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RJ
Los Angeles County
Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: RAE JAMES *RJ*
SUBJECT: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN UPDATE

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ISSUE

Presentation of recent progress made in implementing tasks described in the Board approved MTA Communications Plan.

BACKGROUND

The MTA Communications plan is an 18-month plan covering January 1996 - June 1997. It was approved by the Board on December 20, 1995.

UPDATE

Having recently reached the halfway point in the period covered by the plan, we continue to focus on implementing its programs, which were delineated under five separate goals:

Goal 1 - Promote Ridership

Most of the major tasks outlined in the plan under this goal have now been implemented. Efforts under this goal have sought to promote ridership by strengthening the identity of the Metro System and improving perceptions of our dedication to quality service. Notably, we launched a series of newspaper "Point of View" ads in September giving MTA's position on various transit matters in an "editorial" manner. The series has been appearing twice a month and will continue until November; it will then resume in February and run through April. (Samples are attached.)

Among items still in development are a 1/2 hour television program aimed at increasing awareness of MTA's commitment to its customers. It is targeted to air in January 1997.

Goal 2 - Improve Internal Communications

Nearly all of the tasks outlined under this goal have been completed. Highlights have included the launch of a new monthly employee magazine called "Metro Family" in May. It spotlights employee programs, profiles MTA executives, and offers feature stories on employees and other items of interest. Metro Family is mailed to the employee's home.

To further strengthen internal communications, an editorial board has been established to evaluate and make recommendations on all departmental MTA newsletters. In September, the editorial board sponsored an editor's workshop focusing on consistent key messages and themes, production issues and official editorial style.

Upcoming is a new Employee Suggestion Program. It is in the design phase and is expected to be completed by December 1996 and implemented in the first quarter of 1997.

Goal 3 - Build Legislative Confidence

We have strengthened communications in this area recently by instituting a regular *Legislative Brief* report for MTA Board members and Executive staff. We also produce periodic letters to elected officials over the CEO's signature, advancing MTA viewpoints on specific legislative issues.

Following through on other tasks in the plan, we have coordinated numerous meetings and trips to communicate with elected officials/administration officials in Sacramento, Washington DC and throughout Los Angeles County to advocate the MTA goals and objectives. These communications have included letters from Joseph E. Drew to elected representatives, testifying before Congress and the California Legislature on such topics as the FY 1997 DOT Appropriations Act, the Reauthorization of ISTEA, and the State Transportation Improvement Program Reform legislation.

Further, we have coordinated and/or participated in numerous transportation stakeholder meetings for such organizations as APTA, CTA and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce to communicate MTA goals and objectives and seek opportunities to fund transportation programs and projects in Los Angeles County.

Goal 4 - Non-Passenger System Services

Efforts under this goal have been aimed at identifying and publicizing MTA's involvement in programs that serve the public at large but do not pertain to the passenger system.

To raise awareness of MTA's role in creating carpool lanes, we ran a highly successful public contest called "Tales From the Fast Lane," in which entrants told true stories of their carpool experiences. Winners were announced in late August, and prompted extensive print and broadcast media attention both inside and outside of the LA market.

Further support of freeway-related services has been provided through creation of a new Freeway Service Patrol brochure, and through a recent "Point of View" ad (sample attached).

Goal 5 - Construction Mitigation

To better inform the community with regard to the Metro Red Line East Side Extension, we have instituted a regular column-style ad in *La Opinion* and the Eastern Group newspapers to explain construction progress and promote the benefits of future stations and the system in general. These ads began on October 7 and will appear twice monthly throughout the year.

To further improve relations with the community, we have continued to maximize the use of Metro Rail Field Offices by allowing groups to co-host meetings at these facilities. Our three field offices host various community groups and provide meeting space for local merchant and community based organizations.

We have now completed art projects on six construction fences in the Metro Red Line Vermont/Hollywood project area. Two additional projects have been initiated and are in progress. In the North Hollywood area, we have developed an MOU with Universal Studios for them to fund and install artwork on the Universal City Station construction fences.

We also have been active in the Educational Tour area with International Guests (Peru, El Salvador, China, England, Korea, and Australia) as well as National (FTA, Attendees from APTA) and local groups and organizations (UCLA). An average of two art tours per week of Metro Rail and/or the Gateway Transit Center are also conducted.

A performance contract has been established between Public Affairs and Construction to deal with any emergencies that are encountered. This improved

communication enables quicker response to provide assistance during such emergencies.

Prepared by: Warren Morse

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METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

In 2016, Will LA Still Need Rail?

When William Mulholland proposed a massive aqueduct to supply LA with water more than 80 years ago, many questioned the plan. But Mulholland had a simple way to dramatize why the project was vital to the area's future growth. "If you don't build it," he warned, "you won't need it."

Today, some people question whether we need to supply LA with a rail system. But the 95,000 customers who step aboard our trains each day probably aren't among them. These riders already know the growing 44-station Metro Rail system serves their needs well with a safe, easy and inexpensive way to commute.

Since Metro Red Line subway service was extended from downtown to Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue this summer, ridership has jumped 59%. The Metro Green Line, running between Redondo Beach and Norwalk, carried nearly 5 million passengers during its recently-completed first year of operation. Ridership on the six-year-old Metro Blue Line continues to rise, too,

with an increase of more than 13% during the past year. At the same time, rail service is helping to improve other components of the overall Metro System. Increased rail usage relieves overcrowding on heavily traveled Metro Bus lines, and frees up more vehicles to allow for improved bus service. And that in turn helps to relieve traffic congestion overall.

Had LA opted to do without a plentiful water supply in Mulholland's time, our region might never have developed into the world-class metropolis we enjoy today. What can we expect in our daily lives over the next 20 years if we forego rail construction now? Increasingly clogged freeways. Increasingly unhealthy air. And an increasing outflow of people, business and jobs due to a substandard quality of life compared to most other major cities. If that comes to pass, then a rail system . . . and most other development . . . will indeed be unnecessary.

At MTA, we believe rail is a key component of the balanced transportation network LA requires. And we're committed to delivering a system that still serves you in the year 2016 and beyond.



If you'd like to know more, please call us at 1-800-464-2111

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

We Just Built A Better Bus

Today heralds a milestone in public and private sector partnerships as MTA and Northrop Grumman unveil a prototype bus of the future: the Advanced Technology Transit Bus, or ATTB for short.

Combining the transit expertise of MTA with the technological prowess of the aerospace industry, ATTB is a prototype not only of how to build a better bus, but of how business and government can work together successfully to benefit the public.

Most of all, ATTB is symbolic of MTA's deep commitment to the millions of passengers who board Metro Buses every week. Working in partnership with Northrop Grumman, the Federal Transit Administration and other transit agencies nationwide, MTA has spearheaded the effort to create ATTB and contributed \$10.3 million to its development.

But while we call ATTB "the bus of the future," that future is very much at hand. We expect it to be in service in Los Angeles in the next few years, offering our customers a highly advanced vehicle built with a composite material similar to that used to make the "Stealth" bomber, and fully compliant with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. ATTB's low floor will make it easier to board. Its electronic braking system will reduce noise. Its powerplant will increase fuel efficiency by 23% while producing less pollutants. And its computer-controlled mechanical systems will be more reliable than current transit buses, making an ATTB much more likely to be out on the road than back in the shop.

We're proud of our role in creating this new standard for buses that will carry the transit industry into the 21st Century. And we're dedicated to making MTA customers the first to benefit from these efforts.



The ATTB will be on display in the Patsaouras Transit Plaza adjacent to Union Station this Friday, October 11, from 11am - 2 pm in celebration of the Gateway Transit Center's first anniversary. We invite you to come and preview "the bus of the future" in person. If you'd like to know more, please call us at 1-800-464-2111.

We Care About Cars, Too

While MTA is best known for the Metro Bus and Metro Rail system, our mission statement is specifically directed toward the transportation needs of "all Los Angeles County residents."

And quite frankly, the majority of LA County residents aren't users of our public transit services. But almost everyone uses the freeway. And though you may not know it, MTA has always played a major role in keeping this vital component of LA's transportation network running smoothly.

For example, Metro Freeway Service Patrol, funded totally by MTA, has more than 140 tow trucks patrolling 400 miles of freeway during rush hour every day. They help stranded motorists, clear congestion and keep traffic moving. Last year, the patrol performed about 250,000 assists ranging from changing flat tires to towing disabled cars out of traffic lanes and off the freeway.

Along those same roadways, MTA maintains some 4,300 Freeway Emergency Call Boxes offering troubled motorists a direct link to the California Highway Patrol. The number of calls made averages 40,000 per month or about a call every minute from someone stuck on the freeway.

MTA is also in partnership with Caltrans to build HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lanes - better known as carpool lanes - throughout the county. The recently completed Harbor Expressway on the I-110 Freeway is a notable example. By the year 2000, MTA and Caltrans will have constructed some 200 miles of carpool lanes along the LA freeway system to ease congestion and increase mobility for vehicles carrying more than one passenger.

In short, transportation is our business. And whether it's cars, trains, buses or other modes, MTA is working hard to serve you.



If you'd like to know more, please call us at 1-800-464-2111.



That we here highly resolve...that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth...

FOUNDED IN 19

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METRO UPDATES

Construction News From The Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Welcome aboard! Over the next few years, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority will be working to extend its rail service, specifically the Metro Red Line, into East Los Angeles. The purpose of this new semi-monthly column is to keep you informed of the project's construction developments. Additionally, we invite you to communicate with us if you have questions or comments, or even participate by getting involved in one of our local advisory groups.

The Metro Red Line Eastside Extension

The Metro Red Line is Los Angeles' first subway train and presently operates along a 6-mile corridor between Union Station, near the Plaza Olvera, and the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue.

When the 3.75-mile Metro Red Line East Side Extension and other portions of the Red Line are completed, East Side residents will be able to travel easily to Downtown, Wilshire Center, Hollywood, Universal City and North Hollywood. Additionally, the Metro Red Line will connect East Side residents to the Metro Blue and Green Lines, Metrolink, Amtrak and buses providing transportation to destinations such as the Long Beach Marina, Los Angeles Convention Center and Los Angeles International Airport.

Metro Red Line construction in the East Side is expected to begin in early 1997. Locations of the first four stations will be:

- Santa Fe Avenue/3rd Street
- 1st Street/Boyle Avenue
- Cesar Chavez Avenue/Soto Street
- 1st Street/Lorena Street

Since subway trains move smoothly and quickly without the hindrance of stop and go traffic, travel will be fast. For example, here are a few anticipated travel times between stations along the Metro Red Line:

- 1st/Boyle to Union Station 5 mins.
- Cesar Chavez/Soto to 7th Street/Metro Center 10 mins.
- Santa Fe/3rd to Hollywood/Vine 20 mins.

Calendar of Events

You are cordially invited to participate in the following upcoming festivities and conferences:

- 10/9/96--MTA Community Meeting
Sheridan Elementary School
6 -9 p.m.
416 Sheridan Street
- 11/17/96--Mariachi Festival
1st Street/Boyle Avenue
Mariachi Plaza

If you have any questions about this construction project or are interested in participating in the local advisory groups, we invite you to visit the Metro Information Office at 1634 Pleasant Avenue, L.A. 90033 or call 213-922-9039.