

Study of Alternative Transit Corridors and Systems
Prepared for Southern California Rapid Transit District

Technical Report, Part XII

Next Actions in Rapid Transit Program Development

August 1973

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Preparation of this Report has been financed in part through a grant from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration under the provisions of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 as amended.

NEXT ACTIONS IN RAPID TRANSIT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The submission of a recommended rapid transit program to the District by its team of consultants at the conclusion of Phase II of the Corridor Study initiates a sequence of events leading to the adoption of a transit program for implementation.

Public Review of Consultants' Recommendations

During the months of August through November a considerable amount of time and resources will be devoted to presenting the consultant plan to the public and to reacting to public responses. A series of widely publicized meetings will be held throughout the District area for this purpose.

In the period following this work, District consultants will analyze and evaluate public responses in terms of service impacts, economic impact, technical and financial feasibility. Comparisons will be made with comparable matter contained in the consultant recommendations. This activity will culminate in the preparation of a report to the District Board detailing the suggestions received from the public and the consultant responses. The report may recommend modifications and refinements as a result of the suggestions received from the public.

Consultant Exploration of Near Range Alternatives and Feeder Distribution Systems.

The consultants predicted that it will take about 12 years to implement the recommended line haul system. There is, however, an immediate need for transit improvements which can be implemented in the short term. The

consultants were assigned the task of recommending a program to meet this need. They suggested a series of improved bus services predicated upon the use of preferred or exclusive lanes on freeways and arterials. The exclusive freeway lanes - which are in some cases proposed as contra flow - are mentioned for the Pasadena, Hollywood and Golden State Freeways. Auto parking facilities are proposed in connection with these services in suburban locations.

Increased operating costs are included in the financing arrangements for the long-range plan. The same is true of the increased capital costs caused by the inauguration of such services.

Most of the consultant time in the initial two phases of the study was, of necessity, devoted to identification of transit needs, corridor selection, route alignment and station stop selection. In the concluding phase of the study, after maximum possible public discussion of the issues, the consultants must devote a certain amount of time to refinement of feeder distribution system plans both within and without regional centers:

Their working hypothesis has, up to this time, been that buses operating on streets would carry out this function most efficiently, except in certain high density centers which may justify installation of grade-separated local circulation systems. This hypothesis must now be tested so that the plan put to the electorate will include sufficient funding to take care of any newly identified subsystems.

SCAG Critical Decisions

The California Legislature has given SCRTD the primary responsibility to plan a rapid transit system for Los Angeles County. A similar obligation is given OCTD for Orange County.

SCAG also has certain responsibilities. Under Chapter 1253 of the Statutes of the Regular Session of 1972, SCAG must adopt a regional transportation plan by April 1, 1975. It must include air, transit and highway elements. SCAG must coordinate the transit elements for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties in a regional plan.

It is unlikely that SCAG will be prepared to adopt the regional plan by November 1974. An alternative arrangement has therefore been suggested.

This involves the identification of the critical transportation issues; that is, those things which will ultimately have to be included in the regional plan in much greater depth.

SCAG has proposed the following tentative list:

1. Short-range transportation improvements, including the EPA transportation control plan or a modification thereof.
2. Regional transit proposals including those of SCRTD and OCTD and the expansion of both proposals into a region-wide system. Included in reaching this decision must be an analysis of a low capital (perhaps all bus) approach. A determination should be made of whether a low capital intensive approach is an interim step to a mass rapid transit system or an alternative to that type of system. Further analyses should be made of whether

an emphasis should be placed on high-speed commuting between centers, feeder distribution service within centers, or some combination of those.

3. Regional highway proposals including, at a minimum, those identified as a critical part of the regional transportation system in conjunction with needed improvements in public transportation service. The highways which should be considered include the Long Beach Freeway extension, Foothill Freeway, El Segundo-Norwalk Freeway, San Fernando Valley Freeway, Artesia Freeway, Route 39 Freeway and Route 2 Freeway.
4. A regional Aviation System Plan considering the Citizens Hearing Board Recommendations and final citizen inputs.

It is expected that these issues will be identified by the SCAG Executive Board in January 1974.

Scheduling of the District's Election

In order to qualify for Federal participation in the costs of the ultimate system, SCRTD must create a local matching fund. Under the existing State statute it is authorized to do so by submitting the issue of a special local sales tax levy to the electorate in November 1974. The next possible dates are June or November in the year 1976.

A major consideration favoring an early election is that inflationary forces in the economy tend to cause the cost of identical goods and services to be much more expensive each passing year.

Plan Refinement

It is expected that on or before November 30, 1973, the first phase of public participation will be completed. In December or January, it is hoped that the SCAG Executive Committee will take action on the critical issues.

After public reaction to the Phase II proposals has been secured and analyzed, a Phase III, or plan refinement phase of the study is to be undertaken. The input from citizens and official agencies will be considered, alternative systems will be evaluated; patronage, engineering, cost and environmental considerations will be weighed, and a report defining a recommended transit proposal will be submitted to the SCRTD Board of Directors and to the Southern California Association of Governments in March 1974 and disseminated to the public in March 1974. A period of public discussion and public agency review will be followed by a hearing on the report by the SCRTD Board of Directors, after which the Board of Directors will adopt the plan as submitted or as modified in consequence of citizen or public agency input produced. The target date for approval of the plan by SCAG as consistent with the critical issues of regional comprehensive and transportation planning is June 1974 following SCRTD Board adoption. The Los Angeles County electorate would then have a minimum of three full months in which to regard a final transit development plan.

Other Critical District Actions and Dates

The District Board must pass a resolution requesting that the County Board of Supervisors consolidate the District election with the County-wide

election. This resolution together with the exact form of the proposition to be voted upon must be filed with the Board of Supervisors and the County Clerk 74 days before any election.

The District Board must also adopt an Ordinance calling for the election at least 59 days prior to the election. This Ordinance must be introduced to the Board more than 5 days prior to its adoption by the Board.

The schedule of actions outlined under Plan Refinement will permit the voters of the District to pass upon the transit issue in the November 1974 election.