

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

MINUTES

San Fernando Valley Service Sector
Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Called to Order at 6:32 P.M.

Service Sector Representatives Present:

Brad Rosenheim, Chair
Richard Arvizu, Vice-Chair
Gary Bric
Michael C. Cano
Jesus R. Ochoa
Kymberleigh Richards
Steven Veres

Officers:

Richard Hunt, General Manager
William Walker, Council Secretary

1. Pledge of Allegiance was held.
2. APPROVED Minutes of Regular Governance Council Meeting held September 2, 2009 as corrected to correct the spelling of speaker Nate Zablen under Item 3 (Public Comment). Representative Bric abstained and Representative Veres was not present at the time of approval.
3. RECEIVED Public Comment
Nate Zablen – Suggested that funding for improvements is disproportionately spent on the Westside and often the San Fernando Valley is forgotten. He highlighted several corridors that could benefit from improved service, which could in turn reduce congestion in the same corridors: Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena (CA State Route 134), north-south corridors that connect with the Orange Line (Van Nuys Boulevard, Woodman and Reseda Avenues), and major trip generators (Cal State Northridge, hospitals and medical centers, etc.).

Glenn Bailey – Requested that the Sector update its website regularly; said the Orange Line Extension Operating Plan should look at ways to coordinate Metro schedules with connecting regional services (Metrolink, Antelope Valley Transit Authority, City of Santa Clarita Transit, Simi Valley Transit); added that Metro Sector staff should review the recently released City of Los Angeles Bike Plan to see how Metro could better coordinate its programs and services with the bike plan.

Vince Garafolo – Reported that the bus stop at Sepulveda Boulevard and Vanowen Avenue moved from the southeast to the northeast corner, but the City of Los Angeles failed to coordinate the moving of its corresponding transit shelter, which is still located on the southeast corner. Mr. Hunt said that he would forward that information to the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), but that the agency is not obligated to move its transit shelter. He added that there is a mechanism in place for Metro to communicate to municipalities and the County of Los Angeles when Metro plans to relocate a stop so corresponding street furniture can also be moved. Representative Richards added that the stops located at Van Nuys and Sylvan (Local Line 233) have the same problem.

4. RECEIVED Chair's Remarks – Welcomed Representatives Bric and Veres to the Council.

5. RECEIVED oral report of Richard Hunt, General Manager.
 - Welcomed Representatives Bric and Veres, City Councilmembers from Burbank and San Fernando (respectively) and echoed Chief Executive Officer Leahy's remarks acknowledging the fact that Governance Councils are the most important public mechanism within Metro. He added that Governance Councils work to improve transit in the Los Angeles region.

 - Stated that a Long Range Transportation Plan would be submitted to the Board in October. The plan gave opportunities to the public, Governance Councils and Board members to provide input on several issues that have been refined and will be presented at the October Board meeting.

 - Year-to-Date Key Performance Indicators for FY 2010 ending August 31, 2009
 - **Accidents per 100,000 hub miles** is a high priority for the Sector, at 2.07 per 100,000 hub miles, the Sector continues to fall below the FY 2009 actual of 2.20, both significantly below the systemwide average. Mr. Hunt thanked supervisors and managers for tireless work and said the data speak for themselves.

 - **Complaints** continue to be very important to the Sector. Each complaint is followed up with an investigation and both Transportation Division Managers Gary Spivack and Maria Reynolds are doing a terrific job. The Sector is currently at 3.0 complaints per 100,000 boardings.

 - **Operator assignment ratio** is having challenges and impacts the cost of operations work. The ratio is at 1.16 for the Sector, below a target of 1.18. This will be remedied by ramping up hiring efforts considering the ratio is down at all Sectors from last year, meaning the agency is short about 100 full-time equivalent operators (two part-time operators equal one full-time equivalent).

- Mr. Hunt also discussed the challenges the Sector has faced with **Mean miles between chargeable mechanical failures (MMBCMF)** and attributed the difficulty to fleet age, higher than average summer temperatures which take a toll on any mechanical equipment, compressed natural gas (CNG) engine issues, and a lack of competition in the CNG engine manufacturing environment. He mentioned that Metro is continuing to add more CNG Compo buses to the fleet which should improve MMBCMF. He reaffirmed Metro's commitment to use of alternative fuels, considering Metro recently achieved a milestone by operating a completely alternative fuel fleet, the largest in the nation.

