

Minutes

Wednesday, September 10, 2014
5:00PM

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL
SERVICE COUNCIL
Regular Meeting

La Cienega Tennis Center
325 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

All Metro meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities. Meeting location served by Metro Local Lines: 20, 28, 105 and Metro Rapid Lines: 705, 720, 728.

Called to Order at: 5:05 p.m.

Council Representatives:
David Feinberg
Perri Sloane Goodman
Art Ida
Glenn Rosten
George Taule

Officers:
Jon Hillmer, Director
Jody Litvak, Community Relations Director
Dolores Ramos, Council Admin Analyst
Henry Gonzalez, Council Comm. Rel. Mgr.
Carol Silver, Transportation Planning Mgr.
Deanna Phillips, Office of the Board Secretary

For Metro information in English, please call the following phone number: 213-922-1282.

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Для получения информации о Metro на русском языке, пожалуйста, позвоните по указанному ниже телефонному номеру: 323-466-3876

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메트로(Metro) 정보를 [한국어]로 알아보시려면, 아래 번호로 전화하십시오: 323-466-3876

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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

1. ROLL Called.
2. APPROVED REVISED Minutes of July 9, 2014 meeting and Transcript of August 13, 2014 Meeting and Public Hearing
3. RECEIVED PUBLIC Comment for items not on the agenda

Ken Ruben mentioned that last month that Southern California Transit Advocates had arranged a public tour of the TAP Lab with David Sutton and Robin O'Hara. Seventeen people showed up. The tour provided a lot of information and those who attended also provided a lot of feedback for potential improvements and/or changes.

Ellen Lanet of the SORO Neighborhood Council commented that she's lived in her neighborhood for 20 years. The Robertson bus used to be once every half hour and now it's once every hour coming north from National to Santa Monica. It's becoming a link from the Expo Line. The Neighborhood Council would like the frequency increased to every 15 minutes. It wouldn't need to be a local bus making all stops every 15 minutes; some of the buses could stop only at the major intersections.

4. RECEIVED Report on Metro Rapid Bus Transit Priority System Traffic Signal Work, Martha Butler, Countywide Planning and Development and Michael Richmai, Regional Transit Planning

The Transit Signal Priority (TSP) project objectives are to: reduce delay at signalized intersections for Metro Rapid and Metro Orange Lines; help maintain headways between buses; and minimize adverse impacts on cross street traffic. TSP does not eliminate red lights, but reduces the amount of time buses spend at red lights. TSP was first implemented in June 2000 on two demo lines on Wilshire/Whittier and Ventura.

Green Light Extension extends a green signal light up to 10 seconds past normal green cycle time, reduces stop time at signals by keeping the signal green until the bus is through the intersection. It is granted only when buses can clear the intersection within that additional 10-second window. Subsequent phases (cross traffic & left turns) are shortened to make up for extended green time given to buses. Early Green shortens existing red lights by up to 10 seconds to minimize delays to stopped or approaching buses. Conflicting signal phases (cross traffic and left turns) are shortened to provide early green without violating pedestrian or safety minimums.

During the performance evaluation, the City of L.A. analyzed over 1,000 bus trips and run time data. Metro Rapid Buses achieved a 25% average reduction in total travel time. Transit Priority contributed to about 1/3 of the total travel time savings. Bus delays at signalized intersections were reduced by 33-39% with minimal impacts to cross street traffic.

Signal Priority features include that buses given only enough additional green to clear the intersection (if 5 seconds needed, 5 seconds are given); no two consecutive priority cycles are allowed, and only 1 bus every 2-3 minutes can request and receive priority. Buses must be eligible for priority. If over half the scheduled headway early, the bus will not be eligible for priority and if over half its headway late, it will be eligible for priority. The system seeks to minimize bus bunching and impacts to cross traffic.

Metro employs two separate signal priority systems. The main system uses loops and transponders (City of L.A.) The second system (other cities in County) uses an onboard processing unit. Requests for priority are transmitted via wireless communications technology. Through two federal grants, Metro funded cities to construct and implement TSP along Rapid corridors, including the City of West Hollywood. Approximately \$1.6 million is going to City of West Hollywood for TSP on the Santa Monica, Beverly, Hollywood-Pasadena, and La Cienega corridors within their city limits. The project is scheduled to be completed by June 2015. Metro also provided approximately \$6.2 million in funding to the City of L.A. for the Venice TSP (scheduled to be completed by late 2014)

Councilmember Feinberg asked where the \$6.2 million in funding comes from. Ms. Butler replied that the funding is from the CMAC Grant.

