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January Board Committee Meetings

Wednesday, Jan. 17

- > Planning and Programming, 1 p.m.
- > Finance and Budget, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 18

- > Executive Management and Audit, 9 a.m.
- > Operations, 12 p.m.
- > Construction: Cancelled

Board Committees to Consider New Rail Line Analysis, More Development and Plan to Increase Ridership

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(Jan. 12, 2007) A feasibility analysis of a possible new rail line, four proposed transit-oriented developments, and a broad plan to increase ridership on Metro’s bus and rail services are among topics that will come before Board committees in January.

**Item 6, Harbor Subdivision Analysis.** A feasibility analysis to be presented to the Planning and Programming Committee describes four alternatives and six operating scenarios for rail and bus transit on the Harbor Subdivision, a 26-mile Metro-owned rail right-of-way that connects downtown LA, LAX and Wilmington. Metro bought the right-of-way in 1992 from the former Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, now Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

The feasibility analysis examined each potential mode of transit, but did not conduct in-depth environmental review or community outreach and provides only a rough order of magnitude cost and ridership forecast.

The analysis looked at four operating scenarios for two types of DMUs (self-propelled diesel-powered rail cars), light-rail trains and Bus Rapid Transit. The analysis indicates that “there are no fatal flaws to implementing certain types of passenger transit service,” however, more in-depth environmental and community outreach would be needed, according to a staff report.

**Item 7, Call for Projects.** The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion to approve \$86.3 million in supplemental funding to cover cost increases incurred by outside project sponsors for 46 transportation-related projects previously funded in the Call for Projects. The projects range from arterial improvements and interchange reconstruction to bike paths and pedestrian walkways.

The committee also will be asked to approve implementation of the LA River/Taylor Yard pedestrian bridge and bikeway access project as a joint City of Los Angeles-Metro project.

**Item 10, 1st and Lorena Development.** A proposal to construct a mixed-use development at 1st and Lorena streets near the Metro Gold Line extension in East Los Angeles goes before the Planning and Programming Committee for discussion.

A motion would authorize the CEO to negotiate with the developer, 1st and Lorena LLC, to build 43 housing units, retail space and two community rooms, along with 94 parking spaces. The design of the 34,494 square foot site, originally intended for location of a traction power sub-station, has been modified to also accommodate the proposed development.

**Item 11, Temple Street Development.** The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to negotiate with a firm proposing a retail and housing development on the 1.2-acre Metro Bus layover zone at the intersection of Temple and Beaudry streets, just south of the 101 Freeway.

The developer, Temple and Beaudry LLC, plans to construct a three-level parking structure and a five-story building with 145 residential units and 11,436 square feet of retail space. The development would be built above a bus garage with space for approximately 24 buses, employee accommodations and restrooms. Construction would begin in 2009.

**Item 12, Universal City Development.** The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to negotiate with Thomas Properties Group, Inc., of Los Angeles, which is proposing to build a retail, office and entertainment production project with parking structures at the Universal City station.

The first phase of the proposed project would be a five-story, 200,000 square foot production facility, retail space, a parking structure and a 23-story, 450,000 square foot office building. The production building would include broadcast facilities for NBC/Universal TV entertainment and news programs. The second phase would be an approximately 22-story, 400,000 square foot office building with a parking structure.

**Item 24, Metro Ridership Plan.** In a report to the Executive Management and Audit Committee, the Metro Communications staff will recommend a comprehensive plan aimed at increasing ridership by five percent over the next three years. The report notes that Metro's ridership grew by 4.5 times the national average in 2005 and that so far this fiscal year ridership has been trending at 4.9 percent growth. Such growth could mean an additional \$8.4 million in annual farebox revenues, the report says.

The plan calls for increasing ridership by realigning existing service through Metro Connections and other programs; adding more

“customer-driven” services such as Metro Rapid and Rapid Express lines; and investing more resources in marketing and advertising, especially on TV and with direct mail.

In addition, the plan proposes that Metro maintain the “best fleet on the street” with maintenance programs that would include zero graffiti tolerance; providing customer information through such means as improved signage and 24-hour customer information; improving the “customer environment” with additional amenities, positive operator-customer relations, the use of station agents at some rail stations and transit centers and other programs; and eliminating barriers to transit use by promoting the use of the day pass, regional fares and other means.

**Item 39, Metro Red Line Station Canopies.** The CEO would be authorized to award a contract for preliminary design of 14 canopies to cover escalators and stairs that are exposed to the weather at nine Metro Red Line stations, under a motion before the Operations Committee. Although not currently required, installing the canopies would bring the escalators into compliance with the latest national escalator safety code.

The canopies would be installed at the Civic Center, Pershing Square, Westlake/MacArthur Park, Wilshire/Normandie, Vermont/Beverly, Vermont/Santa Monica, Vermont/Sunset, Hollywood/Western and Universal City stations. The Board report says the canopies would be designed to become “respected urban landmarks while clearly identifying station entrances....”

**Item 40, 65-Foot Articulated Bus.** The Operations Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to modify a contract with bus manufacturer NABI to provide one 65-foot articulated bus. Metro’s current artics are 60 feet long and adding five more feet would increase seating capacity by nine seats or 15.7 percent. According to the staff report, service on the Metro Orange Line could be improved with higher capacity buses.

The 65-foot artic would be operated primarily on the Orange Line, but also could be tested on some city streets. The Metro staff also recommends that, in addition to increased length, the bus would be used to test a new “frameless” window design. Total cost of the project – five-foot extension and windows – is not to exceed \$100,000.

**Item 45, Pomona and Atlantic Development.** The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to enter into a joint development agreement with a development firm, Atlantic Partners, LLC, that plans to construct a housing project on a 1.12-acre site owned by Metro at Pomona and Atlantic boulevards in East Los Angeles.

The project would include approximately 130 senior housing units and a shared parking structure with 200 parking spaces for the exclusive use of Metro, its patrons, employees and others. Under the proposal, Metro would pay the developer up to \$4.3 million to cover the agency’s portion of parking structure.

