



HIGHGROVE HAPPENINGS



Dedicated to the improvement of our community through awareness and involvement in local issues”

METROLINK STOP IN HIGHGROVE ????

June 2001 P. 3 & 5

Denis Kidd and I have been gathering information to see if there is enough community support to try and get a Metrolink stop in Highgrove. Several weeks ago, we talked to the City of Grand Terrace Economic Development personnel to see if there could be a joint effort that would benefit both communities and the surrounding area. Denis recently spoke at one of their City Council meetings about a joint effort regarding Metrolink. We previously learned that a consultant recommended that the proposed line between Perris and Highgrove be changed from the more direct route (straight track to Highgrove) and divert southward approximately 2 miles before reaching Highgrove from Perris near Marlborough St. and Rustin Avenue. The Riverside County Transportation Commission would have to purchase additional land and U.P. track rights plus build new track to connect one railroad to the other since the railroads cross each other at this point in a perpendicular manner and are not parallel. All this would have to be done to get onto the old Southern Pacific/ U.P. line which also would have to be upgraded to get to Riverside's Metrolink station therefore bypassing Highgrove. The R.C.T.C. already owns the entire line from Highgrove to San Jacinto. It is my understanding that there is money already set aside for the line to Perris although the 20 million or so is still not enough. If money is an issue (which it always is) why not continue on the additional 2 miles to reach the BNSF main line at Highgrove where additional commuters could get on and off the train. There already is a train signal bridge between Center St. and Main St. that governs eastward train movement from the San Jacinto industrial spur. This part would not require any additional eastward signaling for the trains at this location since it is already in use by the BNSF freight trains.

Furthermore, several developments have occurred since the consulting firm of Schiermeyer Consulting Service from Seal Beach made their recommendation to R.C.T.C. over 2 years ago in March of 1999. Those changes include the recent approval of over 1500 new homes in the Pigeon Pass area of Highgrove, the rapid expansion of the adjacent Hunter Business Park, the new U. C. R. High Tech Park and the availability of vacant land in Highgrove.

For many of us the timing of the predicted expansion of our area may not be what we want. However, to say that Highgrove is going to remain the same is an understatement. We have already experienced the process of change that will soon effect the entire area. If we remain silent and do not speak up on issues that effect our community then only we as residents are to blame if progress does not move in the direction we want. We must face reality when we are located between Grand Terrace which is land locked by the County line, and the Northern boundary of the City Limits of Riverside, especially when so much of our area is vacant and expandable. The land within our boundaries is becoming more valuable each day. To look far into the future may require a crystal ball but while other agencies make plans for our area we should make sure that each one of those agencies receives input from our local people.

As the price of gasoline increases there will be even more people wanting to commute to and from their destination. On the front page of the Press enterprise on May 31, 2001 there is an interesting article about train riders not having enough space to park while they commute especially in San Bernardino and Riverside. Highgrove is approximately half way between the two and already the junction point from Perris. We could be bypassed and the surrounding area will miss out in what could be a positive influence for the revitalization and stimulation for both the business and residential aspect of the older part of Highgrove. **Remember nothing can be done until ample funding is obtained.** Last month we asked for your input and we received several positive responses. I would like to hear from you to get your opinion whether it is positive or negative.

Let us know how you feel ! Thank you, "Barney" (909) 683- 4994

METROLINK COMMENT: Turn to page 5 for a letter we received about Metrolink. (P.5) Dear Mr. Barnett, We spoke by phone a few weeks ago and you suggested that I write a letter to you regarding my thoughts on the proposed Metrolink Park and Ride stop in Highgrove which I was delighted to read about in your column in the Highgrove Happenings newsletter for May. I work in North Hollywood. My commute is as follows: I drive from my home in Grand Terrace to the Metrolink Station in Riverside (sometimes to San Bernardino). I ride to Los Angeles and then transfer to the Metro Red Line to the North Hollywood terminus where I then transfer to a bus to complete my journey. The time spent commuting is usually 2 - 2 1/2 hours. Done properly, this would not only be great for those of us living in the Highgrove area, but for others who live and work in the greater Riverside-San Bernardino "central" corridor. Thank you, Franklin Carpenter Jr. Grand Terrace, Calif.

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FUTURE METROLINK STATION IN HIGHGROVE???

The Riverside County Transportation Commission owns the Railroad tracks from Highgrove to San, Jacinto which is approximately a distance of 38 miles. The B. N. S. F. Railroad still uses the former Santa Fe track for freight purposes and 1 & 1/2 miles from Highgrove, the former Southern Pacific Railroad track (now owned by Union Pacific) crosses the San Jacinto industrial spur near Marlborough Avenue.

The recommendation received from the consultant hired by R.C.T.C. states that future Metrolink trains coming from Perris should not come to Highgrove but instead should divert onto the SP/UP line near where the two railroads intersect. Since it is impossible for the trains to turn at 90 degree angles, a new switch and curve would have to be installed for access from one railroad to the other. This also would mean additional property would have to be purchased to allow enough room for the curve. As proposed this line would then continue on into Riverside bypassing Highgrove by only 1 & 1/2 miles. It would also mean R.C.T.C. would have to purchase the right to run Metrolink trains over the SP/UP track from Marlborough Ave. to Riverside. In Addition this track is in very poor condition and in need of upgrading and it has many curves.

On the other hand, R.C.T.C. already owns the track all the way into Highgrove. Moreover the track between the SP/UP crossing and Highgrove is 1 1/2 miles of STRAIGHT TRACK!

There is also a new Railroad signal bridge between Center St. and Main St. that allows trains to proceed onto the B. N. S. F. main line from the San Jacinto line. In addition the vacant land between Transit Ave., Center St., and Main St. adjacent to the tracks would make an ideal location for a station stop. This land is also under current ownership of the R.C.T.C. which could be used for a "Park And Ride" location. Both San Bernardino and Riverside Metrolink parking lots are near capacity and Highgrove is approximately halfway between the two cities and already railroad connected. At our CSA meeting on Nov. 27th the Advisory Board adopted a 15 point resolution outlining the benefits of a Metrolink station stop in Highgrove.

The City of Grand Terrace is also interested in this type of access to a nearby commuter line since their access to the B.N.S.F. Railroad is almost impossible due to the difference in elevation between Highgrove and the Santa Ana River especially around the Barton Road overpass. Grand Terrace also will have a similar resolution on their agenda at their city council meeting on Dec. 13th starting at 7:30 pm at the Grand Terrace City Hall on Barton Road.

This article is in not to criticize the R.C.T.C., its Consultants or anyone else. Its purpose is to draw attention to the fact that if this line diversion is approved onto the S.P/UP, Highgrove will be bypassed as a station stop. This may not sound too important now but look at the future opportunity we have now to enhance the older part of Highgrove. We have the potential for growth (whether we like it or not). We may not like some of these changes but we have to realistic about

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where the future growth will be. Grand Terrace on the other hand is "Land Locked" as far as expansion is concerned and we are right next door with buildable, vacant land. A Metrolink stop in Highgrove would increase our property values by providing a combination of a rural type of living and still being able to work in other metropolitan areas. It is important to be aware of what plans are being made by others that affect our community and its future.

R.A. "Barney" Barnett

February 2002 P. 5 & 6

HIGHGROVE METROLINK STOP

The Riverside County Transportation Commission has announced that an "Alternatives Analysis" will be prepared for the San Jacinto R.R. Branchline / I-215 Corridor from the City of Perris to Downtown Riverside. Highgrove and the surrounding communities are requesting a Metrolink station stop in Highgrove. The **1st meeting will be Feb. 13, 2002** at Moreno Valley Council Chamber, 14177 Frederick St., Moreno Valley at 6:30-8:00 pm., **2nd meeting : Feb. 19, 2002** at R.C. T. C., 3560 University Ave., Suite 100, Riverside at 6:00-8:00 pm (N. E. corner University & Iowa Ave.). **3rd meeting: Feb. 20, 2002** at Cesar E. Chavez Library, Community Room, 163 E. San Jacinto Ave., Perris, at 6:30-8:30 pm.

Nov. 27, 2001 County Service Area 126 (Highgrove) passed a resolution recommending that "the Riverside County Transportation Commission grant a Metrolink Station stop at Highgrove when planning for future track upgrading for Metrolink service on the San Jacinto Industrial Spur".

Dec. 12, 2001 The Riverside County Transportation Commission was addressed by Denis Kidd and R. A. Barnett in reference to the petition and 21 members of the Commission were given copies of the resolution. A few days later 10 more copies were mailed to the remaining Commissioners who did not receive one at the meeting.

Dec. 13, 2001 I addressed the Grand Terrace City Council in regard to resolution # 2001 that was on their agenda which was a duplicate of our C. S. A. resolution. Grand Terrace passed the resolution unanimously .

Jan. 8, 2002 Project Area Committee P. A. C. (Highgrove Area Redevelopment) passed a similar petition.

Jan. 15, 2002 I attended the City of Colton Redevelopment meeting and spoke under the public comments section to inform them of our desire to have a Metrolink stop in Highgrove and asked for their support and to please include it on their next agenda.

Jan. 16, 2002 I spoke at the meeting in San Bernardino of the Commuter Rail Committee of the San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) to inform them of our desires.

Jan 22, 2002 Loma Linda City Council unanimously supported a Metrolink stop in Highgrove. Councilman Robert H. Christman also serves as President of SANBAG.

Feb. 19, 2002 Colton City Council to consider similar resolution of support on their agenda.

The purpose in informing the Commissioners in both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and the surrounding communities is to make everyone aware of our desire before plans get too far along when the various agencies make decisions about Metrolink commuter lines and where the station stops will be. Although it may be a very long time until a decision is actually made, we want everyone to know how we feel way before the decision is at hand. We are laying the groundwork now for future consideration.

For additional information please refer to the December 2001 issue of the Highgrove Happenings or call (909) 683-4994.

January 2003 P. 8

Metrolink update

The passing of measure "A" last November extended the ½ cent sales tax for an additional 30 years and authorized bonds up to \$500 million dollars. The bonds would be used for expansion of freeways and streets, transit for seniors and persons with disabilities, and Metrolink commuter rail service.

According to Riverside County Transportation Commission spokesman John Standaford the R.C. T. C. is planning on having additional public hearings in mid February or March, 2003 regarding the proposed commuter service rail line between Riverside and Perris on the San Jacinto industrial spur.

The commuter line would bypass Highgrove if service were diverted onto the old Southern Pacific Railroad tracks near Marlborough Ave. which is only about one mile south of Highgrove.

When more detailed information becomes available, we will inform you of the exact location and time of the public hearings. For more information about Metrolink please call 1 800 371 LINK (5465)

July 2003 P. 3

No surprises at June 11, 2003 meeting

On the front page of last month's issue the article entitled "Metrolink Service to Highgrove Doubtful" we stated that the consultants and R. C. T. C. staff were going to recommend to the Riverside County Transportation Commissioners that the Commissioners authorize the purchase of the old S. P. line between Marlborough Ave. and Riverside for future commuter line between Perris and Riverside. This is exactly what was approved. There were no surprises at the June 11th meeting in spite of past resolutions from Highgrove, Grand Terrace and Loma Linda for a Metrolink station in Highgrove.

This option was the most expensive at over 102 million dollars which moves the project closer to qualifying for federal assistance. If plans proceed as anticipated, commuter rail service would not begin until 2008 and the closest stop to Highgrove would be near Spruce Street and Rustin Avenue.

Supervisor Marion Ashley proposed a second recommendation that was approved that reads: "**Direct staff to explore acquisition of additional right-of-way for a future Highgrove Station to serve the Inland Empire-Orange County Line**".

As a result, on June 19, 2003 I met with their consultant, Carl Schiermeyer from Long Beach and showed him the area where a future Metrolink stop could be located in Highgrove. I also took him to some places that I know he had never been before and showed him where the new homes are planned in the Pigeon Pass area and our potential for growth. Those of us who now enjoy the present rural lifestyle around Highgrove can be assured that this area with all of its vacant land will not remain the same. With San Bernardino and Riverside Counties adding over 500 new residents per day and our availability of vacant land, how long will it be until the actual building boom will explode? If more growth is inevitable will the consultants and those who make the decisions and/or recommendations have a plan for it? I hope so, but only time will tell.

The invention of the automobile was and has been a wonderful contribution to transportation but is also has created some of our biggest problems. Will anyone or anything be able to pull us from our automobiles even if we all someday experience gridlock to such a degree that nobody can even move? Probably not! Will Metrolink ever replace the automobile? Definitely not! Will it help relieve traffic on the roads? I think it already has since most of these commuters would normally be sitting next to you on the freeway.

Maybe the solution is not to build more roads but just quit building automobiles altogether until we catch up with the availability of the roads they drive on. (Think about this the next time you are stuck in traffic).

The old advertisement that said "Next time take the train" may make more sense in the not so distant future!

September 2004 P. 5

Highgrove Metrolink stop submitted to RCTC Commissioners

A new plan using existing tracks and existing commuter trains for a Metrolink stop in Highgrove on the BNSF main line has been mailed to each of the Riverside County Transportation Commissioners. This change was made after attending meetings at UCR and Perris which indicated that RCTC staff is recommending that the commission buy the old S. P. Line where the two tracks intersect at Marlborough Avenue. I asked the commission to abolish the Rustin Ave./ Spruce St. Station and use the money instead to purchase land to give Highgrove and the surrounding areas a more convenient location for local commuters. Previous supporting resolutions were included in the packets from Highgrove, Grand Terrace and Loma Linda.

August 2005 P. 3 & 11

Metrolink Meeting attended by Denis Kidd

CSA 126 Advisory Board member Denis Kidd attended a meeting of the Hunter Park PAC that was held in the Riverside City Council Chambers on Thursday July 21, 2005.

The residents of the University Area south of Highgrove along the San Jacinto Branch rail line have been quite active in expressing their concerns to RCTC (Riverside County Transportation Commission) that 2 stops in their neighborhood, one near UCR and the other near the intersections of Spruce and Rustin Streets, would result in too great of an impact on their area. The two stops would be very close together. On previous occasions I attended their meetings to hear their comments so that a better location could be found to satisfy and also meet the needs of present Highgrove residents and future home owners of the new housing developments currently planned and under construction.

Darell Salmon and Wendy Eads from the University area along with other residents from their area have indicated that a better location for a station stop would be one that is closer to Highgrove. Our CSA 126 Advisory Board has requested a Metrolink station stop in Highgrove for the past several years and resolutions of support have been received from Grand Terrace and Lima Linda. One item of concern expressed by RCTC however is that by building a station in Highgrove would enable more use by San, Bernardino County residents in Grand Terrace and Loma Linda which would be beyond the boundaries of the Riverside County Transportation Commission. .

One of the choices available for consideration by RCTC for a station stop in the area was the establishment of a new track leaving the Perris line with a westward curve near Citrus Avenue, across the vacant field just north of the old Lily Cup on Citrus, and then run parallel to the existing BNSF tracks near Iowa Avenue into the Riverside station. This would require approximately 3 miles of new track from Iowa Ave. plus new track on the curve between the San Jacinto Branch and the BNSF main lines.

Some benefits of a station in this area is there are already grade crossings at Citrus Ave. and Iowa Ave.. With the addition of a new track the crossing gates on the south side of Iowa Ave. would have to be moved back to allow enough room for the addition of another main line but there is enough railroad right of way for another track into Riverside:

Also, the land where the curve would be located is now vacant land with no houses. In addition it would be closer and more accessible to existing Highgrove and Grand Terrace residents and much closer for the future commuter residents of the 2500 new homes planned in the Spring Mountain Ranch and Springbrook Estates projects than the Spruce and Rustin location. The Citrus Avenue Station would hopefully relieve some of the future congestion on Main and Center Streets by using either Spring Street or Palmyrita. The majority of the commuters would not sit in their cars and be blocked by trains at the Center or Main Street crossings because most of the riders are already (and will be) east of the railroad tracks. Access to the Citrus Station could be made without having to cross the busy BNSF tracks.

