

MINUTES

San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office
3449 Santa Anita Avenue
El Monte, CA 91731
3rd Floor, Council Chambers Room

Called to Order at 5:00 p.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

Rosie Vasquez, Chair
Roger Chandler, Vice Chair
Harry Baldwin
Ernest Gutierrez
Bruce Heard
Sharon Martinez
Joseph Mosca

Officers:

Jack Gabig, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. Introductions.

APPROVED **Minutes** of Regular Governance Council Meeting held June 9, 2008.

2. RECEIVED **Public Comment** – Ken Ruben, transit user, stated that July 26 marks the five-year anniversary of the opening of the Gold Line. He noted that he has not yet seen any announcements regarding the anniversary. He mentioned that he rode on the first run of the Gold Line on opening day. Mr. Ruben observed that buses and trains have become increasingly overcrowded due to rising fuel costs. Pass-ups have been occurring in all five Sectors.

3. RECEIVED **Chair’s Remarks**.

- The San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council continues to solicit applications for the transit user vacancy. Staff has extended the application deadline to August 22, 2008. Announcements have been posted on the metro.net website and in local newspapers. The re-appointment of several San Gabriel Valley Sector Representatives will be placed on this month’s Board agenda for approval.
- The Council APPROVED the cancellation of the August 11, 2008 meeting due to lack of a quorum.
- Chair Vasquez announced that this is the last meeting for which she will serve as Chair. She thanked Sector Representatives for their support and patience.

4. ELECTED **officers (Chairperson & Vice-Chairperson):**

- Representative Chandler was selected as the new Chair.
- Representative Mosca was selected as the new Vice-Chair.

5. RECEIVED **report of the General Manager**.

- Mr. Gabig presented Chair Vasquez with a certificate of appreciation for one year of outstanding service as Chair.
- Interior car cards and newspaper ads relating to the “We Can’t Go Anywhere Without You” campaign have been posted on the bulletin board in the Council Chambers room. Additional Metro customers will be featured on car cards and ads throughout the year.

Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project

- Introduced Mary Lou Echternach, Transportation Planning Manager III, and Stephanie Wiggins, lead consultant for the Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project. Ms. Wiggins stated that Metro is working with the Federal government on congestion reduction strategies, including but not limited to congestion pricing. Staff will examine three corridors as part of the one-year Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project, including the I-10, 210 and 110 corridors. Staff presented a video highlighting key aspects of the Project. One major goal of the Project is to increase both the number of people per vehicle and the capacity of HOV lanes. There are two major opportunities in the I-10 corridor, including examining how to better manage HOV lanes during peak periods, and identifying how single occupancy vehicles can use HOV lanes during off-peak hours. Ms. Wiggins stated that the I-10 freeway HOV lanes already meet full design standards by Caltrans. There is also a potential to re-stripe the HOV lane between El Monte and the I-710 freeway to create additional capacity. However, staff needs to determine how to terminate the lane near Union Station. Capital improvements will need to be made in order to meet the goals of the Project, including adding more Express buses, expanding commuter rail service, and enhancing major transit facilities.

Representative Baldwin asked when a plan will be available to address the termination of the I-10 HOV lanes at Union Station.

Ms. Wiggins responded that a conceptual operating plan will likely be completed in September.

Representative Gutierrez asked if the capital improvement plan will include analysis of stop-light synchronization and possible congestion on surface streets.

Ms. Echternach responded that increased traffic on the freeway may result in surface streets becoming more congested as commuters look for alternate routes. She stated that this trend may get worse as time progresses. Capacity may be increased if commuters shift either their mode or time of travel. Staff will examine the benefits of signal synchronization. One key aspect of the Project involves regulating the number of people accessing the freeway at any given time.

Representative Gutierrez asked if there are any restrictions on the use of the Federal grant.

Ms. Echternach responded that there is specific criteria outlined in the MOU with the federal government. She highlighted the importance of improvements to the El Monte busway.

Representative Heard inquired about the timeline for the 210 corridor. He asked if changes on the 210 freeway will occur in concert with changes on the 10 freeway.

Ms. Echternach stated that she does not have a definitive answer. She mentioned that various entities have expressed concerns about congestion pricing proposals. Recent discussions have focused on implementing changes on the 10 and 110 corridors only.

Chair Vasquez asked if Foothill Transit will receive part of the \$200 million grant.

Ms. Echternach responded that Foothill Transit is a partner along with Caltrans. The grant will assist Foothill Transit in providing 10 additional Silver Streak buses and 50 high-capacity commuter buses on the 210 freeway. In addition, the grant will allow Metro to purchase 33 buses in order to add service on the 110 freeway, expand the vanpool program, purchase 15 rail cars for Metrolink, implement improvements to the Union Station bus division and El Monte transit center, provide direct access between Union Station/Gateway Plaza and the El Monte busway, and add commuter bus stops, among other changes.

Representative Mosca stated that the Project will allow the agency to receive over \$200 million in federal grants, but at the same time, it is a demonstration project in that it involves a congestion pricing component.

Ms. Wiggins clarified that the \$200 million grant will be solidified once the agency has complied with the demonstration program requirements for a period of one year. In order to be compliant with the grant, state legislative authority is needed by October 15, 2008. This is a significant challenge.

Representative Mosca asked how success is measured in terms of meeting the federal government's standards.

Ms. Echternach responded that staff is developing parameters for measuring success. She added that one benefit of the project is that the agency may keep the grant at the conclusion of the demonstration period.

Representative Martinez asked about buy-in from state or local legislators, especially regarding impacts on the I-10 freeway.

Ms. Echternach responded that some legislators are opposed to congestion pricing, while others are still studying the proposal. She added that complicating matters are the proposed sales tax measure and Gold Line extension. She stated that in the past, the agency had to wait a long time to receive a few million dollars of funding. The federal grant for the demonstration project is a substantial amount.

Representative Chandler stated that the Gold Line Foothill Extension represents the key to mitigating the friction in the San Gabriel Valley.

Representative Gutierrez asked for clarification on the state authority requirement.

Ms. Echternach responded that there was previous legislation that established toll roads, including two requirements that needed to be met in order for an authority to collect toll fees. A finding of eligibility needs to be established by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). The CTC will hold a public hearing on July 23 at 1:00 p.m. at the Metropolitan Water District headquarters. Subsequent to the hearing, the CTC will make a finding of eligibility. In addition, the state legislature will need to pass legislation allowing Metro to move forward and collect the tolls.

Representative Chandler stated that he appreciates Director Fasana's efforts in helping the agency receive the grant.

May 2008 Performance Report (Jack Gabig)

- Mr. Gabig announced that the FY09 Governance Council handbook has been distributed to the Council. The guidebook includes monthly tabs for meeting documents, staff and Council contact information, Sector transit service information, and bylaws.
- OSHA Recordable Incidents - There were 5 incidents in May. This is below the target of 6.2. The incidents were not significant.
- New Workers' Compensation Indemnity Claims per 200,000 Exposure Hours are trending above target. There were 15.8 claims per 200,000 exposure hours in May. The target is 11.6. The spike this month is due primarily to several unusual claims for incidents occurring in 2007. Almost half of the 15 claims were denied.

- Bus Traffic Accidents – There were 3.2 accidents per 100,000 hub miles in May, which is above the target of 2.9. There were 33 accidents per 100,000 hub miles at Division 3 and 21 accidents per 100,000 hub miles at Division 9. The accident types are consistent with previous months', including Side Swipes with Other Vehicle Passing our Vehicle and Vehicle involved with Bus Standing in Zone. The bus accident severity index was .98 in May. This is higher than the target of .90. There were two incidents filed at each division. A bus versus pedestrian incident requiring hospital transport occurred on May 9.
- Miles Between Total Road Calls remain below the target at 1,230 miles. A report will be provided in the future regarding the Odyssey battery test at Division 3.
- On-time Performance was on target at 68%.
- There were 2.1 Complaints per 100,000 Boardings in May, which is below the target of 2.5.
- Ridership – Mr. Gabig noted that ridership has not yet reached last year's level due to the fare increase. He stated that ridership data may not take into account overcrowding on buses. Sector staff is requesting that operations planning staff re-analyze the data.
- Fare revenue is \$42.2 million through May.

- “How You Doin’?” Results:
 - Division 9 Transportation placed 1st.
 - Division 3 Transportation placed 5th.
 - Division 9 Maintenance placed 2nd.
 - Division 3 Maintenance placed 8th. The Division is struggling with attendance and industrial injury issues.

