

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC  
APRIL 25 – 27, 2023**

**INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY**

**ISSUE:** As the U.S. Department of Transportation implements the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and fiscal year appropriations measures, the Monday Morning Group recommends focus on two key areas of emphasis.

**Fund Coachella Valley Rail Project**

**BACKGROUND:** The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) has long supported developing multimodal transportation solutions to improve mobility choice, relieve traffic congestion, and meet climate goals. In December 2022, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in partnership with RCTC, applied for \$20 million in federal Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant funding for the next phase of the Coachella Valley Rail (CV Rail) Project. Upon completion, CV Rail would provide game-changing access to jobs and education centers while reducing vehicle miles traveled and combating climate change and air pollution. The project would extend approximately 144 miles between Los Angeles County and the Coachella Valley and create significant new economic and tourism opportunities by opening travel with stops throughout the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside.

**ACTION:** The Monday Morning Group urges the Federal Railroad Administration to swiftly approve Caltrans' and RCTC's application for \$20 million in federal CRISI funding for the CV Rail Project. This funding will enable RCTC to move forward with the Tier II project-level environmental analysis and preliminary engineering. CV Rail service will transform, connect, promote sustainability, access, and equity, expand economic investment and tourism, and offer more travel choices for residents of our rapidly growing region. Sixty-eight elected officials, municipalities, and community organizations provided letters of support for this grant request, including United States Senator Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator Alex Padilla, Representative Raul Ruiz, Representative Mark Takano, Representative Ken Calvert, and 19 cities in Riverside County.

**Regional Mobility Amid Population Growth and a Supply Chain Crisis**

**BACKGROUND:** According to a Wall Street Journal article published in November 2021, Inland Southern California effectively tied the Phoenix region in 2020 for the biggest gain in households from migration nationwide. Riverside County is home to two of the state's top ten city growth rates, as well as two cities identified as having one of the ten longest commute times in the United States. Our roads do not just move people, they move goods. 40% of the nation's goods travel through the region by truck and train. As freight and goods movement accelerates to historic levels to serve the rest of the State and the nation, inland residents are left to compete for limited space on our highway networks. This congestion leads to reduced productivity, less time with family, poor mental health, and the worst air quality in the country.

**ACTION:** The Monday Morning Group encourages Congress to invest in our region and provide immediate relief to its working families and the economy as this vital freight and goods movement gateway sinks further into dysfunction. The proposed daily passenger rail service between Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley would provide commuter choice and alleviate congestion on I-10. The I-10 Bypass project would provide the first surface street connection between Banning and Cabazon to prevent catastrophe should the freeway ever close. The Third Street Grade Separation Project in Riverside would boost commerce and improve safety and air quality in a growing community impacted by two freight lines. The 15 Express Lanes Project Southern Extension to SR 74 would expand commuter choice and manage long-term traffic congestion spurred by increased goods movement and population growth. The proposed triple track of the BNSF rail line from Fullerton through Riverside would allow expanded passenger rail service in Riverside County, improve the movement of freight and goods from the Ports of LA and Long Beach, and reduce road congestion and associated emissions. This suite of projects would take \$875 million in funding alone, demonstrating the severity of our region's need.