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Fifth Chat Questions Target Congestion Pricing and Transit Funding

- Metro Chair Pam O'Connor explains possible one-half sales tax measure
- Read complete transcript at [chat archives](#)

By NED RACINE, Editor

(May 22, 2008) Holding her fifth digital Town Hall meeting, Metro Chair Pam O'Connor answered 21 questions during her hour-long chat May 21 at noon, many targeting funding for transit projects and details of congestion pricing efforts.

Fifty questions were received.

Several questions asked which vehicles would be allowed on any demonstration project using high occupancy toll (HOT) to reduce highway congestion, as Metro has suggested for several County highways.

The Board Chair answered that "vanpools, with their high capacity of occupants, will be free, as will buses. Regarding carpools, this is a policy issue that has to be discussed such as the threshold number of people in the car . . . the bottom line is for the toll lanes to be moving at 45-50 mph."

Other questions explored the details of a possible Los Angeles County half-cent sales tax for transit projects. One participant asked how voters could be sure that proceeds from a half-cent ballot measure would be spent on transit improvements.

"The ballot measure that is envisioned for LA County will specify projects," O'Connor answered. "And remember that the monies would be locally controlled, by the county (not the State)."

Other comments praised the TAP universal fare card and asked if congestion would be relieved if some highway lanes could be made reversible, to better handle morning and evening rush traffic.

Unfortunately O'Connor answered, because County highway traffic is bi-directional, the advantages would not justify the cost.

The next 'live chat' will be held in June.