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LA COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES - MARCH 27, 1996

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Larry McFarland, Chairman  
Neil Bjornsen, Past Chairman  
Nathan Chroman  
Pam Corradi - Secretary  
Russ Davies  
Mike Dickerson  
Stanley Hart  
David Louie - Vice Chairman  
Sean McCarthy  
Seymour Rosen  
Howard Sachar  
Peter Schick  
James Seal  
Charles Stapleton

**SPEAKERS**

Richard Katzman, County Counsel Office  
Jim McLaughlin, Executive Officer, MTA Bus Improvement Plan  
Ellen Gelbard, MTA Project Manager, Westside Area Team.

**STAFF PRESENT**

Ray Harris, MTA Government Relations  
Audrey Noda, MTA Government Relations  
Fe Alcid-Little, MTA Government Relations

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by CAC Chairman Larry McFarland.

II. **Committee Reports**

L. McFarland reported on the Metro Red Line, Mid-City Western extension. He read in the LA Business Journal that based on the gas probes done, the MTA is now looking at a 3<sup>rd</sup> alternative route. This would run south from Wilshire Blvd. along Wilton Place instead of Crenshaw. This being a new alignment would require changes in the law because current federal law says stations are to be located at Olympic-Crenshaw and Pico-San Vicente. He wants to pursue the CAC motion that was made in February 1995, studying Wilshire Boulevard as an alternative. He wants to modify the motion to link it to the preliminary engineering. If MTA is going to move forward with the preliminary engineering on Wilton Place or any other alternatives, it should at the same time do the preliminary engineering under Wilshire Blvd. He drafted a letter which he wants to send to all the MTA Board Members which points out what Dr. Eisenstein said before the CAC that in his opinion you could tunnel under Wilshire Boulevard. In terms of preliminary engineering, he is a world renown expert and I think that information should be considered today.

S. McCarthy said he's looked at it no more in depth than anybody else on this committee regarding the gas studies in the Mid-Wilshire, Miracle Mile area. In those reports they say that the gas in the Miracle Mile area is in fact less in most instances than what has been encountered in the Mid-Wilshire area. This doesn't mean there are no risks associated with it. He was at the Construction Committee meeting, John

Walsh says this is a conspiracy theory in the fact that this is a way of having to go back and reopen the EIR, and delay any sort of work on the west side. He has no idea whether this is true or not. He wants to find out whether this would require a new EIR or delay any movement to the west side of Los Angeles, whether it's under or whether it goes to Pico-San Vicente alignment or down Wilshire Boulevard. Congressman Waxman through his amendment to Public Law 99.190 stopped effectively the spending of any federal funds in the hazardous gas are of Miracle Mile. How much risk are we willing to take in doing that tunneling? I strongly support the various measures to push on some of these issues.

N. Chroman, asked if the MTA did engineering in the first place.

L. McFarland said what we are talking about at this point is, if the MTA is to bring preliminary engineering concept under Wilton Place, that they ought to do it under Wilshire Boulevard. Wilshire Boulevard is clearly the best route for everyone. The MTA Board may decide simply to do nothing and maybe they will say we'll just stop at Wilshire-Western for now and we'll wait. That will be the most logical thing to do. In 1992, they adopted an EIR, calling for deep bore tunneling down Pico-San Vicente. The MTA Board decided they cannot build under it. Ever since, the MTA staff has been in the process of coming up with alternatives: cut and cover, aerial combinations of cut and cover aerial, and detours; looking in all these different ways to make an alignment and different construction approach.

N. Chroman asked so the circumstances haven't changed except for the techniques?

L. McFarland said at the CAC's request, the MTA did another additional probe further looking at the gas situation. The probes were in the Western and LaBrea areas under Wilshire. They did probes along Wilton Place. According to E. Gelbard, they got a lot of water but no gas, between Western and LaBrea under Wilshire which is good news in terms of tunneling in that structure. They also found little or no gas under Wilton Place. The staff decision is to support deep bore tunneling under Wilton Place as an alternative way to get to Pico-San Vicente.

