



Metro

Daily Brief

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National Transportation Commission Calls for Bold Action to Overhaul Aging, Underperforming Infrastructure

At a packed news conference today in Washington, the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission (also known as the “1909 Commission”) released its much-anticipated final report to Congress. Created by SAFETEA-LU, the Commission’s purpose was to examine the condition and future needs of the nation’s surface transportation system and identify short and long term alternatives to replace or supplement the gasoline tax as the primary revenue source to finance the Highway Trust Fund.

Declaring that the country’s transportation system is at a crossroads, the Commission issued a “call to action” by proposing sweeping and immediate changes to fix an aging, crumbling system bursting at the seams. In essence, the Commission made the case for a complete overhaul of the federal transportation program. Its major recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Significant increase in investment at all levels of government – At least \$225 billion per year over the next 50 years is required to substantially upgrade the current transportation system. Only 40% of this amount is spent annually. The investment gap is alarming and must be reversed. State and local governments need to increase their share as well.
 - 2) Federal role – The federal government must be a full partner in this effort. The job is too big for local and state governments and the private sector to handle alone.
 - 3) Radical restructuring of federal programs – Eliminate all existing federal
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surface programs and replace them with 10 performance-based, outcome-driven programs focused on projects of national interest. Among the proposed programs of relevance to Metro include metropolitan mobility (dedicated program dedicated for congestion relief in the nation's largest metropolitan areas), freight transportation (establishes a dedicated goods movement program), and environmental stewardship (mitigating the environmental impacts of transportation by reducing carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions, promoting carpooling and transit, scrapping old vehicles, etc.).

- 4) Speeding project delivery – Drastically reform the process by which projects are approved and constructed without weakening environmental standards.
- 5) Revenue – Short-term needs should be met by increasing the federal gas tax by 5-8 cents each year over 5 years, or an increase of 25-40 cents. In the long term, however, the Commission suggests moving away from the gas tax and adopting a tax based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Such a financing mechanism, however, would not be ready until at least 2025. In this recommendation, it should be noted that the Commission calls for a federal ticket tax on all transit trips to increase overall funding for federal transit programs.

In his comments, Commissioner Tom Skancke of Las Vegas specifically cited Metro's experience with the FTA's New Starts program and was astounded to learn of the significant cost increases and delays directly attributable to the bureaucratic and time-consuming New Starts process.

It should be noted that the final report received bipartisan support, although it was not unanimously endorsed by all 12 commissioners. Of the 9 who supported it, 4 were appointed by Democrats and 5 were appointed by Republicans. The three dissenting commissioners were appointees of the Bush Administration.

Finally, the Regional CEO's have agreed to submit a joint letter in response to the Commission report. The letter, which will be completed within the next few days, is expected to be largely supportive of the Commission's findings.

A hard copy of the Commission report will be delivered to each board member. The report may be viewed online at www.transportationfortomorrow.org and a brief summary of the report is attached.

Recap of Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority Board Meeting

Yesterday, the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority (Expo) Board held its regular meeting in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room (381B) in the

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration.

During the meeting, the Expo Board took the following actions:

- Authorized the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to issue a Notice-to-Proceed for Contract Package B2, Corridor Improvements between Vermont Avenue and Harcourt Avenue, including soil remediation within the railroad right of way, to FCI/Flour/Parsons (FFP), a joint venture, in a total amount not-to-exceed \$55,829,225;
- Authorized the CEO to negotiate and execute a Contract Change Order to Contract Package A3, Trench Construction, to compensate the Design/Build Contractor, FFP, for the additional cost of Cast in Drilled Holes (CIDH) pile construction due to excessive caving in an amount not-to-exceed \$450,000;
- Authorized the CEO to execute a two-year contract with Jones & Stokes, with an additional single-year option, for Environmental Compliance Services; and
- Receive and file monthly report on CEO authorized contracts.

The item pertaining to the Farmdale grade crossing was carried over to the next meeting, which is scheduled for February 7, 2008.

Metro Blue Line [Service Alert](#)

Beginning Tuesday, January 15 at 9:00 p.m. and continuing through Wednesday, January 16 until close of service, system maintenance is scheduled on the Metro Blue Line. Northbound trains to Los Angeles will run 7-8 minutes later than regular schedule, beginning from Transit Mall at 8:48 p.m. and every 20 minutes through 11:29 p.m. Trains to Wardlow Station will run 8 minutes later than regular schedule between 11:49 p.m. and 1:09 a.m., then at 1:21 a.m. and 1:41 a.m. Southbound trains to Long Beach will leave 7th/Metro Center on regular schedule.

Also, on Wednesday, January 16 and Thursday, January 17, crews will be performing emergency Blue Line track repairs at Stockwell Street, south of Imperial/Wilmington Station. Trains will run every 20 minutes between 8:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (northbound) and 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (southbound) on both days.

Correction: Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, [Notice of Full Street Closure](#) – First Street Bridge

Yesterday's Daily Brief included an item regarding the Notice of Full Street Closure for the First Street Bridge. The notice stated a starting date of Monday, January 21. However, a new notice has been issued with a new starting date of Monday, January 28, 2008. This closure is part of the continuing construction

activities for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, which entails the construction of a guideway across the intersection of Mission Road and First Street.

What: Closure of northbound and southbound thru lanes on Mission Road at the First Street intersection. Right turns will be allowed.

When: Beginning on January 28, 2008. Closure will be continuous on a 24-hour basis for approximately one month, weather permitting.

Where: Mission Road at First Street.

What to expect:

- Truck drivers are advised not to take the North and South 101 Freeway off-ramps at Mission Road. Instead take the 101 Freeway off-ramps at First Street, travel westbound on First Street, to southbound Utah, and to westbound Third Street. The Fourth Street off-ramps are also an option.
- For access to North 101 Freeway on-ramp proceed east on First Street.
- For access to South 101 Freeway, North 5 Freeway, and South 5 Freeway on-ramps proceed east on Fourth Street.

Note: To mitigate a lengthy impact to the community, this closure is being conducted in conjunction with the one month closure of the First Street Bridge.

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