

MINUTES

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

SOUTH BAY SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald
Community Center
(Carson Community Center)
801 E. Carson Street
Carson, CA 90746

Called to Order at 9:34 a.m.

Sector Representatives Present:

John McTaggart, Vice Chair
John Addleman
Margaret Hudson
Lou Mitchell
Devon Deming
Ralph L. Franklin
Robert Pullen-Miles
Don Szerlip

Officers:

Dana M. Coffey, General Manager
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. CLOSED SESSION: - NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (8:30 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.)

Personnel Matters – G.C. 54957: - (Continued from previous Meeting)

Public Employee Performance Evaluation – General Manager

CARRIED OVER.

Upon commencement of the public session, Ms. Coffey announced that Representative Hudson will be re-locating to Texas and that this is her last Council meeting. She noted that Representative Hudson has served on the Council since its inception in 2002. The Council thanked Representative Hudson for her loyalty and commitment to the Council. Ms. Coffey presented Representative Hudson with a certificate of appreciation and a plaque.

2. **Safety 1st Contact** by Metro South Bay Volunteer – Ms. Coffey mentioned that it is important to have adequate provisions (e.g., water, medicine, food) in the event of a natural disaster such as an earthquake.
3. **APPROVED Minutes of the July 11, 2008 Governance Council Meeting.**
4. **RECEIVED Presentation on Congestion Pricing** by Stephanie Wiggins, Consultant, Metro New Business Development.

Ms. Wiggins stated that Metro is working with the federal government and other transit agencies 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. Recent discussions have focused on implementing changes on only the 10 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. 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. The 110 corridor is unique in that it already includes significant transit infrastructure and has two carpool lanes traveling in each direction. The project will need to be completed by December 2010. The proposal will allow solo drivers to purchase access to the HOV lanes.

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Toll credits may be available for lower income commuters to allow fair access. Caltrans is examining ways to improve entry and exit points along the 110 corridor and mitigate traffic near Adams Blvd. Staff is taking steps to ensure that the demonstration project will result in an overall increase in mobility in all lanes.

The first community meeting on the 110 corridor will take place on Saturday, August 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson St., Carson, CA. Another community meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 20 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Constituent Service Center, 8475 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA.

Representative McTaggart asked if toll revenues will remain in the community.

Ms. Wiggins responded that toll revenues will be re-invested in transit improvements or carpool lanes as mandated by the federal government.

Representative Deming stated that commuters traveling in vehicles with two or more occupants should be provided greater benefits or pay a lower fee for using HOV lanes than those driving solo. Staff should ensure that adequate parking is available at park-and-ride lots, particularly those that are shared by both vanpool/carpool participants and transit users. Funding should be allocated among various transit modes.

Representative Franklin expressed concerns about implementing congestion pricing, the ability of lower income commuters and motorcyclists to use the HOV lanes, possible additional fares imposed on commuters, possible rise in emissions, and northbound 110 freeway congestion near Adams Blvd. and Martin Luther King Blvd. He also asked at what point on southbound 110 freeway prior to the 105 freeway could a motorist enter the HOV lanes without paying the congestion fee?

Ms. Wiggins responded that Metro does not yet have the authority to impose congestion tolling. The agency will need to obtain state legislative authority by October 15, 2008 in order to receive the grant. Motorcycles will continue to be allowed in the HOV lanes. All users who currently have access to HOV lanes on the 110 freeway will continue to have access once the project is implemented. Tolling will result in a net decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. Staff is working with Southern California Association of Governments and Southern California Air Quality Management District to analyze environmental impacts.

Metro and Caltrans staff are examining ways to improve merging on the 110 freeway near Adams Blvd. and reducing the northbound bottleneck.

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Ms. Wiggins noted that lower income groups typically appreciate having the choice of congestion pricing. Toll credits for lower income groups will help increase accessibility.

Representative McTaggart stated that an air quality analysis should consider that toll credits might encourage people to drive their cars instead of riding the bus. He noted that many cars include devices that track when commuters enter tolling areas, and questioned the practicality of the widespread use of this technology, particularly for commuters who only occasionally travel to downtown.

Representative Deming observed that because of zone charges on 110 corridor and the higher fares on Express buses, the Harbor Transitway is less attractive to ride than the Blue Line which charges only the base fare and travels in the same direction. She stated that staff needs to look at eliminating the express bus zone charges and implementing a base fare on the Transitway.

Representative Pullen-Miles requested a report back on zone charges as well as extra transfer fees some patrons may have to pay when using service provided by contract operators. He asked why staff is no longer focusing on the 210 corridor.

Ms. Wiggins responded that all three corridors were included in the original grant application. The 210 and 10 freeways were initially prioritized but it became clear that tolling on the 210 freeway would be a challenge given limited parallel transit options along the corridor. The 110 freeway has superior transit capacity. The Metro Board recently approved a change in tolling provisions for the 110 freeway to allow two-occupant vehicles to travel in HOV lanes without the burden of paying the toll.

Lionel Jones, transit user, commented that the Exposition light rail line, once completed, will be traveling through the intersection of Adams Blvd. and the 110 drop ramps. This will worsen the northbound 110 bottleneck for commuters. He inquired about the number of additional solo drivers that are expected to travel on the 110 HOV lanes once tolling is implemented. He also expressed concern about increased congestion on the 110 freeway HOV lanes and the potential for negative impacts on bus speeds.

Ms. Wiggins responded that this analysis has not been completed. The goal is to ensure a minimum 45 mile-per-hour travel speed on HOV lanes. USDOT requires a service guarantee of the speed.

JK Drummond, transit user, noted that the requirements for traveling in HOV lanes may differ from one corridor to the next. For example, HOV lanes along the 10 freeway require a minimum of three passengers during peak periods. He added that the southbound 110 freeway at the 105 interchange is also a bottleneck and that buses transitioning to westbound 105 freeway are slowed by congestion. He stated that it is inconvenient that Metro local buses do not stop underneath some of the transitway stations. He asked how occasional solo drivers will pay the tolls, and whether unrestricted in-and-out privileges on the HOV lanes will be allowed.

Ms. Wiggins responded that a transponder device or card, maybe even Metro's Transit Access Pass (TAP) card, will be used but it is still to be determined. She stated that staff needs to evaluate the feasibility of in-and-out privileges.

Dorothea Jaster, transit user, asked how law enforcement agencies will monitor the lanes. She stated that solo drivers who are pulled over for non-compliance may cause traffic jams.

Ms. Wiggins responded that staff will work with the California Highway Patrol on this issue. Toll revenues would allow for greater CHP enforcement.

Lisa Wilson, transit user, asked about the cost differential of traveling at varying speeds on the HOV lanes and the impact of speed on fuel efficiency. She also asked about the number of security guards at each park-and-ride facility and how many cars get vandalized or stolen.

Ms. Wiggins stated that this information is not available. The agency does not have enough resources to provide security at each park-and-ride facility.

David Snowden, transit user, noted that there is a great deal of existing congestion on the Harbor Transitway, even in the evenings due to sporting and other events.

Claudette Moody, Metro Consultant, stated that Metro Board Director Pam O'Connor supports the congestion pricing proposal and emphasized that this is a demonstration project.

5. **RECEIVED update on Solar-Powered Lighting Systems at Metro Bus Stops** by Pete Serdienis, Facilities Maintenance Manager, Stops & Zones.

Mr. Serdienis presented slides showing a solar-powered I-Stop bus driver alert light and passenger light. He reviewed the timeline for installation of the I-Stops. The pilot prototype was initially installed in the South Bay Sector in

May 2006 on Artesia Bl. at Kingsdale Ave. A representative I-Stop pole was presented to the Council.

Representative Szerlip asked how the light turns off.

Mr. Serdienis responded that the light automatically shuts off. He reviewed future I-Stop installation plans.

Representative Deming asked who should be notified if there is a problem with I-Stop lights.

Mr. Serdienis responded that this information should either be reported directly to him or a representative from Customer Relations. He stated that it is important to provide the location of the light when contacting staff.

Representative Szerlip asked about the number of I-Stops within the South Bay Sector, and how staff prioritizes where they are installed.

Mr. Serdienis responded that there are approximately 40 I-Stops in the Sector. He stated that staff receives input from customers and other entities on where to locate the I-Stops.

Representative Pullen-Miles asked if the light on the I-Stop distracts drivers.

Mr. Serdienis responded that the I-Stops are used in other transit systems and are not distracting.

Dorothea Jaster, transit user, stated that there are many bus stops with no trash bins. She asked if the light on the I-Stop is visible in the daytime.

Mr. Serdienis responded affirmatively.

