

**Metro**Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation AuthorityOne Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952213.922.2000  
metro.net**SYSTEM SAFETY & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE  
NOVEMBER 21, 2013****SUBJECT: PROPOSED CHANGES TO METRO BUS SERVICE****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file report on changes to Metro Bus Service to be implemented December 15, 2013.

**ISSUE**

Metro Bus and Rail services are adjusted two times per year in June and December to improve schedules and modify routes to adapt to the current operating environment.

**DISCUSSION**

For the upcoming December 15, 2013 service changes we are focusing on several key areas of service improvement:

- Improve connections with municipal providers – As part of the Board's Motion 79 (Schedule Coordination) implementation, modifications will be made to several bus lines to improve connectivity with other operators and Metro Rail.
- On-Time Performance – Staff continues to work with divisions, perform ride lines, and analyze data to improve on time performance through running time reallocation and redistribution of timepoints. The goal is not to add service hours and slow the system down, but rather redistribute run times and strategically place timepoints to allow the Operators the best chance of maintaining the schedules we publish.
- Address route safety concerns and load issues – Through discussions with Operators and division management, staff received information on safety concerns related to routing. The December service changes include slight route modifications to make on street operations safer. In addition, stops will be added to a few lines to provide more transit alternates to alleviate load issues on adjacent lines.

- Right size service levels – We will reallocate less productive trips on lines falling under the load standard to lines that exceed the load standard (130 percent which is a seated load plus 12 standees on a standard 40 foot bus) and a few minor route extensions. These actions are planned to result in no net change to annual service hour allocations.

### **Motion 79 Items**

Metro continues to enhance bus service to improve rail and bus connections through the following changes:

**Line 102** – Modify peak frequency to every 36 minutes to meet Expo trains at Western Station; primary direction of travel being northbound buses in the AM transfer to eastbound trains, southbound buses in the PM receiving passengers from westbound trains. Line 102 is currently at a 30-minute peak frequency but customers have requested improved timed connections with Expo running on 12 minute headway. This change will improve connections at no additional cost.

**Line 120** – Make permanent the extension to Rancho Los Amigos rehab center to provide improved mobility device access to the hospital and to help carry mobility device demand from Line 117. Currently, Line 117 carries the most mobility devices and posts the most pass ups within the system.

**Line 161** – Extend Saturday service to the Thousand Oaks Transit Center to connect with new Saturday service on Thousand Oaks Transit. This improvement creates a new Saturday connection at no additional cost.

**Line 167** – Extend last two late night shortline trips to the far terminal to improve Orange Line connectivity. This proposal will be cost neutral.

**Line 212** – The southbound shortline route will be modified to provide direct connectivity with Line 115 in the City of Inglewood. This change, received through comments at the South Bay Governance Council, will eliminate a 3-5 minute walk to transfer between the two lines.

**Lines 181/264/266/487** – New Sierra Madre bay assignments to better serve Pasadena ARTS buses and Metro customers.

**On-Time Performance (OTP) Improvements** – The following lines will have new schedules to improve on-time performance through running time reallocation and redistribution of timepoints.

**Line 105** – Modify running time to improve OTP by reallocating from existing resources. Proposed stop modifications along Vernon Avenue will also improve OTP

and improve operational safety, while maintaining Board adopted bus stop distances.

**Line 217** – Due to constant street closures along Hollywood Boulevard at Highland Avenue, create a regular established detour route from Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue to Sunset Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue; Stops and Zones will install special permanent signs for Hollywood Boulevard bus stops providing a conduit for permanent customer communications.

**Line 720** - As part of a campaign to improve OTP and reduce headway variation, establish Westwood - Vermont Red Line Station shortline by reallocating existing trips to smooth gaps in service.

**Safety Improvements/Loading** – The following changes will be implemented to improve system safety, reduce overloads, and expand service accessibility.

