



**Metro**

# Daily Brief

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**CEO Roger Snoble**

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## **APTA Peer Review Tunneling Panel Briefing**

Mayor Villaraigosa announced at today's Board meeting that during an executive staff briefing this morning the APTA Peer Review Tunneling Panel's preliminary findings indicate that it is safe to build a subway along the Wilshire Corridor. The Los Angeles Times asked about the panel members' exit briefing. Rick Thorpe and I told the reporter that the panel felt it was safe to build and operate a subway system along the Wilshire Corridor due to the fact that tunneling technology has greatly improved over the last 20 years with better equipment and detection systems. The panel believes that by taking the right precautions, a subway can be constructed safely in the area. Copies of the panel's briefing were given to the LA Times, Daily News and LA Weekly. The Los Angeles Times story is expected to run tomorrow.

## **Eastside Residents Raise Concerns Over Human Remains Uncovered During Construction**

A handful of Eastside residents invited the media to the Metro Board meeting today where they claimed that construction of the Eastside light rail project disturbed human remains, including those of Native Americans. Media Relations staff responded to reporters from Channels 2/9, 5, and 34 plus the Daily News and L.A. Times and City News Service. Residents claimed Metro desecrated sacred burial grounds and then kept this a secret from the community. Staff told reporters none of this was true. Metro had no indication it would uncover human remains during construction of a retaining wall at First and Lorena last June.

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Crews uncovered partial and full skeletal human remains, dating back to 1897, and other artifacts apparently buried there from the old county crematorium. Following protocols, work stopped immediately and archeologists were brought in. Elected officials and the community Review Advisory Committee were notified. They were given construction alternatives and decided the best course would be to complete the work in that location rather than remove additional property or reduce First Street to a substandard one lane. The bones and other artifacts were excavated and are being examined at a lab and will be re-buried in the next several months in an appropriate ceremony with possibly a memorial erected as decided upon by the community. No Native American remains have been identified and scientists have not been able to identify the deceased.

### **Los Angeles City Council Transportation Committee Discusses Wilshire Bus Lane**

The Los Angeles City Council Transportation Committee on Wednesday discussed a Councilmember Bill Rosendahl and Wendy Greuel motion to suspend the Wilshire Bus Lane between Federal Avenue and Centinela Avenue until other jurisdictions have agreed to implement the project from Downtown Los Angeles to Downtown Santa Monica. Department of Transportation (LADOT) representatives verbally recommended that the bus lane be removed from the two blocks between Barrington Avenue and Federal Avenue. John Catoe said significant progress on bus lane expansion is occurring and removal of the lane, or parts of it, would be a step backward. Councilmember Rosendahl said real discussion is now occurring on the bus lane issue and he is looking for a solution after no movement for eighteen months. Councilwoman Greuel indicated that she had spoken to Supervisor Yaroslavsky about the matter earlier in the day and that the Supervisor had committed to convening a multi-agency task force to work on the matter. The committee continued the item for two weeks.

### **Los Angeles City Council Transportation Committee Receives Metro Orange Line Safety and Connectivity Reports**

The Los Angeles City Council Transportation Committee on Wednesday heard two Metro Orange Line items addressing safety and connectivity. LADOT and Metro staff spoke of the numerous safety features incorporated into the Metro Orange Line. The committee directed LADOT to report back every 30 days on any safety issues that may arise. LADOT staff also reported on transit connectivity with the Metro Orange Line and said they were prepared to make LADOT service changes quickly based on any impacts from the Metro Orange Line.

### **Goods Movement Action Plan Meetings to be held in Sacramento Next Week**

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The Secretary of Business Transportation and Housing and the Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency have announced a series of meetings in Sacramento next week to kickoff the second Phase of the Governor's Goods Movement Action Plan. These meetings are to begin the process of establishing priorities for the plan. In addition one meeting will be held in Los Angeles on Saturday October 29 from 1:00 to 4:00 at Caltrans District 7 Headquarters in downtown Los Angeles. Metro Government Relations staff and Metro's advocacy team in Sacramento will participate in these meetings.

### **Goods Movement Caucus Hails Victories Gained in SAFETEA-LU**

The Congressional Goods Movement Caucus, co-chaired by Reps. Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-Carson) and Dave Reichert (R-WA), held a press event in Washington today to highlight goods movement victories in SAFETEA-LU, the recently enacted surface transportation reauthorization bill. Noting that SAFETEA-LU provides a four-fold increase in funding for freight and goods movement (from \$1 billion in TEA-21 to \$4 billion in the new bill), Millender-McDonald called on a renewed effort to pursue public-private partnerships and creative financing as a means of leveraging private dollars and building on the favorable provisions incorporated in SAFETEA-LU. She also underscored the need to integrate technology in the overall effort to plan and construct freight projects. Other speakers at today's news event included Mark Pisano of SCAG, Leslie Blakey of the Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors, and Jeff Squires of Parsons Corp.

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