidings in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, and although the state budget crisis has postponed most STIP funding, the Seacliff and Ortega projects are the primary candidates when this rail capacity improvement funding becomes available.

The site of the Seacliff siding extension and rail realignment project is also under consideration by Caltrans District 7 for use as potential parking mitigation that may be required as part of the freeway widening/HOV project between Mussel Shoals and Carpinteria. Some beach access parking will be lost near La Conchita as part of the widening and Caltrans has identified Seacliff as an option for replacement parking to a Coastal Commission subcommittee. Fortunately, the Seacliff rail siding extension and realignment project and any use of the area for beach access parking are not mutually exclusive. SBCAG staff has been working with Caltrans Division of Rail and Caltrans District 7 staff to coordinate the two projects so that they do not prevent the other from being constructed.

ATTACHMENTS:
Letter from SBCAG board chair to Bill Bronte regarding Pacific Surfliner schedule revision
December 17, 2009

Mr. Bill Bronte
Caltrans Division of Rail
P.O. Box 942874
Sacramento, CA  94274

Subject: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision

Dear Mr. Bronte:

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments strongly supports adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Santa Barbara and Goleta after 10:00AM and Surfliner #798 departs Santa Barbara and Goleta before 5:00PM. An earlier #799 arrival time in Santa Barbara, at 7:30AM, will significantly boost ridership on this train. Adjusting the #798 to depart Santa Barbara after 5:00PM to better meet existing demand will have a similar effect, appealing to many more passengers traveling to the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and points further south after they finish their work day.

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<th>Recommended Pacific Surfliner Adjustments</th>
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Adjusting Pacific Surfliner service in our region is necessary to create attractive rail service as an alternative to Highway 101, which is frequently heavily congested. Highway 101 is the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties and four major highway construction projects over the next fifteen years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions. Government agencies, community organizations, and private employers are all highly supportive of developing inter-city rail service that will relieve the congestion on Highway 101. Fortunately, capital funding for new locomotives and passenger cars is not necessary to provide better rail options for regional travelers, only adjustments to the existing Pacific Surfliner schedule.
As signatories to the LOSSAN Memorandum of Understanding adopted by the LOSSAN board in October 2009, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Caltrans Division of Rail, the Ventura County Transportation Commission, and other member agencies are committed to revising the Pacific Surfliner schedule to better serve the Ventura-Santa Barbara peak period market (Section 2 – Short Term Actions). Adjusting the Surfliner schedule in our region was specifically identified and located in the Early Action section of the MOU because it is considered an attainable accomplishment that will help “make immediate changes that have a direct, positive experience on the traveling public.”

Beginning in 2010, Santa Barbara County will have annual funding available to support enhanced passenger rail service as a result of the adoption by voters in 2008 of the Measure A Transportation Investment Plan. Measure A will provide $25 million over 30 years to improve and enhance rail service in our region. SBCAG is currently developing a Strategic Plan that will identify funding opportunities available for the Measure A passenger rail program.

With the state facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency and productivity of state-supported train service is crucial, and modifying the #799 and #798 trains to better serve regional travelers will increase ridership and fare revenue on these two trips. SBCAG strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above, which will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire Pacific Surfliner system.

Sincerely,

Salud Carbajal
Chair
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
January 15, 2010

Mr. Jim Kemp

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 North San Antonio Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Subject: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision

Dear Mr. Kemp:

The Alliance for Sustainable and Equitable Regional Transportation (ASERT) strongly support adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers traveling from Ventura County to their jobs in Santa Barbara and Goleta. Thousands of single drivers use Highway 101 every day for a wide variety of purposes, and severe congestion on Highway 101 is common. This traffic results in lower employee productivity, lost time, and a lower quality of life for inter-city travelers. Even the buses often end up stuck in traffic, so allowing drivers to take the train when the freeway is most congested is vital to improving and maintaining the economic health of our region.

The current schedule does not allow commuters to utilize existing service, and adjustments to the Pacific Surfliner service north of Los Angeles are necessary to create attractive rail service as an alternative to Highway 101, which remains the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Four major highway construction projects over the next eighteen years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions. Drivers and bus commuters alike will need a viable alternative that can alleviate congestion along this route, especially in light of the economic costs the projected levels of congestion will exact on business and tourism.

Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Santa Barbara at 10:12AM and Surfliner #798 departs Santa Barbara at 4:31PM. This makes a commute by train impossible for most commuters, and indeed for many travelers. A #799 arrival time in Santa Barbara between 7:20AM-7:40AM will significantly boost ridership on this train. Adjusting the #798 to depart Santa Barbara between 5:20PM-5:40PM will have a similar effect, appealing to many more passengers traveling to the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and points further south after they finish their work day. Adjusting the schedule to appeal to a greater segment of the traveling public will boost ridership and make these trips more productive, and give commuters who chose not to drive more options. Securing these changes prior to the increased construction along the 101 corridor is critical.
With the state facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency of state-supported train service is vital, and modifying both the #799 and #798 trains to better serve regional travelers will help accomplish this. ASERT strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above, which will increase the options available to travelers throughout our region.

Given the phased construction slated to occur between Ventura and Santa Barbara over the next twenty years, retiming is quickly becoming a critical issue. This corridor is already extremely impacted, and a viable alternative would provide drivers and bus riders a means of avoiding being stuck in traffic, as well as improve congestion and increase ridership.

Sincerely,

KK Holland
Project Coordinator
ASERT
Alliance for Sustainable and Equitable Regional Transit
City of Santa Barbara
Office of Mayor

January 14, 2009

Mr. Jim Kemp
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 North San Antonio Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Subject: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision

Dear Mr. Kemp:

The City of Santa Barbara strongly supports adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Santa Barbara at 10:12AM and Surfliner #798 departs Santa Barbara at 4:31PM. An earlier #799 arrival time in Santa Barbara, at 7:30AM, will significantly boost ridership on this train. Adjusting the #798 to depart Santa Barbara at 5:20PM to better meet existing demand will have a similar effect, appealing to many more passengers traveling to the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and points further south after they finish their work day.

Adjustments to the Pacific Surfliner service north of Los Angeles are necessary to create attractive rail service as an alternative to Highway 101, which is frequently heavily congested. Highway 101 is the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties and four major highway construction projects over the next fifteen years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions. Providing an alternative to this corridor is crucial to maintaining and enhancing the economic vitality of our region, and adjusting the Surfliner schedule to meet peak hour demand between Ventura and Santa Barbara is specifically identified in the Early Action section of the LOSSAN MOU adopted in October 2009.

With the state facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency and productivity of state-supported train service is vital, and modifying both the #799 and #798 trains to better serve regional travelers will increase ridership and fare revenue on these two trips. The City of Santa Barbara strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above, which will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire Pacific Surfliner system.

Sincerely,

Helene Schneider
Mayor
Mr. Jim Kemp  
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments  
260 North San Antonio Rd.  
Santa Barbara, CA  93110  

Subject: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision  

Dear Mr. Kemp:  

The Coalition for Sustainable Transportation (COAST) strongly supports adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers between Ventura and Santa Barbara. As many as 16,000 commuters travel Highway 101 every day in each direction, resulting in severe congestion on Highway 101, lower employee productivity, and a lower quality of life for inter-city travelers. An option for travelers to take the train when the freeway is most congested is vital to improving and maintaining the economic health of our region.

Adjustments to the Pacific Surfliner service north of Los Angeles are necessary to create attractive rail service as an alternative to Highway 101, which is the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Four major highway construction projects over the next eighteen years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions.

Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Santa Barbara at 10:12AM and Surfliner #798 departs Santa Barbara at 4:31PM. A #799 arrival time in Santa Barbara between 7:20AM-7:40AM will significantly boost ridership on this train. Adjusting the #798 to depart Santa Barbara between 5:20PM-5:40PM will have a similar effect, appealing to many more passengers traveling to the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and points further south after they finish their work day. With the light passenger load on these two trains, adjusting the schedule to appeal to a greater segment of the traveling public will boost ridership and make these trips more productive.

With the state facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency of state-supported train service is crucial, and modifying both the #799 and #798 trains to better serve regional travelers will help accomplish this. COAST strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above, which will increase the options available to travelers throughout our region.

Sincerely,  

Eva Inbar, President
Mr. Jim Kemp  
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments  
260 North San Antonio Rd.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Subject: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision

Dear Mr. Kemp:

CoastalRailNow (CRN) has supported adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers between Ventura and Santa Barbara for a number of years. As many as 16,000 commuters travel Highway 101 every day in each direction, resulting in severe congestion on Highway 101, lower employee productivity, and a lower quality of life for inter-city travelers. A rail option for peak-hour commuters is vital to improving and maintaining the economic health of our region. Although the #799 was originally planned as a commuter option, its commuter unfriendly schedule has resulted in such low ridership that I understand it’s being considered cut from the Surfliner program.

Adjustments to the Pacific Surfliner service north of Los Angeles are necessary to create the much needed commuter friendly rail alternative to Highway 101, especially since the 101 is the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Four major highway construction projects over the next 18-20 years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions. Rail as mitigation to these road projects is how this should be viewed.

Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Santa Barbara at 10:12AM and Surfliner #798 departs Santa Barbara at 4:31PM. A #799 arrival time in Santa Barbara between 7:20AM-7:40AM will provide the anticipated commuter option. Adjusting the #798 to depart Santa Barbara between 5:20PM-5:40PM will have a similar effect, appealing to the anxious commuters from Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and points further south after they finish their work day. Adjusting the schedule will greatly boost ridership by providing the much needed commuter friendly rail option and in turn guarantee that the #798 and #799 will continue to operate. This is what you call a no-brainer.

With the state facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency of state-supported train service is crucial, and modifying both the #799 and #798 trains to serve regional travelers and commuters will help accomplish this. CoastalRailNow strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above, knowing it will increase the options available to travelers and commuters throughout our region. Let’s help rail move people efficiently.

Sincerely,

Dennis Story

Chair - CoastalRailNow
January 18, 2010

Mr. Jim Kemp
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 North San Antonio Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Subject: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision

Dear Mr. Kemp:

Penfield and Smith is a Civil Engineering firm located in Downtown Santa Barbara. We have a 100 employees of which several commute from Ventura County to Santa Barbara throughout the week. Traffic congestion on Hwy 101 makes driving stressful for these employees. Even taking the bus can be frustrating due to traffic congestion. The Amtrak train presents a great congestion free option for our employees, however, the current schedule does not serve our employee’s work schedules. Penfield and Smith supports adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Santa Barbara at 10:12AM and Surfliner #798 departs Santa Barbara at 4:31PM. An earlier #799 arrival time in Santa Barbara, at 7:30AM, will significantly boost ridership on this train. Adjusting the #798 to depart Santa Barbara at 5:20PM to better meet existing demand will have a similar effect, appealing to many more passengers traveling to the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and points further south after they finish their work day.

Adjustments to the Pacific Surfliner service north of Los Angeles are necessary to create attractive rail service as an alternative to Highway 101, which is frequently heavily congested. Highway 101 is the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties and four major highway construction projects over the next fifteen years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions. Providing an alternative to this corridor is crucial to maintaining and enhancing the economic vitality of our region, and adjusting the Surfliner schedule to meet peak hour demand between Ventura and Santa Barbara is specifically identified in the Early Action section of the LOSSAN MOU adopted in October 2009.

With the state facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency and productivity of state-supported train service is vital, and modifying both the #799 and #798 trains to better serve regional travelers will increase ridership and fare revenue on
these two trips. Penfield and Smith strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above, which will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire Pacific Surfliner system.

Sincerely,

PENFIELD & SMITH

[Signature]

Julie Miller
Human Resources & Facilities Coordinator
12/21/09

Mr. Jim Kemp
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 North San Antonio Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Subject: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision

Dear Mr. Kemp:

Tyco Electronics strongly supports adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers between Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Hundreds of employees at Carpinteria businesses, including Tyco, live in Ventura County and commute to their jobs in Carpinteria. Highway 101 is the only route available and is always congested during commute hours, increasing our employee’s stress levels and adding hours to their workday. If our employees could take the train instead of drive their car, they could avoid the time, expense, and frustration of driving and not only would their quality of life increase, their productivity would as well.

Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Carpinteria at 9:57AM and Surfliner #798 departs Carpinteria at 4:46PM. An earlier #799 arrival time, will significantly boost ridership on this train. Adjusting the #798 to depart Carpinteria at a later time will have a similar effect, appealing to employees traveling to the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, and Camarillo after they finish their work day.

Adjustments to the Pacific Surfliner service north of Los Angeles are necessary to create attractive rail service as an alternative to Highway 101, which is the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Four major highway construction projects over the next eighteen years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions.

With the state facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency and productivity of state-supported train service is crucial, and modifying both the #799 and #798 trains to better serve regional travelers will increase ridership and fare revenue on these two trips. Tyco Electronics strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above, which will increase the options available to commuters and other travelers in our region.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Sandie Wilkes
HR Manager