N. Chroman asked are you suggesting that these probes are really expensive?

L. McFarland replied what we are suggesting is preliminary engineering. E. Gelbard has the budget. We shouldn't be looking for one route without looking at the other or we should not be going forward. For four years now I have tried to find ways to get to Pico-San Vicente. Originally Pico-San Vicente was sold to everybody. It would be so much easier to go on Wilshire, but Wilshire was so fatally flawed that one had to abandon it. He drafted a letter which he would like to send to every Board Member directly and enclose a report from Leroy Crandall. Leroy Crandall has been around forever and he has looked into these issues. Mr. Crandall has concluded, in his opinion that we can safely deep bore tunnel under Wilshire Boulevard through the Fernando formation. Now maybe he is right and maybe he is wrong but this is just more information for the Board to look at and make a decision on where they want to spend their money and how they want to approach it. We have Leroy Crandall siding with us and wanting us to do it. What we want the Board to do is to look into this issue and if it can be done then they take that information back to Congress. Congress today is very different than it was when this particular law was passed. One thing is the Republicans are in charge not the Democrats. So if Congress can change the law, we need to go ahead and go over that. This concludes the information session.

M. Dickerson stated the number one bus line of the MTA has always been the Pico line. Vermont is always number two. A lot of people with significant transportation expertise have come to the conclusion that there is a better way to handle it. It is entirely true, the heaviest boulevard is in fact Wilshire Boulevard. So the argument is really a matter of how many people ride a bus line in a corridor. There are some legitimate arguments on Pico-San Vicente. The logical route is to go west on Wilshire Boulevard, to the university or to Beverly Hills. Frankly, Pico-San Vicente is the better line and it would intercept more people on Wilshire Boulevard. People go to the museums. The actual number of people in that alignment is much less dense than Pico-San Vicente. It makes no sense to them to pick up San Vicente. It probably makes a lot more sense to make sure the Pico-San Vicente is covered.

L. McFarland stated that Wilshire Blvd. be studied first and that the information should be included in the EIR. Currently, the document should include information on potential ridership, development, and the social equity of the ridership. The EIR should include all those factors, but up until now it has not been done

M. Dickerson stated that the motion should be acted on so that we can get the matter before Congress next January because this Congress may very well find that this is better.

### III. Update on the Fare Litigation

R. Katzman, County Counsel, reported that the trial is set for May 14 but it's difficult to say whether the case would actually start on May 14 because its simply up to the Judge. It was set for January and in some circumstances it was put over to May. You might be interested that the case has changed somewhat since it began. The issue was on the fare and what it had to do with rail versus bus. It's now somewhat changed to an attack on the funding of the Munis, the Municipal Operators such as Santa Monica, Long Beach, Foothill, etc. Whether this will actually go to trial or not is still unknown because there are several motions pending with the Judge to prevent that issue before going to trial since it was not originally raised. Again it is hard to say what the judge will do with this. He granted one motion that would seem to exclude this, but there are some pending items that might change that. If that does happen, this case gets even more complex than it is. Perhaps more delayed because we would be seeking more and on behalf of the Munis. It is their funding that will be attacked.

M. Dickerson asked R. Katzman to summarize the two submissions.

R. Katzman replied what the plaintiffs are saying is that essentially MTA operates an inequitable fund and has operated an inequitable transit system. This case is based on minorities, versus a suburban white system. The MTA is continuing to fund this system inequitably. Originally it was rail versus bus and part of the rail attacked was the Metrolink. It has been hard to attack Metrolink because it is not part of the MTA. The Munis are funded through MTA, it is not a division of MTA. MTA's own rail lines are in large part minority lines. The Blue Line is a minority line. So once this evidence starts coming in through discovery although Metro Link is still part of the case, the plaintiff's are saying that the Munis which serve traditionally less minority populations are receiving inequitable share of funding. So this is where the Munis come in. It's the variation on the same theme. The Munis were not included in the original claim. He also explained that he handled the case initially up until that preliminary injunction. It's now being handled by Riordan & McKenzie.

