



In this issue:

- [Access Washington, D.C. Advocacy Effort on Capitol Hill](#)
- [Westside Extension Transit Corridor Study Public Meetings](#)
- [Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project Update Meetings](#)
- [Southern California Public Health Association's Annual Conference for Public Health Education](#)
- [Earth Day Celebration Update](#)

Access Washington, D.C. Advocacy Effort on Capitol Hill

Last week, our representatives joined over 200 business, political and civic leaders in Washington, D.C. in a united effort to bring more federal dollars back to Southern California. The Access DC delegation, which brought together public and private sector stakeholders from Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties, lobbied Members of Congress and the Executive Branch on issues ranging from aviation, goods movement, transportation, international trade, healthcare and education and workforce development issues.

Among the over 75 lawmakers who met with Access DC participants was Chairman James Oberstar (D-MN) of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, who clearly recognized the role Los Angeles County plays in moving the goods that fuel America's economy. Our own Directors David Fleming and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa were among those who led Access DC's drive to encourage legislators to boost federal investments in Southern California. Among those who addressed the Access DC delegation were Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab and U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA).

Westside Extension Transit Corridor Study Public Meetings

Media Relations today issued a news release noting that Metro will be conducting a new round of public meetings for the community to learn about progress on the agency's Westside Extension Transit Corridor Study. Meetings will be held throughout the study area at the following locations:

Monday, May 5
Los Angeles County Museum of Art-West
6-8 p.m.
LACMA-West Terrace Room, 5th Floor
5905 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA

Tuesday, May 6
Westwood Presbyterian Church
6-8 p.m.
10822 Wilshire Boulevard (At Malcolm)
Los Angeles, CA

Thursday, May 8
Santa Monica Public Library – Multipurpose Room, 2nd Floor
6-8 p.m.
601 Santa Monica Boulevard
Santa Monica, CA

Monday, May 12
Plummer Park
6-8 p.m.
7377 Santa Monica Boulevard (At Plummer Place)
West Hollywood, CA

The news release also notes that we have previously completed two rounds of community meetings. The first set of meetings held in October 2007 allowed for input to help shape the study. The second set of meetings held in January/February 2008 presented the initial alternatives that resulted from the earlier public meetings. These alternatives include various modes as well as potential alignments and station locations.

The new round of meetings will present the refined set of alternatives that will continue for further study and a schedule for future steps. To date there has been a high level of interest and participation in the study. Nearly 800 people have attended the the official community meetings thus far. More than 750 comments have been received in all forms since the study began.

Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project Update Meetings

The Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Study team has successfully completed four project update meetings held in Whittier, South El Monte, Montebello and Pico Rivera. More than 200 community members attended meetings held from April 9 -17, 2008 in the 80-square mile project area that is made up of 13 cities and

unincorporated parts of eastern Los Angeles County. The public was presented with five refined alternatives (4 Light Rail Transit, 1 Bus Rapid Transit), screened down from 17 alternatives.

This Alternatives Analysis is focused on connections to the Eastside Extension (under construction) that terminates at Pomona and Atlantic. The main corridors under consideration are the SR-60, Beverly Blvd., Whittier Blvd., and Washington Blvd. alternatives. Comments were generally supportive of the effort and the study is being closely followed by the cities involved as the alternatives traverse and terminate in different cities. The project team will further refine the alternatives and is expected to make a recommendation on further environmental analysis to the Board in Fall 2008.

Southern California Public Health Association's Annual Conference for Public Health Education

Last Friday, at the Southern California Public Health Association's Annual Conference, I joined Rick Cameron, Director of Environmental Planning for the Port of Long Beach, and Gretchen Lewotsky, Vice President of State & Local Public Affairs and Environmental Operations for Fox Entertainment Group, in a panel discussion, moderated by Michael Johnson, Support Services Manager for the City of Long Beach Department of Health & Human Services.

I spoke about our Sustainability Program and how we incorporate the various elements of sustainability into our operations and infrastructure without compromising our core mission of moving people efficiently and effectively; thus, supporting a better quality of life and a healthier environment for millions of people who live, work, and play in Los Angeles County.

"Building Healthy Environments" was the conference's theme, and it was attended by approximately 300-400 professionals and students in public health education.

Earth Day Celebration Update

Latin singer/songwriter Carina Ricco will perform during our Earth Day concert at Union Station's South Patio Tuesday, April 22nd from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Ricco replaces the rock group Canon, who had to cancel due to the illness of one the lead singers. The concert is free to public transit users.

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