



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer
213.922.6888 Tel
213.922.7447 Fax
metro.net

November 29, 2010

Mr. Leslie Rogers
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration Region IX
201 Mission Street, Suite 1650
San Francisco, CA 94105-1839

Attention: Mr. Ray Tellis

Dear Mr. Rogers:

On November 17th, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) Planning and Programming Committee considered the staff recommendation to approve a locally preferred alternative and Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment for the Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit project funded under the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Very Small Starts program. The locally preferred alternative proposes a 8.7 mile peak period bus lane within the City of Los Angeles from Centinela Avenue at the Santa Monica city limit to Park View Street near downtown Los Angeles. This letter is to request approval to remove a one-mile segment from Selby Avenue to Comstock Avenue from the proposed locally preferred alternative.

The Committee expressed its overall support for the project, but directed staff to seek FTA approval to remove the Selby-Comstock segment from the locally preferred alternative. At this meeting, there was considerable community opposition to implementing the bus lane in the Selby to Comstock one-mile segment of Wilshire Boulevard, which is located between Westwood and the City of Beverly Hills. After hearing the concerns of the community, we believe that it is in the best interest of the project to remove this segment. This segment is fairly unique for the corridor in that it is primarily high-rise residential and is one of the faster moving segments of the project corridor. Even with the removal of this short segment, we still anticipate significant bus speed improvement benefits for the project as a whole. Additionally, we do not anticipate that this change would cause any auto or bus transition problems that would affect the continuity of the project.

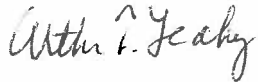
If this request is approved, we will ensure that the \$3 million per mile requirement of the Very Small Starts program and all other criteria are met. In order to remain within the \$3 million per mile requirement, we will reduce the project budget from \$31.5 million to \$27.0 million (escalated) with a corresponding reduction in the federal share from \$23.3 million to \$19.9 million (escalated), for a total project length of 7.7 miles. In addition to

removing the Selby-Comstock segment, we will reduce costs by restriping rather than reconstructing the segment from Comstock to the Beverly Hills city limit. We note that while Alternative A of the EIR/EA proposed reconstructing the Comstock-Beverly Hills segment, the original project application proposed restriping.

As this project is scheduled for Board action on December 9th, we would appreciate your response as soon as possible. We are confident that with these minor modifications, the project can move forward and be a successful nationwide model that demonstrates the benefit of bus rapid transit projects. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Please contact Brad McAllester, Executive Officer of Long Range Planning, at 213-922-2814 with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Arthur T. Leahy in cursive script.

Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer