



Metro

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

January 16, 2008

SUBJECT: INCREASE IN THE METRO RAPID FIVE-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN INFRASTRUCTURE BUDGET

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

Increase the Metro Rapid Five-Year Implementation Plan budget in the amount of \$16.3 million to cover cost increases, increasing the project budget from \$112.2 million to \$128.5 million.

ISSUE

In September 2002, the Board approved \$112.2 million to construct and implement the Metro Rapid Five-Year Implementation Plan. Approximately \$64.8 million was set-aside to construct the bus signal priority system, and \$47.4 million to construct Metro Rapid stations throughout Los Angeles County. Since then, equipment and construction costs have out-paced the escalation rates used to develop the original bus signal priority and station construction budgets. In addition, cities outside of the City of Los Angeles have proven to cost slightly more per mile to construct bus signal priority than was assumed in the Five-Year Plan due to a lack adequate infrastructure to support bus signal priority technology. As a result, the bus signal priority construction budget is projected to increase by \$4.1 million, from \$64.8 million to \$68.9 million, and the station construction budget is projected to increase by \$12.2 million, from \$47.4 million to \$59.6 million.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended action is consistent with and supports completion of the Board adopted 28-corridor Metro Rapid network.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Bus Signal Priority Cost Increase – The Board could request staff to either reduce the amount of bus signal priority constructed on the final six Metro Rapid corridors where construction contracts are pending, or not construct bus signal priority on one or two of these same corridors. Staff is not recommending either of these alternatives as both will increase average bus speeds, resulting in added passenger

delay. Bus speed improvement goals may no longer be met. Because bus signal priority accounts for approximately 1/3 of a corridor's total speed improvement, operating costs are likely to increase along the affected corridor.

Station Construction Cost Increase – The Board could direct staff to either reduce the number of stations constructed, or redesign the stations to reduce the cost per station. Staff is not recommending either of these alternatives since the stations, as designed, are considered an integral part of the Metro Rapid Program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The funds for this project increase will be included in the FY 09 budget. Since this is a multi year project, the Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budgeting the required funding in future year budgets. The source of funds for the cost increase will be CMAQ funds that were originally intended for the Gap Closure portion of the Metro Rapid Program: the Metro Rapid System Gap Closure Project. Recently, the FTA approved a Very Small Starts Grant for the Gap Closure Project making the CMAQ funds available for the Metro Rapid cost increase.

DISCUSSION

Metro has reached the final phase of implementation the Metro Rapid Program and now operates 19 of the 28 corridors scheduled for implementation (Exhibit 1). The program's success has garnered national attention. Passenger travel times have been reduced by an average of 24%, with nearly 300 buses in service today operating over 250 corridor miles. Demand for Metro Rapid service has increased significantly, with ridership up by as much as 40% in some corridors. Approximately 1/3 of this ridership increase has been generated by patrons who previously used the automobile. When complete, the system will consist of 28 corridors operating nearly 500 buses along 360 miles throughout the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, and 31 other cities.

Bus Signal Priority Construction Cost Increase

Nearly 275 miles of bus signal priority has been funded to-date throughout the Cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, West Hollywood, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, Bell, Bell Gardens, Compton, Huntington Park, Inglewood, Lawndale, Long Beach, Lynwood, South Gate, and Los Angeles County. An additional 55 miles of bus signal priority is planned for construction in the Cities of Los Angeles, Culver City, Glendale, Pasadena, Alhambra, Bell, Carson, Commerce, Cudahy, Inglewood, Long Beach, Maywood, Monterey Park, Rosemead, South Pasadena, Torrance, Vernon, and Los Angeles County. The cost of the planned construction is estimated at \$14.1 million. In total, committed bus signal priority construction projects (\$54.8 million) and planned bus signal priority projects (\$14.1 million) are projected to exceed the Board-approved budget (\$64.8 million) by \$4.1 million.

