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Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is surrounded by his appointees during a Wednesday morning news conference. From left, they are: former Assembly Speaker Richard Katz, Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks, attorney David Fleming and new Deputy Mayor for Transportation Jaime de la Vega.



Photos: Luis Inzunza

Mayor Names Parks, Katz and Fleming as Board Members

- Jaime de la Vega named mayor's transportation deputy
- In this report: Meet City Councilman [Bernard Parks](#), former Assembly Speaker [Richard Katz](#), Attorney [David Fleming](#) and new Deputy Mayor for Transportation [Jaime de la Vega](#).

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 6, 2005) In a morning news conference held in the East Portal, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announced his three appointments to the Board of Directors and named his transportation deputy.

The mayor appointed Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks, former Assembly Speaker Richard Katz and Attorney David Fleming to the city's three seats on the Board. He announced that Jaime de la Vega, a former Board member, will serve as deputy mayor for transportation.



Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa

Promising to "bring the same energy and commitment to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority that I'm bringing to the city as

mayor," Villaraigosa said, "I will work tirelessly to improve traffic and public transportation in the City of Los Angeles."

He outlined his priorities as "improving the bus system, laying the groundwork to expand our rail system, reducing congestion by breaking the bottleneck on projects and initiatives that make common sense for our commuters, identifying a way to substantially expand our public transportation system to both serve the transit dependent and to provide alternatives to driving."

'World-class' transportation system

"We have to have a vision for a world-class public transportation system," the mayor said in response to



Mayor Villaraigosa caught the Metro Gold Line at Southwest Museum station for his trip to Union Station where he announced his appointments. After the news conference, he boarded the Metro Red Line to the Civic Center station.



CEO Roger Snoble was on hand at Mayor Villaraigosa's news conference, Wednesday, to greet the new Board appointees.

"We're very excited about the new Board members coming in," he said. "The mayor has appointed members who are active, energetic, committed and have experience in dealing with transportation issues. These appointments show that the mayor has a strong commitment towards shaping the future of our transportation system."

"I also want to welcome back Jaime de la Vega, the new deputy mayor for transportation, whose past experience as a Board member will prove to be invaluable to this agency," Snoble added.

"We'll miss our departing Board members," he continued. "They served the agency well and were dedicated to improving transportation in the county. I'm confident we can count on their continued support as we move

a reporter's question. "We have to build a consensus around that vision, put a plan together and fund that plan. It won't be overnight, but it's going to be a lot faster than it's been in the past because we have no other options. We're already the 'gridlock capital' of the United States of America and there are very few alternatives."

"No one person can take on this challenge alone," said Villaraigosa in his prepared remarks. "You have to bring people together to get things done. You have to bring the best and the brightest to the table and confront the massive challenge."

The mayor noted that, collectively, his appointees have served the public for more than six decades.

Bernard Parks

Parks, who was elected in 2003 as the city councilman to represent the 8th district, served as a police officer for 38 years. He rose through the ranks to become Chief of Police in 1997.

Noting Parks' commitment to improving the city, Villaraigosa said, "I am confident Councilmember Parks will bring his same tenacity and leadership to the MTA Board."

Reacting to his appointment, Parks said,

forward.”

“I am especially interested in having a hand in the completion of the Expo Line, which makes the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum even more attractive as we move closer to returning NFL Football to Los Angeles.”

Acknowledging Villaraigosa’s vision for improving transit in Los Angeles, Parks said, “He will lay down a game plan that will be followed for the next several decades to make sure that we will have a city and a region that is going to be less dependent on vehicles and more on public transportation.”

Richard Katz

Katz was first elected to the Assembly in 1980 and served for 16 years. For 10 years, he chaired the powerful Assembly Transportation Committee and, in 1990, authored Proposition 111, a 10-year Transportation Blueprint to raise money for mass transit and highways.

Katz was instrumental in drafting legislation that created the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority through a merger of the SCRTD and LACTC in 1993. He also created the Congestion Management Plan, which requires cities and counties to measure and mitigate impacts of land use decisions on their streets, highways and transit systems.

In making the appointment, Villaraigosa described Katz as “a visionary and leader in transportation.”

In response, Katz said the mayor’s vision is one of “movement for Los Angeles; it’s a vision that understands the importance of rail transit and highways and the fact that there’s no single solution....”

David Fleming

An attorney for 43 years, Fleming has been of counsel to Latham & Watkins since 1992. From 1996 to 1999, he served as a member and vice chairman of the California Transportation commission (CTC) as an appointee of Gov. Pete Wilson. He also served as president of the Los Angeles Board of Fire Commissioners from 1993 to 2001.

Fleming, who served as an advisor to Mayor Richard Riordan, is chairman of the Board of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, which is composed of many prominent companies throughout the county.

The mayor said Fleming’s “experience with the CTC and the state will help the MTA secure the funding it needs to expand and improve our transportation system.”

Fleming said that, in naming him to the Board, Villaraigosa told him to think outside the box. “That’s what we have to do at MTA. Nothing should be left off the table. Our gridlock problem is too big and it’s growing every day, so now’s the time for action.”

Jaime de la Vega

Jaime de la Vega served as budget director to City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo from 2002 to 2005, overseeing a \$93 million annual budget for the 1,000-person office.

He previously served as an assistant deputy mayor and senior policy advisor to Mayor Riordan from 1995 to 2001, and as a member of Metro's Board of Directors.

Villaraigosa said de la Vega will be "the lead in helping me put together the effort to reduce traffic, to do the smart things we can do to address the issue of congestion in our region and, also, to help direct our efforts (on) the MTA Board."

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