



**Orange County Transportation
Authority
LOSSAN Corridor Rail Service
Integration Focus Group Report**

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**Prepared for
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Orange County Transportation Authority

LOSSAN Focus Group Report

July 2008

Introduction and Project Objectives

The Orange County Transportation Authority (Authority), in cooperation with other transportation districts and authorities in Southern California, is exploring options to coordinate and improve commuter and intercity rail services between Los Angeles and San Diego. The varying services, station stops, fares and schedules frequently confuse passengers and generate a multitude of questions and suggestions for improvement. The overall goal is to improve the customers' experience and, ultimately, to expand the market and increase ridership.

In concert with this goal, the Authority wishes to assess attitudes, perceptions, and proposals about existing rail service, especially with regard to the potential for enhancing and coordinating intercity and commuter passenger rail services currently provided by Metrolink (SCRRA), The Coaster (NCTD), and Amtrak. This assessment was accomplished in this current project through focus group research. Current rail transit customers as well as non-users (all of whom have trip origins in Orange County) were targeted for focus group recruitment.

This project entailed the design and implementation of four focus groups – 2 groups of rail transit users and 2 groups of non-users. Participants were selected from various geographic locations within Orange County. Perceptions about current service characteristics as well as new service strategies were elicited. Examples of such topics include plans to integrate schedules and feeder services, the potential for streamlining fares and fare collection activities, providing on-board and station amenities, and the clarification and consolidation of messages and marketing programs.

This project is designed to help ongoing efforts intended to answer the following types of questions:

- Where do opportunities exist for better scheduling and train connections?
- What service improvements are needed to enhance customers' commuter and intercity rail experiences?
- How can service information best be communicated to customers?

- What scheduling, ticketing, fare structure and on-board and station amenities are important to customers and potential customers?
- What markets are likely to produce new train customers?
- How can the brands and identities of the various complementary rail services in the Los Angeles-San Diego corridor be unified to increase ridership and educate the public about the corridor's integrated passenger rail service?

Methodology

A project "kick-off" meeting was held with the staff of the Orange County Transportation Authority and the principals of Rea & Parker Research – Richard A. Parker, Ph.D and Louis M. Rea, Ph.D on May 23, 2008. At this meeting, it was determined that four focus groups would be planned as follows: two groups of train users and two groups of non-users. The recruitment screeners are attached to this report in Appendix 1.

The user focus group participants were drawn from Metrolink's list of monthly pass holders (members of Metrolink's Orange County panel). The train user focus groups were planned and scheduled as follows:

- **June 11, 2008:** (Orange County resident train users living in Santa Ana or north of Santa Ana who have used the train at least 2 times per week during the past 3 months); some recruits were scheduled who also ride Amtrak and/or the Coaster. Fourteen participants were recruited and 14 were actually seated for discussion. This focus group was held at Ask Southern California Garden Grove.
- **June 24, 2008:** Orange County resident train users living in Santa Ana or south of Santa Ana who have used the train at least 2 times per week during the past 3 months); some recruits were scheduled who also ride Amtrak and/or the Coaster. Fourteen participants were recruited and 10 were actually seated for discussion. This focus group was held at the Adler-Weiner Research Company in Irvine.

The non-user focus group participants were drawn from the databases of the focus group facilities. The non-user focus groups were planned and scheduled as follows:

- **June 25, 2008:** (residents of Orange County LOSSAN corridor who are non-regular users of the train but have used transit at least 15-20 times in their adult life). Fourteen participants were recruited and eleven were actually seated for discussion. This focus group was held at Adler-Weiner Research Company in Irvine.
- **July 1, 2008:** (residents of Orange County LOSSAN corridor who are non-regular users of the train and have used transit less than 15-20 times in their adult life). Fourteen participants were recruited and fourteen were actually seated for discussion. This focus group was held at Ask Southern California in Garden Grove.

Focus group discussion guides were prepared by Rea & Parker Research in consultation with the staff of OCTA. These discussion guides are attached to the report in Appendix 2. In each focus group, participants were asked to rate and rank potential service enhancements related to train service along the LOSSAN corridor. The forms used for this ranking exercise are attached in Appendix 3.

Each focus group was approximately two hours in length and began at 6:00 PM (Ask Southern California) and 6:30 PM (Adler-Weiner Research Company). Participants were served a light dinner and were given \$100 for their time and transportation.

Summary of Key Findings: Train Users (Focus groups on June 11 and June 24)

- The participants who regularly commute by train are primarily interested in service improvements that support the daily train commute. Consequently, they lobby for earlier and later trains during the week. They also wish to alleviate crowded conditions during peak periods and would like to have more cars added to the trains. The time a train is scheduled is far more important than the particular train (Amtrak or Metrolink).
- Riders view Amtrak and Metrolink as interchangeable and are willing to ride whatever meets their scheduling needs.
- Participants would like to have the option of purchasing Coaster tickets at Amtrak/Metrolink Stations and vice versa. They went one step further, however. They would like to be able to purchase one ticket from point A to point B irrespective of the train system. Also, it is felt that all systems should be consolidated so that schedules and tickets are similar in appearance.
- People will be attracted to the train if trains run earlier and later both on weekdays as well as weekends. Thus, important selling points to attract train riders are reliability and convenience (frequency and length of service). People do not ride currently because the train schedule is restrictive. If there are more trains on the track, people will be attracted to rail. And if you have more frequent service, then perhaps there will not be the need for more cars.
- Currently, regular train riders do not use the train extensively on weekends or during other non-peak periods. They view the train as a weekday mode and generally do not wish to endure the scheduling challenges on the weekends. In many cases, the lack of late night trains and the overall infrequency of trains on weekends inhibit train travel for special events and for other recreational travel and shopping. With certain service enhancements, some of these train users can be motivated to expand their weekend/off-peak train travel.

- If services were integrated and operated more frequently and seamlessly, riders indicated they would entertain using the train to travel to San Diego to visit such attractions as Petco Park and the San Diego Zoo. They would also want to visit beaches, South Coast Plaza, the Irvine Spectrum, and various other tourist attractions on weekends. There is some interest in attending night games at Anaheim Stadium if trains were available after the game.
- The primary motivations to use a proposed seamless train system parallel the reasons for using the train at all. These reasons include reduction of stress associated with driving and traffic congestion, convenience over the car (ability to sleep, read, relax on the train), and cost savings (especially related to the rising price of gas and cost of parking – Staples Center, in particular).
- The greatest single motivator for recruiting new train riders is the cost of gas. Other significant motivators include quality train service that combines reliability and frequency of service. Adequate parking at the stations and a feeder system that enables passengers to access their final destination are also important.
- Currently, parking at the train stations is not adequate. Also, the station one parks at dictates the system he/she uses for the return trip. Since Metrolink may not run frequently enough and Amtrak does not stop at all stations, there is a problem in returning to the station where the car is parked.
- The general sentiment is that the feeder system in Orange County is not well developed. It is much more efficient and useful in Los Angeles.
- Amtrak trains have more room in the seating area than do Metrolink trains and the Amtrak train seats are more comfortable. Amtrak trains tend to be dirty but the participants enjoy the refreshments that are available.
- The Amtrak website is more user friendly and helpful than the Metrolink website. In general, Amtrak generally communicates better with its clientele and is more dependable than Metrolink.
- The prospect of a unified schedule for the three train systems was well received. Participants are positive about the possibility of having the schedule of all trains in the corridor on one page. This consolidated schedule could appear on a consolidated website, where it could be viewed on a computer (laptop) and could be printed for ready reference. It also could be attached to the wall at train stations.
- The regular train users view the availability of electronic real-time information at the stations, transmitting information about delays to cell phones, a consolidated LOSSAN timetable and website, and on-board information as the most important potential service features or ones that should be enhanced. It is important that this information be simple and straightforward with reports on train arrival times, delays, and the cause of the delay. The on-train information should be visual only and not have an audio component.

- The flat fare of \$1.00 per stop for short stops is seen by many as an incentive to recruit new train riders. If the \$1.00 per stop is adopted, it is important that those who try it as a new rider have a positive experience or their ridership is not likely to be sustained.
- To attract new train riders, additional businesses and companies, especially along the LOSSAN corridor, should become actively involved in an incentive program that provides transportation reimbursements and other incentives to employees who use transit for their commute.
- The use of television, the Internet, and radio should be used to promote rail ridership.
- Train riders are willing to use the train instead of drive if the time commitment on the train is no more than 50 percent greater than the driving commitment.
- The regular train users view the following possible service features as unimportant to them: freeway signs that show train information, airport connections to LAX and John Wayne, a café car on the train, and the availability of wireless internet at the stations.

**Summary of Key Findings: Non-Users of the Train
(Focus groups on June 25 and July 1)**

- There is a lack of easily accessible information available to those who would like to consider commuting or traveling by train for recreational purposes. These non-users have minimal knowledge about the location of stations near their home or work and they are not confident about how to use the feeder system that is available to move them from the train station to their final destination.
- Current non-users with some train experience point out that rail systems in other parts of the world and in other parts of the United States are much more effective in transporting people efficiently to a greater number of places than the train systems in southern California generally and in Orange County in particular.
- Some non-users are concerned that a short trip at midday would take too long; others feel that the short trip can become a beneficial addition to one's daily travel routine.
- The flat fare of \$1.00 per stop for short trips is seen by nearly everyone as a good idea. This plan is clearly cheaper for shorter trips than the current fare structure. This plan is also simple and understandable. If the appropriate feeder system is in place and parking becomes less of a problem, people may actually find these short train trips an added benefit to their daily travel routine.
- The prospect of paying only \$1 per stop serves to motivate those who otherwise would not consider a short train trip.
- A single ticket for an entire trip (rail and bus) is very appealing. This was compared with the single ticket to a roundtrip airline ticket that shows all departure and arrival times for the main flights as well as connecting flights.

- Non-riders would take the train to the Staples Center, San Diego, and Anaheim. The major constraints are price, fear of being stranded and a feeling there would not be adequate connections.
- There is fear of using transit for the first time. People are worried that they will be stranded and they will not know what transportation options are available to them. For example, there is some interest in using the train to attend an event in the evening such as a concert at the Staples Center. However, there is a lingering concern that a train will not be available for the return trip late at night when the event is concluded – a concern that is justified.
- These non-users generally feel that the primary market for new train riders is the youth - college age (early twenties). In addition, in the long term, current children are likely to be the future train riders because it is possible to educate them to use transit in their daily lives. Accordingly, an educational campaign should be undertaken to orient children to transit at an early age. Seniors and pre seniors are viewed as individuals from the automobile generation and this group is not conducive to learning how to use transit.
- There would be interest among non-users in using the train to travel from Orange County to a place in north San Diego County (e.g. Tustin to Carlsbad Village) but the time commitment by train is a major obstacle. Given that the drive time is 1 hour, some non-user participants do not wish to exceed 1.5 to 2 hours by train; others expect the train to compete directly with the automobile and not require a time commitment of any more than 1 hour.
- These non-user participants feel that the most important service features of the train or those features that should be enhanced are as follows: a consolidated LOSSAN website and timetable that integrates all three train systems, the \$1.00 per stop fare concept, and the single ticket for the entire trip.
- These non-user participants view freeway signs that show train information as unimportant to them because they would rarely use the freeway to get to the stations.

Detailed Focus Group Summaries

Train Rider Focus Group North Orange County

Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2008
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Place: Ask Southern California
Facilitator: Richard A. Parker, Ph.D.

General Patterns of Rail Use

- All but two participants commute by train 5 days per week. The other two participants commute 3 to 4 days per week. The Metrolink system is the core system for their commute. However, almost all participants use Amtrak sometimes and two participants have used the Coaster for business.
- The general sentiment is that the time a train is scheduled is far more important than the particular train system (Metrolink or Amtrak). Most participants view Amtrak and Metrolink as interchangeable and are willing to ride whatever meets their scheduling needs. Very early trips as well as evening trips frequently require the use of Amtrak. One participant indicates that the 6:45 am train is the earliest train out of Anaheim but a 6:00 am train would be much more desirable.
- The station at which one parks his/her car dictates the system he/she uses for the return trip. Since Metrolink may not run frequently enough and Amtrak does not stop at all of the stations that Metrolink stops at, there is a scheduling problem in returning to the station where the car is parked.
- Amtrak is the only option after 6:30 PM. That is, it is the only way back to Orange County from Los Angeles or San Diego when Metrolink stops running for the day.

Comments Related to Possible Train Use during the Non-Commute

- There is mixed opinion about the possible use of the train on weekends or during non-commuting hours for shopping, recreation, or entertainment. There has been some interest in using the train to travel to Union Station during the off-peak to explore Olivera Street, Chinatown, and other nearby attractions. Others would consider travel south to San Diego to visit attractions such as museums and others expressed interest in traveling to San Juan Capistrano to have lunch at the Depot. There is more interest in weekend train travel outside of Orange County than within the County.
- The feeder system creates some constraints on weekend train travel. In Los Angeles, the monthly pass permits the use of feeders 7 days per week but in Orange County, the

monthly pass restricts the use of the feeder system to Monday through Friday. There is some rumor that MTA will be limiting the feeder system to weekdays in the near future.

- Non-commute travel on weekends is oriented to Los Angeles where the train rider does not have to pay for feeder buses. In addition, bus connections in Los Angeles are better than in Orange County.
- There would be more interest in evening recreational travel to restaurants and the activities at Anaheim Stadium, but the train does not run late enough to accommodate the return trip after 10:00 PM. In addition, on weekends, the train schedule is restricted/limited. The headway is far too infrequent to be useful.
- The participants are not concerned that the train should provide more entertainment or special conveniences on the weekend (e.g. dining car). The train trip itself should be enough and part of the overall positive experience. The view from the train is unique and can only be enjoyed from the train – not the automobile.
- The dominant sentiment is that the train is considered primarily a commuting mode for use during the week. Participants do not want to be concerned with schedules and connections on the weekend when their time is valuable for family and friends. It is more difficult to use the train on the weekend and they do not want to worry about it. While commuters are willing to endure certain difficulties and inconveniences associated with train travel during the week, they are not willing to deal with such difficulties on weekends. That is why they have a car – for the weekend.
- The overall suggestion is to use resources to improve the weekday commute (earlier and later daily trains) rather than promote weekend and off-peak train travel.

Comments on Why Participants Started to Use the Train and Why They Continued to Use It

- The reasons that participants began to use the train are largely similar to the reasons why they have continued to use it. These reasons include high expenditures associated with the automobile such as insurance, maintenance, and the price of gas. Some enjoy the close proximity of their home to the train station, while others wish to read and relax on the train. There is also some concern for preserving the environment by reducing pollution. More specific comments in this regard are as follows:
 - An individual started to use the train for social reasons as she commuted with her daughter every day. Later, she began to appreciate not having to drive to work given how close the train station is to her home. Also, she continued to enjoy the opportunities to rest and relax on the train.

- Another individual first used the train because it enabled her to maintain a reasonable work schedule – not work long hours at the office – a protection against her own tendency to overwork. Later, she appreciated the ability to use the telephone, send e-mails and otherwise conduct business on the way home.
- Another individual was motivated to start train travel by a company reimbursement program that provided \$75 per month if he used the train to work. This proves to be quite cost effective when coupled with the monthly pass. Later, he appreciated the opportunity to save on gas expense, and to relax and read on board the train.
- Another person was initially quite disgruntled with traffic jams on the freeway. This factor motivated him to use the train and then he found he could save money and be quite productive while riding the train. Similarly, one person finds the automobile to be quite unreliable due to mechanical breakdowns. Delays and accidents on the train are generally minor and infrequent.
- Most are willing to travel 5 hours by train when the drive time may be 2.5 to 3 hours. The cost savings is worth the extra time and the ability to reduce stress and relax is an added bonus.

Biggest Selling Points to Attract New Riders

- There is some general agreement that there is no need to attract more commuters. The trains are currently full during the week at peak times. In fact, there is standing room only. There is a need to add more cars. If there is an effort to recruit more train commuters, there must be some assurance that cars will be added to accommodate the new commuters.
- The major selling point to attract new commuters is the high price of gas.
- Also, people will be attracted to the train if trains run earlier and later both on weekdays as well as weekends. Thus, important selling points to attract train riders are reliability and convenience (frequency and length of service). People do not ride currently because the train schedule is restrictive. If there are more trains on the track, people will be attracted to rail. In addition, if you have more frequent service, then perhaps there will not be the need for more cars.

- The use of the train on weekdays versus weekends is culturally based. The commuter uses the train as a daily way of life, while the non-commuter views train travel differently and has different needs. AMTRAK is viewed as the recreational line, while Metrolink is focused on weekday commuters.

Parking at Stations

- Parking at train stations is a problem. This is one of the obstacles that make it difficult to maintain the rail commute. Fullerton is generally full and frequently requires that a rail rider be dropped off. If one does not get to the Buena Park station by 7:00 am, it is very difficult to find parking. Tustin has a small parking area and fills quickly. The Norwalk station is not set up for pedestrians walking out of the station. There is a danger from vehicles passing by.

Suggestions for Possible Improvements in Rail Service

The following is a summary of the comments expressed by participants regarding their opinion of the importance of possible improvements in the train system in the LOSSAN corridor.

1. **Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor Timetable:** The prospect of a unified schedule for the three train systems was well received. Participants are positive about the possibility of having the schedule of all trains in the corridor on one page. This consolidated schedule could appear on a consolidated website, where it could be viewed on a computer (laptop) and could be printed for ready reference. It also could be attached to the wall at train stations. Some participants pointed out that a consolidated book already exists that shows both Amtrak and Metrolink schedules. However, these schedules are not shown on one page.
2. **Consolidated LOSSAN Website:** The concept of a consolidated website for Amtrak, Metrolink, and the Coaster was very appealing to the participants. There is little concern about what system the train represents; the primary concern is that there is a train at the time it is needed. It is important to the participants that the consolidated website also is interactive much like MTA's website. They would prefer that the website indicate how to get from point A to point B and that the system allow the potential rider to purchase the ticket for the trip on line. The Metrolink website is currently quite cumbersome.

Lessons should be learned from the airlines – keep it simple in terms of departure and arrival times. New train riders now must learn by trial and error and by asking questions of veteran riders at the stations.

3. **Show all connections within 30 minutes at major transfer stations (Los Angeles, Fullerton, and Oceanside):** The participants are not impressed with this concept since they do not frequent these three stations in the daily commute. If this information were to be provided at the stations they use, the information could be useful to them. Real-time information at any station is a good idea. Again, the focus for these participants is on getting by train from A to B and they have no interest in focusing on major connection sites.
4. **Joint Ticketing Options:** Participants would like to have the option of purchasing Coaster tickets at Amtrak/MetroLink Stations and vice versa. They went one step further, however. They would like to be able to purchase one ticket from point A to point B irrespective of the train system. Also, it is felt that all systems should be consolidated so that schedules and tickets are similar in appearance.
5. **More Midday MetroLink Service:** There is not a great demand among these participants for more midday train service. As commuters, they strongly prefer earlier trains and later trains. Earlier trains are particularly requested southbound in the morning on MetroLink.
6. **More Intermediate Stops by Amtrak:** Participants feel that more intermediate stops would be useful but they do not care if MetroLink or Amtrak fills the gap. However, the general tenor is that Amtrak should stop more places rather than have more MetroLink trains.
7. **Electronic Real-time Information at Stations:** These participants would like to see estimated arrival times at the stations and information as to whether the train is delayed. It would also be useful for passengers to know their transportation options if their train is delayed for a long time. This information is important to know before the passenger boards the train. They should not be stuck on a long delayed train without the opportunity to make other arrangements. In addition, passengers would like to know the nature of the delay – not many details but simply if the train is delayed because of an injury or a fatality or if the delay is due to a simple switch problem. The former generally implies an inordinately long delay while the latter implies a relatively short delay. This real-time information would be very useful to obtain on the Internet from home or office before traveling to the station.
8. **Televisions on Train:** Participants are not interested in having TV's on the train. TV's are viewed as distracting, especially if they include an audio component.
9. **Joint Marketing – Rail for Special Events:** The participants feel that coordinating the train schedule with special community events would be “nice,” but it is not their priority for the use of resources. It is felt that resources should first be expended to bolster the commute.

10. **Airport Connections:** The participants do not think that more bus connections to the airport from train stations are a good idea. First, such a linkage would bog down the early commute on Metrolink and in fact was characterized by the participants as potentially disastrous. Airport bound passengers have much baggage with them that take precious room. This is quite bothersome to the regular commuter. To alleviate these problems, perhaps more train cars would help since the commuter trains are already at capacity.
11. **Advertise Amtrak Buses:** While advertisement of these buses would be helpful to some, the general perception among the participants is that Metrolink passes do not permit pass holders to utilize these buses. There is, however, some confusion about this issue because they can use these buses within the geographical boundaries of their ticket or pass.
12. **Freeway Signs that Show Train Information:** Since these participants do not use the freeway to gain access to their train stations, freeway signs announcing information about trains would not be useful to them. It is generally felt that advertisements and promotions about train travel would be beneficial rather than notices to current train riders. Such advertisements may actually attract more train riders. In freeway traffic, perhaps a sign that read “The train is on time; you, however, will not be on time” would have some positive impact on the recruitment of rail riders.
13. **511 Information about Trains:** Calling this number would provide information about the train schedule and which trains may be delayed. Other information about freeway traffic and bus service would also be provided on this line. This system is available in San Diego and is planned for Orange County and Los Angeles. Participants mentioned that there is a number to call currently to obtain information about Metrolink. The recording indicates that all trains are on time even when they are clearly not on time. Will 511 be worth the effort? “Please don’t give us another source of bad information.”
14. **Wireless Internet Access at Stations:** Participants feel that providing Internet at stations is not cost effective. They do not spend very much time at the stations and it is awkward to physically set up a laptop in that setting. It would be much more beneficial to have wireless Internet on the trains as long as all the cars are equipped with adequate plugs. The stations should provide shelter from the rain if resources are to be wisely spent there.
15. **Information Transmitted Directly to Cell Phone:** Information about train delays that are transmitted directly to one’s cell phone would be highly desirable. Participants do not want superfluous information – only information needed about train times and delays.

Table 1 summarizes the relative importance that the participants attach to each potential service enhancement. The “aggregate” ranking (ranking based upon a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very important and 5 = very unimportant) represents the sum of all rankings provided by each participant for each feature. It is clear that these participants feel that electronic real-time information at the train stations is most important to them. They also attach considerable importance to the prospect of having a consolidated LOSSAN website and information about delays transmitted directly to their cell phone. The column labeled “overall relative importance” indicates the number of times participants marked a service feature as important. They were asked to mark up to three as most important to them. Again, electronic real-time information received a high priority. Freeway signs that show train information and airport connections to LAX and John Wayne are regarded as least important in terms of possible service enhancements.

Opinions about Current Websites and other Features of Amtrak and Metrolink

- **Amtrak:** Participants regard the Amtrak website as easy to use. It has current information. Reservations can be made on line and there is the ability to purchase tickets on line as well. All routes are available for viewing and they can be printed.

- **Metrolink:** The Metrolink website is not regarded as up to date. It does not have a point-to-point trip planner – no interactive system showing how to get from Point A to Point B. It is a clumsy site.

- **Other Features of Amtrak and Metrolink:**
 - Amtrak is more comfortable and more dependable than Metrolink.
 - Metrolink does not communicate well with its passengers or its ridership. Metrolink does not communicate when trains will be late. Amtrak, on the other hand, is much better at such communication.
 - There is generally no Metrolink representative at the stations to help passengers. Amtrak frequently has representatives to assist.
 - Amtrak train windows are dirty, old, and scratched and it is difficult to see out of them.
 - At any Amtrak station, The PA system will announce the Amtrak trains that are late.
 - There are flashing lights that provide messages at stations but one cannot see this information from the parking lot. Passengers actually have to get of their car and walk to the station in order to read these messages.

Other Suggestions to Attract Train Riders

- Provide a four-day promotional pass to interested individuals to motivate them to try the train.
- Provide assistance at the stations so passengers, especially new people, feel comfortable using train service. Relying on friends or fellow passengers for information does not instill confidence and ensure continued use of the train.
- Trains should be made comfortable. Suggestions are as follows:
 - Seats should not be used for baggage while people are standing
 - Purchase new train cars where seats face one way instead of facing each other. This will alleviate any discomfort associated with bumping knees with those facing each other
 - Designate a quiet car on the train so those who desire complete quiet can achieve that.
 - Control the number of passengers with bicycles on each car. Bicycle riders are taking up more than their fair share of the train space. Also, they come onto the train perspiring and create an unsanitary environment. This issue should be addressed for the benefit of the regular train riders.
 - Tickets are checked infrequently and it is suspected that people are riding free. This does not speak well for security on board the train. There should be a greater presence of the conductor for information and general purposes of security.

**Table 1:
Rating/Ranking of Suggested Service Enhancements to LOSSAN Corridor Integration**

June 11, 2008 – Train Riders Potential Service Enhancements	*Aggregate Ranking From High Importance to Low Importance (LOWER SCORE IS HIGHER RANKING)	**Overall Relative Importance Higher numbers = Higher Importance
Electronic real-time information at stations – re: arrival, departures, late trains with possibility to tap into this system from your home, office or portable internet device	16	12
Information transmitted directly to you cell phone about delays	31	5
Consolidated LOSSAN website with information about all three services	31	4
Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor timetable that would allow the rider to see all the trains in the corridor as well as connections between train systems.	34	4
More intermediate stops by Amtrak	34	6
511 information about trains	41	1
Central Information booths at LA Union Station and Oceanside to handle the many systems that converge at those sites	41	0
More midday Metrolink service	42	3
Joint ticketing – being able to purchase tickets for the Coaster at Metrolink/Amtrak stations and vice-versa.	42	1
Show all connections that will be available within 30 minutes at major transfer points (Los Angeles, Fullerton, Oceanside). Online or hard copy?	47	1
Amtrak has buses that carry Amtrak riders to and from their trains. Should these be integrated into the schedules and promotions?	48	1
Wireless internet access at stations	52	1
Joint Marketing – Expansion of Rail2Rail for special events	57	1
Freeway signs that show train information	59	0
Airport connections Fullerton to LAX and Santa Ana to John Wayne.	62	0
*Represents the sum of all rankings for each feature (scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = high importance and 5 = low importance) ** Represents the number of times the feature was marked as important		

Train Rider Focus Group South Orange County

Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2008
Time: 6:30-8:30 PM
Place: Adler-Weiner Research Company
Facilitator: Richard A. Parker, Ph.D.