What really needs to happen is that RCTC and SANBAG need to work together and realize that trains or automobiles do not stop where e their jurisdiction does and both agencies from the two counties need to address the needs of the people in the area no mater what side of the county line they are on. A joint effort between Riverside and San Bernardino Counties is needed to obtain a Metrolink station stop closer to Highgrove just like a joint effort is also needed for an under pass on Main Street under the BNSF main lines where both counties could contribute financially since Main Street is also the Riverside/San Bernardino County line.

December 2005 P. 1 & 4

Transportation plan proposed

As we go to print, the grading continues in the Pigeon Pass area for the new homes. Needless to say, the Highgrove area is undergoing some of the most dramatic changes ever in its long history. New traffic lights are going to be installed to help alleviate some of the additional traffic but in order to further prepare for the impact on our area, I have devised a transportation plan that hopefully will address the needs of our present and future residents. Naturally many long time residents would prefer Highgrove remain a quiet little rural community but realistically speaking, the changes are now under way and we need to prepare for them as soon as possible.

Before going any further, I must explain that none of these requests have been granted. They are being presented to the various agencies for their review and consideration before the vacant land mentioned is developed for other uses. The plan includes:

New North to South Road:

The transportation plan involves requesting the building of a new road from Center St. southward across the vacant 40 acres, across Spring St., and across the vacant 28 acres on the south side of Spring St., and over to the south side of the arroyo for access to Palmyrita Avenue.

On Sept. 19, 2005 I met with the V-President and senior V-President of the development company that owns these vacant 68 acres from Center St. southward to the Arroyo, to advise them that a new connection road between Center St. and Palmyrita Ave. is needed. This new road is in direct line with Northgate that continues southward from Palmyrita to Columbia Avenue for access to the I-215 Freeway. The Columbia Avenue railroad grade crossing is on the top of Riverside's list of priorities for construction of a new railroad grade separation. I also have a letter from the Riverside Land Conservancy stating that they have no objection to crossing the arroyo but it should provide reasonable protection of the natural habitat and an under-crossing for the Regional Trail as well as habitat usage. Additionally, the City of Riverside's Senior Planning Engineer, Mayor Loveridge and Councilman Betro have been given packets containing this proposal since it would extend from County land across the arroyo onto property that is within the Riverside City Limits on the south side of the Springbrook wash.

New East to West Road:

Another new road is needed from the intersection of Transit Ave. and Spring St. by extending Spring St. westward into the vacant 19.27 acres of vacant land and proceeding southward parallel to the BNSF railroad tracks, across the arroyo and connecting to Citrus Street. Closing Villa St. and using Spring St. instead, is also an option to be considered. Having Spring St. extended westward will enable residents on the east side of the tracks access to and from the I-215 without having to cross the tracks or wait on trains when they block Main St., Center St. or Iowa Avenue. Residents would have access to Columbia Ave. by traveling south on Iowa Avenue near Citrus Street instead of sitting at the crossings waiting on trains.

Metrolink Station.

On Oct. 25, 2005, the Grand Terrace City Manager, Tom Schwab, Assistant City Manager, Steve Berry and I met with Riverside County Transportation

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Transportation plan proposed

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Commission staff to discuss the possibility of a Metrolink station in Highgrove. RCTC staff included Stephanie Wiggins, Bill Hughes and Hideo Sugita. The staff indicated that a pedestrian overpass over the BNSF main lines would be needed to allow commuters access to both sides of the multiple tracks for more effective train dispatching if the existing 8 commuter trains stopped in Highgrove. Then, at the Riverside County Transportation Commission meeting on Nov. 9, 2005 I spoke under public comments regarding a Metrolink station in Highgrove and gave the clerk of the board 34 copies of my 8 page requests, for distribution to the 5 County Supervisors, Commissioners from the 24 cities represented by RCTC, and the RCTC staff.

Other packets were also given to the City of Grand Terrace, BNSF Railroad, SANBAG, Riverside County Transportation Director, County Economic Development Agency, Riverside Transit Agency, University Neighborhood Assn., Springbrook Estates, Spring Mt. Ranch, Victoria Homes, & Bixby Land Development. This proposal was also discussed at our Highgrove community meetings on Oct. 25th and Nov. 22, 2005.

The map below shows where the new roads would be located and the proposed location of the Metrolink Station. The Metrolink location presently has 8 commuter trains that pass through Highgrove but do not stop. Currently there are 4 trains each way between Riverside and San Bernardino on the BNSF main lines but we need these 8 trains to stop to pick up or disperse passengers. This entire 35 + acres is now vacant land and the goal of this plan is to use it as a transportation center for Metrolink, Park and Ride, and Bus Service, with a new road between Spring St. and Palmyrita/Iowa Ave. to allow freeway access to and from Highgrove without having to cross the BNSF main line when trains pass through our area.

RCTC has the authority to purchase this large pie shaped vacant land between the BNSF main lines and the Perris Valley Line. Hopefully, this location will not be overlooked since both sides of the property are right next to the railroad tracks. The BNSF side now has commuter service and the San Jacinto Branch (Perris Valley Line) is already owned by the Riverside County Transportation Commission. RCTC needs to purchase this property before it is sold or developed for other purposes. Funding could be applied for through Federal Grants, combination of RCTC and SANBAG funds, TUMP fees, or bonds. Cooperation is needed between Riverside County and San Bernardino County since it is so close to the County line because residents from both Counties would benefit from these improvements. Spring St could be connected to Palmyrita & Iowa Ave similar to the 5 point intersection at Mill St. and "E" St. in San Bernardino and would not interfere with the proposed future railroad overpass at Iowa Avenue.

Your comments are needed: (951)683 4994 Fax (951) 683 7258 or

highgrovenews@adelphia.net

January 2006 P. 1, 4 & 5

Transportation plan update

In our December, 2005 issue I presented a plan to address the upcoming increased traffic that will be created by the addition of over 2,000 new homes in the Highgrove area. Also listed were the various agencies that have been notified of the proposal which includes 2 new roads and a Metrolink stop.

On Dec. 8, 2005 I attended the Riverside City Planning Commission meeting and gave the commissioners copies of the December issue for their review and spoke briefly about the plan since a major portion of it is within the Hunter Park boundaries of the City and would involve cooperation between both City and County agencies. Copies were also left for Diane Jenkins, the principal planner for the City of Riverside Community Development Department Planning Division.

Then on Dec. 12, 2005 I met with Mark Bixby of Bixby Land Company to discuss the new north/south proposed road between Center Street and Palmyrita Avenue that would dissect 65 acres of their vacant land between Center St. and the arroyo to the south, and Garfield Ave. and the UPRR tracks to the west. These are the large empty fields near the elementary school on both sides of Spring Street.

Since our meeting, I have received his letter that supports the east-west road connecting Spring Street to the proposed location of the Metrolink Stop, but he does not support a new street alignment through their 65 acres.

Instead, he would support an alignment along the California Street right-of-way which is the dirt area that runs parallel with and along the east side of the UPRR tracks between Center St. and Palmyrita Avenue. California Street is a dedicated street that is shown on several maps but is not presently used as a north/south street.

There are several reasons that my original plan shows a new roadway between Center St. and Palmyrita Ave. through the 65 acres of the vacant Bixby property.

First of all, you may recall when Northgate ran between Palmyrita and Columbia parallel with, and along the east side of the UPRR tracks. Several years ago, Northgate was moved eastward one block at this location because the City of Riverside said they did not like a road running right next to the RR tracks at an intersection. The street was moved eastward one block and a large commercial building was built by the RR tracks where Northgate used to be located.

The California Street right-of-way also runs parallel with, and along the east side of the UPRR tracks just like Northgate used to run. Also, many new large commercial buildings have been built along the southern boundary of the arroyo and there are very few places left that have enough space between the large buildings for a road across the arroyo.

For example, if you look directly southward from the intersection of Michigan Ave. and Spring St. you will see an empty space between the buildings on the south side of the arroyo. However, the Springbrook Estates project has already been approved between this intersection and the arroyo making it impossible for Michigan Ave. to be extended southward across the arroyo for access to Palmyrita Avenue.

The only other feasible location across the arroyo that has space between the buildings is between the Bixby property on the north side of the arroyo and Palmyrita Ct. on the south side. Palmyrita Ct. becomes Northgate at Palmyrita Avenue then continues southward 1 block to Columbia Avenue. Last month the Riverside City Council hired DMJM Harris, an Ontario company that was awarded over \$783,000 to help design an overpass over the BNSF RR tracks on Columbia Avenue. This overpass has been the City of Riverside's number one priority which will become a reality in the near future.

The 2 new roads in my proposal will allow traffic to move between Highgrove (east of the BNSF RR tracks), and the I-215 freeway via the Columbia overpass without having to wait on trains. Naturally, residents on the west side of the tracks in Highgrove already have unrestricted freeway access and are not blocked by trains. It is understandable that the developers of the 65 acres would not want to be restricted by a road through the middle of their property to connect Center St. and Palmyrita Avenue and consideration should be given to them to develop their land as they so desire.

California St. is already a dedicated right-of-way and if Bixby Land Co. feels approval can be obtained from Riverside County and the City of Riverside for traffic to operate parallel to and along the east side of the UPRR tracks between Center St. and Palmyrita Ave. then they should pursue that goal. I think they will find that the significant question that arises is how to safely design an intersection next to the railroad track where California Ave. intersects with Palmyrita, Spring St. and Center Street. California Ave. would intersect all 3 locations which are right next to the UP railroad track.

We are then back to square one, why Northgate was moved 1 block eastward in the first place: to get away from the railroad track!

If the design problems with these 3 intersections next to the railroad track could be overcome, residents could use Palmyrita to get to Iowa Ave. and the Columbia overpass for freeway access. Another possibility would be to cross the arroyo at Northgate (Palmyrita Ct.) then curve westward toward the UPRR tracks and run parallel to and along the east side of the tracks between Spring St. and Center Street. This would enable the road to be on the western boundary of the 40 acre parcel between Spring St. and Center St. to meet the developer's needs instead of near the center of their property. The problem with this plan is it would still create the same type of undesirable intersections at Spring St. and Center St. which would be right next to the railroad track.

Back to square one again! My original proposal has taken many of these problems into consideration.

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Transportation plan update

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I still believe a straight north/south road from Center St., straight across the fields and arroyo to Northgate, is in the best interest of the community and would provide for better north/south traffic flow. This could be accomplished by moving the north/south California St. right-of-way eastward to line up with Northgate instead of being next to the railroad track. Although all parties may not be completely satisfied, when the time for a decision is upon us, hopefully these important decisions will be made by County, City and other agencies based on what is best for our community and not what is best for the developers.

The Spring Street extension westward is also necessary for the east/west traffic flow to keep residents from being cut off by the trains. One of the most important features of this plan is that both the north/south and east/west roads I have proposed are through land that is currently vacant. Now is the time to plan for roads to go through it before other buildings or houses are built on it and occupy the very space that is needed for vehicular movement. Eastward access through Pigeon Pass is almost impossible.

I have presented my proposal to you and many agencies but I have no power to implement any portion of this plan. My only hope is, by bring it to the attention of City and County agencies, Commissioners, Supervisors and Planners that they will thoroughly examine it and if it does have merit, they will communicate with each other.

“Examination and Communication” by those who have the power to make it happen. Those are my goals!

The easy part of human nature is to complain about a situation after the fact. The hard part is looking into the future and trying to offer viable solutions. I hope this traffic plan will be taken seriously before a final decision is made.

April 2006 P. 12

Highgrove Metrolink gets neighborly support

The University Neighborhood Association has written a letter of support for a Metrolink stop in Highgrove. It was addressed to the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Riverside County Supervisors, Riverside City Council, City Manager, and Planning Director.

Plans are being considered for a Metrolink stop at UCR and another one about 1 mile away at Spruce St. near Watkins Drive and the residents near UCR do not want any stops much less- two of them so close together. They have instead recommended the 35 acre of vacant land within the City limits of Riverside in the Hunter Business Park area.

At the Riverside City Council meeting on March 21, 2006 I spoke under the public comments portion and Melanie Zimmermann from Highgrove also spoke in favor of a Highgrove Metrolink stop using the existing 8 commuter trains that now pass through Highgrove. Wendy Eads and Kevin Dawson from the University Neighborhood Association also spoke to the city council and asked them to consider using this property near Highgrove for a future transportation terminal. Even though we have past

Highgrove CSA 126 (Nov. 27, 2001, Highgrove Project Area Committee, City of Grand Terrace (Dec. 13, 2001) and the City of Loma Linda (Jan. 24, 2002), and letters from the University Neighborhood Association (Oct 21, 2005 and March 15, 2006) and the Bixby Land Company (Dec. 12, 2005), and other numerous contacts, we have not been able to convince the Riverside County Transportation Commission to purchase this property for a Highgrove Metrolink Station.

In the past 4 1/2 years I have never been told that this plan is not a good idea or it is impossible. It has been a long hard fight to try and get any action for this proposal that is needed for the near future and wanted by so many. But the solution to this problem involves co-operation between the City of Riverside, County of Riverside and especially the Riverside County Transportation Commission. My fear is that with all the new homes being built where our former orange groves were once located, that the City of Riverside will issue building permits for this land that is now vacant. If new large industrial warehouses are allowed to build on this location, someone may eventually wake up and realize that they should have made a better plan for this land. When that happens, I am also sure that no one will be there to step up to the plate and accept responsibility for not having a vision for the future to accommodate the community's needs.

Riverside is set to adopt their General Plan for the year 2025. **If this land is used for any purposes other than Metrolink and transportation purposes that include a new road between Spring St. and Citrus St., then someone is not planning very well for the future!**

May 2006 P. 7 & 11

Highgrove wake up call!

Growth, Transportation, change

When we are young the three most important words in our life are: “DON’T DO THAT”!

Then as we grow into adulthood the 3 most important words in our life change and become: “I LOVE YOU”! If you live in Highgrove and are a property owner, the most important three words in your life should be “GROWTH, TRANSPORTATION, and CHANGE”.

Next year will be my 60th year in Highgrove. Many of you have lived here longer than that. Many were born and raised here and have seen more changes than I have. The good ole days are gone in the eyes of many of the old timers and many long time residents have sold their property and moved out of state for the cheaper land and quieter life-style like we used to have here in Highgrove. Yes, many have taken the path of relocating while a few of us remain to face the challenges of drastic changes happening all around us. And the changes are not over yet! It is just the beginning because the groundwork has already been laid that will change Highgrove forever. We face the biggest change in our historic past as our orange and citrus groves are about to become homes for people we do not even know.

To put it into another perspective, the present residents are the “WE” of Highgrove and the future residents are the “THEY”. To explain what I mean, in reference to the question: What do “WE” (the present residents) want to happen to Highgrove and what will “THEY” the new residents want? Right now the “THEY” side does not even exist but they are coming. And when they come “WE” will be outnumbered which means out voted to put it bluntly. So what do “WE” do? What do “WE” want? And how do “WE” make our community a better place to live and raise our children and grandchildren?

A long time ago I decided if I wanted to still call Highgrove my home, I would get involved and be aware of what is going on in my neighborhood. That is why I volunteer my time at the community meetings on our Advisory Board. Our volunteer Advisory Board members attended our local meetings to hear from our neighbors so we will be able to tell our County Supervisor what we need in Highgrove. That’s the way it works. Local meetings are held each month to discuss our problems, needs and solutions and relay them to our Supervisor. I have had the privilege of having a good working relationship with Supervisors Norton Younglove, Tom Mullen and Marion Ashley and they as Supervisors have the authority to make changes. We as volunteers or community members are powerless except for the fact “WE” are the voice of the people at the local level.

