

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

5:00-7:00 PM

Minutes

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL
SERVICE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

Young Oak Kim Academy
615 S. Shatto Place
Los Angeles, CA 90005

Call to Order

Council Representatives:

Joe Stitcher, Chair
Jeffrey Jacobberger, Vice Chair

Peter Capone-Newton
Peri Sloane Goodman
Art Ida
Elliott Petty
Glenn Rosten
Jerard Wright

Officers:

Jon Hillmer, Director
Jody Litvak, Community Relations Mgr
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Suzanne Handler, Council Secretary

Please turn off cell phones or put them on vibrate

1. ROLL Call – Art Ida absent
2. APPROVE Minutes for March 14, 2012 meeting - approved
3. PUBLIC Comment for items not on the agenda

Ken Rubin representing SOCATA and himself: We have no comment on this agenda. Speaking for myself, I was on the Expo Line for Friends for Expo, we had 33 people and everyone was enthusiastic. Went out on Siemens cars and came back on the original Blue Line cars built in 1990. Scheduled for a transit advocates trip on Tuesday and Wednesday. We had our Culver City Council election we made some changes and there are a couple of transit supporters on the new council. I am happy to see Al Martinez here he will give us an update on the Nextrip and gave him some of my comments. Finally, on the tour yesterday was a former member of this council, Pressley Burroughs, he said to say hello.

Michelle: My family takes the bus and our bus Line 439 is being cancelled and I understand it has already been through the process of cancellation. We were not riding the bus when you did that. We don't want our bus cancelled. Line 439 runs from Culver City Transit Center to Union Station. As I understand it, the 439 bus will be cancelled at the June service change and replaced by the 217. The reason it is getting cancelled is the new Expo Line opening. At this time, I get to downtown in 30-40 minutes. Using the 217 to the Expo Line to 7th and Metro I will have to transfer instead of having a one-seat ride. I don't know if it is too late not to cancel it, but I listen to other people on the bus and they are all unhappy. Every time you have to transfer it makes it more difficult.

Chair Stitcher: We cannot take action on public comment, but if you want more information on the 439 we can probably give you a staff person to contact with your questions.

Representative Capone-Newton: I was curious as to where you were traveling what cross streets? If we could get that at some point.

John Eastman: I go to business school at USC and we are real excited about the Expo Line. There has been conflicting stories as to the reason for the delay. General comment, it would be nice if we could receive accurate information. What is the best way to get information, and does a detailed summary exist.

Chair Stitcher: I am sure we could find someone to give you that information, via e-mail or phone call.

Wayne Wright: I would request staff to consider for the December 2012 changes to truncate Line 30 at the Little Tokyo Gold Line station, when these routes go into operation this June. The reason for the change is when the 30 and 330 are extended to run west of Rimpau Transit Center via San Vicente to Hollywood it would cause problems on the east end going to Indiana station. My suggestion is to reinstate line 31 and have it replace line 30 east of Little Tokyo Gold Line station to east LA College in Monterey Park. The bottom line as I mentioned before would cause problems with buses being late and service development did not think this through when they decided to expand line 30 west of Rimpau terminal. I don't want to have to come back to the board complaining about poor performance on the 30 and 330 in the future.

4. RECEIVE update on Nextrip usage and tactile signs at bus stops, Al Martinez, Supervising Engineer, ATMS

Thank you for having me back. This will be a short update on what is happening with Nextrip and address any thoughts, questions or recommendations you may have.

Today we are at 1,772,141 hits per month we have seen a continuous month-to-month increase since starting in March 2011 at 102,207 hits. We have seen a nice trend that we hope to continue. The majority are mobile users at 54%, next the Web at 40%. We are surprised at the low percentage of 3% for users of SMS; telephone is also at 3%.

Other agencies countrywide, the SMS/text is low but we still have 59,898 hits per month. Washington DC's Mobile Web was first with 1,280,305 and we were 5th with 70,197; Smartphone in San Francisco was 798,237 and we are 400,028; Agency Web Page, Washington DC with 936,798 and we are in 2nd with 301,184. For total use we are 5th in usage at 1,727,965 and San Francisco has 5,861,958 per month. They use it more in the Bay Area but we are not far behind with Toronto and DC. Given our attempts, we will see increase in the Expo opening and Orange Line Extension, especially when we put rail on line with this program. We will see our numbers change. We are also waiting for New York City to come on line and those numbers should be huge.

