



NEWS

April 26, 2001

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PLAN PROVIDES 25-YEAR BLUEPRINT FOR TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT

MTA BOARD APPROVES 2001 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The MTA Board of Directors today approved the MTA's 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan for Los Angeles County with the provision that amendments to the plan could be introduced at the next regular Board meeting on May 24, 2001. The plan will guide transportation development in the county through the year 2025, a period in which the county is expected to experience unprecedented growth.

The population of Los Angeles County is projected to grow by almost three million people to nearly 13 million people in the next 25 years. The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) examines the impacts this growth will have on the mobility of the county, which includes increasing demand on streets, highways, buses and trains, and it recommends what could be done to address those impacts within anticipated revenues ("recommended plan"), as well as what could be done if additional revenues become available ("strategic plan").

The recommended plan provides a balanced transportation program with a strong emphasis on public transit to meet the expected growth in travel. Components of the recommended plan's transportation program include:

- completion of the Eastside and Pasadena light rail projects
- two busways for the San Fernando Valley
- a fixed guideway project, bus or light rail, from downtown to West Los Angeles

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- 22-line expansion of the successful Metro Rapid Bus program
- freeway widenings, extensions and gap closures
- freeway interchange improvements
- expansion of the HOV (carpool) lane network
- construction of additional soundwalls
- expansion of the Metrolink commuter rail system
- completion of a countywide traffic signal coordination system

The Long Range Transportation Plan also encourages more ridesharing, walking and bike riding, telecommuting and improved management of truck traffic.

The LRTP's recommended plan is built on what the MTA believes are realistic financial projections of revenues from federal, state and local taxes and subsidies, as well as revenues from passenger fares, advertising, real estate rentals and other miscellaneous sources. Because most funding decisions are made years ahead, the MTA estimates that \$106.4 billion will be available for local transportation projects through 2025.

Since \$95.2 billion of this sum already is committed, only \$11.2 billion in uncommitted funding will be available for new transportation projects through 2025, most of that after 2010.

The Long Range Transportation Plan also spells out a strategic plan, which includes other transportation projects and services the MTA believes are of regional importance, but which would require new sources of revenue to complete. In fact, there is a projected shortfall of more than \$20 billion between the \$106.4 billion available under current funding scenarios and what is needed to address additional impacts that population growth will have on the transportation system.

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Transportation projects and services identified in the LRTP's strategic plan include:

- an additional 14 Metro Rapid Bus lines
- extensions and/or upgrades to transit corridor projects in the constrained plan
- extension of the Pasadena Blue Line from Sierra Madre Villa (Pasadena) to Claremont
- completion of countywide system of HOV (carpool) lanes
- additional freeway gap closures
- additional community transit services (i.e., shuttles, local circulators)
- additional Metrolink expansion

MTA Board approval of the Long Range Transportation Plan means the plan will now be submitted to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the designated planning organization for a six-county region, for inclusion in SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The RTP demonstrates how Los Angeles, Orange Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino and Imperial counties will meet federal mandates, particularly air quality requirements. Only projects and programs included in the RTP are eligible for federal funding.

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