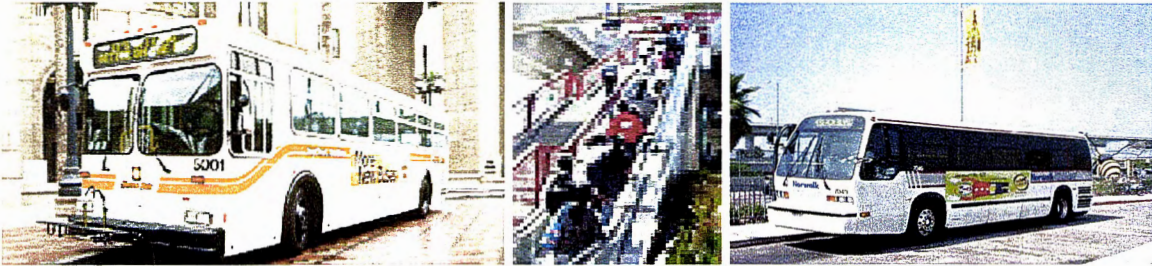


# *Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study*

## *DRAFT Final Report*



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# **Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study Executive Summary**

## **Introduction and Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to identify and evaluate opportunities to improve existing local and regional fixed-route bus transit services, transit facilities, and community-level transit and paratransit systems serving the Southeast study area. It is intended as a follow-on study to the Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study (SABRE), completed in August 2000.

The SABRE study collected a wealth of transit-related data in the study area and made several sound recommendations regarding restructuring alternatives. In the late stages of that study, a suggestion arose to look more closely at community-based services in the Southeast area. Given that the SABRE study was in its final stages and the extent of the effort required to meet this suggestion fully, the decision was made to complete the SABRE study and conduct a supplemental study to address community-based services. This supplemental study has assessed needs and opportunities related to the various local transit systems operating in the study area through close consultation with all affected parties (including Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Norwalk Transit System (NTS), Montebello Bus Lines (MBL), the County of Los Angeles, and the cities of Norwalk, Whittier, Santa Fe Springs, Pico Rivera, and La Mirada), innovative outreach efforts to gather community input, and additional data analysis.

The project team's approach for this study has been to build on previous work in the SABRE study, relying as much as possible on information and analyses gathered and conducted in that study. The intention of this study is not to re-invent the wheel, but to build on the relevant findings of the previous study.

This executive summary includes major findings and recommendations from each phase of this study. Specific sections below summarize previous findings, the needs assessment, study goals and guiding principles, subregional service recommendations, and funding and institutional arrangements.

## **Findings of Previous Studies**

The review of the SABRE study resulted in the following findings:

- ◆ Recommendations related to local service were not specific. This study needs to examine local transit services much more closely.
- ◆ Several recommendations related to regional service have been implemented. Norwalk Transit has assumed operation of the eastern segment of MTA Line 125. Line 18 has been truncated at Garfield Avenue. MBL has assumed operation of MTA Line 104. Line 466 has been discontinued.
- ◆ Reasons for not implementing other regional recommendations include:



- Whittwood Mall declined the opportunity to establish a transit center on its property. This affected all proposals that truncated or extended service to this location.
- The I-105/I-605 Green Line Station bus facility is at capacity and cannot serve additional routes without expansion.
- Proposed truncation of Line 121 would not produce significant cost savings.
- The need for three additional express routes to downtown Los Angeles is still being evaluated.

MTA has indicated that these regional recommendations are still valid if conditions change, i.e., if the new owners of Whittwood Mall agree to a transit center and when the I-105/I-605 Green Line station bus facility is expanded.

- ◆ The SABRE study noted that this subregion was not transit-oriented, with the minor exception of a high concentration of senior citizens clustering around Whittier Boulevard in Whittier. With regard to travel patterns, the previous study found that internal trips tended to be by modes other than transit. This might reflect a general tendency not to use transit for short trips, but could also suggest a need for additional community-based transit services.
- ◆ The project team has determined that there is no need for additional data collection activities. The extensive data collection effort undertaken as part of the original study has produced a wealth of useful information.

### Needs Assessment

Based on the technical analyses, workshop findings, roundtable results, focus groups discussions, and survey responses, the most critical needs to be addressed through this study include:

- ◆ **Connections across municipal boundaries and any accompanying institutional changes** to facilitate provision of such service.
- ◆ **Coordination** to minimize/eliminate duplication. On the fixed route side, this could involve an examination of regional versus local bus service and a reconsideration of operator responsibilities in line with MTA's tiered approach. On the paratransit side, the need for better coordination of services among the various providers is a major element.
- ◆ **Service in the unincorporated area of the County** within this study area. While several regional routes serve this area, County representatives have expressed interest in additional community-based services.
- ◆ **Efficiency and effectiveness.** These important factors can be addressed through consideration of cross-boundary services and coordination of services to minimize duplication, but must also be included in any evaluation of potential new services and institutional changes.
- ◆ **Development or expansion of transit centers.** The I-105/I-605 Green Line Station and the Norwalk Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center are major intermodal facilities



within the study area, and opportunities to expand their role as transit hubs need to be identified and explored.

- ◆ **Customer orientation.** The focus groups discussions particularly revealed the need to focus on reliability, safety, travel time, and amenities. Addressing these issues is part of ongoing campaigns for all transit operators in the area, and is beyond the scope of this study. However, these factors cut across all areas. As alternatives are developed, service or institutional options that enhance these factors deserve priority.

### Study Goals and Guiding Principles

The process of reviewing SABRE study results and sifting through the needs assessment findings yielded eight goals for this study:

1. **Address unmet and undermet travel needs.** These have been identified primarily through the workshop, focus groups, and roundtable discussion. The most pressing needs are additional transit service in the unincorporated County areas and cross-jurisdictional trips.
2. **Analyze opportunities for service coordination and integration.** This goal requires careful consideration of community versus regional travel needs, and the most appropriate way of meeting each need. Provision of seamless connections and consistent information across all operators and services is an important objective. In addition, identification of common transfer points for adjacent demand response services is another means to improve service coordination.
3. **Emphasize connectivity with regional transit network.** The study area has two major intermodal transfer sites, the I-105/I-605 Green Line Station and the Norwalk Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center. Several regional bus routes also serve the area.
4. **Enhance cost-efficiency and effectiveness of transit service within the subregion.** Steps have been taken recently to meet this goal in terms of a reevaluation of community versus regional service. MTA has transferred operation of routes or route segments to municipal operators where the service was local in nature. There also may be opportunities to achieve economies of scale in local transit services; an example of this is the operation of the Santa Fe Springs Tram by Norwalk Transit. Strategies to increase the effectiveness of demand responsive service are another aspect of this goal.
5. **Make use of existing subregional resources.** Two major municipal operators (Norwalk Transit System and Montebello Bus Lines) serve this area, as do MTA and Metrolink regional services, and municipal fixed route and demand response services. Together, these resources are an important benefit to the subregion and can be deployed to maximize benefits to transit riders. These municipal operators provide service beyond city boundaries and thus connect the entire sub-region. Economies of scale may be achieved by having the major municipal operators assume operation of other local services, thus reducing administrative burdens for localities while taking advantage of the expertise offered by the major municipal operators.



6. **Identify institutional changes to support transit in the study area.** Actions identified in furtherance of this goal will encourage cooperation, improve funding opportunities, and incorporate the new MTA sector approach.
7. **Extend positive aspects of previous study.** The project team has taken advantage of the extensive data collection for fixed route services, to avoid re-inventing the wheel. The previous study also developed sound recommendations for regional service that can still be advanced.
8. **Build consensus among affected agencies.** This is the key underlying goal of this study. Any study is necessarily a snapshot in time. Going forward, the consensus-building process will encourage and provide opportunities to continue to work together in developing solutions to emerging problems and issues.

The ultimate purpose of this study is to develop concrete recommendations for improving transit service within the study area in line with the goals. Working with the project steering committee, the project team developed a series of guiding principles for use in the development of specific proposals. The six guiding principles are:

- ◆ Address cross-jurisdictional trips, particularly among demand responsive systems
- ◆ Provide service in under-served areas to ensure service equity within the study area
- ◆ Encourage efficiency and economies of scale in fixed route services
- ◆ Emphasize connectivity to intermodal facilities at rail stations
- ◆ Ease transferring by establishing common transfer points
- ◆ Develop an institutional framework to carry out study proposals and to guide the future development of transit within the study area

### **Subregional Service Recommendations**

Service recommendations were developed in response to several key issues, as noted below.

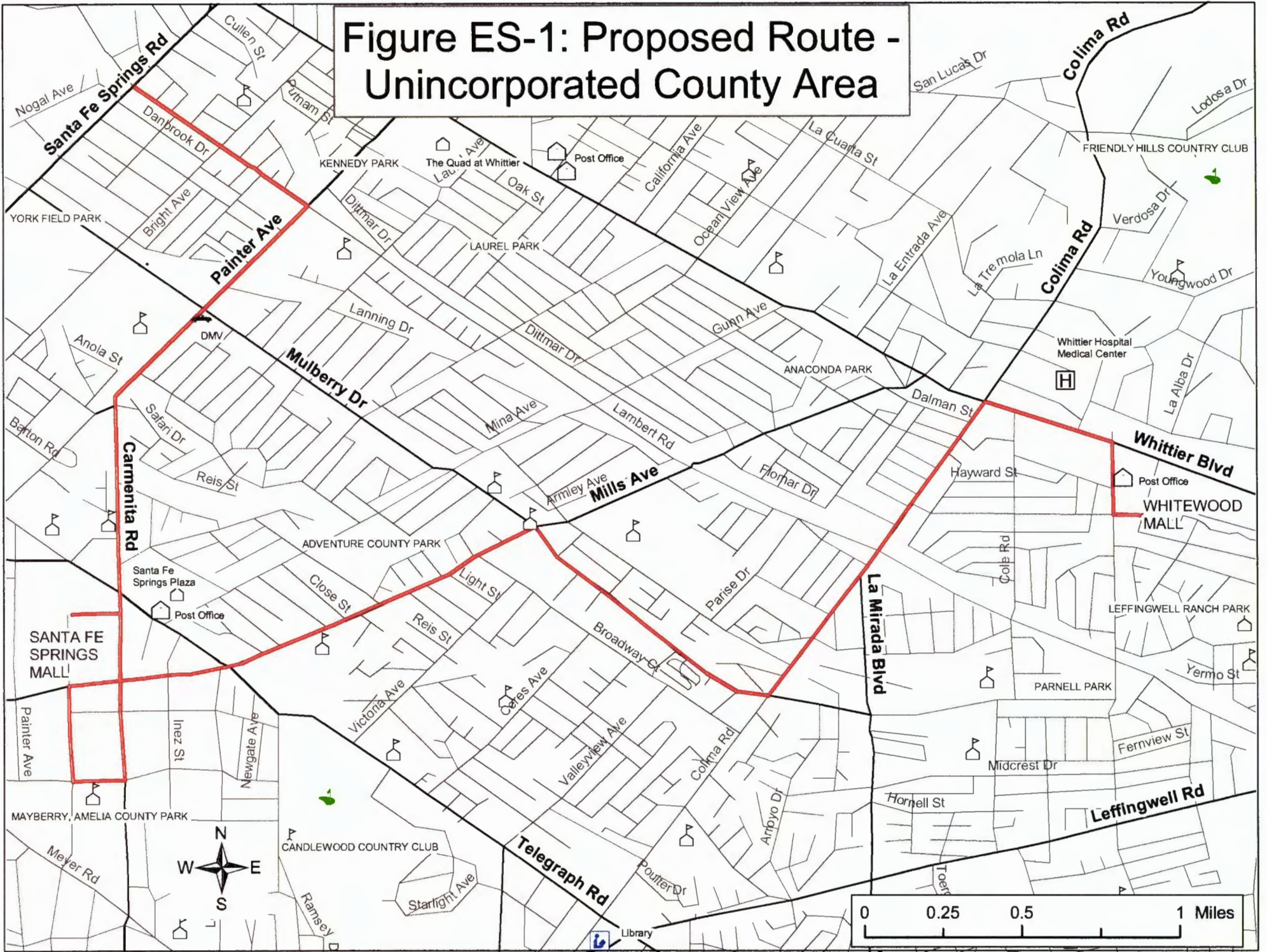
#### ***Unmet Needs***

1. The County should establish a new fixed-route shuttle in the unincorporated County area. This route, shown in Figure ES-1, would:
  - ◆ Connect with Whittwood Mall and Santa Fe Springs Mall (Target) via Colima – Mulberry – Mills
  - ◆ Also serve Santa Fe Springs Plaza and the Community Center
  - ◆ Extend northward via Painter to serve Whittier Health Clinic and Presbyterian Hospital, and possibly south to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center during peak hours





# Figure ES-1: Proposed Route - Unincorporated County Area





One of the municipal systems could operate this route, or operation could be contracted to a private contractor. One possibility is to contract operation of this route with the Los Nietos shuttle. Cost estimates under several different service scenarios are provided in Chapter 5, and range from \$117,000 to \$322,000 depending on days and hours of service.

2. The County should modify the vehicle deployment practices of the County's contractor and track ridership response by:
  - a) Returning to service the two vehicles in the County fleet that had been removed for reasons of underutilization;
  - b) Assigning vehicles to specific groups of pockets to increase the vehicle availability in these areas; and
  - c) Reviewing the agreement with the contractor and possibly suspending clauses regarding vehicle productivity thresholds during a pilot period of at least twelve months to eighteen months.

The County should consider assigning one group of vehicles to the Whittier area pockets and a second group of vehicles to the Rowland Heights and La Puente area pockets.

3. The County should conduct a more detailed review and analysis of passenger trip-making patterns to determine whether current service area designations effectively match reasonable trip requests from County residents; e.g. review the destinations commonly served or commonly requested to identify destination-rich areas and to determine what fit or misfit may exist with current service area designations.
4. The County should review service operating hours and budget capabilities to determine feasibility of offering limited weekend service hours.
5. Depending upon changes instituted, the County should employ a variety of rider education techniques to advise County residents of service changes.
6. The County may consider defining some performance standards that allow it to determine what needs may be "reasonable to meet" and which cannot; such standards may reflect farebox recovery ratios or other productivity measures.

### ***Service Coordination and Integration***

1. Whittier should continue its discussions with Montebello Bus Lines and Norwalk Transit and reach an agreement to contract its fixed route service with one or both of these operators. MBL's Line 40 might be reconfigured to serve critical segments of Whittier's routes. Norwalk Transit could also provide service within Whittier, possibly in conjunction with the proposed Metrolink commuter shuttle. This study makes no recommendation regarding which municipal operator should be selected, because this is properly a matter for the City of Whittier to decide, but this study does strongly endorse the concept that Montebello Bus Lines and/or Norwalk Transit assume operation of Whittier Transit's fixed route system.
2. Whittier can reinvest any savings from contracting its fixed route service in other transit-eligible projects. A formal expansion of the dial-a-ride service area is not recommended



at this time, because the other options are identified for the County to enhance paratransit service in the unincorporated area, but cross-jurisdictional trips should be provided as needed to Whittier residents. In this regard, Whittier has received incentive funds with La Habra Heights that assist the cities in expanding and coordinating paratransit service areas.