6. RECEIVED Draft Report on Orange Line Canoga Avenue Extension Operating Plan – Michael Brewer, Service Development Manager

Mr. Brewer reviewed the existing operating configuration of the Orange Line, which is 14 miles in length between North Hollywood Red Line Station and Warner Center Transit Hub, with 14 stations, seven of which have park and ride lots. Service operates 7 days a week from 3:44 am until midnight. The line operates 4 minute peak headways, 10 minute off peak and weekend headways, and 20 minute evening headways. Twenty-seven buses are required for peak operations; twelve are required off peak. Patronage averages 22,045 passengers weekdays, 13,360 Saturdays and 9,960 Sundays. In 2012, Metro will open the Orange Line Canoga Avenue Extension, which extends 4 miles from Canoga Station, north along an exclusive right-of-way adjacent to Canoga Avenue, across a newly constructed Lassen Avenue overcrossing, into the Chatsworth Metrolink Station. New Orange Line stations will be built at Sherman Way, Roscoe Boulevard, Nordhoff Street and the Chatsworth Metrolink Station with parking provided at Canoga, Sherman Way and Chatsworth Metrolink stations. The transitway portion of the Canoga Extension will look and feel like other portions of the existing Orange Line Transitway. An operating plan is under development that will provide further information about proposed scheduling and running time for the line extension. Projected ridership for the extension portion of the line per environmental documents is 9,165 additional passengers. Weekend numbers extrapolated from the weekday amount are 5,315 Saturday and 3,950 Sunday riders.

Staff Recommended Service Plan – Alternating Trip Service: North Hollywood to Chatsworth and North Hollywood to Warner Center

Service departing from North Hollywood Station would alternately serve Warner Center and Chatsworth Metrolink Station. A peak hour shuttle would operate between Chatsworth Metrolink Station and Warner Center Transit Hub. The peak hour shuttle would also be coordinated with trains and buses from regional providers arriving from outside the region – Metrolink, Amtrak, Antelope Valley Transit Authority, City of Santa Clarita Transit, and Simi Valley Transit.

Peak headways on the line would be 4 minutes along the trunk portion of the line, between North Hollywood and Canoga stations; service to each of the spurs (Warner Center, Chatsworth) would be approximately 8 minutes and service between the two termini (Warner Center and Chatsworth) would operate every 8 to 16 minutes and would be timed to meet regional feeder service from Metrolink, City of Santa Clarita Transit, and Simi Valley Transit.

Mr. Brewer reviewed the benefits of operating the recommended alternative: passengers are afforded a one seat ride from any of the three termini, allows for the most flexible scheduling option, and is most convenient for patrons.

Alternative Service Plan – North Hollywood to Chatsworth with Canoga Station to Warner Center Feeder Shuttle

Mr. Brewer then introduced the alternative option, which would operate all Orange Line service between North Hollywood and Chatsworth stations. Shuttle service from Canoga Station to Warner Center would be provided 7 days a week. Frequency for the trunk line would be 4 minute peak headways, 10 minute off peak headways and 20 minute evening headways. The Warner Center Shuttle would operate 7 days per week at 8 to 16 minute headways, but not into the late evening. A modified alternative service plan could have every other evening trip alternate between Warner Center and Chatsworth Station. This alternative also costs more than the preferred option, requires a transfer for riders north of Canoga Station to reach Warner Center Transit Hub, and provides a level of service that might not be necessary for the northern extension between Canoga and Chatsworth stations. Projected ridership for the existing Orange Line in the year 2020 is 36,000 boardings; Canoga Avenue Extension ridership is projected to be 9,000 boardings that year. A

combined Orange Line ridership will be 45,000 boardings. Revenue service hours planned for the line would increase from 100,656 (existing) to 125,100 RSH, an increase of 24,444 hours. The alternative service recommendation would increase RSH by 32,569 to a total of 132,225 RSH. Mr. Brewer said planned headway improvements for east-west service would be implemented to complement service along the Canoga Extension. The extension would also require a new maintenance and auxiliary bus storage facility to be located at Canoga and Marilla Avenues, on existing MTA property. The site is adjacent to the San Fernando Valley Sector Office in Chatsworth and it would require additional transit operations supervisors (approximately 5 full time equivalents). The facility would allow the monitoring of Orange Line operations along the Canoga Avenue portion of the Orange Line Transitway. The operating plan will also include information regarding where buses are to detour in the case of an emergency along the transit way. The extension will also employ safe driving speeds where the transitway crosses intersections with pedestrians and other motorists.

RECEIVED Questions regarding Draft Orange Line Canoga Avenue Extension Operating Plan:

Representative Cano asked whether the Sector was looking at ways to grow the Orange Line further (i.e. grade separations) considering the line has already reached capacity. Mr. Brewer responded that requests for state legislative approval of using 65-foot buses on the corridor and for LADOT to either improve the existing signal timing system or provide signal preemption are two actions that could expand the currently maxed out Orange Line. Mr. Hunt added that the existing 65-foot demonstration bus that currently operates in revenue service on the Orange Line continues to receive positive feedback and has had minimal operations issues if any. Representative Richards agreed to draft a motion requesting the Metro Board urge state legislators to approve the operation of 65 foot vehicles on public roadways in the State of California.

Representative Rosenheim asked whether LADOT would reverse their opposition of Orange Line Transitway signal priority preemption if Metro would ramp up service along north-south corridors in the San Fernando Valley and coordinate timed transfers with Metrolink stations in the Sector, thereby providing a viable alternative for drivers to take transit. Mr. Hunt responded that the system provides signal timing based upon four minute headways. Even at optimal performance, the system only allows Orange Line buses 60 to 65 percent of green lights. Of the 31 intersections on the

line, three or four intersections are never green for the Orange Line. The City of Los Angeles transportation engineers are very reluctant to alter their existing signal system in order to allow Orange Line signal preemption. Representative Cano suggested the Council make their request for signal preemption to the Board, considering the general manager of LADOT sits on the Metro Board and chairs its Operations Committee. Mr. Brewer indicated that Metro already coordinates its schedules with the arrival and departure of Metrolink trains from stations within the Sector.

Representative Rosenheim reminded staff that after the Warner Center Specific Plan update, the transit-oriented village build-out, highly dependent upon connections to more regional services like the Orange Line, might require a slight reroute of the Orange Line to better serve the hub.

Representative Cano asked whether there were any issues related to operation of the Orange Line Transitway and if there had been any possible violations of California Public Utilities Commission guidelines; he asked which intersection experienced the most conflict between Orange Line buses and other vehicles. Mr. Hunt responded that he is unaware of any CPUC issues on the Orange Line and that LADOT is most concerned with Van Nuys and Sepulveda Boulevards. Metro, from an operations standpoint, is most concerned with both Woodman and Oxnard and Victory and Winnetka, considering the diagonal nature of these crossings, as well as Chandler and Tujunga, the entrance to the North Hollywood Station and layover area. Representative Cano noted that grade separations along the Orange Line in strategic locations was on the wish list submitted to the Board regarding the LRTP from the San Fernando Valley Sector, but the project was not included in the LRTP.

Representative Richards raised a concern regarding the platform configuration at Canoga Station and suggested that passengers waiting at Canoga Station for service to Chatsworth Station would have to choose between two different platforms, potentially missing the next arriving bus. Mr. Hunt agreed to bring conceptual drawings of the proposed station at a future meeting.

Representative Cano asked if the peak headway could be reduced if the experiment with Line 902 proves unsuccessful. Mr. Brewer responded that average speed decreases when the headway is shorter than 3 minutes. With four minute headways, 2 vehicles pass on the line every 2 minutes. If

headways were 3 minutes, it is more likely that buses will be delayed by red lights unless the City of Los Angeles provides better signal synchronization or preemption in order to accommodate the increased service.

Representative Bric asked the travel time from end to end on the Orange Line. Mr. Brewer responded that the trip from North Hollywood to Warner Center takes 42 minutes, an estimate for a trip from North Hollywood to Chatsworth would be 55 minutes, and from Warner Center to Chatsworth would be 10 minutes.

7. RECEIVED oral report on Draft Orange Line Canoga Avenue Extension Operating Plan – Maria Reynolds, Division 8 Transportation Manager

Ms. Reynolds provided a profile of the existing Orange Line service. Daily ridership is currently at 20,689 riders. Ridership has held steady between 20,000 and 22,000 passengers, with some shift in ridership in recent months because of a change from manual rider counts to automated passenger count (APC) totals. Accidents are averaging at about one accident per month, a significantly lower average than both the Sector and Metro system. All accidents on the Orange Line are attributed to motorists running a red light in order to cross the exclusive right-of-way. Red-light violations have decreased since the line's implementation, averaging about 70 violations per day for the month of August 2009.

Ms. Reynolds announced that a 4 mile Canoga Extension was planned to open in 2012, at an expected capital cost of \$216 million. A June 24 project groundbreaking was held at the Chatsworth Metrolink Station parking lot. The groundbreaking was for the Orange Line parking lot to be built north of the Metrolink station to accommodate existing parking spaces that will be required by Metro in the south parking lot as a staging area for materials and equipment needed to build the future Orange Line station and extension. She mentioned that landscaping, the planned bikeway, and station amenities on the Canoga Extension will mirror the existing line.