We are installing Bus Arrival stop signage, these are small nextrip signs as well as stop #s for Nextrip; QR Codes on the signs are getting 200 hits a day. We do not promote the QR codes but we are still getting hits on it. You can basically use any QR reader. Some of the signs have Braille.

We have a new app that is being tested at Wilshire/Vermont providing bus and rail information. Right now there is scheduled information, when Nextrip rolls out for rail, that will be real time information. The foundation is being laid which will eventually roll into bike maps or download the static maps showing what is around you.

Representative Sloane Goodman: One suggestion does that include the stop position? Sometimes you know you are going to Vermont/Santa Monica but you are not sure if the stop is on SE or SW corner?

Al Martinez: It is not the perfect example, but the pin points on the maps will show you which side of the street.

Representative Wright: If we are looking to bump up the number of hits and people are starting to use the Nextrip now is the perfect time to start putting the bus stops on our bus schedules.

Al Martinez: We have had a lot of discussion about that, actually I think you brought it up last time. The idea is there but so are the problems. Yes, I agree with you and it would be helpful, but it would limit flexibility on how we print information, etc. Rather than give you an answer from last year, I'll see if anything has changed and give you a better response.

Representative Wright: I feel this is a perfect way to get Nextrip out to the public, free advertising.

Al Martinez: Our first goal was getting it right. We wanted to make sure we did not implement a product that was really flawed with arrival information, and certainly we are not perfect. For the most part Nextrip has been very popular and well received definitely for the first rollout. What we see coming in the future is going to be rail. Rail is a very different story. If there is a problem with the line, we will be flooded with queries, not just one or two. We will have to be careful how we manage all of the schedule changes that are bound to occur and do occur every day in rail. Displays, we cannot do every corner it is not feasible but people like displays due to their relevant information. We are testing solar displays similar to the one at Wilshire/Vermont showing the next bus as you are going up the escalator. Metro will be a test site for Real-time Google Transit, we are in preliminary discussions. 511 mobile app is in development. Go Metro App for bike paths, rail, etc. should be in early 2013. Go Metro App in early May 2012. Testing low power solar displays for on-street signage.

Representative Capone-Newton: The 1.7 million do you have any idea how many unique users are in there?

Al Martinez: I cannot tell you the number of unique, what we do is we filter out people who are going on and on, they have 30 seconds.

Representative Capone-Newton: The 40% is coming from a desktop or equivalent? Mobile would be through an app or through a mobile web browser?

Al Martinez: It would be through our mobile web-site which is m.metro or any mobile app.

Representative Capone-Newton: Is it possible to show where the requests are coming from? Or use of GPS on the phone?

Al Martinez: I do not have the information the best I can do is a count of independent IP addresses where we are getting them. Those IP addresses do not necessarily define the location.

Representative Capone-Newton: I used it today it just says can we have your location, so the location is going to the service maybe they don't store it but it would be interesting to take a sample. Where they are coming from and it would be interesting to see a map of where the 2,000 signs are located.

Representative Sloan Goodman: I am a huge fan of this service and it has pushed me from being a sometimes user of transit to full time, having that convenience. In terms of marketing you might want to consider other ways of reaching the average person. It seems the only people who know about this are the regular transit riders. If you are thinking about marketing to those who might not otherwise use the bus, you might capture additional market share. When I am trying to find the service on my phone, when you have to scroll through the lines sometimes it would be easier to type in the line. Rather than having to scroll through all the lines, just type your line and it comes up on the screen.

Representative Wright: As a follow up the implementation of this which came out of a November 2011 workshop the biggest comment was I don't know when my bus is getting here. Thankfully, Conan was there to explain Nextrip and this was at a meeting with transit riders.

Al Martinez: I agree with you and Ms. Goodman in regards to marketing, we have had a couple of waves of marketing tied in with 511. Unfortunately there are "x" amount of marketing dollars and we know the wave of things coming, i.e., Expo Opening, Orange Line Extension for the next few months. We will continue to work on how best to expand our marketing efforts.

