

MINUTES

Friday, May 8, 2009

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

SOUTH BAY SERVICE SECTOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald
Community Center
(Carson Community Center) – Room 111
801 E. Carson Street
Carson, CA 90746

Service Sector Representatives Present:

Ralph Franklin, Chair
John McTaggart, Vice Chair
John Addleman
Devon Deming
Robert Pullen-Miles
Lou Mitchell
Kim Turner
Don Szerlip

Officers:

Dana M. Coffey, General Manager
William Walker, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
2. Safety 1st Contact by Metro South Bay Volunteer Gwendolyn Sykes, Operator, Division 18:

Bicycle riders should use caution when approaching buses and never approach a bus from an operator's blind spot.
3. Roll Call
4. Self –Introductions
5. APPROVED Minutes of the April 10, 2009 Governance Council Meeting.
6. RECEIVED PRESENTATION on Customer Complaints by Cynthia Karpman, Division Transportation Manager, Carson Division and Curley Little, Division Transportation Manager, Arthur Winston Division.

Transportation Managers Cynthia Karpman and Curley Little reviewed the Customer Complaint Process:

Customer Concern Process

1. Complaint is received from member of the public.
2. Complaint is investigated: customer is contacted and complaint is validated.
3. Operator involved is interviewed and if necessary, counseled.
4. Complaint is entered into the Passenger Concern System.
5. Customer Concern Action Plan is initiated if the operator is involved in three or more customer complaints.

Customer Concern Action Plan

1. Undercover check of the operator-in-question is conducted by a Transit Operations Supervisor in Vehicle Operations.
 - a. Undercover supervisor looks for signs of an operator running off its designated route, running ahead of schedule, operator discourtesy, unsafe operation, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. Instructor retraining by Operations Central Instruction is required if an operator has three or more incidents.
 - a. Operators observe customer service agents taking calls from riders at the Metro Customer Service Call Center.

3. Peer group training session for ten operators with most discourtesy concerns involves reenactment of discourteous behavior and resolution of discourteous concern incident with feedback from peer group.

Customer Concern Tracking

- Passenger Concern Management System is used to identify the ten operators who repeat the same behaviors the most.
- Complaints are tracked by type and division.
- PCMS provides monthly reports and also identifies repeat customers.
- The top 5 complaints are discourtesy, no-shows, pass-ups, late arrival, and unsafe operation.

RECEIVED Questions regarding Customer Complaints Presentation:

Representative Deming suggested providing customers with an option to send a text message from a cellular telephone to Metro's Customer Service Center.

RECEIVED Public Comment regarding Customer Complaints Presentation:

Dorothea Jaster said she preferred contacting the South Bay Service Sector directly for customer complaints rather than the agencywide toll free number.

7. RECEIVED PRESENTATION on Short-Range Transportation Plan (SRTP) – Rod Goldman, President, Diversified Transportation Solutions.

Mr. Goldman gave an overview of the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) development process which included gathering feedback on issues and objectives from key stakeholders, including but not limited to Metro executive staff, Board, Service Sector councils and the riding public. He noted that this plan would be transitional in nature and could change once operational goals and issues are identified and a comprehensive plan could be drafted to achieve goals and resolve issues. He then presented an outline of the plan and discussed in detail parts of the plan where Service Sector Councils might be interested in providing more input.

Purpose of Metro SRTP

- Develop multi-year strategic plan to improve transit quality, accessibility, cost effectiveness and efficiency
- Provide short-term action plan for transit activities towards meeting Metro’s long-term objectives

Key Goals of SRTP

- Evaluate current operational and financial condition of Metro Operations
- Project trends in transit demand and transit funding over a five-year period
- Identify probable impacts to Metro Bus and Rail services and facilities
- Identify strategies to address future service needs and align with long-term agency goals
- Create framework for development of future operational policies
- Establish priorities for service development for the next 5 years

CURRENT METRO OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

METRO BUS OVERVIEW	
Service Area	1,433 sq. miles
Number of Routes:	194
Route Types:	Local, Rapid (skip stop), Express
Peak Buses:	2,213 (FY08)
Average Weekday Boardings:	1.3 Million