Recently I have had the opportunity to attend a lot of meetings in and around the surrounding area, from small meetings to very large ones. One of the things that I find common among these organizations is the fact that many people are willing to participate to make change happen. Some of the people become very passionate and verbal in trying to get the attention of a panel, board, commissioner, council member or other person of authority to listen to their pleas for change or in many instances just to leave everything alone and don’t change anything.

On May 12th, I attended a meeting at the Riverside County Transportation Commission in front of 30 representatives of cities throughout Riverside County and shared my views during my 3 minute presentation under public comments. Finally, after 4 1/2 years of trying, I think someone is finally seeing that the transportation

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May 2006 P. 7 & 11 Highgrove wake up call!

Growth, Transportation, change

Continued from page 5

plan I have proposed may have some merit. The RCTC Staff was directed to take another look at this plan and report back to the Commission. This plan is a reaction to address the issues of moving people in, around and through Highgrove due to the drastic changes that soon will be evident as we sit in our cars and are blocked by trains and traffic. It involves 2 new roads and a Metrolink station that is supported by many surrounding communities.

Another meeting I attended was about the watershed and arroyos that lasted 3 hours but the University Neighborhood Association meetings and train sub-committee meetings were not as long as the arroyo meeting. Each one of these organizations has its purpose and goals. At the University Neighborhood Plan meeting near UCR on April 19th the City of Riverside held its 4th and final meeting to address their local issues to submit when the General Plan is adopted. This was the completion of the 1st plan out of 26 more plans the city will be holding to address concerns of each community.

On April 18th, I went from a Colton City Council meeting where I waited 50 minutes for my 3 minute time period then went directly to the Loma Linda City Council meeting and walked in just in time for them to ask if anyone wishes to speak under public comments on items that were not on the agenda. I had to fill out a speaking form later because I was called up just as I walked in. What I thought was interesting was that one of the people who spoke at the Colton meeting walked into the Loma Linda meeting the same time I did so I know he had to hurry to get there too. He was a developer looking out for his own interest for a project he wants to build in Reche Canyon.

If you ask why I attend all these meetings I guess the answer lies somewhere in the 3 most important words that face our neighborhood which brings me back to Growth, Transportation and Change. It's true that I have more time since I retired but you don't have to be retired to get involved or participate. The American process allows us, the little guys, to have time to say what we think and give our opinions even if we only get 3 minutes at the microphone. At the Riverside City Council meeting I attended, when the time came for public comments the whole wall was occupied with people who wanted to speak. Also at the Grand Terrace City Council meeting on May 13th there was standing room only because people were concerned about changes that are being planned for a Lowes, new Stater Bros. Market and other changes that affect their local daily lives in Grand Terrace. Jack Brown, CEO of Stater Bros., squashed a lot of rumors when he stated that all the rumors that have circulated about Stater Bros. building a new market are not true because he has not signed anything yet. "If you want to know what Jack Brown thinks: "Ask Jack Brown", he said.

Sometimes I compare our local community meetings to the former union meetings I used to attend where many of the railroad workers didn't come unless the company was going to take something away, make a drastic change in their working conditions or reduce their wages. When any of these 3 things happened the union hall would be packed. The same principal applies at the community level.

Highgrove- This is our wake up call! How many of you have never been inside the Norton Younglove Community Center in Highgrove? How many new faces walk through the doors and get involved in what is happening in and to our neighborhood?

Do you fall into any of these 3 categories? 1. I don't have time 2. I'm too busy 3. I trust others to look out for me.

If you fall into any of these categories then maybe you should consider taking the time, caring enough to get involved locally or it may be too late if something happens to our neighborhood that you don't like. We are all busy with our own lives and families and that is our first priority but what happens to our neighborhood is important too.

Take another look at the motto along the top of the front page. Have you ever noticed? It says: "**Dedicated to the improvement of our community through awareness and involvement in local issues**" That is the purpose of the "Highgrove Happenings" newspaper. Our community meetings are based on that very same principal.

Wake up-Highgrove the changes are a commin' and "WE" have to be ready for them!

Our next community meeting will be at **7:00 pm at the Norton Younglove Community Center at 459 Center St. in Highgrove on May 23, 2006.** Come and bring a friend or neighbor! Our guest speaker will speak about illegal dumping.

June 2006 P. 6

Metrolink station needed in Highgrove

This Metrolink train currently operates between Riverside and San Bernardino. It is shown on the BNSF/UP main line passing by 35 vacant acres in the Highgrove area. A Metrolink Station is needed between the arroyo and Villa St. so these 4 trains (2 each way) could stop for passengers. Parking would be on the east side of these tracks with a pedestrian overpass for access to the west side. To accomplish this requires co-operation between the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), and the City of Riverside. Also, by extending Spring St. westward to Iowa Ave. would give direct vehicle access to the freeway for everyone east of the RR tracks including the new Springbrook Estates, and Spring Mt. Ranch projects without being blocked by freight trains. 4 1/2 years ago Highgrove, Grand Terrace and Loma Linda passed resolutions for a Metrolink stop in Highgrove and we are seeking co-operation between the various agencies that can actually make it happen.

July 2006 P. 1 & 13

Metrolink trains to pass through Highgrove on weekends



48 Commuter Trains per week pass thru Highgrove and do not stop!

In addition to the 8 commuter trains that pass through Highgrove each day that do not stop during the work week, there are plans for 8 more new trains that will pass through Highgrove on the week ends. The plan is for 8 new trains on Saturday and Sunday between San Bernardino and Riverside starting on July 15, 2006. This brings a total of **48 Metrolink trains per week** that pass by the 35 acres of vacant land in the Highgrove area where we are trying to get a station platform so these trains can stop and pick up passengers from Highgrove, Grand Terrace and the surrounding area.

On June 12, 2006 I spoke during public comments at the meeting of the Western Region Council of Governments and furnished the executive members with copies of past resolutions of support, letters, and information relating to the need for a Highgrove metrolink stop. Hopefully some of these agencies will start working together while the land is still vacant and available.

For schedules and ticket information please visit: www.rctc.org, **News & Events, 7-15-06 Metrolink weekends IEOC Line service begins**

November 2006 P. 1 & 13

Highgrove Metrolink not derailed yet!

For 5 years there have been many efforts made to get a Metrolink stop in Highgrove. Most of you know that written resolutions of support have been passes by Highgrove, Grand Terrace, and Loma Linda. Colton has also supported the Highgrove Metrolink location.

But did you know what happened to our written documents that were given to the staff of the Riverside County Transportation Commission for distribution to the RCTC Commissioners?

This is a very touchy subject but I feel the members of Highgrove and the surrounding communities who support our location should know what has happened, and what is happening in regard to the Highgrove location.

In August of 2004 I prepared 30 packets for distribution to the RCTC Commissioners. The yellow packets had a 2 page map inside (of the Highgrove location), and was entitled "Highgrove Metrolink Station Proposal". It also contained the following information:

Copy of resolution of support for a Highgrove station from CSA 126 (11-27-01)

Copy of resolution of support from City of Grand Terrace (12-13-01)

Copy of petition from Highgrove PAC (1-8-02)

Copy of resolution of support from City of Loma Linda (1-24-02)

On August 16, 2004, I took the packets to the County Administration Building in Riverside and gave them to a RCTC staff member (who will remain anonymous at this time) for distribution to the RCTC Commissioners.

About 2 months later (in Oct. of 2004), when I found out that the packets hadn't been given to the Commissioners- I asked: "Why not"?

I received a letter of explanation dated Nov. 4, 2004 stating that RCTC was in the process of developing responses on behalf of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to all of the comments, and all comments submitted must be treated equally. The letter also stated that the packets I submitted to the RCTC Commissioners became an FTA document and was not an RCTC document even though it was addressed to the RCTC commissioners.

Much later, I later found out that these yellow packets had not been given to the Commissioners until 14 months after I gave them to the staff.

During my 3 minutes at the podium on Oct. 11, 2006, I told the commissioners that I thought it was unfair to the public, surrounding communities, and their leaders, that this important information was not given to the commissioners in a timely manner. I stated that during that 14 month period, I was sure that the RCTC staff had contact with the Commissioners as well as their consultants but in this particular case the information and resolutions in the packets that were submitted on behalf of the public, had been delayed for well over 1 year.

Another misconception that is being presented by RCTC staff is that by establishing a Metrolink Station in Highgrove would trigger the need for a \$100 million dollar flyover in Colton where the Union Pacific line crosses the BNSF line. (One RR line would go over and the other RR line would go under).

This statement is simply not true!

We are not asking for any new additional commuter trains that would change the Feb. 14, 1996 agreement that governs the amount of commuter train moves between San Bernardino and Riverside- All we are asking for is to have the EXISTING 48 COMMUTER TRAINS STOP IN HIGHGROVE! These commuter trains currently go by the proposed Highgrove Metrolink location 7 days a week but do not stop because there is no platform!

RCTC's Executive Director claims that 75% of the Highgrove riders would be from San Bernardino County but this is short sighted because there soon will be over 2,100 new homes built within one mile of this site that will be added to the existing homes in Highgrove and all of them are in Riverside County.

At the Oct. 11, 2006 meeting, the Commissioners told their staff to make arrangements for a tour of the Perris Valley Line either by bus or rail and to start in Highgrove where I could show the Commissioners the actual physical location of the proposed site.

Also, last week I gave a personal tour of the site to the Mayor of Grand Terrace, Maryetta Ferre and Colton City Council member, Issic Suchil who represents the Colton area ¼ mile north of the Metrolink site along Colton's southern boundary. Two days later, I gave another personal tour to the Mayor of Loma Linda, Bob Christman, to show him where the site is located.

The Commissioners need to know that many potential riders will use this site but a joint effort must be made between RCTC and SANBAG (on the San Bernardino side of the county line) so that this station will benefit the **entire region!**

For the last 5 years I feel that our efforts on behalf of the people in our surrounding neighborhoods have basically been ignored by the RCTC staff and their Executive Director. I have no hard feelings toward any of the 30 or so Commissioners because in this case they did not receive information from the public in a timely matter (14 months). But during that time, they received input from their staff and their consultants and that is simply not fair!

December 2006 P. 1, 8, 9, & 13

Public outcry expressed at RCTC meeting!

For 2 months in a row, community members and leaders from the surrounding area expressed their concern for the lack of action by the Riverside County Transportation Commission's Executive Director and Staff to acquire the land for a Metrolink Station in Highgrove.

At the last Riverside County Transportation Commission meeting on Nov. 8, 2006 there were 9 speakers who voiced their opinions during the public comments. The speakers addressed different issues such as traffic congestion, parking issues at the Riverside and San Bernardino Metrolink stations, the 35 vacant acres of land in Highgrove, the 2,100 new homes soon to be built near the proposed Highgrove location, bus route # 25 that currently goes through Highgrove between Riverside and Loma Linda, and many other transportation related items supporting this location.

The speakers in order were yours truly R. A. "Barney" Barnett, Don Earp from Colton, Jim Miller' current Grand Terrace City Councilman, Maggie Sanders' Grand Terrace resident, Melanie Zimmermann Highgrove Municipal Advisory council, Ed Demuth Grand Terrace resident, Denis Kidd Highgrove CSA126E, Byron Matteson former Grand Terrace Mayor for 14 years, and Latitia Pepper from the University Neighborhood Association near UCR.

During Jim Miller's presentation there were some intense discussions between Commissioner, Bob Buster and Executive Director Eric Haley. Legal council intervened by suggesting that this item should be put on a future agenda and not discussed in depth by the Commissioners during the public comments.

Everyone is concerned that no action has been taken for the last 5 years to establish a Metrolink stop in Highgrove.

On Nov. 8, 2006 I read the following RCTC document to the Commissioners and then gave 30 copies to the clerk of the board for distribution to each Commissioner. This is what the Commissioners directed their staff to do almost 3 ½ years ago:

HIGHGROVE SITE ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

"Residents of the community of Highgrove, as well as the city councils of Grand Terrace, Colton, and Loma Linda, have expressed an interest in a future Metrolink station in Highgrove. At its June 2003 meeting, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) directed staff to determine the feasibility of acquiring additional right-of-way for a future Highgrove Station to serve the Inland Empire-Orange County Line."

The Inland Empire-Orange County Line mentioned above is the BNSF main line tracks that go through Highgrove right next to the 35 acre parcel of vacant land where we want the station located.

For the last several years we have been trying to get RCTC to purchase this vacant land for a Metrolink station in Highgrove. A curve through this property was initially considered years ago by RCTC when the route from Perris to Riverside was first being planned. Over the last 5 years I have worked with and talked to many members of the RCTC Staff and I know they have spent many hours with their consultants trying to devise a workable plan for the Perris Valley Line in order to establish Metrolink service between Perris and Riverside. The location of the stations on the Perris Valley Line may not seem to affect the Highgrove location since they involve 2 different sets of railroad tracks, but if 2 stations are built close together on the Perris Valley Line such as the proposed UCR and Spruce and

Continued on page 8

December 2006 P. 1,8,9, & 13

Public outcry

Continued from page 7

Rustin locations, then it would be almost impossible to build a 3rd station in Highgrove. We have asked that the Spruce and Rustin location on the Perris Valley Line be abandoned since it is only about 1 mile from the UCR station and use that money to help purchase the land for the Highgrove station. The University Neighborhood Association near UCR agrees that the Highgrove location is a better place for a station.

The Perris Valley Line has been the RCTC staff's main concern for the last several years. But what about the Highgrove Metrolink Station? Should the public comments and written resolutions from the past be disregarded? Since June of 2003 has the Executive Director instructed his staff to try to acquire this property for transportation purposes like they were directed to do? We are not criticizing the RCTC Commissioners since they receive information from their RCTC Staff.

At the RCTC meeting on Oct. 11th I told the Commissioners that I gave 30 packets to the RCTC Staff on August 16 2004 for distribution to the Commissioners but the packets were not given to the Commissioners for 14 months. These packets included a map of the Highgrove location and copies of the resolutions of support from Highgrove and the surrounding communities of Grand Terrace and Loma Linda that date back to Nov. of 2001. Mr. Haley's reply was **"I don't recollect a briefing in the summer of 2004, if it was not distributed, my apologies"**. Also if the Staff was directed to find a location in Highgrove 3 1-2 years ago, why hasn't the property been purchased if this is such an ideal site Who is responsible for this oversight Someone has to be held responsible for not pursuing the acquisition of this land for a Metrolink Station regardless of what happens on the Perris Valley Line. Eric Haley has been the Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission since 1998. He formerly worked for SANBAG the county agency in San Bernardino County that oversees the Metrolink Commuter trains on their side of the county line. On several occasions, Mr. Haley has stated that by purchasing the Highgrove property would be **"Land banking"**. He has been challenged for using this term many times due to the fact that the land would not be purchased for speculation or future sale for profit, but if the land was purchased and a platform built the existing commuter trains could stop for passengers on the day of completion. The existing Metrolink commuter trains currently pass right by this location 7 days a week but do not stop because there is no platform. Another misconception attributed to Mr. Haley is that if a Highgrove station was built, it would trigger the need for an \$85 million railroad over and under where the Union Pacific RR tracks cross the BNSF RR tracks in Colton. The last several times he used these figures it had gone up to \$100 million and even \$150 million.

That is enough to scare anyone but this scare tactic simply does not apply to our situation!

We are not asking for any additional commuter trains between San Bernardino and Riverside that would change the Feb. 14, 1996 agreement concerning the amount of commuter train moves that can be made between Riverside and San Bernardino. We just want the existing trains to stop! That does not change the agreement.

In the past, we have had tremendous support from Supervisor Bob Buster. Commissioner Buster stated: **"Lets not loose this opportunity based on staff policy making. A defacto decision has been made here apparently that has not been discussed by the Commission and we are the policy body!"**

Commissioners John Tavaglione and Marion Ashley agree that is a good location but they want SANBAG involved. Also, Assemblyman Bill Emmerson has written a letter supporting the Highgrove location.

So why has nothing been done? Mr. Haley was the Executive Director when all of the surrounding resolutions were passed 5 years ago. In 2003 he was also the Executive Director when his Staff was directed to find a location in Highgrove. We pointed to the 35 acres of vacant land over and over again.

I have also listened to his statements that were made during public meetings that I feel are incorrect such as reference to the 100 million dollar requirement for the Colton crossing if the trains stop in Highgrove.

We were also told that by adding another commuter train to the BNSF tracks would change the Feb. 14, 1996 agreement for the amount of commuter trains that could operate between San Bernardino and Riverside. Then on July 15, 2006 permanent weekend trains were added to include Saturday and Sunday commuter service over these very same tracks.

Highgrove is now watching the commuter trains go by 7 day per week instead of 5. Five Supervisors are also RCTC Commissioners but could not attend. Note: There are no freight trains on the Perris Valley Line tracks on Saturday and most of Sunday.

At the RCTC meeting on Nov. 8, 2006, RCTC Chairman, Marion Ashley referred this to the Executive Director with instructions to talk to SANBAG and at some point agenize this before the appropriate committee so it can be pursued and settle it once and for all.

This has caused concern for many of our local constituents. As members of the public we are apprehensive about telling the Executive Director of RCTC to meet with SANBAG about something that he does not believe in or want. When his multi-million dollar figures are presented to SANBAG what do you think their reaction will be? (Remember, these figures do not apply if the existing trains just "stop" in Highgrove).

On Nov. 9, 2006, I received a copy of a letter addressed to RCTC and SANBAG from Melanie Zimmermann who is a member of the Highgrove Municipal Advisory Council, requesting that I be present during the talks between RCTC and SANBAG. Copies were also sent to RCTC Executive Director, Eric Haley, SANBAG Executive Director Tony Grasso, and SANBAG representatives Bea Cortes from Grand Terrace, Robert Christman from Loma Linda, and Deirdre Bennett from Colton.

The public wants their voice to be heard loud and clear when RCTC and SANBAG sit down to talk. The Highgrove station location will benefit the entire region and is a plan for the present and the future but the people have been ignored because the RCTC Executive Director thinks it's too close to the county line and people from San Bernardino County will be riding the trains at RCTC's expense. Mr. Haley seems to have only one thing in mind and that is the Perris Valley Line. He has ignored what the people want and need because he says: "75 or 80% of the riders (his figures) will be from San Bernardino County." but the 2,100 new homes that will soon be built, and the existing homes in Highgrove are all in Riverside County. He fails to recognize that there will soon be long term regional consequences due to the failure to acquire this property. Our freeways are conjested with vehicles from both counties and commuters from other areas. Isn't the idea of using Metrolink based on transporting people and taking their vehicles off the freeways and roads? And aren't the riders buying tickets to ride the Metrolink trains? As members of the public we must continue to express our concerns during the public comments at both RCTC and SANBAG meetings and at the joint meetings between the two agencies. The best way our public comments to be heard is for us to stand up for our rights and speak our minds so that these public agencies will listen to the will of the people. At the last RCTC meeting during my public comments, I suggested a simple 3 step solution for Highgrove:

1. BUY THE PROPERTY, 2. INSTALL A PLATFORM, 3. STOP THE TRAINS! Also at the Nov. 8, 2006 RCTC meeting Melanie Zimmermann from Highgrove asked the Commissioners to *"take a small bus to see where the new homes will be, meet with Barney and look with an open mind"*. Denis Kidd from Grand Terrace also stated: *"Invite Barney to meet you at the Highgrove site so he could represent us because the opposition will be amply represented by RCTC Staff"* That did not happen!

Eric Haley arranged for the Commissioners to tour the Perris Valley Line via rail on Nov. 28, 2006 but they did not stop at the Highgrove site. Viewing the vacant 35 acres from the rail is not possible since the track is lower than the property and there is a dirt bank in the way. (That is why Mrs. Zimmermann suggested using a small bus). So the Commissioners did not see the site for the platform next to the BNSF main lines. Why did Mr. Haley schedule a tour on a Tuesday when all 5 of the Board of Supervisors were at their weekly meeting? These 5 Supervisors are also RCTC Commissioners but could not attend. Note: There are no freight trains on the Perris Valley Line track on Saturday and most of Sunday. **"Thank you"** to all of you who spoke up at the public comments. We are the voice of the people and our voices should be heard!.

February 2007 P. 1 & 5

Highgrove Metrolink Denial

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS DECISION?

by R.A. "Barney" Barnett (Highgrove Happenings Newspaper)

After many years of RCTC using the excuse that San Bernardino County needs to participate in the Highgrove Metrolink station because it is so close to the county line; on Nov. 8, 2006, the RCTC Commissioners instructed, their Executive Director, Eric Haley to contact SANBAG in San Bernardino County.

On Dec. 7, 2006 RCTC's, Eric Haley wrote a letter to SANBAG Executive Director, Tony Grasso which stated in part: **"a station in this vicinity will require cooperative action between RCTC and SANBAG"**.

The following month on Jan. 1, 2007, Dennis Hansberger, SANBAG Chairman (and also a San Bernardino County Supervisor), made this statement in the San Bernardino Sun:

"It's a very worthwhile objective. Unfortunately, the people in Riverside County who have jurisdiction have not shown a lot of interest. But we are willing to try to get that discussion going".

Then on **Jan. 10, 2007** at the RCTC meeting, a pink colored hand-out entitled: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AGENDA ITEM 8 -was given to the RCTC Commissioners just minutes before the meeting entitled *Minute Action* but was dated **Jan. 18, 2007-eight days into the future**-(which happened to be on the same day as the next SANBAG Commuter Rail meeting). So how could any **"Action"** be taken from the minutes of a meeting that had not occurred yet? The date was not a misprint and the hand-out was used as a pre-judged conclusion of how SANBAG would be voting 8 days before their meeting.

Also on **Jan. 10, 2007**, (nine days after Chairman Hansberger's statement that they were willing to get the discussions going),- the RCTC staff inflated the Highgrove location costs by improperly attaching the multi-million dollar Colton flyover costs to the Highgrove site and deflated the ridership projections thru inaccurate estimates. They said the Highgrove Station would cost **\$157 Million dollars for only 117 riders per day**. (Those figures would scare any Commissioner!) These figures were used to influence the Commissioners vote and are based on estimated predictions with no consideration given to the 2,400 new homes to soon be constructed in our area.

SANBAG was scheduled to meet only 8 days later on Jan. 18, 2007 but why (after 5 years of nothing happening), was RCTC staff so anxious to get their Commissioners to decline it just before the SANBAG meeting? This was a very discouraging blow to the public since surrounding cities and communities passed resolutions of support over 5 years ago and nothing has been done to purchase the vacant land next to the tracks.

The **hurry up and decline it before San Bernardino gets a chance to vote** mentality is short sighted, and biased against commuters from both counties. I feel that the RCTC Commissioners were misled by their own staff when they indicated that SANBAG would also have to decline it 8 days before the SANBAG meeting.

Then at the Jan. 18, 2007 SANBAG Commuter Rail Committee meeting, the SANBAG staff report was the same wording that was used in Riverside by the RCTC staff 8 days earlier. Though SANBAG staff, RCTC staff tried to convince the SANBAG Commuter Rail Committee to recommend that SANBAG take the same action as RCTC but it didn't work!

During the public comments at the SANBAG meeting on Jan. 18th, six local residents and community leaders spoke out against SANBAG going along with RCTC's recommendation. **The SANBAG rail committee tabled their decision and no vote was taken.**

Was Eric Haley's letter of Dec. 7th a mere formality or does he and his staff really not want to work with SANBAG for the benefit of the region? Is his only focus the Perris Valley Line? Was it RCTC staff's strategy to stop it in Riverside 8 days before it reached San Bernardino for consideration so they could say that the Riverside County Transportation Commission doesn't want it, so why should San Bernardino want it?

DESTINATION 2030 from the Southern California Association of Governments summed it up best-when they stated:

"Destination 2030 lays out a vision for Southern California without boundaries, one in which cities and counties work together to plan our future and consider how growth patterns can be accommodated in a manner that preserves our quality of life"

The Highgrove station could be used immediately by the whole region since 56 commuter trains per week already go right by this location next to the BNSF main line tracks. San Bernardino station is 7 miles to the north and the Riverside station 3.5 miles to the south. The track speed limit is 60 MPH and needs no upgrading!

The Perris Valley Line on the other hand, is 38 miles of old track that needs new rail and RR ties and needs a complete new signal system, since there is none, and the track dead-ends at San Jacinto where there are no connections. Also, a large warehouse would have to be torn down and a new curved track added to connect onto the UP tracks at Marlborough Avenue.

RCTC said the cost of the Perris Valley Line is only \$112 Million dollars but they are forgetting to add in the **\$500 Million dollars** they paid in 1993 for the rights to run commuter trains over the Perris Valley Line, the line from San Bernardino to Redlands and the line from San Bernardino to Los Angeles. The original costs to purchase track rights has somehow disappeared from their sales program and a large portion of the \$500 Million dollars was left out of the Perris Valley Line expenditures.

So does it really make sense to buy the track rights in 1993, rebuild it, install 18 to 38 miles of new signals, build seven new stations and purchase new engines and coacheswhen all they had to do is buy the 19.27 acres in Highgrove, build one platform and use the existing 56 commuter trains that have connections on both ends?

RCTC should have purchased this vacant land **or at least the northern 19.27 acres** long ago to keep both options open. The only other route is over the Union Pacific tracks with a new curve near Marlborough Avenue.

Since RCTC has failed to obtain control of the Highgrove location NOW, the UP can now hold them hostage (financially) whenever RCTC wants to purchase the commuter rights to run over the UP tracks because it is the only route left. **The entire region, on both sides of the county line, could still benefit from this location and the Highgrove location should be re-considered to help relieve freeway congestion between the two counties.**

The benefits of the Highgrove location are overwhelming! It is a common sense solution to deal with current transportation issues now, and in the future!

These recent local decisions will have long term affects on our entire region. The land is still vacant, and 56 commuter trains go by this location each week. **We just want the existing commuter trains to stop.** Buying the property, building a platform and stopping the trains-does not have anything to do with the \$150 Million dollar flyover in Colton!

Continued efforts are being made to make everyone aware of the actual facts behind this denial in order to help overcome the temporary successful manipulation by the RCTC staff to influence their Commissioners, SANBAG staff, and the SANBAG Commuter Rail Committee while at the same time ignoring the public's interest.

For photos with text visit our web site: www.highgrovehappenings.net
highgrovenews@adelphia.net

R. A. "Barney" Barnett (951) 683 4994 E-mail:

Oct. 1, 2007

What happened to the Highgrove Metrolink Station?

WHY THIS LOCATION SO IMPORTANT:

Location, location, location

- (a) The Highgrove location for the requested platform is 7 rail miles south of San Bernardino and 3.5 rail miles north of Riverside on the BNSF tracks.
- (b) There is 35 acres of vacant land right next to the 3 BNSF railroad tracks on the west end of the property where 56 commuter trains per week (7 days a week) pass by this property between Riverside and San Bernardino but do not stop for passengers due to no station platform at Highgrove.
- (c) The Perris Valley Line railroad track is right next to the east end of the vacant 35 acres and the 38 mile Perris Valley Line track is already owned by RCTC.
- (d) The Perris Valley Line RR is already connected in Highgrove by rail, and signaled for train movements to and from the BNSF RR.
- (e) Stopping the 56 existing commuter trains in Highgrove for passengers does not require the addition of any new tracks, train signal system, track up-grades, underpasses or overpasses, engines, coaches or additional crew members.
- (f) Stopping the 56 existing commuter trains in Highgrove does not violate the train movement agreement dated Feb. 14, 1996.
- (g) Stopping the existing commuter trains in Highgrove does not require building the Colton Flyover. That is a separate and un-connected issue!
- (h) 2,400 new homes have been approved by Riverside County in the Spring Mountain Ranch and Springbrook Estates projects. Spring Mountain Ranch is within a few months of starting home construction now that the flood control issues have been resolved and both projects are only about 1 mile east of the requested Highgrove Metrolink site. These new homes are in addition to those already built or planned by Victoria homes and the existing homes.

OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- (a) The 35 acres is located in a redevelopment area.
- (b) The proposed Metrolink site is not zoned for residential but is only 1 mile from the new homes to be built.
- (c) It is located within the city limits of Riverside but is bordered on 3 sides by Highgrove boundaries. Highgrove is an un-incorporated part of Riverside County.
- (d) The west end of Spring St. stops at the Perris Valley Line railroad tracks but could be extended ½ mile westward through the vacant 35 acres and connect to Citrus Street.
- (e) The westward extension of Spring St. would enable all residents east of the BNSF railroad tracks to have access to the I-215 when freight trains block Main St., Center St. or Iowa Avenue, delaying the need for an underpass.

WHO SUPPORTS THE HIGHGROVE METROLINK LOCATION?

Here is a re-cap of information and requests dating back almost 6 years supporting the Highgrove Metrolink Station.

All of the following information can be verified in writing.

Riverside County Service Area 126 (Highgrove)	by resolution 11-27-2001
Grand Terrace City Council	by resolution 12-13-2001
Highgrove Project Area Committee (PAC)	by resolution 1-08-2002
City of Loma Linda, Ca.	by resolution 1-24-2002
Letter from Calif. State Assemblyman- Bill Emmerson:	8-14-2006
Letter from Riverside County Supervisor, Bob Buster	7-17-2006

continued on P. 10

Continued from P. 9

San Bernardino County Supervisor and SANBAG, Chairman, Dennis Hasnberger (statement in San Bernardino "SUN"): 1-01-2007

Riverside Land Conservancy:

Joint letter from Robert Nelson and Jane Block 10-18-2005

Highgrove resident and current Highgrove Municipal Advisory

Council member, Melanie Zimmermann: Letter to RCTC 11-09-2006

University Neighborhood Association (near UCR) by vote 10-13-2005

Letter of support from Gurumantra Khalsa 10-21-2005

Letter of support from Wendy Eads 3-15-2006

Letter of support from Kevin Dawson 4-13-2006

Letter of support from Latitia Pepper 7-21-2007

City of Grand Terrace letters of support:

First Mayor, Tony Petta (1978) 6-23-2006

Former 14 year Mayor, Byron Matteson (1982 to 1996) 6-23-2006

Present Mayor, Maryetta Ferre (2007) 6-23-2006

Hugh Grant, Former SANBAG, OMNITRANS, LAFCO 6-21-2006

Steve Berry, Assistant GT City Manager 5-15-2003

Craig Neustadter, GT City Traffic Engineer 1-22-2007

Franklin Carpenter, GT commuter/resident 5-28-2001

Jo Ann Johnson, GT resident 11-04-2006

Bixby Land Company 12-13-2005

Victoria homes continued support

Spring Mountain Ranch/ RWR homes continued support

JUNE 2003 DIRECTIVE TO RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION: From Schiermeyer Consulting Services to RCTC:

HIGHGROVE SITE ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

Residents of the community of Highgrove, as well as the city councils of Grand Terrace, Colton, and Loma Linda, have expressed an interest in a future Metrolink Station in Highgrove. At it's June 2003 meeting, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) directed staff to determine the feasibility of acquiring additional right-of-way for a future Highgrove Station to serve the Inland Empire-Orange County Line.