Representative Capone-Newton: Have you done any quality assurance on where there might be errors or mistakes on the data presented?

Al Martinez: We have done predictability measurements and we are at 93%. We typically measure that about one month after a new baseline shake up. If I did a measurement today, and I haven't, knowing all the schedule changes since our last measurement, I am sure we would be less than 93%. I am eager to get to this new base line so we can do some cleanup of our schedule adjustments.

Public Comment:

Ken Rubin: I have not seen too many of the new signs, one regular sign with the codes, I've seen. Venice/Culver about a block away from the eventual end of the Phase 1 of the Expo Line. Recently I've noticed if you want line 33 or stop #33 on 511 they will ask you to repeat your request, now they will give you to an operator. Also some of the familiar stops are not recognized, like Union Station or Patasaouras Plaza, If I want something out of the Plaza I'll just use Cesar Chavez and Alameda. This is a great operation and I use it all the time.

5. RECEIVE update on Westside Subway Extension, Jody Litvak, Community Relations Manager

After 4 ½ years of environmental analysis, the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Final EIS/EIR) is recommending the 9 mile extension of the Metro Purple Line from Wilshire/Western to the Westwood/VA Hospital with 7 new stations at 5.6 billion dollars (2022 dollars). Projected weekday ridership is 78,700, and projected travel time is 25 minutes from downtown LA to Westwood. The Final EIS/EIR proposed to build the extension in three phases based on available funding. The first phase from Western/Wilshire to LaCienega is just less than 4 miles. One of the key challenges in this phase is the tar sands and gassy soil around Wilshire/Fairfax. Earlier in the environmental analysis, the first phase was projected to end at Fairfax. However, shifting the Phase 1 terminus to LaCienega saves money. More expensive tunneling technology is needed in this stretch due to the gassy ground and extending this segment to La Cienega gets the line beyond this area. The project will be able to use a less expensive type of tunnel boring machine west of LaCienega to the VA Hospital.

The Final EIS/EIR also recommends placing the Century City station at Constellation due to the active faulting found along Santa Monica Blvd. No active faulting was found at the Constellation site. Safety is the number one criteria for any decisions concerning Metro projects. The Final EIS/EIEIR , however, is projecting more than 3,000 additional daily boardings at the Century City Station located on Constellation where there is a higher density of jobs compared to Santa Monica Boulevard.

The Westwood/UCLA station box is recommended to be under Wilshire between Westwood and Gayley where it is easier to construct with fewer impacts to existing buildings. This is the only station where Metro is recommending to build two entrances due to the number of boardings. We are projecting 11,000-12,000 boardings per day. The Westwood/VA Hospital station is recommended for the south side of Wilshire at Bonsall as it's a less expensive location, closer to the hospital entrance and good positioning for any future extension.

The entrance for the La Brea Station is recommended for the NW corner which will also be used for staging along with the SW corner. The Fairfax Station entrance is recommended at NW across from LACMA on Wilshire; the LaCienega Station entrance is recommended for the NE corner of Wilshire/LaCienega; the Wilshire/Rodeo Station entrance is recommended to be on the SW corner of Wilshire/Reeves Drive; the Century City station entrance is recommended for on the NE corner of Constellation Blvd./Avenue of the Stars; the Westwood/UCLA entrances will include one at UCLA's Lot 36 and another "split" entrance on the westside of Westwood Boulevard on both the north and south sides of Wilshire; and the entrance to the Westwood/VA Hospital station is recommended to be on the south side of Wilshire at Bonsall.

CEQA public review: 30-day public review ends on April 23, 2012. The City of Beverly Hills has released two reports that evaluated the technical reports released in October about the subway in the Century City area. Metro responded to their report by the firm Exponent on April 10, 2012. Our review of the report by the firm Shannon & Wilshire is ongoing. The Beverly Hills Unified School District has conducted their own studies including trenching at Beverly Hills High School. We are awaiting their report being prepared by Leighton and Associates.

Following anticipated CEQA environmental action on April 26, 2012 by the Metro board, Metro will file a notice of completion with county recorder and state clearinghouse.

NEPA environmental action: May 22, 2012, close of FTA public review period; Metro will continue to forward all public input received to FTA. Metro will seek a record of decision from the FTA and request approval to enter final design.

