



Metro

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CEO Roger Snoble



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Mercury Spill at Metro's Pershing Square Rail Station Probed

LASD Commander Dan Finkelstein, Acting Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers and I were interviewed this morning by *Los Angeles Times* and City News Service reporters regarding a suspicious incident that occurred at the Pershing Square Metro Rail Station on the evening of Friday, December 22nd.

The Los Angeles Joint Terrorism Task Force is seeking a man who spilled a small vial of mercury on the station platform. Commander Finkelstein said there's no evidence to suggest the incident was terrorism-related or even criminal in nature but the Task Force wants to question the man about why he was carrying mercury and why he spilled it. At this point in the investigation, the Task Force has asked for the public's help in tracking down the suspect. A "[Wanted for Questioning](#)" poster showing a surveillance camera photo of the young man has been posted in Metro's Pershing Square Station.

Numerous other reporters also interviewed Commander Finkelstein today. CNN has aired reports since last night. *The Times* questioned Metro staff about several issues including: the lapse in time between when the suspect used the station emergency phone to report the mercury spill and the arrival of the Hazardous Materials cleanup team the following morning; the fact that the station remained open until cleanup commenced; who reviewed the incident on our surveillance cameras; and why action wasn't taken.

All issues are being investigated. Commander Finkelstein has viewed the

surveillance tape and maintains that the suspect appeared to be surprised when the vial spilled and looked around for a station emergency phone to report the spill. Therefore, it did not appear that he had planned this activity. Commander Finkelstein also noted that mercury is used in cleaning jewelry and that the Pershing Square station serves the Jewelry District. Nevertheless, the entire incident is being reviewed.

Metro Submits \$1.77 Billion Corridor Mobility Improvement Program Proposal to the California Transportation Commission

On Tuesday of this week the California Transportation Commission (CTC) received five copies of Los Angeles County's \$1.77 Billion application for Corridor Mobility Improvement Account funds. California voters authorized the Corridor Mobility Improvement Program on the November 8, 2006 ballot as part of Proposition 1B, which provides bond funding for congestion relief on the state highway system. On November 9, 2006, the CTC adopted an aggressive schedule for conducting a Statewide Corridor Mobility Improvement Program (SCMIP) competition. The \$4.5 billion SCMIP is subject to the North/South split, in which 60% of the \$2.7 billion statewide total must be programmed for use in the 13 Southern California counties.

The Board adopted the \$1.77 billion in proposed SCMIP projects for Los Angeles County at the December 7, 2006 meeting. Countywide Planning and Development has been working on the applications jointly with Caltrans District 7. Within a very compressed six-week application timeframe, including the holidays, Countywide Planning and District 7 have produced an impressive 86-page proposal that summarizes the merits of the following program of projects:

Project Description	Estimated Total Project Cost (escalated & in millions)	Non-Corridor Mobility Funds Programmed to Date (in millions)	Corridor Mobility Program Proposal (in millions)
Interstate 5 Carpool and Mixed Flow Lanes from Interstate 605 to Orange County Line	\$1,413	\$1,026	\$387
Interstate 5 Carpool Lane from Route 170 to Route 134	606	533	73
I-405 Carpool Lane I-10 to US-101 (Northbound)	950	220	730
Interstate 10 Extend El Monte Busway/Carpool Lane to SR-57	365	9	356

Interstate 10/605 Transition (I-605 South to I-10 East)	71	-	71
Route 138 Avenue "T" to Route 18 Various Loc. Widening	145	34	111
Intelligent Transportation Systems	40	0	40
Total	\$3,590	\$1,822	\$1,768

Yesterday, Caltrans Headquarters in Sacramento released its [final \\$6.4 billion advisory shortlist](#) for the \$4.5 billion SCMIP. The I-5 Carpool Lane from SR-170 to SR-134 project, the I-10/I-605 Transition project, and a large portion of the SR-138 project still may compete independently for the \$2.7 billion in overall Southern California funding, even though Caltrans Headquarters did not include them on their advisory shortlist.

CTC staff has indicated that their recommendation for the SCMIP will be available on or about February 20th. The CTC is then scheduled to adopt at least an initial program of projects at their February 28th special meeting in Orange County.

U.S. Senate Banking Committee Hold Transit Security Hearing

The Senate Banking Committee held a hearing in Washington, D.C. today to consider a number of issues related to transit security. The hearing, which was a prelude to the introduction of legislation addressing transit security funding in the 110th Congress, was led by the committee's Chairman, Senator Christopher Dodd, (D-CT) and Ranking Member, Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL). Among those testifying at the hearing were the President of APTA, William Millar, and the Managing Director of the London Underground, Tim O'Toole. Chairman Dodd's questions at the hearing focused on the failure of the federal government to provide adequate funding to train employees charged with responding to an attack on a mass transit property. Ranking Member Shelby asked a number of witnesses whether transit security should be provided a dedicated source of funding by the federal government. Committee member Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) also commented on a recent incident on our rail system where an individual was videotaped pouring mercury on the ground of the Pershing Square Rail Station.

Santa Monica Boulevard Transitway Dedication Event

Master of Ceremonies (and Metro Board Member) Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa welcomed local leaders and approximately 175 people outside the Westfield Century City Mall on Santa Monica Boulevard this morning to celebrate the completion of the Santa Monica Boulevard Transit Parkway project -- a 2.5

mile improvement between the 405 freeway (at Beloit Avenue) and the Beverly Hills/Los Angeles border. Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, City Council President Eric Garcetti, Councilmembers Jack Weiss and Wendy Gruel also attended the event accompanied by officials from Caltrans, the City of Los Angeles, Metro staff and local residents. According to Mayor Villaraigosa, the project will help improve traffic flow and vehicle mobility, improve local access, and reduce travel time. Metro contributed approximately \$57.7 million through a variety of federal, state and local funds towards the \$95 million project which also included signalized and energy-efficient traffic signals, more than 350 new street lights, a bike lane, a bus-only lane and 1,000 new trees. The contributions by former Los Angeles County Supervisor Ed Edelman who “dreamed” of the project were noted by many speakers.

Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension Project

Earlier today, a reporter from *La Opinión* visited the underground segment of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension for a story on the progress of the construction project. Construction staff stated that once completed, this project will vastly improve the transportation options available for this densely populated corridor. A story is expected to run in tomorrow’s edition.

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