L. McFarland asked how did they get on their job.

R. Katzman replied theoretically at random, there is no way to know. This case has been set relatively quickly for federal court.

M. Dickerson asked can you give us some indication as to the jurisdictions.

R. Katzman stated there is a similar case pending in Northern California by the same plaintiffs counsels against the County Health Care system. It has to do with the demolition of the original hospital and whether they should put a satellite hospital or rebuild a central hospital. There was a preliminary injunction in that case to prevent the destruction of the hospital. That case is still in discovery. Discovery is complete in our case. There is also a similar case in New York, but the New York system is not the same even though the legal issues are the same. New York is funded differently. They are attacking more cross subsidization than rail versus bus. Those are the major cases. Fare litigation is how it began. The fare isn't the issue, its not the primary issue. It has to do with the claim that the bus riders pay more for service, than railriders but the claims are far broader than fare litigation. If it prevails it could result in complete restructuring of MTA.

M. Dickerson asked if construction could be changed.

R. Katzman said potentially the handling of rail construction. Changing how the other transit operations is funded. Changing of MTA deploying bus fleet, structure.

Howard Watt, public comment, questioned the raise of the bus fare from \$8 to \$12.

R. Katzman stated they reached a settlement with the claims to allow certain increases in the fare. MTA's defense is that MTA does not only serve inner city minority bus riders. We have other objectives such as air pollution control traffic congestion reduction

J. Seal asked about restructuring in terms of Prop A & Prop C.

R. Katzman replied that the MTA has hired expert witnesses who have declarations on these very issues and on the lateral effect of various construction projects. MTA's defense includes all the various constituencies and all the various objectives that it serves not just one objective.

R. Katzman said MTA Operations, its own operations unit primarily serves the minority bus riders. The attack is on MTA as a whole not only MTA operations. MTA for example, funds commuter bus lines, which serves other people, traffic congestion, and air pollution. The plaintiffs are attacking MTA's structure not just MTA operations. MTA concedes that MTA Operations' primary constituency is transit dependent minority riders.

Rosen stated so you want to change the format of MTA.

R. Katzman clarified that the MTA is giving them everything they want. The MTA is making major changes everything they want.

S. Rosen asked Prop A and Prop C are voted in by the voters. Is there any bearing on the nature of the case.

R. Katzman concluded by stating that part of the case involves a dispute between the parties as to what various provisions of Prop A and Prop C mean. There is already an expert declaration on just that very issue but that is part of the case. Our position says there is dedicated money and also state railbox money for example.

#### IV. **Jim McLaughlin, Executive Officer, MTA Bus System Improvement Plan**

J. McLaughlin stated the Bus System Improvement Plan attempts to bring together all the many anticipated programs here at the MTA that deal with the bus system including some of the impacts of the litigation previously discussed. What the MTA is attempting to do is pull all those programs together submit it to the Board, timelines updates and performance measures to try to show what is working and what isn't working. They have a number of demonstration programs that are scheduled for implementation within the next year. The MTA wants to see how some of those track out, what the benefits. Then we make recommendations on how to go forward with the system. This plan has four elements.

1. To get more community input on items. Recognize that each community is different. The problem in the past is not communicating with those communities. This is one of the reasons for the litigation against us. We recommended the development of a process that allows for community input
2. To plan at a more community level. Recognize that again we should take advantage of working on things at a smaller scale, and recognize that one size doesn't fit all.
3. Restructure the services to meet those demands and then;
4. Redistribute resources based on how those services are redistributed and how those services are restructured.

The MTA believes it can do more with the dollars we have available today for the bus system, if does things a little bit differently. Look at the outlying areas, community based services, duplication that

exists. Try to get more effective use of things like competitive contracting, the benefits of some expenditures by some of the municipal operators and working in better partnership for both jurisdictions, accessing their systems where there usable and try to bring them into the picture. The bus system will always be the backbone of the transit system but we need more in order to make it work better with the dollars that we have today. The recommendation to make it less process oriented and more performance oriented. the call is MTA is committed to adding more service with better quality. Unfortunately, the MTA doesn't have the resources to do that from a funding stand point. We are trying to create more partnerships out there and make the resources go farther than what we have to day. This will be a five-year effort. This plan includes a media element in it. \$10.4 million will be needed to try to reduce overcrowding on those lines which serves the general transit dependent areas and we are going to go forward to put on that program as well.

H. Sachar asked what really started this? He understands that the basic problem is the overcrowding of buses.

J. McLaughlin stated what started this was several things. A year or so ago Mayor Riordan made a commitment to a group in the South Central area. Chairman Zarian indicated the MTA needs to develop a short term plan that will encompass some of the ideas and put them together in one place in conjunction with the fare litigation. There was some thought that maybe we can pull some of this together and come up with some sort of compromise and settle out of court. Some of the elements for the plan were presented to the plaintiff and they rejected them as being way too minuscule and prepared something for a longer case. He stated overcrowding is one element of the overall system that is out there. The MTA operates approximately around 200 lines, the top twenty of those lines carry over 50% of the riders. The whole issue is how the dollars are spent. Fare decisions that are made are expensive decisions, some service decisions which are made are expensive decisions. The question is can you look at a variety of these components that could get you better service in a slightly different manner and then that provides you the opportunity not only to relieve overcrowding but to serve the elements of the system. If we did some of the things smarter we could free up some resources so that we can provide more service where it is needed, but until we have the first of that done, we have no money to do the second part. McLaughlin further stated that the MTA is trying to deal with major issues including overcrowding, better headways, and driver sensitivity. There are programs which the MTA has implemented that are working.. Decentralization of regional general managers allows management to occur at a local level. We must try to make and take advantage of that so that the driver will start thinking they are working in one area and for one regional manager instead of part of the entire system. Clearly our goal is to better serve the in place but are not tailored to the customer. What we are trying to do is make it more tailored customer; find out what they want done, what they need as far as transfers, etc. Some of our systems are in place but are not tailored to the customer. What we are trying to do is make it more tailored.

J. McFarland said what they used to do is actually put employees out where they are visible and stand in critical corners throughout the city to monitor what the actions are, of the drivers and to see that they are doing their jobs. It was suggested that MTA submit to the CAC any relevant reports on what lines and routes are running every hour. Get the line number and actually have someone come back to us from MTA, investigate, and file a report.

S. McCarthy inquired as to the mechanism MTA would use for community input and shared his experience on this. Mr. McCarthy was concerned about community input in Hollywood. He asked how will the bus operations plan find out what the community needs. MTA staff should be invited to a meeting and address question about service and how it should be provided, when the buses should run provided and what routes they should take. Mr. McCarthy stated that he feels its really important that the people who ride the bus and not people who are most interested in influencing when the buses are running, be the ones that are asked

J. McLaughlin agreed. The bus riders and other groups, come to the board and want to make comments on the bus system based on their use of it. The Board is not the place to make those comments. There is

no room for interaction or for dialogue. What MTA is trying to do is work with "transit improvement councils." I don't know if we are going to use the same method in each community. In some communities the church maybe the best place. In other communities it maybe homeowner groups. We should ask the bus riders union, the CAC, and people who have been riding this system for years. The community of Echo Park for example would have the best solution for its own community

S. Rosen inquired as to how someone files complaints with the MTA

J. McLaughlin stated what people first will call the information number and start there

N Chroman asked where will they be directed?

J McLaughlin replied probably the Customer Relations Department. They would then get that information and turn it over to Operations. J. McLaughlin continued by stating that the normal process would to direct complaints to Operations, Customer Relations. Some of the Regional General Managers are getting some of the customer complaint information. He said Operations would out any complaints about drivers. If there was a series of violations, Operations would follow-up with disciplinary actions.

N. Chroman asked what if she complaint in Spanish, or other language?

J. McLaughlin replied there are people that are bilingual in a number of languages that are being used within the system.

N. Chroman asked are there signs on the buses that say if you don't like the way the driver is driving here is how to make a complaint?

J. McLaughlin replied not to my knowledge.

M. Dickerson discussed the problem regarding the signage in the Gateway building and on the buses.

Howard Watt, public comment mentioned that there is not one bus in this city with a map. There is not one map that shows where the bus goes.

M. Dickerson said the problem is we need to sign this system. There is no other system in any place in the world that is unsigned. There is nothing to tell you how to get information there is nothing to sell the system. He asked what is the mechanism that is being used? Is there anything being created within the bus operations system?

J. McLaughlin stated that the MTA hopes to use the combination of resources from Public Affairs, the community, the area teams of Planning and Programming and some of the resources from the local side and try to see how best to deal with the problem. The LAPD for example has instituted a community policing program. When you walk into a division there is a box with a survey card and you state how the representative talked to you...etc. If you are not pleased with the officer you just fill out the form and then deposit it. It is possible for the MTA to do the same. We can ask how is this driver driving and, how is the service? The card can be in Spanish and English. Other systems that are smaller have been doing things like this for years. MTA because of the budget has not done a lot of this. MTA's Marketing is conducting a customer satisfaction survey so we will be getting input including how to make this ongoing. This is something we will recommend as an annual expenditure.

M. Dickerson said that schedules could be put up in inexpensive stands at post offices and libraries which have easy access. They are not in any places at all.

Pat Moser, public comment, stated that every library should have a complete stack of MTA timetables on all 200 lines. There should be on board traffic signalization systems on all the Long Beach Blue Line trains so they could change traffic lights on Flower Street and Washington Blvd. It is outrageous that

you treat the Blue Line as if it were a bus. It is not a bus. It shouldn't be treated that way, it should be given priority. Blue Line trains have to wait for the traffic light as if they were a car, or truck, or a bus. At stations they should be able to change the traffic light as they approach the intersection. A more efficient means of transportation should be given priority over the least efficient means of transportation, the automobile. The MTA complaint line number should be on the back and inside of every MTA bus and train. They should also have a 1-800 number in every bus and train for schedules and information. Every timetable should have the information for it. But the MTA keeps that deeply held secret. And MTA has not printed a map since it became MTA. I can understand that every year or so you rearrange your routes and that can be solved by printing sectional maps which the RTD used to do every year. This way you won't have to print all of the sectional maps all at once.

H. Watt, public comment, said no bus has any schedules. The drivers should bring those schedules and put them in the box for each and every bus they are driving. The public is not even allowed to speak on any agenda items nor the Bus Improvement Plan report at Board meetings.

J. McLaughlin said he understood about the Board procedure. It seems that each month there is a different rule. It is hard for people to understand when they can speak, what they can speak on and how it works. We must try to communicate better.

H. Watt further complained about excessive wait times for the 1/800 lines.

**V. New Business - MOS III Mid-City Wilshire Issue**

E. Gelbard, Project Manager, Westside Area Team Mid-Cities Segment. Ms. Gelbard appeared to answer questions regarding the westside extensions. Ms. Gelbard indicated that MTA staff is in the middle of drafting a Board report for April so she couldn't discuss the staff recommendation. She could report on it next month. Staff approved the probe which the Board directed us to do in November. We probed in the Arlington-Wilton Place area and on Wilshire. We are bringing the results to the Board in April with recommendations on our findings.

L. McFarland asked what are the recommendations?

Gelbard replied we don't have them approved all the way. It appears that the MTA might be looking at a deep bore tunnel under Wilton Place-Arlington. Wilshire is an open question. It is still federally prohibited. FTA told the MTA they will not support this. Ms. Gelbard indicated that she is not sure what staff is going to recommend but there will be an alternative on the engineering work

J. McFarland stated that the CAC needed to make a recommendation to the Board.

S. McCarthy said it was mentioned that there is hydrogen sulfide that lingers 25 feet below the ground and it extends down 75 to 80 feet at the intersection of Crescent Heights and Wilshire Blvd. This is why they would need a deep bore tunnel in that area. Congressman Henry Waxman put the public law in place because of the explosion at the Ross-Dress for Less in 1985 where Third Street caught fire and burned. Even now there is a drain system that is being tunneled under West Hollywood. It goes down to the hazardous gas levels. It doesn't matter if it is an L. A. County project, or Public Works and there are some serious considerations in that area because of what it is going. They're gonna go right up San Vicente, right through the only existing oil fields. That is probably gonna tell more about what going to be able to be done in that area. There are serious considerations as to how they're venting the area. Hydrogen sulfide is heavier than air. The Pico-San Vicente area is even worst. Methane concentration is 100% . Methane is everywhere in Los Angeles.

J. McFarland said in the Fernando formation there is no hydrogen sulfide. And the Fernando is around 75 feet deep. If we prove that it can be done then we go back to Congress and ask isn't this a matter of self-determination, isn't this a local issue?

E. Gelbard stated that the core study found 42 different alignments on how to get the Red Line over to the Valley and ended up on Vermont and Hollywood. The Board in November authorized a month to do a probe.

L. McFarland said the CAC has a small victory. However, he warned that the CAC was to expand the scope of the Wilshire study. This draft EIR came to the Board, but now that is all changed. Now it's time to put it on the Board to study a different alignment. Mr. McFarland circulated a letter and report from Leroy Crandall regarding tunneling beneath Wilshire Boulevard. The report was completed for the L. A. County Museum of Art. Mr. McFarland then entertained a motion for the CAC to adopt a motion to include a part of this allocation of additional funding for the preliminary engineering. (Attachment I, CAC Motion, Attachment II, CAC Letter, Attachment III, Leroy Crandall Letter).

**Discussion of the Ethanol issue.**

M. Dickerson discussed the Ethanol-Methanol issue and the danger of it especially to children. He reported that a consultant from Denver, Colorado told the LACTC what the problem was about Methanol buses. Linda Bohlinger was the staff responsible for the 300 Methanol buses. We can't do anything about this Ethanol-Methanol situation.

**VI. Old Business - MTA Transit Police**

Louie reported. this is to follow-up on the potential merger of the MTA Transit Police and the LAPD/Los Angeles Sheriff Department. At the last executive board meeting Chief Sharon Papa commented on the various facts and circumstances surrounding this merger. Mr. Louie stated that in general the Executive Board feels that a merger was not beneficial to the MTA or to the mission statement of the organization. It was also concluded that there was not a whole lot that could be done because it was sort of a done deal. Today the Board: Molina, Alatorre, Yaroslavsky, Brathwaite-Burke and Dawidziak moved to continue the item. The Board instructed the staff to go back and examine the issue and come back with some satisfactory answers to several questions they had. He felt it would be advantageous and beneficial to the CAC to write a letter in support of maintaining the MTA police as it is.

D. Louie introduced a motion to support of maintaining the MTA Transit Police (Attachment IV).

MSC to adopt motion.

A. Noda asked if anyone was going to attend the Metro Red Line Segment 2 & 3 tour on Friday, April 12.

**VII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.



## ATTACHMENT 1

### LOS ANGELES COUNTY MTA CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC)

#### MOTION

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority ("LACMTA") has issued a Notice of Preparation for a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the Metro Rail Red Line Western Extension Mid-City segment; and

WHEREAS, the SEIR is being prepared because the high concentrations of hydrogen sulfide along the proposed alignment made technologically infeasible the construction of the previously approved deep bore construction of a Mid-City segment with stations at Olympic/Crenshaw and Pico/San Vicente; and

WHEREAS, the technologically feasible construction techniques, involving cut and cover and aerial construction, involve significant cost and environmental complications, both during construction and as permanent impacts on the surrounding communities, which were not considered in the adoption of the Pico/San Vicente alignment as the locally preferred alternative;

WHEREAS, the MTA staff has recommended that additional funds be allocated to perform engineering feasibility and conceptual engineering for an alternative subway alignment under Wilton Place for the Mid-City Extension to Pico/San Vicente; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens' Advisory Council believes that any responsible and legally sufficient environmental and policy analysis of the Metro Rail Red Line Western Extension should include an analysis of the cost and environmental impacts of alignments westerly along Wilshire Boulevard with stations at LaBrea and Fairfax.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Citizens' Advisory Council requests the LACMTA Board of Directors to allocate funds to perform engineering feasibility and conceptual engineering for an alignment of the Metro Rail Red Line Western Extension westerly under Wilshire Boulevard with stations at LaBrea and Fairfax.