METRO RAIL OVERVIEW	
Number of Routes:	5
Light Rail Lines:	Blue, Gold, Green
Heavy Rail Lines:	Red, Purple
Systemwide Rail Miles:	73.1
Stations:	65
Average Weekday Boardings:	320,000

METRO SYSTEM TRENDS FY2010-2014	
Projected Growth in Bus Ridership	5%
Projected Growth in Rail Ridership	20%
Planned Increase in Metro Bus Revenue Service Hours	0
Planned Increase in Metro Rail Revenue Service Hours	197,550

Metro System Market Potential

Mr. Goldman referenced a number of different methods Metro could employ to expand its market potential through developing more commuter-oriented services, rail feeder lines, continuing to expand upon partnerships within both the business and educational communities, providing sporting event and special event services, and expanding both late-night and owl service options. He also discussed how Metro could serve new travel patterns that may have emerged since Metro implemented the existing route network by realigning portions of the existing bus network and reviewing the daily operating hours of bus service.

Mr. Goldman discussed how the Metro Operations department would need to look at promoting transit ridership, developing new markets, and improving service quality in order for Metro to continue to be viable in years to come. He commented on Metro's current plan to improve on-time performance, bus cleanliness and service reliability. He said that bus divisions are over capacity by 168 bus parking spaces, the rail division is also out of space for rail car storage as the agency finishes two major rail projects in the next 2 years, and he noted that many transit center bus bays and park/ride lots were also at capacity. He mentioned the following initiatives that would help the department achieve their desired outcomes:

Measure R

Measure R, a half-cent sales tax approved in November of 2008, will generate over \$40 billion in the next 30 years. Objectives of the Measure R program include:

- Providing capital funding for major transit and highway projects
- Funding regional bus and rail operations
- Funding local cities to build or improve transportation

Metro will need to establish priorities for its share of Measure R Operating funds. Some potential proposals for the bus service improvement program include:

- New Clean Bus Purchases
- Deferral of Fare Increases or Reduced Fares
- Operation of Additional Bus Routes
- Increased Service Frequency
- Bus Route Restructuring
- Elimination of Structural Operating Deficit

- Consideration of Service Sector Council Recommendations for Service Improvements.

Acceleration of Capital Project Program

Measure R, Congestion Pricing Reduction Program (ExpressLanes) and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds may also accelerate some capital projects that Metro may not have the operational funding resources to begin revenue operation.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Market Development

Metro will look at developing methods to increase transit ridership and access unserved and underserved markets by working with potential stakeholders (business community, sporting and special event venues, schools) using an entrepreneurial approach to develop services not typically offered by Metro:

- Long-Distance Commuter Services
- Service to Regional Business Centers
- Rail Feeder Services
- Service to Sports Venues and Major Sporting Events
- Late-Night “Owl” Services

Network Plan Development

The Short Range Transit Plan acknowledges a need for Metro to collaborate with regional partners and simplify route structure, thereby increasing the efficiency of bus schedules, improving supply and demand, and coordinating modes of service, thereby improving service for the whole region.

Service Quality

A test program will analyze bus route operations, identify causes of poor on-time performance, and develop strategies to improve. Other service quality areas of improvement include bus cleanliness, vehicle reliability, and mean miles between mechanical failures.

Bus/Rail Interface

The Short Range Transit Plan highlights how Metro has integrated the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension into the existing route network and future proposals for bus route changes in preparation of the Exposition Light Rail opening in 2010. Changes to bus routes that feed rail stations enhance connections between bus and rail, minimize service

duplication, and avoid increases in operating costs.

Metro Connections Transit Hub Facilities Plan

Forty-four regional and sub-regional hubs have been identified and \$10.5 million in funding would be needed to fully implement a program that builds out amenities needed for Metro Connections transfer centers, including but not limited to street furniture, transit shelters, passenger information and lighting.

Express Lanes (Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project)

Express Lanes is a toll lane demonstration project, in partnership with Caltrans and the Federal Transit Administration, that will convert high occupancy vehicle lanes on Interstates 10 (San Bernardino Freeway) and 110 (Harbor Freeway) to high occupancy vehicle and high occupancy toll lanes. Metro will also implement a dual hub bus rapid transit line (Silver Line 910) that connects El Monte Station and the Artesia Transit Center via the El Monte Busway, downtown Los Angeles (Union Station) and the Harbor Transitway.