Councilmember Ida asked if the City of Los Angeles is looking into transitioning from the loop to the WiFi. Martha Butler responded that they are not.

Councilmember Sloane Goodman asked if the requests are generated by the operator or automatically by the system. Ms. Butler replied that they are generated by the system; operator-generated requests were problematic when tested during a pilot project. Councilmember Sloane Goodman asked how implementation of the system affects operation of a long line like Line 704 that goes through several jurisdictions. Ms. Butler replied that it affects operation greatly because they have to make it work with the different jurisdictions along the corridor.

Bob Thomas asked if this system is in place with the light rail lines those that run through Downtown Los Angeles. There are signals issues with the Expo and Gold Lines. Ms. Butler clarified that the system provides signal priority and not preemption, different from rail and emergency vehicles that are given the preemption option where they have the capability of turning the signals green. However, there are some intersections that the city thinks are problematic where they do not allow rail line preemption.

5. RECEIVED Presentation on Metro's Rider Relief Transit Program, Armineh Saint, Local Programming Transportation Planning Manager

The RRTP mission is to provide transportation assistance to the most economically vulnerable and transit dependent in Los Angeles County. In 2007, the Metro Board, after raising fares, set aside \$5 million for RRTP with current funding remaining at the same level. Eligible participants are Metro or participating Operators' pass holders whose income is below Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) poverty level.

The program incorporates coupons distributed through a network of non-profit agencies to eligible participants for use at the time of purchase. Participants receive a booklet of 6 coupons for 6 months. The coupons are valid for the month printed on them. There are currently 55,000 participants in the program. Individuals receiving subsidies from their city/school are not allowed to participate in the program.

Applicant may prove eligibility for RRTP by demonstrating any of the following: pay stub, proof of receiving Public Benefits, valid proof of income documentation, tax returns, Medi-Cal or Lifeline (water and power) program enrollment. There are additional requirements for seniors, K-12 students, and college/vocational participants.

Minimum eligibility requirements for distributing agencies are that they must: be a not-for-profit 501(c) organization or part of a local jurisdiction established in LA County for at least 3 years, operate out of a fixed structure, have more than 50 people participating in their program, and be committed to all program requirements.

Motion 55, approved in May 2014, expanded the marketing and outreach for fare subsidy programs. It includes various new marketing strategies to expand participation and knowledge about subsidy programs. It aims to alleviate the burden of fare increases on the most vulnerable populations. Motion 70, approved in June 2014, directed staff to launch a full scale advertising campaign for fare subsidy programs in August 2014 prior to a fare increase. The RRTP Marketing and Outreach Plan will provide core informational materials for use in a variety of venues, utilize Metro's system for outreach and includes outreach activities in venues outside of Metro. To reach existing riders, Metro has posted RRTP posters and brochures on Metro's rail cars and buses, placed advertisements and banners on metro.net and added messages to Transit TV. Information is included in the on-hold messages on the Metro Customer Relations telephone line and in the monthly Metro Insider newsletter. To target eligible audiences in venues outside of Metro, RRTP is using radio spots, presentations to Councils of Governments and Service Councils, outreach at senior centers, senior housing, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) locations, Head Start, K-12 schools, and through direct mail.

Councilmember Rosten commented that in looking at the income numbers, they don't look that low considering the whole population of people who rides the bus. He asked what the current average income of Metro riders is. Mr. Hillmer said that the majority of transit users are low-income; the average income is around \$24,000, but Metro doesn't have data on household income. Councilmember Rosten said that if that's the average and assuming that most people, even household, may not have a whole lot more, everyone would be able to take advantage of the program, which would decrease revenue. Mr. Hillmer noted that there is a limit on how much money is available for fare subsidies.

Councilmember Sloane Goodman asked what percentage of the budget has been spent. Ms. Saint replied that the program receives \$5 million annually and they are close to the limit. As part of Motion 55, the Board asked for them to return in May and report on the status of the program. Councilmember Sloane Goodman asked if organizations should go through Metro or FAME if they want to participate as a distributor. Ms. Saint replied that either way is fine.

Councilmember Feinberg commented that the program does a lot for the community. Big Blue Bus is a program participant and it helps a lot of their riders.

Eugene Salinsky said that if the program is just for pass discounts, Metro is not going to reach the people it wants to reach, as it still costs \$90 for a monthly pass. He suggested a pass discount or that another type of pass be created. Most people are not going to get passes with the new transfer policy.

