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Orange Line Marathon, New Transit Colors Among Board Committee Items in March

(March 14, 2006) Board committees this week will consider motions to approve a half-marathon on the Metro Orange Line right-of-way, designate colors for various transit facilities, and accept funds to improve regional transit security.

Restoration of the historic Lankershim Depot and developing a temporary parking lot at the Orange Line station in North Hollywood also are on committee agendas.

Item 28. Half-Marathon Pilot Project. The Operations Committee will consider a motion that would authorize the CEO to negotiate an agreement with a San Fernando Valley organization that plans a "Great Pumpkin Half-Marathon" on the Metro Orange Line right-of-way on Sunday, October 29.

The proposal calls for re-routing Orange Line service and all north/south service that intersects the Orange Line for four hours or more to accommodate the marathon and cleanup. The agency would waive policies that allow use of Metro property only when normal transit service will not be disrupted. Metro also would provide staff, including Sheriff's deputies, Operations and Communications personnel, and would negotiate a fee with the event organizers.

Considered a pilot project by Metro, the half-marathon "would provide an opportunity to showcase the (Orange Line) and create a unique event in the San Fernando Valley," the staff report says. "This event will enjoy broad community support and would provide significant cultural and economic benefits" to the Valley.

Item 13, Metro Line Colors. The Executive Management and Audit Committee will consider a motion to adopt various color designations for the Mid-City/Exposition Line, the El Monte Busway, Harbor Transitway, and the Wilshire/Western subway line and potential extensions of that line.

A staff report recommends the color aqua for the Exposition Line, purple for the Union Station-Wilshire/Western line, silver for the El Monte Busway and bronze for the Harbor Transitway.

Designating a map color for these transit lines is intended to assist customer orientation as well as promote transit alternatives and connections and "will provide consistency on how the projects are referred to in all printed and electronic" communications, says the staff report.

Board Committee Meetings

Wednesday, March 15
Planning and Programming, 1 p.m.
Finance and Budget, 2:30 p.m.
Thursday, March 16
Executive Management and Audit, 9 a.m.
Construction, 10:30 a.m.
Operations, 12 noon

The cost of the proposed changes would be minimal, according to the report, and primarily would be confined to maps and printed materials, all of which are routinely updated and reprinted.

Item 29, Homeland Security Grant. The Operations Committee will consider a motion to accept \$3.3 million state Office of Homeland Security grant funds to support security programs for Metro, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority and OCTA.

The staff report says the grants will “fund efforts to augment rail security” at Union Station, including overtime for Sheriff’s deputies, barricades in the parking structure, installation of closed-circuit cameras throughout the USG complex, Metro Red Line message sign upgrades and other security measures.

Bus security improvements would include multi-agency disaster drills, installation of closed-circuit cameras at bus divisions, security kiosks at selected bus divisions and on the Metro Orange Line, and enhancements for the LASD data network.

Item 5, Restoration of Lankershim Depot. The Planning and Programming and Construction committees will each consider a motion to approve a budget of \$3.6 million for restoration of the Metro-owned historic Lankershim Depot Transit Center, located adjacent to the Metro Orange Line station in North Hollywood.

Approval of the motion would establish the Lankershim Depot Transit Center as a Metro capital project, using Proposition C 10 percent funds and matching funds contributed by the Community Redevelopment Agency. Once completed, the restored building may be improved for use for Metro community services purposes.

Item 19, Metro Red Line Parking Lots. The Construction Committee will consider a motion by Councilman Bernard Parks directing the Metro staff to work with the City of Los Angeles in developing a temporary parking lot for transit riders at the southwest corner of Chandler and Lankershim boulevards in North Hollywood using funds remaining in the Metro Orange Line construction budget.

The motion notes that parking lots adjacent to Metro Red Line stations in North Hollywood and Universal City “are completely full by 8 a.m. on weekdays.” With the opening of the Orange Line, the motion says, “it is critical that additional parking be provided so that commuters can park in North Hollywood and use these transit systems to access Woodland Hills and downtown Los Angeles.”

The motion says a former construction staging area at the southwest corner of Chandler and Lankershim “would be an ideal location for a temporary parking lot until a permanent joint development project is constructed.”