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Metro Board Approves Key Motions on Lengthy June Agenda

- FY 2008 budget among many motions approved

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(July 6, 2007) Working through a lengthy agenda at its June meeting, the Metro Board approved motions that – in addition to the amended FY 2008 budget – included funding for local transit operators and studies of a subway extension and a light rail regional connector.

Other motions approved included \$174.5 million to purchase 50 light rail cars for the Metro Blue Line and Expo Line, improvements at five operating divisions and an upgrade for the ATMS "smart bus" system.

The Board considered the following items, among others on its June agenda:

Item 5, FY 2008 'Mini Call'. The Board approved a motion to program \$14 million in Proposition A Incentive Reserve funds for an FY 2008 "Mini Call" that will provide funding for local transit operators to buy bus and dial-a-ride vehicles. The funds will allow 11 local operators to buy a total of 65 buses and 24 local operators to buy a total of 154 dial-a-ride

vehicles.

Item 7, SCRRA Funding. The Board approved a proposal to provide \$48.1 million in Proposition C 10% local sales tax funding to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority for Metrolink operations and to reprogram \$4.9 million in Prop C 10% funds for Metrolink capital projects.

Item 8, Bus Speed and Street Design. The Board approved a plan under which Metro will partner with LADOT and the LA Department of Public Works to improve bus travel times and schedule reliability in congested corridors. This might include adding bus-only lanes, the addition of bus-only right-turn lanes and restricting left-turn movement at some intersections, increased parking restrictions and other measures.

A report to the Board noted that Metro Local bus speeds have declined 12 percent, "leading to significant increases in Metro operating expenses and the addition of nearly 300 peak buses to compensate...for...lower bus speeds."

Item 11, Westside Subway Extension. The Board approved a motion awarding a \$3.7 million contract to study a proposal to extend the Metro Red Line by tunneling through the Westside. The study will include various alternatives, assessment of tunnel feasibility and conceptual engineering, along with funds for other professional services and contingencies.

Item 12, Light Rail Regional Connector. The Board approved a motion to award some \$2.5 million in contracts to study the feasibility of a Regional Connector, which might be built as a subway, at-grade or aerial connection to link Union Station and the 7th and Metro station.

Metro patrons who want to make the connection between the Blue Line and the Gold Line now must take the subway to bridge the 1.85-mile gap between Union Station and the 7th and Metro station.

Item 20, FY 2008 Budget. The Board approved the proposed \$3.121 billion budget for FY 2008. The budget includes funding for new capital projects, salary increases and benefits for union and non-contract employees, an annual inflationary increase to the non-contract employee salary ranges, the safety and security budget, and funding for eight employees and \$1 million for implementation of TAP operations.

The Board amended the budget to direct the staff to work with Caltrans and other agencies to develop a detailed operating plan with at least three options for implementing "congestion pricing" in LA County by 2010. Congestion pricing, such as that implemented in London, Stockholm, Singapore and other cities, the amendment says, can "serve as an incentive to form carpools, speed up commutes by improving system performance, and finance transit and transportation infrastructure.

A second amendment provides \$975,000 for implementation of "incident based recording technology" on all Metro buses, including those under contract to the agency. The staff was directed to establish "key performance indicators" report to the board within 120 days of implementation.

The staff also was directed to report to the Board in 60 days on "steps necessary to establish a specialized bus accident investigation unit" to be

staffed by Metro employees who would be certified accident investigators.

Item 26, Sheriff's Contract. The Board approved a motion to fund the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau (TSB) at a cost of \$62.5 million for the final year of a five-year agreement. Metro has contracted exclusively with the LA County Sheriff's Department for security services since 2003.

Item 42, 50 Light Rail Cars. The Board approved a motion to budget \$174.5 million to purchase 50 light rail cars for operation on the Exposition Line and the Metro Blue Line.

Sixteen of the cars will be earmarked for the Expo Line. The remaining 34, which will be operated on the Blue Line, will replace part of the P865 Nippon Sharyo cars which have exceeded 20 years' service.

Item 48, Orange Line Cameras. The Board approved a motion to award a \$200,293 contract for 140 new pan/tilt/zoom surveillance cameras for placement at Metro Orange Line stations. The new cameras will replace less capable cameras now installed at the stations.

Item 54, Lane Restrictions for Buses. The Board approved a motion directing the CEO to develop for the Board within 60 days a new policy or policy amendment that would restrict buses to the outermost lane on all freeways; and make the second outermost lane available only for passing, providing the freeway has three or more lanes.

The policy would create exceptions for buses using express bus or transitway routes and for instances in which left lanes are used to exit or enter a freeway or highway.

The motion also directed the CEO to send a letter to the state on behalf of the Board requesting within 90 days "an assessment of how current laws prohibiting trucks and other large vehicles from using the Number One and HOV lanes can be enforced to the greatest extent possible and be expanded in future legislation" to improve highway safety.

Item 61, Bauchet Street Warehouse. The Board approved a motion to establish a \$12.9 million life-of-project budget for construction of an approximately 60,000-square foot warehouse and Facilities Maintenance building on a site of slightly less than 3 acres on Bauchet Street adjacent to the Metro Support Services Center (formerly the RRC).

Construction of the building will allow Metro to centralize bulk warehousing and such Facilities Maintenance functions as Stops & Zones, property maintenance and the sign shop currently located at the South Park facility. Sale of that property to the City of Los Angeles is pending.

Item 62, Division Improvements. The Board approved a motion to establish a \$13.7 million life-of-project budget to improve, modernize and expand transportation and maintenance facilities at operating divisions 1, 3, 8, 9 and 15.

All are from 23 to 33 years old and currently operate and maintain more buses than they were originally designed to accommodate. The improvements will extend the service life of the divisions by at least 25 years.

Item 63, Upgrade the ATMS System. The Board approved a motion to establish a \$12.1 million life-of-project budget to upgrade the Advanced Transportation Management System. ATMS provides voice and data radio

dispatching, as well as automatic passenger counting, automated vehicle annunciation, video surveillance, real-time automated vehicle location information and daily operator schedules.

The upgrade will allow Metro to take advantage of new technology applications, hardware and software development and normal life-cycle system improvements.

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