Credibility with banks and the rail technology industry is precisely what the politically-driven California project has lacked, but requires in order to attract serious levels of private investment.

Van Ark is well-regarded by industry sources and has nearly 30 years of experience in engineering and management positions with rail industry firms. He has been a senior private-sector executive following extensive international rail construction and carbuilding experience.

For the past five years, he served as president of Alstom Transportation Inc., the North American subsidiary of the French company that builds high-speed trains used in France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and the United Kingdom.

Prior to that, he worked with a GE subsidiary on airline security systems and had a 20-year stint with Siemens AG, where he worked on German high-speed rail projects, a Chinese transit project and most recently ran the firm’s Sacramento rail car assembly plant.

"With his diversity as a manager and as an engineer, he brings the highest level of competency to our project," HSRA Chairman Curt Pringle said. "Roelof van Ark arrives just as Bay Area rail supporters including Member of Congress Jackie Speier (D-S.F.) have begun to express doubts about feasibility of the current HSRA financial plan. The Authority faces a $30 billion gap in funds, too large to be bridged by federal grants.

Alstom train at Marnoue-les-Moines approaches end of 205 mph operation segment on French LGV-Est about 48 miles from Paris. Photo by Alain Stoll
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Regular member $30-59
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AUDIT REPORT: HSRA RISKS DELAYS INADEQUATE PLANNING, WEAK OVER-

The Authority’s 2009 business plan estimates it needs $17 billion to $19 billion in federal grants. The business plan, however, specifies only $4.7 billion in possible funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) and a few other small federal grants. According to its communications director, the Authority has no definite commitments from the federal government other than Recovery Act funding, which actually amounted to $2.25 billion when awards were announced in January 2010. The program risks significant delays without more well-developed plans for obtaining or replacing federal funds.

Further, the Authority’s plan relies heavily on federal funds to leverage state bond dollars through 2013. Proposition 1A bond funds must be leveraged to provide only up to 50 percent of the total cost of construction of each corridor of the program. The remaining 50 percent must come from other funding sources. Thus, the award of up to $2.25 billion in Recovery Act funds allows for the use of an equal amount of state bond funds for construction, for a total of about $4.5 billion. However, the Authority’s spending plan includes almost $12 billion in federal and state funds through 2013, which is significantly higher than what is now available. Additionally, creating a viable funding plan may be a challenge as matched funding for the least expensive corridor eligible for Recovery Act funds—Los Angeles to Anaheim—amounts to $4.5 billion, while projected costs total $5.5 billion. Baring additional non-Proposition 1A funding, the Authority may have to settle for a plan covering less than a complete corridor. The Authority must decide relatively quickly which corridors will receive federal funds. The Auditor says it must prepare funding plans by spring 2011 in order to meet federal deadlines.

The Authority plans for private financing include a revenue guarantee that needs further specification, but it is working to improve its approach to risk management. According to the 2009 business plan, the Authority expects private investors to supply $10 billion to $12 billion, but also indicates these investors will require a minimum revenue guarantee from a public entity. The Auditor says the consulting consultant has addressed concerns raised by the Legislative Analyst’s Office that this might be a prohibited operating subsidy; however, clearly, such a revenue guarantee may cost or who might pay it are scant. Additionally, the 2009 business plan provides little detail on how the Authority would manage risk in general, but the Authority is planning to improve

SUMMARY BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE AUDITOR

The Authority’s 2009 business plan estimates it needs $17 billion to $19 billion in federal funds. However, the Authority has no federal commitments beyond $2.25 billion from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and other potential federal programs are small.

The Authority’s plan for spending includes almost $12 billion in federal and state funds through 2013, more than 2.5 times what is now available.

The Authority does not have a system in place to track expenditures according to categories established by the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century, its largest source of committed funding.

The Authority has not completed some systems needed to administer Recovery Act funds, for example, a system to track jobs creation and saved.

Some monthly progress reports, issued by the Authority’s contracted Program Manager to provide a summary of program status, contain inconsistent and inaccurate information.

Authority staff paid at least $4 million of invoices from regional contractors received after December 2008, without hav- ing documented written notification that the Program Manager had reviewed and approved the invoices for payment.

The Authority paid contractors more than $268,000 for services performed outside of the contractor’s work plans and purchased $46,000 in furniture for one of its contractor’s use, based on an oral agreement contradicted by a later written contract.

RESULTS IN BRIEF

The Legislature created the High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) in 1996. State law charges the nine-member Authority with the development and implementa-

tion of intercity, high-speed rail service. According to state law, the entire network, from Sacramento to San Diego, is intended to be complete by 2020. In November 2008 voters approved the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century (Proposition 1A), providing $9 billion for construction of a high-speed rail network.

Although the Authority’s 2009 business plan contains the elements required by the Legislature, it lacks detail regarding how it proposes to finance the program. For example, the Authority estimates it needs $17

Ark is the world-class manager and engineer we need to take the reins of this project and turn the promise of high-speed rail into reality for the people of California.

Due to his international rail work, van Ark is used to “P3” turnkey or design-build-operate projects in which private capital takes a major risk, and therefore has an incentive to design a cost-effective project. This contrasts with the public works model followed by HSRA to date in which public agencies define the project and are saddled with any cost overruns. P3 models require heavy involvement by operators and investors at an early stage, something that has been entirely missing in California planning to date.

Political backers of the project have been shocked to learn that investors are critical of the 100+ excess miles of route inserted into the Bay Area-Los Angeles project. Inefficient route design is a fun-
damental problem for investors because it might prevent the California system from ever becoming profitable.

Many observers remain skeptical that van Ark can reform the project. However, his appointment at least suggests that HSRA is ready to listen to what industry has to say and accept a reality check on his appointment at least suggests that HSRA is ready to listen to what industry has to say and accept a reality check on
risk management for the program.

The Authority also needs to improve its oversight and administrative controls. State law creates a peer review group (review group) to assess the Authority's plans. The review group's mission is to issue an analysis and evaluation of the viability of the Authority's funding plan for each corridor of the program. As of February 2010, however, only three of the group's eight members had been appointed, limiting the expertise available to the Authority. Moreover, according to our legal counsel, the review group is not subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act (Meeting Act), although the Authority has received informal advice to the contrary. Nevertheless, the review group's work could be voided if this issue is not resolved.

Additionally, the Authority lacks systems to comply with state law regarding bond funds. According to state law, only up to 2.5 percent ($225 million) of its portion of bond funds from Proposition 1A may be used for administration and only 10 percent ($900 million) may be used for planning, environmental review, and preliminary engineering (preconstruction tasks). According to its fiscal officer, the Authority does not know how much it will take to track expenditures by category. In such cases, unless the plan in place, the authority cannot report accurately on its expenditures and risks running out of bond funds available for administration or preconstruction. This is a serious problem because it is set to have spent $168 million of the $1.1 billion in bond proceeds authorized for these purposes by the end of fiscal year 2009-2010.

Contractors accounted for 95 percent of the program's total expenditures over the past three fiscal years. Although the Authority generally followed state requirements for awarding contracts, its processes for monitoring the performance and accountability of its contractors—especially the entity that has been contracted to manage the program (Program Manager)—are inadequate. The Program Manager's monthly progress reports, a primary document for tracking expenditures for these activities, do not compare those actions and products to actions taken or products created, they did not track expenditures for these activities, and they did not compare those actions and products to actions taken or products created, they did not identify any inefficiencies.

To ensure that it does not run out of funds for administrative or preconstruction activities, the Authority should ensure that funding levels that may vary from its to funding levels that may vary from its plans. In addition, the Authority needs to develop and publish alternative funding scenarios that reflect the possibility of reduced or delayed funding from planned sources.

The Authority should ensure that it implements planned actions related to risk management.

To ensure that Authority staff receive relevant information, the Authority's status, it should amend the program management oversight consultant's work plan to include a critical review of progress reports for funding plan consistency. Authority staff also should ensure that the Program Manager revises its progress reports to include information on the status of planned projects and services.

To determine if it is paying invoices that accurately reflect work performed, the Authority should ensure that it does not misuse public funds and that it reviews invoices to ensure that the work claimed actually has been performed and then notify Authority staff whether the invoice should be paid. The chief deputy director further stated that the Authority staff should not pay invoices without notifications. However, Authority staff paid at least $4 million of invoices from regional contractors after December 2008—when the Authority's fiscal officer says she was informed that such notifications were required—without documenting notification. The Authority only adopted written policies and procedures related to invoice payment. However, those policies and procedures do not adequately describe its controls or their implementation.

