





Metro

October 7, 2005

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ROGER SNOBLE 
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: CAROL INGE 
INTERIM CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

SUBJECT: STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION MODELING FOR FOOTHILL
EXTENSION PROJECT

ISSUE

Staff is providing a status report on transportation modeling for the Foothill Extension New Starts submittal.

BACKGROUND

Metro planning staff have been coordinating with and assisting Parsons Brinckerhoff project management staff that are under contract to the Gold Line Construction Authority to prepare a New Starts submittal for preliminary engineering on the Foothill Extension project.

As part of their work for the Authority, Parsons Brinckerhoff is developing a model run, using the Metro model, to meet FTA user/benefits technical analysis requirements for New Starts projects. Parsons Brinckerhoff is lead on this work.

In February, Parsons Brinckerhoff staff met with Metro modeling staff to explore ways of expediting the completion of modeling work. Metro agreed to allow Parsons Brinckerhoff access to the Metro Travel Demand Model in modeling the Foothill Extension project. FTA had notified Metro that previously approved modeling parameters required changes on future New Starts submittals. Metro agreed to allow Parsons Brinckerhoff to upgrade the Metro travel demand model for these new FTA requirements. These model upgrades were charged to an existing contract between Parsons Brinckerhoff and Metro for modeling work related to the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan Update. Metro agreed to provide trip tables from the Metro model for use in the Foothill Extension modeling analysis. These trip tables were provided as soon as they became available between April and July. Upon the submittal of the trip tables, all commitments by Metro had been met.

It is important to note that work on the Foothill Extension project was treated with priority by Metro staff and the consultants, alike. Work on this project proceeded as quickly as possible based on the efforts of a highly skilled consultant team who closely coordinated with Metro modeling staff and with FTA.

FTA has instituted new requirements for technical modeling analysis of New Starts projects over the last several years, and these requirements are continually changing. The uncertainty provided by ever changing FTA technical requirements, the length of the review process, and the level of precision that is now expected of travel demand models nationwide, serve only to

lengthen the time required to complete modeling analysis for New Starts projects. These are factors that are beyond the control of either the consultant team or Metro staff, but have a clear impact on the time it takes to complete modeling analysis necessary to obtain federal approval of New Starts funding.