**Line 60** – Additional southbound short line trips are needed in the 5 a.m. period between Flower and Alameda Streets, which will address overloads and hence improve OTP. The overcrowding is due to an increase in employment in the vicinity of 7th and Alameda Sts in the garment district.

**Line 83** – In response to Operator observations, a minor route change of one block at Piedmont Avenue and Figueroa Street eliminates an un-signalized left turn. Due to increased traffic on Figueroa Street, a long established left turn on Line 83 has become problematic and difficult for bus operations. This minor route change utilizing a signalized intersection will provide operators with a safer left turn onto northbound Figueroa Street.

**Line 102** – Relocate 33rd St. layover to 31st (Felix Chevrolet will be vacated). Due to a new large housing development located next to Felix Chevrolet, the City of Los Angeles has proposed vacating 33rd Street. Service planning staff has identified a new layover on 31st Street.

**Line 117** – The schedule will be modified to match the Line 120 schedule hours of service at the Rancho Los Amigos Hospital.

**Line 256** - In response to Operator observations, a minor route change of one block at Piedmont Avenue and Figueroa Street eliminates an un-signalized left turn. Due to increased traffic on Figueroa Street, a long established left turn on Line 256 has become problematic and difficult for bus operations. This minor route change utilizing a signalized intersection will provide operators with a safer left turn onto northbound Figueroa Street.

**Line 577** – In recent years, ridership on Line 270 to Rio Honda College has increased from El Monte Station. In order to relieve overcrowding on Line 270 and to

provide Line 577 an opportunity to be more productive, Scheduling Staff suggested a route extension to the college on a demonstration basis for six months. This change will provide students an opportunity for a faster trip to the college from El Monte Station at no additional student fare increase. The route modification will not increase resources allocated to Line 577 today. Should the demonstration prove successful, a Public Hearing will be conducted next year to make the route change permanent.

**Line 760** – Based on Division visits and scheduling staff line rides, it is proposed to add two stops in downtown Los Angeles on 7th Street to relieve overcrowding on Line 60. The overcrowding is due to an increase in employment in the vicinity of 7th and Alameda Streets in the garment district.

**Silver Line** - Due to the popularity of Staples Center and LA Live, the intersection of 11th and Figueroa Streets is frequently closed and/or has become extremely congested with pedestrians and autos. Therefore, in December, the Silver Line will be rerouted from Figueroa Street to Flower Street between 11<sup>th</sup> Street and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street where it will rejoin the current route at the 23rd Street Station. All stops made today on Figueroa Street will be moved one block to Flower Street.

In addition, the following improvements will be made in June due to continued increases in demand:

- Improve peak hour service frequency to relieve overcrowding;
- Extend peak periods of service; and
- Sunday schedule will improve from 40-minute to 20-minute frequency to match Saturday.

**Outreach** – Three types of outreach occur prior to the implementation of a bi-annual schedule change: internal, stakeholders, external.

Metro employees serve as information agents. Service Planning and Scheduling staff have meet with management at each operating division to discuss the upcoming changes. The Service Review Committee meeting is held monthly, and the schedule change information is shared at these meetings, attended by internal stakeholders such as Customer Relations, Operations, and Marketing staffs.

Metro stakeholders include our partners in providing transit service around the county. Service Planning staff meets quarterly with the municipal operators to discuss issues and advise them of the bi-annual service changes. These meetings will be held in early December, and are geographically arranged to match with the service area responsibilities of the Metro Service Councils.

Externally, a number of materials are developed to inform our customers of the upcoming changes. The Marketing Department oversees the creation of three

collateral pieces used for our information campaign. A Service Change marketing “take-one” brochure will be printed and distributed to all divisions so Operators may place them on the buses. This brochure is a summary of upcoming changes designed to be placed in small boxes and timetable racks located inside the bus (historically known as “take-one” boxes). They also oversee posting this information on the internet. A special “banner” is created to float across the opening page of metro.net. When the banner is “clicked on”, the user is directed to the same changes that are contained in the “take-one” brochure. Also created is a special bus poster that is placed above the interior bus window, a space where advertising is also located. The poster, placed on all buses, will also contain the same information as available on metro.net and contained in the “take-one” brochure. All of these materials will be available on November 27.