Finally, the Authority made some payments that did not reflect the terms of its agreements, risking its ability to hold contractors accountable for their performance. For example, it spent $46,000 on furniture for its Program Manager's office. Based on an oral agreement, despite the fact that its written contract expressly states that oral agreements not incorporated in the written contract are not binding. The written contract requires the Program Manager to provide its own furniture, equipment, and supplies. For example, the Program Manager also should have notified the Authority whether it had paid a regional contractor more than $194,000 to subcontract for tasks not included in the regional contractor's work plan and paid the Program Manager $53,000 for work on Recovery Act applications, which was also outside the Program Manager's work plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that it can respond adequately to funding levels that may vary from its planned projections, the Authority should develop and publish alternative funding scenarios that reflect the possibility of reduced or delayed funding from planned sources. These scenarios should detail the implications of variations in the level or timing of funding for the program and its schools.

To plan adequately for private investment, the Authority should further specify the potential cost of revenue guarantees and who would pay for them.

In order to respond effectively to circumstances that could significantly delay or halt the program, the Authority should ensure that it implements planned actions related to risk management.

To avert possible legal challenges, the Authority should ensure that the review group adheres to the Meeting Act or seek a formal opinion from the Office of the Attorney General regarding whether the review group is subject to this act.

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On April 3, Metrolink’s board hired a freight rail executive with broad rail industry experience to replace David R. Solow, the agency’s former CEO. Following a nationwide search for candidates, the passenger railroad named John E. Fenton as its new chief executive.

Most recently, Fenton was the operating partner of CGI Capital, a Denver-based infrastructure investment bank. He also previously served as President/CEO of Omnitrax Inc., a Denver-based short line and railroad services provider. He previously was Vice-President at Canadian National Railway and Vice-President at Kansas City Southern, two of the most respected freight operations in North America.

Fenton reported for work April 16 and by May had already started the analysis of an agency reorganization that created more of a market-driven structure. Fenton also rapidly focused on areas where cost savings were possible, identifying shutting down idling diesels as a reform that could both save money and reduce air emissions. Good relations with air quality agencies are important in Southern California, especially with Metrolink’s aging fleet of diesels.

At his first board meeting on May 14, Fenton remarked that he is looking forward to providing the best service possible. A report from operations manager Gary Kray noted that the Operations Morning Call has been restructured under Mr. Fenton’s guidance to look at initial terminal delays. Crary reported that the May results to date were 680,000 passengers with an average on-time performance of 95.7 percent, significantly improved from prior months.

Fenton told the board that it is important to recognize that Metrolink’s service impacts the lives of its passengers and it is important to refocus and reeducate the public to continue forward with work on this core and reenergizing the group and their collective wisdom.

At the same time, a crash energy management cars last month in San Bernardino, Fenton told attendees, “Metrolink has an exciting future. Safety will always be our number one value and we are setting a higher benchmark for public safety by continuing to harness cutting-edge technology and innovation.”

Fenton continued, “Moving forward, we will also adopt new practices to reinforce our value of new initiatives in customer service, efficiency, environmental and financial stewardship. Together with our employees, contractors, labor leaders, regulators such as the Federal Railroad Administration and California Public Utilities Commission and the communities we serve, we can position Metrolink as the gold standard for commuter rail transportation across the nation.”

Fenton takes over Metrolink at a challenging time for the agency. The Metrolink System organization has had recent financial problems that nearly forced service cutbacks. Metrolink is also transitioning from an operating contract with Caltrans to a new one starting in late June with Amtrak as the operator. Unions have pushed back against some of Amtrak’s demands such as psychological testing of drivers.

Meanwhile, the organization has been struggling to obtain funding to implement positive train control. At the heart of the issue is the need for funding to implement positive train control, the technique of “through-routing” or overlapping corridors was applied repeatedly in the 1970s. For example, the Northeast Corridor (NEC) oversees much of its traffic and

The Structural Advantage of Overlapping Corridors

Most North American rail success stories owe a lot to the development and careful planning of new service experiments on the New York, New Jersey, Illinois Central and Canadian National in the mid-1960s, and later lessons learned by the Northeast Corridor and GO Transit.

The passenger rail revival that centered on corridor routes and short-distance corridors was marked by a number of failures and revisions of technical success. The problems were, in part, that both sides had to pay their operating costs, and that service staff had to do their work.

In the late 1970s, there were few good examples to emulate, and not much of an industry knowledge base.

GOING BEYOND DOWNTOWN TERMINALS

One of the strongest lessons, painfully learned by New York Central when it disrupted its through traffic, is that overlapping traffic corridors are key to revenue success. Even when a weak travel corridor is joined with other corridors, it can contribute tremendously to system throughput revenue. This is because the ridership of each corridor is overlaid with trips between the two corridors. Another way of seeing the effect is to count the revenue that increases proportionally with extensions. On the other hand, it is necessary to charge a fare not immediately obvious which services would succeed, and until the late 1970s, there were few good examples to emulate, and not much of an industry knowledge base.

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ACE SETS PLANS FOR AN UPGRADE

By Robert Reynolds
TRAC Board Member

The Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) began passenger service at the end of 1996, when the dot com boom in Silicon Valley really took off. The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission manages the service and Herzog Transit Services operates the line on 86 miles of Union Pacific (UP) Railroad track.

UP dispatches these trains in Omaha. The launch of the ACE service followed eleven years of development work, including passage of San Joaquin County Measure K (half-cent sales tax for transportation) in 1990. The 86 miles traverse San Joaquin, Alameda and Santa Clara Counties. All three counties participate in the Commission management and provide operating funds.

ACE initiated weekday only peak service with two morning departures from Stockton through the Tri Valley (Livermore, Pleasanton, Fremont) to Silicon Valley and back in the evening. Service eventually expanded to four trains a day, but the sparsely used mid-day fourth trip was recently eliminated to save $700,000. Ridership has been up to 4,000 daily, about a million passengers a year.

The dot com boom became the dot com bubble and finally the dot com bust so far by only cutting the superhighway congestion through the Tri Valley really took off. The San Joaquin Valley business contracted dramatically two plus years after ACE launched. Silicon Valley business contracted dramatically and perhaps such an ominous downturn could have sunk ACE, as it was designed for commuters to and from Silicon Valley. But ACE survived. And now ACE has survived the recent deep and persistent housing bust so far by only cutting the superhighway congestion.

What is in store next for ACE?

California Rail News recently sat down with ACE Executive Director Stacey Mortensen and Strategic Development and Communications Coordinator Thomas Reeves to look at the future of this vital link. The key to understanding the future of ACE is that its 90 mile network cuts through some of the most congested highway territory in California and is the better solution to the almost continuous gridlock on those roads. The projects proposed for improving East Bay transit woes involve ACE as a major backbone.

ACE is planning an ambitious and comprehensive upgrade by partnering with California High Speed Rail Authority and using some Proposition 1A funds. Long-range ACE objectives are “to transform the existing ACE service into a robust intercity and commuter service with frequent trains (20 minute headways) operating in both directions all day long.” (from an Altamont Corridor Project Goals presentation) and maybe weekend service.

Phased improvements will cut trip times in half. The first hurdle is that ACE needs its own right of way (90 mph service / cutting 30 schedule minutes per trip).

The second step anticipates that ACE would replace current equipment sets with bidirectional lightweight diesel multiple unit trainsets (110 mph / cutting 30 more minutes). The last piece is complete electrification and interoperability on high-speed rail tracks in the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys from Manteca (125 mph / additional 20 minutes cut).

CRN asked Reeves for a notional schedule and he said “the First Phase could begin in as early as three years depending on the completion of an Environmental Impact Report.” The CAHSR and ACE are working jointly on the EIR/EIS for the Altamont Corridor.

The benefits of an independent physical plant include scheduling flexibility and higher speeds, as the average present is a leisurely 45 mph.