6. RECEIVED update on **Metro Clean Program** by Pete Serdienis, Facilities Maintenance Manager, Stops and Zones.

Mr. Serdienis provided a brief overview of the Metro Clean program, which utilizes community service workers assigned by the courts. He presented slides of Metro staff and community workers performing maintenance duties.

Mr. Serdienis reviewed the Metro Clean program's "Character Counts 6 Pillars" which include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. He presented slides of Metro Clean statistics and annual labor cost savings.

Representative Franklin expressed concern about the number of pressure washers available to clean the bus stops. He commented on the stench at several stops. He inquired about the number of bus stops in the region.

Mr. Serdienis responded that there are 16,000 stops throughout the system, and that homeless and fast food debris are continuing challenges. Also the number of community service workers available each day varies and the lack of consistency makes it difficult to address all stops in a timely manner.

Representative Szerlip noted that it is important to ensure that waste from the pressure washes are diverted from storm drains. He expressed concern about having cities pay for the removal of the toxic waste.

Representative Mitchell suggested there are germs at bus stops and asked if the use of chemicals and the dirty water creates hazards that are greater than the problem itself.

Mr. Serdienis responded that there are no chemicals used, only hot water.

7. RECEIVED update on **Line 210/710 Changes in Ridership and Define Tiers 1, 2 & 3** by Scott Greene, Transportation Planning Manager IV, Metro South Bay.

Mr. Greene presented slides showing a comparison of ridership trends on all South Bay Sector lines. He reviewed average weekday boardings by line, and explained the definitions of local Tier 1, 2 and 3 lines, Rapid lines, Express lines, contract Tier 2 lines, and contract Tier 3 lines. He provided an overview of the weekday ridership and service levels before and after the Line 710 route change to Wilshire/Western Station which was effective June 2007.

Representative Szerlip asked why Line 710 was shortened.

Mr. Greene responded that service levels were reduced due to budgetary constraints. Staff also received letters of complaint from the Metro Board and the public indicating that there were too many buses and a large number of speeding buses in a residential area north of Wilshire Bl.

Representative Szerlip expressed concern about the loss of discretionary riders. He asked if the shortening of Metro Line 439 has impacted ridership on Beach Cities Transit Line 109.

Mr. Greene stated that he does not have this information.

Representative Szerlip inquired about the decrease in ridership on Line 120.

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Mr. Greene stated that the line previously operated in conjunction with Line 121, which was extended to Whittier by the Gateway Cities Sector. The South Bay Sector shortened Line 120 at that time resulting in a loss of riders. The line no longer serves Norwalk Station, and this resulted in a transfer for some patrons or caused them to decide to use the Metro Green Line instead of bus.

Lionel Jones, transit user, noted that the vehicle hours in revenue service for Line 710 decreased from December 2006 to June 2007, but at the same time the cost per passenger increased. He asked if reducing service on this line was a huge mistake.

Mr. Greene responded that in addition to the other reasons for the Line 710 route change, construction at Hollywood Blvd. and Vine St. impacted the bus layover in that area. Staff can re-examine this issue once the joint development project is complete.

John Ziegler, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, inquired about the overall impact of the fare hike on passengers. He asked when the next fare increase will occur.

Mr. Greene responded that the next fare hike is scheduled for July 1, 2009. However, the planned fare increase may be suspended due to a Metro Board action which took place at the July 24, 2008 Regular Board Meeting. Mr. Greene stated that he does not know if the proposed fare freeze will impact all fare categories.

JK Drummond, transit user, commented that there are fewer bus stops along the route of Line 444 and that this may have resulted in the decline in ridership. He asked that all the original bus stops be re-instated after dark.

Mr. Greene stated that a courtesy stop may be made during certain times if it is safe for the operator to do so.

Representative Szerlip observed that ridership on the Green Line continues to escalate. He requested more information on this line.

Mr. Greene stated that he can include Green Line ridership information in the quarterly ridership reports.

8. RECEIVED update on **Adopt-A-Line Program** by Service Sector Representatives.

Representative Franklin stated that he rode Line 210 to work on July 21. He noted that the schedule indicated that several buses would arrive at his stop between 7:46 a.m. and 8:04 a.m. However, the first bus did not arrive until 8:10 a.m. and was out of service. He stated that he was able to board bus #6436 at 8:12 a.m. to City Hall. He transferred to bus # 6417 on Line 115 and noted it had only Line 40 timetables on board. He said that drivers were focused and fareboxes worked. He acknowledged staff for addressing the cleanliness of bus stops, but noted that stops in the Inglewood area remain dirty.

