



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer
213.922.6888 Tel
213.922.7447 Fax
metro.net

Metro

January 20, 2010

Hon. Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), I would like to invite you to hold a public listening session at our agency regarding the planned changes you have announced with respect to the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts and Small Starts programs.

Our agency is eager to work with you and your colleagues at the U.S. Department of Transportation in implementing new rules that strengthen the New Starts and Small Starts program. More broadly, we also look forward to working with you to ensure that the livability and sustainability goals supported by the Obama Administration are advanced in a manner that enhances America's commitment to transit projects, here in Los Angeles County and across the United States.

For Los Angeles County, the New and Small Starts programs have been essential in building worthwhile, environmentally-friendly and cost-effective transit projects. From our subway, with over 135,000 boardings a day, to the Eastside Light Rail Line that opened late last year, this federal program has effectively partnered with our agency to lay the groundwork for a world-class transit system. We look forward to supporting efforts that will make the New Starts and Small Starts even more effective. Having said this, we are mindful that any effort to reform this federal program must be matched with a robust level of funding if the Administration's livability and sustainability goals are to be fully realized.

We thank you in advance for considering Metro as a potential site for a public listening session related to your planned changes for the New Starts and Small Starts programs. Please feel free to have your staff contact our Government Relations Department at 213.922.7175 to discuss the many benefits of our agency hosting a listening session.

Sincerely,

Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer