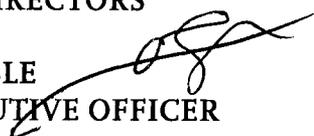




Metro

May 19, 2006

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ROGER SNOBLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 

FROM: CAROL INGE 
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

SUBJECT: CRENSHAW CORRIDOR INITIAL ENHANCEMENTS

ISSUE

With the adoption of the 2003 Short Range Transportation Plan (SRTP), the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board of Directors approved \$10.1 million to design and implement some initial enhancements to the Crenshaw Metro Rapid Service. The types of improvements were identified in the Crenshaw-Prairie Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS). Over the past 15 months, technical analysis have been completed and discussions have taken place with City of Los Angeles staff to develop a project concept that would be acceptable to the City of Los Angeles, improve transit performance within the study limits and be cost effective. Since consensus could not be reached on a set of low-cost initial bus speed enhancements, further work on this effort is being terminated.

BACKGROUND

At its January 2003 meeting, the Metro Board received and filed the Crenshaw-Prairie Corridor MIS. The purpose of which was to conduct a thorough and comprehensive analysis of future transportation system improvements for this constrained and congested corridor. The MIS evaluated numerous transportation options including Light Rail Transit, Bus Rapid Transit and Rapid Bus. With receipt of this document, the Board directed that a funding plan and implementation schedule be prepared for Crenshaw Metro Rapid enhancements including higher capacity buses, enhanced stations and segments of dedicated transit lanes and urban design for consideration by the Board, along with other potential projects as part of the SRTP adoption.

In October 2004, Metro hired a consultant team utilizing a portion of the \$10.1 million approved by the Metro Board to prepare a plan of enhancements to the Crenshaw Metro Rapid Bus as well as other urban design features directly related to the recommended bus improvements. The study limits extended the length of Crenshaw Boulevard between Wilshire Boulevard on the north and Florence Avenue on the south, the most congested segment for Metro bus operations. A Technical Working Group was established to review the progress of and to provide input to the work effort. The group was comprised of representatives from City of Los Angeles,

Department of Transportation (LADOT), Metro South Bay Sector, South Bay Area Planning Team, Metro Rapid Planning Team and Metro Community Relations. As part of the project, Metro met with representatives of the Congressional, State Senate and Assembly, Supervisor and City Council offices as well as a Commissioner of the Board of Public Works, staff from City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering and Street Services and key stakeholders, e.g. Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce, West Angeles Development Corporation and the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI).

Study Recommendations

Over the past 15 months, Metro and the City of Los Angeles worked to develop a series of recommendations that would enhance Metro Rapid Line 710. Metro focused on improvements that primarily would benefit bus service, but could also assist traffic flow and would be of lasting benefit. The Technical Working Group discussed various arterial and freeway-related improvements including conversion of several segments of mixed flow travel lanes to dedicated bus lanes during the peak periods, signal upgrades at the Adams, Jefferson, Rodeo and Coliseum intersections, queue jumpers, modifications to frontage roads, e.g. Slauson Avenue, an improved bus loading area at Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and Santa Monica (I-10) Freeway ramp modifications. Metro's consultant evaluated the benefit to the bus in terms of seconds of savings as well as an associated project cost for each potential improvement. LADOT staff was supportive of the project elements pertaining to traffic signal and roadway modifications and improvements at the I-10 Freeway ramps. They were however, very concerned about the conversion of segments of mixed flow travel lanes to bus lanes during the peak periods and did not agree with the consultant's analysis. As an alternative to the lane conversions, LADOT staff proposed minor bus improvements mostly short approach lanes at the intersections.

After a review of the various project concepts, LADOT and Metro could not reach consensus on the improvements and their estimated costs. Metro determined that the allowable improvements benefiting the bus were outweighed by the associated capital costs which were estimated at the \$4.5-\$5.5 million range including urban design enhancements.

NEXT STEPS

The consultant contract will be terminated and final payment will be made. Additionally, the City of Los Angeles will be directed to submit billings for its approved and completed work effort on this project. During FY 07, a scope of work and the procurement process will be initiated to obtain consultant services for the

Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement-Report/Preliminary Engineering leading to a Locally Preferred Strategy for the Crenshaw Corridor project. The findings of the 2003 MIS study will serve as a base. The balance of the \$10.1 million for the initial improvements will be used for this work along with a SAFETEA-LU earmark of \$7.2 million for the Crenshaw Boulevard corridor. Board authorization will be sought to award this contract.