The Scheduling Staff prepares new timetables and provides these to the webmaster to be posted on-line. The timetables are distributed to the divisions for placement on buses. Service Planning Staff also prepares individual “take-ones” that are line specific for distribution on the buses. Unlike the larger brochure mentioned earlier, this notice is the size of a timetable, usually a single sheet and alerts customers who may only ride one line of the upcoming change. These materials are developed and ready to be placed on buses beginning December 1.

In addition to the general information on service changes, lines with more substantive changes are preceded with more specific outreach efforts. For example, Metro staff has worked collaboratively with staff from Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center (Rancho) and Access Services (Access) to revamp the shuttle service provided by Access at Rancho. The shuttle services have been updated to encourage and attract customers to the shuttle to mitigate pass-ups on Lines 117 and 120. Metro requested Access to open the Rancho Shuttle to the general public with disabilities, their personal care assistants (PCA), and Rancho employees. At their September 2013 meeting, the Access Board approved the item to open the shuttle services to the general public. The new service model was implemented October 14, 2013 and provides free shuttle service to and from Rancho to the Willowbrook Station, which serves the Metro Blue and Green Lines and provides access and connections to all of Los Angeles County. The shuttle operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. from the Willowbrook Station to Rancho hourly for all persons with disabilities, their PCAs, and Rancho staff with proof of identification card.

Metro Ambassadors are stationed at Rancho and the Willowbrook Station to distribute the handout and to answer questions about the expanded shuttle service. An E-blast was developed and distributed to Rancho and Access for dissemination to their customers. Metro Creative Services is developing a permanent “take one”, maps of the shuttle routes, and wraps for the vehicle to promote the Rancho shuttle service. Metro is also providing a training bus at the facility monthly to educate Rancho clients on traveling on fixed route prior to taking their first trip on the system.

In addition, Community Relations and Service Planning will be preparing promotional brochures focusing on specific destinations related to the December changes. These will include:

- Rio Hondo College (Line 577 route modification)
- Harbor Transitway (Silver Line improved frequencies)
- Thousand Oaks Transit Center (Line 161 Saturday route extension)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Street Improvements (Lines 60 and 760 service improvements for the Garment District)

## **TITLE VI/ ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

None of the service adjustments described in this report meets the major service change threshold defined by Metro. Metro policy does not require a public hearing nor a Title VI and Environmental Justice Analysis if the changes do not meet the major service change threshold.

## **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

The Board of Directors consideration of the service changes presented in this report are expected to improve the safety of Metro's employees and customers as described above.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Board of Directors consideration of the of the service changes presented in this report is included in the FY14 adopted budget.

### **Impact to Budget**

Approval of this report is consistent with the FY14 adopted budget.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The minor route modifications will benefit customers by providing a safer trip by reducing turning movements, improve service to new destinations such as Rio Honda College and Rancho Amigos Hospital, and relieve overcrowding by improving service frequencies.

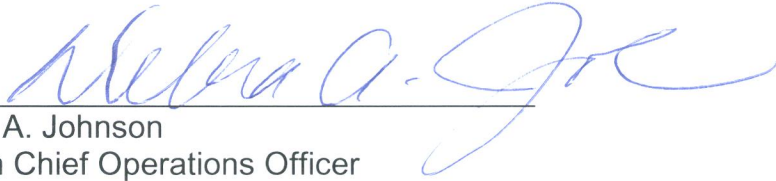
The alternative to not implement these changes will result in service being maintained as it operates today. This is not recommended, as the minor route changes improve mobility in the region, reduce passenger overloads and provide for safety improvements.

## **NEXT STEPS**

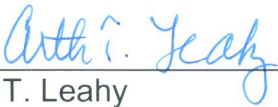
All of the proposed changes will begin on December 15, 2013 or later.

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