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Board Chair Hosts Final Chat, Swaps 'Staycation' Ideas With Participants

- Online audience requests more bikeways and light rail
- [Metro Interactive](#): Transcript of sixth live chat

By NED RACINE, Editor

(June 19, 2008) Holding her final chat as Metro Chair (at least for the foreseeable future) Pam O'Connor swapped "staycation" ideas during her noon-hour chat June 18.



Seeing green: Pam O'Connor stays on message.

A staycation is spent at or near one's home, allowing someone to experience local attractions he or she might ordinarily miss. Staycations are now more prominent on the cultural landscape because exploding fuel prices are colliding with summer vacation plans.

O'Connor answered 22 questions during the hour-long chat, many on recurring issues such as the need for more bicycle lanes, removing gas-guzzling cars from

the road and what projects might be built if voters approved a half-cent sales tax limited to funding transportation projects.

But ideas for staycations—highlighting participants' favorite Los Angeles County haunts—flew in as well.

O'Connor added a wrinkle by suggesting her audience travel to their staycations on Metro's bus and rail system.

"One fun trip is the Metro docent-lead tours of the rail art programs ... along the Red and Purple subway lines and all the light rail lines," O'Connor wrote. Other staycation advocates quickly chimed in.

Lynnae promoted the Metro Blue Line from Downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach as "a great day trip. It lets you off downtown, where you can walk to the Pike restaurants and shops, the Queen Mary, Aquarium of the Pacific, or the downtown Arts District."

Karin painted a relaxing picture of free jazz concerts in Warner Center Park and recommended chat participants take the Metro Orange Line to get there.

"There are concerts at the band shell in Pasadena and at the Pier in Santa Monica," O'Connor added. "There are many possibilities for inexpensive summer fun by taking transit there."

Jean suggested, "Taking bikes on the Green Line to the end at Redondo

Beach and then taking a ride on the new Redondo Beach Bike Path. Other options are Hermosa Pier or Redondo Pier for something to eat. But the best thing is to ride along the ocean, which is particularly beautiful around here."

When the online conversation returned to core transportation issues, Alek suggested that drivers consider all the costs when comparing driving costs and Mass Transit costs—not just fuel prices. Alek included auto repairs, insurance, financing, registration, insurance, parking and moving violations in drivers' costs.

"Overall, you could spend on Mass Transit \$750 a year, while yearly driving expenses could easily add up to \$4,000-7,000 or more, depending on the car."

O'Connor signed off by reminding the audience that her year as Chair of the Metro Board is coming to an end. "I look forward to continuing to work on these issues, and especially sustainability, over the next few years as a Board member."