Major Metro Bus and Rail Capital Activities

- Over \$3.9 billion will be invested into a capital program that will:
- Add 260 45-foot compressed natural gas buses to the Metro fleet
- Continue the evaluation of 6 gas-hybrid buses
- Procure 50 additional light rail vehicles to be deployed on the Eastside (Gold) and Exposition (Expo) light rail extensions
- Mid-life refurbishment of 104 heavy rail vehicles (Red and Purple Lines)
- Facilities program that will look at modernizing existing facilities and building a new bus division in downtown Los Angeles adjacent to the Metro Support Services Center and the Gateway Building

Service Development Plan

Service development over the next five years will focus upon maintaining existing bus passenger capacity and increasing rail passenger capacity through the opening of new rail extensions. Unfunded needs in the service development plan include:

- Unfunded Service Needs
- Additional Rail Operating Division Capacity
- Operating Facility Improvements
- Grade Separation for Metro Blue and Metro Expo Lines near Washington Boulevard and Flower Street
- Expanded Transit Center and Park-Ride Capacity
- Improved Passenger Access Between Metro Red and Metro Orange Lines

- Responding to customer needs through better service design and optimizing service performance.

Next Steps

- Stakeholder Review of Metro Operations SRTP
 - Metro Executive Staff
 - Service Sector Governance Councils
 - Metro Board of Directors
 - Present Metro Operations SRTP to Metro Board of Directors for Approval

RECEIVED Questions and Comments regarding Short Range Transportation Plan Presentation:

Representative Szerlip was surprised that given the Congestion Pricing Demonstration project, the SRTP does not identify an issue with the Harbor Transitway ramps at the Flower /Adams intersection. Ms. Coffey said an update on Congestion Pricing would be presented next month, and that implementation of the Silver Line (also known as Line 910) would be delayed. Representative Szerlip suggested budgeting some of the forthcoming capital funding to replace the clocks at Artesia Transit Center.

Representative Turner suggested that Metro work with municipal operators to pool funds and find opportunities where capital improvements can be made to transit centers jointly, which enhances future Metro Connections hubs that might be better served with multiple transit operators. Mr. Goldman said that the SRTP focuses on passenger amenities that could be installed at transit centers, such as NextBus displays.

Representative Franklin suggested road improvements and emissions controls also be considered in the SRTP and reminded the Council that all parties involved benefit from improved road infrastructure and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Goldman responded that Metro's Long Range Transportation Plan identifies road improvement projects.

8. RECEIVED PRESENTATION on “Seniors on the Move” by Ellen Blackman, Consultant

Chip Hazen, ADA Compliance Administrator introduced Ellen

Blackman who consults with Metro's ADA Compliance Program and formerly worked with the department. Ms. Blackman gave an overview of Metro's Seniors on the Move Program:

Seniors on the Move was created in response to an incident that took place in Santa Monica when an elderly man mistook his accelerator for a parking brake and drove through a Santa Monica Farmer's Market injuring patrons. The program works with the California Highway Patrol and the Department of Motor Vehicles to identify adults at risk of losing their license in order to introduce or reacquaint these individuals with public transit and potentially introduce people unable to drive on their own a method of travel where s/he can be independent and travel without reliance upon paratransit, taxicabs, or other more cost-prohibitive means of travel.

Ms. Blackman reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that was used at a Seniors on the Move presentation at Manhattan Beach Joslyn Community Center. The presentation informed patrons on how to incorporate transit into their current routine and dispelled many myths about taking public transit alone in Los Angeles. The presentation reviewed fare information for Metro, municipal operators and on-demand transit providers (paratransit, dial-a-ride) in the area, used maps and timetables to educate riders on available options, gave an overview of the online (metro.net) and telephone [1 (800) COMMUTE] trip planning services, and taught the seniors how to locate a nearby bus stop and board and alight a bus. Presentation participants are given a Metro Transit Access Pass (TAP) card with a month in free rides loaded onto the card. The presentation also incorporates information on TAP to help seniors understand the changes to Metro fare collection processes and discounted fares. Five presentations will be held each year, one in each supervisorial district throughout the county. Presentations are not limited to the Metro service area, they also include municipal operators and can accommodate up to 80 participants.