## ATTACHMENT 2

April 8, 1996

Larry Zarian, Chairman  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chairman Zarian:

As you know, the Citizens' Advisory Council (CAC) of the MTA adopted a motion which it presented to the MTA Board on February 22, 1995, calling for an analysis of the cost and environmental impacts of alignments for the Metro Rail Red Line Western Extension westerly along Wilshire Boulevard through the Miracle Mile. At the CAC's January 28, 1996 General Membership Meeting, Dr. Eisenstein, the tunneling expert hired by the MTA to advise it on the Metro Rail North Hollywood extension, told the CAC that, in his opinion, a subway tunnel could be safely bored and operated under Wilshire Boulevard from Wilshire/Western to Beverly Hills.

In addition, LeRoy Crandall, one of the most respected and senior geophysical engineers in California, has concluded that "it is clear that the Wilshire Boulevard alignment provides a superior tunneling location to the alternative routes now being considered. In fact, the hydrogen sulfide conditions are much more serious for the Pico/San Vicente route than for the Wilshire Boulevard route." A copy of Mr. Crandall's letter setting forth his position is enclosed.

We recently learned that the MTA staff is going to recommend at the April MTA Board meeting that additional money be allocated to study a new route for the Pico/San Vicente alignment - specifically, a subway alignment under Wilton Place. We believe that if the MTA Board decides to allocate additional money to study yet another route to Pico/San Vicente, the Board, at a minimum, should vote to allocate money to conduct engineering feasibility and conceptual engineering for a subway route under Wilshire Boulevard. A motion to this effect was passed unanimously by the CAC at its March 27 meeting and will be on the MTA Board's April agenda.

If the engineering feasibility and conceptual engineering studies demonstrate that a subway can be safely bored and operated under Wilshire Boulevard, this information would demonstrate that the federal prohibition on tunneling under Wilshire Boulevard is unnecessary and could be used to convince Congress to lift the prohibition. The alignment of the Western Extension of the Red Line should be decided locally, not in Washington, to ensure that the region's interests are served. It is important to note that the construction of a subway under Wilton Place would also require a change in federal law and a new EIR.

The advantages of a Wilshire Boulevard alignment are self-evident. Wilshire Boulevard is the major east-west street in Los Angeles and is, in truth, a linear downtown, with both the commercial and residential densities to support a subway.

The CAC strongly urges you to support the study of a Wilshire Boulevard alignment for the Metro Rail Red Line Western Extension.

Very Truly Yours,  
LACMTA CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

The letter was adopted unanimously at the CAC's March 27, 1996 General Membership Meeting.

Enclosures



**LAW/CRANDALL, INC.**  
ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

March 26, 1996

Mr. James R. Young  
Trustee  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
5905 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California 90036

Re: Los Angeles Metro Rail -- Western Extension

Dear Mr. Young:

Following our recent discussions, I am pleased to submit my opinion regarding the feasibility of constructing a Metro Rail tunnel system along Wilshire Boulevard from Western Avenue to Fairfax Avenue. It is my understanding that this section along Wilshire Boulevard is being bypassed because of the "high risk" methane category assigned to this area as well as the presence of hydrogen sulfide gas in the area. Present alignment studies are considering a route from the Wilshire/Western station south to Pico/San Vicente. Recent studies of that alignment have disclosed the presence of excessive amounts of not only methane but of the more serious hydrogen sulfide gas.

In developing my opinion regarding the feasibility of the Wilshire Boulevard construction, I have reviewed the data obtained by consultants in studies performed for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. I have also relied on my over 50 years experience in performing foundation studies for almost all of the major buildings in the Los Angeles area, including those along the Wilshire Boulevard route. Based on this recent knowledge and past experience, I have no hesitation in stating that the Wilshire Boulevard alignment between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue is the best location for construction of a subway tunnel system and would encounter fewer difficult gas control conditions than would exist along the bypass route to Pico/San Vicente. Furthermore, this subway system would be buildable with standard tunneling techniques like those used to construct the tunnel from Union Station to the Wilshire/Western station. Attached is an illustration of the geology in this area and the appropriate location of a subway tunnel to take advantage of the favorable geological conditions.