While a majority of the corridors implemented during the first three years of the program were constructed entirely within the City of Los Angeles, recent corridor alignments have passed through three or more cities and have required the cooperation of those cities in order to realize the program's 20% bus speed improvement goal. Many cities outside the City of Los Angeles, however, have not had adequate infrastructure to support bus signal priority technology and, thus, the unit cost of construction in those cities has been higher than anticipated. Examples include the Cities of Beverly Hills, Pasadena, West Hollywood, and Santa Monica. To help mitigate unanticipated construction cost increases, a number of cost reduction strategies were put in place at the inception of the program, including rejection of all construction bids greater than 25% above the budget estimate, elimination of bus signal priority along corridor segments where average traffic speeds were deemed consistently higher than average, and elimination of bus signal priority in those cities that could not maintain or support the technology. To-date, the City of Vernon is the only city which has stated that it cannot support bus signal priority technology. Corridor segments found to have higher than average traffic speeds include the segment of the San Fernando South Metro Rapid that traverses the City of Burbank, the segment of the Western Metro Rapid that traverses the City of Inglewood, segments of the Sepulveda South and Western Metro Rapids that traverse the County of Los Angeles, and the segment of the San Fernando-Lankershim Metro Rapid that traverses the City of San Fernando.

Staff's recommendation to increase the bus signal priority construction budget by \$4.1 million is a result of the combined effect of higher unit costs of construction coupled with increases in construction costs outpacing escalation rates.

Station Construction Cost Increase

Only 56 of the 779 Metro Rapid stations approved by the Board in September 2002 have been constructed. A cooperative agreement between Metro and the City of Los Angeles to fabricate, install, and maintain up to 503 Metro Rapid stations, at a total cost of \$28.3 million, has been stalled since 2002 due primarily to complications between the City and the County Tax Assessors office. A cooperative agreement between Metro and Los Angeles County to fabricate, install, and maintain up to 62 Metro Rapid stations, at a total cost of \$5.5 million, is nearing completion. These significant delays in the station construction schedule, in conjunction with requests to construct 73 additional stations beyond the Board-approved 779, as well as 27 stations along the Wilshire corridor which were left unfunded as part of the Metro Rapid Demonstration Program, have resulted in a revised station construction cost estimate that exceeds the Board-approved budget by an estimated \$30.8 million.

To help mitigate a portion of the increase in station construction costs, staff identified the following cost reduction strategies that take into account shortened corridor alignments, "shared" bus stops, "alighting-only" bus stops, and bus stops added through January 2008. As a result, the \$30.8 million cost increase has been reduced to \$12.2 million.

- *Eliminate 49 stations due to shortened corridor alignments* – Minor changes in Metro Rapid corridor alignments have taken place over the life of the Metro Rapid Program, resulting in 49 fewer bus stops (and stations) than approved by the Board in the Metro Rapid Five-Year Implementation Plan. Elimination of 49 stations equates to a savings of approximately \$4.4 million.
- *Eliminate 19 “shared” stations* – As the final ten corridors of the Metro Rapid network are implemented, and gaps between corridors are eliminated, bus stops (and stations) along specific segments of corridors are shared to facilitate quick and easy transfers of patrons between Metro Rapid lines. Elimination of 19 shared stations equates to a savings of approximately \$1.7 million.
- *Eliminate 68 “alighting-only” stations* – The primary purpose of Metro Rapid stations is to provide safe and secure passenger waiting areas, passenger information, and system identity. In some cases, however, stations are not required at the last stop on the line where patrons alight only. Elimination of 68 alighting-only stations equates to a savings of approximately \$6.0 million.
- *Eliminate 73 “added” stations* – Over the life of the Metro Rapid Program, 73 bus stops have been added for various reasons. Funds to construct stations at these bus stops, however, were never approved. Elimination of 73 added stations equates to a savings of approximately \$6.5 million.

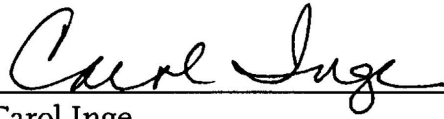
NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval to increase the Metro Rapid Five-Year Implementation Plan budget from \$112.2 million to \$128.5 million, staff will complete negotiations and execute agreements to complete construction of the Metro Rapid stations and bus signal priority system.

