

Barney Barnett

From: LetitiaPepper@cs.com
Sent: Sunday, July 23, 2006 2:22 PM
To: MDelsman@aol.com

Subject: Re: Tired of getting stuck at train crossings? Supervisor Buster's proposal
Hi Mary,

Thanks for your reply. The Metrolink money is not readily available for grade crossings, but my understanding is that political pressure can be used to switch its use. Riverside County Transportation Commission is not limited to train service, but covers all forms of transportation.

It does seem to me that while Perris and the corridor between it and Moreno Valley is not yet built up, using buses to link them to the existing Metrolink stations makes sense, and meanwhile use the money for the grade separations. This would smooth out street traffic, reduce emissions caused by cars idling at train crossing, and improve people's quality of life -- we already spend too much time on the road commuting.

The other reason to rework the money into grade separations is that, at present, there is some agreement with the BNSF railroad that limits the number of commuter trains that can cross from Riverside to San Bernardino. The County/RCTC is suing the freight line over this issue. Once it is resolved, the Highgrove station would be even more usable, and it's not only more flexible in terms of permutations of lines, but it has a lot more: space for parking, stations, and commercial development like restaurants.

I loved taking Metrolink into LA for work, and I would like to see a broader web of lines and better hours of operation. I do not want to see Metrolink stations on Watkins Drive, because I think the area is not conducive to good parking and traffic circulation. Ideally, a Metrolink station should provide space for a bus line and taxis to come in and wait for passengers, to really make the station a "hub" for transportation. Highgrove has enough space, and UCR could use the Highland Hauler to shuttle students from Highgrove (or the Vine Street station) to UCR quite easily. USC uses a bus to move students from Union Station in LA to their campuses -- which are farther away from Union Station than UCR is from either Vine Street or the Highland station. Running a shuttle from UCR to Highgrove could also serve to drop off and pick passengers from the Technology Park, which is supposed to be building on the presence of resources at UCR.

Obviously, we need to promote the use of light rail -- one of the major causes of particulate pollution is the use of tires. But diesel is a particulate producer, too. So, we need to develop better technology!