It is my expert opinion that the most advantageous tunneling conditions would be in the firm siltstone materials defined as the Puente and the Fernando Formations. These deposits are at reasonable depth below the ground surface in this stretch of the Wilshire Boulevard alignment. By placing the tunnel at depths varying from 40 to 100 feet below the present surface, the construction will be entirely within the siltstone formations from Western Avenue to Fairfax Avenue. It is my opinion that the Puente and Fernando Formations provide almost ideal tunneling conditions. While possessing adequate firmness, these materials can be readily excavated with conventional tunneling equipment. They are also relatively impermeable, so that the presence of water and gas will represent only a nominal problem. Significant fluid flows will only occur in the event a more porous layer is encountered or when significant fractures exist in the formation material. The test data reviewed by me, and my experience in constructing deep excavations in this area, are indicative of only minimal potential problems with either methane or hydrogen sulfide.

The tunneling problems encountered on the Hollywood extension would not be present along the Wilshire Boulevard alignment. No alluvial material, which was the cause of the subsidence and sink-hole problems in Hollywood, would be present if the tunneling occurs in the Puente and Fernando Formations. These are the same formations in which tunneling was successfully done from Union Station to Western Avenue. No subsidence or other significant problems were encountered in the construction of the Wilshire Boulevard tunnel. Minimal subsidence occurred near the Wilshire/Western station but this was unrelated to tunneling. Stations at La Brea Avenue and at Fairfax Avenue could be reached safely through ventilated vertical shafts connecting the tunnel to the station.

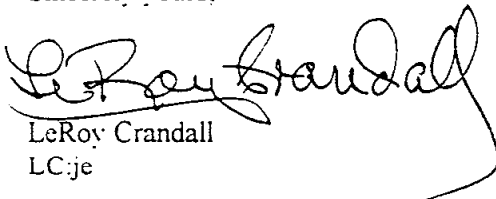
While I believe the optimum placement of the tunnel would be within the siltstone formation, it would be possible to construct a tunnel at a shallower depth. In that event, the tunneling would encounter the less desirable San Pedro and Lakewood Formations. These materials contain serious concentrations of gas, severe groundwater conditions, and the asphalt sands problem. If a shallower depth tunnel is considered more desirable, extensive safety measures would have to be undertaken, but it is technically possible to construct a tunnel safely in these less desirable formations. It is also technically possible to construct a cut-and-cover tunnel along Wilshire

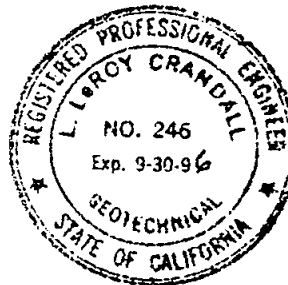
Boulevard within the less desirable alluvial materials. The employment of suitable design and construction techniques could assure a safe installation for these conditions.

In summary, it is clear that the Wilshire Boulevard alignment provides a superior tunneling location to the alternative routes now being considered. In fact, the hydrogen sulfide conditions are much more serious for the Pico/San Vicente route than for the Wilshire Boulevard route. The Pico/San Vicente alignment and its variations do not have the siltstone formations at depths as favorable as those along Wilshire Boulevard. Accordingly, from a purely technical standpoint, the Wilshire Boulevard alignment possesses much better tunneling and construction characteristics than the current alternative, and will be a much more economical installation. As discussed above, the tunnel can continue in the same siltstone material encountered from Union Station to Western Avenue which will result in the fewest construction problems and expense and be virtually free of methane and hydrogen sulfide gases.

It has been a pleasure discussing this important community project with you. I will be pleased to answer any questions or provide further information if desired.

Sincerely yours,

  
LeRoy Crandall  
LC:je



(attachment-  
Wilshire Boulevard Geologic Section)