May Financial Report (Paula Faust)

- Total San Gabriel Valley Sector was \$8.7 million under budget YTD. The majority of the savings was in Total Transportation, particularly in the areas of labor, Workers' Compensation, and Public Liability/Property Damage.
- Total Maintenance is close to \$1 million under budget YTD. Savings were realized in the areas of wages, fuel, and Workers' Compensation.
- Workers' Compensation was slightly over budget in May, but is \$2.9 million under budget YTD.

Announcements

- Mr. Gabig announced that Jon Hillmer will be leaving his current position as Service Development Manager and will assume the role of Transportation Manager at Division 9. Mr. Hillmer's past experience within the agency is extensive and includes positions as bus operator, schedule maker, scheduling supervisor, and regional manager for Maintenance and Transportation. Staff would like to announce a replacement for the position at the next meeting.
- A Closed Session item regarding the General Manager's annual performance evaluation will be agendized for September.

6. RECEIVED oral presentation on **Short Range Transit Plan** by Rod Goldman, Diversified Transportation Solutions.

Mr. Goldman provided a brief overview and background of the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP). He stated that the purpose of the SRTP is to develop a multi-year strategic plan to improve transit quality, accessibility, cost effectiveness and efficiency and to provide a short-term action plan for transit activities towards meeting Metro's long-term objectives. He reviewed the role of the Service Sectors in the development of the SRTP, including identifying key goals, issues and desired outcomes for Metro transit service over the next five years, identifying major bus and rail service plans over the next five years, and providing feedback on the development of a comprehensive transit service plan. Key issues for the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector include the Gold Line Eastside Extension, Congestion Pricing Program, capacity constraints at El Monte Station, development of "dual hub" service, and bus service reliability. Next steps include discussing major transit issues with Metro staff, obtaining input from the Service Sectors, and incorporating input from Metro staff and Sector Councils into key SRTP goals and objectives.

Representative Chandler asked if staff is conducting fact-finding.

Mr. Goldman responded that staff is trying to identify what aspects of bus and rail service are important to the Sectors. Based on this information, a five-year service plan will be developed which will include elements that will be consistent with long range plans.

Representative Chandler asked how this project will be financed.

Mr. Goldman responded that staff is only soliciting input at this time. He clarified that not all issues raised by the Sectors will be acted upon by the Metro Board.

Chair Vasquez asked if the transit plan will be presented to the Metro Board.

Mr. Goldman responded that it will be presented near the beginning of next year. The goal is to complete the document by the end of the calendar year. Staff may return to the Sectors to provide a summary of all input received. Mr. Gabig added that the Council may provide input at a future meeting.

Representative Martinez asked if Mr. Goldman was hired as a consultant by the Metro Board.

Mr. Goldman responded that he was hired as a consultant through the Metro Service Development Department.

Representative Martinez asked if staff will use all of the public input received.

Mr. Goldman responded that many of the concerns that were raised by the public are a good representation of key issues experienced by the Sectors. Many of these issues will serve as a basis for the service plans.

Chair Vasquez inquired about the study that was conducted a few years ago which required outside funding.

Mr. Gabig responded that staff has acted on many of the study recommendations. The study focused on the hub and spoke concept of Metro Connections and how the San Gabriel Valley region is interconnected to other service areas. There is additional service restructuring that will need to be implemented as part of the “dual hub” concept discussed by Mr. Goldman. Mr. Gabig noted that the program is financially constrained.

7. **RECEIVED Line 70/71 Profile Report** by Carl Torres, Transportation Planning Manager III.

Mr. Torres stated that staff has initiated a new program which involves providing a profile of various bus lines each month. Sector Representatives may provide suggestions on lines they would like staff to profile. He presented slides of Line 70/71, including a route map. Mr. Torres reviewed the length of the line and number of buses running during peak periods. He reported that the line runs seven days a week. Twenty-four hour service is provided on Line 70. Mr. Torres provided statistics on FY08 third quarter daily line patronage from January 1, 2008 through March 31, 2008, Line 70 daily average ridership, system-wide daily average ridership, San Gabriel Valley Sector daily average ridership, and Line 70/71 ridership levels relative to the system-wide and San Gabriel Valley Sector ridership levels.

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The line provides service to Cal State L.A. and Los Angeles County – USC Medical Center.

Representative Mosca suggested that staff provide a profile of Line 177 at a future meeting.

Mr. Gabig announced that the next Council meeting will be held on September 8, 2008.

8. Consideration of Items not on the Posted Agenda – none.

ADJOURNED at 6:22 P.M.



Michele Chau, Council Secretary