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CEO Roger Snoble addresses full house at all-hands meeting on Tuesday.



Photos by Gayle Anderson

CEO's "All Hands" Meeting Details Successes, Struggles and His Top Ten

By JIMMY STROUP

(April 30, 2008) CEO Roger Snoble invited Metro employees April 29 to an "All Hands" meeting to recognize the hard work and success of current projects and address his Top Ten vision for the future.

Snoble detailed recent Metro accomplishments, including an unprecedented safety record on the Gold Line Eastside Extension project. The project reached nearly 3 million hours of work without a lost time accident.

"I'm calling it the best project in America," Snoble said. "We're on track to open on time and on budget."

He also highlighted the success Metro has had in working with Transit-Oriented Developments – 33 projects, so far – and Metro's unending commitment to Going Green with 2,500 clean-burning CNG buses and energy saving solar projects. Snoble then commended the growth of Metro Rapid, which is by far the largest rapid system of any transit agency in the country.

Snoble praised Congestion Pricing as a unique pilot on several fronts: it adds some much-needed funding; converts carpool lanes to toll lanes on the 10 and 210 freeways; increases bus efficiency on the freeways; and, encourages people to get out of their cars and onto transit.

"It's not to give people driving a Lexus a faster trip, but to improve our bus speeds in the carpool lane," he said.

Challenges

The meeting also detailed some challenges the agency will face in the near future. Snoble was candid, saying that lack of funds is Metro's primary problem but that the agency has been diligent in maintaining fiscal responsibility.



CEO Roger Snoble

"We are a little worried about [our funding sources] because of the rough economy, but we'll get through it," he said. "But we will present to the Metro Board a balanced budget. We don't have the huge deficits the city and state have because we've been working hard to erase our structural deficit."

Snoble discussed the draft Long Range Transportation Plan, which he said was a mix of paid-for and wished-for projects. In both cases, he boiled the need to plan realistically for the future down to a simple point: quality of life.

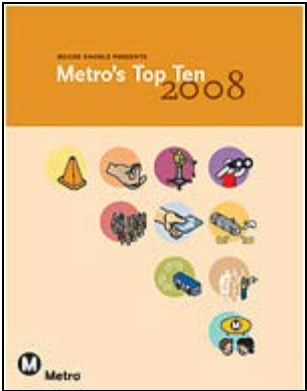
"As funding becomes more scarce, planning becomes more important," he said. "Through mobility we will be able to provide a high quality of life. Even though the system is over-taxed today, we have a responsibility to improve that system for our children."

He also used the meeting to unveil his Top Ten, which are his directives ("Though, I don't like to call them directives, but that's what they are," he said) to keep the agency moving forward in a united effort.

Top Ten

In order they are: (1) Safety's First; (2) Pinch Every Penny; (3) Think Big; (4) See the Future; (5) Exceed Expectations; (6) Tap, Tap, Tap; (7) Head East; (8) Go Green; (9) Speak With One Voice; (10) Talk Amongst Ourselves.

Taken together, Snoble said these points will give Metro a blueprint for maintaining the success the agency has enjoyed. Some are familiar, such as Safety's First, and some are newer, but none are completely new ideas. He said they are things we do now but things we need to stay focused on to keep Metro moving forward.



[Download](#) Top Ten brochure (PDF)

Exceed Expectations: "I think we do this every day," he said. "We need to see what [people] want and continue to give it to them."

Speak With One Voice: "Communications is always a difficult problem in any organization," he said. "But we don't want it to be a problem. We want it to be an opportunity."

Pinch Every Penny: "In good times we need to pinch that penny," he said. "In bad times we need to pinch that penny even harder and we need to prepare to do that."



And the Roger Award goes to... from left, Ann Kerman, Brad McAllester, Lynda Bybee, Patricia Soto, (CEO Snoble), Heather Hills and Robert Calix. The A-list team of producers and stars won the 2008 award for the Best Long Range Transportation Video.

But it wasn't all business. With a self-effacing humor that personalized the CEO, Snoble handed out some awards to the employees who helped create the Long Range Plan video – which has sparked quite a lot of public interest. Snoble awarded six "Rogers" for actress, two for actor (one in Spanish), behind-the-scenes supporting role, stagehand and producer.

The meeting wrapped with a few questions. One was about Congestion Pricing and the other was about divisions bursting at the seams with more coaches than the yards were designed to hold.

"In the Long Range Plan we have plans to reconstruct two divisions with just that in mind," he said. "The question is really how do we provide quality service if we don't have quality facilities? That is a big, big challenge. We realize it and we're trying to work it out as best we can."

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