

MTA Planners Developing Draft of Long-Range Transportation Plan

By ED SCANNELL

(Nov. 15) MTA planners are developing a draft of the Long-Range Transportation Plan, the 25-year blueprint for transportation planning in Los Angeles County. They updated their progress at a Board workshop held today.

Due to be presented to the Board in January, 2001, the Long-Range Transportation Plan recommendations will lay out in detail the mobility challenges facing the county in the next quarter century.



Jim de la Loza,
Executive Officer for
Countywide Planning

The plan also will present solutions for developing a transportation system that improves the region's mobility, air quality and access during a time when the county is expected to experience unprecedented growth in population. No easy feat.

"The plan will make it clear that we are not going to be able to build our way out of congestion," said Jim de la Loza, executive officer for Countywide Planning. "In large measure, we need to make better use of what we already have, target our resources and use our infrastructure more efficiently."

Maintaining quality of life

De la Loza says if the MTA just maintains current programs and funding levels, the region's air quality, economy and quality of life will diminish. The good news, however, is that there is a lot the MTA, in partnership with Caltrans, SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments), local governments and the private sector, can do to meet the challenge.

That said, the LRTP will present a series of recommendations and directions including:

- Restructuring of bus and rail service countywide,
- Expansion of the Metro Rapid Bus System,
- Development of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT),
- Completion of three transit corridor projects (Eastside, Mid-Cities and San Fernando Valley East-West) currently under environmental clearance,
- Community based service (shuttles, community circulators),
- Examination of potential light rail extensions,
- Completion of the HOV system,
- Freeway gap closures and interchange improvements,
- Development of intelligent transportation systems,
- Construction of additional soundwalls,
- Maintaining commitments to the Alameda Corridor and Alameda Corridor East projects,
- Consideration of other goods movement projects that address increasing goods movement on highways and arterials and projects that support access to ports and airports, and
- Demand management strategies such as ridesharing and off-peak use of highways and arterials, which make efficient use of the transportation system.

"There's no magic bullet, no single solution to solving the challenges to mobility in the years ahead," said de la Loza. "The good news is

there are a lot of actions which collectively can make the difference between a region stalled in gridlock and one that continues to thrive as it grows."

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