An added cost, Mortensen said “is the need to perform maintenance of way activities and build a maintenance of way facility. ACE could partner with HSR to coordinate the Northern California maintenance of way effort.” The table below compares the speed increases and the potential maintenance costs of each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speed (MPH)</th>
<th>ROW Maint. Costs ($/mi)</th>
<th>Travel Time (now vs. 2010)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>42K</td>
<td>1:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
<td>140K</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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Mortensen estimates that ACE will spend upwards of $200+ million to acquire right of way and develop smaller initial segments of the corridor. When asked about adopting the old Southern Pacific Railroad line, she noted that as yet UP has not been interested in selling any of the routes and the SP routing through Niles Canyon makes that part of the line unsuitably constricted for ACE expansion. The “de novo” plan is studying another way through the range but no clear choice has emerged.

Phase 2 includes trainset buys and, more importantly and costly, complete grade separation on the whole route. This step could involve a more incremental funding profile tailored to the grade separation schedule.

Mortensen notes that “…ACE will follow its historical pattern and buy off-the-shelf equipment, piggybacking on someone else’s order to benefit from economies of scale.”

Some of the expansion may be timed with the opportunity for pooled equipment purchases. CalTrain provides a good model and the two railroads communicate continuously and extensively.

Finally, ACE will achieve full electrification in the last phase and, it is hoped, use HSR rails along the 99 corridor. Service could extend to Sacramento and Fresno but that has not been decided. HSR and ACE teams are researching the interoperability problems mixing 125 and much speedier trainsets to understand how scheduling constraints will be relaxed.

Big plans. Big money. Plenty of questions. Many risks to be mitigated. But, plenty of foreseeable benefits to the public that increasingly suffers the extensive highway congestion through the Tri Valley area.

What do the ACE customers think about these plans? Frankly, CRN was surprised at how few were even aware of them. To note that customers maintain a fierce loyalty to ACE mostly understates the case. Most appreciate the alternative to driving in the congestion so any scheduling constraints will be relaxed.

Big plans. Big money. Plenty of questions. Many risks to be mitigated. But, plenty of foreseeable benefits to the public that increasingly suffers the extensive highway congestion through the Tri Valley area.
Experts Revive Altamont as HSR Option

By David Schonbrunn

Three citizen groups working together filed a series of reports in late April as comments on the Revised Draft Bay Area Central Valley Program Environmental Impact Report, which the High-speed Rail Authority (HSRA) intends to use to replace the defunct 2008 EIR.

One of the reports, authored by the French rail engineering firm Setec Ferroviaire, finds the Altamont route technically feasible, thereby preventing the Authority from using the legal tricks it employed in the past to avoid objective consideration of Altamont.

The California Rail Foundation, the Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund, and the Planning and Conservation League filed the expert reports in an attempt to overturn the Authority’s choice for connecting the Central Valley to the Bay Area has been the Altamont route.

The HSRA’s predecessor agency, the California High-Speed Rail Commission, had found the Altamont route (the I-580 Corridor) to have higher ridership, lower environmental impacts and lower construction costs than the Pacheco Route. Nonetheless, for the past ten years, the Authority’s choice for connecting the Central Valley to the Bay Area has been the Pacheco Route.

The Authority did not even evaluate the Altamont Route in its 2005 Statewide Program EIR. Legal pressure forced the Authority to compare the two routes in its 2008 Program EIR, which was overturned after a challenge by the groups. As a result, the Authority has still not legally chosen which route its trains will take in getting from the Central Valley to the Bay Area. The Alternatives Analysis process now underway assumes a Pacheco Route, because it serves the East Bay and the northern San Joaquin Valley; generates much higher ridership than the Pacheco Route, because it serves the East Bay and the northern San Joaquin Valley; and northern San Joaquin Valley; and

Rather, the final model was significantly different from the published one. A memo from the model developer, Cambridge Systematics, announced that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, under contract to HSRA to manage the development of the model, had “elected not update the Task 5a report nor to include the final coefficients and constants in the final report.”

The petition is based on discovery of new facts in the case: the recent disclosure of details of the ridership and revenue analysis not previously made public by HSRA. The ridership projections used by the Authority as the basis of its selection of the Pacheco Pass route did not come from the ridership model that had been peer-reviewed and fully documented.

Instead, the final model was significantly different from the published one. A memo from the model developer, Cambridge Systematics, announced that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, under contract to HSRA to manage the development of the model, had “elected not update the Task 5a report nor to include the final coefficients and constants in the final report.”

The groups hired a transportation consultant who reviewed the documentation and concluded that the final coefficients and constants were different from the published numbers in the model documentation and were invalid.