Representative Rosten: Trying to get a handle on the cost in Expo for example, what were the estimates at this stage and what were the actuals?

Jody Litvak: The number we had was 4.2 billion, but that was in 2008 dollars, the 5.6 in 2020 dollars. So far we have been able to keep this project within the budgeted amount according to the long-range transportation plan. We are not asking for any additional funding.

Representative Wright: Is there a possibility to locate the Westwood/VA station box further west?

Jody Litvak: No, but we are looking at relocating some of the construction staging further west. The station box will not move.

Representative Wright: Westwood/UCLA is currently a major bus layover spot, are we considering those particulars on these properties where we have construction staging to use that area as bus layovers in the future?

Jody Litvak: We did a lot of work during development of the Draft and Final Environmental reports working closely with city planners in Beverly Hills and City of LA and talked about issues such as good bus connections around all stations.

Representative Wright: What about the station advisory committees or group?

Jody Litvak: During the Final EIS/EIR, there were 6 Station Area Advisory Groups that were put together for all but the VA station, made up of area businesses, residents, property owners, key institutions, elected officials and chambers of commerce.

Chair Stitcher: One of the problems is the intersection of Westwood/Wilshire it is probably one of the worst intersections in the city for people and bus operators who have to make a right turn. Is there anyway we can direct pedestrians under Wilshire to get to the train or cross over instead of trying to cross Wilshire?

Jody Litvak: If you wanted you could go to the station entrance on the northwest corner go down to the mezzanine and come up the other side. There will actually be three ways in and out of this station – one full entrance at Wilshire/Gayley on UCLA's lot 36 and a "split" entrance on both sides of Wilshire on the west side of Westwood Boulevard. This creates interesting opportunities to direct people to other areas.

Representative Capone-Newton: Regarding this station, has there been discussion at UCLA how they would operate their shuttle?

Jody Litvak: It's way too soon to have that conversation.

Representative Capone-Newton: Connections to a Sepulveda Pass project.

Jody Litvak: In theory, when the planning begins that could connect either at UCLA or VA station. We will work hard to design all of these stations so as not to preclude future stations.

Vice Chair Jacobberger: What is likelihood of the Metro board taking action on the 26th?

Jody Litvak: It is on the agenda.

6. DISCUSS change of venue to Beverly Hills in September 2012, All Members

Representative Rosten: I am the one to suggest it, my feeling is that the idea to come here was to get more people to attend, in fact we have had less people, we have more interruptions and it is less convenient. I would like to make a motion that as of the end of this contract we move back to the Beverly Hills Tennis Center.

Representative Wright: Is the Beverly Hills Tennis Center the same cost? One of the reasons why I ask, I want to make sure there is no increase. (Council Secretary it is the same cost).

Representative Capone-Newton: Any where that we move I would like to have a sidewalk so pedestrians can access the building.

Vice Chair Jacobberger: My sense is that this is a more transit friendly location, not that we get a large audience, but in terms of sending a message that we are receptive to the transit public.

Chair Stitcher: Frankly Beverly Hills is easier for me, and I don't think we achieved our goal of getting better turn-out even though it is transit friendly. I need to digest some of this.

Representative Wright: In terms of location, a lot is dictated by our agenda. If we really are looking for turnout we need to adjust our agendas. Our higher turnout was at the Beverly Hills Library and the Presbyterian Church in Westwood which were held in conjunction with the Subway proposals. For the next fiscal year, take a look at our work plan that once a quarter have a workshop related item, i.e., corridor that needs improvement.

Jon Hillmer: just some added information, San Gabriel Valley service council is interested in moving some of their regular meetings, in June we'll be meeting at the ELA Civic Center Library. Potentially having a meeting in Pasadena. Gateway Cities will be having a special workshop every 6 months, too, in May it will be in Bell Gardens at the City hall and in November it will be held in Compton at the new blue line station. In addition to their regular monthly meetings they will have evening meetings.

Representative Rosten: That makes sense in terms of workshops, more than it does regular meetings.

Jon Hillmer: Yes SGV has a good turnout in ELA but poor at their regular location.

