

Wednesday, January 2, 2013

6:30-8:00PM

Minutes

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY
SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

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

Called to Order at 6:32 PM

Council Members Present:

Kymerleigh Richards, Chair

Jesus R. Ochoa, Vice Chair

Dr. Richard Arvizu

Gary Bric

Michael Cano

Kathryn Engel

Dina Garcia

Donald Weissman

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director Service Councils

Collette Langston, Board Secretary Office

Dolores Ramos, Council Admin. Analyst

Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

1. PLEDGE of Allegiance
2. APPROVED **Minutes of December 5, 2012 meeting** with abstention of Council Member Bric.
3. RECEIVED **Chair's Remarks:**

Chair Richards mentioned the MTA just celebrated its 20-year anniversary on January 1, 2013. She shared that she was on KNX 1070 news radio show this morning where she was asked for her thoughts regarding Item 7 on tonight's agenda.

4. RECEIVED **Public Comment**

➤ Vince Garofalo wished the Council a Happy New Year. He complained that while waiting for the bus, he dropped some papers. Because the bus was behind schedule, Operator 74404 did not wait for him to pick up his papers and left without him. He feels this was a deliberate pass up. He suggested creating a poster showing a man smoking with the caption, "There is something in the air" for a non-smoking campaign.

5. RECEIVED **Presentation on San Fernando Valley Transportation Needs**, Manuel Araujo, Sam Gutierrez, and Brianda Hernandez, CSUN Transportation Tiger Team

The Transportation Tiger Team consists of CSUN Urban Planning students concerned about public transportation needs in the San Fernando Valley. The Team reviews and analyzes current public transportation services and documents unmet needs in order to recommend projects to improve service.

The Team's research has led them to conclude that Metro Rapid Line 741 service is inadequate. The line realizes little time savings when traveling from end to end versus local Metro Bus Line 241. There is a lack of service connectivity from Sylmar to CSUN and the Reseda Corridor. Extending Line 741 would help to address the first and last mile issues between CSUN and Sylmar Metrolink Station. The Team evaluated potential routes and determined that Chatsworth Street has the most unmet needs. They recommended Metro could resolve the "end of line" problems of the current service by adding a Rapid-style service with limited stops. They suggested the extension could be addressed through a 5 year pilot program and the use of JARC (Job Access, Reverse Commute) grant monies. The Team pointed out that while Metro tends to add service hours when adding rail lines, no local bus service hours were added when the Orange Line was created.

Through their research, the Team also concluded Line 230 has inadequate service and connectivity. El Cariso Park and Mission College could be serviced on this Line more adequately if frequency was increased. The Team recommended that all trips on this line begin and end at LA Mission College, and that later and earlier arrivals and departures at Sylmar Station would facilitate connections to Metrolink service and assist in addressing unmet needs. Later departures were recommended south on Balboa route in order to

service Sylmar Station train commuters arriving on trains 221, 222 and 223 and Metro Line 236. The addition of service traveling south would accommodate Sylmar Station commuters arriving on the morning train 200 for Metro Bus Line 239. Adding service traveling north would feed Sylmar Station commuters to train 223 for Metro Bus Line 239.

The Team also identified the need to develop corners in the Sylmar community to increase accessibility for riders with disabilities, allow for establishment of bus stops, and ease loading issues. The corners of particular need are: Glenoaks/Cobalt, Glenoaks/Bledsoe, Hubbard/Borden and Hubbard/Dronfield.

Additionally, the Team identified improvements that could be made to Orange Line BRT service to the San Fernando Valley. Establishment of Night, Late Night and Owl service for feeder lines to the Orange Line after 7:00 p.m. would improve connectivity.

Lastly, the Team cited a shortage of bike space on Orange Line buses. During evening hours, buses run every 20 minutes on average with 29% of buses leaving at least 1 or more cyclists behind. On average, 60% of bike-racks are occupied and 26% of cyclists miss the first bus. Alternatives to remedy these issues include allowing bicycles inside buses, better operator and sheriff training about allowing bikes inside buses, increasing service frequency at night, and installing bike-racks inside the buses.

After discussion, the Council requested that the information within the Tiger Team report be evaluated by Metro's Service Planning staff with a report back in 90 days. In addition, the Chair requested that Mr. Hillmer check with Commander Jordan regarding ticketing riders with bicycles on the bus.

6. **RECEIVED Presentation and Demonstration of the G-Tel System**, Yvonne Price, ADA Compliance Administrator, Linda Hoos, Title VI Manager, Daniel Lindstrom, Wayside Systems Manager

The G-Tel (gate help) system uses similar technology as P-Tel (platform help) and E-Tel (emergency help) systems. The system was created in light of the future latching of the gates and the need to address the needs of riders that cannot physically tap their fare media to open the gates for entry to the station platforms.

