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Los Angeles Times Op-Ed Piece on Congestion Pricing to Run Tomorrow

Doug Failing and I submitted an Op-Ed piece on our Congestion Pricing proposal to the Los Angeles Times, which is expected to run in tomorrow's newspaper. The opinion piece explains the many benefits of congestion pricing, not just for the rich but also for low and moderate income individuals. The piece explains why we and Caltrans sought a federal grant to test congestion reduction pricing on the 10 freeway from downtown Los Angeles to the 605 and on the 210 freeway from the 605 to the 134 freeways and on the Harbor Transitway if there are sufficient funds.

We also explain that carpool lanes on these freeways would be converted into toll lanes where optimum speeds of between 45 and 50 miles-per-hour would be achieved by variable pricing. While the tolls here haven't been determined, in other American cities they have ranged from 50 cents to \$10 a trip. However, freeway express buses and vanpools would not be charged a toll, and we are considering giving regular transit users a credit to cover tolls on those occasions when they do have to drive. Moreover, those driving in off peak hours would be charged less than those who use the lanes during rush hours with the expectation that people would change their commuting behavior by either opting for beefed up rideshare programs

or traveling during off peak hours to ease congestion.

Congressional Delegation Urges FTA to Implement Local Match for Expo and Foothill

Following congressional passage of the SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections bill, a bipartisan group of Southern California House members, along with both U.S. Senators, sent a letter ([see attached](#)) to FTA Administrator James Simpson pertaining to the local match language in the corrections bill for the Expo and Foothill light rail projects. The letter expresses strong support for the match language and urges the FTA to implement and carry out the provision in accordance with congressional intent. The letter also highlights the significant local investments on the first phase of both projects and calls on the FTA to credit these local expenditures when determining the federal share for the second phase of Expo and Foothill.

In addition to Senators Boxer and Feinstein, the letter was signed by Representatives Joe Baca, Xavier Becerra, David Dreier, Gary Miller, Grace Napolitano, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Adam Schiff, Hilda Solis, Diane Watson and Henry Waxman.

As reported earlier this week, the corrections bill has cleared both houses and is on its way to the White House. The Administration has issued a statement of "strong opposition" to the bill but has stopped short of promising a presidential veto.

Board Chair O'Connor's Live Chat Set for May 21, 2008

Media Relations distributed a [news release](#) this morning noting that Board Chair Pam O'Connor will be holding her live internet chat on Wednesday, May 21, 2008. The release notes that topics for the live chat will include thoughts and opinions of our new Draft Long Range Transportation Plan. The public is encouraged to share their thoughts on how we can generate local funds to make these visions a reality including a discussion of freeway toll lanes and a possible new half cent transportation sales tax for LA County.

Final Two Community Meetings for the Draft 2008 Long Range Transportation Plan

The final two community meetings to present the Draft 2008 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) were held on Tuesday, April 22nd, at the Larry Chimbole Cultural Center in Palmdale, and on Wednesday, April 23rd, at the Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center in Van Nuys.

Approximately 40 people attended the Palmdale meeting where North Los Angeles County constituents had an opportunity to express their comments on the Draft 2008

LRTP. Comments included the need for more bike lanes in the Antelope Valley, more bicycle signage, and more connectivity between bikeways in Palmdale and Lancaster; interest in additional Metrolink service to the Antelope Valley, including Express Service to and from Union Station; and more frequent bus service in the Antelope Valley and better signage indicating destinations, and fares.

Approximately 65 people attended the final LRTP Community Meeting in Van Nuys providing San Fernando Valley constituents with an opportunity to provide their comments. Comments included representatives speaking in favor or in opposition to carpool lanes on the 101; speakers who supported a range of other improvements in the San Fernando Valley including various interchange improvements, support for a Wilshire rail expansion to UCLA; the need to connect West Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley and LAX; the need for more Metrolink service; the need to connect more buses to the Orange Line; and the need for a light rail system connecting the San Fernando Valley and LAX along the 405 corridor.

Draft 2008 LRTP Presentation to Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley

On April 23rd, staff made a presentation on the Draft 2008 LRTP to the Executive Committee of the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley. Board members David Fleming and Richard Katz are the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, respectively. There was discussion of the Plan recommendations, as well as San Fernando Valley needs beyond what is recommended for funding in the draft Plan. Issues included what would be funded in the Orange Line project beyond the consideration of extending the existing project from Canoga to Chatsworth Metrolink station, looking at ways to improve north/south commute patterns, options for improving travel between the San Fernando Valley and the Westside, and what it would take to maintain or improve today's mobility over the life of the Plan. The Committee offered to be a forum for advising Metro on how to solve transportation issues in the San Fernando Valley, and to develop consensus on key Valley needs.

Draft 2008 LRTP Presentation San Fernando Valley Service Sector Governance Council

On April 30, staff made a presentation on the Draft 2008 LRTP to the San Fernando Valley Service Sector Governance Council at the Marvin Braude Constituent Center in Van Nuys. The Council posed questions on a variety of issues such as: projects specific to the San Fernando Valley, the process for developing the Draft 2008 LRTP, expansion of the Orange Line with grade crossings and safety gates and upgrading the Orange Line to light rail, investment in Metrolink service, increasing revenue service hours for local bus service, status of the congestion pricing initiative, and investing in system management tools such as ITS technologies across jurisdictions.

Two Suspects in Custody for Vehicle Burglary at Norwalk Station

On May 1, 2008, the Transit Services Detective Bureau was notified that two suspects were in custody regarding a Vehicle 459 (Burglary of a Locked Vehicle) that took place at the Norwalk station. A witness provided Deputies with a description of the suspects and vehicle license number in an initial report taken at Norwalk station. Deputies ran the vehicle license number and went to residence of the registered owner, where they located the vehicle and made contact with the two suspects as they exited the residence. Both suspects, who matched the descriptions in the initial report, were detained and a field line up was conducted. The witness positively identified one suspect; both were advised of their rights and admitted to the Norwalk burglary. Several car stereos, stereo parts, two cell phones, along with various burglary tools were recovered from the suspect's vehicle.

Transit Services Detective Bureau obtained and served a search warrant for the residence, discovering a large amount of Narcotics (approximately 2.2 pounds of a white powder substance resembling cocaine and approximately three pounds of marijuana), several car stereos, a Garmin GPS, and a couple of cell phones (believed to be stolen property). A consent to search of the second suspects residence was obtained and Deputies recovered several car stereo amplifiers, also believed to be stolen property.

Two more burglaries were reported the same day at the Lakewood station, which is currently under investigation by the Detective Bureau.

Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension – Construction Notice

Starting on Monday, May 5, 2008, intermittent closures of the northbound right turn pocket lane of Alameda and Commercial will be in effect, alternating with the shift of westbound traffic to the south on Commercial Street between Alameda and Hewitt. This construction activity is necessary for the contractor to receive material and place concrete at the Gold Line Bridge over the 101 freeway.

Next Week's Procurement Postings

RFP to Procure Security System

We have released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure our Security System. The procurement process blackout period is expected to run from April 21 through July 31, 2008.

This procurement is to provide maintenance, repair and enhancement upgrades or additional devices for our Security System.

Any inquiries concerning this procurement action during the blackout period must be directed to and may only be answered by Jean Belvin, Contractor Administrator, at (213) 922-1041.

IFB to Procure Concentrated Liquid Bus Wash Detergent

We will release a two-step Invitation for Bid (IFB) next week to procure Concentrated Liquid Bus Wash Detergent. The procurement process blackout is expected to run from May 7, 2008 through October 30, 2008.

Concentrated Liquid Bus Wash Detergent is used to clean the buses and light rail vehicles.

Any inquiries concerning this procurement action during the blackout period must be directed to and may only be answered by Sherri Jackson, Procurement Planning Administrator at (213) 922-1025.

Upcoming CEO Meetings & Events

Next week, I will be meeting with Hasan Ikhata, Executive Director of the Southern California Association of Governments and Arthur Leahy, Chief Executive Officer of the Orange County Transportation Authority. I will also speak at the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce's "City Trip to Los Angeles" Meeting. Finally, I will be participating in the Mobility 21 Board of Directors' Meeting and the Regionwide CEO Meeting.

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