Representative Petty: I personally am on the fence as to location, message matters, it is important to have a location that is easily accessible for public transportation. I support us going to different areas since our area is so large. I would like to get more comment from the public.

Public Comment:

Wayne Wright: I am mixed about moving from here to Beverly Hills. This is a very central location. I would like to see this council take their meetings to other places, north east LA from Boyle Heights to Eagle Rock is part of W/C territory. We need to focus more on those areas, also south of USC, Crenshaw district, Slauson Avenue, That needs to be covered, not just West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica I understand you have schedules, but those areas I have mentioned they need to be serviced also, I would like to see this board have one or two meetings a year in those areas.

Public Comment:

John Eastman: I just came back from China and they just finished a subway in Xi'an where the Terra Cotta soldiers are located have a new subway system with streets similar to Wilshire that are 5 lanes wide. They have underground pedestrian tunneling I found very helpful and safer to use than crossing a large street. China uses underground pedestrian crossings even in Beijing's, Tiananmen Square.

Chair Stitcher: Suzanne, what is the timing for notification if we want to move back to Beverly Hills. (Suzanne, two months notice for both, we need to make a decision in July). We will put this on the agenda next month for Action.

7. UPDATE on Exposition Line, Jon Hillmer, Director

Opening will be on the 28th of April. There will be free fares for the weekend. There will be a VIP opening event on April 27. Your invitation is in the mail. We had our tours on the 6th and 10th of this month from 7th and Metro to LaCienega Blvd.

8. RECEIVE Director's Report, Jon Hillmer, Director

- Civil Rights Public Presentation – Reminder we took our action on this last month on several bus lines for service changes. There was a disparate impact identified on the 40 line, because they were proposing to take the articulated and put them on the local lines, while using the 40' buses on the Rapid Lines. That resulted in better levels of service. Since the 40 line is a projected line due to it being a “minority” line. The board was more reluctant to approve service services if there was a disparate impact. However, they did approve without comment.
- Performance Report
 - On Time Performance: Target 85%; Westside 75.7%
 - Customer Complaints per 100,000 Passengers: Target 2.29; Westside 2.73
 - Miles Between Road Calls: Target 3,650; Westside 3,022

- Clean Bus Rating: Metro 8.0; Westside 8.17
- Accidents per 100,000 Miles: Target 3.53; February 4.61
- Monthly Bus Ridership: Westside Target 16,89,000; February 17,860,000
- Average Daily Ridership on All Metro Bus Lines: Weekday 1,150,992; Saturday 785,226; Sunday 562,170
- Rapid Line 720 Ridership: Weekday 36,500; Saturday 30,000; Sunday 23,000
- Red/Purple Line Ridership Trends: Weekday 150,000; Saturday 82,000; Sunday 73,000
- Metro Bus Service Average Load Factor by Month: 77.7% No standees; 18.3% average 1%t to 30%; 4.0% Over 30%
- Station Cleanliness: Artesia Blue Line 6.4; LAX City Bus 6.6; South Bay Galleria Bus 6.5; Universal Red Line bus 6.5; Aviation Green Line 8.3; Burbank Metrolink 8.5; Cal State LA 8.6; Harbor/Gateway Transit 8.2; Inglewood Bus 8.2; Norwalk Green Line bus 8.3; Rosa Parks Bus 8.1; Sierra Madre Gold Line 8.0; Harbor-Century Freeway 8.1
- Service Quality Compliance Report
- Monthly ADA related Complaint Trends: 40
- Wheelchair Pass-up Complaints: 16
- Percentage of Wheelchair Pass-Ups Mystery Riders 0%
- Lift/ramp Deployed for non-wheelchair Patrons 89%
- Wheelchair Procedures and Securement: Securement 89%; Secured 80%
- Operator Cell-Phone 0%
- Meet and Confer with CEO, May 21 at 2:30pm, Heritage Room 13th floor: FY14 Metro Budget Outlook, Metro bus and Rail Performance Targets for FY14, Introduction of Frank Alejandro, America Fast Forward

9. CHAIR and Council Member Comments

- Line Rides
- Action Item

Consideration of items not on the posted agenda, including: items to be presented and (if requested) referred to staff; items to be placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Council; and/or items requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take immediate action came to the attention of the Council subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT