



**SAN DIEGO
REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

Proj # 79

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January 13, 2003

Chairman R. Kirk Lindsay
1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

REC'D BY CTC

FEB 13 2003

Dear Chairman Lindsay,

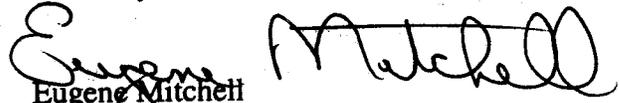
The San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce appreciates the immensity of California's state budget crisis and commends your efforts to balance the state budget. However we feel that there are compelling reasons for the State to continue to support the Oceanside-Escondido Rail Line Project.

The Oceanside-Escondido Rail Line involves the conversion of 22 miles of existing freight railroad into a passenger rail service that parallels Highway 78 and is set to open in December 2005. It is estimated that each year the project would save 1.5 million hours of highway travel time and would reduce carbon dioxide emissions by more than 4,000 tons. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has given the project three rarely awarded "highly recommended" ratings based on the project's potential to relieve regional congestion with a well-designed, cost-efficient plan. In addition, the project design is complete and construction activities have commenced. Nearly \$60 million has been expended to date and over \$21 million in contracts has been awarded for construction, management and design.

The total project cost is \$351.5 million including \$80 million from the state Transportation Congestion Relief Program (TCRP) funds and \$152.1 million from the federal government through an agreement called a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA). The FFGA was literally days away from being signed, when the state budget crisis hit. The FFGA has not been signed due to the federal government's concern over the State's commitment to fully fund its \$80 million share of the project. The TCRP funds have been in application for two years, but could not be allocated until the FFGA was officially signed. *Loss of state funding for the project would result in a loss of federal funds not only to the region, but also to the State, as the funds are restricted to use on eligible New Starts transit projects.*

At this time, we request your continued support for the State to fully fund its share of the Oceanside-Escondido Rail Project. Your support is crucial to the project's success. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 619.544.1309.

Sincerely,


Eugene Mitchell
Vice President of Public Policy

Project # 79

February 11, 2003

REC'D BY CTC

FEB 14 2003

Chairman R. Kirk Lindsay
California Transportation Commission
1120 N. Street
Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: North San Diego County Rail Project Funding

Dear Mr. Lindsay,

As residents and registered voters of San Diego County, we urge your support for San Diego's North County Transit District Oceanside to Escondido Rail Line Project. We are backers of this project and emphasize that the funding already committed to the project should be retained. The following points are included to support our position:

- The Federal Government is prepared to fund over \$150 Million of the project's costs.
- **RETURN ON THE DOLLAR!** The State's previously committed \$83 Million needs to be realized. For each State dollar spent, three dollars of benefit is achieved.
- Nearly **\$60 million has been expended** to date.
- Over **\$21 million in contracts** has been awarded for:
 - Construction
 - Management
 - Design
 - Owner Controlled Insurance Program administration
- Loss of the Project means that **loss of 4,884 direct FTE (full time equivalent jobs) and 6,667 additional secondary or indirect jobs from the project.**
- If the project is lost, **overall development of the community will be lost.** The **economic blow to the region would be staggering.**

I cannot stress enough the importance and value this project will have on the communities of San Diego County.

- The Oceanside-Escondido Rail Line Project will improve 22 miles of existing freight railroad into a passenger rail service planned to operate seven days per week from approximately 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. In addition, it will include a new alignment to California State University, San Marcos.

Please take into consideration our expressed concern for the support of funding for the Oceanside to Escondido Rail Line Project.

Sincerely,