RECEIVED Public Comment regarding Seniors on the Move Presentation:

Dorothea Jaster – commented that Metro should operate service later so seniors can enjoy a movie without finding an alternative to Metro service that ends too early. She added that operators should pull closer to the curb, especially for seniors and people who use walkers and canes.

9. RECEIVED PRESENTATION on Metro South Bay FY '09 Quarterly Budget and Status

Mean Miles between Mechanical Failures is on target due to Sector Maintenance Staff being up-to-date with preventative maintenance campaigns and tracking of road calls, inspections and repairs.

In-Service On-Time Performance is just slightly below target at 61.86 percent, compared with a 62 percent goal. A more aggressive 67 percent target will be set for the upcoming fiscal year. The Sector will work to achieve this goal with deployment of Transit Operations Supervisors, retraining operators who are not operating on-time, and higher visibility of field supervisors.

Bus accidents continue to exceed the annual goal because of safety alerts and accident prevention workshops. There were 3.45 accidents per 100,000 hub miles, which falls below the target of 4.0 accidents.

Customer complaints per 100,000 boardings are at 3.11, slightly above the target which is 3.0. Transportation Managers at the divisions have updated the Customer Complaint Action Plan which will involve investigating all complaints, interviewing operators and complainants, counseling operators when necessary, and providing additional training.

New **Workers' Compensation** claims are at 9.2 per 200,000 exposure hours, significantly lower than the target of 13.5, which factored into the decision for the Sector to lower their target significantly to 10.5 for the upcoming fiscal year.

Contract wages are at a positive variance of \$2.77 million (5.6 percent) because the operator assignment ratio has been on target for most of the fiscal year, resulting in less built in overtime. Part-time operators were also utilized in excess of 36 hours per week, further lessening reliance upon overtime hours.

Non-Contract wages are at a positive variance of \$82,509 (5.5 percent) because of a surplus in the transitional duty (Return-To-Work Program) line item. Participation in this program for the year is less than planned.

Uniform stipends have also been underutilized, but this trend may reverse in the fourth quarter of FY 2009.

Fuel is at a positive variance because of the hedge in place on CNG fuel which balances with the amount the Sector spends on fuel, which has been low for most of the year.

Parts and Materials are at a positive variance mostly attributed to a timing of when charges will post to these accounts.

Over \$720,000 has been received for **warranty replacements** from vendors for parts and labor on buses that are still under warranty.

Overall, the **Sector budget** is at a positive variance of \$4.3 million (4 percent) for FY2009.

10. UPDATE on Adopt-A-Line Program by Service Sector Representatives.

Kim Turner – gave positive feedback on her Line Ride from Hawthorne Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue to the Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center for the May 8 Sector Council meeting. The first bus she boarded, Line 740, bus 9577, was clean, had schedules, information on Bike-to-Work Week and on how to protect oneself from the Swine Flu. The bus had approximately 15 passengers and Operator 20854 was courteous. She transferred at Hawthorne and Artesia Boulevards to Line 444 southbound. She said two buses arrived at the same time and she boarded the second bus, which was less full. This bus was semi-clean and three interior lights were not working. She said both operators were friendly and that Metro Connections, in this particular case, worked for her. She completed her trip to the meeting on Torrance Transit Line 3.

John Addleman – reported riding a crowded bus on Line 450X northbound on Monday, May 4. The bus was clean, on-time, and had swine flu prevention tips for the taking. The bus he rode back from Los Angeles 35 minutes later was half-empty.

Ralph Franklin – rode Line 210 northbound at 2:33 PM on May 7, Bus 6389. He experienced walking through spilled coffee as he entered the bus, due to a hole in the trash bag. Operator 26969 was a cautious driver who had to deal with a motorcycle weaving in and out of traffic. Mr. Franklin observed excellent customer service while the operator assisted a passenger in a wheelchair, but also remarked that the operator did not caution a passenger who stood in the aisle in front of the yellow line, potentially causing an operating hazard. On his southbound trip at

approximately 3:15 PM, he observed operator 34254 on bus 6399 making inappropriate comments to a passenger for not having paid full fare. He said this operator also made remarks that may have been inappropriate while representing Metro, including her response of “you too, baby” when a passenger said “Have a nice day.” He added this driver may have used excessive speed and had to brake hard to stop.

