



COACHELLA VALLEY- SAN GORGONIO PASS

RAIL CORRIDOR SERVICE

Program Environmental Document
and Service Development Plan



Rail Corridor Service

Fast Facts

- **Los Angeles Basin:**
16.5 million population,
7.2 million jobs
- **Coachella Valley:**
443,000 population,
12.2 million annual visitors
- **Trips through Pass:**
130,000 daily
- **Proposed initial daily
round-trips:** 2
- **Running time Los Angeles-
Indio:** 3 - 3.5 hours
- **Potential host railroads:**
Union Pacific, BNSF Railway
- **Current phase:**
Program Environmental
Document and Service
Development Plan

Connecting Southern California

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is studying options for providing additional Amtrak intercity passenger rail service between Los Angeles and the desert cities in the Coachella Valley. The Coachella Valley – San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service would extend from Indio in the east to Los Angeles Union Station in the west. The service is envisioned to provide a safe, reliable, and convenient intercity passenger rail service that would meet the future mobility needs of residents, businesses, and visitors within the Corridor.

Studying Rail Route Alternative Options

In 1991, RCTC completed the first in a series of studies to evaluate the feasibility of operating one or two daily intercity rail round trips between Los Angeles and Indio. From 1991 to 2013, RCTC completed additional feasibility studies of the Coachella Valley – San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service. In July 2016, RCTC, in coordination with FRA and Caltrans, completed the Coachella Valley – San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service Study Alternatives Analysis Final Report (AA Report) that evaluated several alternatives for a new intercity rail service between Los Angeles and Indio.

The Corridor currently faces mobility challenges that are likely to expand as growth in population, employment, and tourism increases. An effective rail system between Los Angeles and the San Gorgonio Pass/Coachella Valley will help meet the future mobility needs of residents, businesses, and visitors as well as provide new travel options. The project study area is outlined on the map on the reverse side of this fact sheet.

Program Environmental Document and Service Development Plan Under Way

With the completion of the AA Report, work is under way to prepare the Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document, consistent with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.

At the initiation of the Program EIS/EIR process, all interested agencies and the public were invited to participate in public scoping meetings in October 2016. Through the scoping process, interested agencies and the public provided input on the Purpose and Need and helped identify important issues for consideration in the Program EIS/EIR. These comments will help finalize the Purpose and Need and the issues to be studied. The next steps include identifying the service alternatives to be evaluated and to perform the technical analysis of those alternatives.

After completing the Draft EIS/EIR, a Service Development Plan will be prepared to conceptualize how the service would operate through the Corridor and what infrastructure improvements would be needed to accommodate the new intercity passenger rail service.

This phase of work is being funded through a \$2.9 million grant awarded by the FRA to Caltrans and RCTC in April 2015 and matched by RCTC with \$1.1 million of local funds.



December 1, 2017





Program Environmental Document
and Service Development Plan

Rail Corridor Service

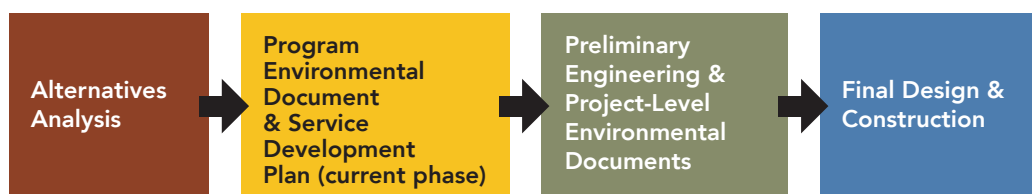
Project Process

The Coachella Valley – San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service is currently in the early stages of the environmental process and will utilize a tiered NEPA/CEQA approach. “Tiering” is a phased environmental review process often applied for complex transportation projects. When used, the initial phase or Tier 1 (e.g. Program EIS/ EIR) addresses broad corridor questions for a project, such as general locations of routes and potential impacts of construction and operating the service. Based on the decisions made in the Program EIS/EIR, future site-specific proposals for the rail service (such as new track or specific station locations) would be analyzed at a greater level of detail and addressed in subsequent (e.g. Tier II/Project-level NEPA and CEQA) environmental documents. Currently, work on the SDP and Program EIS/EIR is anticipated to take approximately three years to complete.

How to Stay Involved

RCTC has formed a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of regional stakeholders and an Ad Hoc Committee of its Commission members. These groups meet periodically to provide feedback about project development.

Public scoping meetings were held in October 2016. RCTC is evaluating these comments and will continue to seek feedback from the community throughout the environmental process.



Study Area Map