ATTACHMENT

Los Angeles County Metro Rapid Network Map

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 Coordination

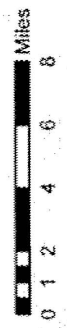
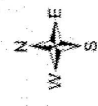
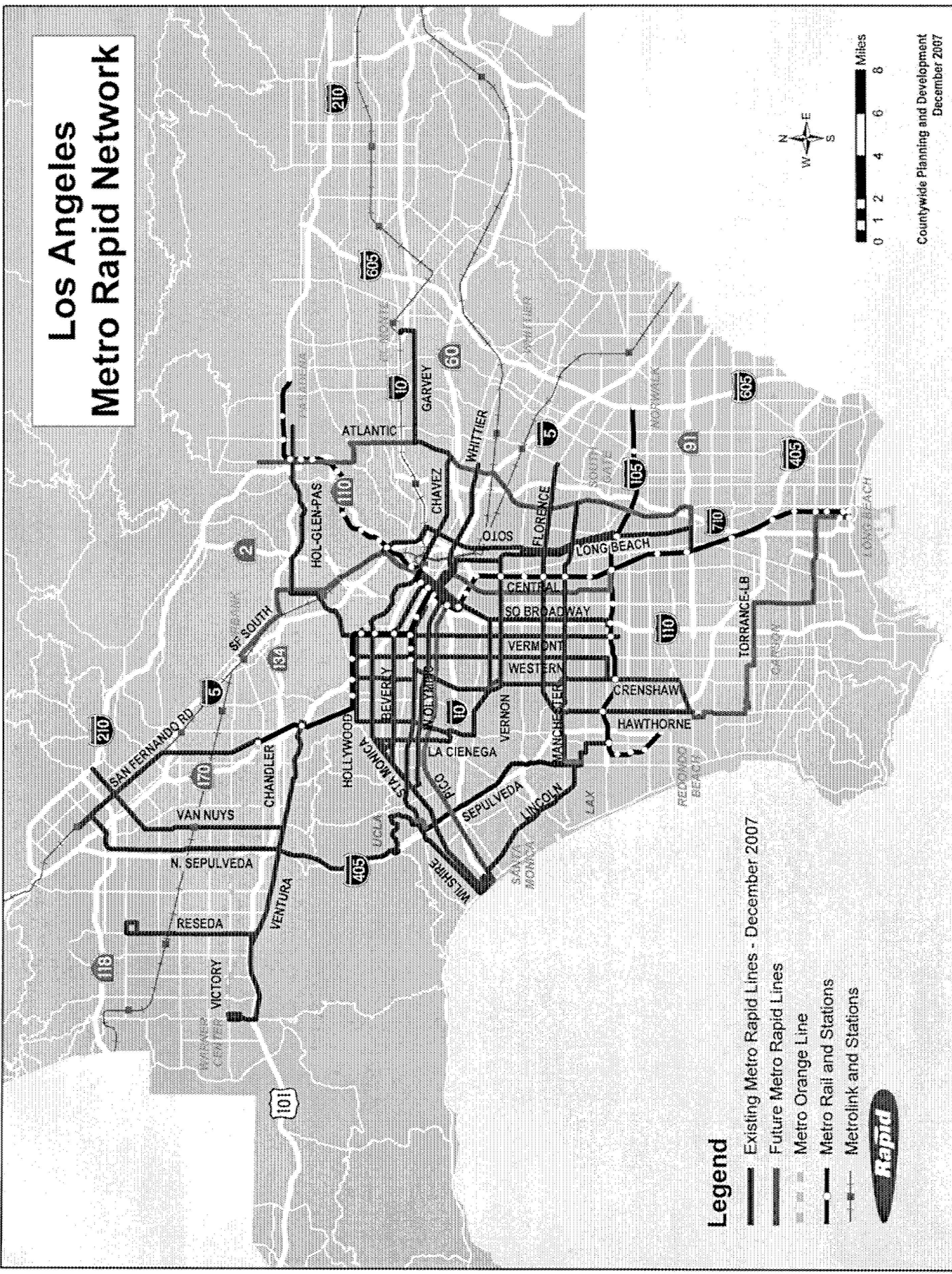


Carol Inge
Chief Planning Officer
Countywide Planning and Development



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Los Angeles Metro Rapid Network



Legend

- Existing Metro Rapid Lines - December 2007
- Future Metro Rapid Lines
- Metro Orange Line
- Metro Rail and Stations
- Metrolink and Stations

