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LA COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES - MAY 22, 1996

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Larry McFarland, Chairman
- Nathan Chroman
- Pam Corradi, Secretary
- Russ Davies
- Mike Dickerson
- David Louie, Vice Chairman
- Sean McCarthy
- Seymour Rosen
- Howard Sachar
- Peter Schick
- Charles Stapleton

SPEAKER

David Mieger, Project Manager, San Fernando Valley East-West Corridor Studies

STAFF PRESENT:

- Ray Harris, MTA Government Relations
- Audrey Noda, MTA Government Relations
- Fe Alcid-Little, MTA Government Relations

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 6:25 p.m. by CAC Chairman L. McFarland

II. **Chairman's Report**

L. Mc Farland noted that today the MTA Board adopted a process by which the MTA was going to study illegal routes through the Valley. The routes do not comply with state law, requiring a deep bore subway. The CAC asked the MTA Board to study Wilshire but were repeatedly told it is impossible to study other routes, it is illegal.

Public Comment: L. McFarland announced that public comment will be handled the following way: a total of two minutes after each item on the agenda, rather than at the end of the meeting.

III. **D. Mieger, Project Manager, San Fernando Valley East-West Transportation Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS)**

D. Mieger reported that the MTA Board approved the Alternatives Screening Report which is part of the ongoing MIS/EIS/SEIR. There has been no decision on whether or not the Valley Extension will run on heavy or light rail, or bus. Alternatives are being looked at in the MIS that extend across the entire Valley however, the long-range plan only provides funding for a project to I-405. Completion of the MIS and EIS are necessary to allow the project to compete for federal money.

A unique characteristic of the Valley is the old Southern Pacific Burbank right-of-way. All of the other segments of the Metro Red Line are under city streets or under properties on city streets. This allows for consideration some options that weren't available on Hollywood Boulevard or Vermont. But when there is a railroad right-of-way there are a

number of options. The MIS Board emphasizes the range of options we have. The deep bore subway is the most expensive. The MTA could still put the train below ground but not deep bore tunnel, cut and cover. Some of the areas like North Hollywood are very concerned about above ground trains. Cut and cover calls for an excavation of the surface in the railroad right-of-way, excavate down and then deck over the most sensitive areas where there are concerns about the visibility of the trains or noise problems. There is substantial savings over the deep bore method.

At-grade or aerial are other options. At-grade configurations are the least expensive of the options.

The recommendation was to look at different variations of the Red Line car including dual power mode. The MTA also looked at the East Valley for light rail. The Red Line car would stop at North Hollywood and shift over to the light rail system. Customers will have to get off the Red Line car and transfer to the light rail car.

Dual mode Red Line car would allow us to travel on both subway and light rail. There be a problem, however, in running a Blue Line car in a Red Line tunnel.

M. Dickerson asked if the actual switches are different.

D. Mieger said there was a problem with combining the switching and operations of the two systems. (Blue & Red)

M. Dickerson wanted to know who told MTA staff that the switches are different. He said there is no reason why you can't use the light rail car through the tunnels.

H. Sachar agreed he was frustrated because there is an unwillingness from the MTA to look at technologies that work in other parts of the world.

D. Mieger responded there are two sides to the argument. One argument is you can't use different technology in every quarter. The first four lines are the Red, Blue and Green lines and MetroLink. The other argument is standardization and have one system that operates as a complete system. We have been criticized on both sides of that argument: not having enough creativity and not having a uniform system.

D. Mieger described the light and heavy rail systems that were in the staff report today. Staff found that transfers were a big problem. Ridership would decrease if people are forced to transfer. A separate rail yard in the Valley would also be needed somewhere along the line. The extension of the Red Line avoids the forced transfer at the North Hollywood.

R. Davies asked for a clarification of MOS 3 in the Valley.

D. Mieger replied MOS3 extends from Hollywood/Vine to North Hollywood.

R. Davies asked if the MTA is still treating the rest of the Valley as two segments.

D. Mieger responded Phase 1 goes up to the 405 and Phase II is to Warner Center. Phase II was in the thirty-year plan but was deleted from the twenty-year plan. The twenty-year plan will get us to the 405 freeway but there is no funding for the West Valley Phase II.

S. Rosen asked what is your destination in thirty years.

D. Mieger replied in the plan we will go as far as Topanga Canyon. Given the realities of our funding we are putting the pieces together so we can go 15 to 20 years in the future.

S. McCarthy asked how long does it take to dig cut and cover or a trench underneath the street. How far before it gets to the intersection and beyond an intersection. Will you need to dig a trench in order to get light rail, bus or anything else underneath the average surface street.

