

Minutes

Thursday, October 9, 2014
2:00PM

GATEWAY CITIES
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

Salt Lake Park Community Center
Lounge
3401 E. Florence Ave.
Huntington Park, CA 90255

All Metro meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities. Meeting location served by Metro Lines 111, 311, and 612.

Called to Order at 2:05 p.m.

Council Members:

Richard Burnett, Chair
Gene Daniels, Vice Chair
Jo Ann Eros-Delgado
Thomas Martin
Ana Maria Quintana
Wally Shidler

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director, Regional Councils
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Michael Sieckert, Transportation Planning Mgr.

For Metro information in English, please call the following phone number: 213-922-1282.

Para más información de Metro en español, por favor llame al número que aparece a continuación: 213-922-1282

Մետրոյի մասին հայերեն լեզվով տեղեկություններ ստանալու համար, խնդրում ենք զանգահարել այս հեռախոսահամարով՝ 323-466-3876

Для получения информации о Metro на русском языке, пожалуйста, позвоните по указанному ниже телефонному номеру: 323-466-3876

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สำหรับข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับรถโดยสารเมโทรเป็นภาษา [ไทย] กรุณาติดต่อที่หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ด้านล่าง: 323-466-3876

ដើម្បីនិយាយជាមួយអ្នកបកប្រែ Metro ម្នាក់ សូមទូរស័ព្ទតាមលេខ 323.466.3876។

메트로(Metro) 정보를 [한국어]로 알아보시려면, 아래 번호로 전화하십시오: 323-466-3876

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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. ROLL Called
3. APPROVED Minutes from September 11, 2014 Meeting
4. RECEIVED Presentation on First – Last Mile Connectivity, Steven Mateer, Countywide Sustainability Programs

For the first time, there is a strategic plan to facilitate first-last mile planning methodology. The plan was adopted by the Metro Board in April 2014 and is a joint effort between Metro and SCAG. The plan was motivated by an on-board survey that found that 91% of patrons walked, biked, rolled or took a bus to a station.

In developing the plan, safety and security, maintenance, and legibility (very hard to find stations) issues were examined around the county. Patrons should be able to easily locate and navigate transit. Additional issues include that there is not a lot of street space to reallocate the road to pedestrian or bike uses, that parts of the city have long blocks that force people to run across the street, and that there are a number of freeway over and underpasses that either feel unsafe or are unsafe.

The goal of the plan is to respond to the challenges faced by transit users in order to make transit more accessible to the largest number of people possible. The methodology defines access sheds as 1/2 mile for pedestrians and 3 miles for cyclists. One of the methods used is to conduct station survey walk audits which are then used to identify improvements necessary to further facilitate access.

To facilitate implementation of the plan's goals, extra points will be given to cities that promote transit in proposals submitted to Metro's Call for Projects. The Metro Board also decided to look at implement pilot station projects, two have already been funded. The project has also received planning money to complete first mile-last mile planning for the entire length of the Blue Line. The project is also examining ways that these aspects can be integrated into Transit Oriented Development (TOD) projects.

Vice Chair Daniels commented that the areas where improvements are needed are not isolated; infrastructure has been neglected for so many years, the cost to fully implement these types of improvements will be enormous. He asked what period of time is being considered to start implementing the program and noted that it will not be an easy task. Mr. Mateer replied that there isn't really a dedicated source of funding, but the plan does bring Los Angeles County to the head of the state, will help to get positioned better for State and Federal funding. Improvements at two stations were funded through the State's active transportation plan. It is a long term investment. The program is reporting to the Board this month, and is thinking about how to implement these types of improvements with 2nd and 3rd decade projects as they are implemented.

Councilmember Shidler asked if those efforts include installing shelters and amenities to improve bus stops. Mr. Mateer replied that they do, with better shade, lighting, and real time arrival information. The decision is left up to the local jurisdictions as to what type of improvements they'd like to do.

Councilmember Martin really likes the idea of developing additional TOD, especially if it's owned by Metro. He suggested that Metro work with local cities to see if they have any properties that could be developed jointly and to have those local cities that have shuttle service implement stops at Metro stations.

5. RECEIVED Report on Eastside Transit Corridor Phase II Public Hearings, Dolores Ramos, Council Analyst

Metro conducted four public hearings to receive public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for a proposed extension of the Metro Gold Line Eastside light rail system. Each of the public hearings was preceded by a 30 minute open house, where residents could see project boards, talk to staff, and view the Draft EIS/EIR. The four hearings attracted over 525 attendees, with approximately 125 people providing public comments on the Draft EIS/EIR. There was support for each of the proposed alternatives throughout the hearings, and some commented that they would like to see both alternatives built.

The Draft EIS/EIR analyzes potential extensions from the Atlantic/Pomona Gold Line Station in East Los Angeles to either the City of South El Monte (SR 60 Alternative) or the City of Whittier (Washington Boulevard Alternative). It also includes a no-build option and a Transportation Systems Management alternative that identifies bus corridor improvements.

The draft environmental document was released August 22, 2014 with a 60-day public comment period concluding at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 21, 2014. Metro staff is scheduled to present a summary of the technical analysis and comments received, along with a recommended Locally Preferred Alternative, to the Metro Board of Directors in November, where the Board will be asked to decide how to proceed

Vice Chair Daniels commented that he's heard through the Gateway Cities Council of Governments that the Washington route is the preferred alternative.

Councilmember Shidler commented that he's heard that the SR-60 alternative would have more opportunities for Park and Ride patrons, while the Whittier Blvd. alignment would have more ridership through more densely populated areas. He added that he'd like to see both alignments built.

6. RECEIVED Director's Report, Jon Hillmer, Director

Vice Chair Daniels mentioned that he boarded a rail car in which several rows of seats had been taken out to provide space for bikes and wheelchairs. It was unusual to see so much space on a train.

Councilmember Shidler commented that at a recent CAC meeting, staff indicated that day pass sales had not yet plummeted as much as had been anticipated with the recent fare change. Mr. Hillmer replied that he hadn't seen any preliminary data yet. He anticipates that a shift will occur over time as people become more familiar with the transfer policy and riders shift to use of the transfers over day pass purchases.

Councilmember Shidler asked if there is any way to compare ridership to fare box recovery for the same time period to see how much is being lost in unpaid fares. Mr. Hillmer replied that Metro is looking at the process of comparing how many people are boarding as compared to fare box data to examine the issue.

Councilmember Shidler commented that he thinks fare evasion is higher on the buses. Mr. Hillmer replied that until recently, rail was based on honor system, and security was not vigilant enough in checking riders to reinforce payment. Now that the gates have been latched, it's much easier for security to heck people who are on board or on the platform because they have to have a valid fare media. On the bus, operators are expected to enforce payment. In some cases there are so many people boarding that it's hard to do. Operators are supposed to quote the fare once when someone boards and doesn't pay, but sometimes they feel threatened.

Councilmember Shidler asked if Metro is ever going to move towards installing 3-bike racks on its buses. Mr. Hillmer replied that until the State Legislature recently took action, Metro legally couldn't install 3-bike racks though some other operators were doing so. Based on the new legislation, Metro can put 3-bike racks on 40 ft. buses but not on 45-foot buses. Metro is exploring options to ensure that installation of such racks won't block operators' vision in some way.

Chair Burnett asked if the Blue Line repairs are on schedule for completion. Mr. Hillmer replied that they are, and that he understands the work is going very well.

7. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the Agenda

Mr. Timberlake is interested in knowing what the actual number of Gateway Cities region customer complaints is. He is concerned because he thinks a lot of people give up on submitting complaints about buses that don't show up or are 20 minutes late with 10 minute headways. Yesterday took a Line 260 bus in 2 increments. On both trips there were 2 Line 260 buses running in tandem. This happened twice within a period of 2 hours. He is particularly concerned that the Council understands that there's no indication whatsoever to the customer even if they submit a complaint in writing or by email that anything is being done to resolve the issue. There is no further response other than the polite acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint. He doesn't know what the people in the Customer Service office are doing with complaints received. There's no evidence that it does any good to complain no matter how detailed the complaint is.

8. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

Vice Chair Daniels appreciates public concern regarding Metro service. He keeps complaining about vending on the Blue Line. No matter what day it is, every time he rides, there's a lady on the platform at the Artesia Station with a baby carriage full of items for sale. He has mentioned this at least 5 times and he understands why the public feels frustrated. When there are fare checkers there, they allow vendors onto the platform. Mr. Hillmer apologized for the poor service. He offered to route any complaints where inappropriate action was taken so that it would be placed into the queue to receive an official response. He agreed that the vendor issue needs to be handled. The Chief Operations Officer is committed to improving the situation and has met with CEO on ways to correct some of those issues. He asked that the public provide specifics so that staff can follow up on incidents or investigate why the CCTV monitors are not reporting the incidents.

Councilmember Shidler commented that the Blue Line has become a problem and the Sheriffs don't know how to attack it. He never sees vendors on the Gold Line and rarely sees them on the Red Line, but there are constantly vendors on the Blue Line. On a recent ride, he saw two fare inspectors on the platform and three Sheriffs deputies all in the same place at Union Station. He doesn't think the Sheriffs will fix the issue, and doesn't think they want to fix it. Vice Chair Daniels added that the deputies view being assigned working the Blue Line like drawing the short straw and they avoid it.

Mr. Sieckert replied that some of the confusion is not only the lack of enforcement but also the fact that Metro's Real Estate Department does allow vending at selected stations. He indicated he would follow up with Real Estate to obtain a list of authorized locations where vendors are allowed to sell their wares and to make that available to the Council and Sheriff.

Councilmember Shidler commented that there is a gentleman who has a permit to sell at the parking lot of Florence and a permit from the Health Department who can't operate his business because there are too many illegal vendors competing with him.

Councilmember Eros Delgado requested that if the sheriffs return to provide the Council with an update, she would like Metro staff to check at least the day prior to confirm who will be coming to the meeting. The Sheriffs need to come prepared. The last time they sent a representative, he mentioned that he'd just been informed that he was to attend the meeting an hour before.

Councilmember Shidler commented that the only people who can enforce the rules are the Sheriffs. Fare inspectors are not allowed to get involved in enforcement.

Chair Burnett commented that the reason the Gold Line is saturated with deputies is because that's the line used by Metro CEO Art Leahy. It takes 10 sheriffs to do the job of two. On Long Beach Transit he sees a lot of fare evasion, customers fumbling with change and others boarding behind them without paying and the fact that drivers get a little irritated because people are fumbling with change, which opens door to fare evasion. He added that too much information is being given out on loudspeaker. There is line information announced, then fare information. It all gets to be confusing. Mr. Hillmer replied that a meeting was recently held regarding the: amount of information being transmitted to customers on the bus. There are several messages directed to

patrons, including line information, destinations, fares, safety messages. Operations is going to try to tighten up on-bus messaging to patrons a bit.

Mr. Timberlake waited at the Florence Blue Line station for over 30 minutes. The platform was jammed. Then when the train arrived, announcements were made threatening that if people didn't get behind the yellow line, the train wasn't going to pull up to the Station. First there was an announcement of a 10 minute delay, then another announcing a 20 minute delay. At the recent Board meeting, Supervisor Molina said only way to be successful is by getting riders by choice. Most patrons are riders by necessity. Metro's operations are not going to be saved by ridership necessity. Middle class riders are not going to tolerate this type of thing.

ADJOURNED at 3:17 p.m.