Representative Addleman indicated that he rode Line 450X recently and that the trip was a pleasant one. He stated that he has four criteria for evaluating bus service, including on-time performance, cleanliness, bus operator courtesy and professional conduct. All four criteria were met on this trip.

Representative Szerlip reported that he rode the Green Line and Blue Line to a trade conference in Long Beach. He mentioned that free gift cards were offered to all participants using public transit to attend the conference. He did not encounter any fare inspectors during the trip. The trains on which he rode were 60%-85% full. He noted that while the trains were clean, the windows were soiled. He stated that he waited a long time to transfer from the Blue Line to the Green Line during the off-peak period.

Representative Mitchell stated that she rode Line 55 on Wednesday morning to travel to downtown. She transferred to Line 45 at Broadway and Adams Blvd. The buses were overcrowded, and some passengers had to enter through the back door. She observed that passengers generally provided positive feedback regarding their experiences on the Metro system, but that all agreed we need more buses.

9. RECEIVED **Chair's Comments** – Representative McTaggart remarked that Representative Hudson will be greatly missed by the Council.

10. **RECEIVED General Manager’s Comments** – Mr. Greene presented the General Manager’s comments on behalf of Ms. Coffey:
- Starting next month, interested Sector Representatives may participate in a quarterly ride-along with Ms. Coffey. The first ride-along will take place on Friday, September 12 immediately following the Council meeting. Sector Representatives and staff will meet at the Artesia Transit Center and randomly select a destination. The trip will last approximately 90 minutes.
 - Service Sector Annual Meet and Confer meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 20 at 4:00 p.m. at the Metro headquarters building.
 - Crenshaw-Prairie Transit Corridor: A Mid-Corridor Working Group meeting will be held on Monday, August 11 at 7:00 p.m. in Leimert Park. A South Corridor Working Group meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 13 at 7:00 p.m. in Darby Park (City of Inglewood).
 - The Council may attend the following Metro Board meetings: Operations Committee meeting held every third Thursday of the month at 12:00 p.m. and Regular Board Meeting every fourth Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m.
11. **RECEIVED Public Comments:**
- Evaristo Ramos, transit user, stated that he is deeply saddened that Representative Hudson is leaving the Council. He expressed gratitude for the help he received from Representative Hudson.
 - Lisa Wilson, transit user, commented that buses that stop at Patsaouras Plaza generally arrive on time, but operators proceed to take a lunch break and buses leave thirty minutes late. She observed that many operators do not call out stops and play music while buses are in service. Further, Line 205 does not have an annunciator. When she tried to complain, the operator swore at her.
 - Dorothea Jaster, transit user, stated that she was unable to find information regarding Sector meetings on the Metro website. She commented on the lack of public information regarding the recent shakeup. She stated that she was informed about Line 205 schedule changes at an Artesia Transit Center open house. She regularly rides this line on Sunday mornings. She was unable to obtain a copy of the new Line 444 timetable in a timely manner.
 - JK Drummond, transit user, thanked Representative Hudson for her service on the Council. He requested that the Sheriff’s department attend each meeting. He asked that Line 460 be added to the timetable racks for the next meeting. He mentioned that southbound traffic on the 110 freeway exiting at Pacific Coast Highway frequently backs up, delaying Line 445 buses attempting to service the PCH Station stop.

He stated that some LADOT Line 142 operators refuse to accept the Metro rail transfer issued by the Ticket Vending Machine (TVM). He has had difficulty obtaining tickets from the Blue Line TVMs as they are slow and difficult to read. He stated that he has observed Line 142 operators treating disabled patrons in a discourteous manner. He recently spoke with a staff member representing Supervisor Don Knabe on various transit issues including the proposed sales tax.

- Lionel Jones, transit user, commented that northbound Line 550 operators are unable to turn left at Exposition Blvd. and Figueroa St. Operators are attempting to detour at this intersection and need a consistent route. He observed that bus operators continue to use cell phones and related his experience with a Line 550 operator who missed the stop at 3rd Street because he was distracted by a Bluetooth device. Regarding the Adams bottleneck on the north 110 freeway, he noted that either buses will need to be re-routed or a flyover will need to be built. He stated that the Exposition Line will block several streets as it travels across the intersection on a diagonal near the freeway off-ramp. He asked why the Exposition line station will be at 23rd Street instead of Adams Bl.

ADJOURNED at 12:05 P.M.

Michele Chau

Michele Chau, Council Secretary