

## Board to Consider Long-Range Transportation Plan at April Meeting

**UPDATE, April 26: The MTA Board adopted the Long-Range Transportation Plan with a provision that members may add amendments at the Board's May meeting.**

- **In a KNBC television interview, April 24, with anchor Kelly Mack, Jim de la Loza, executive officer, Countywide Planning and Development, discussed the importance of the Long-Range Transportation Plan to the future of Los Angeles.**



**Jim de la Loza**  
Executive Officer  
Countywide  
Planning and  
Development

(April 25, 2001) The 2001 Long-Range Transportation Plan goes before the MTA Board for adoption, Thursday. The plan, which extends through 2025, establishes priorities for programs and projects totaling an estimated \$11.2 billion.

Beginning work more than a year ago, the staff completed a draft of the plan in February following public comment at a series of community meetings. Between mid-March and April 11, the MTA conducted 17 more community meetings, attended by some 500 people, many of whom live in minority or transit-dependent communities.

Following Board approval, the plan will be finalized and distributed to the public. It also will be integrated into the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2001 Regional Transportation Plan.

In a KNBC television interview, April 24, with anchor Kelly Mack, Jim de la Loza, executive officer, Countywide Planning and Development, discussed the importance of the Long-Range Transportation Plan to the future of Los Angeles.

### Transcript of the KNBC interview

**Kelly Mack:** The MTA has released a Long-Range Transportation Plan and it's a blueprint for transportation planning in LA County through the year 2025. Joining us this morning to talk about the details is Jim de la Loza. He is executive officer, Countywide Planning and Development for the MTA.

Now, there are millions of us that commute out there. Tell us some of the highlights of this particular plan.

**De la Loza:** Well, the plan takes a 25-year look into the future and says that with the potential increase in population of about 2.5 to 3 million people over the next 25 years, how can we best accommodate this growth?

Just to put it in perspective, that's the equivalent of a city the size of Chicago being put within this county. So, the plan then looks at the resources available and proposes various improvements to help us meet this challenge.

**Mack:** Such as?

## High-occupancy vehicle lanes

**De la Loza:** Such as the completion of the high-occupancy vehicle lane program in the city or the carpool program. Basically, we will be completing that and adding a lot of capacity to freeways such as the 405 from the Valley to the Westside, the 5 Freeway from Orange County to downtown Los Angeles.

These are freeways that have significant congestion and we will be expanding the capacity there. Also, key freeway interchanges such as the 405/101 interchange and a number of others that we will be improving to add more capacity and ease the flow of traffic.

**Mack:** Can you tell commuters (whether) it's going to take 25 years to improve the situation on the 405 between the Valley and the Westside? Do you have (plans) in the short term, say in the next 10 years, for) the high-occupancy vehicle lanes?

**De la Loza:** Yes. Within 10 years, we'll have significant portions of the plan in place. Basically, the plan will add improvements as we go along and this population increases.

**Mack:** What about bus travel? You've got a major element of the plan that involves that.

## Rapid Bus System

**De la Loza:** Right. We took a re-look at the bus system and we have a very successful program called the Rapid Bus. We basically took a bus and said, 'What if we tried to operate it as a light rail?' And we have fewer stops; we put in technology that gives the bus a green light as it approaches an intersection. And we've had significant success – about a 25 percent increase in ridership, a 25 percent improvement in speed.

We're proposing to expand it countywide. We will be able to attract some of the discretionary riders that currently are driving. We really intend to have a network of bus systems that interfaces with our rail system that allows people another option to driving.

One of the key challenges is going to be looking at our transportation as a system and managing it. And the best way I can explain that is by going back to the Olympics that were held in Los Angeles and how successful we were in alleviating traffic. We're going to have to implement programs like that that will help us manage the transportation system. And with some key modifications in the way we travel and when we travel, we can continue to keep the freeways and the roads moving, within the resources that will be available.

**Mack:** What about that subway system? A lot of people say it's useless. Is there any part of the plan that is addressing that?

**De la Loza:** The current subway that has opened in North Hollywood has exceeded our expectations (in) ridership. However, I think we recognize that we really need to build

patronage of people who use the transportation system. We are going to focus on what we have now. If additional funds become available, we will look at expansions of the rail system. But, right now, the focus is going to be on improvement of the Rapid Bus system and using the rail that we have in place efficiently.

**Mack:** OK, Jim. Thanks for coming in so early this morning.

[Back to MTA Report](#)