



Metro

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In this issue:

- [Homeland Security Chief Visits Union Station](#)
- [Senator Boxer Addresses Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Standard & Poor's Upgrades Metro Bond Rating to "AAA"](#)
- [Mobility 21 Comes to the Westside](#)
- [Metro Joint Development Projects](#)
- [Route 710 Tunnel Presentations](#)
- [Region-Wide CEO Meeting Recap](#)
- [Upcoming CEO Meetings and Events](#)

Homeland Security Chief Visits Union Station

Earlier today, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff, visited Union Station to observe a joint exercise involving Metro's Transit Services Bureau, Federal Air Marshals and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The joint exercise, entitled the Visible Intermodal Protection and Response (VIPR) operation, has taken place on the Metro Red Line over the past three days. It consisted of teams of Federal Air Marshals accompanying deputies from Metro's canine and Special Problems Unit (SPU) whose mission was to look for suspicious reactions to the patrol while traveling on the Red Line.

Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Commander Dan Finkelstein, Captain Pat Jordan, Captain Anthony La Berge, Lieutenant George Grein, Paul Lennon (Metro's Managing Director of Intelligence and Counterterrorism), Carolyn Flowers (Metro's Executive Officer of Operations) and I had an opportunity to meet with and brief Secretary Chertoff on the features of the Metrorail system and our security operations. We took him to the East Portal of Union Station as well as the station platform of the Metro Red Line. The 45-minute visit enabled us to educate the Secretary on the unique security needs of a major transit system. We also highlighted the cooperative and beneficial working partnership between Metro and TSA as a result of the successful implementation of the VIPR operation. Based on Secretary Chertoff's comments, it was clear that his visit to Metro and Union Station made a powerful impression and vividly illustrated the security challenges facing major transit properties. We also took the opportunity to press him and the Bush Administration to include greater levels of funding for transit and rail security in next year's federal budget.

Senator Boxer Addresses Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

This afternoon, U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer spoke to the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. In her address, she announced her new role as Chair of the Senate Goods Movement Caucus, which will merge with the House Goods Movement Caucus (co-chaired by Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald). Senator Boxer also recognized the Los Angeles Chamber for its persistence and leadership on goods movement issues. I spoke briefly afterwards and thanked the Senator for her support of Mobility 21 and indicated that we look forward to her address at the Coalition's Summit on October 30th.

Standard & Poor's Upgrades Metro Bond Rating to "AAA"

The bond-rating agency Standard & Poor's (S&P) has upgraded its rating on our Prop A sales tax bonds two notches to "AAA" - the highest possible rating. The agency has also upgraded its rating on our Prop C sales tax bonds two notches to "AA." In taking this action, S&P highlighted Los Angeles County's diverse and resilient economy which has resulted in a long history of stable sales tax revenues, favorable transit ridership and revenue collection trends. Additionally, S&P noted the strength and stability of Metro's management. These upgrades are anticipated to favorably impact the upcoming sales of Prop A and Prop C refunding bonds, scheduled to occur in September 2006.

Mobility 21 Comes to the Westside

The Mobility 21 Coalition will hold its next quarterly meeting on Tuesday, September 12th at the Kirk Douglas Theatre, in Culver City beginning at 8:30 a.m. The agenda will include an overview of the Expo Light Rail Transit project and an update of the Highway, Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality and Port Security Bond Act of 2006. All local elected officials have been invited to participate. Our community partners to date include: the Westside Economic Collaborative, the Westside Urban Forum, the Westside Cities Council of Governments, Friends 4 Expo Transit, and the Beverly Hills, Century City, Culver City, and West Hollywood Chambers of Commerce.

Metro Joint Development Projects

Both the *Daily News* and the *California Real Estate Journal* inquired this week about Metro's Joint Development Program. Staff reported that the agency currently has 24 joint development projects in various stages. The newest of these projects, 17+ acres of land at the intersection of the Metro Red and

Orange Lines in North Hollywood, will shortly release a Request For Proposals (RFP) for development. The RFP calls for mixed-use development on the Metro-owned property, including residential, office and retail space. Another of Metro's near-term joint development projects is for hotel and retail space at the intersection of Hollywood and Vine which is scheduled to break ground in November of this year. Additionally, ongoing construction on Metro-owned property at the Wilshire/Vermont Red Line Station is scheduled to be completed in early 2007. Metro pursues all such developments with the goal of helping to drive transit ridership, and reduce air pollution and traffic congestion within Los Angeles County. Stories are expected to run this weekend and next week.

Route 710 Tunnel Presentations

This week Metro consultants, Planning and Community Relations Staff made presentations on the findings of the Route 710 Tunnel Feasibility Study to the City Councils of Pasadena (Monday) and Glendale (Tuesday) which I attended. Since the draft report was completed in June, eleven presentations have been made to community meetings and city councils throughout the Los Angeles region.

Region-Wide CEO Meeting Recap

The Chief Executive Officers of the Southern California transportation agencies met today to discuss a number of issues. We had a brief discussion on the status of the Goods Movement Memorandum of Understanding, which will be considered by the Metro Board of Directors next week. The future expansion of Mobility 21 into a Southern California coalition with our partner agencies was also discussed. Metrolink shared with us a list of their future projects – some of which are possible candidates for the infrastructure bond. We also reviewed Metrolink's operating budget and all of our funding contributions for 2007. Lastly, the group approved the Interagency Agreement for Rideshare Services.

Upcoming CEO Meetings and Events

Next week, I will be meeting individually with Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Supervisors Mike Antonovich, Don Knabe, and Zev Yaroslavsky, and Directors John Fasana and Pam O' Connor. I will also attend the Women in Transportation Seminar's Reception acknowledging Carol Inge, Metro's Chief Planning Officer and the Transportation Business Advisory Council's 2006 Summer Business Mixer & Membership Drive.

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