

CEO Urges Board to Seek \$632 Million in State Funding for Transit Corridors

(Feb. 24) CEO Julian Burke successfully urged the Board at its February meeting, Thursday, to immediately request state funding of \$632 million for construction of rapid bus and light rail lines in the East LA, Mid-City/Westside and San Fernando Valley transit corridors and \$200 million to cover the cost of current operating expenses.

Voting unanimously, the Board approved a motion by Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke that supported the CEO's recommendation. The motion asks the state to identify separate funding so that all three corridors "shall move forward together."

Millions for transit projects

The CEO recommended that the MTA seek \$236 million in state funding for the Eastside corridor, \$251 million for Mid-City/Westside and \$145 million for the San Fernando Valley project.

To fund operations, CEO Burke said the Board should ask for a total of \$200 million over five years. Starting with \$50 million in 2001, the funding would be scaled down each year to \$45 million in 2002, \$40 million in 2003, \$35 million in 2004 and \$30 million in 2005.

"I urge the Board to consider the importance of the opportunity that is being developed in Sacramento," the CEO said. "It is clear to me that it would be appropriate and desirable for the Board to agree to this preliminary funding plan so we can proceed with a unified presentation to the state Legislature, the governor and his staff...."

Plan presented to state officials

Burke said he already had presented his plan to the California Secretary of Transportation, to Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa and to State Sen. Betty Karnette, who chairs the Senate Transportation Committee.

If the plan isn't approved by the Legislature by the end of the state's fiscal year, Burke said he would present the Board with new suggestions for funding.

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