The G-Tel system is a telephone box mounted on a post with a camera near the top and a sensor at the bottom. The telephone box has internationally recognized symbols of a telephone with an arrow, a talking mouth, and an "OK," and corresponding lights underneath each symbol. The box also has a "Push for Help" button. When a patron dwells in a specific area in front of the post, the sensor detects the patron and automatically calls the control center; a loud ringing is heard, indicating that the control center is being contacted. The amber light below the symbol of a mouth talking illuminates and the control center operator begins communication with the patron. The camera allows the control center operator to see the patron needing assistance and to help even if the person that initiated the contact cannot speak. The operator can then activate the green light below the OK symbol and the patron can proceed to the gate.

The control center can follow the patron via camera and once they approach the latched gates, the operator will release the gate so the patron can enter freely. While there may be a very slight potential for fraud, Metro would prefer to err on the side of accessibility. While vandalism of the cameras is a possibility, the amount of vandalism that occurs across the system makes it unlikely that it would be an ongoing, expensive problem to keep the system operational. The total cost per unit is approximately \$3,000; Metro is in process of ordering materials for unit assembly and installation.

- Daniel Garcia requested to be notified when the system is installed at the North Hollywood Red Line Station. He questioned the feasibility of having a unit installed at every station. Mr. Lindstrom responded that the North Hollywood Station will receive high priority for installation, and that all subway stations with latched gates will receive the G-Tel equipment.

7. UPDATE on **Sepulveda Pass Corridor Systems Planning Study**, David Mieger, DEO, Countywide Planning, and Roger Martin, Transportation Planning Manager

The Sepulveda Pass Corridor extends for 30 miles - through San Fernando Valley for 11 miles, Sepulveda Pass for 9 miles and from the Westside to LAX for 10 miles. Potential transit connections include Metrolink's Antelope and Ventura Lines, Metro's Orange, Green and Expo Phase 2 Lines, the Westside Subway Extension, Crenshaw/LAX LRT Project, and the Airport Metro Connector. Current improvement projects on I-405 include adding a northbound HOV lane and alleviating the existing southbound HOV lane because it operates over capacity. There are 6 concepts for this project.

The first concept is a 30-mile route of shoulder running BRT with partial exclusive lanes from Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station to LAX. The bus would use freeway shoulders through the Sepulveda Pass during peak periods for 8.5 miles, and have priority treatment on Van Nuys and/or Sepulveda Blvds in the San Fernando Valley and Westside.

The second concept is a 29 mile at-grade Express Lane with BRT. The Express Lane (3+ HOT) would have 2 HOT lanes in each direction through the Sepulveda Pass and single 3+ HOT lane north of US 101 and south of I-10. This option takes advantage of 3 BRT routes that connect at the Metro Orange Line/Sepulveda Station for transfers through this area. This option includes 4 direct access ramps: at the Metro Orange Line/Victory Blvd, direct connectors from eastbound 101 to southbound I-405 and northbound I-405 to westbound 101, south of Santa Monica Blvd, and south of SR-90 at Sepulveda Blvd or Howard Hughes Pkwy. This option is a candidate for Public-Private Partnership.

The third concept is an aerial viaduct/Express Lanes with BRT, with lanes constructed above the median of the I-405 from US 101 to I-10 freeway for a total of 10 miles. It includes 4 HOT lanes, 2 in each direction with the existing HOT lanes for dedicated busway beneath the viaduct. This option has been considered but not recommended in Caltrans/FHWA I-405 Widening EIR/EIS.

The fourth concept is a 9-mile tolled highway tunnel with BRT. It includes 4 toll lanes, 2 per direction, through the Sepulveda Pass between US 101 and I-10. The connections would be from eastbound US 101 to southbound I-405 and northbound I-405 to westbound US 101. This option is also a candidate for Public-Private Partnership.

The fifth concept is for either an LRT or HRT rail tunnel. The route could be 28 miles for full length or 11 miles for the Sepulveda Pass Segment. This concept has two options: Option A is an LRT transit-only tunnel in the Sepulveda pass with an at-grade section north and south of Sepulveda Pass with grade-separated crossings at major intersections. The northern portal would be near Ventura Blvd. and the southern portal near Santa Monica Blvd. Option B is an HRT tunnel that is fully grade-separated for the full alignment.

The sixth concept is a combined 21 mile highway and rail tunnel with demand pricing. The two portals would be at Roscoe Blvd and LAX. The highway connectors would be at US 101/I-405, Santa Monica Blvd and at Sepulveda Blvd/Howard Hughes Parkway. The Private Rail tunnel would from Van Nuys Metrolink Station to LAX (Century/Aviation Station). This option is a candidate for a Public-Private Partnership and fares would be set in proportion to highway tolls.