General Patterns of Rail Use

- All of the participants commute by train virtually every weekday. Two participants have used the Coaster and most of them use Amtrak.
- Participants have been commuting by train from 5 years to 13 years and they generally travel from Orange County stations northward toward Los Angeles.
- Most of the participants view train travel as largely regional rather than just within Orange County.

Comments Related to Using the Train for the Non-Commute

- Four participants use the train for non-commuter trips on weekends. They travel to various places but dominantly to Anaheim Stadium and Disneyland within Orange County and to San Diego for entertainment and shopping. One person has used the train to travel to the Solana Beach station to gain access to the Del Mar Race Track. Two people use the train extensively to travel on weekends to Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, including the San Fernando Valley.
- Those who use the train for weekend travel do so for several reasons: reduce stress associated with driving, cost savings, eliminate traffic congestion and eliminate parking difficulties.
- Some participants argue that they are not able to travel outside the range permitted by their monthly pass unless they pay more. This is not a problem in the Los Angeles area where MTA will honor the Monthly Pass 7 days per week.
- Within Orange County and San Diego, the monthly pass is not understood to be honored on weekends and the cost of train travel for recreational purposes is perceived to be a serious consideration.

- Participants provided other reasons as to why the non-commute by train on weekends or in the evening is problematic.
 - One individual would not be able to get his family out of the car. His family would regard weekend train travel as a hassle. It's just not a weekend thing.
 - It is difficult traveling with non-adults on the train. There is little room on Metrolink trains for backpacks and toys.
 - One person recognized that she could drive to San Diego on weekends faster than it would take by train. Thus, this would be a tradeoff of time for saving money. However, the greatest challenge is in the late afternoon and evening when there is no way by train to get back to Orange County.
 - Train schedules are oriented around the commuter at rush hour. One passenger mentioned that he would like to go to lunch in Los Angeles with his grandchildren but he would not be able to get a return train on Metrolink until 3:00 pm. He could use an earlier Amtrak train for the return trip but that would be cost prohibitive.

Comments on Alternative Scheduling Scenarios

Participants were provided several alternative train trip scenarios and asked if they were likely to make that trip by train.

- **Example 1: From Tustin Station to Carlsbad Village for the day to shop and/or dine.**

About two-thirds of the participants were initially interested in making this trip. However, when they were told that the train ride (including connections) could take about 3 hours and the drive time would be about an hour, everyone rejected the train as an alternative mode for this trip. Driving is viewed as preferable. If the train ride were about 1.5 hours, the participants would be more interested in making this trip by train. It is clear that a train trip that takes 50 percent more time than driving is still competitive among frequent train riders.

- **Example 2: Individual lives in Mission Viejo; Train trip from Mission Viejo or Irvine to Staples Center in Los Angeles for a sporting event or concert.**

The participants are not enthusiastic about making this train trip because there is no late train trip home and they felt they could be stranded. However, they are generally knowledgeable about leaving from the Irvine Station where there are more scheduling options for both Metrolink and Amtrak. They also recognize that it would be difficult to return from Los Angeles since the last train leaves at 10:10 PM. In order to catch this train, one would probably have to leave the evening event before its conclusion.

Generally speaking, participants feel that train times should be expanded and coordinated with scheduled events in the region. For example, special event trains run to San Diego Padre games.

Coordination and Integration of Metrolink, Amtrak, and the Coaster Rail Services

Participants were asked to visualize and consider a future rail system that integrates the three systems. Trains would run in the early morning and late at night and they would be available 7 days per week. Trains would operate at 30 -60 minute intervals – seamlessly without connection difficulties. The following comments were made in response to such a system:

- In order for this 30-60 minute headway to work, there needs to be a dedicated train line that will not be interrupted by delays. One obstacle that should be addressed is the fact that freight trains have priority on the track and if the freight trains sit and wait on the track, Metrolink and Amtrak trains will inevitably be delayed.
- The continuous (seamless) train operation coupled with the 30-60 minute headway will be a strong recruitment message to those considering train travel. Successful recruitment is predicated upon these seamless conditions actually taking place and not disappointing the new recruits.
- Participants made the point that Metrolink is designed for short trips while Amtrak is designed for the longer trips. Amtrak has more room in the seating areas than does Metrolink. Consequently, when riders are carrying baggage and other bulky materials on Metrolink trains, the seating area becomes even less comfortable. Amtrak trains provide a bouncier ride than do Metrolink trains and Amtrak trains tend to be dirty. Amtrak, unlike Metrolink, has refreshments onboard. For the weekend riders, trains should have more comfort (better seating and more area for baggage).

Comments Related to an Integrated/Consolidated Train System with Seamless Travel

Respondents were asked how their ridership patterns would change, if at all, if a hypothetical, integrated train system were created with 30-60 minute headways, with 18 hours of operation per day (including early and late trains), and with service seven days per week.

- Under the circumstances described, participants would entertain using the train to travel to San Diego to visit such attractions as Petco Park and the San Diego Zoo. They would

also want to visit beaches, South Coast Plaza, the Irvine Spectrum, and various other tourist attractions on weekends. There is some interest in attending night games at Anaheim Stadium if trains were available after the game.

- The primary motivations to use this hypothetical seamless train system parallel the reasons for using the train at all. These reasons include reduction of stress associated with driving and traffic congestion, convenience over the car (ability to sleep, read, relax on the train), and cost savings (especially related to the rising price of gas and cost of parking – Staples Center, in particular).
- One participant emphasized that, in the current market, the interest in trying rail travel is all about money. The rising price of gas is motivating people to try alternative modes.

Problems Associated with Train Travel (non-peak as well as peak periods)

- One respondent expressed that she would feel “vulnerable” at the train station parking lots at night, especially when she could miss the last train home and become stranded; alternatively, she could miss a train and not catch another for 2 or 3 hours. However, participants generally feel safe on the line haul.
- It was expressed that time is too precious on weekends to waste waiting for a train and tolerating unexpected delays.
- It is difficult to change the ways of the older generation who are accustomed to using their car for recreational trips
- One can never be certain that the train will operate when it says it will – one does not know it will be there when you want it to be. If you do not need to use the train on weekends, drive.
- The train is not flexible or reliable enough for certain jobs – for example UPS drivers and police officers. The trains must have more regularity, consistency, and they must run earlier in the day.

Comments Related to Potential Service Enhancements

1. Flat Fare

The flat fare of \$1.00 per stop for short stops is seen by many participants as an incentive to recruit new train riders.

- There is some concern about monitoring the short trip because tickets are rarely checked. One participant suggests that passengers be required to pass through a gate and that the gate could only be accessed with a valid ticket. Of course, this concept would require several gates and would negate the convenience of barrier free station entry.
- If the \$1.00 per stop concept is adopted, it is important that those who try it as new train riders have a positive experience. If their experience does not coincide with what they were promised during recruitment, their ridership is not likely to be sustained.
- As an alternative to the flat \$1 fare per stop, consider the day pass similar to what is used on the bus system. One would be able to use all trains and feeders in the system for a single day by purchasing one day pass.

2. Single Ticketing

- Participants think that a single ticket for an entire trip (rail and bus) is generally a good idea and would be particularly useful for trips that are not included on the monthly pass.
- One concern is that all the train agencies would have to cooperate and this is seen as problematic.
- Another concern is that the conductor or bus operator would not recognize the single ticket as a valid pass for the trip. It is suggested that training would be necessary to familiarize conductors and bus drivers with the single ticket, especially when it is first introduced.

3. Café Car on Trains

- Three participants are somewhat interested in a café car on Metrolink trains. These participants would like to have coffee, wine, and water available, especially if there are train delays. Even vending machines would be useful.
- Most of the participants, however, are lukewarm to the idea of a café car. It is far down the list in term of needed improvements. Further, it could create a messy,

unclean environment. Cleaning equipment and cleaning personnel would be required on board.

- Participants feel that this amenity would require an attendant – a substantial added cost.
- Also, it is difficult on Metrolink to move from car to car. Thus, gaining access to the café car and returning to one's seat in another car could be problematic.

4. Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor Timetable

- A consolidated timetable is essential if an integration of three train systems is to be obtained. This timetable should appear online as well as in hard copy and it should be in one place.
- The participants are skeptical that the schedules of this integrated system will fit on one page.

5. Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor Website

- All participants feel that a consolidated website of the three train systems is absolutely needed. At present, it is necessary to compare two or three websites to make a trip.
- It is also essential that the website be interactive showing how a person can get from point A to point B. It would be useful if the system were able to prepare a printable itinerary much like Mapquest does for driving directions.
- Some are interested in the opportunity of purchasing their ticket through the system as well.

6. Schedule Showing all connections Within 30 Minutes at Major Transfer Stations

- Participants are not particularly interested in the availability of schedules (showing all connections within 30 minutes) at Los Angeles, Fullerton, and Oceanside. Most of the participants do not use these stations.
- If this information is going to be made available, it should be available at all the stations.
- Train riders are interested in getting from Point A to Point B and are not interested in extraneous information that does not contribute to that end.

7. On-Board Information

- The participants think that information about train arrival time is useful. They want to know if the train is going to be late and the general reason for its tardiness. Information about alternative connections upon arrival and where to make those connections (track number) would be helpful.
- This information should appear over a monitor but it should be video only. A TV monitor with audio would be noisy and distracting.

8. Electronic Real-Time Information at Stations

- Participants describe the current electronic information that is available as limited and frequently inaccurate. An announced 15-30 minute delay could actually result in a 1.5 hour delay.
- Participants would like to have information about train delays that is likely to affect their schedule before they arrive at the station. This information will enable them to assess whether to get on-board the train for their trip or to seek an alternative mode such as driving.
- If train riders know the nature of the delay (e.g. death on the track, switching problem), they will be able to estimate the amount of time the train will be delayed. The details of the delay are not necessary.
- An e-mail alert or a message transmitted directly to the passenger's cell phone would be the most efficient way to get useful information to train riders. The transfer of information is particularly important.

9. Freeway Signs

- Freeway signs that provide information about trains may be useful for those who use the freeway to get to the station. Such freeway users may be in the minority.
- One participant indicated that this could be an advantage if the train rider were able to avoid going all the way to the station upon learning by way of a freeway sign that the train has been cancelled or severely delayed.

10. Intermediate Stops by Amtrak

- In order to provide more trains at midday, participants generally recommend that Metrolink provide more midday trains as opposed to Amtrak stopping at more stations during the midday.
- However, most participants agree that it does not make any difference to them who provides the service as long as trains are made available.

11. Wireless Internet at Stations

- Wireless Internet at the stations is not important to the participants. They generally do not spend enough time at the station to use it.
- More outlets on the train for internet access would be more useful to the participants.

Table 2 summarizes the relative importance that participants attach to each potential service enhancement. The “aggregate” rankings (ranking is based upon a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very important and 5 = very unimportant) represent the sum of all rankings provided by each participant for each feature. Information transmitted directly to cell phones about delays, on-board information, and electronic real-time information at stations are the most important service features to these participants. The column labeled “overall relative importance” indicates the number of times participants marked a service feature as important. They were asked to mark up to three as most important to them. Again, electronic real-time information and information transmitted to cell phones about delays received a high priority. The prospect of having a cafe car on the train and the possibility of having wireless internet capability at the stations are regarded as least important in terms of possible service enhancements.

Station Parking Issues

- Respondents indicated that parking is difficult to find at the stations. Parking lots fill quickly in the mornings. Parking at the stations is generally found to be inadequate. The

Orange Station stands out as particularly problematic with regard to parking and the Santa Ana Station is still adequate.

- One respondent feels that crossovers (bridges/elevators) are not cost effective. Funds should be diverted elsewhere – even underground passageways to cross the tracks would be a better alternative. Crossing the tracks should not become a costly project. Sometimes, the elevators used to cross the tracks are not working.
- As train ridership builds up, the existing parking infrastructure is inadequate to handle it.

Feeder System

- The general sentiment is that feeder buses in Orange County are poorly coordinated with the train system and information about them is poorly advertised. The feeder system in Los Angeles is much better and a great deal of information is available about them at Union Station.
- One participant indicated that she did not know much about the feeder system in Orange County because she does not have the opportunity to use it. She uses the Los Angeles feeder system because Union Station is her destination and place of work.
- One participant indicated that she does not use an Orange County feeder to get to the train station in the morning because it does not run early enough and even if it did, it would add 45 minutes to her commute time and this is unacceptable.
- It was pointed out that an effective Orange County feeder system would require express bus service to the stations with a 5-6 minute headway at commuting times. This would be comparable to the service provided by the DASH system in Los Angeles.

What Else Could Motivate Train Riders to Use the Train More Frequently?

