



**Metro**

# Daily Brief

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**CEO Roger Snoble**

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## **Board Chair and CEO Champion Our Priorities on Capitol Hill**

Board Chair Pam O'Connor and I returned last night from Washington, D.C., where we spent two days on Capitol Hill visiting with our congressional delegation to discuss our legislative agenda and brief them on the status of current and future capital projects and programs. Spending time with our congressional members well in advance of budget and appropriations season gave us an opportunity to lay the groundwork and build support for our priorities. It made for a very productive two days in Washington.

In addition, Board Chair O'Connor and I met with top officials from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Transit Administration. During a meeting with Tyler Duvall (Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy) and David Horner (Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy), we highlighted the benefits of our proposed congestion reduction demonstration project and discussed the various elements of our proposal. Assistant Secretary Duvall indicated that our application is being carefully reviewed by DOT staff. He further acknowledged that the Administration would greatly welcome the opportunity to showcase the potential of congestion pricing in Los Angeles. At the same time, DOT officials were not prepared to indicate whether our proposal will be selected. In addition, DOT informed us that the Administration plans to internally select grant winners in late February, although a public announcement may not occur until March or even April.

It should be noted that the President's proposed budget for FY 2009 will be transmitted to Congress next Monday, February 4th. At that time, we will learn more about the Administration's funding requests as they pertain to the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension and possibly the Wilshire Boulevard Bus Only Lane Project. Further details will be provided following release of the President's

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budget.

### **Los Angeles City Council Approves High-Speed Transport Authority JPA**

Today, the Los Angeles City Council approved a High-Speed Transport Authority Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) setting forth a high speed rail corridor from West Los Angeles to the Ontario Airport with intermediate stations at Los Angeles Union Station and West Covina. The project would be governed by an eight member Board with four voting members. The City of Los Angeles would have two voting members and the Cities of Ontario and West Covina would each have one voting member. SCAG, SANBAG, Caltrans and Metro are the four non-voting members. Except for SCAG, the other non-voting members are not parties to this agreement. SCAG will allocate funds to assist the JPA's planning activities. No other funding commitments are being made at this time. This project is not included in our draft Long Range Transportation Plan.

### **Los Angeles City Council Held a Meeting on Transportation**

Yesterday, the Los Angeles City Council held their Single Topic Meeting on Transportation and heard reports from transportation stakeholders from the public and private sectors. City Council President Eric Garcetti and Transportation Committee Chair Wendy Greuel provided context to the transportation issues facing the City. Assemblymember Mike Feuer provided an overview of his State legislative bill package, which includes sales tax authority for Metro, infrastructure financing districts, lowering the voter threshold for sales taxes to pay transportation bonds, establishing a statewide transportation funding taskforce, and authority to place a carbon fee on the ballot. Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) General Manager Rita Robinson and Los Angeles Department of Planning General Manager Gail Goldberg provided an overview of their plans to address transportation and planning issues in the City. The City Council recognized that transportation and planning are intertwined and that both departments must work closely together.

Government Relations Manager Michael Turner participated on the "New Funding and Potential Funding Sources" panel that included Ian Simpson from Deloitte Touche, Denny Zane from the Los Angeles Transportation Funding Collaborative, and Professor Gen Giuliano from USC. The panel provided an overview of the current transportation funding structure and the potential for new funding sources such as sales tax initiatives and congestion pricing. The City Council raised concerns regarding Los Angeles County receiving its fair share of transportation dollars from the State and Federal governments. They also recognized that the current transportation funding sources are dwindling and that new funding sources must be established to make long term investments in the City's transportation infrastructure.

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Council President Eric Garcetti presented a motion to direct LADOT and the Planning Department to work with transportation stakeholders to improve transportation including, a Call for Projects proposal to turn Western Avenue into a walkable pedestrian friendly corridor, extending Red Line service to 24 hours, providing additional Park and Ride lots near the Red Line, establish incentives for private and public sectors to carpool and providing wireless access on city buses. The City Council meeting concluded with a discussion on the City's transportation strategic plan with John Rist, Office of Transportation, City of Portland, Al Foxx, Department of Transportation, City of Baltimore and representatives from the Southern California Association of Governments.

### **Media Inquiry into the Westside Extension Transit Corridor Study Community Update Meetings**

The Los Angeles Times, Daily News and LAist Blog have inquired about our upcoming community update meetings for the Westside Extension Transit Corridor Study. The project team consolidated nearly 500 public comments during its six early scoping community meetings late last year, and will present a representative sample of the alternatives to be evaluated in further detail at three community meetings, January 31st, February 5th and February 6th. In all, the project team will present 17 fixed route alternatives along both the Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevard alignments, as well as a no-build option and one that depends only on bus service additions. Among the comments received during early scoping, most public comments favored a subway system rather than aerial/monorail, light rail transit or bus rapid transit, though support was expressed for all modes. Additionally, a Wilshire corridor alignment was generally favored. Many comments, however, expressed support for transit service improvements in both corridors. Following these meetings, the project team will evaluate the performance of alternatives against identified criteria such as project feasibility, public acceptance and cost-effectiveness as it prepares its Board recommendation for a locally preferred alternative this summer. Stories are expected to run tomorrow.

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