The many of the above listed people and organizations have been pointing to the 35 acres for almost 6 years so why has nothing been done to purchase this ideal location?

First of all, I want everyone to know that I do not represent any investor, real estate group railroad, or any other organization where I will benefit financially or

Continued on page 11

What happened to the Highgrove Metrolink Station?

Continued from page 10

otherwise from the Highgrove Metrolink site.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

My concern is that the current Executive Director of RCTC, Mr. Eric Haley has continued to ignore the wishes of the people and instead has influenced his staff and RCTC Commissioners to decline the Highgrove Station and tried to influence SANBAG to do the same in San Bernardino County. Mr. Haley wants to rebuild the Perris Valley Line with 2 stops one mile apart in a residential neighborhood that does not want them.

The University Neighborhood Association, which is near UCR, has repeatedly supported the Highgrove site and opposes having one stop at UCR and another one near Spruce St. and Rustin Avenue in their neighborhood and they have been very vocal at the RCTC meetings in Riverside. Here are some important things that occurred while RCTC staff was under Mr. Haley's leadership:

(a) On Sept. 15, 2006, RCTC held a "Workshop" for the Perris Valley Line in La Quinta, California which is one hour and 30 minutes from Riverside. The distance to the "workshop" (77 miles), made it very difficult for people who live near UCR to attend and speak under public comments. Only one speaker drove to La Quinta from the UCR area.

(b) On Aug. 16, 2004, I (R. A. "Barney" Barnett), hand delivered 40 packets to RCTC for distribution to the Commissioners. That **information was withheld for 14 months** before it was given to the Commissioners. These packets included copies of the resolutions, a map and other important information. Naturally I thought the packets had been given to the Commissioners as requested. Later, at the RCTC meeting on Oct. 11, 2006, I told the Commissioners about the 14 month delay.

Here is Mr. Haley's reply at the meeting on Oct. 11, 2006- almost 2 years afterwards:

"I don't recollect a briefing in the summer of 2004-if it was not distributed-my apologies"

(c) Under Mr. Haley's leadership, RCTC has completely ignored all of the resolutions for almost 6 years from the surrounding cities and organizations and the 35 acre location along the Inland Empire-Orange County Line through Highgrove still remains vacant.

(d) Instead of buying the property which could be used immediately upon completion of a platform by using the existing trains, Mr. Haley referred to the Highgrove purchase as **"Land Banking"** and stated that it was **"too close to the County Line and residents from San Bernardino County would be using the station"**.

(e) At the RCTC meeting on Nov. 8, 2006, Melanie Zimmermann requested that a bus be used so the Commissioners could actually see the Highgrove location. She was among 9 speakers who spoke in favor of the location during the public comments portion of the meeting. Denis Kidd said that I ("Barney" Barnett) should be present to meet the bus and show the Commissioners the Highgrove site.

Then on Nov. 28, 2006, Mr. Haley scheduled a visit to the site on the same day as the Riverside County Board of Supervisors meeting (11-28-2006), which meant that none of the Supervisors, who are also Commissioners, were able to attend. And instead of using a bus, there were 2 hi-rail (on track) vehicles with just a few of the Commissioners.

There is a dirt bank that is higher than the track elevation at this location, so it prevented anyone in the hi-rail cars from seeing the vacant 35 acres. (That is why a bus was requested). And the hi-rail vehicles did not even stop at Villa St. in Highgrove so the Commissioners could step out and see where the platform would be located on the west side as requested 20 days earlier.

I know they did not stop because I was at Villa Street when they went by!

(f) Supervisor/Commissioner Bob Buster has been the strongest advocate for the Highgrove station and has criticized Mr. Haley's intentional neglect and handling of the Highgrove site by making decisions that should be made by the Commission.

Commissioner Buster followed up with this statement: **"Lets not loose this opportunity based on staff policy making. A de facto decision has been made here apparently that has not been discussed by the Commission and we are the policy body"**

Was this just a coincidence that the "tour" was scheduled by Eric Haley when all of the Riverside County Supervisor/Commissioners were in another meeting? By Mr. Haley providing 2 hi-rail cars actually prevented anyone from seeing the advantages of this site due to the difference in elevation. A bus would have let more of them see why the public supports this location. It is very evident that the public's requests were ignored again especially when they didn't even stop at the Highgrove location as requested by the public.

(g) Also, just prior to the meeting on Jan 10, 2007, RCTC staff distributed information to the Commissioners entitled: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AGENDA ITEM 8.

It contained information under **Minute Action** but was dated Jan. 18, 2007- **eight days into the future**-(which happened to be on the same day as the SANBAG commuter rail committee meeting in San Bernardino). The date was not a misprint and the hand out was used as a prejudged conclusion of how SANBAG would be voting 8 days before their meeting! How could any "Action" be taken from the minutes of a meeting that had not yet occurred? Also on Jan. 10, 2007, RCTC Staff presented their estimates to the RCTC Commissioners that showed the cost of the Highgrove station to be \$157 Million dollars and only service 117 riders per day. These inaccurate estimated figures were designed to influence the RCTC Commissioners to vote it down just 8 days before SANBAG was set to vote. The public speakers requests for a postponement of a decision were rejected and the RCTC Executive Director and his staff convinced the RCTC Commissioners to vote the Highgrove location down.

(h) RCTC's staff recommendation on Jan 10, 2007 was then relayed to SANBAG and the SANBAG Staff report on Jan. 18th was the exact same wording as RCTC's on Jan. 10th.

RCTC wanted SANBAG to go along with them by also turning down the Highgrove site but due to public comments at the SANBAG meeting, SANBAG tabled their decision.

(i) Then on March 8, 2007 the Southern California Association of Governments requested that SANBAG take no formal action on the proposed Metrolink Station in Highgrove until a feasibility study is completed. The letter states: **"SCAG is initiating a feasibility analysis of a Metrolink Station in Highgrove as it relates to SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan and Growth Forecast"**.

At the SANBAG meeting on April 4, 2007, SANBAG voted to:

"Reconsider the matter based upon the results of the SCAG Feasibility Study".

(j) **The following day, April 5, 2007 Eric Haley went to the SCAG meeting in Los Angeles to get the independent study stopped. Grand Terrace councilwoman and SCAG representative LeAnn Garcia, who helped initiate the SCAG Feasibility Study previously requested a continuance because she could not attend the April meeting. In her absence, Eric Haley convinced SCAG not to do the Highgrove Feasibility Study. (Tape recording of the SCAG meeting available).**

Why would any Executive Director of any transportation agency want to stop an independent study that would help relieve some of our transportation problems? The above listed resolutions, letters, and requests are still being ignored. Perhaps Mr. Haley is afraid that a new "independent" study may recommend what the public already knows, wants, and needs in Highgrove!

The cost of building one station in Highgrove would be minimal compared to the cost of rebuilding 20 to 38 miles of railroad track on the Perris Valley Line, building 6 new stations, buying new engines and coaches, and installing a completely new train signal system on the Perris Valley Line that now has none!

Metrolink trains on the BNSF tracks do not stop at the county line when they go by Main St. in Highgrove and neither do freeway commuters. The I-215 freeway is less than 1 mile from the proposed station. Commuters could have already been using this station for several years if the present RCTC Executive Director had a proper vision for the future transportation needs of the region by using existing trains instead of concentrating on totally re-building a railroad that dead-ends in San Jacinto, 38 miles from Highgrove.

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP:

What happened to the Highgrove Metrolink Station?

Continued from page 11

RCTC's Executive Director, Eric Haley announced his retirement effective at the end of this year (but he will become a consultant). SANBAG's Executive Director Tony Grasso resigned on Aug. 2, 2007. Now is the time for RCTC and SANBAG to again start working together under new leadership for the benefit of the entire region!

COOPERATION:

Three agencies already understand how to properly meet our future transportation needs:

(1) Riverside Environmental Evaluation: "The City of Riverside General Plan states that transportation corridors within the city should link neighborhoods and centers within Riverside with the region surrounding it".

(2) SANBAG's mission statement reads in part: "Improve cooperative regional planning"

(3) Southern California Association of Governments states: "Destination 2030 lays out a vision for Southern California without boundaries, one in which cities and counties work together to plan our future and consider how growth patterns can be accommodated in a manner that preserves our quality of life"

SOLUTION: The simple solution is to build a station at UCR and use the money that was allocated for the Spruce and Rustin station on the Perris Valley Line, to help purchase the Highgrove site that already has 56 commuter trains per week with connections at both ends-Riverside and San Bernardino. All 35 acres are still vacant but if the entire portion is not needed, then just buy the 19.2 acres on the north end.

We have lost almost 6 years of precious time but now the 2 new county transportation leaders and their staffs need to work together for all of the above listed reasons!

November 2007 P. 1

PUBLIC COMMENTS NEEDED NOV. 8, 2007

**STOP AT
HIGHGROVE!**



**ALL
ABOARD!**

A public hearing will begin at 9:00 am Thursday November 8, 2007 at the Riverside City Hall located at 3900 Main St. (10th and Main) in Riverside.

This meeting will be a City of Riverside Planning Commission meeting. The public is encouraged to attend and ask the Commission to decline plans for building 4 warehouses on property best suited for a Metrolink Stop in Highgrove.

Why is this meeting so important?

For the last six years the public's requests for a Metrolink Stop have been blocked by the former Riverside County Transportation Commission's Executive Director- who is retiring.

Highgrove, Grand Terrace, Loma Linda and other grass roots organizations have requested a Metrolink Station with resolutions dating back to Nov. 27, 2001.

The 35 acre property is still vacant but public input is needed to stop warehouses from being built where 56 commuter trains per week (7 days a week) currently pass thru Highgrove but do not stop. Highgrove surrounds this property on 3 sides, but the property is in the Riverside City Limits.

Two New Executive Directors:

Both Riverside County and San Bernardino County now have new transportation leaders:

On Oct. 25, 2007, Anne Mayer started her new job as the new Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission due to former RCTC Executive Director, Eric Haley retiring.

On Aug. 2, 2007, Tony Grasso resigned as Executive Director of SANBAG and Deborah Robinson Barmack became SANBAG's new Executive Director.

3 THINGS YOU CAN DO!

1. If you have a commuter, please take time to look at the web site: www.highgrovehappenings.net

Click on: Metrolink and watch the video, scroll down, then click on Supporting Documentation, and Warehouse Photos.

If you do not have a computer, please call (951) 683 4994

2. Please attend the Public Hearing on Nov. 8, 2007 and ask the Planning Commission to decline construction on this property until a complete review has been made with the new transportation leaders or:

3. Send your written comments to: ggonzalez@riversideca.gov

December 2007 P. 8 & 9

Metrolink Changes

November was a busy month trying to bring attention to various transportation agencies and others who can turn 19 acres of vacant land into a Highgrove Metrolink Stop instead of warehouses.

On Nov. 8th we attended the public hearing on the City of Riverside's General Plan and I thank Grand Terrace's first Mayor (1978), Tony Petta, Colton resident John Stahley and Wayne Young from Grand Terrace for going with me to speak in favor of the Highgrove location becoming a Metrolink Stop. After 2 ½ hours the Planning Commission voted 5 to 2 to continue with the warehouse plans due to the current zoning. We considered appealing this decision after the meeting, but there is an explanation at the end of this article stating why this was not done.

That same evening (11 8 07), I attended a meeting of the University Neighborhood Association which is a community group near UCR that does not want 2 station stops in their neighborhood and has supported the Highgrove Metrolink location for several years. They too were interested in what happened at the planning meeting. The following Monday (11 12 07), I attended a meeting of the North Side Improvement Association which is a group on the west side of the I-215 freeway that meets at the Springbrook golf course clubhouse on N. Orange Street. Everyone seems to be concerned why the Highgrove site has been overlooked!

Then on Nov. 13, 2007 I met the new Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Ann Mayer at 10:00 am in her office. Stephanie Wiggins, RCTC Regional Program Director, was there also.

I would like to thank Don Earp of the Highgrove CSA 126E and Municipal Advisory Council, and Gene Carlstrom (former SANBAG, Omnitrans and Grand Terrace City Councilman), for attending this meeting with me to meet Ann Mayer.

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Metrolink Changes

Continued from page 12

At 1:30 pm that same day I attended another meeting at Riverside City Hall about the City 2025 General Plan. At that meeting I was met there by current Grand Terrace City Councilman, Jim Miller and former Wash. D. C. lobbyist Jerry Loving and I thank them for their input that was given to the city council. After that meeting I met with the owner of the property at his office in Riverside and he agreed that he does not need railroad tracks on 2 sides of the property to build warehouses. His plans are for 4 warehouses that do not include any railroad spurs. He is willing to sell the northern 19.27 acres if there is a buyer or he may consider a land swap but at our last discussion he said he would prefer to sell rather than swap for other property.

Since this is more of a regional issue rather than a local issue, we need to try and get other agencies and/or politicians aware of this location.

On Nov. 16th I drove to Los Angeles to attend the Metrolink Board of Directors meeting. By the time I found the building (and parking) in downtown Los Angeles, I was close to the 10:00 am meeting time. I ended up in the wrong building that had a committee meeting instead of the Board of Directors meeting and then had to go down from the 26th floor and walk to another building and go up to the 12th floor. I arrived at 10:10 am just a few seconds too late for the public comments portion. But as 3 people were leaving, after their portion of a presentation, I asked them in the hallway, how I would get my speaking form to the podium without disrupting the meeting. One of them said they would deliver it. I thought I had missed my 3 minutes by a few seconds but luckily I was called upon and given the time to explain why Highgrove is an ideal location for a Metrolink station stop. I handed out 12 two page sheets showing a brief summary of the benefits and a map of the site showing where the 2 station stop platforms could be located.

Then on Nov. 20, 2007, the City of Riverside held the final discussions on the 2025 plan and I was assured that if an agreement was reached to purchase the 19.27 acres for transportation purposes, even after the 2025 plan was approved, there still could be a General Plan Amendment submitted later. That is why it was decided to abolish the appeal process to the City Planning Commission decision. Later that afternoon the 2025 Gen. Plan was approved by the Riverside City Council. We are now waiting on a figure from the owner to put a price on the property. Meanwhile, we will continue to inform all interested parties about how important this location is to the movement of people by using Metrolink instead of automobiles. The homes are coming, the freeways are overcrowded and this opportunity should not be missed to let the existing commuter trains just stop at this natural railroad junction!

All of these meetings do not mean anything unless we can capture the attention of someone or some agency that will take another objective look at this location before it is too late!

January 2008 P. 8, 9, & 11

It's Your Call

Metrolink, An Answer



On Nov. 28, 2007, the Riverside County Transportation Commission presented a live television show on KVCR to provide information to the public about Metrolink and to take phone calls about the Metrolink Commuter train service in the area.

The program was hosted by Pat Haslam and was very informative.

The 3 member panel consisted of: Stephanie Wiggins- RCTC Regional Program Director Commuter Rail Programs, John Standiford -RCTC Public Relations and Frank West Moreno Valley Mayor and Southern California Regional Rail Authority member.

The intent of this article is to show that we have similar transportation goals but there is a difference of opinion on how to achieve those goals. It is not intended to challenge the integrity of anyone in the transportation field nor to criticize their statements but is being used to point out what they actually stated on television and my reply to those statements.

The following statements were made during that TV show and are shown in *italic print*.

My reply to those statements, are shown in regular print.

