



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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January 17, 2014

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ARTHUR T. LEAHY *by fct*
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: DEBRA A. JOHNSON *DAJ*
INTERIM CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

SUBJECT: ORANGE LINE PIERCE COLLEGE STATION

ISSUE

At the November 20, 2013 Planning and Programming Committee meeting, a motion was introduced by Directors Yaroslavsky, Antonovich and Kerkorian for staff to investigate concerns raised by the Winnetka Neighborhood Council regarding issues related to public urination, waste and debris in the residential area of Winnetka in Woodland Hills. Staff was directed to present a plan to mitigate these issues.

BACKGROUND

The Orange Line Pierce College Station is located on Winnetka Avenue adjacent to Pierce College in the community of Woodland Hills, which is part of the City of Los Angeles. In November 2013, weekday ridership totaled 29,475 customers.

This station is separated from a single family residential area by a Metro right-of-way (ROW) wall. There is another block wall alongside a private residence which creates a five foot opening. The residents in this area claim that Metro customers have been using this thoroughfare to "relieve" themselves. As a result, the Winnetka Neighborhood Council has requested that Metro install portable toilets in the park-and-ride lot for this station.

The Neighborhood Council also requested vegetation and debris cleanup in the Metro ROW along Metro's soundwall as well as an area along the alleyway which is the City of Los Angeles' ROW.

The Board directed the CEO to report back on these findings at the January 2014 Board meeting and present an implementation plan for installing portable toilets if the aforementioned issues cannot be thoroughly mitigated.

On Tuesday, December 3, 2013, Metro staff visited and surveyed the area via visual inspection where the problems were said to occur. The purpose of the site visit was to determine the scope of the issue and the possibility of monitoring the area via video

surveillance. On Thursday, December 5, 2013, a video trailer was installed and recorded area activities for 30 days. As of Sunday, January 5, 2014, staff has not been able to substantiate the claim that Metro customers are entering into the thoroughfare for any activity.

Staff reported that there was no evidence of large debris, urine and feces, needles, prescription bottles, or pedestrian traffic. Staff did ascertain that the Metro ROW needs minor vegetation clearing and debris removal. There is some intrusion into the area from residential trees and bushes.

During the site visit, it was noted that there is no lighting in the portion of the area where the problems are said to occur. Further away from Metro property, there are a few individual motion sensor lights located on private garages that offer illumination.

NEXT STEPS

In November 2013, Metro's Community Relations Department met with the City of Los Angeles Council District Three (CD 3) planning staff and offered several recommendations for the homeowners in the area. The suggestions include installing motion detectors and lighting in the portion of the area that is exceptionally dark at night, and installing residential security cameras and/or signage. CD 3 staff is open to exploring these proposals with the Neighborhood Council and homeowners.

Metro will need authorization from the City of Los Angeles and the Neighborhood Council to move forward with tree and bush trimming within the thoroughfare. As of Friday, December 20, 2013 Metro Maintenance staff completed vegetation and debris removal in the five foot space between Metro's soundwall and a private residence's block wall (Attachment A).

Metro Board policy currently prohibits installation of public toilets at stations (Attachment B); three exceptions have been made for transit hubs (Union Station, El Monte and Artesia). The park-and-ride lot in which the Neighborhood Council wants to install a port-a-potty is owned by Pierce College and leased by Metro; Metro does not have jurisdiction to install public toilets on the lot unless approved by Pierce College.

The permit and construction costs to install an Automated Public Toilet (APT) similar to the units located at the El Monte and Harbor Transitway stations start at \$600,000 per unit. Construction costs may increase due to 1) the college's labor agreements; 2) the distance to the main sewer, potable water and power lines; 3) underground utilities and easements obstructing the utilities. The annual maintenance contract is \$48,000 per APT. Additional security cameras and emergency systems to the construction and maintenance costs may increase significantly due to the proximity of the APT to the college.

BEFORE



AFTER





OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MAY 19, 1999

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

SUBJECT: MTA RESTROOM POLICY

**ACTION: ADOPT A NEW MTA RESTROOM POLICY INCLUDING
MODIFICATIONS TO THE METRO RED LINE
RESTROOM POLICY**

One Gateway Plaza
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RECOMMENDATION

213.922.6000

Adopt a new MTA restroom policy, including modifications to the Metro Red Line Restroom Policy.

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POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The MTA's existing restroom policy applies only to Metro Red Line facilities and provides for restroom usage by passengers only in the event of an emergency. Hence, existing policy does not address restroom facilities at non-rail locations nor general public use of such facilities other than on an emergency basis. This limitation on access to restroom facilities has been an element of MTA policy since the preliminary engineering phase of the Metro Red Line in the early 1980's. This limitation has been predicated on security concerns and the capital, operating and maintenance costs typically associated with public restrooms.

The MTA is currently proceeding with a contract which will provide up to 10 Automatic Public Toilets for MTA bus and rail passengers and the general public. As a next step, staff is preparing a set of short and long range steps which will allow the MTA to proceed cautiously to decide whether public restroom needs can be accommodated at reasonable costs without impacting the safety of our passengers.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The financial impacts of expanding the existing restroom policy could be considerable but are difficult to quantify at this time. It is likely that there will be increased costs associated with security of public restroom facilities and potential liability from claims is unknown. Because of the prospect of heightened operational costs associated with public toilet provisions and the financial constraints that the agency faces with respect to its core business operations, it is necessary and prudent to provide some reasonable assurance that the expansion of the restroom policy be pursued in a manner which is cost-neutral to the MTA.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board has the alternative of not modifying existing restroom policy and maintaining public access to restrooms at Metro Rail stations only in emergencies. The proposed short range and long range steps will allow staff to evaluate all relevant issues in a prudent manner.

BACKGROUND

At the March 25, 1999 Regular Board Meeting, staff was directed to work with the committee to develop recommendations relative to public restroom facilities. Staff made a presentation at the April 21, 1999 Operations Committee meeting which provided an overview of the existing Restroom Policy developed during the Metro Rail design process and adopted by the Rail Construction Corporation Board on February 3, 1992, and the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission on February 26, 1992. At the April 29, 1999 Regular Board Meeting, a motion was approved directing staff to report back with a comprehensive public restroom policy and a negotiated contract for approval with OMNI Outdoor/STI for APTs. The negotiated contract is the subject of a separate Board Report presently before the Operations Committee.

The most recent version of the restroom policy, as adopted by the LACTC in 1992, states:

Restrooms shall be provided at each station for Metro Rail use. These facilities shall be available for emergency use by the public at the discretion of Metro Rail personnel.

It is the policy of the RCC Board of Directors that restroom facilities shall be provided at each subway station for Metro Rail staff use.

Provisions for future installation of such restrooms shall be installed at staffed stations, rail interchanges and terminal stations. These facilities may be completed and available to the passengers when a clear demonstration of public needs results from actual operations and encourage installation of restroom facilities by those developments that benefit from the stations existence. (Emphasis added).

The last portion of this policy introduces the concept of cost-neutrality and public-private collaboration in the future installation of public restrooms. The APT program being negotiated with OMNI Outdoor/STI is an example of a public-private partnership that provides for the provision of public restrooms with certain safeguards to minimize financial risk to the MTA. The proposed policy builds on this model and reinforces the existing policy that restroom access be encouraged in joint development opportunities. Upon the adoption of the attached policy, staff will negotiate for the provision of public restrooms into future joint developments wherever feasible.

An important element of the proposed policy involves a report to the Board at the conclusion of the first year of APTs regarding operational and financial performance and any related security concerns. This evaluation will enable management and the Board to consider the effectiveness of such facilities and take appropriate measures for improvements.

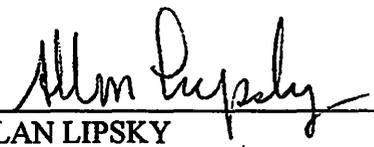
ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Proposed Revised MTA Public Restroom Policy

Prepared by: Frank Cardenas, Executive Officer, Administration



FRANK CARDENAS
Executive Officer, Administration



ALLAN LIPSKY
Office of the Chief Executive Officer

Public Metro Red Line Restroom Policy

Restrooms shall be provided at each station for Metro Rail use. These facilities shall be available for emergency use by the public at the discretion of Metro Rail personnel.

It is the policy of the ~~RCC Board of Directors~~ MTA that restroom facilities shall be provided at each subway station for Metro Rail staff use.

It is further the policy of the MTA to consider the restroom needs of its passengers and the public in the construction, maintenance and operation of bus and rail facilities and joint development projects.

In furtherance of these policy goals, the LACMTA Board of Directors directs that the following short-term goals shall be implemented to provide for restroom access by passengers and the public:

- a) implement the Automated Public Toilets (APTs) demonstration project under the terms of the contract approved by the Board in May 1999
- b) incorporate public access to restroom facilities into joint development policies in a manner that ensures cost-neutrality to the MTA. Staff shall coordinate with developers and encourage installation of restroom facilities by those developments that benefit from the station's existence; and
- c) explore innovative public/private cooperative agreements to expand existing MTA contracts for the use of restrooms and for new agreements and facilities.

Additionally, it is the policy of the LACMTA Board of Directors that the following long-term goal shall be implemented:

One year after the full implementation of any restroom facilities provided after adoption of this policy, including the APT project, report back to the Board on whether to expand on-site restroom facilities and the most cost effective and customer responsive method of implementation.

~~Provisions for future installation of such restrooms shall be installed at staffed stations, rail interchanges and terminal stations. These facilities~~ The following guidelines are to be considered by staff in the effectuation of this policy. Public restrooms may be completed installed at locations including but not limited to bus/rail interchanges and terminal rail stations and available to the passengers and the public when a clear demonstration of public needs results from actual operations. Restroom facilities shall be free of charge to passengers and the public.

Initial installation of public restroom facilities shall be on a test or provisional basis and staff shall present to the Board an assessment of the financial and operational impacts and public service benefits of providing such facilities after one full year of implementation, at such time the Board shall make a determination as to whether to proceed with installations of additional public restroom facilities and the most cost effective and customer responsive method of implementation.