11. Chair’s Comments

- Requested that a Closed Session to review the General Manager’s performance be added to the June Agenda to take place immediately before the June meeting.
- Requested that Adopt-A-Line forms are provided to Council Representatives in a PDF file format.
- Said that legislation to ban plastic bags may change how Metro collects trash on-board the buses.
- Said that Temporary TAP cards for seniors and the disabled expire June 30.

12. Service Sector Representatives Comments

Representative Deming announced the Los Angeles World Airports Bike-to-Work Day pit stop at Aviation Metro Green Line Station, from 6am until 10am, Thursday, May 14. She added that Metro and select municipal operators will provide free rides to cyclists who ride their bikes or carry their helmets on board buses or trains on Bike-to-Work Day.

Representative Mitchell reminded General Manager Coffey of the ride along opportunities that had been previously discussed.

Representative Szerlip commended Service Sector Management and Staff for exceeding key performance indicators, winning first place honors at the APTA Roadeo, and for overall great leadership exhibited by the Sector.

13. General Manager’s Comments

- Line 442 Update – reported that the last trip in each direction (northbound in the AM peak and southbound in the PM peak) on Line 442 would be eliminated for lack of patronage and that cancellation of the line is postponed indefinitely.
- Reported that implementation of the new Line 910 (Silver Line/Dual Hub BRT) and South Bay Service Changes associated

with this change (changes to Lines 207, 209, 439, 444, 445, 446, 447) will be delayed until the December 2009 Service Change Program (Shakeup) because of further follow up that needs to be done with Metrolink, Foothill Transit, and other municipal operators (Gardena, Torrance, LADOT) who might be impacted by implementation of the new Silver Line service.

- In-Service On-Time Performance Action Plan – reported that the Sector plans to embark upon a “Back to the Basics” In Service On Time Performance improvement plan that will require teamwork between the maintenance and operations teams to ensure operators report to work on-time, receive their assigned bus on-time, that the bus is inspected, and that rollout takes place on-time. Maintenance will also have to ramp up to ensure that maintenance is done in a timely manner and that road calls for bus breakdowns and other maintenance issues are reduced. Managers from all departments will ride weekly. Governance Council input will be documented through Adopt-A-Line forms. Ms. Coffey strongly encouraged Council representatives to submit their forms prior to the meeting so she can provide feedback at the meeting.
- Recognition of Achievement: 50 Years of Dedicated Service
Ms. Coffey recognized Carson Division bus operators Donald Dube and Jack Bailey for 50 years continued service with Metro and its predecessor agencies.
- Recognition of Achievement:
 - Recognized Andrew Warren, Frank Forde, and Rommel Vargas of the Arthur Winston Maintenance Team, plus Bus Operator Juan Navarro of Division 3, for having the highest combined score and making Metro the Grand Champion in the 2009 APTA International Bus Rodeo.

14. RECEIVED Public Comment

Dorothea Jaster likes the Transit Access Pass (TAP) in general but there are still glitches, for example the TAP website does not allow seniors to purchase TAP fare products which is contrary to what she was told by TAP program managers at a previous Sector Council meeting. Instead, she had to go downtown and wait in line for over an hour. She added that blatant false statements weaken any confidence that riders have in so-called experts from Metro headquarters.

J.K. Drummond

- Suggested Line 460 trips be added to the Harbor Transitway

combined timetable.

- Suggested that bus bays be reassigned at Artesia Transit Center so buses that operate in the same direction or on the same streets can be boarded at the same or at least adjacent bus stops.
- Said that purchasing a TAP card from vendors rather than on board buses or at ticket vending machines is a barrier to tourists who may not know where to purchase a TAP card.
- Said that Torrance Transit map included mistakes from a previous edition. Ms. Turner replied that the new brochures only updated the fare information and that Torrance Transit is aware of the errors on the map.

ADJOURNED at 12:20 P.M.

Prepared by:



William L. Walker
Council Secretary