Stephanie Wiggins: *"So that's why what we've seen over the last 15 years in the Southern California basin-the first priority is to try to add service where tracks already exist. That's really what we found to be most cost effective and actually minimizes the impact to the public"*

Reply: If *"the first priority is to try to add service where tracks already exist"*, why has the Highgrove site been ignored? Both the east and west sides of this property have existing railroad tracks. The west side already has 56 commuter trains per week-7 days a week that pass right next to the proposed Highgrove Station location.

Stephanie Wiggins: *"It is a challenge especially in a growing area like Riverside County where we're having a growing population, so there is fewer undeveloped land available". "We don't want to necessarily take people's homes or businesses-those are the challenges that actually increase the cost of a project and can sometimes make them really unfeasible"*

Reply: For the last 6 years we have pointed to the vacant land in Highgrove. The 19 acre Highgrove location for a Metrolink station is still vacant land, in fact the entire 35 acres are still vacant. No *"peoples homes or businesses"* will need to be taken!

Stephanie Wiggins: *"Commuter rail doesn't stop at our county borders"*

Reply: Why then has RCTC staff refused to acknowledge the Highgrove Station as the key location in helping relieve traffic congestion between Riverside and San Bernardino counties?

Stephanie Wiggins: *"Cost of upgrading 20 miles of Perris Valley Line is \$193 million dollars"*

Reply: That is a lot more expensive than buying 19 acres of vacant land where eminent domain is not needed!

Stephanie Wiggins: *"Not enough train equipment"- "Delivery of new equipment not until 2010 or 2011" "Cars have been borrowed from Seattle". "Every bit of equipment is being maximized and used as much as possible" "PVL service should be ready for year 2011"*

Reply: There is no current need for additional equipment! Just stop the existing commuter trains that pass right through Highgrove every day of the week!

John Standiford: *"5,000 people per day ride the Inland Empire Orange County Line"*

"The fact that we have parking issues show that we are victims of our own success!"

Reply: The Inland Empire Orange County Line is the same line that presently goes through Highgrove but the trains do not stop where there is plenty of room for parking!

John Standiford: *"Downtown Corona is full", "You can barely find a parking spot", "Unfortunately you've got to build the structure on spots that are already scarce and precious as they are, so that's why*

we're going to open up a satellite parking lot. There's a former Edwards Cinema not far away that recently closed that has some parking there that we are leasing. We will start construction in mid-January for satellite parking at the former Edwards Cinema with shuttle service to downtown Corona Station"

Pat Haslam: *"The Corona parking lot is full by 6 or 6:15 am"*

Reply: 35 acres of vacant land in Highgrove was pointed out to RCTC staff over 6 years ago that has plenty of room for parking without building a parking structure.

John Standiford *"Highgrove would cause us to go somewhat north as we come back" (to Riverside)*

Reply: Mr. Standiford's statement indicates that the only destination from Perris- is Riverside and points west- such as Orange County. What about the other direction toward San Bernardino?

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It's Your Call

Metrolink, An Answer



Continued from page 13

By eliminating one station that is planned on the Perris Valley Line (at Spruce and Rustin) and going onto the Union Pacific tracks at Marlborough Ave., which is the route preferred by RCTC, commuters could go between Perris and Riverside in the year 2010/2011 or whenever that service is established. Meanwhile, commuters between San Bernardino and Riverside could immediately be riding the existing trains for the next 3 or 4 years, by just building a platform on the west side of the Highgrove property while waiting for the Perris Valley Line service to be established.

After the Perris Valley Line is established, another platform could be added to the east side of this very same 19 acre property, for commuter trains between Perris and San Bernardino without having to go into Riverside first, then change trains to go to San Bernardino. One piece of property in Highgrove could serve commuters between Riverside and San Bernardino now, and between Perris and San Bernardino or Riverside in the future.

John Standiford: "\$200 million dollars to get to Perris" (from Riverside), "Locomotives and cars are on order. "Riverside County (RCTC) owns and operates our own stations- including security" .

Reply: There is a need for developing the Perris Valley Line but the Highgrove station should be the first priority due to the lower cost and existing commuter train service.

Frank West: "Citizens need to be active and speak up"

"But you know, that's why I advocate for the Metrolink so much because I know that the people when they really will something and they really want something, they can put together Political Interest Group and they can make it happen. And the more people that ride are going to see what a great program it is and how much it saves them in money and in time. And I'm convinced that as people get to know the Metrolink System, it's going to grow and it's going to service all of the areas you've mentioned"

Reply: For the last 6 years, the people have been very active but the voice of the people has not been heard in spite of the many letters, comments from the public at many meetings, and resolutions from surrounding cities.

Other call in comments during show:

"More Parking needed, more cars should be added" "More trains wanted: Not enough mid-day service"

Barney" Barnett comments via call in-during program "Please take another look at the Highgrove Station. Natural RR junction point, immediately convenient, cheapest plan, 56 commuter trains, room for future platform-Perris to San Bernardino, new road would delay need for underpass, room for parking etc., location is ideal"

Please take a look at the web site: www.highgrovehappenings.net and click on **Supporting Docs** and look at the dates of the resolutions, letters and documents. All of this, and other information is verified in writing, photographs, or recordings.

I purchased the tape recording of the April 5, 2007 SCAG meeting in Los Angeles to verify what was actually said by Mr. Haley to stop the "Independent Feasibility Study".

February 2008 P. 1 & 6

Ideal location for transportation center!

1. BUY THE LAND 2. STOP THE EXISTING COMMUTER TRAINS 3. BUILD A NEW ROAD

1. BUY THE LAND: Vacant land is "For Sale" that would be an ideal location for a Transportation Center in Highgrove. Highgrove is located where the **BNSF RR** tracks meet the Perris Valley Line RR track between Riverside and San Bernardino.

2. STOP THE EXISTING COMMUTER TRAINS: Sixty-two (62) commuter trains per week go through Highgrove right next to this property 7 DAYS A WEEK but do not stop for passengers! A metrolink platform is needed for boarding at (A) next to the BNSF RR tracks (purple line).

3. BUILD A NEW ROAD: A new 1/2 mile road would go between the west end of Spring St., and Palmyrita Ave. through the vacant land and between the buildings (green line). This new road would allow access to the I-215 freeway when Main St., Center St. or Iowa Ave. are blocked by freight trains and would delay the need for an expensive overpass. Under this plan, no structures would have to be demolished for the Metrolink station or for the new road.

35 acres of vacant land, are bordered by the BNSF RR tracks on the west side (purple line), Villa St. on the north, The Perris Valley Line RR track on the east side (red line), and Citrus St. on the south end. Only 19 acres on the north end are needed for a Metrolink station but the new road (green line) would extend to Palmyrita Avenue.

There is also room for another platform for future commuter trains between Perris and San Bernardino, without having to go into Riverside first (B). Purchasing this 19 acres would provide ample parking for both Metrolink platforms with their different destinations. RCTC currently has a plan for the Perris Valley track to curve onto the Union Pacific track at Marlborough Ave. and we agree this is the best route between Perris and Riverside.

But residents in the UCR area do not want 2 stations in their neighborhood, especially since they are only one mile apart. And since RCTC does not own the property for their proposed station at the corner of Spruce St. and Rustin Ave., that money should be used to purchase the property in Highgrove. The Highgrove location is only 1 mile north of their proposed station at Spruce and Rustin. There are no commuter trains on the Perris Valley Line now, and there will not be until 2010 or 2011 after the track is up-graded, a new train signal system installed, and equipment purchased. The cost of rebuilding 20 miles of track on the Perris Valley Line between Riverside and Perris is initially estimated at \$193 Million dollars. Meanwhile, every day of the week existing commuter trains pass through Highgrove. There is no need to wait on the Perris Valley Line to be developed. We need a platform in Highgrove NOW, so the existing trains can take traffic off the freeways!

Please visit the web site: www.highgrovehappenings.net and click on Metrolink, Supporting Docs, Warehouse Photos and "It's your call"

"Public Comments"-Keep on trying until someone listens!

For the last 6 years we have been trying to get the attention of several transportation agencies to **hear the voice of the people** during public comments. Leaders from surrounding cities, local citizens and many other people from organizations in the area have spent 3 minutes at a time speaking at these meetings. Many citizens feel it is useless and have stopped going to the meetings. Some of the resolutions were passed over 6 years ago requesting a Metrolink stop in Highgrove.

My comments at these meetings may be considered one person's opinion but I am also speaking up on behalf of those who are tired of coming to these meetings.

When I say "we", it is supported by many written documents that you can actually see on our website: www.highgrovehappenings.net

Just click on: "WRITTEN DOCS" for verification.

If you have not seen these letters of support, I encourage you to look at them and look at the dates on these numerous letters and resolutions.

The property for the Metrolink station will cost a lot more today than it would have 6 years ago but it is still vacant and it is "For Sale"!

The Highgrove Metrolink station can still be done. But just listening to the words during public comments is entirely different than actually **HEARING what those words say and mean, and then taking action! The public has been speaking up but the "voice of the people" has not been heard!**

May 2008 P. 1 & 8

Metrolink route headed to Highgrove!

After 6 ½ years of trying to convince someone to purchase the vacant 35 acres near Highgrove so this location can be used for transportation uses, on April 9, 2008 the Riverside County Transportation Commission reversed its decision and voted 24 to 0 to revise their previous preferred route over the Union Pacific RR track at Marlborough Ave. and instead, study using the same vacant 35 acres we have been recommending for many years. This location is bordered by Citrus St. on the south, Villa St. on the north, the Perris Valley Line RR track on the east and the BNSF RR tracks on the west and surrounded by Highgrove on 3 sides. This route would include a curved track between the Perris Valley Line track and a possible new 4th main track parallel to the present BNSF tracks or connecting to the # 3 main line near Citrus St. that would handle trains between Perris and Riverside.

On Monday April 7, 2008, Denis Kidd and I met with RCTC's Stephanie Wiggins, John Standiford and Eliza Echevarria two days prior to the commission's decision. Our meeting with them was to learn what the staff recommendations would be to the commission on the following Wednesday. After 6 ½ years of trying, I can assure you that we were not instrumental in influencing the decision to change the route recommendation to Highgrove just 2 days before the commissioners meeting.

Everybody knows about the 6 ½ year old resolutions of support for the Highgrove Metrolink location from the Highgrove CSA 126, City of Grand Terrace, City of Loma Linda, and the University Neighborhood Association near UCR who oppose 2 stations close together in their neighborhood.

So what happened to make RCTC change their minds?

In a letter to RCTC dated Dec. 13, 2007, from the Federal Transit Administration's Regional Administrator, Leslie Rogers, part of the letter reads:

Finally, FTA is concerned about the capitol cost estimates and the projects cost-effectiveness. Although the project currently warrants a "medium" rating for cost-effectiveness, any increase in the projects cost could result in the project receiving a "medium-low" cost-effectiveness rating. Thus FTA encourages you to undertake cost-containment measures and value engineering to identify further reductions in the projects capitol cost estimate".

Cost estimates from RCTC Staff to the commissioners on April 9th, indicated there would be a \$4.61 million dollars savings to come to Highgrove instead of going over the Union Pacific track at Marlborough Avenue.

Also, in an article that appeared, in the Press Enterprise on the morning of April 9, 2008, just before the commission voted, John Standiford was quoted as saying: "We are doing this as a result of the input we received from the community" and "The public does make a difference"

Whatever the reasons are for this change in the position about the Perris Valley Line route, the first step is that this 35 acre vacant property should be purchased for transportation uses. We have stated this for many years. This property is becoming a very popular location with the new 48" water pipe line that is being put through it, (see photo on right) and the new Iowa Ave. overpass that is planned near the south west corner, and the possibility of commuter trains going through it. But during these planning stages there also needs to be a new road constructed through it to handle future growth.

On April 9, 2008, during the public comments, Denis and I supported the RCTC decision because the property needs to be purchased before any road or a track can be put through it!

July 2008 P. 1 & 9 STOP THE TRAIN.....



This Metrolink commuter train is shown crossing Main St. in Highgrove. Main St. is the Riverside/San Bernardino County Line. There are already 3,224 commuter trains that pass through Highgrove each year but do not stop for passengers. The Highgrove station sign is to the left of the train.

HERE!



A new curved track from the Perris Valley Line RR (left-but not shown) is planned to connect to the BNSF RR near this location. The 7 on the post indicates that it is 7 rail miles from San Bernardino to Highgrove.

It is 3 1/2 rail miles to Riverside from mile post 7. Between this location and Citrus St. (near Iowa Ave.) would be an ideal location for a Metrolink platform so commuters can travel in 3 different directions: to Riverside and beyond, San Bernardino and beyond and between Riverside and Perris when the Perris Valley Line is upgraded in a few years. One platform at this location would allow commuters to park in the vacant 35 acres and ride the existing trains as soon as the platform is completed while waiting for the Perris Valley Line to be rebuilt. Commuter trains pass by this location every day of the week including week ends.

If it takes 3 years to rebuild the Perris Valley Line, that means that **967 commuter trains passed through Highgrove while the Perris Valley Line was under construction!** These existing trains could take a lot of drivers off of the freeways and save commuters thousands of dollars in gasoline. It is time to stop ignoring the benefits of this location and give the region a Highgrove Station Stop the people have been working on for the last 6 1/2 years! *To view the map showing the new proposed curved track go to: www.highgrovehappenings.net and click on Metrolink.*

METROLINK RESOLUTION ADOPTED

HIGHGROVE
MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Resolution
June 24, 2008

WHEREAS, On **Nov. 27, 2001**, Riverside County Service Area 126 (Highgrove) passed a resolution requesting a Metrolink Station Stop in Highgrove and
WHEREAS, On **Jan. 8, 2002**, the Highgrove PAC (Project Area Committee) also requested “a Metrolink station stop be implemented at Highgrove when the tracks are upgraded for commuter service on the San Jacinto branch” and

WHEREAS, Highgrove residents and residents from other surrounding communities have given written support for a Metrolink Station in Highgrove for the last 6 ½ years and

WHEREAS, Many local leaders and residents from both counties have attended Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) meetings and San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) meetings, to make verbal requests (3 minutes at a time under public comments) for our voices to be heard for the benefit of residents in both counties and

WHEREAS, On **April 9, 2008**, the RCTC commissioners changed the preferred route for the Perris Valley Line track from going over the Union Pacific RR track near Marlborough Ave. to the location near Highgrove in the same vacant 35 acres where the public has been requesting a station for 6 ½ years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that for the above reasons, the Highgrove Municipal Advisory Council is requesting a Metrolink Station Stop on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) main line between Mile post 7 and Citrus Street near Highgrove. This location currently has 62 existing commuter trains per week, (3, 224 trains per year) that pass by this location without stopping for passengers. We oppose building a station south of Palmyrita Ave. on the Perris Valley Line where there will be no commuter trains for several years.

R. A. Barnett, Don Earp, Denis Kidd, Mark Visyak, & Melanie Zimmermann

The above resolution was passed unanimously by the Highgrove Municipal Advisory Council at the community meeting on June 24, 2008 and the original was given to Jaime Hurtado to give to our Riverside County Supervisor for the 5th District, Marion Ashley.

Our guest speakers for the evening were Eliza Echevarria, Riverside County Transportation Commission Community Relations Manager and Cathy Bechtel, RCTC Project Development Director.

We thank them for attending our meeting. There was however, respectful objections to the placement of a station platform south of Palmyrita Ave. where there are no present commuter trains.

August 2008 P. 6

Locals attend closed meeting

A few local residents from Highgrove, Grand Terrace and the UCR area were allowed to sit in on an Ad Hoc committee meeting that was attended by high-ranking transportation officials when the Perris Valley Line was the topic of discussion by select members of the Riverside County Transportation Commission. The meeting was not open to the public and we were not allowed to speak or ask any questions. (We were more like the fly on the wall as we listened to the proceedings). The consultants and staff presented their information to the committee but I can not divulge what happened during the meeting. The meeting was held at the County Administration Building on June 26, 2008 and even though we were unable to make any comments, we learned a lot just by listening. It was a worthwhile learning experience just to see what happens at this type of meeting.

August 2008 P. 6

PVL Metrolink: Highgrove to Riverside not on track!

There have been many meetings about the Perris Valley Line and the plans for rebuilding and upgrading the track for commuter train service between Riverside and Perris.

RCTC already owns the 38 mile Perris Valley Line track from Highgrove to San Jacinto but their jurisdiction ends at the location where they need to leave their track on the PVL between Citrus St. and Spring St. and start the curve from their track to the BNSF tracks. But the property that is needed for the curve between the Perris Valley Line and the BNSF tracks is still owned by a developer. And even though the property is “For Sale”, RCTC has not yet purchased it.

In addition even if they did own the land for the curve, it is almost unbelievable that there still is no written agreement between RCTC and the BNSF Railroad for the Perris Valley Line commuter trains to operate between Highgrove and Riverside. On July 30, 2008, RCTC confirmed that-even if RCTC pays for the cost of building a 4th main line between Highgrove and Riverside, there is no written agreement with the BNSF to let them run more commuter trains. RCTC can not connect to the BNSF into Riverside without an agreement with the BNSF because it is on the railroad’s right-of-way.

Here are two important issues that could stop the project in its tracks:

1. The property for the curve between the two railroads is not owned by RCTC.

2. There is no agreement with the railroad to use the BNSF right-of-way for PVL commuter trains between Highgrove and Riverside.

Both of these important issues need to be resolved before commuter trains can operate between Riverside and Perris. Without both of these steps being resolved, the commuter trains can only operate between Highgrove and San Jacinto on their own Perris Valley Line.

Meanwhile every day of the week, existing commuter trains continue to pass through Highgrove without stopping long enough to pick up passengers. The Highgrove location is only 1/2 mile north of the proposed Palmyrita Ave. station that RCTC wants. We oppose the Palmyrita Ave. station because the PVL will not have any commuter trains for another 3 or 4 years even if the 2 previously mentioned issues are resolved tomorrow.

On July 9, 2008 I spoke at the RCTC meeting during the 3 minute “Public Comments” and I gave a copy of my statements to each of the 30 Commissioners. This was my presentation:

“For the last 6 ½ years surrounding cities and organizations have continually pointed to Highgrove as an ideal location for a Metrolink stop.

In the past, we have been told that SANBAG needs to be financially involved if a station were to be located in the Highgrove area because it is so close to the county line. RCTC needs the property at the Highgrove location for a curved track from the Perris Valley Line to the BNSF right of way, but this same property could also be used for a Metrolink platform. In addition, RCTC also wants to purchase another piece of property south of Palmyrita Ave. for a platform and parking where there are no existing commuter trains.

With this plan, I see a duplication of expenses for the purchase of 2 properties instead of 1 and I also see a delay of several more years for Metrolink service to this area. And I am sure these expenses are without any help from SANBAG for the purchase of the 2 different properties.

*7 days a week, there are commuter trains that pass through Highgrove but do not stop. This amounts to 62 trains a week or **3, 224** commuter trains per year. Highgrove has commuter trains that can serve riders in 3 different directions: To and from Riverside, to and from San Bernardino, and eventually to and from Perris, and it is only ½ mile north of the Palmyrita location.*

September 2008 P. 6 & 11

Community representatives meet with RCTC

On Aug. 21, 2008 community representatives from Highgrove and Grand Terrace met with the Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Ann Mayer and other RCTC representatives, John Standiford, Cathy Bechtol and Eliza Echeverria. Community representatives included former Grand Terrace City Councilman Gene Carlstrom, Denis Kidd, Melanie Zimmermann and yours truly, R. A. "Barney" Barnett.

The topic of discussion was the location of the proposed Metrolink stations in the Highgrove area. There is a difference of opinion regarding where to put the station. RCTC wants to put a station on the Perris Valley Line just south of Palmyrita Ave. (see photo below). This would require the demolition of an existing warehouse and would result in another delay of commuter train service to the area for approximately 3 or more years until the entire 23 miles of the old Perris Valley Line track is upgraded for commuter trains.



The community's position is that by purchasing one piece of vacant land where there is already commuter train service, and does not require any demolition, is more efficient than buying two pieces of property where one of the locations will not have commuter trains for several years. Buying the property for the curve and then buying additional property for the Palmyrita station where there are no commuter tax dollars. The property north of the arroyo and south of Villa St. is mandatory for the curved track between the PVL track and the BNSF tracks. And this property already has Metrolink trains on the west side of the property that go through Highgrove 7 days a week. We have waited 6 1/2 years for Metrolink service and we would have to wait another 3 to 5 years under the RCTC plan.

This is the warehouse that would have to be purchased and demolished to make room for a Metrolink station south of Palmyrita Ave. under the plan proposed by RCTC. The Perris Valley Line railroad track is located to the right of the photograph but is not pictured. There will be no commuter train service over this track at this location until the entire 23 miles of track are upgraded and a signal system for train movements (Traffic Control System) is installed between Highgrove and Perris on the PVL.

September 2008



*This is just one of the sixty-two (62) commuter trains that already pass through Highgrove each week. A platform is needed near this location that could be used for destinations in three different directions: to and from **Riverside**, to and from **San Bernardino** and in a few years when the Perris Valley Line is rebuilt and upgraded for commuter trains, this same location could be used for commuter trains to and from **Perris**. The purchase of one 19 acre piece of property could be used for both the curve and a platform to serve all three destinations. And all of the 19 acres are still vacant land! There used to be 35 acres of vacant land but our suggestions have been ignored for the last 6 1/2 years and warehouses are now being built on the south side of the arroyo. Time is running out because if this land is not purchased soon there are plans for 2 more warehouses on the north side of the arroyo and RCTC will not have access for the curved track to Perris.*

Inland Empire-Orange County Line

808

**62 Passenger trains pass through Highgrove each week
but do not stop due to no station platform**

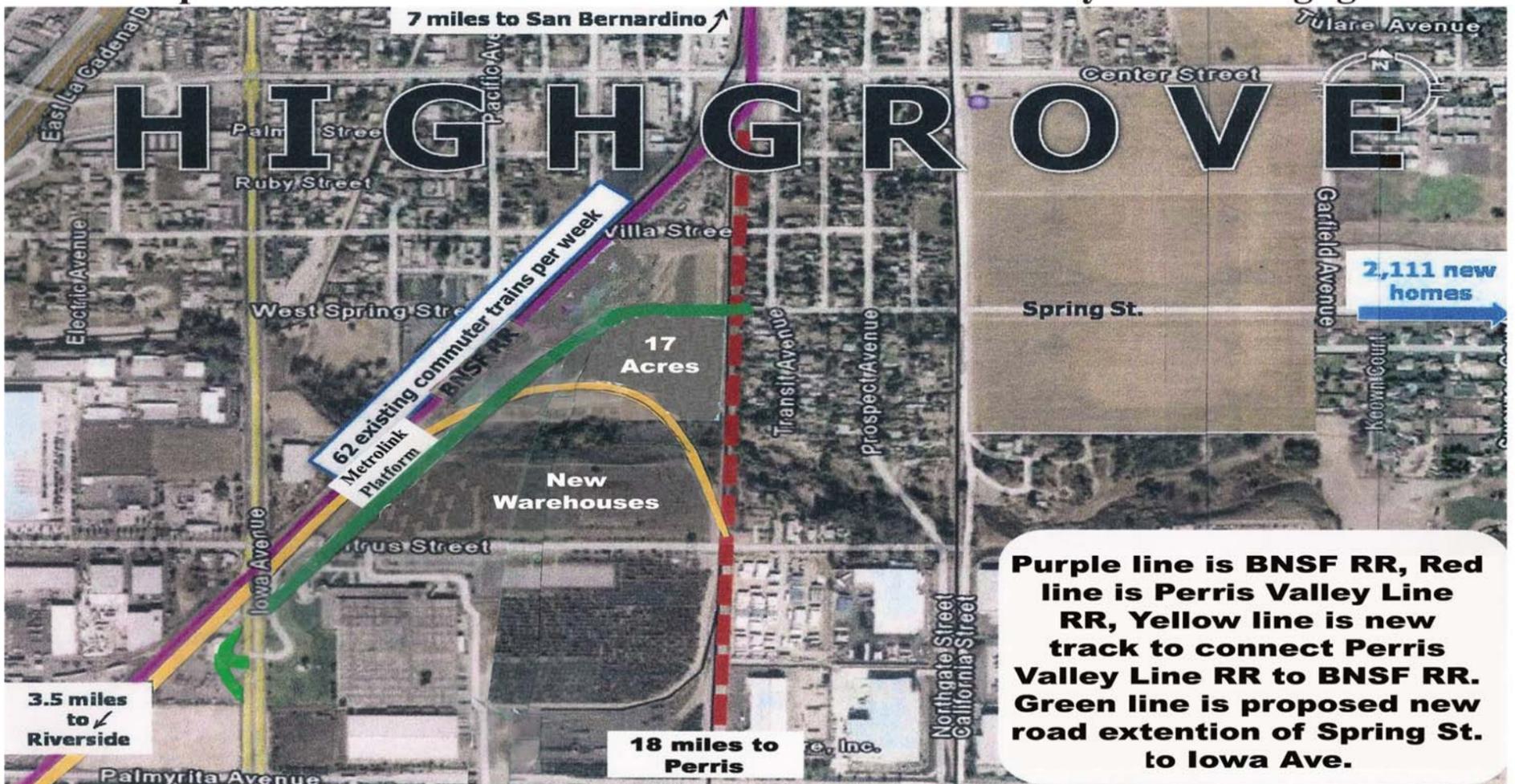
	Departing San Bernardino	Train #	Arriving Riverside		# of Trains
Saturday	5:32am	3	5:53am	Amtrak	1
	7:30am	857	7:50am	Metrolink	1
	8:55am	859	9:15am	Metrolink	1
Sunday	5:32am	3	5:53am	Amtrak	1
	7:30am	857	7:50am	Metrolink	1
	8:55am	859	9:15am	Metrolink	1
Weekdays	4:52am	803	5:11am	Metrolink	5
	5:22am	805	5:41am	Metrolink	5
	5:32am	3	5:53am	Amtrak	5
	5:57am	807	6:16am	Metrolink	5
	11:25am	811	11:44am	Metrolink	5

	Departing Riverside	Train #	Arriving San Bernardino		
Saturday	4:49pm	858	5:20pm	Metrolink	1
	6:29pm	860	7:00pm	Metrolink	1
	8:03pm	4	8:29pm	Amtrak	1
Sunday	4:49pm	858	5:20pm	Metrolink	1
	6:29pm	860	7:00pm	Metrolink	1
	8:03pm	4	8:29pm	Amtrak	1
Weekdays	10:21am	800	10:50am	Metrolink	5
	5:18pm	804	5:45pm	Metrolink	5
	6:03pm	806	6:30pm	Metrolink	5
	6:38pm	811	7:10pm	Metrolink	5
	8:03pm	4	8:29pm	Amtrak	5

Total Passenger trains per week 62

Comparing Metrolink Station locations: Sept. 23, 2008

Station platform needs to be where commuter trains already exist in Highgrove

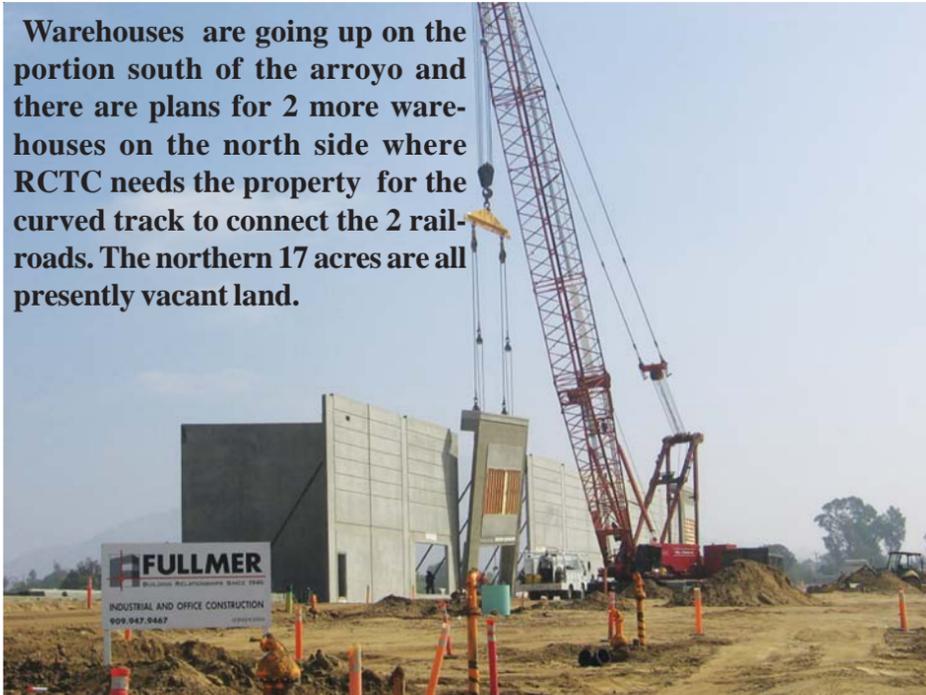


X RCTC wants a station south of Palmyrita Ave.
at the X where there are no commuter trains!

The yellow curved line shown on the map above is where there are 17 acres of vacant land that is "For Sale" for \$11 million dollars and is mandatory for the curved track to connect the Perris Valley Line RR to the BNSF RR between Riverside and Perris. Without this curve at Highgrove, future Perris Valley Line commuter trains will not be able to operate between Riverside and Perris in either direction. If RCTC does not buy the 17 acres, there are plans for 2 more warehouses on the 17 acres. We have waited for 7 years but our plan is still being ignored. RCTC wants to buy property and put a station where there are no commuter trains on the Perris Valley Line. The X at the bottom of the map shows where RCTC wants to put a Metrolink station. This \$25 million dollar property is not needed at all because the 17 acres at Highgrove could be used for the curved track, a Metrolink station where there are existing daily commuter trains, and plenty of room for parking. Abandoning the Palmyrita Ave. station could save \$25 million of your tax dollars.

October 2008 P. 8 & 9

Warehouses are going up on the portion south of the arroyo and there are plans for 2 more warehouses on the north side where RCTC needs the property for the curved track to connect the 2 railroads. The northern 17 acres are all presently vacant land.



These 25 acres (below) south of Palmyrita Ave. are "For Sale" at \$1 million dollars per acre. RCTC would not need this \$25 million dollar property because the Highgrove location is only 1/2 mile north of this location. And there will be no commuter trains here until the entire Perris Valley Line is ready for commuter service in 3 to 5 years. The PVL track is located to the right of the photo but is not pictured.



This photo shows one of the 62 Metrolink trains that currently pass through Highgrove each week. A platform is needed at this location and just stop some of these existing trains next to the 17 acres. (see Metrolink Platform on map at left)



During the proposed re-construction time of 3 years for the Perris Valley Line track to be up-graded there will be almost 10,000 commuter trains that pass through Highgrove that do not stop.

Here are the figures: Highgrove now has commuter train service 7 days a week. There are 62 commuter trains each week or 3,224 trains per year. Three years of construction time is equivalent to 9,672 commuter trains that could take thousands of vehicles off the freeways during this period. These figures are not freight train figures but trains that transport people by rail.

