



Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA
90012-2952

**SUBJECT: EL MONTE TRANSIT STATION IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM**

**ACTION: APPROVE CALL FOR PROJECTS FUNDING CHANGE
FOR Foothill TRANSIT**

RECOMMENDATION

Amend Foothill Transit 1995 Call for Projects award in the amount of \$369,757 for improvements at the El Monte Transit Station.

ISSUE

As part of the 1995 Call for Projects, funds in the amount of \$731,000 were awarded to Foothill Transit to implement eight bus transfer centers. Only seven of the transit centers were completed. The Citrus College project did not move forward because MTA and Foothill Transit staffs have agreed that previously programmed Call funds would be of greater benefit if used at the El Monte Transit Station site.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This is a step toward meeting the regional coordination goals established in the MTA Long Range Transportation Plan. As El Monte Transit Station serves both MTA and Foothill Transit riders, a joint effort to improve the El Monte Transit Station will be a significant development accommodating thousands of transit riders and enhancing transit usage in Los Angeles County. The El Monte Transit Station is the major transfer hub in the San Gabriel Valley and serves a large number of transit dependent riders.

OPTIONS

The Board may consider the option of not approving the scope change to the El Monte Transit Station Improvement Project. Without this change the funds will lapse and will be reprogrammed through the Call for Projects with no improvements

to the El Monte Transit Station. The MTA can make the needed improvements, however no funds have been allocated in the MTA Capital Budget. Without the budget allocation, it will take much longer for the MTA to assume and complete the needed improvements. There currently is no transit store at this site. Approving the staff-recommended scope change will provide this amenity.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This action does not impact the FY 2001 MTA Budget. The MTA Board approved and programmed \$731,000 of Proposition C 10% funds in the 1995 Call for Projects for the Timed Transfer Center Demonstration project. Funds were programmed for use in FY 1996-97. Foothill Transit applied for funds to implement eight bus transfer centers in the San Gabriel Valley. Only seven bus transfer centers totaling \$361,243 were completed. Foothill Transit is now proposing to use the remaining balance of \$369,757 of the original grant amount for the Citrus College Transcenter to fund Phase I of the proposed improvements to the El Monte Transit Station.

The Call for Projects process requires that Foothill Transit provide \$161,820 in local matching funds towards the \$531,577 total project cost. Foothill Transit also has indicated that a portion of the agency's annual Proposition C 5% Security Fund allocation could be used to provide increased security at the site. MTA Security and Foothill Transit staffs have discussed how best to provide the additional security needs. The transit store operation will be funded from Foothill Transit's operating budget. Foothill Transit has submitted an application in the 2001 Call for Projects to fund Phase II capital improvements at the El Monte Transit Station.

BACKGROUND

The El Monte Transit Station property is owned by Caltrans and is operated by MTA as a transit center under a Memorandum of Understanding with Caltrans that was executed in 1973. The El Monte Transit Station improvements are owned and managed by the MTA. The El Monte Transit Station is the major transfer hub in the San Gabriel Valley and serves 6,826 Foothill and 2,777 MTA passengers every day. The station consists of a transfer center with multiple bus bays, as well as extensive facilities for commuters. There are restroom facilities, vending machines, news racks, as well as an enclosed space in the center of the facility that is currently unused. Foothill Transit proposes to improve the station for the benefit of all transit customers who use the facility. By encouraging more people to use the El Monte Transit Station, the facility should improve the ease of transfers to other bus lines in the San Gabriel Valley. The facility also will improve the regional system by having an attractive timed transfer hub in a geographically desirable location.

Last year at the request of Foothill Transit, the MTA agreed to a one - year extension for Foothill Transit to re-scope and re-site the Citrus College project to the El Monte Transit Station. Foothill Transit has \$369,757 of Call for Projects funds from the tabled Citrus College Transcenter that it intends to transfer to improvements at the El Monte Transit Station.

Initially, Foothill Transit proposes to use the partially unused second floor as a transit store to sell fare media and provide schedule information to customers. MTA and Foothill Transit staffs are currently engaged in discussions that will lead to an upgrade in facilities at the El Monte Transit Station. Both agencies anticipate that Foothill Transit will have a greater role in the daily operations of the Transit Station.

More specifically, Foothill Transit proposes the following improvements using the existing Call for Projects funds:

1. Construct new entry elements that include signage, concrete paving treatments and a new Information Pylon at the main tunnel entrance.
2. Remodel the vacant transit store and make it much more user friendly. Additionally, included in this task will be expanding the police substation, upgrading the driver's restrooms, adding a restroom facility for the transit store employees and adding a Foothill Transit Kiosk for added customer information access.

Additional improvements to the transit station that Foothill will fund include:

- Enhanced security that Foothill Transit will provide;
- Bus landing platform improvements with new bus benches, walkways and signage;
- Enhancements for the main entrance and tunnels, including new bulletin boards, walkways, landscaping, lighting and public art displays.

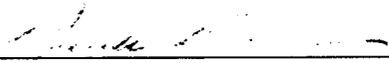
To secure needed funds for the El Monte Improvement program, Foothill Transit has applied for additional funds through the 2001 Call for Projects.

MTA and Foothill Transit staffs are pursuing recommendations in the San Gabriel Valley Bus Restucturing Plan. Foothill Transit is the primary public transit operator serving the El Monte Busway. Foothill operates seven bus lines on the busway, while the MTA operates three. Regional service plans currently under consideration call for Foothill Transit expanding service in the San Gabriel Valley, and the MTA decreasing its presence by withdrawing duplicative services, such as those operating along the El Monte Busway. Approving the staff-recommended scope change will prove to be very beneficial to the transit patrons of Los Angeles County and make good and more timely use of regional funds.

NEXT STEPS

With Board approval, MTA staff will continue to work with Foothill Transit staff and Caltrans to facilitate improvement needs at the El Monte Transit Station and negotiate a lease for the property improvements. MTA and Foothill Transit staffs will continue to discuss Foothill Transit's future role in assuming overall responsibility for operating the entire El Monte Transit Station.

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