The system planning study findings noted that up to 49% of traffic through the Sepulveda Pass enters or exits between the US 101 and the I-10 freeways. Twenty percent of trips through the Sepulveda Pass originate in Santa Clarita and the North County. Capacity upgrades would best serve this segment. Study concepts could accommodate increases in travel through the Sepulveda Pass of 11-29%. The grade separated concepts 4, 5 and 6 would improve both vehicle and person throughput between US 101 and I-405 but costs would be high due to the length of the corridor. To mitigate cost, initial segments of between 9 and 12 miles could be completed for less cost while maintaining the primary benefit of bottleneck relief in the Sepulveda Pass.

At the December 13, 2012 Board meeting, the Sepulveda Pass Transit Corridor was approved as a candidate for further consideration as a P3 delivery project with no change to LRTP priorities. Metro is authorized to evaluate the suitability of a transit and/or highway facility through the Sepulveda Pass as a P3 using Board-approved P3 criteria; convene an industry outreach program to expand interest, information and feedback on the Sepulveda Pass project, and proceed with preparation of a Pre-Development Agreement with private entities. The study findings have been received and filed.

- Ronald Ziff of the Sherman Oaks Council and Alliance of Councils complimented Metro on the transportation grid in the Valley and West Los Angeles. He commented that it seems as though the different operators of municipal lines are operating in different countries. He suggested extending Line 734 to Century City and stop forcing people to transfer. Mr. Ziff asked that this extension be given a 180 day trial because relief is needed now.
- David Goldstein lives near the Orange Line and is intrigued by options 2 and 5. He likes the idea of having light rail down the middle of the 405. He suggested that Metro look into private advertising along the corridor to help with costs. He asked if

anyone ever thought that widening the 405 actually adds more cars because there are more lanes.

- Laurie Kelson has been an Encino resident since 1948. The day-to-day living with the 405 widening project has been terrible. She questioned the stability of the soils in the area. She believes that putting Van Nuys Blvd through the mountain is the most feasible option and doesn't want to hear about the option to put the lanes back to 11 feet.
- Pat Heist asked if every time "Sepulveda Pass" is referenced, whether it is the section of the 405 or the boulevard. There are 8 major combustible lines through this area and doing any digging could put lots of homes in danger. She asked if there is a draft EIS/EIR yet and whether the only financial source is Measure R unless a P3 can be secured.
- Irene Sandler, a representative of the Bel Air Crest community, has experienced a lot with this project and has also made a lot of comments. In the EIR, she was told that those comments do not matter. She asked how many lanes would be left if something is built down the center. In addition, wondered how a vehicle would get from the 405 to the 101 at the interchange when the median would be 7 lanes away. She cautioned that these decisions be made with the utmost care.

Chair Richards explained that this project is a separate project from the 405 project that is currently happening. The current project is expected to be finished within the next 12 months.

8. **RECEIVED Director's November Performance Report**, Jon Hillmer, Director
- On-time Performance: San Fernando Valley: 77.4%, Goal: 80.0%, System Average: 75.0%
 - Complaints Per 100,000 Passengers: San Fernando Valley: 2.97, Goal: 2.20, System Average: 3.24
 - Mystery Rider Wheelchair Passups – 1% (1 out of 91)
 - Operator Wheelchair Passenger Procedure Compliance: Approximately 85%
 - Wheelchair Boardings Per Month: Approximately 70,000 per month
 - Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls: San Fernando Valley: 6,132, Goal: 3,900, System Average: 4,178
 - Clean Bus: San Fernando Valley: 8.98, Goal: 8.5, System Average: 8.51
 - Accidents per 100,000 miles: San Fernando Valley: 2.38, Goal: 3.10, System Average: 3.25
 - Average Weekday Bus Ridership: San Fernando: 203,398
 - Bus Station Cleanliness Evaluation Scores: Burbank Station: 8.5, North Hollywood Red Line Station: 8.2, Universal Red Line Station: 8.7
 - Orange Line Average Ridership: 29,466 weekday, 16,866 Saturdays, 13,165 Sundays.
 - Average Weekday Bus and Rail Ridership: 362,090 rail, 1,120,449 bus, total 1,482,539.
- Daniel Garcia commended Metro on providing follow up to a complaint that he had submitted.

9. RECEIVED **Chair and Council Member Comments**

Councilmember Cano thanked Mr. Hillmer for facilitation his accompaniment on the bus station inspections.

Councilmember Bric asked how the City of Burbank can increase the Burbank Station's Bus Cleanliness Rating, and requested copies of the rating sheets.

Councilmember Weissman said that he is looking forward to the new year and suggested playing Tina Turner music at the stations to keep the pigeons away as some other transit agencies have done.

Adjourned at 8:36 p.m.