D. Mieger said in some streets there are storm drains or hard pipes which means you have to go deeper.

S. McCarthy said Dallas or Houston actually built a busway which is capable of handling rail.

D. Mieger said the Harbor Transit Way is designed that way. Minor modifications along the El Monte busway could be made to run a railway in the future. State projects are built to convert an HOV lane into a bus, toll way or rail line. The busway didn't perform as well. A dedicated shuttle running back and forth on the rail ran through Warner Center and North Hollywood. The ridership was very low. We took buses on parallel streets and diverted them on the busway. We tried to put grade separations to make the bus way faster. At that point the cost rose. There were 7-8 different model variations. The busways didn't work as well as the enhanced bus alternative or the light rail alternative.

D. Mieger explained proposals are made to make the Red Line cars work on light rail configurations but not the reverse-light rail cars on heavy rail.

M. Dickerson asked if you build a line that goes across the street to the third rail, how would you fence the right-a-way.

D. Mieger replied we have to fence the third rail, but if it was overhead it may not have to be fenced.

M. Dickerson asked if it was overhead, what would you do with the intersections.

D. Mieger said you need a bridge/grade separator.

H. Sachar asked what is the schedule.

D. Mieger replied the MIS/EIS/SEIR is more than halfway completed. The goal is to have the draft MIS/EIS/SEIR document completed in December. The purpose is to prepare for the Federal 1997 ISTEA funding and have a locally approved alternative for the Valley to the 405 freeway. The MTA needs to tell them this is the technology, alignment and profile of the stations.

S. McCarthy asked about the financing mechanism.

D. Mieger said the breakdown is 50% Federal, 25% State and 25% local. The City Council has to act on the benefit assessment; we don't have sole discretion to do that.

S. McCarthy asked if there was a formula; what properties will be included in the assessment area in the Valley.

D. Mieger said no because the MTA is having trouble as far as benefit assessments are concerned for Segment Three.

IV. **New Business:**

M. Dickerson reported on the CAC's Motion in support of Alternate Rail Technology (ART). He said if the MTA doesn't get into cue on ISTEA funds this year, it's going to be very difficult to get ISTEA money for the Red Line. The MTA probably has a year to receive it. The South Valley is the area that deserves transit service on a high speed high capacity basis. The first problem in the Valley is the 101 freeway which will be jammed to the point of non-usability. It's down to 15 miles per hour or more at the end of twenty years with maximum build-out.

The other thing that is happening to overcome gridlock is to put an overpass in Warner Center. The Red Line to Warner Center was the only solution. It was going to be built and fully opened. It would be opened in the third decade and we will start halfway through the second decade.

D. Mieger said the cost to build is about \$1.6 billion, \$2.7 billion for subway.

M Dickerson said the MTA should design its system at the same cost of MARTA, BART, or WASHINGTON, D.C. or any of the other third rail systems. It cost the MTA three times the average design cost of any other system in the United States. In the Booz-Allen Report, for a short segment, it costs \$50M for MTA to design an alignment from Glendale to Los Angeles and MetroLink designs the same thing for \$20M. It cost half a billion to design the Pasadena Line. It costs more to design the Pasadena Line than to build any of the light rail lines in the United States.

Our proposal is a simple one—which says do you want to serve the Valley, yes or no. Do you want to serve the major part of the Valley or the southern part. The line through the center and upper parts of the Valley do not get much service. The two lines are Metrolink lines.

Our proposal is you can build a line that carries on the average 200 people per trip per vehicle from Glendale to Burbank Airport at a cost of \$100 million. It is \$138 million if the line were designed by the MTA. If you want to carry 100,000 people through the Valley he suggested the following: to do exactly the same thing by removing the Pasadena Santa Fe line between Fullerton and San Bernardino. It took about nine months to do all the work. This is designed for four tracks. We would triple most of the service that works on a twenty minute-schedule on double track. It would cost about \$400M to do the same thing here. The Mayor wants better ways to do this. He suggested probably less than \$400M in the \$210M-\$230M range. You can carry 100,000 people a day from Warner Center to downtown Los Angeles.

It misses LA Valley College and Van Nuys Civic Center. It picks up the Burbank and the Van Nuys Airport, the General Motors' Assembly Plant Redevelopment and a lot of cheap vacant land. Parking lots are important. MTA charges \$12,000 to design parking spaces. The City of Pasadena does that for \$1,300. This is 122% of the build cost. Burbank and Glendale are both putting in an excess of \$6B into transit areas.

He recommends that an RFQ/RFP go out to Siemens, ABB, Switzerland and Bombardier, Canada. They are the only companies with the equipment to do this. We have none of this equipment in the country. If it can be built for \$150M and operated comparable to bus prices, it's a done deal. The financing in the twenty year plan is a problem. There is

support for this outside the City of L.A. If we build this then Supervisor Burke would get her line, Board Member Fasana would get his, and everybody would get what they want. All of this money is being sucked into Valley subway. The rail bus is twice the size of a bus.

He said the rail bus in Calgary goes up to 62 miles/hour. It holds 170 people and seats sixty-two people, 100 standing.

The second unit is the IC3 train. There is one in Denmark, Sweden and Israel. Four or five other places are getting the car. AMTRAK in San Diego will go into revenue service. (Proposed Oceanside to Long Beach to Escondido) He recommends to run the ART's on MetroLink.

It serves more than the Valley, it serves the 118 in Simi Valley and is eligible for ISTEAF funds that are not available to the Red Line or anything else because it is a railroad. The railroad money is available. It is one of the two lines in the United States that is available for FAA matching funds because it runs next to an airport. The other one which has already applied is Baltimore (they are building a line to the airport). So we have the opportunity to pick up on the low side \$5B, high side \$40B from the FAA. If we run into San Fernando we can pick up \$80B and two stations. Tom Grier of the Burbank Airport for years says the Burbank Airport has money available. The General Motors facility will have a station and a lot of development is planned. If you wanted to carry 100,000 people a day, intercept the 118 and the 101 this accomplishes it. He suggested to run the trains at 90 miles an hour if you have ATS (Automatic Train Stop). It stops automatically. MetroLink is going to fence the right-of-ways. But the problem is MetroLink runs 6 trains a day AMTRAK, four and Southern Pacific, four. The proposal is 3 an hour at a minimum and 6 an hour during rush hour.

The Alameda Corridor will impact everything.

S. McCarthy asked how will you address the capacity problem.

M. Dickerson said the Booz-Allen proposal is to add one more track all the way and double track from Chatsworth down with double ended cars. The Southern Pacific was going to build a light rail line to Agoura to Camarillo and then to Santa Barbara and this is in the report in the library. Streets in Glendale were built for the right-of-way. The original monorail proposal included Long Beach to downtown and then into the Valley.

L. McFarland commented we don't want to get into an alternative for the Red Line. The Valley is large enough to have more than one form of transit. It may take 10-15 years with funding problems. He suggested to leverage Pico-San Vicente against this and a possible light rail line down Crenshaw. For \$650-\$800M for Pico-San Vicente to be built, everyone agrees it shouldn't be built because its not in the right place. Look at what you can build for \$800M- a line into the Valley and a light rail line from Wilshire-Western down Crenshaw into the Airport for the price of Pico-San Vicente.

M. Dickerson replied we could borrow money from Mid-Cities under the Full Funding Grant Agreement but we would be responsible as a county to pay the 100% tax. If you ran light rail through Mid-Cities we could run light rail to the airport. If we used turnkey we can run light rail along the MTA right-of-way, it would cost \$300-\$370M including cars and connect the Green Line. The Green Line cost was only \$230-\$240M to build. There is no one at the Department of Transportation that will say Pico-San Vicente makes any sense.

This line, on the FAA permit can get the ISTEA money and the federal money for exactly the same project and double dip the system. This is what Baltimore did. They actually made a profit on building the light rail line.

We are scheduled to speak at the next Board meeting. R. Davies and S. Rosen can put together the presentation. We must remind the MTA Board that both these cars are coming to Southern California. We must get an RFQ out immediately. Both Siemens and ABB are both desperate to try this equipment in the United States.

S. McCarthy asked how many are being brought to Los Angeles.

M. Dickerson said one of each. Siemens said we're not getting any cooperation from MTA. We are getting cooperation from Sacramento and BART.

We voted to go to the Board with the recommendation that we study this alignment and that we do that using a RFQ/RFP process to design and operate.

M. Dickerson said that he spoke with R. Stanger at MetroLink and they like the idea because he can run a train from Simi Valley to Warner Center. If he is given the opportunity to run this, he will substantially increase his total revenue. R. Stanger is probably going to get the responsibility of running the inner-city trains as far out as Yuma as far north as San Luis Obispo and San Diego. We are going against Booz-Allen and the turn key issue.

P. Corradi introduced a motion to put together a group to make a presentation to the Board at their next meeting and the presentation be ready by Friday. M/S/C (see attached motion).

M. Dickerson said Chairman Zarian wants a test project using DMUs along the line between Burbank and Union Station.

V. **Old Business:**

L. McFarland said he received S. McCarthy's resignation from the CAC. He was appointed apparently to the Citizens' Committee for Greek Theater and was sad to see him go. He asked for a motion for a "thank you" letter to Art Leahy for all of his help with the CAC in arranging tours etc. M/S/C A. Noda will prepare a draft.

According to N. Bjornsen, balloting will be in June. H. Sachar and M. Dickerson volunteered to be on the Nominations Committee.

Ethanol-Methanol: M. Dickerson said the Ethanol-Methanol problem is much more severe than we think. He understands the Board had a presentation today as to what the problems are. The CAC decided not to proceed with this issue because of the Public Relations issue.

VI. **Adjournment:**

L. McFarland adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

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DATE PREPARED 29 April, 1996
DATE REVISED 24 May, 1996
DATE REVISED 6 June, 1996

TO : BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
SUBJECT: *James Corrali*
ALTERNATE RAIL TECHNOLOGY

RECOMMENDATION

Initiate steps to reduce the current cost projections for the proposed infrastructure improvements and operating plans of the Los Angeles, Glendale, Burbank demonstration ART line. At a minimum, the total costs should be comparable to those in the areas where the technology is utilized.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

The Board has previously authorized study of a ART demonstration project.

BUDGET IMPACT

The service proposed is not included in the current budget. If the cost of Alternate Rail Technology proves to be a far less expensive and is a more timely method of providing frequent, high speed and high capacity rail service, it may prove to be a prudent expenditure.

ALTERNATES CONSIDERED.

The alternate is to incur costs higher than required to provide the proposed service.

DISCUSSION

The request is in line with the boards direction to find lower cost alternates to capital programs.

The utilization of Alternate Rail Technology could produce a very significant savings but the amount is subject to educated estimates. It is difficult to obtain accurate estimates because the equipment, likely to be used, is not currently operating in North America. A Design /Build - Design / Build / Operate - Design / Build / Operate / Finance proposals, with appropriate guarantees, is recommended as the more accurate method to determine costs. The determination of costs should be made with an absolute minimum of staff or paid consultant involvement.

The cost of extensions beyond the demonstration project should also be quickly determined. The cost determination is particularly useful where a substantial investment in infrastructure has already been made, on MTA owned lines, to support Amtrak or Metrolink.

As an example, it appears that a six mile extension to Van Nuys from Burbank may have little or no additional capital cost because of previous investments to upgrade the track.

If the costs are as low as incurred in Europe and Asia a further extension through the valley to Warner Center via Chatsworth may be affordable. The improved track and signaling, except from Chatsworth to Warner Center, would also be utilized by Amtrak - Metrolink - Southern Pacific which may allow additional funding sources not available for corridors used solely for transit. The Multimodal stations at the airports should allow Federal funding from the Airport Trust. A direct connection to the Warner Center would be provided, at Chatsworth, for potential Metrolink users from the Simi Valley and Ventura County.

The alignment serves the central valley thus the distance to Warner Center is longer than either the Chandler or 101 Alignments. The potential speed is higher so the actual travel time may in fact be shorter.

The alignment has very little adjacent housing thus reducing the potential for negative homeowner comments.

The alignment allows for direct service to a number of locations with high ridership potential, in addition to the Warner Center.

- The redevelopment site of the General Motors Assembly Plant
- Two airports directly and the Van Nuys Flyway service to LAX.
- Transportation centers, in addition to Union Station, at Burbank and Glendale.

Frequent service in this corridor could be provided in less than two years.

The corridor would relieve traffic on the 118, 5 and 405 in addition to the 101 since it is a diagonal across the valley.

A similar potential exists on these MTA owned lines.

- LA to San Fernando Via Burbank
- LA to Orange County Border
- LA to San Bernardino County Border
- Pasadena to San Bernardino County Border

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY MTA
CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC)**

MOTION

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority ("LACMTA") has authorized study of the Los Angeles, Glendale, Burbank ART demonstration Corridor,

WHEREAS, the use of Alternate Rail Technologies has the potential to provide service at the lowest possible build cost, with an accelerated implementation, and;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Citizens' Advisory Council request that the LACMTA Board of Directors issue a Requests for Proposals (RFP's) that allow for a Design - Build and possible Finance - Operate contract, for the use of Alternate Rail Technology from Los Angeles to Burbank and Glendale with an absolute minimum of staff or paid consultant involvement. Further that the RFPs allow for costing proposals for these possible additions.

- Los Angeles to Van Nuys via Burbank
- Los Angeles to Warner Center via Chatsworth, Van Nuys, Burbank
- Los Angeles to San Fernando via Burbank
- Los Angeles to San Bernardino Border
- Los Angeles to Orange County Border
- Pasadena to San Bernardino Border

