

METRO WESTSIDE/CENTRAL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

April 1, 2004

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES TO MTA
WESTSIDE/CENTRAL SECTOR SERVICES**

**ACTION: APPROVE FINDINGS OF PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPT
REVISED SERVICE CHANGE PROGRAM**

RECOMMENDATION

- A. Approve the findings of the Public Hearing conducted on Tuesday, March 9, 2004 shown in Attachment A concerning Metro Westside/Central Sector's June 2004 Service Change Program.
- B. Adopt the Revised June 2004 Service Change Program as outlined in this report.

ISSUE

On March 9, 2004 the Westside/Central Service Sector conducted a public hearing to consider public input before coming to the Governance Council with final recommendations for significant changes to the bus system. After carefully considering public input, the revised June 2004 Service Change Program proposes to re-route service to improve operational safety, improve service in the Wilshire/Whittier Rapid Bus Corridor, and reduce duplication in the service area.

OPTIONS

The options to the staff recommendations are to either 1) adopt the Revised June Service Change Program; or 2) modify and adopt any subset of the proposals.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Revised Service Change Program

Considering customer feedback during the public hearing process, staff is recommending a program that yields an increase of approximately 9500 revenue bus hours annually. On a fully allocated cost basis this represents a cost increase of approximately \$975,000 annually.

BACKGROUND

The revised June 2004 Service Change Program includes routing modifications to improve operational safety, improve travel speeds or eliminate duplication of service. The program is consistent with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (LACMTA) Long Range Transportation Plan, and the Metro Connections project tentatively scheduled for implementation in December 2005.

Public Outreach Process

On February 5, 2004 the Metro Westside/Central Sector Governance Council approved a Notice of Public Hearing detailing proposed modifications to sector bus lines. The legal hearing notice was published in area newspapers the dates of which are on file with the MTA Board Secretary's Office. Meetings were held with Municipal Transit Operators and other groups.

Prior to the public hearing, "Take-One" brochures with information about the hearing and community meetings were made available on Metro buses. Notice of the hearing and community meetings was electronically sent out to a sector community database of over 200 maintained by Community Relations. MTA Media Relations issued a press release on the hearing and community meetings. A paid advertisement regarding the hearing was run in the Los Angeles Times. "Metro Briefs", paid advertising purchased in neighborhood newspapers contained general information about "having a voice in service planning" in the Westside/Central area. A message on the sector community meeting phone line contained information about the hearings and the meetings.

Two community meetings were held at the Unity Center in the Vermont corridor of Los Angeles and at the Westwood United Methodist Church in Westwood to gather additional input on the proposed changes. The public hearing followed on March 9, 2004, at the La Cienega Tennis Center in Beverly Hills.

Results of the Public Hearing

Approximately 15 people attended the public hearing. Ten people provided testimony by the close of the public record on Tuesday, March 9, 2004. Seven individuals gave oral testimony and five respondents provided written comments. Five individuals provided e-mail comments after the close of the public record.

Summary of Public Comment

Of the service change proposals under review, most of the public comment addressed the elimination of duplicate services to Santa Monica and to UCLA. Other input received described concern over the need to make transfers, and increased costs to purchase fares and transfers for service provided by another operator.

Attachment A summarizes the public comment and includes staff's response.

SUMMARY OF REVISION TO SERVICE CHANGE PROPOSALS

Considering public input and review of the proposals presented at the public hearing, staff recommends proposals be modified as described below.

- Routes 10/11/48 - (Melrose – Virgil Aves – Temple St. - Maple Ave.)
Staff recommends the re-route of service from Maple Ave. to Main St. between Adams Blvd. and 8th St. The re-route will increase travel speeds along this segment and improve operational safety. Alternative service on Maple Avenue between 8th and Pico Boulevard is available on DASH E. The original proposal to reduce frequency of service from 6 to 10 minutes is no longer recommended. Staff's final analysis of passenger loads determined load standards would be exceeded.
- Route 20 – (Wilshire – Santa Monica Blvd.)
Staff recommends shortening of service from Main St. and Pico Blvd. in Santa Monica to Veteran Ave. and Wilshire Blvd. in Westwood with retention and expansion of late night/owl service. Alternative service is available on Santa Monica Line 2 and MTA Line 720. Resources from the deleted segment will be re-allocated to Line 720.
- Route 21 – (Wilshire Blvd. – U.C.L.A.)
Eliminate service on Westwood Blvd. between Wilshire Blvd. and Strathmore Ave. (Ackerman Bus Terminal) at UCLA. Alternative service is available on Culver City Line 6, Santa Monica Super 12, and the UCLA Campus Shuttle. Resources from the deleted segment will be re-allocated to Line 720.
- Route 720 - (Wilshire – Whittier Blvd. Rapid Bus)
Staff recommends extension of trips currently terminating at Wilshire and Westwood Blvd. to 5th St. and Colorado Ave. in Santa Monica so that all Wilshire Rapid buses go to Santa Monica. Staff is also working on establishing additional stops between Westwood and Santa Monica. This proposal will increase operating speeds in this segment and reduce overcrowding during peak hours and summer months.
Staff's recommendation is contingent on the adoption of Route 20 and Route 21 recommendations.

NEXT STEPS

With approval from the Sector Governance Council, staff will implement all changes effective June 27, 2004 or later.

Attachment A: Summary of Public Comments

Attachment B: Maps of Service Proposals

Attachment C: Public Hearing Notice

Prepared by: Ha Chau, Transportation Planning Manager-Metro Westside/Central Sector

Rogelio Gandara
Service Development Manager – Metro Westside/Central Sector