

Mobility 21 participants applauded word from Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, during a noontime speech, that MTA and ATU had reached a tentative contract agreement that would bring an end to the 35-day-old transit strike.



PHOTO BY BILL HEARD

Mobility 21 Targets State, Federal Governments for LA's Fair Share of Transportation Funding

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 18, 2003) Almost 500 local officials, community leaders, businesspeople and others gathered Monday for Mobility 21, an annual transportation summit aimed at bringing more state and federal funding to bear on the increasing congestion of the region's transportation network – highways, airports, railways and seaports.

CEO Roger Snoble challenged Mobility 21 participants to help secure transportation funds for the region.



PHOTO BY DAVE SOTERO

With the State of California deep in a budget crisis and federal transportation funds becoming ever more scarce, speakers at a series of seven seminars looked for creative ways to finance, plan, build public support for and deliver transportation projects.

The second annual Mobility 21 was co-sponsored by MTA, the LA-Area Chamber of Commerce and the Automobile Club of Southern California.

In opening remarks, CEO Roger Snoble noted the gap between LA County taxpayers' contributions to the federal and state governments and what the county receives in transportation funding.

"Unfortunately, that inequity is only growing," he said. "Businesses and residents of Los Angeles County pay \$1.4 billion annually, yet get back less than \$1.2 billion."

'Heart of this struggle'

Federal funding for local transportation projects is drying up and state dollars are uncertain, Snoble said. "Whether this region will be able to turn transportation

blueprints and plans into reality is at the heart of this struggle."

The CEO pointed out successes that had been achieved since last year's summit. Among those were state approval to seek a half-cent sales tax for specific transportation projects and an amendment to the state transportation program that allows construction of the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway and the Eastside Light Rail Project.



Six elementary, middle and high school students were honored during Mobility 21 for their artworks or essays entitled, "What Will LA County Look Like in the Future?" The youngsters were from Ritter and Selby Grove elementary schools, New Vista Middle School, and Franklin and Wilson high schools.

In remarks delivered at the summit's closing session, Snoble laid out three immediate goals for summit participants:

- Ensure that state transportation funds are not used for loans that will never be paid back.
- Work to garner support for voter approval of the half-cent sales tax to fund crucial transportation projects.
- Ensure that Los Angeles County is not left out of transportation appropriations.

"We need to continue the momentum we have achieved here," he said, "by keeping up the pressure in Sacramento and Washington to protect and preserve transportation funding."

Renee Berlin, director of MTA's Southbay Area Team, makes opening remarks at a seminar titled, "Improving Ground Access to LA County Airports."



PHOTO BY DAVE SOTERO

Urging members of the business community to become involved in projects

that “will have tremendous economic benefit” for the region, Snoble said, “Mobility 21 is about harnessing the power of a group interested in the creation of a transportation system that can sustain our quality of life.”

Mobility 21 Staff: Danielle Boutier, Jennifer Salamanca, Rafi Hamparian, Michael Turner, Kimberly Yu, Wilbur Babb, Manjari Patel, Suzanne Handler, Christian Valtierra, Art Henry, Marisa Perez, Kevin Michel, Susan Gilmore, Sally Singleton, David Yale, Mona Jones, Mary Lou Williams, Cindy Shavers, David Mieger, Ray Maekawa, Tim Papandreou, Andrea Karabenick, Doug Kim, Diego Cardoso, Warren Whiteaker, Manuella Abrahamian, Rex Gephart, Larry Torres, Martha Butler, Julianne Fowler, Renee Berlin, Al Patashnick, Kathleen McCune, Holly Balderas, Robert Calix, Luke Cheng, Claudia Keith, Shahrzad Amiri, Marion Colston. Lynda Bybee, Don Ott, Eric Carlson, Jeff Ringsrud and Volker Durre.

[Back to MTA Report](#)