- Passengers are already packed in during the commuting times. More cars on the trains should be provided to alleviate the crowding. New riders will not have a pleasant train riding experience if they are crowded on a train.
- Passengers should not be permitted to block isles with their baggage or bicycles. This contributes to an unpleasant train experience.
- More parking is needed at the stations. New riders would create an even greater parking problem. Lack of parking could very well dissuade potential train riders from continuing to ride the train.

Public Communication Campaign

The following suggestions were put forward by the participants to promote train ridership:

- The train systems should provide an individual at the stations who is able to provide information to the passengers about connections and other information necessary to ride the train successfully.
- Shuttles to and from the train stations should be provided for special events and information that this service is available should be widely advertised.
- The websites of major destinations such as Disneyland and Anaheim Stadium should have links to the websites of the train systems and emphasize how train travel can be used to travel to these special destinations.
- Additional businesses and companies along the rail corridor should be encouraged to provide incentives to its employees who use public transit to commute to work. This could involve an outreach campaign to employers.
- The ticket process should be more user friendly. If a passenger loses a pass or a ticket, reimbursement is possible but the process is cumbersome and tiring. There should be a more streamlined process for reimbursement.

**Table 2:
Rating/Ranking of Suggested Service Enhancements to LOSSAN Corridor Integration**

June 24, 2008 – Train Riders Potential Service Enhancements	*Aggregate Ranking From High Importance to Low Importance (LOWER SCORE IS HIGHER RANKING)	**Overall Relative Importance Higher Numbers = Higher Importance
Information transmitted directly to your cell phone about delays	22	7
Electronic real-time information at stations – re: arrivals, departures, late trains with possibility to tap into this system from your home, office or portable Internet device.	23	8
On-Board Information	23	3
Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor timetable that would allow the rider to see all the trains in the corridor as well as connections between train systems.	24	0
More midday Metrolink trains	25	5
Consolidated LOSSAN website with information about all three services	27	2
Schedule showing all connections that will be available within 30 minutes at major transfer points (Los Angeles, Fullerton, Oceanside).	29	1
Freeway signs that show train information	29	0
More midday Amtrak stops	29	0
Single ticketing for entire trip – including all bus and rail systems	31	3
\$1 per stop fares	31	1
Wireless internet access at stations	34	0
Café car for snacks, soft drinks, cocktails	40	0
*Represents the sum of all rankings for each feature (scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = high importance and 5 = low importance) ** Represents the number of times the feature was marked as important		

**Train Non-Rider Focus Group
(Some Transit Experience)**

Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2008
Time 6:30-8:30 PM
Place: Adler-Weiner Research Company
Facilitator: Richard A. Parker, Ph.D.

Familiarity and Experience with Train Systems in the LOSSAN Corridor

- All participants are familiar with the existence of Metrolink as a train system.
- Participants who live and/or work in San Juan Capistrano or San Clemente hear and see the train frequently and have learned about the existence of the train through its obvious presence.
- One woman teaches disabled children how to use public transit. She indicated that Metrolink cars are equipped to handle two wheelchairs at a time. Sometimes, she has four children in wheelchairs with her. It is a challenge to move these wheelchairs on and off the train without delaying the train.
- Another participant used the train to commute to Los Angeles during the early 1990's. He needed the availability of two cars to use the rail. One car was used to get to the station in the morning and the other car was left at the destination station in the event he had to stay late at work. He found the train to be unreliable and undependable and he was able to use the train regularly only because he had a flexible schedule and a flexible boss. Those who have to be on time to work were not able to use the train because they would run the risk of losing their jobs.
- One participant knows enough about the train to realize that it does not go where she needs to go. Further, if she were able to get to some designated place, she feels she would be stranded because of the lack of interconnections (feeders).
- Another person rode a Metrolink train one Saturday – a free day -- for 5 minutes. She rode from San Clemente to San Juan Capistrano.

- One individual took the train to Oceanside but did not realize how poor the options were for the return trip. She had to stay in Oceanside with little to do for the better part of the day before she was able to obtain a return train trip.
- At least two participants pointed out that parking is inadequate at the train stations and that this is a major problem in motivating people to use the train.
- One participant, who lives in San Juan Capistrano, receives visitors from San Diego who arrive at Lindbergh Field and take the train to the San Juan Capistrano Station.

Experience with other Train Systems

- Participants had experience with other train systems as follows: Chicago, New York City, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, London, and systems in Japan.
- The overall experience with these systems is very positive. Participants indicate that they are able to move from one place to another quickly. The systems are easy to understand.
 - One person explained in detail the ease of travel from the airport in London to Scotland by rail in just a few hours.
 - Another person mentioned that she used the BART system in San Francisco as a child, but does not use transit much as an adult. However, with rising gas prices, she is considering using transit but does not know where to start.
 - One participant did not have a positive experience using the Chicago train system. She found one of the train segments to be dark and dank with the odor of stale cigarette smoke.

Distinctions among Amtrak, Metrolink, and the Coaster

- Five participants have used Amtrak. The general impression is that Amtrak has comfortable seats and that its refreshment car is a plus. One person remembers that on the way to Santa Barbara, the Amtrak train stopped constantly and the trip seemed to take many hours.
- The impression of Metrolink is that the seats are uncomfortable, there are no refreshments on board, and the atmosphere is unfriendly.
- One person rode the Coaster from Carlsbad to San Diego. The impression was that the system is not well policed in terms of checking passenger tickets.

Thoughts about Using Rail and Associated Problems

- One participant suggested to her husband that they take the train one weekend to Santa Barbara as a fun outing. They found it took a long time to get to Santa Barbara by train and the trip did not seem appealing or convenient.
- Another participant helped her husband plan a rail trip to his place of work – the City of Hope Hospital. There was no train station near the hospital and rail travel to this destination was not feasible.
- Some participants have thought about using rail service but two primary obstacles emerged: First, they did not have enough information to start (station of origin and station of destination and the schedule of trains) and second, there is little useful information about feeder systems. Once the passenger arrives at the destination train station, there is a lack of information concerning how to gain access to one's final destination either by rail connection or by bus.
 - Most participants do not know the location of the closest train station to their home; further, they generally do not know the station closest to their place of work. This lack of knowledge and information are major obstacles to trying the rail as an alternative form of commuting.
 - There is knowledge among those familiar with Los Angeles that Union Station has all the information they need in one place for purposes of traveling to other parts of Los Angeles by public transit. The Fullerton Station, for example, has little helpful information about connecting to other parts of the region. Thus, arrival at the Fullerton station can be problematic for those who do fully plan their trip to its final destination.
 - It was suggested that shuttle buses or jitneys be used to feed the rail. These shuttles would have to run frequently and information about how they operate would have to be widely disseminated.

Places Respondents Would Think about Visiting by Rail with the Availability of Adequate Feeders

- For those who are thinking about non-commute trips by rail, the following places would be considered: Chino Hills, Buena Park, Van Nuys, Palos Verdes, Long Beach, San Diego (Gaslamp Quarter), and Disneyland.
 - Besides Anaheim Stadium and Disneyland, the participants do not feel that there were very many recreational destinations in Orange County that they would care to visit by rail.

- In general, longer, non-commute trips are more suitable for rail travel. When time is not a major consideration (longer, vacation related trips), the train becomes more attractive as an alternative mode. For such trips, the lifestyle is more leisurely. It is faster to drive the short trips.
- In general, the reasons for considering train travel during non-commuting periods, according to the participants, are as follows: ability to relax on board, avoid traffic and avoid the need to drive, and the notion that train travel for recreational purposes is a novelty.

Comments on Alternative Scheduling Scenarios

Participants were provided train trip scenarios and asked if they were likely to make that trip by train.

- **Example 1: From Tustin Station to Carlsbad Village**

Initially, all of the participants were interested in making this trip by train. However, when they were told that the train ride (including connections) could take about 3 hours and the drive time would be about an hour, everyone rejected the train as an alternative mode for this trip. If the train ride is 1.5 to 2.0 hours, the participants would be more interested in making this trip by train instead of by car. It is clear that a train trip that takes 50 percent more time than driving is a competitive option.

A major concern about this trip is that a train would not be available for the return trip. After the 3:30 PM train, another train would not be available until 6:00 PM. Thus, the trip would have to be planned carefully.

- **Example 2: Train trip from a station in Orange County to the Staples Center in Los Angeles for a sporting event or a concert.**

The first impression of these participants is that they would like to make this trip to the Staples Center. The major concern is that it would be difficult to return from Los Angeles since the last train leaves at approximately 10:00 PM. In order to catch this train and avoid being stranded, one would have to leave the evening event before its conclusion.

Coordination and Integration of Metrolink, Amtrak, and Coaster Services

Participants were asked to visualize and consider a future rail system that integrates the three systems. Trains would run in the early morning and late at night and they would be available 7 days per week. Trains would operate at 30-60 minute intervals – seamlessly without connection difficulties. The following comments were made in response to such a system:

- With the seamless system described above, participants would seriously consider using the train for various trips. There is still little interest in making short trips by train (e.g. Anaheim to Orange for lunch) due to concerns about travel time. The

exception is the trip to Anaheim Stadium to attend a baseball game where participants expressed some interest.

- There is more inclination to use the train for longer trips to such attractions such as Petco Park and the Staples Center. There is also some interest in using the train to visit Santa Barbara. The lingering concern is that a train would not be available late at night after the conclusion of the concert or sporting event. One person suggested that a dedicated train be available for the events. Perhaps a train that will take people to the event as well as a train that will be available for the return trip would be useful.
- The participants are more likely to use the train for the line haul if rail connectors were available as opposed to bus connectors. Buses are subject to delays in traffic.

Other Impressions of the Train

- Participants perceive Amtrak to have more comfortable seats than Metrolink where one can sit back and relax. The refreshments available on Amtrak are also a nice amenity not available on Metrolink. Metrolink is noisy and not conducive to conversation.
- Participants have negative impressions of the following train characteristics: ease of use, transfer among systems, and promptness and reliability.
- There is not enough parking at Metrolink stations and this is a major problem.
- The cost of the train is viewed as similar to the cost of using the automobile. However, the greatest difference is that the train takes much longer.
- Participants are not motivated by environmental considerations to use the train. It was suggested that no attempt should be made to “sell” the train on the basis of helping the environment. The locomotive produces pollution in great amounts.
- It is not reasonable to compare rail systems in southern California with systems in other parts of the world. Transit systems work well where population density is high. The cities in Europe and cities in the United States such as New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco are characterized by such densities and their transit systems are quite successful. While the population density is increasing in southern California, it is not at all comparable to the places where transit is in high demand and has become a way of life.
- One participant commented that the space that was used to build the toll roads should have been used to construct electrified transit service (with overhead wire).

New Customers

- Participants agreed that the primary market for the recruitment of future rail riders should be the youth – primarily college-age students. The rising price of gas should be a major motivator as well as the fact that time is valuable to people and the thought of being tied up in traffic on a regular basis will become less and less appealing to the youth.
- It will be difficult trying to motivate seniors and pre seniors to use the train instead of their cars. The “baby boomers” are not likely to change their travel patterns in large numbers over the short term.
- One participant indicated that many families (similar to his) will not be able to give up the flexibility afforded by the automobile. There is the need to shuttle children to their appointments and activities in the late afternoon and early evening.

Comments Related to Potential Service Enhancements

1. Flat Fare

- The flat fare of \$1.00 per stop for short trips is seen by the participants as a good idea. The price is reasonable and the concept is simple to understand. The concept has a marketing appeal and it peaked the interest of the participants. One participant immediately recognized a special advantage as follows: Paying \$1 to travel one stop would enable the pass holder to save money on his/her monthly pass.

2. Single Ticketing

- Participants thought that a single ticket for an entire trip (rail and bus) is very appealing. They compared the single ticket to a roundtrip airline ticket that shows all departure and arrival times for the main flights as well as connecting flights.

3. Café Car on Trains

- Participants feel that a café car should only be considered for relatively long trips. One participant, however, feel that light refreshment (wine, water, snacks) should be available on trips of one-half hour or more.

4. Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor Timetable and Website

- Everyone is interested in a consolidated timetable as well as a consolidated website that coordinates the schedules of the three train systems. The primary interest is in an interactive website which shows how to get from point A to point B. This interactive

concept sparked interest in the use of train travel among those who otherwise had little interest.

- Participants do not see much need for a hard copy of the schedule. It is easy to print a schedule from the website.

5. On-Board Information

- Participants would like TV monitors on-board the train. These monitors should indicate each stop along the route and whether the train is expected to be late.

6. Electronic Real-Time Information at Stations

- The participants are not enthusiastic about the need for real-time electronic information at the train stations. They would prefer to have information about train delays and other problems that affect them before they arrive at the station and/or while they are on-board the train.
- While they would not mind having WIFI at the stations to access information through personal computers, they would much prefer to have Internet connections on the train.

7. Freeway Signs

- Participants thought that freeway signs that provide information about trains would be useful. If the sign indicated that a passenger's train was severely delayed, that person would be able to avoid going to the station and could immediately look for other travel options (e.g. continue driving to final destination).

