



Metro

Daily Brief

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State Budget Update

The State Budget Conference Committee recently approved its recommendations relating to the Transportation Portion of the State Budget. They approved the recommendations relating to the Public Transportation Account (PTA) Spillover funds and Proposition 42 repayment. PTA Spillover funds have been an issue with transit agencies as the State has retained these funds to balance the State Budget deficit over the last few years. The Conference Committee approved an allocation of \$343 million to the PTA account with one significant modification. The Conference Committee recommendation is to allocate these funds in the following manner; 80% to transit agencies and 20% to the STIP. In the past, PTA funds were split evenly between direct allocations to transit agencies for operating purposes through the State Transit Assistance account and to the State Transportation Improvement Program. Funds allocated through the STA formula net more funds for Los Angeles County and are more flexible than funds allocated through the STIP. STIP funds are also precluded from being used for operational purposes. The committee also approved off the top allocations of \$20 million to a farm worker assistance program and \$13 million to the High Speed Rail authority.

Additionally, the Conference Committee approved a recommendation to repay \$660 million in outstanding Proposition 42 funds. The Administration had proposed to repay \$920 million to Proposition 42 and allocate the funds to the STIP and for street and road repair. This meant that no funds would be available for transit operations. The Legislature considered reducing that amount significantly and allocating the funds in accordance with existing law which would allocate funds to transit. The Conference Committee recommendation will allocate \$660 million to repay Proposition 42 and allocate funds across all Proposition 42 categories. This recommendation will allocate \$122 million to the

Public Transportation Account.

The entire state budget is expected to be considered in the Senate and Assembly on Thursday June 15 and, if approved, will be transmitted to the Governor for his consideration. Metro's advocacy team in Sacramento is working to support these recommendations through the legislative process.

710 Tunnel Feasibility Study Released

Today, Caltrans District 7 Director Doug Failing and I gave a media briefing on the newly released 710 Tunnel Feasibility Study to reporters from the Los Angeles Times, Pasadena Star News and South Pasadena Review. Eastern Group Publications, La Opinion and Channel 18 also inquired about the study. The Study concluded that it is feasible to build a 4.5 mile underground freeway tunnel connecting the 710 and 210 freeways closing a freeway gap that has existed for more than 40 years.

During the briefing, transit officials stressed that the community must first reach consensus and form a partnership before additional studies could be undertaken and various funding options pursued. The cost in 2006 dollars could range from \$2.3 billion to \$3.6 billion. The gap closure would ease congestion and greatly improve air quality in the region.

Media Relations also issued a news release today noting the tunnel study and announcing a public workshop meeting to be held on June 22 in Pasadena. http://www.metro.net/news_info/press/metro_097.htm#TopOfPage

Metro's Universal Fare Program

An editor with Inside ITS Newsletter, based in New York City, interviewed Metro's Jane Matsumoto, Universal Fare System/Transit Access Pass (TAP) Card Project Manager today to get an update on the Metro TAP Card Program. Metro staff explained that the smart card is begin pilot tested right now and that by this Fall, Metro may potentially begin the TAP program with Institutional, Business and Annual pass TAP patrons (I-TAP, B-TAP, and A-TAP). It was also explained that the new contract with ACS will provide customer service support for regional riders using the new Universal Fare System TAP Smart Card. The story will run in their July issue.

Free Yourself Campaign Pushes Record Ridership Gains

Even as gas prices drop from March highs, Metro's ridership continues to grow at record levels. May bus ridership soared more than 10 percent and Metro Rail ridership climbed nearly 18 percent over last year. The "Free Yourself" campaign has proven to be a motivating force. It began May 8th on outdoor and in newspaper advertisements and has resonated with those looking to step away

from the pump. The Los Angeles Times covered the campaign and its impact in a June 7th news feature. In addition to “Free Yourself”, APTA sponsored a national “Dump the Pump” day on June 8th.

http://www.metro.net/news_info/press/metro_096.htm#TopOfPage

Metro Rapid and Other Service Improvements Set For June 25

Media Relations distributed a news release this morning announcing various service modifications to take place effective Sunday, June 25. The news release notes that Metro will introduce a new Metro Rapid Line 734 on Sepulveda Boulevard deploy high capacity buses on six lines and add service to 13 Metro Bus Lines to enhance service for its patrons.

Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension Construction Update

For the next two months Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension construction crews will be working at the intersection of Ducommun and Alameda streets. Ducommun will be closed to all traffic in order to build a wall for the light rail extension. Work at the intersection will consist of relocating utilities and constructing an earth wall. Once work is completed they will then build a cul-de-sac in the area. Work will take place Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Media Relations has distributed a news release regarding the construction work and street closures in the area.

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