In his report, Norman Marshall of the Smart Mobility modeling firm wrote that “These numbers make absolutely no sense and cannot be justified by the model development process.”

The documents filed with the Court are available on-line at: www.transdef.org Click on the High-Speed Rail tab, then the Ridership Challenge tab to see the documents.

The three groups, working with the Town of Atherton and the City of Menlo Park, contend that failure to disclose the actual numbers used in the ridership model deprived the public of the right to comment on the reasonableness of the model and its resulting projections. They are asking the Court to order HSRA to respond to comments about the flawed ridership modeling.

Hundreds of millions of dollars in environmental studies are now underway whose justification depends on the validity of the ridership projections. The Authority’s Business Plan as well as its claim of profitable high-speed rail operation are based on the flawed model. The Business Plan findings that Merced, Gilroy and Anaheim interregional boardings equal or exceed those of Los Angeles are clearly unreasonable.

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Setec designed the alignment for the 205 mph LgV-Est. Photo by Alain Stoll

• Avoids inducing new sprawl in Santa Clara and Merced Counties;
• Provides attractive rail service linking the Bay Area, Stockton, and Sacramento, with most trips less than an hour;
• Addresses highway congestion on Interstates 80, 880, 580, and 680;
• Adds mobility between the Bay Area and the northern San Joaquin Valley;

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Opinion by James R. Mills

A treasure of enormous potential value is buried under downtown Los Angeles. It is the old Pacific Electric subway station and what is left of the subway tunnel into it. They were opened in 1925 to bring trains from Glendale, Burbank, Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley and Santa Monica into the center of the city.

The management of the Metropolitan Transit Authority ordered the designers of the Red Line subway to put the mezzanine of its Pershing Square station at the same level as the mezzanine of the Pacific Electric station. The new station is just thirteen feet from the old one. MTA management wanted to make it possible to connect them and make of them one big station. The idea was to provide that option in case of a future decision to use the remaining segment of the old tunnel for some new rail service.

The old subway station had five stub-end tracks and five platforms and was used to turn hundreds of trains a day back out into the western reaches of Los Angeles. It now could be reopened and served by light rail trains from throughout the region. The operating plan presently being discussed for the downtown connector tunnel will have Long Beach to Pasadena trains run right through it. The expressed intent is to do away with any need on the part of passengers for a transfer.

A serious problem with that operating plan is that the demand for service is very different on those two lines. Presently present of passengers for a transfer. Another advantage to using the old Pacific Electric station and tunnel would provide turnbacks and risks becoming a serious one.

The downtown connector facility as currently planned lacks flexibility to provide turnbacks and risks becoming a bottleneck because of the frequency and number of services planned to use it. Finally, the cost of replacing the Pacific Electric station and tunnel would be enormous. It would be a pity not to examine the advantages of again using such a valuable asset.

In the past the MTA required that the Pershing Square station of the Red Line be put at the level of the Pacific Electric station to make a connection possible in the future. That decision was an intelligent one. If the MTA now decides not to build a connection from the new connector tunnel into the old Pacific Electric tunnel and station as a part of the first project it should show the same level of intelligence as it did years ago. It should put the new tunnel at the same level as the old one so an interchange could be added in the future if experience with the operation of the light rail system shows that to be advantageous or even necessary.

The trains coming into Los Angeles from Long Beach run six minutes apart. Sending those trains to Pasadena will result in their running over forty miles. No light rail system in the world tries to run trains six minutes apart over a line forty miles long that has only two tracks.

Putting the East Los Angeles to Santa Monica trains into the same tunnel downtown will result in trains running three minutes apart in each direction, and trains on both lines will inevitably be delayed in traffic on the streets before they get into the tunnel. Train operations in the new tunnel will be a problem, perhaps a very serious one.

The downtown connector facility as currently planned lacks flexibility to provide turnbacks and risks becoming a bottleneck because of the frequency and nature of services planned to use it. At the very least the option of future flexibility should be preserved. Not to do so now would be foolish.

James R. Mills was president pro tempore of the California state senate from 1971 to 1980. He was chairman of the San Diego metropolitan transit agency from 1994 to 1994 and chairman of the Los Angeles-San Diego rail corridor agency from 1984 to 1994.