8. Intermediate Stops by Amtrak

- Participants agree that Metrolink should provide more trains at midday. It is not cost effective for Amtrak to stop at more stations at midday.
- In general, participants feel that all train systems should concentrate on providing trains at the peak hours and then consider covering the midday.
- One participant emphasized that it is important for passengers to know how they can reasonably get to their final destination after they arrive at the destination station. Providing people useful information about feeders/connections is very important and is critical to the sustained use of the train.

9. Schedule Showing all Connections Within 30 Minutes at Major Transfer Stations

- Participants are not particularly interested in the availability of schedules (showing all connections within 30 minutes) at Los Angeles, Fullerton, and Oceanside. It is much more important to know how to get from one's origin to one's final destination.

10. Information Submitted Directly to Cell Phone

- Most participants generally think that receiving text messages on their cell phone about train delays is a good idea; a few are unsure or lukewarm on the idea.

Table 3 summarizes the relative importance that participants attach to each potential service enhancement. The "aggregate" ranking (ranking based upon a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very important and 5 = very unimportant) represents the sum of all rankings provided by each participant for each feature. It is clear that a consolidated LOSSAN website and timetable that integrates all three systems, the \$1.00 per stop fare concept, and the single ticket for the entire trip are the most appealing service features to these participants in contrast to riders. The column labeled "overall relative importance" indicates the number of times participants marked a service feature as important. They were asked to rank up to three as most important to them. The same features emerge as having high priority. Freeway signs that show train information are regarded as least important to the participants.

Public Communications Campaign

The following suggestions were put forward by the participants to promote train ridership.

- Advertisements that promote train ridership on television are important because the use of visual images is critical in this process of rider recruitment.
- Radio announcements are especially important because people generally listen to the radio while they are driving. The message should be, "We can get you there." These messages should air primarily during rush hour so drivers feel the impact of traffic congestion and how train travel can alleviate it.
- Flyers should be sent to all businesses, especially in the LOSSAN corridor, providing information about train travel.
- Businesses should be motivated to provide incentives to their employees for using transit in their commute to work.

- One participant suggested that, if the technology is available, the option to permit someone to take their car with them on the train would be a great motivator to sustain their ridership.

Best Way to Obtain Information

- Besides newsletter, flyers, and radio announcements (mentioned above), participants feel that advertisements in local community newspapers would be an effective advertising medium.
- Others feel that packaging train travel with tickets to a sporting event or concert would be an effective way to promote train ridership.

**Table 3:
Rating/Ranking of Suggested Service Enhancements to LOSSAN Corridor Integration**

June 25, 2008 – Non-Users of Train (Some Experience) Potential Service Enhancements	*Aggregate Ranking From High Importance to Low Importance (LOWER SCORE IS HIGHER RANKING)	**Overall Relative Importance Higher Numbers = Higher Importance
Consolidated LOSSAN website with information about all three services	16	8
Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor timetable that would allow the rider to see all the trains in the corridor as well as connections between train systems	18	6
\$1 per stop fares	18	4
Single ticketing for entire trip – including all bus and rail systems	19	7
Electronic real-time information at stations – re: arrivals, departures, late trains with possibility to tap into this system from your home, office or portable Internet device.	21	4
Schedule showing all connections that will be available within 30 minutes at major transfer points (Los Angeles, Fullerton, Oceanside).	26	1
On-Board Information	28	
More Midday Amtrak Stops	29	0
Wireless internet access at stations	29	0
Café car for snacks, soft drinks, cocktails	30	2
Information transmitted directly to your cell phone about delays	33	1
More Midday Metrolink Trains	33	0
Freeway signs that show train information	45	0
<p align="center">*Represents the sum of all rankings for each feature (scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = high importance and 5 = low importance) ** Represents the number of times the feature was marked as important</p>		

**Transit Non-Rider Focus Group
(Little or No Transit Experience)**

Date: Tuesday, July 1, 2008
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Place: Ask Southern California
Facilitator: Richard A. Parker, Ph.D.

General Travel Patterns and Knowledge of the Rail System

- Most of the participants live and work within Orange County. A few participants are not currently employed.

- Three participants have some basic knowledge about Amtrak, the Coaster, and Metrolink. This information can be summarized as follows:
 - One participant heard about Amtrak or saw it on the track when he was passing by.

 - Another participant knows that Amtrak is a federal or national system and that Metrolink is more regionally based.

 - Metrolink operates lines to Los Angeles, Orange County, and Riverside.

 - Metrolink is the basic commuter train, while Amtrak is used for more extensive travel.

- All but two of the participants view the train as a mode for intercity travel more so than travel within Orange County.

Thoughts about Using the Train

- Six participants have thought about the possibility of using the train. Among these participants, there is some familiarity with the location of the Fullerton Station, the Orange Station, the Anaheim Station, and the Irvine Station. It is a good idea to have more information about where train stations are located.

- The general perception is that it is cheaper to drive than it is to use the train. One person indicated that it cost \$27 to travel by train to Los Angeles and with a family of three, the fare approaches \$90. Another issue is that the cost of getting from a destination station to the final destination is quite costly if one has no information about how to use public transportation to accomplish this. The cost of using a taxi is prohibitive.
- One woman indicated that she used the train when her car was in the repair shop for two weeks. She commuted from Anaheim to Irvine by train and found the experience to be daunting, complex, and long. She felt alone and confused waiting for the train. She asked other passengers what to do and managed to make the train trip by trial and error. A person, who is not as persistent as she is, would probably have given up trying to use the train. She was never comfortable using the train and did not sustain her ridership after her car was repaired.
 - New riders must feel confident in using the train. Agents or ambassadors should be available to help passengers find their way.
 - The critical issue is that one loses control by using the train. Someone else determines when you will get there. So, even with rising gas prices, using one's car is preferable.
- Another person mentioned that he likes to drive because driving provides the flexibility he requires in his schedule. However, the rising gas prices have caused him to think about using transit.
- One participant recently totaled her car on the 91 Freeway and thought about the possibility of using transit for the first time.

The Possibility of Using the Train for Recreation and Entertainment Trips

- One participant would like to take a train trip from Fullerton to San Diego with her children during the summer for various recreational opportunities. She knows how to get to the Fullerton Station but is entirely unsure about what to do when she arrives in San Diego.
- Another person considered taking the train on a Saturday afternoon from Anaheim Station to Los Angeles. When she found that the round trip price is \$20 person, she just left. She felt this price is too expensive.
- Another participant reported that his brother-in-law travels by train from Burbank to Fullerton every day. He travels with friends and finds the trip to be relaxing. The trip is largely a social outing as well as a means of transportation.

- This participant also indicated that the train is not a practical mode of transportation because it is so slow – stopping frequently. One needs plenty of time in his/her schedule for the train to be a viable travel option.

Other Places Participants Would Like to go by Train

Participants would like to make the following trips:

- Long Beach Airport
- Irvine near John Wayne Airport to access job opportunities in that area
- Fullerton to Oceanside to see family
- Santa Barbara (challenges associated with changing trains)
- Pechanga Indian Reservation
- San Bernardino
- Palm Springs

Perceived Problems Associated with Train Travel

- There is some concern that the train is slow because it stops at too many stations. To solve this problem, it was suggested that a dedicated track be established for express trains.
- One person expressed some frustration about not knowing where the stations are located. She feels that marketing is poor in this regard.
- Other participants feel lost at the station --- especially the destination station. There is little confidence in knowing how they will get to their final destination once they arrive at the destination station. One person went on-line to try to figure out the feeder system but found it to be too complicated. She decided simply to pay the taxi fare when the connection was not obvious.
- Several participants (especially women) are concerned about their personal safety while waiting at train stations. On the weekends, some stations (e.g. Irvine) are virtually deserted and Orange is less safe than most. Fullerton and Santa Ana are better in terms of safety because they are located in areas of higher population density.
- Most of the participants think of the train as not easy to use.

- When a person arrives at the station within a few minutes of when the train is due to arrive, that person is frequently not sure if he/she missed the train or it did not yet arrive. This issue can be solved by better information provided at the stations.
- It does not take much to bring the train to a standstill. The slightest mishap can cause extensive delays. At least one-half of the participants view the train as unreliable.

Comments on Alternative Scheduling Scenarios

Participants were provided alternative train trip scenarios and asked if they were likely to make that trip by train.

- **Example 1: From Tustin Station to Carlsbad Village.**

Participants were told that this train ride could take up to 3 hours depending on the time of day and the day of the week. They were also told that the driving time is about 1 hour according to Mapquest. This time differential did not make the train an attractive alternative for this trip. Participants insisted that the train would have to make the trip within the same 1 hour time frame and the cost of the trip would have to be less than driving. Time is valuable and if the passenger can make the time on the train useful, then perhaps the ride would be worthwhile.

- **Example 2: Train trip from Orange County to a sporting event or concert at the Staples Center in Los Angeles**

Nine participants would entertain making this trip by train; the remaining participants definitely feel that driving is a better option, especially in the evening. Two issues would have to be resolved before the train becomes a viable option: first, the availability of parking would have to be limited at the concert site and not require walking a long distance late at night or a shuttle would have to be available to transport people to the train station and second, a late train would have to be available to return people to their home train station.

Coordination and Integration of Metrolink, Amtrak, and Coaster Rail Services

Participants were asked to visualize and consider a future system that integrates the three systems. Trains would run in the early morning and late at night and they would be available 7 days per week. Trains would operate at 30-60 minute intervals -- seamlessly without connection difficulties. The following comments were made in response to such a system.

- The seamless, integrated train system would only motivate four participants to consider using the train to travel from Tustin to Carlsbad Village.

- Most of the participants are not interested in a short two-station trip at lunchtime. They feel that the one-half hour wait for the train to arrive at both ends plus the time spent on the line haul is still too long for a trip at midday. Also, the location of the final destination relative to the location of the final destination station is critical to the overall time it takes to make this trip.
- Participants feel that good business practices do not include arriving for lunch at a restaurant on a feeder bus. One would leave the client with a much better impression by arriving in an automobile – preferably a prestigious one.
- One participant indicated that a common logo or name for the integrated system could be useful. It would enable new riders to recognize one train system rather than three separate systems.
- There is a great deal of discomfort among the participants that they do not have enough knowledge to use the train efficiently and safely.
- Other places that participants would be interested in visiting if the seamless system becomes a reality are as follows: Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Chino/Norco area, and Venice Beach.

New Customers and Markets

When asked about the development of new markets for train travel, participants made the following comments and suggestions:

- The new customers for rail transit will largely be the next generation. Children should be oriented to using the train and other types of transit from an early age. Orienting young people to the train is a long-term process and will involve an extensive educational campaign that emphasizes the benefits of transit.
- This educational effort should not consist of dry and boring lectures. Rather, it should appeal to the youth on a personal level and attempt to instill passion in them about helping to save the environment and convincing them that each individual effort makes a difference.
- Potential customers of train travel will be found wherever jobs are located in large numbers. Make it possible for people to travel by train where they need to be. The locations of jobs, train stations, and train routes should be coordinated. This speaks to the concept of transit-oriented development where development is planned so that people have the opportunity to use transit in their daily commute.
- New customers are less likely to include pre seniors and seniors who were brought up in the automobile generation. It will be difficult to move this generation out of their cars.

Comments Related to Potential Service Improvements

1. Flat Fare

- The flat fare of \$1.00 per stop for short trips is seen by nearly everyone as a good idea. This plan is clearly cheaper for shorter trips than the current fare structure. This plan is also simple and understandable. If the appropriate feeder system is in place and parking becomes less of a problem, people may actually find these short train trips an added benefit to their daily travel routine.
- One participant would like to see a family fare to encourage families to use the train recreationally for short trips.

2. Single Ticketing

- Most of the participants find the single ticket concept to be appealing. One ticket for the entire trip would inform the passenger exactly what to do in terms of taking trains and buses to take to reach one's final destination.
- One participant would be willing to buy a ticket that does not allow substitutions if the price is right.

3. Café Car on Trains

- This is a nice amenity but it is not essential. The cafe car will not entice new riders to the train.
- One participant suggested that a small library car or reading area could be a pleasant amenity.

4. Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor Timetable and Website

- Everyone is interested in a consolidated timetable as well as a consolidated website that coordinates the schedules of the three train systems.

- While there is an overall preference for a consolidated website, some participants recognize that not everyone is technologically oriented. Thus, there will also be a need for hard copies of the consolidated schedule.
- One participant commented that the use of paper schedules is not environmentally sensitive.

5. Schedule Showing all Connections within 30 Minutes at Major Transfer Stations

- Participants are not particularly interested in the availability of schedules (showing all connections within 30 minutes) at Los Angeles, Fullerton, and Oceanside. This does not matter unless one of these stops is your origin or destination stop.
- The primary interest is in an interactive system that shows passengers how to get from point A to point B.
- One participant commented that there is no substitute for the ability to contact by telephone a live person who can help with information and directions. Not everyone is oriented to website technology.

6. On-Board Information

- Participants agree that on-board information about train arrival times and delays should be available. Information about bus connectors and shuttles should also be posted or electronically displayed.

7. Electronic Real-Time Information at Stations

- Participants feel that real-time information at the stations is a good idea. The information should indicate the following: whether the trains are on time and the track number of departure or arrival.
- One person suggested that each registered passenger be assigned a unique code that could be punched into a machine at the station. The machine would produce information relevant to that passenger's individually programmed needs.