The passenger track speed at this location is 60 mph and the platform for the existing trains would be located on straight track. Just stopping the existing trains does not violate the Feb. 14, 1996 train movement agreement between RCTC and BNSF because there are no additional trains added between San Bernardino and Riverside. The trains are already there- but they need to stop just long enough for passengers. The curved track would intersect the BNSF railroad from the right side of the above picture. Our freeways are so congested and the gasoline prices are so high that many commuters have turned to park and ride. Highgrove is the perfect location to park and ride because the platform would serve commuters in 3 directions: to and from Riverside using existing trains, to and from San Bernardino using existing trains, and to and from Perris when the Perris Valley Line is completed. The Perris Valley Line railroad also needs a completely new signal system to run commuter trains. There are no signals for any trains except for the ones on each side of the railroad junction where the Union Pacific track crosses the Perris Valley Line track at Marlborough Avenue. Additional passing tracks or sidings will have to be built and new engines and coaches will be needed. And there is no rail connection at the other end of the Perris Valley Line because the track dead ends at San Jacinto. But the real question is: How will their trains get between Riverside and Perris without the 17 acres of vacant land at Highgrove?

January 2009 P. 1 & 3

Greyhound Bus/Metrolink Service

What do they have in common? Location, Location, Location!



The picture above shows a Metrolink train passing over Iowa Avenue. Penhall Trucking (Arrow), is located on the west side of Iowa Ave. and would be an ideal location for a Greyhound Station.

There are no residents in the area of the triangular shaped Penhall property which has RR tracks on one side, the walls of an existing warehouse on another side, and the remaining side will be along the elevated part of the Iowa Ave. overpass. Access to this property will be under the proposed Iowa Ave. overpass on the south side, and parallel to the BNSF RR tracks. The Greyhound Station would be within walking distance of a future Metrolink Station near the train shown in the picture. Iowa Ave. is also along the Riverside Transit Agency's (RTA) existing bus route 25 between Riverside and Loma Linda. Two forms of bus transportation would be available close to the proposed Metrolink Station. A Metrolink Station is needed for present commuters between Riverside and San Bernardino, and future rail commuters between Riverside and Perris. Four types of transportation would be located in the same area: Greyhound & RTA bus service, Metrolink commuter train service, and automobile traffic could use the new proposed 1/2 mile road between Citrus St. and Spring St. when trains block the grade crossings. This short road could go through the vacant property north of the new warehouses on Citrus St. that is the same property needed for the curved track from the Perris Valley Line to the BNSF main lines!

Back on **Aug. 4, 2008**, I met with Riverside City Manager, Brad Hudson and his assistant Belinda Graham in Brad's office to discuss my plan to relocate Greyhound to the outskirts of Riverside. I have never heard from them in response to my proposal! But I keep reading in the Press Enterprise about how Riverside wanted to move Greyhound to the west side of the I-215 freeway by Columbia

Continued on page 20

Greyhound Bus/Metrolink Service

Continued from page 19

Ave. and that fell through, and how they are considering buying out Greyhound for \$625,000 to get them out of their \$1.00 per year lease agreement.

Then on Dec. 15, 2008 I met with Riverside County Supervisor, Bob Buster to talk about relocating Greyhound and also to discuss the Highgrove Metrolink Station. This property is within his jurisdiction as County Supervisor but it is also within the city limits of Riverside. He informed me that Greyhound was interested in the property on the south/east corner of Center St. and Iowa Ave. in Highgrove. But moving Riverside's problem to Highgrove is not the answer and I oppose this location because it is too close to our businesses and residences.

That same day (Dec. 15, 2008), I gave CD copies of my Greyhound plan to Supervisor Buster, to Jaime Hurtado for Supervisor Ashley, to Juan Perez, Riverside County Transportation Director, and to the city of Riverside for Brad Hudson, Belinda Graham, and Councilman, Mike Gardner, who is the city councilman in ward one where this property is located.

On Dec. 20, 2008 I talked to the owner of the property who leases to Penhall Trucking and sent him a copy of the photo shown on the front page and asked him to view the Greyhound portion of our web site. He is willing to listen to my proposal that includes talking to the city of Riverside about relocating. If Penhall Trucking were relocated, this would be an ideal location for Greyhound since they need a building to use for their station.

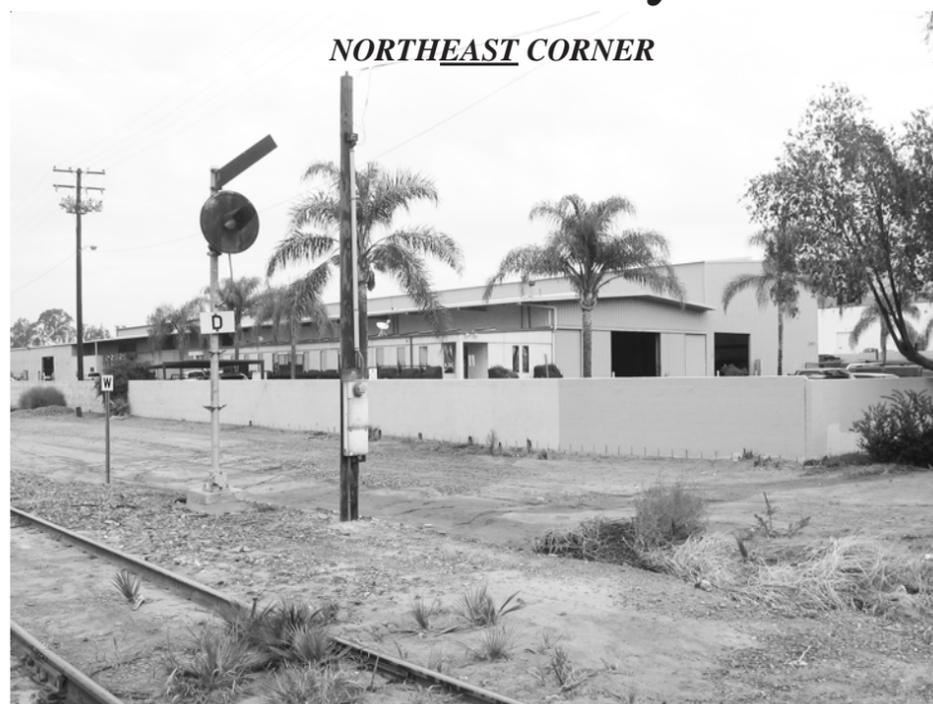
The CD I gave to the City and County officials is available for your viewing by visiting our web site at www.highgrovehappenings.net and clicking on "Greyhound". (Thanks to Bill Hahn for preparing this for our web site)

There will be a meeting of the Transportation Committee at 1:00 pm on Jan. 8, 2009 on the 7th floor of the Riverside City Hall to discuss the possibility of finding a new location for the Greyhound terminal in the city.

The public is invited to attend!

February 2009 P. 6 & 7

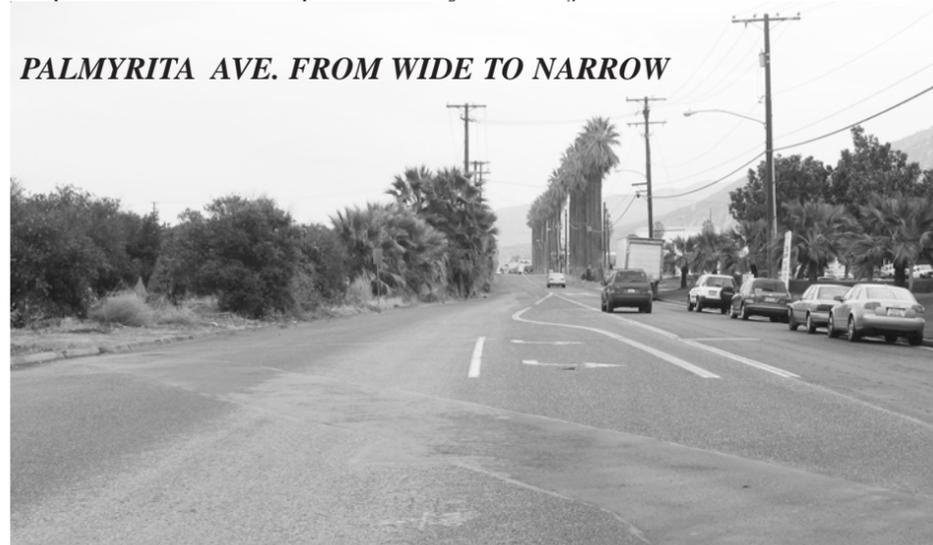
Where will the Palmyrita Ave. Metrolink Station be located?



The northeast corner is already occupied by West Coast Wire and Steel Co.



The northwest corner appears to be an orange grove but is only 4 rows of trees deep. This is the narrow part of Palmyrita Ave. just west of the RR track.



These trees will be gone when Palmyrita Ave. is widened to match the existing width of the street. Notice how the trees extend into the right-of-way where the road narrows! Palmyrita Ave. is wider at both ends of this small orange grove.

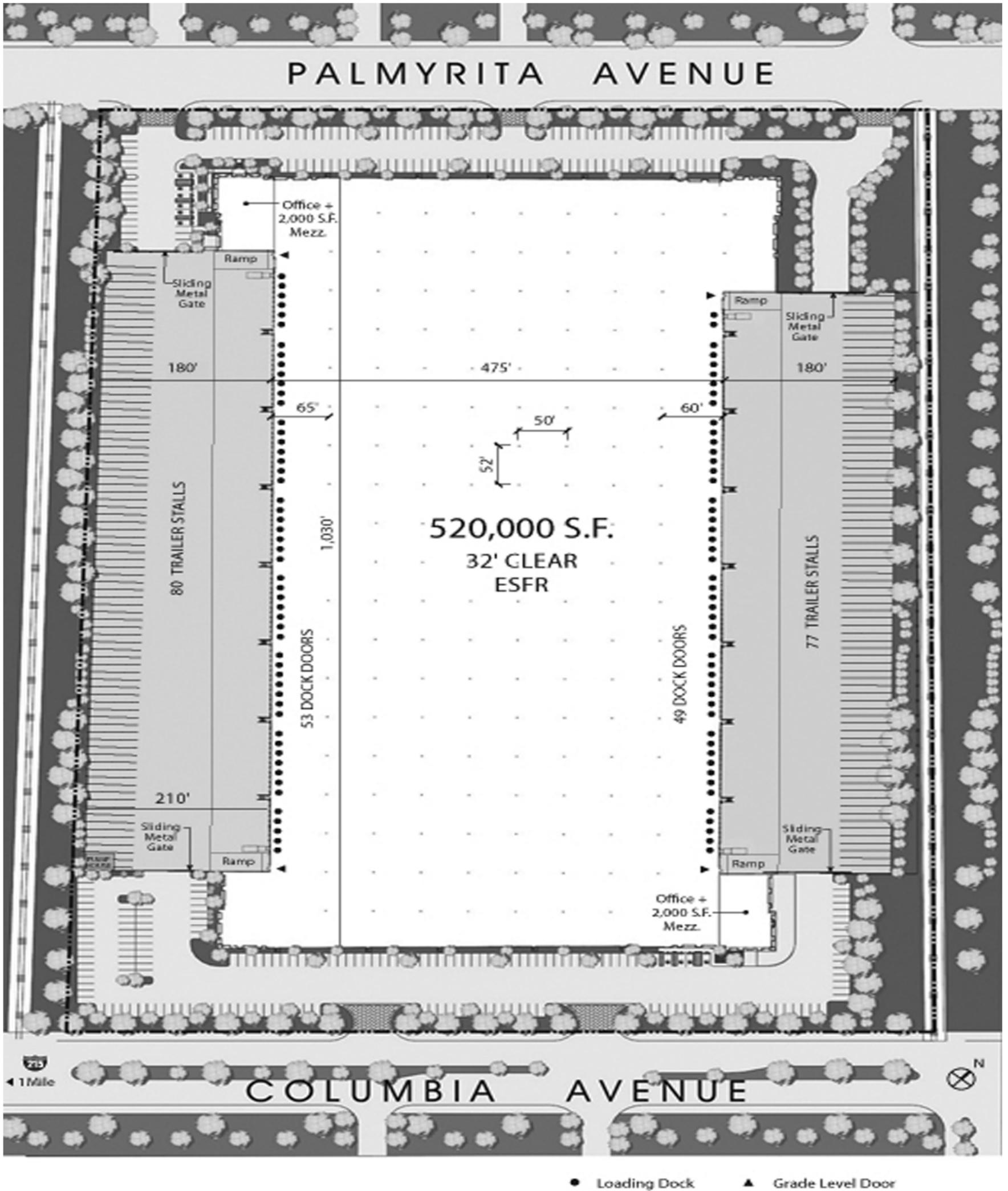


Grading is underway for a giant warehouse south of Palmyrita! The plan for the 520,000 Sq. Ft. cross dock warehouse is shown at the right



On the southwest corner of this area is a warehouse next to the railroad track so this location for a Metrolink Station is out because there is no room for parking. This photo is looking south at the Perris Valley Line RR across Palmyrita Ave. Even if one of these corners was available for a Metrolink station and parking, there will be no commuter trains on this track for several more years until the entire Perris Valley Line is upgraded. Why try to put a station on a track where there are no commuter trains when only 1/2 mile north of this location there are **3,224 commuter trains that already pass through Highgrove each year?**

There is no room for a station at Palmyrita Ave. on the Perris Valley Line!



● Loading Dock ▲ Grade Level Door

25 acres are currently being graded for this giant 520,000 Sq. Ft. cross dock warehouse that stretches from Palmyrita Ave. all the way to Columbia Avenue. The plan above shows 53 dock doors on the west side and 49 on the east side for 102 dock doors. It also shows 80 trailer stalls on the west side and 77 trailer stalls on the east side for a total of 157 trailer stall parking spaces. The verticle left hand margin of the above plan is where the Perris Valley Line Railroad track is located-right next to this large warehouse.

The RCTC plan shows 460 parking spaces at the Palmyrita Station in 2011 and 550 in 2030 but all 4 corners are taken!

Only 1/2 mile north of the Palmyrita location there are 19 acres of vacant land that is mandatory for a curved track to connect the 2 railroads. Without this land, future commuter trains will not be able to operate between Riverside and Perris. This same land should be used for the Highgrove Metrolink Station where commuter trains pass by on the west side of the property each day of the week including week-ends. This means that 62 commuter trains per week or 3,224 commuter trains per year already go through Highgrove where there is room for the curved track and plenty of room for parking. There is no need to purchase 2 different properties-one for the curve and another for a station when Highgrove is only 1/2 mile away!

One piece of property would serve both purposes and the land is "For Sale"!

The photo at the left states it will be a warehouse with 530,000 Sq. Ft. but the floor plan says 520,000 Sq. Ft. Either way these 25 acres are taken!

Move the Palmyrita Ave. location to Highgrove! One Metrolink station platform could serve 3 cities: Riverside, Perris and San Bernardino.

Hunter Park Distribution Center
 530,000 S.F. Cross-Dock
 Available 4th Qtr 2008

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RAIL AND BUS TRANSPORTATION PLAN

JAN 5, 2009

7 RAIL MILES TO SAN BERNARDINO DEPOT



3.5 RAIL MILES TO RIVERSIDE DEPOT

18 RAIL MILES TO PERRIS

BLUE LINE = RTA BUS ROUTE #25 BETWEEN RIVERSIDE AND LOMA LINDA
 YELLOW DOTTED LINE = CURVED TRACK TO CONNECT PERRIS VALLEY LINE RR TO BNSF RR
 SOLID GREEN LINE = NEW 1/2 MILE ROAD THROUGH VACANT LAND
 YELLOW = EXISTING RAIL LINES
 BELOW RED DOTTED LINE = CITY LIMITS
 ABOVE RED DOTTED LINE = COUNTY