

## JULY 18, 2024 REGULAR BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

1. **LOSSAN Rail Realignment Notice of Preparation:** The North County Transit District (NCTD) Board of Directors (Board) received an update from the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) on their efforts to realign NCTD's railroad tracks off of the Del Mar Bluffs. SANDAG released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Realignment Project (Project), which included three potential tunnel alignments. SANDAG solicited public feedback through the NOP on the three potential alignments and the Project in general.

As the owner of the railroad right-of-way in the Project area and the Rail Common Carrier as designated by the Surface Transportation Board, NCTD has discretionary authority over the Project. Therefore, it is considered a responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Project and must provide comments on the NOP. NCTD's response to the NOP highlights the limited information available in the NOP and notes NCTD's inability to determine specific operational impacts of each alignment at this early stage in the Project development process. NCTD emphasizes the Surface Transportation Board's role in approval of the construction of a realigned railroad and urges SANDAG to consider the following potential impacts of each alignment in its preparation of the DEIR:

- Impacts of construction to COASTER, Amtrak Pacific Surfliner, and BNSF Railway Company freight operations of each alignment.
- Operational feasibility post-construction for all forms of rail transportation, including operations through the tunnel as well as ventilation and train control systems.
- Anticipated operation and maintenance costs, including information on the useful life of each alignment. As the Railroad of Record designated by the Federal Railroad Administration, NCTD is the entity responsible for maintenance of the San Diego Subdivision of the LOSSAN corridor and would therefore assume maintenance responsibility for the newly constructed tunnel.
- Connectivity to existing transit centers for each alignment, including the Solana Beach and Sorrento Valley stations as well as a future special events platform at the fairgrounds.
- Impact of each alignment on travel times for all forms of rail transportation. NCTD is contractually obligated to ensure any capital improvements to the rail line do not increase travel times for Amtrak and BNSF operations.