8. Freeway Signs

- The participants feel that there is no point to the use of freeway signs to announce train conditions. This would benefit only a small minority of passengers who happen to drive to the station. These freeway signs should be used to describe road conditions or to post Amber Alerts. If signs are used for train announcements, they would only be distracting. There are better ways to provide train information.

9. Intermediate Stops by Amtrak

- Participants generally agreed that Metrolink should provide more trains at midday; Amtrak should not be slowed down by requiring that its trains stop at more stations during the midday.
- One person recommended peak/off-peak pricing. That is, early bird low fare specials should be offered to those who opt to take earlier trains and help to lighten peak traffic.

10. Wireless Internet at Stations

- The participants are interested in the availability of wireless internet at the train stations. One participant feels that this is an important component to the overall effort of making communications about rail travel more effective and useful.

11. Information Submitted Directly to Cell Phone

- Participants generally feel that receiving text messages on their cell phone about train information is a good idea.

Table 4 summarizes the relative importance that participants attach to each potential service enhancement. The “aggregate” ranking (ranking based upon a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very important and 5 = very unimportant) represents the sum of all rankings provided by each participant for each feature. The most important service feature for these participants are electronic real-time information at the stations, single ticketing for the entire trip, and the \$1.00 per stop fare concept. The column labeled “overall relative importance” indicates the number of times participants marked a service feature as important. They were asked to mark up to three as most important. Again, electronic real-time information and information transmitted to cell phones about delays received a high priority. Freeway signs that show train information are regarded as least important in term of possible service enhancements.

Public Communications Campaign

The following suggestions were put forward by the participants to promote train ridership:

- Participants have previously expressed some suggestions related to advertising the train system when they were addressing the issue of attracting new customers and new markets. Participants feel that an educational campaign focused on children is critical, there is a need to make the campaign personal and individual, and the campaign should emphasize the cost differential between the rail and the automobile.
- One participant mentioned that the government should provide tax incentives for using public transportation. Perhaps this could be in the form of writing off a portion of the fare.
- Other ideas centered on providing gift cards, groceries, weekend trips, and similar rewards for using public transit.
- One participant feels that the campaign should include Television and/or the Internet. It is important to have visual images. These images should focus upon a person who has successfully mastered their route through the use of public transit including the rail and connector buses.
- Another person feels that train tickets should be provided as part of a package for those who purchase tickets to special events (e.g. Anaheim Stadium, Staples Center).
- The public communication campaign should take advantage of the fact that people listen to their radio while they are driving. On the heels of a radio report about severe traffic congestion, a promotion regarding the train could have a significant impact.
- The newspaper is not viewed as useful in promoting the train.
- The cost differential between the automobile and transit should be emphasized. The “full” cost of operating the automobile should be made clear – insurance, maintenance, gas, etc.
- Television and radio commercials promoting train travel should be presented by celebrities.

Table 4: Rating/Ranking of Suggested Service Enhancements to LOSSAN Corridor Integration		
July 1, 2008 – Non-Users of Train (Little or No Experience) Potential Service Enhancements	*Aggregate Ranking From High Importance to Low Importance (LOWER SCORE IS HIGHER RANKING)	**Overall Relative Importance High Numbers = High Importance
Electronic real-time information at stations – re: arrivals, departures, late trains with possibility to tap into this system from your home, office or portable Internet device.	15	7
Single ticketing for entire trip – including all bus and rail systems	18	8
\$1 per stop fares	20	12
On-Board Information	23	1
Consolidated LOSSAN website with information about all three services	24	2
Schedule showing all connections that will be available within 30 minutes at major transfer points (Los Angeles, Fullerton, Oceanside).	29	0
Consolidated LOSSAN Corridor timetable that would allow the rider to see all the trains in the corridor as well as connections between train systems.	30	3
Wireless internet access at stations	33	1
Information transmitted directly to your cell phone about delays	38	2
More Midday Metrolink Trains	39	0
Café car for snacks, soft drinks, cocktails	47	1
More Midday Amtrak Stops	48	2
Freeway signs that show train information	64	0
<p>*Represents the sum of all rankings for each feature (scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = high importance and 5 = low importance) ** Represents the number of times the feature was marked as important</p>		

APPENDICES

Screener for OCTA Train Rider Focus Group

Wednesday, June 11

6pm-8pm

Recruitment Population: A list will be provided that will contain names, addresses and phone numbers for Metrolink monthly pass holders whose trips start or end in Orange County. The focus group participants are to be drawn from this list. Concentrate on the northern portion of the County (e.g. north of Santa Ana).

Introduction: The Orange County Transportation Authority, Metrolink, Amtrak, and San Diego's North County Transit District are conducting a series of focus groups to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego. Your name has been provided as a resident of Orange County and member of Metrolink's Orange County panel. Is that correct?

Terminate if "NO"

I'll provide more details in a minute, but might you be interested in participating in a focus group discussion about rail service in Orange County on the evening of Wednesday June 11?

Terminate if "NO"

Details:

1. Time: 6-8 p.m.
2. Place: Ask Southern California, which is near The Block and The City – near I-5 and just north of the 22.
3. \$100 fee for participation --- dinner at 6pm.

Are you still interested? **Terminate if "NO"**

Screens:

1. During the past 3 months, have you used the train for your travels in the Los Angeles-San Diego corridor at least 2 times per week? **Thank and Terminate for a "No" answer**
2. Do you sometimes also ride Amtrak? **Would like 5-6 "Yes" members of group**
3. Have you had occasion to use the Coaster in San Diego County? **Would like 2 "Yes" members of group—desirable but not absolutely necessary.**

If all answers meet requirements, go ahead and schedule participation.

Screener for OCTA Train Rider Focus Group

Tuesday, June 24

6:30pm-8:30pm

Recruitment Population: A list will be provided that will contain names, addresses and phone numbers for Metrolink monthly pass holders whose trips start or end in Orange County. The focus group participants are to be drawn from this list. Concentrate on the southern portion of the County (e.g. south of Santa Ana).

Introduction: The Orange County Transportation Authority, Metrolink, Amtrak, and San Diego's North County Transit District are conducting a series of focus groups to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego. Your name has been provided as a resident of Orange County and member of Metrolink's Orange County panel. Is that correct?

Terminate if "NO"

I'll provide more details in a minute, but might you be interested in participating in a focus group discussion about rail service in Orange County on the evening of Tuesday June 24?

Terminate if "NO"

Details:

1. Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
2. Place: Adler-Weiner Research in Irvine.
3. \$100 fee for participation --- dinner at 6:30pm.

Are you still interested? **Terminate if "NO"**

Screens:

1. During the past 3 months, have you used the train for your travels in the Los Angeles-San Diego corridor at least 2 times per week? **Thank and Terminate for a "No" answer**
2. Do you sometimes also ride Amtrak? **Would like 5-6 "Yes" members of group**
3. Have you had occasion to use the Coaster in San Diego County? **Would like 2 "Yes" members of group—desirable but not absolutely necessary.**

If all answers meet requirements, go ahead and schedule participation.

Screener for OCTA Train Non-Rider Focus Group

(Some Transit Experience)

Wednesday, June 25

6:30pm-8:30pm

Recruitment Population: Recruit from general population of Orange County residents—except for those who are residents of Huntington Beach, Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, Fountain Valley, Westminster, Midway City.

Introduction: The Orange County Transportation Authority, Metrolink, Amtrak, and San Diego’s North County Transit District are conducting a series of focus groups to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego.

We are conducting a focus group on the evening of Tuesday June 24 among people who do not regularly ride the trains in the Los Angeles-San Diego corridor at least twice per week.

1. Do you use public transit —buses or commuter rail—more than once a week?
Terminate if “YES”
2. Have you used transit at least 15-20 times in your adult life? **Terminate if “NO”**
3. Do you presently use rail service in Orange County sometimes? **IF YES, limit to 7 participants and skip over next question—once seven achieved, terminate with YES response. IF NO, continue to next question.**
4. Are you interested in the possibility of using rail service at least sometimes to go to places in Orange County, Los Angeles, or San Diego **Terminate if “NO”**

I’ll provide more details in a minute, but might you be interested in participating in a focus group discussion about Orange County rail service on the evening of Wednesday June 25?

Terminate if “NO”

Details:

1. Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
2. Place: Adler-Weiner Research in Irvine.
3. \$100 fee for participation --- dinner at 6:30pm.

Are you still interested? **Terminate if “NO”**

If all answers meet requirements, go ahead and schedule participation.

Screener for OCTA Train Non-Rider Focus Group

(Little or No Transit Experience)

Tuesday, July 1

6pm-8pm

Recruitment Population: Recruit from general population of Orange County residents—except for those who are residents of Huntington Beach, Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, Fountain Valley, Westminster, Midway City.

Introduction: The Orange County Transportation Authority, Metrolink, Amtrak, and San Diego’s North County Transit District are conducting a series of focus groups to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego.

We are conducting a focus group on the evening of Tuesday June 24 among people who do not regularly ride the trains in the Los Angeles-San Diego corridor at least twice per week.

1. Do you use public transit —buses or commuter rail—more than once a week?

Terminate if “YES”

2. Have you used transit at least 15-20 times in your adult life? **Terminate if “YES”**

3. Are you interested in the possibility of using rail service at least sometimes to go to places in Orange County, Los Angeles, or San Diego **Terminate if “NO”**

I’ll provide more details in a minute, but might you be interested in participating in a focus group discussion about Orange County rail service on the evening of Tuesday July 1?

Terminate if “NO”

Details:

1. Time: 6-8 p.m.
2. Place: Ask Southern California, which is near The Block and The City – near I-5 and just north of the 22.
3. \$100 fee for participation --- dinner at 6pm.

Are you still interested? **Terminate if “NO”**

If all answers meet requirements, go ahead and schedule participation.

Suggested question/answer format
LOSSAN train rider focus group—6/11/08

I. Facilitator Introduction: My name is Richard Parker. I am going to lead the discussion we have planned for today. We are here to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego—known as the LOSSAN South corridor. The Orange County Transportation Authority wants to hear from each of you. As riders of this train service, your input is very important.

Facilitator will then ask each participant to introduce himself or herself, including in what community they live and where they work. They will also be asked to indicate the station where they board the train and the station where they disembark.

We are very appreciative that you are here and OCTA appreciates it very much as well. What we value the most is that you are taking the time to tell us your opinions and thoughts, which will contribute to OCTA's decision making and policies in the near future.

We are videotaping tonight's meeting so that we can go back and review exactly what you had to say. The tapes will remain in our possession for that purpose only.

Brief technicalities: *Each person will give his/her response in succession until all responses are exhausted. The group will then openly discuss any comments, suggestions, or ideas until the facilitator determines that the question has been thoroughly discussed. The facilitator will attempt to determine a consensus or validation of the views expressed and will summarize the key points.*

Question/Discussion Outline:

1. a. Do you ride Metrolink, Amtrak or Coaster? Which one(s)?
b. How frequently do each of you ride the train in this LOSSAN South Corridor.

- c. At what times/days do you ride the train?
 - d. Do you use the train mostly to commute to work?
 - e. How would you describe the differences between the three different services?
2. Who among you uses the train for non-commute trips such as shopping or recreation?
- a. within Orange County?
 - 1. Purpose of trip/Destination
 - 2. Days of the week
 - 3. Pros/cons of non-commute trip
 - 4. Also use for non-commute to LA or SD?
 - b. Anybody else use the train for non-commuting trips to LA or San Diego?
 - 1. Purpose of trip/Destination
 - 2. Days of week
 - 3. Pros/cons of non-commute trip
 - 4. On some of these longer trips, would you use a dining car if one were available?
 - a. How much would you spend to eat on board?
 - b. Would this entice you to make more of these longer trips outside of Orange County?
 - c. For those who do not use the train for non-commuting trips, have you considered using the train for any of those non-commuting trips either within OC or to LA or SD?
 - d. What has stopped you from using the train for non-commuting trips?
 - e. Do you think of the train more in terms of traveling within the county or to points outside of the county?
3. a. When did you first begin using the train to make these trips?

- b. Why did you start using it?
- c. Why do you continue to ride? In other words, what are the features of the system that keep you riding--what are the features that maintain your interest and your patronage?

PROMPT: What benefits do you derive from using the train that make it preferable to other travel options?

- punctuality and reliability
- cost
- reduced fuel consumption
- frequency of service
- safety (**ELABORATE:** personal on board, at stations, accidents)
- reduction in air pollution/greenhouse gases
- physical comfort
- privacy
- ability to work, read or relax while traveling

- 4. What would you say could be the system's biggest selling point to non-riders? In other words, what is the #1 reason to ride the train?
- 5. What characteristics of the using trains for your trips are unattractive to you? What would you suggest to improve these shortcomings?
- 6. **[IF NOT DISCUSSED IN PRIOR TWO QUESTIONS]** How do you feel about the parking situation at your station (make certain to ascertain station)?
- 7. Let's discuss the adequacy of the connections to the train.
 - a. Do you use the bus feeder system for your train trips? **[DESCRIBE IF NECESSARY]**

If yes,

Do you use the feeder on one or both ends of your trip?

What do you do for transportation on the end where you do not use the feeder system?

What are the benefits of the feeders?

What are the drawbacks?

PROMPT: How about connections? promptness and reliability? comfort? frequency of service? personal safety? hours of operation?

OR

If no,

Why don't you use the feeders?

PROMPT: How about the adequacy of the connections? promptness and reliability? comfort? frequency of service? hours of operation?

8. If you knew more about the feeders and its capabilities, would that provide an added incentive for you to use the rail?

9. OCTA, Caltrans, Metrolink, Amtrak and North County Transit (the Coaster) are exploring ways to enhance the usefulness of rail services for you, the riders, in an initial stage that can be implemented at a manageable level of expense. They would like to hear your opinions and suggestions about the following **[Discussion of each to follow—then ranking exercise---DESIGNATED FIRST PRIORITIES **]**:

Ask for all—How important do you think this improvement is?

- a. **A consolidated LOSSAN Corridor timetable that would allow the rider to see all the trains in the corridor as well as connections between train systems. PROMPT: Portable? Size? Download to PDA or print from website?
- b. Consolidated LOSSAN website with information about all three services
- c. (ongoing) Show all connections that will be available within 30 minutes at major transfer points (Los Angeles, Fullerton, Oceanside).
 - i. How detailed should this be?---show destinations, stops, fares for all connecting buses and trains?
 - ii. Is it more practical to have this online or hard copy?
- d. Joint ticketing—being able to purchase tickets for the Coaster at Metrolink/Amtrak stations and vice-versa.
- e. **More midday Metrolink service
PROMPT: what times?

[If needed to stimulate discussion: LA-Oceanside gap 8am-3:20pm out of LA—8:25am from Laguna Niguel to LA---3:35pm Oceanside.

- f. More intermediate stops by Amtrak. **[Amtrak travels midday but stops at many fewer stations than does Metrolink]**
- g. **Electronic real-time information at stations—re: arrivals, departures, late trains. Now the message signs can only display one line at a time and only Metrolink information. Looking to install multiple information capable signs. **PROMPT:** What do you want to see on these signs?

Also, are you interested in capability to tap into this system from your home, office or portable internet device?

- h. Central Information booths at LA Union Station and Oceanside to handle the many systems that converge at those sites
- i. **Joint Marketing—There is a Rail2rail pass that allows Metrolink and Coaster monthly pass holders to use Amtrak within the stations

that their pass covers. Amtrak riders can ride Metrolink and the Coaster between their ticketed station pairs. Do you think that these systems should coordinate and expand their joint efforts for special events.

- j. **Airport connections are accomplished by Airport Flyers, LAX Flyaway buses. More could be added at Fullerton to LAX and Santa Ana to John Wayne. In SD, Amtrak riders do not get free transfers—only Coaster riders.
- k. **Amtrak has buses that carry Amtrak riders to and from their trains. These are not heavily promoted, especially for Metrolink riders. Should these be integrated into the schedules and promotions.
- l. Freeway signs that show train information
PROMPT: What information? On-time? Next scheduled?

- m. **511 information on trains is available in SD and scheduled for LA/OC later this year—valuable to you?
- n. Wireless internet access at stations
- o. Information transmitted directly to your cell phone about delays? What else might you want to be informed about?

- 10. Have you visited any of the systems' websites?
 - i. **IF YES**—What is your opinion of the sites [**obtain specifics as to what site they are discussing**]?
 - ii. What improvements would you like to suggest?

- 11. What else do you think could be done by OCTA and the other transit operators to get you to use the train even more than you do already or to attract new riders?

Conclusion: Thank you for coming here today. We appreciate that you have taken the time to share your thoughts with us. Your input has been very valuable and will be very important in planning future rail services.

LOSSAN Train Rider Focus Group—6/24/08

II. Facilitator Introduction: My name is Richard Parker. I am going to lead the discussion we have planned for today. We are here to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego—known as the LOSSAN South corridor.

We are very appreciative that you are here and OCTA appreciates it very much as well. What we value the most is that you are taking the time to tell us your opinions and thoughts, which will contribute to OCTA's decision-making and policies in the near future.

We are videotaping tonight's meeting so that we can go back and review exactly what you had to say. The tapes will remain in our possession for that purpose only.

Facilitator will then ask each participant to introduce himself or herself, how long they have been using the train and for what purpose.

Brief technicalities: *Each person will give his/her response in succession until all responses are exhausted. The group will then openly discuss any comments, suggestions, or ideas until the facilitator determines that the question has been thoroughly discussed. The facilitator will attempt to determine a consensus or validation of the views expressed and will summarize the key points.*

Question/Discussion Outline:

1. a. **[IF NOT CLEAR FROM INTROS]** Do you use the Metrolink train mostly to commute to work?
 - b. How many of you also ride Amtrak? The Coaster?
2. Who among you uses the train for non-commute trips such as shopping or recreation? Raise your hand if you use the train for non-work trips (Move quickly through this section – when possible, poll group “show of hands”)
 - a. within Orange County?
 1. Purpose of trip/Destination
 2. Days of the week
 3. Pros/cons of non-commute trip

4. Also use for non-commute to LA or SD?
 - b. Anybody else use the train for non-commuting trips to LA or San Diego?
 1. Purpose of trip/Destination
 2. Days of week
 3. Pros/cons of non-commute trip
 - c. For those who do not use the train for non-commuting trips, have you considered using the train for any of those non-commuting trips either within OC or to LA or SD?
 1. What has stopped you from using the train for non-commuting trips?
 2. Do you think of the train more in terms of traveling within the county or to points outside of the county?
3. So you are a very experienced group of riders. That is great because OCTA wants your feedback on some new rail service concepts...But first, let me give you some examples of potential rail trips:

Example 1:

- a. Suppose you live near the Tustin station and want to go to Carlsbad Village for the day to shop and/or dine. Would you like to be able to use the train for a trip like this?
- b. Mapquest estimates the total travel time for this trip by car would be about an hour; the train would take you 3 hours. Does that seem right? Would this travel time difference between a car and train make a difference to you?

Example 2:

- c. Imagine you want to see a sporting event or concert at Staples Center in LA. Would you be interested in going by train? Why or why not?
- d. You live in Mission Viejo. If you wanted to go to LA, what station would be the best to leave from if you wanted to travel to a sporting event or concert at Staples Center?

[Mission Viejo—closer-----Irvine—more options – see if they know this and favor one over other]

4. Metrolink, Amtrak and the Coaster are looking for ways to better coordinate and integrate rail transit service between San Diego and Los Angeles (and maybe even north to Santa Barbara). (Show map.) Service would run early morning to late evening, 7 days per week at intervals of 30-60 minutes. The trains would operate seamlessly, meaning they would be easy to use.....they would have consolidated information, schedules and fares.
 - a. Do you think that you might make that trip to Carlsbad by if this were the case?
 - b. How about the Staples Center trip?
 - c. Assume you are a businessperson in Tustin and you want to meet a client from Orange for lunch – what if you could hop on a train and go to the Orange circle for lunch? Would a short one-station trip within Orange County be appealing?
 - d. Would Petco Park in San Diego to watch the Dodgers play the Padres be something you might want to try by train and visit the zoo or the go to the Gas Lamp District for dining and entertainment?
 - e. How about something simple—use the train to go to an Angel game?
 - f. WHAT OTHER TRIPS WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE IN THE CORRIDOR BY TRAIN IF SEEMLESS TRAVEL EVERY 30-60 MINUTES WERE AVAILABLE? (Santa Barbara??)

For those not so inclined, why not????

5. What would you say could be the proposed system's biggest selling point to non-riders? In other words, what would be their #1 reason to ride the train?
6. OCTA wants to attract new customers to rail.....Who do you think will be the primary new markets or customers for the improved rail service?
7. Besides what we have talked about thus far, OCTA would like to hear your opinions and suggestions about other service enhancements they are considering. **[Discussion of each to follow—then ranking exercise]**

After exercise, ask —How important do you think this improvement is?

[Watch time for #7 —skip discussion of each one and ask most important ones, if necessary but be sure to get to 7a, b, c.]

- a. A flat fare for short trips like \$1.00 for 1 station, \$2.00 for 2 stations, etc.

- b. Single ticketing for your entire trip (includes bus/rail)
- c. A cafe car on the trains—for snacks, soft drinks – maybe cocktails?
- d. A consolidated LOSSAN Corridor timetable that would allow the rider to see all the trains in the corridor as well as connections between train systems. **PROMPT:** Portable? Size? Download to PDA or print from website?
- e. Consolidated LOSSAN website with information about all three services
- f. A schedule that will show all connections that will be available within 30 minutes at major transfer points (Los Angeles, Fullerton, Oceanside).
- g. How detailed should this be?---show destinations, stops, fares for all connecting buses and trains?
- h. Is it more practical to have this online or hard copy?
- i. On-board information? What kind?
- j. Electronic real-time information at stations—re: arrivals, departures, late trains. Now the message signs can only display one line at a time and only Metrolink information. Looking to install multiple information capable signs. **PROMPT:** What do you want to see on these signs?

Also, are you interested in capability to tap into this system from your home, office or portable internet device?

- k. Since the LOSSAN corridor parallels the I-5 freeway, what if we had signs on I-5 that show train information
PROMPT: What information? On-time? Next scheduled?
- l. More midday Metrolink service
. **PROMPT:** what times?

[If needed to stimulate discussion: LA-Oceanside gap 8am-3:20pm out of LA—8:25am from Laguna Niguel to LA---3:35pm Oceanside.

- m. More intermediate stops by Amtrak. **[Amtrak travels midday but stops at many fewer stations than does Metrolink]**
- n. Wireless internet access at stations
- o. Information transmitted directly to your cell phone about delays? What else might you want to be informed about?

8. What else do you think could be done by transit operators to get you to use the train even more than you do already?
9. How do you feel about the parking situation at your station (make certain to ascertain station)?
10. Let's discuss the adequacy of the connections to the train.
 - a. Do you use the bus feeder system for your train trips? **[DESCRIBE IF NECESSARY]**

If yes,

Do you use the feeder on one or both ends of your trip?

What do you do for transportation on the end where you do not use the feeder system?

What are the benefits of the feeders?

What are the drawbacks?

PROMPT: How about the adequacy of connections? promptness and reliability? comfort? frequency of service? personal safety? hours of operation?

OR

If no,

Why don't you use the feeders?

PROMPT: How about the adequacy of the connections? promptness and reliability? comfort? frequency of service? hours of operation?

- b. If you knew more about the feeders and its capabilities, would that provide an added incentive for you to use the rail?

(If pressed for time, can skip or move quickly through #11 – might already have touched on benefits)

11. We're trying to find the main reasons why you ride the train.

PROMPT: What benefits do you derive from using the train that make it preferable to other travel options?

-punctuality and reliability

-cost

-reduced fuel consumption

-frequency of service

-safety (**ELABORATE:** personal on board, at stations, accidents)

-reduction in air pollution/greenhouse gases

-physical comfort

-privacy

-ability to work, read or relax while traveling

12. What kind of public communications campaign could increase ridership and educate the public about integrated passenger services?

Conclusion: Thank you for coming here today. We appreciate that you have taken the time to share your thoughts with us. Your input has been very valuable and will be very important in planning future rail services.

LOSSAN non-rider (transit experience) focus group—6/25/08

III. Facilitator Introduction: My name is Richard Parker. I am going to lead the discussion we have planned for today. We are here to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego—known as the LOSSAN South corridor.

We are very appreciative that you are here and OCTA appreciates it very much as well. What we value the most is that you are taking the time to tell us your opinions and thoughts, which will contribute to OCTA's decision making and policies in the near future.

We are videotaping tonight's meeting so that we can go back and review exactly what you had to say. The tapes will remain in our possession for that purpose only.

Facilitator will then ask each participant to introduce himself or herself, including in what community they live and where they work.

Brief technicalities: *Each person will give his/her response in succession until all responses are exhausted. The group will then openly discuss any comments, suggestions, or ideas until the facilitator determines that the question has been thoroughly discussed. The facilitator will attempt to determine a consensus or validation of the views expressed and will summarize the key points*

1. You are all currently not regular riders of trains along the corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego but have indicated that you have used transit somewhere at least 15-20 times.

- a. Where have you used public transit?
- b. How often at that time?
- c. Have you ever used a METROLINK train?
 - i. For what purpose?

- ii. What did you think of the experience?
- iii. How did you feel about the parking situation at your station (make certain to ascertain station)?
- iv. How important was that as a factor in your choice to use METROLINK?

2. Have you ever used AMTRAK between LA and San Diego?

- i. For what purpose?
- ii. What did you think of the experience?
- iii. How did you feel about the parking situation at your station (make certain to ascertain station)?
- iv. How important was that as a factor in your choice to use AMTRAK?

3. Other transit systems

- i. For what purpose?
- ii. What did you think of the experience?

