



**Metro**

# Daily Brief

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### **First OCTA/Metro Coordinating Meeting Held**

Last Friday, September 15th, Metro hosted a first meeting to coordinate transportation issues of critical importance between the Counties of Los Angeles and Orange. With significant population growth and commuter shifts between the two counties as well as pending corridor and goods movement studies, this marked a historic and vitally important meeting. Those present for the event included Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, Director Bonnie Lowenthal, Caltrans District 7 Director Doug Failing, OCTA Board Chair Arthur Brown, Orange County Supervisor Bill Campbell, Caltrans District 12 Director Cindy Quon, OCTA CEO Art Leahy, I-5 Joint Powers Authority Executive Director Jerry Wood, Norwalk City Manager Ernie Garcia, Larry Nelson and Richard Powers, both with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments and myself. Representatives from the offices of Board Chair Gloria Molina and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa as well as staff from both Metro and OCTA were also in attendance. The group collectively evaluated the status of studies and actions on all projects of mutual interest and praised the establishment of this process agreeing that meetings should continue regularly in order to benefit regional coordination and support.

### **Metro Applies for Federal Small Starts Funding**

In March of this year, Metro requested approximately \$100 million in Federal Small Starts funding for the Metro Rapid Program and components of the North/South San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Project. Unfortunately, Congress did not appropriate funding for Small Starts in FY 07. In August 2006, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) instead issued Interim Guidance & Instructions for the Program which stipulated specific project eligibility criteria and planning requirements. These guidelines carried an application due date of September 15<sup>th</sup>. These Guidelines also delineated a new class of projects – Very Small Starts – defined as those that are very simple, low-cost, and

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demonstrably effective. Funding limits for both project categories (Small Starts and Very Small Starts) were set at \$250 million and \$50 million, respectively.

Metro staff responded to the FTA's request for applications by submitting three Very Small Starts applications last week with a combined total cost of \$69 million. All three applications built upon the highly successful Metro Rapid Program and all are designed to reduce passenger end-to-end trip times. One application for the "Metro Rapid Gap Closure Project" proposes to construct the final eight Metro Rapid lines and complete a network of near-seamless regional bus corridors. The other two, billed as the "Van Nuys" and "Sepulveda Corridor Bus Speed Improvement Projects" proposes to construct peak period and all-day bus lanes along specific segments of each corridor, improve several important interchanges, add queue jumpers, and enhance the existing bus signal priority system.

The FTA is expected to make Small Starts funding decisions in mid-October. Updated information will be provided as it is received.

### **Metro Gold Line Express Train Service Update**

Metro Rail Operations has recently completed work to shorten trip times on the Gold Line between the Union and Sierra Madre Villa Stations. Specifically, the agency has installed a modified train control system and designated the following stations as Express Stops:

<b>Northbound</b>	<b>Southbound</b>
Union Station	Sierra Madre Villa
Highland Park	Lake
Mission	Del Mar
Filmore	Mission
Del Mar	Highland Park
Memorial Park	Union Station
Sierra Madre Villa	

These modifications have resulted in a decrease in run time on Local Service from 34 minutes to 29 minutes and on Express Service from 29 minutes to 24 minutes. Over the next few months, Rail Operations staff will work to develop a new schedule which incorporates the run time improvements and add up to two trips per hour during peak periods. More information will be provided as these modifications are fully implemented.

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