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ITEM #4
METRO WESTSIDE/CENTRAL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL
August 5, 2004

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

ACTION: ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LINES 20, 21, AND 720

RECOMMENDATION

Make no changes to Lines 20, 21, and 720 at this time.

ISSUE

On April 1, 2004 the Westside/Central Service Sector Governance Council met to:

- a) Approve the findings of the Public Hearing conducted on Tuesday, March 9, 2004, and
- b) Adopt the revised June 2004 Service Change Program.

The Council approved the changes to Routes 10, 11, and 48 provided they did not cause a significant negative impact for police, fire and public works. Staff had also proposed shortening Line 20 in Westwood, eliminating Line 21 and extending all Line 720 trips at Westwood to Santa Monica and adding additional Metro Rapid stops. The council deferred action on these proposals and requested staff bring back detailed information.

The deferral of action on Lines 20, 21, and 720 meant the earliest these changes could be implemented is December 2004. In discussions with staff, the Council requested that the decision on these lines be deferred beyond the May 6, 2004 meeting and that the additional time afforded by delayed implementation be used to further study the issue.

On May 6 and May 27, 2004 staff returned to the Council and provided the information requested. This information included stop additions, boarding and alighting numbers, route history, and frequencies associated with the proposals. Staff was to return to the Council on August 5 with final recommendations.

BACKGROUND

In February 2004, sector staff presented preliminary route recommendations for the June 2004 service change to the Governance Council. At that time, the Sector's positive financial performance during Fiscal Year 2004 indicated that additional service could be absorbed by the sector provided that trend continued. During this same period MTA was preparing its Fiscal Year 2005 budget, and under the Consent Decree, a ruling by the

Special Master required MTA to add a total of 290,000 annual in-service hours and 145 additional buses by December 2004. As work on the budget progressed, staff continued to work on the June 2004 Service Change Program, part of which the Council approved and part of which it deferred. Lines 20, 21, and 720 comprised the deferred portion, and if implemented, would have accounted for an annual increase of approximately 9,500 revenue service hours at an approximate annual cost of \$975,000.

As the budget was finalized, it became apparent that with the exception of Consent Decree hour additions, the MTA bus system would remain revenue service hour neutral. As well, the Sectors were called upon to further reduce costs in Fiscal Year 2005.

Thus, the best the Sector could achieve would be to deploy additional Line 720 service in an amount equal to the service hours saved by shortening Line 20 and eliminating Line 21. This would result in a net loss in MTA ridership, as the previously projected ridership gain was in part due to the proposed deployment of an additional 9,500 revenue service hours.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff proposes to make no changes to Lines 20, 21, and 720 at this time. It is recommended that Line 20 continue to provide local service beyond Westwood to Santa Monica, Line 21 continue to serve UCLA, and no additional stops be added nor additional trips be extended from Westwood to Santa Monica on Line 720.

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