Bob Thomas lives in Highland Park. The closest facility to him on the list is Chinatown and there's only one in the San Gabriel Valley. He works for a church that tried to sign up to participate in the program as a provider but the process was very complex that they were unable to enroll. While there may be agencies that want to be helpful, the sign up process is so complicated that it may discourage provider enrollment.

6. RECEIVED Summary of public comments on Proposed Service Changes for December 2014 or later and staff response, Carol Silver, Transportation Planning Manager.

The proposal is to modify the schedule to discontinue service on Line 534 between Downtown Santa Monica and Washington/Fairfax Transit Hub when Phase 2 of Metro Expo Line opens. Three public hearings were held to present the proposed changes: at San Fernando Valley Council on August 6th; at the Metro Headquarters Building on August 9th; and at the Westside/Central Service Council meeting on August 13th. There were 10 attendees at the meeting and only 6 comments were received overall. Seven of the comments supported the proposal, 3 comments opposed it, and there were 2 comments unrelated to the proposal.

Reducing service on that segment will reduce duplication with the Expo Line. The proposed change would remove an 8-mile segment with no changes to the remainder of the route because the terminal of Line 534 is proposed to be in Downtown Santa Monica, close to the Expo Line terminal. Reducing service will improve service frequency.

One of the major benefits for patrons to transition to using the Expo Line to travel this segment will be improved service reliability. Expo is going to provide a consistent 18-minute headway to Downtown Santa Monica from the Culver City station while for Line 534, the running time will vary by the time of day from 21 – 49 minutes. Shortening the service of Line 534 will improve on-time performance.

Wayne Wright commented that Metro thinks reducing Line 534 is good but they will need to monitor problems on PCH such as brush fires, traffic, etc.. He asked staff to consider extending Line 788 to meet the Expo Line because it makes no sense to leave it out of the proposed changes.

Zachary Strom agrees with the proposed changes and thinks they will improve turnaround time and the overall performance of Line 534. He emphasized that there's a missing link with Line 37 on Adams because of the line being discontinued to Washington/Fairfax. Riders travelling on Adams will have to switch to either Line 105 or

217 to connect to the Expo Line. Some may not want to do that and might decide instead to take Culver City Bus to Venice. He understands that layover points are an issue at Culver City station and La Cienega/Jefferson due to limited space, but he thinks it would be a mistake to not extend Line 37 somehow to connect to the Expo Line. Making that connection would justify the change a little bit more.

Wayne Coombs said that Line 780 will not be extended because it's too long for a Rapid. He suggested stopping Line 780 at Vine and Hollywood Blvd. and reinstating Line 717 to travel south to the Expo Line. Line 717 was discontinued because it was too short and this can make it long enough.

7. APPROVED Proposed Service Changes for December 2014 or Later, Service Council Members

8. RECEIVED Director's Report on Westside/Central Service, Jon Hillmer, Director

- On-time Performance: 75.6% Goal: 80%, System: 78.1%
- Complaints Per 100,000 Passengers: 3.21%, Goal: 2.20%, System 3.82%
- Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls: 4,217, Goal: 4,000, System: 4,340
- Metro Bus Cleanliness Ratings: 8.49%, Goal: 9.0%, System: 8.60%
- Accidents per 100,000 miles: 3.73%, Goal: 3.10%, System: 3.07%
- Average Weekday Ridership: 572,147, System: 1,051,011
- Rapid Line 720 Ridership Trends: Weekday: 39,908, Saturday: 27,970, Sunday: 23,145
- Average Daily Bus Ridership: Weekday: 1,088,800; Saturday: 735,646, Sunday: 562,818
- Average Daily Rail Ridership: Weekday: 353,617, Saturday: 233,048, Sunday: 183,414

Ken Ruben disputed the 30,000 figure for Expo Line weekday ridership in the Director's report. He's in regular contact with Dave Sotero and believes the number should be 31,710.

Eugene Salinsky thinks that it seems like there's something wrong with Metro financially. If Metro is right and the Board approves the 2nd and 3rd proposals for fare restructuring, they will still only recover 34% of the farebox. He suggested moving public comment for items not on the agenda to the end of meeting for late arrivals.

9. CARRIED OVER Election of Chair and Vice Chair for FY 2015, All Members

10. CHAIR and Council Member Comments – *none*.

ADJOURNED AT 6:23 P.M.