Ms. Reynolds reported that 78 leases were terminated, of which 55 were ground and 23 were signboard. Four leases remain and will coexist with the extension. Metro is in the process of developing easement agreements with the Chatsworth Mobile Home Park in order to construct a privacy fence separating the right-of-way from the mobile home park. Metro Real Estate staff also continues to work with tenants along the corridor, who will experience a number of issues vacating the right-of-way

over upcoming months. She mentioned that as part of the project, Lassen Street will be partially closed in early 2010 in order to build the Lassen Street Overcrossing for Metro Orange Line buses to enter the Metrolink station from south of the Metrolink Right-of-Way. She added that excitement is building about the four mile northern extension.

RECEIVED Questions regarding oral report on Orange Line Update:

Representative Cano asked what measures Metro will take to ensure the extension is safe, especially when the route intersects at grade, potentially impacting pedestrian and vehicular movements. Ms. Reynolds responded that the extension will have similar safety enhancements as the existing line, and that photo enforcement will be deployed as well. Mr. Hunt added that the style of many of the safety enhancements and signage placed on the Gold Line Eastside Extension were taken from signage initially developed for the Orange Line.

Representative Rosenheim requested an update on the current utilization rates of Orange Line Park and Ride lots. Ms. Reynolds promised to forward this information by email.

8. RECEIVED oral report on Metro Bus Service Performance Monitoring Process for Fiscal Year 2009, fourth quarter results – Stewart Chesler, Transportation Planning Manager, Metro Service Planning and Development

Mr. Chesler presented fourth quarter results of the service performance monitoring ending June 30, 2009. Service is evaluated by service type on the following four key performance categories: availability, quality, quantity and effectiveness.

Accessibility and Connectivity are performance measures that are being met in the San Fernando Valley. Problems with on-time performance with Line 156 (Panorama City-Hollywood via Van Nuys BI) have been addressed by moving the layover location and continuing to monitor progress on that line.

Customer complaints perform well but 5 lines continue to have issues. Line 761 (Pacoima-Westwood Rapid via Van Nuys and Sepulveda BI) receives the most complaints with 28 percent of responses categorized as commendations or positive feedback, 44 percent are operator related, and 26 are schedule related. Lines 156 and 169 tied for second highest

number of complaints with 21 complaints, with Line 156 performing slightly better because some of the responses were actually positive feedback.

Most Sector lines meet frequency standards; Lines 245 (Chatsworth-Woodland Hills, via Topanga Canyon BI), 290 (Olive View Medical Center-Sunland via Foothill BI), 734 (Sylmar-Sherman Oaks via Sepulveda BI) and 761 all need slight modification.

Load factor violations are very rare. Line 152 (Woodland Hills-North Hollywood Station via Roscoe BI) middays and Line 224 (Olive View Medical Center-Universal City Station via San Fernando Rd, Lankershim BI) evenings could use additional capacity.

Sector Line Effectiveness would be improved if the region were not so suburban in nature.

RECEIVED Questions regarding Metro Bus Service Performance Monitoring Process for Fiscal Year 2009, fourth quarter results:

Representative Cano asked whether average speed is included in the In Service On-Time Performance key performance indicator. Mr. Chesler responded that average speed is taken into consideration considering that it has to do with on-time performance with respect to time points and that indeed speed is a factor. Representative Rosenheim added that the presentation was very helpful and asked that Mr. Chesler and Mr. Hunt work on providing updates at future meetings regarding next steps being taken to fix noncompliant lines.

9. RECEIVED Service Sector Representatives' Closing Remarks

Representative Bric said he had quite a learning experience for his first meeting and that he had big shoes to fill considering his predecessor; he committed to working hard and learning more.

Representative Cano announced that the Board would consider approving the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan at its October meeting and that he would push hard on getting all items on Governance Council LRTP wish list into the document.

Representative Arvizu thanked staff for presentations on the Orange Line and said that it was both enlightening to see how the line is progressing and interesting how some areas still need to be addressed.

Representative Richards welcomed Representatives Bric and Veres and shared with the new members that her style might differ from her peers and that she hoped they could get used to it.

Representative Ochoa welcomed the 2 new representatives and said he was happy to see two new faces on the council. He thanked the staff for their work on items presented to the Council.

Representative Veres apologized for being late, said he was excited and looked forward to working with everyone on the council. He added that the Northeast San Fernando Valley has a community very much dependent on public transportation and that he hoped to bring forth that perspective.

Chair Rosenheim thanked Representatives Bric and Veres for joining the Council and said the City of Los Angeles continues to look for potential replacements for their two vacancies on the Council.

| ADJOURNED at 8:16 P.M.

Prepared by:



William Walker
Council Secretary