PROMPT: Train users—ask about adequacy of parking.

iii. Are you familiar with METROLINK? Where have you heard about it?

iv. Are you familiar with the distinction between METROLINK, AMTRAK, and THE COASTER? **[Provide description—and maps]**

2. Have you ever considered using the train services as a regular possibility for your commute?

3. For those who have considered-----

a. Are you aware of the locations of train stations?

If so, which stations would you use on each end of your commute?

b. How far is it from your home and from your work to these stations?

c. Do you know how you would travel between the stations and your work and home if you were to use the train?

- d. Why have you thus far chosen not to use the train regularly?
 - e. What do you consider to be the biggest potential benefits to you were you to use the train?
4. Do you go to any places along the routes that I showed to you for non-commuting purposes?
- a. Which places?
 - b. How often?
 - c. Days of week?
5. Who among has thought about using the train for non-commute trips (e.g recreation, shopping, visiting family and friends)?
- a. within Orange County?
 - 1. Which destinations in particular?
 - 2. Days of week
 - 3. Pros/cons of non-commute trip-- What has stopped you from using the train for non-commuting trips?
 - b. to LA or San Diego?
 - 1. What destinations in particular?
 - 2. Days of week
 - 3. Pros/cons of non-commute trip-- What has stopped you from using the train for non-commuting trips?
6. Do you think of the train as a better option for you to make trips within the County or longer inter-county trips?

We're exploring the use of rail for different types of trips.....:

Example 1:

- a.. Suppose you live near the Tustin station and want to go to Carlsbad Village for the day to shop and/or dine. Would you like to be able to use the train for a trip like this?
- b. Mapquest estimates the total travel time for this trip by car would be about an hour; the train would take you 3 hours. Does that seem right? Would this travel time difference between a car and train make a difference to you?

Example 2:

- c. Imagine you want to see a sporting event or concert at Staples Center in LA. Would you be interested in going by train? Why or why not?
7. Metrolink, Amtrak and the Coaster are looking for ways to better coordinate and integrate rail transit service between San Diego and Los Angeles (and maybe even north to Santa Barbara). (Show map.) Service would run early morning to late evening, 7 days per week at intervals of 30-60 minutes. The trains would operate seamlessly, meaning they'd be easy to use.....they'd have consolidated information, schedules and fares.
- a. Do you think that you might make that trip to Carlsbad by if this were the case?
 - b. Assume you're a business person in Tustin and you want to meet a client from Orange for lunch – what if you could hop on a train and go to the Orange circle for lunch? Would a short one-station trip within Orange County be appealing?
 - c. Would Petco Park in San Diego to watch the Dodgers play the Padres be something you might want to try by train and visit the zoo or the go to the Gas Lamp District for dining and entertainment?
 - d. How about something simple—use the train to go to an Angel game?
 - e. WHAT OTHER TRIPS WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE IN THE CORRIDOR BY TRAIN IF SEEMLESS TRAVEL EVERY 30-60 MINUTES WERE AVAILABLE? (Santa Barbara??)

For those not so inclined, why not????

- 8. Do you think of the train as a better option for you to make trips within the County or longer inter-county trips?

9. Who do you think will be the primary **new** customers for rail service?
10. Whether you know about these characteristics or not, what is your impression of the train in terms of the following features?

- ease of use
- transfers among/between systems
- promptness and reliability
- adequacy of connections to and from your destination and to and from your home
- cost
- environmental issues (greenhouse gases/fuel consumption/ air pollution)
- physical comfort
- frequency of trains
- personal safety
- hours of operation
- ability to read, work, and relax while traveling
- exposure to the weather

[USE JUDGEMENT IN NEXT TWO ABOUT QUALS OF RESPONDENTS TO ADDRESS FEEDER AND PARKING]

11. What are your perceptions about station parking? Plentiful? Limited?
12. Are you aware of the feeder bus system that OCTA operates? **[Explain the system briefly]**

What are your perceptions of this feeder system?

PROMPT:

- promptness and reliability
- adequacy of connections to and from your destination and to and from your home
- physical comfort
- privacy
- frequency of service
- personal safety
- hours of operation

12a. If you knew more about the feeders and its capabilities, would that provide an added incentive for you to use the rail?

13. OCTA wants to attract new customers to rail....Who do you think will be the primary **new** markets or customers for the improved rail service?
14. Besides what we have talked about thus far, OCTA would like to hear your opinions and suggestions about other service enhancements they are considering. **[Discussion of each to follow—then ranking exercise]**

After exercise, ask —How important do you think this improvement is?

[Watch time —skip discussion of each one and ask most important ones, if necessary but be sure to get to a, b, c.]

- a. A flat fare for short trips like \$1.00 for 1 station, \$2.00 for 2 stations, etc.
- b. Single ticketing for your entire trip (includes bus/rail)
- c. A cafe car on the trains—for snacks, soft drinks – maybe cocktails?
- d. A consolidated LOSSAN Corridor timetable that would allow the rider to see all the trains in the corridor as well as connections

- between train systems. PROMPT: Portable? Size? Download to PDA or print from website?
- e. Consolidated LOSSAN website with information about all three services
 - f. A schedule that will show all connections that will be available within 30 minutes at major transfer points (Los Angeles, Fullerton, Oceanside).
 - i. How detailed should this be?---show destinations, stops, fares for all connecting buses and trains?
 - ii. Is it more practical to have this online or hard copy?
 - g. On-board information? What kind?
 - h. Electronic real-time information at stations—re: arrivals, departures, late trains. Now the message signs can only display one line at a time and only Metrolink information. Looking to install multiple information capable signs. **PROMPT:** What do you want to see on these signs?

Also, are you interested in capability to tap into this system from your home, office or portable internet device?

- i. Since the LOSSAN corridor parallels the I-5 freeway, what if we had signs on I-5 that show train information
PROMPT: What information? On-time? Next scheduled?

- j. More midday Metrolink service

. **PROMPT:** what times?

[If needed to stimulate discussion: LA-Oceanside gap 8am-3:20pm out of LA—8:25am from Laguna Niguel to LA---3:35pm Oceanside.

- k. More intermediate stops by Amtrak. **[Amtrak travels midday but stops at many fewer stations than does Metrolink]**

I. Wireless internet access at stations

m. Information transmitted directly to your cell phone about delays?
What else might you want to be informed about?

15. What else do you think could be done by OCTA and the other transit operators to get you to use the train?

16. What kind of public communications campaign could increase ridership and educate the public about integrated passenger services?

17. What is the best way to get information to you in the future?

-newsletters ?

-radio ? (Do you listen to traffic reports, for instance? Which stations do you listen to most frequently?)

-newspapers ? (Which ones? What sections?)

Conclusion: Thank you for coming here today. We appreciate that you have taken the time to share your thoughts with us. Your input has been very valuable and will be very important in planning future transit and rail services for Orange County.

LOSSAN non-rider (little/no transit experience) focus group—
7/1/08

IV. Facilitator Introduction: My name is Richard Parker. I am going to lead the discussion we have planned for today. We are here to discuss the rail system between Los Angeles and San Diego—known as the LOSSAN South corridor.

We are very appreciative that you are here and OCTA appreciates it very much as well. What we value the most is that you are taking the time to tell us your opinions and thoughts, which will contribute to OCTA's decision making and policies in the near future.

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1. Are you familiar with the distinction between METROLINK, AMTRAK, and THE COASTER? **[Provide description—and maps]**

[Remember: Besides routes---Amtrak—more roomy, more expensive, fewer stops]

2. Have you ever considered using rail as a regular possibility for your commute?

[FOR THOSE WHO HAVE CONSIDERED FOR COMMUTE]

a. How many of you are aware of the locations of train stations along this route?
[HANDS]

If so, which stations would you use on each end of your commute?

- b. How many of you know how far is it from your home and from your work to these stations? **[HANDS]**
 - c. Do you know how you would travel between the stations and your work and home if you were to use the train?
 - d. Why have you thus far chosen not to use the train regularly?
 - e. What do you consider to be the biggest potential benefits to you were you to use the train for your commute?
4. Do you go to any places along the routes that I showed to you for non-commute purposes such as recreational trips or business meetings or other types of trips?
- a. Which places?
 - b. How often?
5. Who among has thought about using the train for non-commute trips for recreation, shopping or to visit family and friends?
- a. within Orange County?
 - 1. For what purpose?
 - 2. Pros/cons of non-commute trip-- What has stopped you from using the train for non-commute trips?
 - b. to LA or San Diego or Santa Barbara?
 - 1. For what purpose?
 - 2. Pros/cons of non-commute trip-- What has stopped you from using the train for non-commute trips?
6. We're exploring the use of rail for different types of trips.....:

Example 1:

- a. Suppose you live near the Tustin station and want to go to Carlsbad Village for the day to shop and/or dine. Would you like to be able to use the train for a trip like this?
- b. Mapquest estimates the total travel time for this trip by car would be about an hour; the train could take you 3 hours at certain times of the day. Does that seem right? Would this travel time difference between a car and train make a difference to you?

Example 2:

- c. Imagine you want to see a sporting event or concert at Staples Center in LA. Would you be interested in going by train? Why or why not?
7. Metrolink, Amtrak and the Coaster are looking for ways to better coordinate and integrate rail transit service between San Diego and Los Angeles (and maybe even north to Santa Barbara). Service would run early morning to late evening, 7 days per week at intervals of 30-60 minutes. The trains would operate seamlessly, meaning they'd be easy to use.....they'd have consolidated information, schedules and fares.
- a. Do you think that you might make that trip to Carlsbad by if this were the case?
 - b. Assume you're a businessperson in Fullerton and you want to meet a client at the Orange circle for lunch – what if you could just hop on a train at 30 minute intervals, get to Orange in two stops and go to lunch? Would a short two-station trip within Orange County be appealing?
 - c. Would Petco Park in San Diego to watch the Dodgers play the Padres be something you might want to try by train and visit the zoo or the go to the Gaslamp Quarter for dining and entertainment?
 - d. How about something more local—use the train to go to an Angel game?
 - e. WHAT OTHER TRIPS WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE IN THE CORRIDOR BY TRAIN IF SEEMLESS TRAVEL EVERY 30-60 MINUTES WERE AVAILABLE? (Santa Barbara??)

For those not so inclined, why not????

8. Do you think of the train as a better option for you to make trips within the County or longer inter-county trips?
9. Who do you think will be the primary **new** customers for rail service in this county that will keep growing with only so many roads possible?
10. Whether you know about these characteristics or not, what is your impression of the train in terms of the following features? [**QUICKLY—make certain to touch upon ****]

-ease of use**

-transfers among/between systems

-promptness and reliability**

-adequacy of connections to and from your destination and to and from your home**

-cost**

-environmental issues (greenhouse gases/fuel consumption/ air pollution**

-physical comfort

-frequency of trains

-personal safety**

-hours of operation**

-ability to read, work, and relax while traveling

-exposure to the weather

11. What are your perceptions about train station parking? Plentiful? Limited?

11a. To what extent are parking costs and availability at your destinations becoming a problem—and how can free parking at the rail stations play into your travel decisions?

[USE JUDGEMENT IN NEXT QUESTIONS (#12-#13) ABOUT QUALS OF RESPONDENTS TO ADDRESS FEEDERS]

12. Are you aware of the feeder bus system that OCTA operates? **[Explain the system briefly, if necessary]**

a. What are your perceptions of this feeder system?

PROMPT:

-promptness and reliability

- adequacy of connections to and from your destination and to and from your home

-physical comfort

-privacy

-frequency of service

-personal safety

-hours of operation

13. If you knew more about the feeders and their capabilities, would that provide an added incentive for you to use the rail?

14. Besides what we have talked about thus far, OCTA would like to hear your opinions and suggestions about other service enhancements they are considering. They'd like to hear from you about how important these improvements are in terms of enticing you to use the train? The handout will serve as an outline of this discussion AND we'll fill it in in a few minutes.

[Watch time —skip discussion of each one and ask most important ones, if necessary but be sure to get to a, b, c.]

Ask for all—How important do you think this improvement is in creating an incentive for you to use the train?

- a. A flat fare for short trips like \$1.00 for 1 station, \$2.00 for 2 stations, etc.
- b. Single ticketing for your entire trip (includes bus/rail)
- c. A cafe car on the trains—for snacks, soft drinks – maybe wine?
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- g. On-Board information? What kind?
Info on local bus or shuttle information that meet arriving passengers at stations?

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- i. Since the LOSSAN corridor parallels the I-5 freeway, what if we had signs on I-5 that show train information

PROMPT: What information? On-time? Next scheduled?

Info on local bus or shuttle services to that meet arriving passenger at stations?

- j. More midday Metrolink service

. **PROMPT:** what times?

[If needed to stimulate discussion: LA-Oceanside gap 8am-3:20pm out of LA—8:25am from Laguna Niguel to LA---3:35pm Oceanside.

- k. More intermediate stops by Amtrak. **[Amtrak travels midday but stops at many fewer stations than does Metrolink]**
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- newsletters ?
 - radio ? (Do you listen to traffic reports, for instance? Which stations do you listen to most frequently?)
 - newspapers ? (Which ones? What sections?)

Conclusion: Thank you for coming here today. We appreciate that you have taken the time to share your thoughts with us. Your input has been very valuable and will be very important in planning future transit and rail services for Orange County.