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| **Tuesday, September 15, 2009**  **20090915-1**  In this issue:   * **U.S. Senate Rejects Effort to Cut Transportation Earmarks in Senate Appropriations Bill For Fiscal Year 2010** * **City Council Ad Hoc River Committee Discusses High Speed Rail Alignment and Union Station Options** * **I-405 Sepulveda Pass Widening Project Update** |
| **U.S. Senate Rejects Effort to Cut Transportation Earmarks in Senate Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2010**  Today, the U.S. Senate soundly defeated an effort by Senator John McCain (R-AZ) to eliminate funding for a wide variety of transportation projects in the Transportation Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2010. Senator McCain’s amendments would have, in part, eliminated funding for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension ($9.5 million) and the Wilshire Bus Only Lane ($12.3 million).  Government Relations staff and our federal advocates worked with California Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA), along with Governor Schwarzenegger’s Washington, DC office to make sure Senator McCain’s amendments were defeated.  **City Council Ad Hoc River Committee Discusses High Speed Rail Alignment and Union Station Options**  Yesterday, the Los Angeles City Council Ad Hoc River Committee heard a California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) presentation on high speed rail routes through the City of Los Angeles. The committee also heard a City Planning report which recommended that CHSRA continue studying both the Union Station aerial station option and a second station alternative which is the Union Station East/Vignes option located east of Patsaouras Transit Plaza. The city planning report says this second option may require the acquisition of parts of the city-owned Piper Technical Facility and the Metro-owned Regional Rebuild Center.  The committee directed that city planning staff work with other city departments, LA County and us to explore the possibility of a Union Station East/Vignes option and requested a report back at the next committee meeting scheduled for Monday, October 19, 2009. We have scheduled the first meeting on this topic to take place here at Metro on September 22, 2009.  **I-405 Sepulveda Pass Widening Project Update**  As part of the I-405 Sepulveda Pass Widening Project pre-construction activities, the contractor is conducting geophysical soil testing, surface surveying and potholing of underground utilities in the streets and on the freeway. As a result, all local access will be maintained to businesses and residences throughout the duration of this work. In addition, pedestrians are being re-routed to a safe location outside the work activity area.  As the contractual lead, we are working closely with Caltrans on this design/build project to add a 10-mile northbound High Occupancy Vehicle lane on the San Diego Freeway (I-405) from the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10) to the Ventura Freeway (U.S. 101). The project includes realigning existing on-and off-ramps; removing, replacing and constructing a new bridge and ramps; building 18 miles of retaining and sound walls; and performing road improvements on adjacent city streets.  This project is a recipient of federal American Recovery & Reinvestment Act stimulus funds and will contribute to creating a significant number of jobs within the region. When completed, it will improve travel time through this heavily congested corridor, enhance safety, reduce air pollution and promote ridesharing. |
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