3. La Mirada should examine its transportation program to determine whether it could provide more cost-effective general public transit through fixed-route or deviating fixed-route services. La Mirada should retain traditional demand response services, but it is recommended that this focus on seniors and persons with disabilities. The goal of a fixed-route service would be to serve general public trips with more time-sensitive transit options. Options and cost estimates for fixed-route service in La Mirada are presented in Chapter 5.
4. Santa Fe Springs and Norwalk, using their incentive funding program, should develop a coordinated demand response program that can offer a greater range of trips to Santa Fe Springs' residents and may provide Norwalk residents with increased quantities of service and areas of travel. Service could become a model for the subregion. Operational choices include brokering trips through dispatch across the two operators or consolidating use of selected vehicles under a single operation.
5. Jurisdictions should develop and maintain listings of "senior-friendly" transfer locations for seniors and persons with disabilities to share initially with dispatch offices and, at a later date, with the ridership populations.
6. Jurisdictions should encourage use of joint transfer locations at mutually convenient sites to facilitate cross-jurisdictional travel for their riders (see also recommendation #8 below).
7. Jurisdictions should develop record-keeping capabilities that enable capturing out-of-the-area travel requests and trips provided; such data may be used for subsequent service proposals or service realignments.
8. Jurisdictions are encouraged to explore operational coordination of demand response services where such efforts will not degrade existing service levels while expanding the mobility of eligible residents. These efforts could include common operating hours, coordinated fare media, and potentially coordinated dispatch.

### ***Connectivity with the Regional Transit Network***

1. Expand the current Santa Fe Springs program that provides on-call shuttle service from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center to business locations within the City. This expansion could take two forms: service to additional business locations, possibly in the south end of the City; and service meeting additional trains.
2. Implement the proposed shuttle from Whittier to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center. This shuttle, which is already funded, will provide direct express or limited-stop service during peak hours.



3. Continue to explore the idea of an express regional connection from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center to LAX via I-105, and implement if feasible and if all parties agree.
4. As part of the proposed shuttle serving the unincorporated County area (noted above), consider at least a peak-hour connection to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center.
5. Establish limited-stop service on selected peak-hour trips for Norwalk Transit's Line 4. By stopping at only major intersections (e.g., Beach, La Mirada, Valley View, Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center, and the Green Line station), this service would encourage the use of transit to and from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center and Green Line stations.

### **Regional Recommendations**

The original SABRE study included several sound recommendations for changes to MTA regional bus service within this subregion. Several recommendations, including the transfer of the eastern segment of Line 125 to Norwalk Transit operation as Line 5, truncation of Line 18 at Garfield Avenue (replaced by MBL Line 40), transfer of Line 104 to MBL, and discontinuation of Line 466, have already been implemented. Other recommendations included route truncations and extensions and the establishment of new routes:

1. Move forward with the recommended extension of Line 108 to Whittwood Mall, assuming that space is available at this location.
2. Truncate Line 111/113 at the Green Line Station when sufficient space is available, and begin a new shuttle between this location and Whittwood Mall.
3. Truncate Line 121 at the Green Line Station when sufficient space is available and if this allows cost savings or other changes to the route. As noted earlier, there is no room to add bus routes at the Green Line station. MTA also has not moved to implement this recommendation because truncating the route would not reduce peak bus requirements under the current schedule, but would merely add unproductive recovery time.
4. Prioritize the new express routes proposed in the original study and begin implementation as appropriate. Although not a short-term recommendation, establishment of express bus routes between this subregion and Orange County after the HOV lane on I-5 is extended north received an enthusiastic response whenever it was raised during the public outreach.

### **Funding and Service Coordination**

1. Recognizing that there is a scarcity of available local funds and public subsidies for transit, a "mix" of transit funding sources must be used in order to fund recommended transit service alternatives. Local jurisdictions should work to leverage and maximize local funding allocations and other transit subsidies through coordination with other cities in the study area and by actively seeking external funding for transit projects.





2. A significant amount of local, state, and federal funding is allocated through the MTA Call for Projects Funding application process. Local jurisdictions in the study area should work cooperatively with the MTA in the planning and development of projects to ensure MTA understanding of community-based priorities and support for projects.
3. Cities within the study area should view the gradual implementation and development of both city-specific and coordinated multi-jurisdictional transit projects as wholly interrelated and necessary to develop a cohesive transportation network in the Southeast.
4. Cities in the study area should continue to work beyond the study effort to cooperatively and collectively plan and implement community-based transit service alternatives identified in the study.
5. Service and funding coordination at the community level should include a "programmatic" localized planning process designed to identify, prioritize and develop funding mechanisms for transit services and projects consistent with local and regional needs. This coordinated approach to planning and development of community-based transit services will help to:
  - a. Sustain the current focus and awareness on community-based transit needs established during the study;
  - b. Ensure gradual yet consistent progress toward improving mobility in the study area;
  - c. Promote service equity and increased cooperation between jurisdictions and transit agencies;
  - d. Improve service connectivity and access to transit by riders;
  - e. Provide opportunities for cost sharing and maximization of available transit funding; and
  - f. Provide greater opportunities for local jurisdictions to actively participate in the transit planning and funding process by leveraging community influence and coordination.

### **Institutional Arrangements**

In consideration of changes to the transit planning and operating environment in the Southeast (i.e., LACMTA Southeast Sector activities), there are two institutional options that are being recommended to assist cities in the planning, development and funding of community-based transit services.

*Option 1:* Cooperative agreement/MOU between cities that designates a lead municipal transit operator and/or local jurisdiction responsible for administration of the agreement and other agreed upon responsibilities. The lead agency, study area cities and the Gateway COG would participate in a structured planning process each year leading to the development of community-based service projects, including but not limited to, prioritization of projects, identification of funding options and implementation of services. The LACMTA would participate as a non-voting "accepted" partner at the discretion of the cities. This approach will provide the basis for cooperative planning, development and funding of projects in the study area.

*Option 2:* Establishment of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) comprised of study area cities with a lead municipal transit operator/local jurisdiction responsible for administration and oversight of JPA activities and responsibilities discussed in Option 1.



The study proposes the following institutional recommendation:

1. Cities in the study area should establish a formalized institutional arrangement that is easy to administer and consistent with LACMTA current plans for the Southeast and other transit funding plans (i.e. programming of projects). The recommended option is a cooperative agreement based on an MOU among all parties, with the City of Norwalk designated as the lead agency as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee for this study. This option is recommended for several reasons:
  - a. Simplicity
  - b. Ease of implementation
  - c. Flexibility
  - d. Effectiveness in achieving its goal
  - e. Ability to encompass the MTA Sector as an accepted partner

In the original goals for the study, we cited “achieving consensus” among the Cities, County, and participating agencies as a critical outcome of this study. An MOU-based process is in some ways a more formalized extension of the steering committee that has guided study progress to date. The process is sufficiently flexible to address the concerns of individual agency participants, and can also maximize funding opportunities for critical transit projects in the subregion.

The summary of study recommendations in the Executive Summary ties together specific service recommendations within an institutional approach designed to continue dialogue among the various public agencies in the subregion and to maximize funding opportunities for innovative programs that can emerge from this dialogue. In this context, it is important to note that the restructuring of MTA into sectors with considerable responsibility and discretion at the subregional level works very well with our proposed institutional arrangements. The institutional approach within the Southeast subregion could prove to be an effective model for other area teams.



# Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify and evaluate opportunities to improve existing local and regional fixed-route bus transit services, transit facilities, and community-level transit and paratransit systems serving the Southeast study area. It is intended as a follow-on study to the Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study (SABRE), completed in August 2000.

The SABRE study collected a wealth of transit-related data in the study area and made several sound recommendations regarding restructuring alternatives. In the late stages of that study, a suggestion arose to look more closely at community-based services in the Southeast area. Given that the SABRE study was in its final stages and the extent of the effort required to meet this suggestion fully, the decision was made to complete the SABRE study and conduct a supplemental study to address community-based services. This supplemental study has assessed needs and opportunities related to the various local transit systems operating in the study area through close consultation with all affected parties (including Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Norwalk Transit System (NTS), Montebello Bus Lines (MBL), the County of Los Angeles, and the cities of Norwalk, Whittier, Santa Fe Springs, Pico Rivera, and La Mirada), innovative outreach efforts to gather community input, and additional data analysis.

Project goals or purposes are intended to encompass the perspectives of current and potential transit riders, transit operators serving the study area, and policymakers considering the best means of organizing and delivering transit services. Specific project purposes included:

- ◆ **Unmet and undermet needs.** These needs may involve geographic coverage, service spans, or simply the ability to get to major destinations conveniently. The original study considered these issues, but the importance of identifying significant mobility needs of riders and potential riders that are not being fully met by existing transit services suggests that additional public outreach and technical analysis constitutes an important part of this study.
- ◆ **Operational changes.** Customer needs also spill over to this area, but the focus here is on how transit operators within the study area can best meet these needs. Service coordination and integration are key aspects of operational changes proposed here.
- ◆ **Institutional changes.** Policymakers and planners have a keen interest in the cost-effective provision of public services. Opportunities to enhance the cost-effectiveness of fixed-route and paratransit services as currently organized are explored, along with potential changes to existing organizational structures that would result in more cost-effective operation.

### 1.1 Study Area Boundaries



One issue affecting the original SABRE study was that its study area was much larger. This supplemental study is concerned with a more tightly defined geographic area, shown in Figure 1-1. The study area includes the Cities of La Mirada, Norwalk, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, and Whittier and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The study area is bounded:

- ◆ On the West by the San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo
- ◆ On the North by the northernmost edge of the 90601 zip code (to the west) and the Whittier City Limit (to the east)
- ◆ On the East by the Whittier City Limit and the Los Angeles-Orange County line
- ◆ On the South by the Los Angeles-Orange County line (to the east) and the Santa Fe Springs and Norwalk City Limits (to the west)

Figure 1-1 also includes all transit routes serving the study area. Transit service is provided by MTA, Norwalk Transit System, Montebello Bus Lines, Whittier Transit, and the Cities of La Mirada, Pico Rivera, and Santa Fe Springs. The City of Santa Fe Springs contracts with Norwalk Transit to operate the Tram.

## **1.2 Approach**

The project team's approach for this study has been to build on previous work in the SABRE study, relying as much as possible on information and analyses gathered and conducted in that study. Other existing studies are expected to be relevant to this project as well. The intention of this study is not to re-invent the wheel, but to analyze issues that were not fully addressed in the previous study.

Three issues emerged as critical to the success of this project. The first was how current and potential transit riders view the transit network in the study area. What are its strengths and weaknesses? Are there specific unmet needs? If so, for what types of trips (work, medical, shopping, etc.)? Did the previous study adequately address connections to regional services such as the LACMTA Green Line and regional bus routes? Is circulation within and between neighboring cities in the study area a high priority?

The second key issue was the need to obtain buy-in to the study among community groups and major employers. The project team conducted a series of roundtables, workshops, and focus groups to encourage community input and provide feedback to the project team regarding potential changes.

Finally, involvement of the cities, the County, and transit agencies in the study area was critical in the development of a plan responsive to area concerns. It was very important to include these localities and agencies in this study, both in the early phases of identifying and developing alternatives and also in the later phases of advancing recommendations.

Thus, as this study unfolded, it involved not merely the integration and coordination of transit services, but the establishment of communication forums involving members of the public, civic and community groups, and governmental agencies. Only an open and interactive public outreach process could successfully identify critical issues and build consensus on proposed solutions.





# Figure 1-1: Study Area





### **1.3 Outline of This Report**

Technical analysis of travel patterns, transit system performance, and integration of services across operators and modes is an important component of any study of this nature. Fortunately, the SABRE study provided a strong technical foundation for this work. Much of the data needed had already been collected and analyzed, and is summarized in Chapter 2.

The project team was able to go beyond the previous study's analysis and findings as the public participation process brought new issues and concerns to light. Chapter 3 presents the needs assessment, which includes an analysis of travel patterns and transit orientation summarized from the preceding study as well as the findings from focus groups, roundtables, and workshops.

Careful consideration of the technical analysis from the SABRE study and the results of our initial public outreach efforts led to the development of study goals and guiding principles (Chapter 4) for this project. These served as tools for ongoing discussions with the Technical Committee as part of the consensus building process critical to this study.

Chapter 5 presents subregional service recommendations that emerged from this process. Questions regarding how these recommendations might best be implemented and (more broadly) how the momentum built up around this project and these recommendations can be continued into the future led to an analysis of funding and institutional arrangements, presented in Chapter 6.

The summary of study recommendations in the Executive Summary ties together specific service recommendations within an institutional approach designed to continue dialogue among the various public agencies in the subregion and to maximize funding opportunities for innovative programs that can emerge from this dialogue. In this context, it is important to note that the restructuring of MTA into sectors with considerable responsibility and discretion at the subregional level works very well with our proposed institutional arrangements. The institutional approach within the Southeast subregion could prove to be an effective model for other area teams.



## **Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study Chapter 2 – Review of Existing Studies**

### **2.0 Introduction**

The first task in this study is to review the extensive information collected by the SABRE study. This serves a twofold purpose: to gain a thorough understanding of what has been done to date, and to determine what additional data (if any) are needed to complete this study.

Section 2.1 of this report reviews the general findings and recommendations from the SABRE study as they relate to the specific study area (essentially Subarea 4 of the original study). Section 2.2 examines the findings of the “Unmet Transit Needs” portion of the SABRE study, including the Residential Transit Orientation Index (a measure of the propensity of residents in particular neighborhoods to use transit) and the analysis of travel patterns. Section 2.3 is a summary of findings and conclusions.

### **2.1 General Findings and Recommendations of the SABRE Study**

The following are the major findings and recommendations of the SABRE study that are relevant for this study:

- ◆ A large proportion of residents commute to work within their home subarea, but the transit mode share is low for the journey to work. One possible reason (not stated in the SABRE study) is the short distance of these work trips. It may also be that transit is not providing adequate service for these short trips.
- ◆ The I-105/I-605 Green Line station is the major transit hub in the area. The Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center also serves as a hub, providing connections to Metrolink commuter rail service.
- ◆ A major bus center is proposed in the Whittwood Mall area. Opposition by the mall owners prevented implementation of this recommendation, but new owners recently purchased the Whittwood Mall and may be more receptive to a transit center concept.
- ◆ Public comments focused on the following areas:
  - Schedule adherence
  - Additional buses
  - Improved frequencies
  - Extended weekend/night service
  - Better connections
  - Advance notice of changes
  - Bus condition, particularly cleanliness
  - Facility condition and amenities
  - Safety
- ◆ SABRE study recommendations included:
  - Change 40-minute all day services to 30-minute peak and 60-minute off-peak.



- Provide more direct local services. Local services are currently very circuitous.
  - Coordinate municipal routes and schedules
  - Establish new express services to Orange County when HOV lanes are opened from I-605 to the County line. These would provide an additional choice for commuters, along with Metrolink service at the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center).
  - Establish additional north-south connections between key locations:
    - El Monte Station
    - Downtown Whittier
    - Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center
    - I-105/I-605 Green Line Station
  - Emphasize provision of transit information at Transit Centers (possible demonstration project at I-105/I-605 Green Line station)
- ◆ SABRE specific route recommendations included:
- Truncate MTA Line 18 at Garfield Avenue, with an extended MBL Line 40 providing local service along Whittier Boulevard to Whittwood Mall.
  - Truncate MTA Line 104 (now MBL Line 50) at Whittwood Mall and transfer operation to MBL
  - Truncate MTA Lines 111/311 at the I-105/I-605 Green Line Station and establish a new community line between I-105/I-605 Green Line Station and Whittwood Mall
  - Truncate MTA Line 121 at I-105/I-605 Green Line Station and expand the span of service for NTS Line 4
  - Truncate MTA Line 125 at I-105/I-605 Green Line Station and replace the eastern segment with a new community line
  - Establish three new express lines to Downtown Los Angeles:
    - Via Firestone and the Harbor Freeway (Line 415)
    - Via Florence and Harbor Freeway (Line 411)
    - Via I-105 and Harbor Freeway (extending south beyond the study area to Hawaiian Gardens), replacing Line 362
  - Extend MTA Line 108 to Whittwood Mall via Slauson and Mulberry
  - Straighten MTA Line 270 between Whittier and Norwalk, allow NTS Line 1 to assume discontinued segments
  - Discontinue MTA Line 466
  - Begin smart shuttles in La Mirada to replace MTA fixed-route service
- ◆ SABRE transit center recommendations included:
- New transit centers at the following locations:
    - Los Cerritos Center
    - I-105/I-605 Green Line Station (“destined to become a major transit hub”)
    - Whittwood Mall (10-12 routes)
  - Sub-regional transit centers at the following locations:
    - La Mirada – Santa Gertrudes & La Mirada
    - Pico Rivera – Telegraph and Rosemead
    - Montebello Metrolink Station





- Local transit centers at the following locations:
  - Whittier Transportation Center, a restored historic train depot in Downtown Whittier (recommended as a local transit center because current bus volumes are viewed as insufficient in scale to serve as a regional transit center)
  - Downtown Norwalk

## **2.2 Unmet Needs**

The SABRE study used two primary means to estimate unmet needs. The first is a Residential Transit Orientation Index, originally developed at the University of South Florida, that provides an effective tool to identify residential areas with a high propensity to use transit. When used in conjunction with operating and service-related data, it can assist in evaluating unmet needs within the study area. The second means to estimate unmet needs relies on an analysis of travel patterns for work and non-work trips. Travel patterns were compared to the transit route network to identify any “missing links.”

### **2.2.1 Residential Transit Orientation Index**

The Residential Transit Orientation Index (RTOI) compares census block groups within Los Angeles County with respect to five key variables related to propensity to use transit:

- ◆ Population in poverty
- ◆ Zero vehicle households
- ◆ Elderly population
- ◆ Youth population
- ◆ Residential density

For each variable, a score is assigned to each census block group based upon how that block group compares to the countywide average. The score is derived using a comparative probability estimation method. A composite score is then obtained for each census block group by summing the scores for each of the five individual variables. These composite scores are then ranked and assigned to one of five transit orientation groups (very high, high, moderate, low, and other) based upon how each compares to the average score for the county as a whole.

RTOI findings indicated a low to moderate orientation to transit throughout the study area, with few exceptions. The exceptions were neighborhoods adjacent to transit routes. A further examination of the individual components of the RTOI revealed that there were concentrations of elderly residents in areas clustering around Whittier Boulevard in Whittier. The Whittier corridor is well served by transit.

### **2.2.2 Travel Patterns**

The SABRE study analyzed travel patterns at the subarea level. Subarea 4 corresponds to the study area for this supplemental study, so the results related to Subarea 4 are reported here. The results have been reworked from the original study to show all travel patterns accounting for at least 7.5 percent of trip origins or destinations for trips beginning or ending in the supplemental study area. This breakpoint worked best for capturing significant origin-destination pairs. Tables 2-1 through 2-4 summarize major origins and destinations for work trips and non-work trips, for all modes of travel and for transit.



**Table 2-1  
Major Work Trip Origins and Destinations – All Modes of Travel**

<b>Percentage of Residents Traveling to Work from Study Area to Specific Area</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Employees Traveling to Work into Study Area from Specific Area</b>
36.3%	Internal	38.4%
8.9%	Long Beach	11.2%
8.4%	Downey/Lynwood	9.7%
7.6%	SR 60 Corridor	9.0%
7.5%	West San Gabriel Valley	7.5%
Less than 7.5%	East San Gabriel Valley	7.9%

**Table 2-2  
Major Work Trip Origins and Destinations – Transit**

<b>Percentage of Residents Traveling to Work from Study Area to Specific Area</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Employees Traveling to Work into Study Area from Specific Area</b>
24.8%	Downtown Los Angeles	Less than 7.5%
22.8%	Internal	30.1%
13.7%	Westside	Less than 7.5%
Less than 7.5%	SR 60 Corridor	9.5%
Less than 7.5%	West San Gabriel Valley	9.1%
Less than 7.5%	North I-110 Corridor	9.0%
Less than 7.5%	Long Beach	8.8%
Less than 7.5%	Downey/Lynwood	7.8%

**Table 2-3  
Major Non-work Trip Origins and Destinations – All Modes of Travel**

<b>Percentage of Residents Traveling from Study Area to Specific Area – Non-work Trips</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Those Traveling into Study Area from Specific Area – Non-work Trips</b>
54.6%	Internal	64.2%
11.4%	SR 60 Corridor	8.1%
10.1%	Downey/Lynwood	9.6%
Less than 7.5%	Long Beach	9.5%



**Table 2-4  
Major Non-Work Trip Origins and Destinations – Transit**

<b>Percentage of Residents Traveling from Study Area to Specific Area – Non-work Trips</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Those Traveling into Study Area from Specific Area – Non-work Trips</b>
27.5%	Internal	32.6%
14.7%	Downtown Los Angeles	Less than 7.5%
14.4%	Westside	Less than 7.5%
Less than 7.5%	SR 60 Corridor	10.8%
Less than 7.5%	West San Gabriel Valley	8.9%
Less than 7.5%	North I-110 Corridor	8.8%
Less than 7.5%	Downey/Lynwood	8.6%
Less than 7.5%	Long Beach	7.6%
Less than 7.5%	Vernon/South Gate	7.5%

A few observations may be noted from the preceding tables:

- ◆ Travel patterns, particularly for work trips, are reasonably spread out, although more than one-third of all work trips begin and end in this study area.
- ◆ Work trips from this study area via transit are concentrated on downtown Los Angeles and (through downtown to) the Westside.
- ◆ Short (internal) trip makers are less likely to use transit. Internal trips account for a lower percentage of all trips on transit compared to all modes.

### **2.3 Summary and Conclusions**

The review of the SABRE study has produced the following findings:

- ◆ This supplemental study has an opportunity to offer additional proposals related to local transit services.
- ◆ Several recommendations related to regional service have been implemented. Norwalk Transit has assumed operation of the eastern segment of MTA Line 125, MTA has truncated Line 18 at Garfield Avenue (replaced by MBL Line 40), MTA has transferred operation of Line 104 to MBL, and MTA has discontinued Line 466.
- ◆ Reasons for not implementing other regional recommendations include:
  - Whitewood Mall declined the opportunity to establish a transit center on its property. This affected all proposals that truncated or extended service to this location.
  - The I-105/I-605 Green Line Station bus facility is at capacity and cannot serve additional routes without expansion.
  - Proposed truncation of Line 121 would not produce significant cost savings.
  - The need for three additional express routes to downtown Los Angeles is still being evaluated.



MTA has indicated that these regional recommendations are still valid if conditions change, i.e., if the new owners of Whittwood Mall agree to a transit center and when the Green Line bus facility is expanded.

- ◆ The SABRE study noted that this subarea was not transit-oriented, with the minor exception of a high concentration of senior citizens clustering around Whittier Boulevard in Whittier. With regard to travel patterns, the previous study found that internal trips tended to be by modes other than transit. This might reflect a general tendency not to use transit for short trips, but could also suggest a need for additional community-based transit services.
- ◆ Based upon this review, the project team has determined that there is no need for additional data collection activities. The extensive data collection effort undertaken as part of the original study has produced a wealth of useful information.





## **Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study Chapter 3 – Needs Assessment**

### **3.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to identify unmet travel needs within the study area. Because there is no single approach that can yield a thorough identification of unmet needs, we have used a variety of techniques to assess travel needs and the extent to which transit meets these needs. On an objective basis, this is accomplished by examining trip patterns and key demographic variables to assess the propensity for transit use within these areas. In this manner, any deficiencies within the current system can be identified and targeted for improvement. On a more subjective basis, input from the public has been solicited to identify key travel needs that could be better met by transit.

Section 3.1 summarizes the results of the analysis of travel patterns undertaken in the previous SABRE study as they apply to this study area. Section 3.2 briefly reviews the findings regarding transit orientation within the study area, as documented in the previous study.

The initial meeting of the project steering committee also served as a workshop for members of the public agencies collaborating on this plan. The purpose of this workshop was to ensure that the project team fully understood the concerns, needs, ideas, perspectives, and expectations of the diverse cities and other governmental agencies. Section 3.3 presents the findings from the workshop.

The project team then convened a roundtable discussion with invited representatives of civic and community groups and major employers within the study area. This roundtable provided these important stakeholders with an opportunity to express their thoughts on priorities for the transit network, including any unmet needs, and obtained their buy-in to the goals of this study. The project steering committee nominated potential attendees, who were then contacted by the project team and encouraged to participate. Section 3.4 reports the results of the roundtable discussion.

The project team also arranged and conducted two focus groups with transit users and non-users residing and/or working within the study area to elicit insights regarding transit services and needs within the study area. These were conducted at a focus group facility in La Mirada. The facility produced video and audio tapes of the focus groups. Section 3.5 describes the major points arising from the focus group discussions.

Several project steering committee members suggested additional outreach in the unincorporated areas of the County within the study area. The project team put together a brief survey that was included in a County newsletter sent to all residents in the unincorporated areas and distributed at community centers and elsewhere. We received 118 responses, summarized in Section 3.6

Section 3.7 presents a review of paratransit resources in the study area. This inventory suggests some issues of importance to the study. Some limited additional work on the County dial-a-ride was also undertaken and is reported here.



Section 3.8 summarizes the needs assessment for the study area, based upon both technical analyses and public input.

### 3.1 Travel Patterns

One approach to identifying unmet needs is to define and evaluate travel patterns through the analysis of travel data from the 1995 Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) model. The travel behavior (via all modes and transit only) of study area residents and workers was examined in the original SABRE study to identify significant trip patterns based on work and non-work trip types. Findings from the study were reported in Chapter 2, and implications for this study are summarized below.

- ◆ Travel patterns, particularly for work trips, are reasonably spread out, although more than one-third of all work trips begin and end in this study area. This finding suggests a need for additional local transit service to employment locations within the study area. Detailed internal travel patterns were not examined in the original study, because the model's primary concern is identification of regional travel patterns and needs. Employment sites within the study area are characterized by low density and are scattered throughout the study area, making it difficult to serve these sites well with mass transit.
- ◆ Short (internal) trip makers are less likely to use transit. Internal trips account for a lower percentage of all trips on transit compared to all modes. This could be due to a general reluctance to use transit for short trips, given price, wait time, and other issues. It could also suggest the need for additional community-based services within the study area that could better serve these trips.

### 3.2 Transit Orientation

Another objective approach used in the prior study to identify areas with unmet transit needs involved the Residential Transit Orientation Index (RTOI), a GIS-based analytical tool that identifies neighborhoods with a high orientation toward transit, based on the demographic characteristics of its residents. This information was then compared to the existing transit network to identify areas with unmet transit needs.

Chapter 2 summarized the RTOI and its use in the SABRE study. Findings of interest for this study included:

- ◆ The orientation to transit throughout the study area is low to moderate. There are no neighborhoods with a high transit orientation that are unserved by the current transit network.
- ◆ A more detailed analysis of individual components of the RTOI revealed concentrations of elderly residents in areas clustering around Whittier Boulevard in Whittier. The Whittier corridor is well served by transit.



### 3.3 Workshop with the Project Steering Committee

The project steering committee met for the first time on May 2, 2002. This meeting also served as a workshop to discuss key issues, needs, and concerns of committee members. The workshop discussion emphasized several key points:

- ◆ The cities did not feel that their concerns were heard or reflected in the SABRE study. A major concern is improved transit connectivity and more seamless service across city boundaries within the study area.
- ◆ Specific areas underserved or not served by transit include the unincorporated area of the County south of Whittier and the industrial area of Santa Fe Springs south of Imperial Highway. Community shuttles or improvements to dial-a-ride services may be warranted in these areas.
- ◆ Development or expansion of transit centers is an important component of this study. The I-105/I-605 Green Line Station is the major transit center in the study area, and the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is also an important intermodal facility. Opportunities to expand their role as transit hubs should be explored, along with the possibility of a transit center at Whittwood Mall.
- ◆ Coordination is particularly important for dial-a-ride services. Many trips, including medical trips, cross city and in some cases county boundaries. Coordination can result in more cost-effective service, a major goal of the study. It is also important to consider fixed-route and dial-a-ride services jointly, since improvements in one area can have an impact on other services. In addition, new programs such as user-side subsidies for taxi services provide additional resources.
- ◆ Cost-efficient and cost-effective service is also important on fixed-route services. The area is fortunate to be served by several municipal systems, and some consolidation may be possible to take advantage of existing resources and economies of scale.
- ◆ Identification of institutional mechanisms that enable economies of scale to take place is a critical aspect of this study. Economies of scale are less likely to be achieved without the appropriate institutional changes.
- ◆ Specific populations within the study area whose needs must be addressed include employees working in the area but living elsewhere, the elderly, and students. For those with nontraditional work shifts, lower evening and weekend service levels create difficulties.
- ◆ MTA provides regional and local service in the study area. The agency has recently reorganized into five sectors, with increased autonomy for each sector. This study provides an excellent opportunity for the new Southeast sector to gain a greater understanding of the cities' needs and to foster working relationships with all cities and agencies in the area. MTA has transitioned operation of specific routes and route segments to municipal providers in cases where the service is clearly local in nature.
- ◆ If the cities and agencies work together to develop projects and apply to MTA for funding, their chances of success improve. Thus, there is a tangible financial incentive



to cooperate in project development. Many cities have worked together on subregional projects, and this study can identify additional opportunities to develop partnerships among the cities, the MTA and the municipal operators.

In summary, the steering committee stressed the importance of this project for the cities involved and the flexibility and openness among the participating cities. While there are no preconceived ideas regarding study findings, there is widespread agreement that the Southeast area needs additional attention and analysis provided through this new study, and that connectivity should be a primary goal.

### **3.4 Roundtable Discussion**

#### **3.4.1 Introduction**

As an element of the Needs Assessment task, the project team conducted a roundtable discussion on June 20, 2002. The roundtable was conducted for the purpose of providing an opportunity for representatives of civic and community groups and major employers within the study area to express their thoughts and priorities for the transit network, including any unmet needs, and to obtain their support for the goals of the study.

The project steering committee provided the project team with a list of potential participants representing the following community organizations and businesses:

- ◆ Community Development Commission – County of Los Angeles
- ◆ Los Nietos Community Center
- ◆ Whittier County Sheriff's Community Advisory Council
- ◆ Whittier Community Coordinating Council
- ◆ Whittier Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital
- ◆ Whittwood Mall
- ◆ Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
- ◆ Adventure Park Seniors Program
- ◆ SASSFA – Partners of Progress
- ◆ Cascade Pump Company (Santa Fe Springs)
- ◆ Penta Pacific Properties (Santa Fe Springs)
- ◆ Southern California Gas Company

The project team contacted representatives from each organization and provided an overview of the project for the purpose of ascertaining their interest and soliciting their participation in the roundtable. Discussion topics and an agenda were developed and distributed in advance of the session (Appendix A). This information was also distributed to some individuals who expressed interest, but were unable to attend. Discussion topics covered three major areas:

- ◆ General Awareness and Perceptions of Transit Services within the Community
- ◆ Impact and Importance of Transit within the Community
- ◆ Suggestions for Improvement of Services

Conflicting schedules prevented the involvement of many of those contacted. The roundtable was subsequently scheduled to maximize the participation level of those contacted. A total of eleven individuals participated in the roundtable. A summary of the roundtable discussion is





presented in the following section. In addition, a list of participants and their organizational affiliations may be found in Appendix B.

### **3.4.2 Summary of Roundtable Discussion Group**

The roundtable session began with introductions of the session facilitator and each of the eleven participants (see List of Roundtable Participants – Appendix B). Following introductions, an overview of the purpose and goals of the study were provided to the group. Prior to beginning discussion of the topics, participants were asked to talk about their affiliations within their community. Their responses are summarized as follows:

- ◆ Kathleen Lorhan – President of Whittier Sheriff's Coordinating Council. Ms. Lorhan indicated that the county unincorporated areas are currently underserved by transit and that more should be done to ensure that transit is coordinated with the surrounding cities (e.g., Whittier).
- ◆ Marlene Johnston – Whittwood Mall Manager. Ms. Johnston indicated that she is pleased with the level of service provided to the mall. There are five stops and layover zones on the premises.
- ◆ Marie Quon-Hom – Assistant Director of the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles. Ms. Quon said that her agency provides housing assistance and other services to 20,000 clients. Her agency is currently moving from the East Los Angeles offices to Santa Fe Springs. She indicated that transit would need to be improved to provide travel options for those needing to access their offices.
- ◆ Nancy Whyte – Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital. Ms. Whyte said that transit is important since patients and their families rely on transit to get access to the site for their medical appointments and visits.
- ◆ Leah Monson – Director of Senior Services SASSFA/Partners of Progress. Ms. Monson indicated her concern for clients who are unable to get to their destination because they cannot use regular fixed-route transit services and find that demand-responsive services are oftentimes unreliable.
- ◆ Kirk Kain – Executive Director SASSFA/Partners of Progress. Mr. Kain noted that his agency also works to help people find jobs, and is actively involved in the Welfare-to-Work program. Their clients use bus transportation regularly.
- ◆ Tom Summerfield – Cascade Pump Company a manufacturer of water pumps in the City of Santa Fe Springs. Mr. Summerfield said that he wears two hats serving on the Chamber of Commerce and as a business in the community. He indicated that he has employee issues: 1) Lack of people who actually live in Santa Fe Springs. His employees live in surrounding areas; and 2) His employees don't make a short commute, which makes it difficult to make transit connections to their worksites. Currently, there is only demand-responsive service available. In addition he stated that people need to travel from LAX into the area, both business people and employees. Mr. Summerfield has also worked with the I-5 Consortium on the freeway widening and improvement project.
- ◆ Ellen Blackman – Project Manager MTA. Ms. Blackman indicated her day-to-day involvement with a number of specialized community-based programs for seniors and transit



dependent persons. She is currently working to enhance coordinated transportation, including the use of taxi vouchers.

- ◆ Karen Duncanwood – City of Whittier Accessible Transit Committee. Ms. Duncanwood also has a son who is disabled and uses a communication device. He is unable to use fixed-route transportation. Ms. Duncanwood works with the paratransit riders' coalition and the East Los Angeles Regional Center.

The project team group leader posed questions related to the participant's general awareness and perceptions of transit in an effort to gain perspective on their comments relative to transit in the community. Comments relative to their use and experiences taking transit included the following:

- ◆ All but two of the participants indicated that they had used transit before, although a few have not used it recently or have not used transit within the study area.
- ◆ The two participants who had not used transit indicated that they never had a need to use transit because of personal automobiles and other means of transportation.
- ◆ Those who have used transit offered the following comments:
  - Has taken the train to Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center, however, because he is five miles away, he must make a reservation to be picked up from the station. Also uses transit on recreational trips once every couple of months.
  - Has taken Metrolink from Rialto to Cal State L.A., then taken a connecting express bus. The trip is approximately 90 minutes. This participant does not like the El Monte Station.
  - Has taken transit a few times since working with people with disabilities and the developmentally disabled. Service is not reliable (late buses). Wheelchair lifts don't work. DAR service is good sometimes, but is very late sometimes. Also there are boundary issues between cities.
  - Has used transit when automobile broke down. However, didn't know where to go to get help. Does use transit on recreational trips with family, which was a fun experience. Has also ridden the subway in different cities.
  - Has taken transit most of life, however, after buying an automobile, has taken transit only infrequently. Has traveled by train in the Bronx, NY and taken Montebello Transit.
  - Has taken MTA and Whittier Transit and experienced Access Services. Loves trains, but has not taken local train service. Has taken Pittsburgh, DC Metro and other systems. Riding experiences on those systems were good. Mixed feelings about transit, where transit is good it is okay, and where transit is not good, then taking transit is difficult.
  - Have always taken transit. I have a financial incentive (free bus pass) and a good direct trip to work.
- ◆ Several of the participants have actively participated in planning for community transit services with local governments and agencies, and in addressing regional transportation



issues (i.e. I-5 Consortium). These participants continue on various levels to offer ideas, opinions and strategies to local jurisdictions and transit agencies.

Participants were asked to discuss their opinions concerning the impact and importance of transit within the community. Comments expressed were as follows:

- ◆ Transit service to Whittwood Mall is very important. The mall is a large shopping center with over 100 stores. The mall relies on service provided by Whittier Transit and other operators to bring employees to work. During the MTA bus strike, although the crime rate dropped to zero, employees could not get to work. A number of services are currently operating very effectively at the Mall.
- ◆ Transit is very poor and unreliable in this area. If a rider takes Access Services or DAR they may not be able to get a return trip. In addition, the certification process for getting on Access is too lengthy and not user-friendly. This makes people very unwilling to try transit more than once. There are also issues related to services not crossing jurisdictional boundaries.
- ◆ The lack of transit options impacts me day to day. I reside in the unincorporated area (South Whittier). Each day I come from work to transport my children from school to home. La Mirada Transit has a shuttle for \$1.00 that does not cross city boundaries. Since I live in the unincorporated area, two miles from the LMT stop, my children cannot get home. With school schedules changing and other activities, this is a difficult arrangement. In addition, there are no lines to the college and service does not run on Saturday or Sunday.
- ◆ I have participated on a committee of the I-5 Consortium (widening of the I-5). There is a need for increased capacity, since full build-out on the I-5 is projected for completion by 2020. We are discussing emergency preparedness for Santa Fe Springs specific to the I-5/605 and the dumping of congestion on the streets (e.g. Telegraph and Norwalk).
- ◆ The demand for service in Whittier has grown and outstrips funding for service. It is a lot more expensive to provide fixed-route trips than DAR. Then there is the issue of how far people need to walk to access bus stops. Neighborhoods don't want bus stops. However, we need to make fixed-route more accessible and convenient.
- ◆ The basin is a patchwork piece and transit plans have been developed in this way. Transit operators have promoted the basic grid system. It is much cheaper to use fixed-route than demand response. Accessibility on Metrolink is good; however, bus service is not as good. My son has been stranded for hours on fixed-route. We need to be solving problems on the larger system, which is the key to solving problems on other smaller systems. Cities and operators need to listen to the riders.
- ◆ There are no hospitals in the county unincorporated area, so those needing medical attention must be transported to the nearest hospital. The county residents patronize the City of Whittier (South of Telegraph—North of Imperial). In addition, Hispanic wives are commuting on foot and need shuttle services to connect activity centers.
- ◆ Our agency is meeting with Santa Fe Springs to relocate a bus stop closer to our new building. Even when the offices were located in East Los Angeles, Access service was consistently late and many clients were unable to use the service. Many employees were unable to relocate with the agency from ELA to Santa Fe Springs because of transportation



issues. A connection from the train station to their new work site in Santa Fe Springs is needed.

- ◆ In my role as staff support to MTA advisory committees, I am aware of changes that are taking place. The problems that existed 5-10 years ago don't exist today. The MTA is actively replacing older lift equipment and purchasing low-floor buses, which will improve vehicle accessibility for the disabled.

Participants were asked to discuss their suggestions for improving transit in the community. These comments were made:

- ◆ Individuals that live in some areas of the Southeast are concerned about safety.
- ◆ Persons with disabilities want the same things as everybody else.
- ◆ The area could use more host-type services (e.g. travel training—helping people to use the system), since immigrants coming from rural areas comprise a large group of the population in this area.
- ◆ Use funding in different ways to look at other needs.
- ◆ We need more stops for public transit.
- ◆ Find a way to develop new services effectively.
- ◆ Improve service reliability (if riders make a trip they are not sure if they can get back) – this works against being independent to utilize transit.
- ◆ Curb-to-curb transportation is not working well for many needing door-to-door service. If people cannot get to the curb or the bus, impacts on health occur when they can't get to the hospital or doctor appointments. Use models in Riverside County, which focus on volunteers. The "TRIP" program serves all of Riverside County. Volunteers receive reimbursement of mileage for taking riders to their destinations. Another program is also being implemented in Pasadena.
- ◆ Volunteers can be solicited from those who take transit (or pay them to teach others – mentors)
- ◆ Access Services is too difficult to use
- ◆ Inter-city and inter-county boundaries restrictions are a deterrent to taking transit.
- ◆ In speaking to seniors, cities and agencies need to inform them of options through use of the "buddy" program.
- ◆ There is definite relationship between bus stop accessibility and fixed-route use. TSM improvements (e.g. curb cuts) are needed to facilitate transit use. Cities need to take responsibility for this.
- ◆ In-Home-Support-Services (IHSS) provides transportation to medical facilities and someone to accompany the rider.





- ◆ Explore DMV intervention and coordination. Include leaflet for transit resources in the area by zip code.
- ◆ Service linkages are needed to provide options for employees and agency clients traveling long distances and to and from the area; if areas are linked then cities can change more.
- ◆ Cultural differences and awareness, including language issues must be considered.
- ◆ ELA Regional Center provides services for culturally diverse clientele including, headsets for language translation, training for language impaired.
- ◆ The area needs inter-community van service (such as Los Nietos Shuttle).
- ◆ We also need increased sharing of transportation information in regional centers newsletters.

### 3.4.3 Major Roundtable Issues and Comments

**Community-based fixed-route transit services should not be limited to jurisdictional boundaries.** Roundtable participants repeatedly focused on this issue. Although demand responsive services for the elderly and disabled provide transportation for medical and shopping in neighboring cities, existing City-operated general public fixed-route services do not operate outside city boundaries (e.g., Whittier Transit and La Mirada Transit).<sup>1</sup>

**Improve service linkages between operators and cities for those making longer distance trips.** Participants indicated that many of those needing to access destinations in the Southeast are making long commutes originating in cities outside the area. To encourage people to use transit, connectivity between local municipal systems and regional transit operators will need to be improved.

**Service operated in the County unincorporated area is not meeting the needs of the community.** Agency roundtable participants indicated that there is limited transit service connecting the county unincorporated areas with adjacent communities. There is a need to develop shuttle or other services to enhance local circulation and mobility within Southeast communities.

**Explore creative options for providing services to the elderly and disabled including the developmentally disabled.** Several roundtable participants discussed issues related to improvement of demand responsive services for the elderly and disabled. They cited instances of service unreliability and availability (late service and inability of riders to return home), as well as the need to develop rider assistance and coordinated information on travel options with social service agencies.

**Enhance connectivity between the Norwalk Transportation Center and worksites within the area, and to and from LAX (I-5/I-605 station).** Participants expressed the need for employees and business travelers to have more direct fixed-route connections between the

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<sup>1</sup> While La Mirada Transit and Whittier Transit were mentioned specifically in the roundtable discussion, the two agencies have already developed cooperative arrangements to ease inter-city travel. La Mirada and Whittier have established a transfer point between their services at Leffingwell and Santa Gertrudes, and Whittier Transit charges a reduced price for transfers to La Mirada services (ten cents, versus 25 cents for the regular transfer to MTA and Foothill)



Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center and Green Line station and employer worksites. Fixed-route bus connections are provided to activity and employment centers within the City of Norwalk, and Santa Fe Springs offers demand response service for Metrolink commuters traveling between the train station and worksites in Santa Fe Springs.

**Increase service levels on evenings and weekends where possible.** Participants noted the lack of late evening and weekend service in the Southeast communities. Service enhancements during evenings and weekends are viewed as necessary to develop a strong rider base on community transit services.

### **3.5 Focus Groups**

#### **3.5.1 Introduction**

The project team conducted two focus groups at a facility in La Mirada on June 13, 2002. The purpose of these focus groups was to elicit insights regarding transit services and needs within the study area. The focus groups were scheduled back-to-back, one at 5:30 p.m. and the second at 7:30 p.m., and each lasted approximately 90 minutes.

Analysis Research, a project team member specializing in market research, supervised the recruitment of focus group participants. Our intention was to put together two groups, with transit users comprising approximately two-thirds of each group. In this way, we could explore issues of interest to current transit riders as well as perceptions of non-users. Participants in the 5:30 p.m. group tended to be older and were more likely to be transit users, while the 7:30 group had more young people who were less likely to be current transit riders.

Focus groups are not intended to be a statistically valid sample of the population at large or of any specific group, due to their small size. However, the size of focus groups encourages an open-ended discussion of issues in greater depth than can normally be explored in a larger survey. The open-ended nature of the discussion allows exploration of important issues and perceptions raised by the participants themselves.

The next two sections present a summary of the discussions at each focus group session. Section 3.5.4 summarizes major focus group themes. Sections 3 and 4 present a summary of the discussions at both focus groups. Appendix C contains the screening instrument used to recruit participants. Appendix D includes the discussion guide used during the focus groups. Appendix E lists focus group participants.

#### **3.5.2 Summary of 5:30 p.m. Focus Group Discussion**

A total of eight participants attended the 5:30 p.m. focus group. Of these, five were transit users, who rode the bus for shopping, recreational, and work trips and to pay bills. Those who did not use transit reported having a car as the major reason for non-use, although some reported transit as a back-up travel mode when their car breaks down.

Reasons for using transit included:



- ◆ My only form of transportation (although would still use for some trips if I had a car)
- ◆ Saves gas
- ◆ Used to riding it – know how to use the system, know the schedule
- ◆ Pleasant to use – can take the grandchildren on an outing
- ◆ Takes you wherever you need to go
- ◆ Usually not too crowded (others disagreed)
- ◆ Convenient (although some non-users report that the nearest stop to home or work is too far to walk)
- ◆ Bus operators are nice
- ◆ Easy to transfer, even between systems (e.g., from Norwalk Transit to RTD!)

Reasons for not using transit included:

- ◆ More direct to drive to my destination
- ◆ Not convenient if you don't know the schedule – too long to just walk out to the stop and wait
- ◆ Using more than one bus system on a trip can be confusing – what's the correct fare?
- ◆ Not as comfortable as my own car

With regard to convenience, most agreed that transit was convenient, even if not as fast as a private automobile. There was an understanding that it would not be so convenient for a non-user or occasional user who did not know the schedules.

Personal comfort was an issue. Participants requested cushioned seats, seats that were a little wider, and working air-conditioning. The need for air-conditioning was widely agreed to be important, especially on crowded buses. Some participants felt that buses are too crowded, while others disagreed.

Bus operators generally received favorable reviews, although one commented, "Once in a while, you get an attitude." Riders felt that MTA bus operators were moodier than Norwalk Transit operators, but understood the effects that more traffic can have on a driver. Non-riders complained that MTA bus operators were ruder as drivers. One rider noted that drivers will get to know regular riders, and will wake you up if you miss your stop.

Safety on the buses received mixed reviews. Several participants commented that they feel really safe on the bus, but one other had witnessed fighting and heard about a shooting. Female participants appeared much less likely to travel in the evening, although one mentioned an incident where she was stranded in Compton at night and a bus "miraculously" appeared, apparently off-route but going to her destination.

Participants also differed on the issue of dependability. Again, Norwalk Transit was better regarded than MTA in terms of being dependable. MTA Line 270 was cited as particularly unreliable in the past, but these problems have been fixed. Riders generally viewed their bus route as being dependable.

In general, however, the fear that you would not get to where you needed to be (especially to work) on time was raised as a key problem, especially given the long wait times if you miss a bus. Early departures were particularly troublesome. Wait time was not seen as a big issue as long as you knew the schedules. A wait of 20 to 30 minutes was considered too long.



Obtaining schedule information was viewed as more difficult for MTA routes. The MTA information line was reported to be always busy, whereas it was easier to get information from Norwalk Transit. Some viewed the 1-800-commute number as very convenient, but others have reported problems getting through. Riders were never sure if the schedule brochures were current, since they have an effective date but not an expiration date. Riders also complained that the right schedule was rarely on the bus.

The length of the transit trip was generally acceptable, although one participant had heard riders complaining, "We can walk faster."

Recommendations for improvements included:

- ◆ More frequent service, at least every 30 minutes. MTA Line 275 was mentioned specifically.
- ◆ Ready availability of schedules
- ◆ Amenities on buses to enhance comfort, such as arm rests and cup holders (ideally, televisions and entertainment as well)
- ◆ A more attractive color scheme to improve the image of the bus
- ◆ Wider and more comfortable seats
- ◆ Faster trips, less time on the bus
- ◆ On-off privileges – the ability to stop off on your way home and reboard without paying a second fare
- ◆ Service much later in the evening. Downtown to Whittier was mentioned specifically. Riders approved the lower late-night fare.
- ◆ More frequent weekend service. This was not as high a priority as evening service.
- ◆ Seat belts on the buses

When we read the list of potential improvements mentioned in previous studies, participants especially responded to:

- ◆ Cleaner buses. Graffiti was a source of complaints, and riders suggested trashcans on the buses and towels to wipe down the seats.
- ◆ More bus shelters, and lighted shelters at night (one comment: "I have to stand outside the shelter to be seen by the driver"). Bigger shelters, with more seats.
- ◆ Better lighting at bus stops
- ◆ Schedules that are easier to read (larger type, no multiple-line schedules)

Final comments from this group included:

- ◆ The bus drivers are a valuable source of information. We can always ask them if we don't know something.
- ◆ The agency should fix all the things that are wrong on the buses. Some drivers say that mechanics only fix what's needed to get the bus out on the street.
- ◆ Driver training should include more than how to drive the bus.
- ◆ Bike racks and wheelchair lifts are both very good ideas. One participant was unclear whether he could take his bicycle on the Green Line without a permit.
- ◆ The route number on the destination sign could be clearer.
- ◆ Make it easier to get through on the telephone information line.





- ◆ Have security personnel on the buses periodically, uniformed or undercover. This would make riders feel safer, especially at night.
- ◆ Provide car seats for babies on the bus and racks for strollers.
- ◆ Put bathrooms on the bus.

### **3.5.3 Summary of 7:30 p.m. Focus Group Discussion**

Eleven participants attended the second focus group, and a slight majority were non-users in the past month, although several had had previous experience with transit. Transit riders used transit to get to school (college), to the mall, and for social and personal reasons. The most common reason for non-use was having a car, although one respondent mentioned that transit takes too long.

Focus group participants have used a wide variety of transit systems, including La Mirada dial-a-ride, Norwalk Transit, Whittier Transit, MTA, and OCTA. One complaint was that a transfer between two systems involves a long wait.

When asked reasons to use or not to use transit, participants tended to focus on reasons not to use transit. One reason to use transit was its reliability, and the knowledge that I will get to where I'm going. Another rider mentioned that transit was an acceptable option "if I have to use it." Among reasons not to use transit were:

- ◆ Not convenient – too far to walk, either from my house or my workplace
- ◆ Trip is too long
- ◆ No need to use – transit is for people without their own transportation
- ◆ Poor perception of transit, in terms of other riders, cleanliness of the bus (one rider mentioned "water" on the seat), and time factor
- ◆ Car is more direct and faster
- ◆ Rude bus operators
- ◆ Safety, especially at night
- ◆ On-time performance is unclear
- ◆ Lack of dependability (related to on-time performance)
- ◆ Too confusing
- ◆ Time issue re transfers – "takes forever"

Riders and non-riders recognized the need for transfers, but noted that they were not seamless. The transfer from Norwalk Transit to the Green Line was cited specifically.

The group then got into an extended conversation regarding safety. Riders tended to feel safer than non-riders. Better lighting at stops is needed to make transit safer at night. In the daytime, participants did not feel that there was a safety issue. One noted that there is a perception that transit is not safe because of the potential for something bad to happen in a confined space. Another noted that safety issues are more related to specific neighborhoods than to anything under the control of a transit agency. One participant mentioned the lack of seat belts, but others pointed out that the size of the bus made them feel safe in the event of an accident. Auto drivers complained about bus operators pulling out into traffic, but riders did not see this as a problem. One suggestion was for visible security personnel on the buses. A final comment was that personal safety on the bus "depends on what you're wearing."



With regard to obtaining information about transit, the time on the phone calling the MTA information line was reported as a negative. Most participants thought that the printed schedules were acceptable, although one complained that there is too much information included.

When asked what it would take for individuals to begin riding transit or to ride more often, the group came up with several responses:

- ◆ A greater sense of security
- ◆ Some type of “frequent rider miles” program
- ◆ Rest rooms on the buses
- ◆ Nothing – there is no way to get me on the bus
- ◆ If the train were convenient/closer, I would choose to ride, but not the bus
- ◆ Service closer to where I live and to my destinations – there are gaps in the transit network
- ◆ More park and ride lots, with more express service not oriented exclusively to downtown (i.e., the beach) – this engendered a discussion of how many beaches there are in the L.A. area, and how to choose just one beach to serve from this area
- ◆ A debit card for fare payment
- ◆ Better connections to Metrolink at the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center
- ◆ More direct service - a “straight shot” to key destinations
- ◆ Easier (in terms of more understandable) routes, with faster service
- ◆ Fewer stops – this also engendered a discussion of how to do this with everything so spread out
- ◆ More transit options, especially more frequent and later service
- ◆ Special services for the disabled, in the context of getting them off the buses. Either this, or better mechanics so that the wheelchair lifts actually work.

When asked to summarize the most important improvements, the group came up with the following:

- ◆ Safety. This was a recurring theme.
- ◆ Improved access to transit (closer routes, lighted stops)
- ◆ Service later in the evening and on weekends. Evening service was also a recurring theme, more so than weekend service. One participant suggested a balancing of the two, possibly cutting back weekend frequencies to provide additional late night service.
- ◆ Integration/coordination of the various systems. The municipal systems should help out MTA, by acting as a feeder or distributor.
- ◆ Automated stop announcements
- ◆ On-time performance
- ◆ Customer comment cards on all buses
- ◆ Lighting at bus shelters
- ◆ Payment options such as acceptance of credit cards/bank cards, especially for less frequent users, even if the fare were 25 cents higher for such options
- ◆ Real-time next bus displays at major stops
- ◆ Faster, non-stop (or limited-stop) service
- ◆ Maps of routes at stops



### 3.5.4 Major Focus Group Themes

**Personal safety** is a concern, although riders view transit as much safer than do non-users. Riders and non-riders alike comment on the need for better lighting at bus stops. Safety issues are much more prevalent for evening service, and there was some recognition that feelings of being unsafe were related more to specific neighborhoods than to anything under the direct control of the transit agency.

Later and more frequent **evening service** was a common request. Improved evening frequency of service might balance concerns for personal safety in the evening.

**Service reliability** is important to riders, and non-users are uncertain as to exactly how reliable transit service is. This issue becomes particularly important for more complex trips involving one or more transfers.

**Faster, more direct service with fewer stops** is virtually a requirement for attracting non-riders to transit. Current riders also view improvements in the speed of service as very desirable. It should be noted that the new MTA Metro Rapid routes do not extend as far as this study area, so riders are not familiar with the rapid bus concept.

**Amenities** such as clean buses, lighted bus shelters, and comfortable seats are important to riders and non-riders.

**Municipal services** receive better reviews than MTA bus service, in terms of operator friendliness, ease of obtaining information, service reliability, and ease of understanding schedules and routes. This is partially a function of scale. Even in terms of bus operator attitudes, participants were aware that MTA operators have longer routes that are more exposed to traffic delays and that this can affect an operator's mood. There was a strong sense, however, that municipal transit systems were more customer-friendly than the regional MTA service.

## 3.6 Survey of Unincorporated County Residents

Project steering committee members suggested additional outreach efforts for residents in the unincorporated area of the county, since there was clear consensus that this area was not well served by transit. The County indicated that it could include a survey in its newsletter, sent to all residents in the unincorporated area. In conjunction with the steering committee, the project team designed a brief survey to elicit perceived transit needs. The survey was also distributed at community centers. A copy of the survey may be found in Appendix F.

The first question asked respondents to prioritize possible transit improvements. Five points was awarded for top priority, four points for the second priority, and so forth. Average scores for possible improvements were:

- 3.73 Add frequency to existing weekday routes
- 3.61 Begin new routes to areas not well served
- 3.26 Coordinate van services for senior citizens and persons with disabilities
- 2.92 Improve Saturday service
- 2.36 Improve Sunday service



More frequent service typically tops the list of requests from riders. It is interesting to note the low rankings for improved weekend service, particularly Sunday service.

The next question asked respondents to prioritize different types of service. Since there were four choices provided, the top priority received four points. Average scores for various types of service were:

- 2.93 Regional local bus service (for travel to downtown LA and other areas of the County)
- 2.60 Community local bus service (for travel within the Southeast area)
- 2.55 Van service for seniors and persons with disabilities
- 2.48 Community circulators, such as shuttle service (for travel within your neighborhood)

It was somewhat surprising that community circulators ranked last among these choices. There is probably a tendency to answer these types of questions by giving top priority to the service the respondent is most familiar with or uses most often.

In response to the question about areas, streets, or routes that need better transit service in your community, the most frequently mentioned were:

- ◆ Florence
- ◆ Slauson
- ◆ Telegraph
- ◆ Carmenita
- ◆ Mulberry

Among other comments regarding transit services, the most frequently cited included:

- ◆ General need for improvement on most routes
- ◆ More frequent service/more buses
- ◆ Buses break down too often
- ◆ Need van service in S. Whittier

The total number of usable surveys was 118.

### **3.7 Southeast Area Dial-a-Ride and Demand Response Services**

#### **3.7.1 Introduction**

Community-based dial-a-ride services were only tangentially addressed in the original SABRE study. Yet as programs of long standing and critical importance in the study area municipalities, these programs needed to be addressed in this study. An inventory of the subregion's dial-a-ride resources was developed, with some additional analysis of County services. Information was collected largely by interview of steering committee members responsible for these services.





### **3.7.2 Demand Response Resources in the Area**

An examination of the demand responsive services of the Southeast area was undertaken to identify issues and needs and to suggest areas for study recommendations. A simple inventory was constructed, with input from each city's representative, to describe service similarities and differences. Table 3-1 summarizes key operating features of the dial-a-ride programs examined—each varying in scope, purpose and size. Table 3-2 presents selected demographic features of each community that have bearing on demand response services. Table 3-3 presents each program's ranking on key indicators.



**Table 3-1  
Municipal and County Dial-a-Ride Resources in the Southeast Area Communities**

Jurisdiction	Paratransit Service Area Description	Eligible Ridership	City Square Mileage	City Senior Population (2000)	Density/ Seniors/ Square Mile	Peak Fleet Size	Vehicles/ Square Mile	Average Weekly Trips	Est. Annual Trips	One-Way Trip Fare	Weekday Service	Saturday Service	Sunday Service
La Mirada	La Mirada city limits plus area medical facilities	General public	7.77	6,463	832	12	1.5	160	90,000	Adults-\$1 Senior-\$0.50	6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.	9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.	no service
Montebello	City limits; some limited service to selected destinations immediately adjacent to city.	Seniors (60+) and disabled	9.77	7,735	774	3	2.7	413	21,024	Senior/ Disabled \$0.80	8 a.m. to 6 p.m.	8 a.m. to 6 p.m.	8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
Norwalk	Within City limits.	Persons disabled per DMV regulations, registered	9.35	9,312	995	7	1.1	425	21,415	Adult-\$0.60 Senior-\$0.30 Youth-\$0.45	7 a.m. to 7 p.m.	9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.	9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Pico Rivera	City limits plus 6 miles from City Hall m (6615 Passions Blvd.)	Seniors (55+) and disabled	8.23	6,958	845	5	1.6	687	28,800	Free to 55+ or Disabled	7 a.m. to 6 p.m.	9 a.m. to 4 p.m.	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Santa Fe Springs	Metro Express - to and from Metrolink station	<b>MetroExpress:</b> General public Metrolink commuters	8.72	2,234	255	2	4.4	132	6,620	Free/ Pass	5:30-8:30 a.m.; 3:30-5:30 p.m.	no service	no service
	Senior nutrition, city limits	<b>Senior Nutrition</b>						98	4,900	Free	8:30- 3:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	no service	no service
	Neighboring cities:	<b>Appointment Transportation</b>						46	2,300	Free	no service	no service	
Whittier	Whittier city limits, with one run to Hillcrest Church, La Habra Heights (adult day health care)	Seniors (60+) and disabled, registered	12.04	10,486	871	6	2.0	886	46,056	\$0.50	MWF 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.; TTh 7 - 7:30 p.m.	8 a.m. to 9 p.m.	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
County Unincorporated/ Whittier areas	Non-contiguous pockets north and south of Whittier; also Hacienda Hts., Avacado Hts., Rowland Hts., areas south of San Gabriel. Trips out 3 miles from pockets' edges.	Seniors (60+) and disabled, registered	28 (est.)	10,672	381	5	5.6	500	26,000	\$0.50	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	no service	no service



**Table 3-2  
Population Characteristics, Service Area Size and Density**

Jurisdiction	Total Population 2000 Census	Area Senior Population, Age 65+	Senior %	Age 16 and under	%	City Square Mileage	Density/ Seniors/ Square Mile	Dial-a-Ride Fleet Size	Vehicles per Square Mile
La Mirada	46,783	6,463	13.8%	11,575	24.7%	7.77	831.8	12	1.5
Montebello	62,150	7,735	12.4%	16,882	27.2%	8.35	926.3	3	0.4
Norwalk	103,298	9,312	9.0%	31,411	30.4%	9.74	956.1	7	0.7
Pico Rivera	63,428	6,958	11.0%	18,619	29.4%	8.84	787.1	5	0.6
Santa Fe Springs	17,438	2,234	12.8%	4,759	27.3%	8.72	256.2	2	0.2
Whittier	83,680	10,486	12.5%	22,291	26.6%	14.63	716.7	6	0.4
<b>Municipal Totals</b>	<b>376,777</b>	<b>43,188</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>105,537</b>	<b>28.0%</b>	<b>58.05</b>	<b>744.0</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0.6</b>
<b>County, Whittier Area Pockets Only</b>	<b>114,196</b>	<b>10,672</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>34,458</b>	<b>30.2%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>381.1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Totals, Including Whittier Pockets</b>	<b>490,973</b>	<b>53,860</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>139,995</b>	<b>28.5%</b>	<b>86.05</b>	<b>784.4</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>0.5</b>

**Table 3-3  
Dial-a-Ride Programs' Ranking on Selected Indicators**

Jurisdiction	Area Square Mileage	Area Total Population (2000)	Area Senior Population (2000)	Density/ Seniors/ Square Mile	Trips Per Capita (2000 Total Pop.)	Rankings from Highest to Lowest				Peak Fleet Size	Vehicles/ Square Mile	Est. Annual Trips	Rankings from Highest to Lowest	
						Square Mileage Ranking	Senior Pop'tn. Ranking	Density/ Seniors/ Ranking	Trips Per Capita Ranking				Veh/ Square Mile Ranking	Total Trips Provided Ranking
La Mirada	7.77	46,783	6,463	832	1.71	7	6	4	1	12	1.5	80,000	2	1
Montebello	9.77	62,150	7,735	774	0.34	3	4	5	5	3	2.7	21,024	5	6
Norwalk	9.35	103,298	9,312	996	0.21	4	3	1	6	7	1.1	21,415	1	5
Pico Rivera	8.23	63,428	6,958	845	0.45	6	5	3	4	5	1.6	28,800	3	3
Santa Fe Springs	8.72	17,438	2,234	256	0.79	5	7	7	3	2	4.4	Metro Express 8,620	6	7
												Sehler Nutrition 4,900		
												Spec Transport 2,300		
Whittier	12.04	83,680	10,486	871	0.55	2	2	2	2	6	2.0	46,056	4	2
County Unincorporated/ Whittier areas *	28 (est.)	114,196	10,672	381	0.23 for Whittier areas only; lower rate when other pockets included.	1	1	6	7	5	5.6	26,000	7	4



- ◆ **La Mirada** operates a 12-vehicle paratransit program, the largest of the area demand responsive services. This program serves the entire city's population, providing trips to the general public at a level of 1,600 one-way trips per week. Providing approximately 80,000 trips per year, this service is operating in the smallest physical area of the study cities, at 7.7 square miles. This city also has the largest proportion of seniors, with 13.8 percent or almost 6,500 persons over 65 among its 46,800 residents (2000 Census). This high volume of trips represents a high trips-per-capita rate of 1.71, almost two trips annually for every city resident. La Mirada serves its own city boundaries with limited service to medical facilities in nearby communities. La Mirada provides no Sunday service, operating Monday through Saturday.
- ◆ **Montebello** provides demand response services to a traditional population of seniors and persons with disabilities. With just three vehicles, this program provides about 21,000 trips annually in a service area of 9.77 square miles. Providing dial-a-ride services to a smaller subset of the population than La Mirada, this community's trips per capita rate is 0.34 trips annually to its 62,000 residents. Montebello's dial-a-ride is focused on trips within the city limits, except for some limited medically related trips to destinations adjacent to the city. Montebello provides service seven days a week.
- ◆ **Norwalk** has a seven-vehicle demand response program, also targeted to seniors and persons with disabilities and complementing its extensive fixed-route network. Operating in a 9.35 square mile area, this fleet size represents the highest ratio of vehicles to service area of the study cities. Trips provided annually (21,400) to this city of over 100,000 reflect a trips-per-capita rate of 0.21, among the lowest of the study cities. Norwalk also has the lowest proportion of seniors, at 9.0 percent or 9,300 persons over age 65, almost five percentage points below La Mirada's high of 13.8 percent senior population. Norwalk provides its trips exclusively within the city limits. Norwalk provides service seven days a week.
- ◆ **Pico Rivera** This five-vehicle program is serving an 8.23 square mile area and is targeted to the City's senior and disabled population. Seniors are 11% of the 63,000 residents, in the mid-range of the study cities. The 28,800 trips provided annually reflect a trips-per-capita rate of 0.45, on the lower end of the trip quantity levels in relation to population. Trips are provided largely within the city limits but the vehicles will travel up to six miles from City Hall on Passons Boulevard, allowing the program to serve some area medical facilities. Pico Rivera provides service seven days a week.
- ◆ **Santa Fe Springs** operates two vehicles, providing three distinct services: 1) general public demand response service for Metrolink commuters (MetroExpress); 2) Senior Nutrition Transportation to two congregate meal sites for the city's senior residents; and 3) Appointment Transportation for medically-related trips for resident seniors and persons with disabilities. Although providing the smallest quantity of trips (13,820 annually), these trips represent a high trips-per-capita rate of 0.79, second only to the City of La Mirada which operates a general public dial-a-ride. Santa Fe Springs does have the second highest proportion of seniors among study communities, at 12.8%. Trips are provided within the city's 8.72 square miles and to nearby medical facilities that can be reasonably served by this two-vehicle fleet. Santa Fe Springs provides service on weekdays only.





- ◆ **Whittier** operates a long-standing dial-a-ride service to seniors and persons with disabilities, largely within city boundaries or nearby adjacent areas. The Whittier program, at 46,000 trips annually, is providing a quantity of trips second only to La Mirada's general public dial-a-ride. Its six vehicles operate in a 12 square mile service area, second in size only to the County's service area. Its trip per capita rate is 0.55 annual trips per resident. This is higher than all but La Mirada's program, exceeding the per capita trip rates of each of the other five areas. Whittier provides service seven days a week.
- ◆ **County Unincorporated Areas** are a group of non-contiguous pockets served by the county's senior and disabled demand response service, and include the Whittier area pockets that are within this study's focus. The County program operates five vehicles at its peak, spreading these across all pockets that together comprise a non-contiguous area estimated at 28 square miles. This service area is more than twice the size of Whittier's 12 square miles and over three times the size of the smallest community's, La Mirada, further complicated by the fact that the pockets are dispersed across an even wider area. An estimated 10,600 seniors live in the Whittier area pockets, with a total population estimated at 114,000 persons, slightly more than Norwalk. The trip per capita rate is 0.23 trips per annum but as this accounts only for the Whittier area population, it overstates the rate of trips provided across the entire County service area. County dial-a-ride operates weekdays only to about 4 p.m.
- ◆ **ACCESS Services**, the Los Angeles County region's Americans with Disabilities Act complementary paratransit program, operates through this area, as it does throughout the entire County. ACCESS Services representatives attended study meetings and participated in discussions. Its programs in the Southeast area were not further examined, as these exist to comply with Federal statute and presumably have limited flexibility to address recommendations arising from this study.

### 3.7.3 County Dial-a-Ride Review

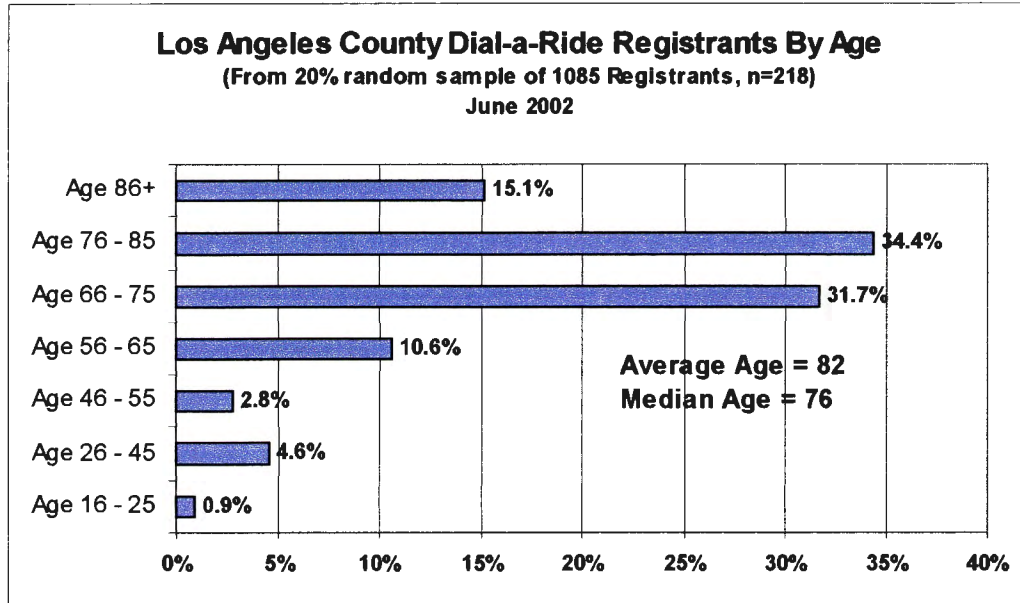
Given a preliminary finding that County dial-a-ride services represented specific issues and concerns, a site visit, interview with dial-a-ride contractor's dispatch office and data analysis was undertaken to identify possible restructuring issues.

**Rider Characteristics:** A sample of rider registrations was collected, recording the birth date and zip code of a random sample of 20% of registrants to ascertain age and area of residence. The average age of 82 reflects a predominately older ridership population, as presented in Figure 3-1. The largest proportions of riders are ages 66 to 75% (31%) and ages 76 to 85 (35%), reflected in a median age of 76.

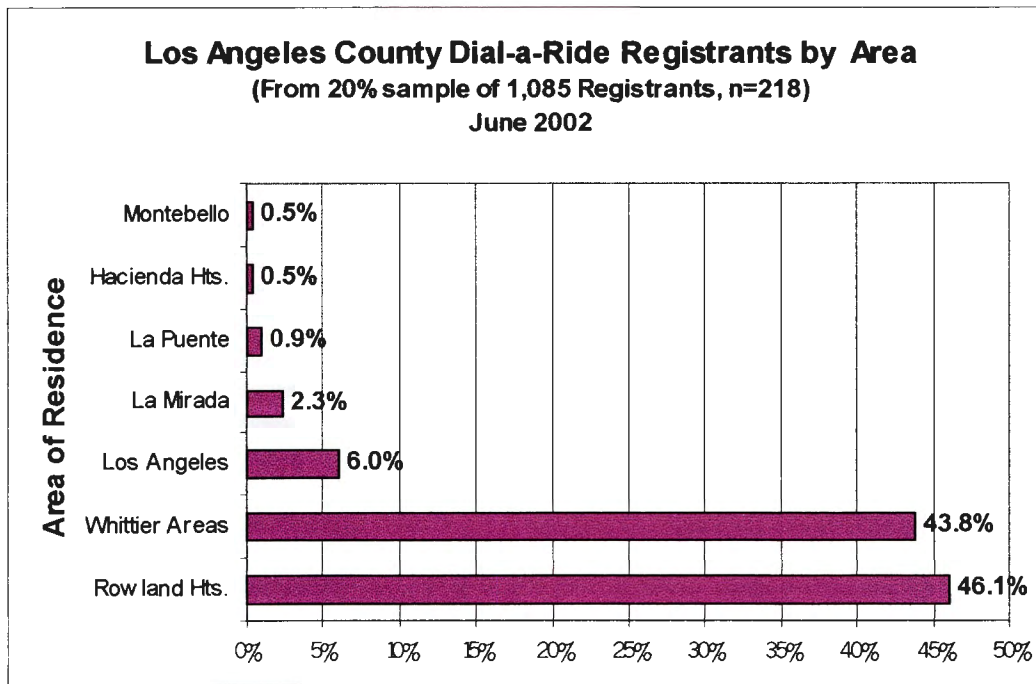
Figure 3-2 shows residential locations, taken from zip codes, as predominately in two areas. A majority of registrants live in Whittier area zip codes (44% in 90601 through 90606) or in Rowland Heights zip codes of (46% in 91745, 91748, or 91770). A much smaller proportion of residents live in other unincorporated pockets.



**Figure 3-1  
County Dial-a-Ride Rider Age Ranges**



**Figure 3-2  
County Dial-a-Ride Registrants by Area**

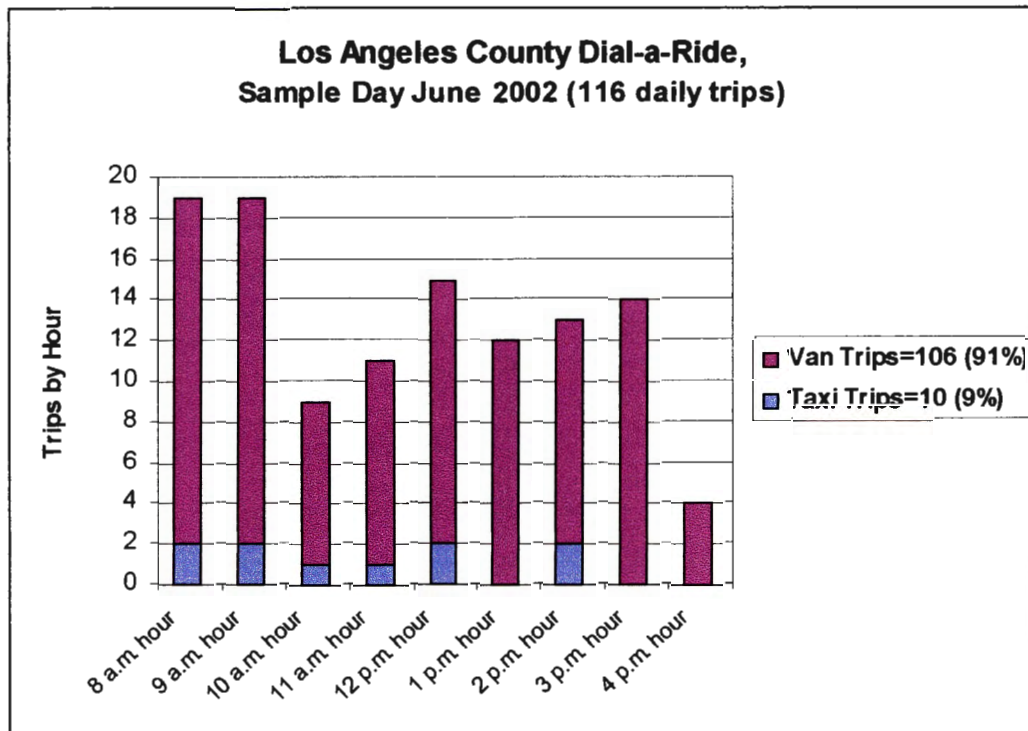




**Operational Characteristics:** The County's contract with the transit provider specifies that taxi back-up may be used to ensure that promised trips are served within a reasonable time. The dispatcher routinely fields five vehicles through the course of the day, dispatching them to trips as efficiency warrants. Use of taxi back-up is fairly minimal, as reflected in Figure 3-3.

Taxi service is reportedly used lightly for at least two reasons: the contractor is penalized when taxi trips climb too high; taxi service is less reliable from the van dispatchers viewpoint in that taxis may or may not provide the trip, even if accepted from dispatch. For the period reviewed, a single day in June, there were a total of 140 trips booked. Of those, 116 were completed, with the balance no-shows or cancellations. This is a 17 percent combined cancellation and no-show rate.

**Figure 3-3**  
County Dial-a-Ride Trips by Time of Day



The challenges of a non-contiguous service area are problematic for the dispatcher and rider alike. County dial-a-ride policy states that the rider may travel up to three miles from the service area boundary. For those living within the Whittier pockets, this (according to the dispatcher) covers most, certainly a majority, of the destinations to which these riders routinely request trips. However, for those living in the Rowland Heights/Hacienda Heights areas, which are not part of this study area, dispatch indicates that the three-mile distance usually cannot transport them into the destination-rich areas around Whittier. This reportedly leads to higher levels of consumer dissatisfaction among the Rowland Heights area riders.

Vehicle deployment is generally five vehicles hourly across the entire day, with two additional vehicles kept out of service at the request of the County and minimal modification of vehicle



scheduling in relation to trip demand. Vehicles are not assigned to particular geographic areas but range across all County pockets in response to trip scheduling by dispatch. Vehicle productivity clauses in the contract have the effect of limiting the number of vehicles in service available to dispatch.

### 3.7.4 Dial-a-Ride Common Themes

Issues of relevance to this study that emerge include:

- ◆ A significant level of public specialized transit does exist in this subregion, with every jurisdiction operating some demand response service. This represents an important foundation of service upon which future opportunities may be built.
- ◆ There are varying levels of service across the different communities – as measured by service hours and days; vehicles to area and to population size; and quantities of trips provided – raising issues of equity of service across jurisdictions.
- ◆ This unevenness in operating hours, notably limited weekend service and operating hours that end early in the afternoon, suggests priority areas of focus for improved service levels.
- ◆ Service reliability issues – on-time performance, high vehicle no-show levels or higher rates of passenger dissatisfaction – did not surface as an issue except in relation to County dial-a-ride service.
- ◆ Cross-jurisdictional travel needs did surface as an unmet need with almost every jurisdiction, particularly in relation to medical destinations that are often regionally based. There are very limited mechanisms in place for providing connections between adjoining dial-a-ride services as a cost-effective means of extending passengers' trip lengths.
- ◆ "Senior friendly" bus stops where seniors and those with disabilities might easily transfer between services are few in number. Attempts to inventory such amenity-rich stops (that feature seats, shelter, telephones, restrooms, security) found them presently limited to bus stops at Metrolink and Green Line stations.

### 3.8 Summary of Needs Assessment

Based on the technical analyses, workshop findings, roundtable results, focus groups discussions, and survey responses, the most critical needs to be addressed through this study include:

- ◆ **Connections across municipal boundaries and any accompanying institutional changes** to facilitate provision of such service.
- ◆ **Coordination** to minimize/eliminate duplication. On the fixed route side, this could involve an examination of regional versus local bus service and a reconsideration of operator responsibilities in line with MTA's tiered approach. On the paratransit side, the need for better coordination of services among the various providers is a major element.





- ◆ **Service in the unincorporated area of the County** within this study area. . While several regional routes serve this area, there are opportunities to establish additional community-based services.
- ◆ **Efficiency and effectiveness.** These important factors can be addressed through consideration of cross-boundary services and coordination of services to minimize duplication, but must also be included in any evaluation of potential new services and institutional changes.
- ◆ **Development or expansion of transit centers.** The I-105/I-605 Green Line Station is the major intermodal facility within the study area, and the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is also an important intermodal facility. Opportunities to expand their role as transit hubs need to be identified and explored. In addition, the opportunity to establish a transit center at the Whittwood Mall should be explored.
- ◆ **Customer orientation.** The focus groups discussions particularly revealed the need to focus on reliability, safety, travel time, and amenities. Addressing these issues is part of ongoing campaigns for all transit operators in the area, and is beyond the scope of this study. However, these factors cut across all areas. As alternatives are developed, service or institutional options that enhance these factors deserve priority.



## **Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study Chapter 4: Study Goals and Guiding Principles**

### **4.0 Introduction**

The activities described in previous chapters have been designed to bring together information from previous studies and updated perspectives (through the various public outreach efforts) on travel needs within the study area. After considering the findings, the project team decided to formalize goals for this study and guiding principles to direct our work efforts. Section 4.1 presents study goals. Section 4.2 summarizes and discusses the guiding principles.

### **4.1 Study Goals and Findings**

The process of reviewing SABRE study results and sifting through the needs assessment findings yielded eight goals for this study:

1. **Address unmet and undermet travel needs.** These have been identified primarily through the workshop, focus groups, and roundtable discussion. The most pressing needs are additional transit service in the unincorporated County areas and cross-jurisdictional trips.
2. **Analyze opportunities for service coordination and integration.** This goal requires careful consideration of community versus regional travel needs, and the most appropriate way of meeting each need. Provision of seamless connections and consistent information across all operators and services is an important objective. In addition, identification of common transfer points for adjacent demand response services is another means to improve service coordination.
3. **Emphasize connectivity with regional transit network.** The study area has two major intermodal transfer sites, the I-105/I-605 Green Line Station and the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center. Several regional bus routes also serve the area.
4. **Enhance cost-efficiency and effectiveness of transit service within the subregion.** Steps have been taken recently to meet this goal in terms of a reevaluation of community versus regional service. MTA has transferred operation of routes or route segments to municipal operators where the service was local in nature. There also may be opportunities to achieve economies of scale in local transit services; an example of this is the operation of the Santa Fe Springs Tram by Norwalk Transit. Strategies to increase the effectiveness of demand responsive service are another aspect of this goal.
5. **Make use of existing subregional resources.** Two major municipal operators (Norwalk Transit System and Montebello Bus Lines) serve this area, as do MTA and Metrolink regional services, and municipal fixed route and demand response services. Together, these resources are an important benefit to the subregion and can be deployed to maximize benefits to transit riders. These municipal operators provide service beyond city boundaries and thus connect the entire sub-region. Economies of scale may be achieved by having the major municipal operators assume operation of other local services, thus reducing administrative burdens for localities while taking advantage of the expertise offered by the major municipal operators.



6. **Identify institutional changes to support transit in the study area.** Actions identified in furtherance of this goal will encourage cooperation, improve funding opportunities, and incorporate the new MTA sector approach.
7. **Extend positive aspects of previous study.** The project team has taken advantage of the extensive data collection for fixed route services, to avoid re-inventing the wheel. The previous study also developed sound recommendations for regional service that can still be advanced.
8. **Build consensus among affected agencies.** This is the key underlying goal of this study. Any study is necessarily a snapshot in time. Going forward, the consensus-building process will encourage and provide opportunities to continue to work together in developing solutions to emerging problems and issues.

## 4.2 Guiding Principles

The ultimate purpose of this study is to develop concrete recommendations for improving transit service within the study area in line with the goals. Working with the project steering committee, the project team developed a series of guiding principles for use in the development of specific proposals. The six guiding principles are:

- ◆ Address cross-jurisdictional trips, particularly among demand responsive systems
- ◆ Provide service in under-served areas to ensure service equity within the study area
- ◆ Encourage efficiency and economies of scale in fixed route services
- ◆ Emphasize connectivity to intermodal facilities at rail stations
- ◆ Ease transferring by establishing common transfer points
- ◆ Develop an institutional framework to carry out study proposals and to guide the future development of transit within the study area



## **Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study Chapter 5: Issues and Service Recommendations**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes major issues facing the study area, based upon the findings in previous chapters, and presents service recommendations that address these issues. Chapter 6 addresses funding and institutional recommendations.

Each section of this chapter considers issues and develops recommendations around a particular subject, recognizing that there is considerable overlap; for example, recommendations regarding service integration can also affect unmet needs. Section 5.1 examines unmet needs. Section 5.2 considers service coordination and integration. Section 5.3 explores connectivity with the regional transit network. Section 5.4 views regional issues and services. The final section presents recommendations in the context of how they would affect individual cities and agencies.

### **5.1 Unmet Needs**

#### **5.1.1 Issues**

The unincorporated County area south of Whittier has been identified as the major area of unmet transit needs within the study area. MTA and Montebello Bus Lines provide service through this area, and these routes generally provide service in a northwest – southeast direction. In most neighborhoods within the unincorporated area, there are no direct connections to Whittwood Mall or to Santa Fe Springs Mall, or to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center.

County area public demand responsive transit is at lower service levels than that of the surrounding cities and operationally difficult to serve. The County operates a demand responsive service for seniors and persons with disabilities in the unincorporated pockets of county areas, almost a dozen of which are included in the study service area. Service is provided on weekdays only within designated distances of the residents' home. Six vehicles are operated over an estimated total area of 28 square miles, made up of these non-contiguous pockets. This vehicle-to-area ratio is more than twice that of other study communities, suggesting that County residents are receiving lower levels of service than are their neighbors.

#### **5.1.2 Recommendations**

1. The County should establish a new fixed-route shuttle in the unincorporated County area. This route would:
  - ◆ Connect with Whittwood Mall and Santa Fe Springs Mall (Target) via Colima – Mulberry – Mills
  - ◆ Also serve Santa Fe Springs Plaza and the Community Center
  - ◆ Extend northward via Painter to serve Whittier Health Clinic and Presbyterian Hospital, or operate a separate shuttle from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center north via Carmenita and Painter





Figure 5-1 shows the proposed route. One of the municipal systems could operate this route, or operation could be contracted to a private contractor. One possibility is to contract operation of this route with the Los Nietos shuttle. The County should consult with all affected parties, including other transit operators, before implementation.

Table 5-1 provides cost estimates for the proposed County shuttle under a variety of service scenarios. Table 5-2 presents a draft weekday schedule for Options 3 and 4 to indicate how the route might operate.

2. The County should modify the vehicle deployment practices of the County's contractor and track ridership response by:
  - a) Returning to service the two vehicles in the County fleet that had been removed for reasons of underutilization;
  - b) Assigning vehicles to specific groups of pockets to increase the vehicle availability in these areas; and
  - c) Reviewing the agreement with the contractor and possibly suspending clauses regarding vehicle productivity thresholds during a pilot period of at least twelve months to eighteen months.

The County should consider assigning one group of vehicles to the Whittier area pockets and a second group of vehicles to the Rowland Heights and La Puente area pockets.

3. The County should conduct a more detailed review and analysis of passenger trip-making patterns to determine whether current service area designations effectively match reasonable trip requests from County residents; e.g. review the destinations commonly served or commonly requested to identify destination-rich areas and to determine what fit or misfit may exist with current service area designations.
4. The County should review service operating hours and budget capabilities to determine feasibility of offering limited weekend service hours.
5. Depending upon changes instituted, the County should employ a variety of rider education techniques to advise County residents of service changes.
6. The County may consider defining some performance standards that allow it to determine what needs may be "reasonable to meet" and which cannot; such standards may reflect farebox recovery ratios or other productivity measures.

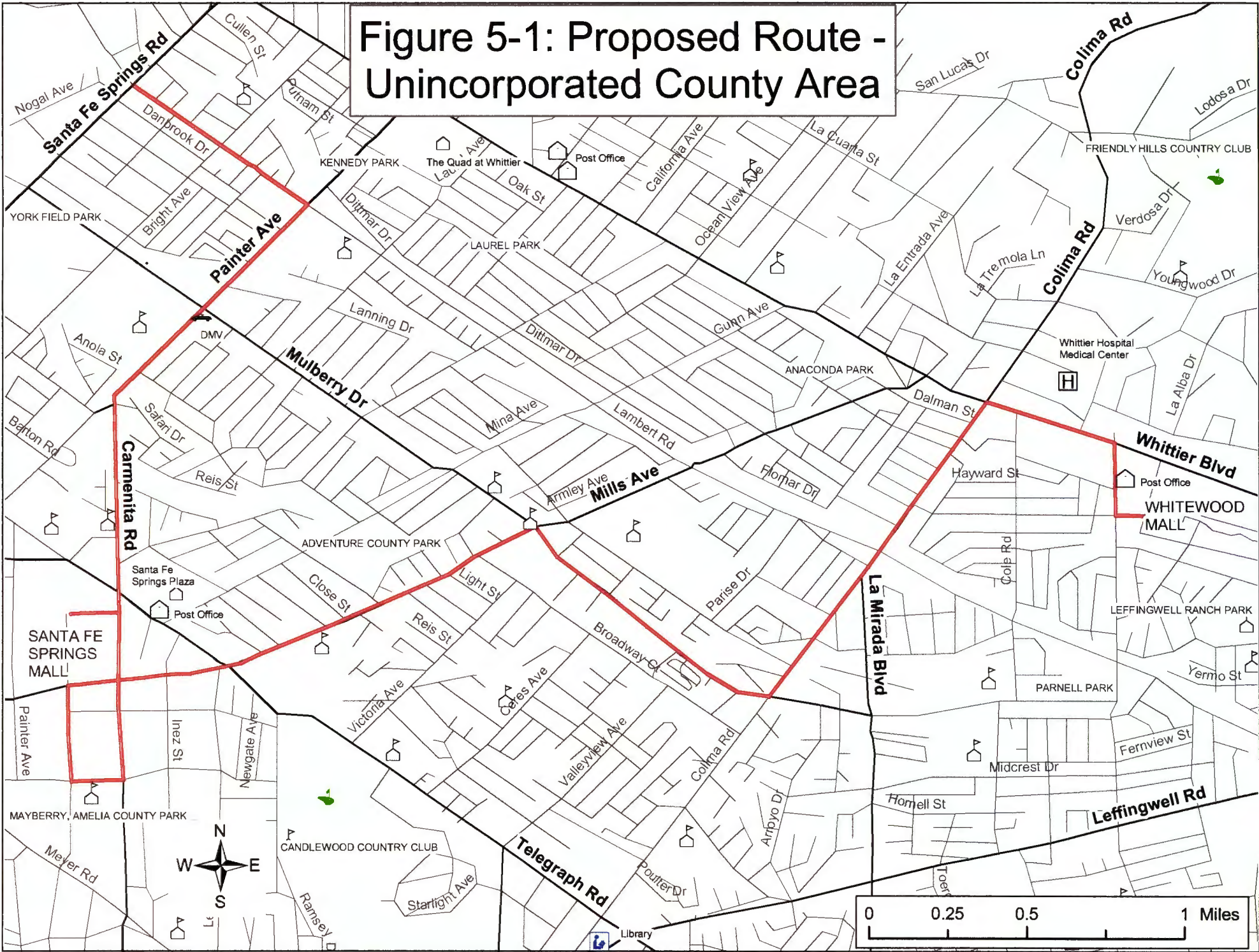
## **5.2 Service Coordination and Integration**

### **5.2.1 Issues**

The City of Whittier currently operates a community-based fixed route system within its City limits. Whittier has expressed interest in contracting operation of its fixed route service to another municipal operator with the goal of reducing costs through economies of scale, and reinvesting any savings in other transportation programs. An option that has been discussed is for Whittier to expand its dial-a-ride service area to encompass the unincorporated portion of the County south of Whittier, but this report recommends other options to improve service in this area.



# Figure 5-1: Proposed Route - Unincorporated County Area





**Table 5-1  
Cost Estimates for County Shuttle**

Option	Daily Change in										Annual Change in				
	Rev Hours		Peak	Ridership		Revenue		Cost		Rev Hours	Ridership	Revenue	Cost	Net Cost	
	Wkd	Sat	Vehs	Wkd	Sat	Wkd	Sat	Wkd	Sat						
1	10	0	1	150	0	\$38	\$0	\$500	\$0	2,550	38,250	\$9,563	\$127,500	\$117,938	
2	20		2	300	0	\$75	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	5,100	76,500	\$19,125	\$255,000	\$235,875	
3	24		2	360	0	\$90	\$0	\$1,200	\$0	6,120	91,800	\$22,950	\$306,000	\$283,050	
4	24	16	2	360	160	\$90	\$40	\$1,200	\$800	6,952	100,120	\$25,030	\$347,600	\$322,570	

Option 1 8-6 service weekday only, every other hour to Presbyterian Hospital

Option 2 8-6 service weekday only, 40 minute frequency

Option 3 6-6 service weekday only, 40 minute frequency

Option 4 6-6 service weekday; 9-5 Saturday, 40 minute frequency

**Assumptions:**

7.55 miles one-way

Fixed Route Cost \$50.00

15 riders per revenue hour weekday

10 riders per revenue hour Saturday



**Table 5-2  
Proposed Schedule – County Unincorporated Area Route  
Weekday Service**

Whittwood Mail	Colima & Mulberry	Community Center (Laurel Av)	Santa Fe Springs Mall (Target)	Presbyterian Hospital	Presbyterian Hospital	Santa Fe Springs Mall (Target)	Community Center (Laurel Av)	Colima & Mulberry	Whittwood Mail
6:00 AM	6:09 AM	6:22 AM	6:26 AM	6:38 AM	6:40 AM	6:52 AM	6:56 AM	7:09 AM	7:18 AM
6:40 AM	6:49 AM	7:02 AM	7:06 AM	7:18 AM	7:20 AM	7:32 AM	7:36 AM	7:49 AM	7:58 AM
7:20 AM	7:29 AM	7:42 AM	7:46 AM	7:58 AM	8:00 AM	8:12 AM	8:16 AM	8:29 AM	8:38 AM
8:00 AM	8:09 AM	8:22 AM	8:26 AM	8:38 AM	8:40 AM	8:52 AM	8:56 AM	9:09 AM	9:18 AM
8:40 AM	8:49 AM	9:02 AM	9:06 AM	9:18 AM	9:20 AM	9:32 AM	9:36 AM	9:49 AM	9:58 AM
9:20 AM	9:29 AM	9:42 AM	9:46 AM	9:58 AM	10:00 AM	10:12 AM	10:16 AM	10:29 AM	10:38 AM
10:00 AM	10:09 AM	10:22 AM	10:26 AM	10:38 AM	10:40 AM	10:52 AM	10:56 AM	11:09 AM	11:18 AM
10:40 AM	10:49 AM	11:02 AM	11:06 AM	11:18 AM	11:20 AM	11:32 AM	11:36 AM	11:49 AM	11:58 AM
11:20 AM	11:29 AM	11:42 AM	11:46 AM	11:58 AM	12:00 PM	12:12 PM	12:16 PM	12:29 PM	12:38 PM
12:00 PM	12:09 PM	12:22 PM	12:26 PM	12:38 PM	12:40 PM	12:52 PM	12:56 PM	1:09 PM	1:18 PM
12:40 PM	12:49 PM	1:02 PM	1:06 PM	1:18 PM	1:20 PM	1:32 PM	1:36 PM	1:49 PM	1:58 PM
1:20 PM	1:29 PM	1:42 PM	1:46 PM	1:58 PM	2:00 PM	2:12 PM	2:16 PM	2:29 PM	2:38 PM
2:00 PM	2:09 PM	2:22 PM	2:26 PM	2:38 PM	2:40 PM	2:52 PM	2:56 PM	3:09 PM	3:18 PM
2:40 PM	2:49 PM	3:02 PM	3:06 PM	3:18 PM	3:20 PM	3:32 PM	3:36 PM	3:49 PM	3:58 PM
3:20 PM	3:29 PM	3:42 PM	3:46 PM	3:58 PM	4:00 PM	4:12 PM	4:16 PM	4:29 PM	4:38 PM
4:00 PM	4:09 PM	4:22 PM	4:26 PM	4:38 PM	4:40 PM	4:52 PM	4:56 PM	5:09 PM	5:18 PM
4:40 PM	4:49 PM	5:02 PM	5:06 PM	5:18 PM	5:20 PM	5:32 PM	5:36 PM	5:49 PM	5:58 PM
5:20 PM	5:29 PM	5:42 PM	5:46 PM	5:58 PM	6:00 PM	6:12 PM	6:16 PM	6:29 PM	6:38 PM





La Mirada is operating a large quantity of general public demand responsive services with its 12 vehicles, providing almost 80,000 trips annually, almost twice the quantity of trips provided in Whittier, which is the next largest paratransit program in the subregion. This volume of trips suggests that some redirection of existing service is indicated, either into fixed-route or semi-scheduled service.

In the evolution of community-based transit programs, agencies will typically consider fixed-route service as productivity increases on its demand responsive service. The high number of trips provided by La Mirada on its general public dial-a-ride suggested a closer examination of its ridership and productivity. According to the National Transit Database data from FY 2000, La Mirada carries 7.4 passengers per revenue hour, whereas 4.0 passengers per hour is considered average for a well performing system. Fixed-route service, with its lower per-rider cost, is often the only option to continue to improve dial-a-ride service with high productivity. Establishment of fixed-route service can also reduce the level of demand responsive service needed, thus partially offsetting the cost of fixed route. While there is always a reluctance to tinker with a very successful program, the productivity of the existing service, the likelihood of continued growth in demand, and the contracting options with larger fixed-route operators in the study area (with the potential economies of scale) are strong arguments for consideration of a demonstration fixed-route program for La Mirada.

Santa Fe Springs has operated a small, purpose-driven paratransit program focused on nutrition trips, medical trips and some service to Metrolink commuters. Expected receipt of three new vehicles and incentive funding for coordinated service with Norwalk offer the opportunity to restructure these cities' demand responsive services.

More broadly, jurisdictions within the service area have operated demand responsive services with a large degree of independence, minimal coordination and largely – though not exclusively – serving only within individual city boundaries. Those seniors and persons with disabilities who rely upon local paratransit programs have expressed difficulty in making cross-jurisdictional trips. Increased cooperation and coordination around such trips will improve the mobility options of seniors and persons with disabilities, many of whom do not qualify for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access services but may not be confident users of the sub-region's fixed-route.

### **5.2.2 Recommendations**

1. Whittier should continue its discussions with Montebello Bus Lines and Norwalk Transit and reach an agreement to contract its fixed route service with one or both of these operators. MBL's Line 40 might be reconfigured to serve critical segments of Whittier's routes. Norwalk Transit could also provide service within Whittier, possibly in conjunction with the proposed Metrolink commuter shuttle. This study makes no recommendation regarding which municipal operator should be selected, because this is properly a matter for the City of Whittier to decide, but this study does strongly endorse the concept that Montebello Bus Lines and/or Norwalk Transit assume operation of Whittier Transit's fixed route system.
2. Whittier can reinvest any savings from contracting its fixed route service in other transit-eligible projects. A formal expansion of the dial-a-ride service area is not recommended at this time, because the other options are identified for the County to enhance paratransit service in the unincorporated area, but cross-jurisdictional trips should be provided as needed to Whittier residents. In this regard, Whittier has received incentive



funds with La Habra Heights that assist the cities in expanding and coordinating paratransit service areas.

3. La Mirada should examine its transportation program to determine whether it could provide more cost-effective general public transit through fixed-route or deviating fixed-route services. La Mirada should retain traditional demand response services, but it is recommended that this focus on seniors and persons with disabilities. The goal of a fixed-route service would be to serve general public trips with more time-sensitive transit options.

Figure 5-2 presents various options for fixed-route service in La Mirada. One idea is to establish east and west routes that meet at Adelfa & Santa Gertrudes (terminus for MBL Line 50, Norwalk Transit's Line 5, and MTA Line 128). These would be similar to Norwalk Transit's Routes 2 and 3, which provide local circulation on the east and west sides of Norwalk. The east route would travel north on Santa Gertrudes, deviating into neighborhoods with apartment complexes housing the elderly, east to Westridge Plaza at Imperial Highway & Beach Boulevard in La Habra, south on Beach, west and south on Hillsborough, west on Alicante, and south on Santa Gertrudes, returning to the transfer point. The west route would travel north on La Mirada, west on Imperial, south on Valley View, east on Rosecrans, and south on La Mirada, returning to the transfer point.

The east and west routes would serve most major destinations and apartment complexes for the elderly, but would not directly serve La Mirada High School and all middle schools. Another potential route is shown on Figure 5-2 would begin at Imperial & Valley View and travel south on Valley View, east on Rosecrans, north on La Mirada, east on Foster past the high school, south on Santa Gertrudes with potential deviations into the neighborhoods, east on Rosecrans, and north on Mercado to Los Coyotes Middle School.

Table 5-3 provides estimated costs for La Mirada fixed route service under a variety of service options. Table 5-4 presents a proposed schedule that illustrates how the service might be operated.

These options are offered for illustrative purposes. The City of La Mirada would obviously be involved in the selection of final routings. In addition, La Mirada would present any proposal for fixed-route operation to the Bus Operator Subcommittee, inasmuch as it could have an impact on formula allocation shares.

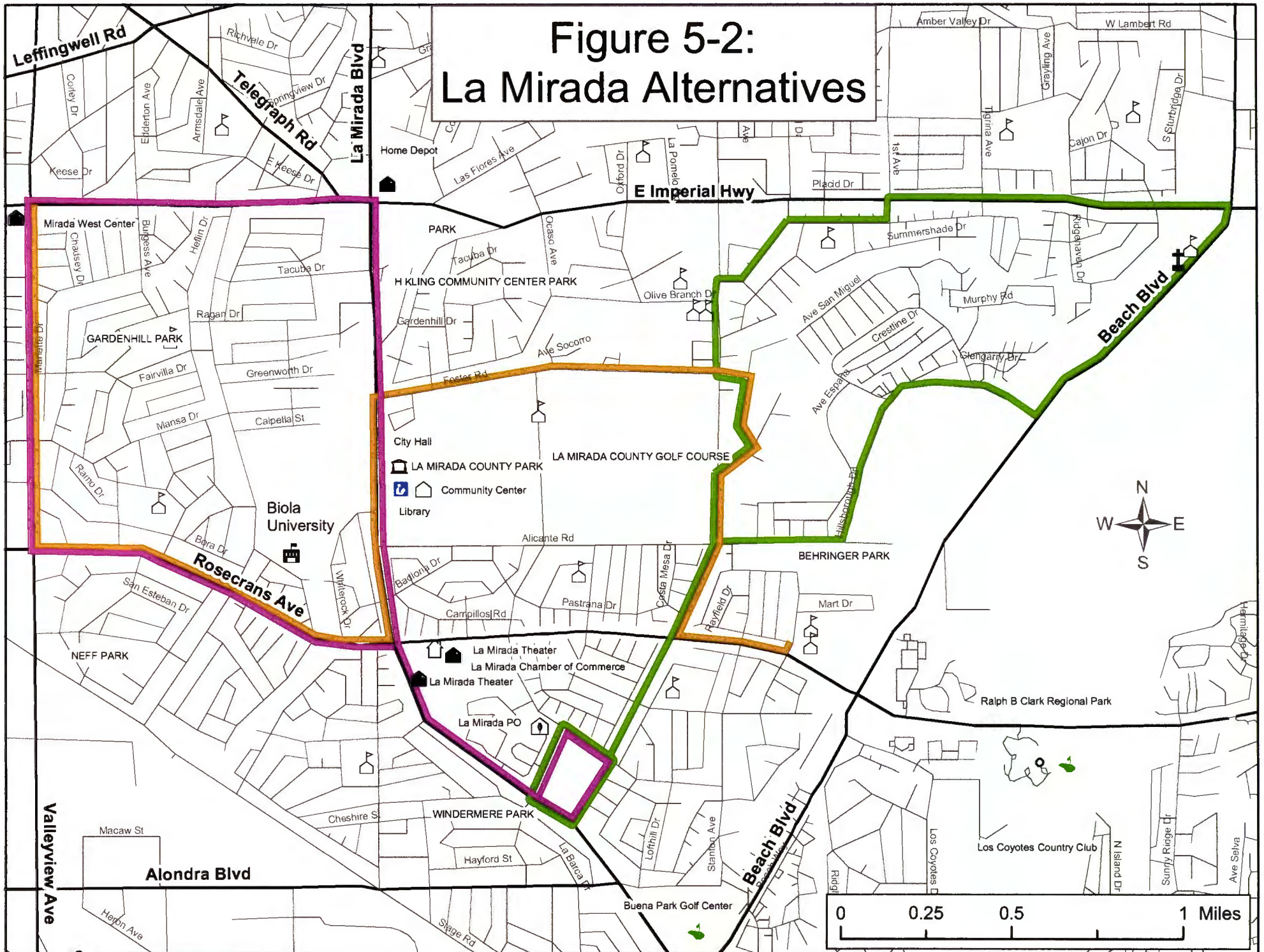
4. Santa Fe Springs and Norwalk, using their incentive funding program, should develop a coordinated demand response program that can offer a greater range of trips to Santa Fe Springs' residents and may provide Norwalk residents with increased quantities of service and areas of travel. Service could become a model for the subregion. Operational choices include brokering trips through dispatch across the two operators or consolidating use of selected vehicles under a single operation. MTA has approved funding for this program under its Proposition A Incentive Program.
5. Jurisdictions should develop and maintain listings of "senior-friendly transfer locations" to share initially with dispatch offices and, at a later date, with the ridership populations.



6. Jurisdictions should encourage use of joint transfer locations at mutually convenient sites to facilitate cross-jurisdictional travel for their riders (see also recommendation #8 below).
7. Jurisdictions should develop record-keeping capabilities that enable capturing out-of-the-area travel requests and trips provided; such data may be used for subsequent service proposals or service realignments.
8. Jurisdictions are encouraged to explore operational coordination of demand response services where such efforts will not degrade existing service levels while expanding the mobility of eligible residents. These efforts could include common operating hours, coordinated fare media, and potentially coordinated dispatch.



# Figure 5-2: La Mirada Alternatives







**Table 5-3  
Cost Estimates for La Mirada Fixed Route**

Option	Daily Change in										Annual Change in				
	Rev Hours		Peak	Ridership		Revenue		Cost		Rev Hours	Ridership	Revenue	Cost	Net Cost	
	Wkd	Sat	Vehs	Wkd	Sat	Wkd	Sat	Wkd	Sat						
Option 1	12	7	1	180	70	\$45	\$18	\$600	\$350	3,424	49,540	\$12,385	\$171,200	\$158,815	
Option 2	24	14	2	360	140	\$90	\$35	\$1,200	\$700	6,848	99,080	\$24,770	\$342,400	\$317,630	
Option 3	24	7	2	360	70	\$90	\$18	\$1,200	\$350	6,484	95,440	\$23,860	\$324,200	\$300,340	
Option 4	32	20	2	480	200	\$120	\$50	\$1,600	\$1,000	9,200	132,800	\$33,200	\$460,000	\$426,800	
Potential Savings	36	0	3	78	0	\$61	\$0	\$1,953	\$0	9,180	19,954	\$15,589	\$497,923	\$482,334	

Option 1 6-6 weekday, 9-4 Saturday, 60 minute service each loop

Option 2 6-6 weekday, 9-4 Saturday, 30 minute service each loop

Option 3 Same as option 2, but 60 minute service on Saturday

Option 4 5-9 weekday, 8-6 Saturday, 30 minute service each loop

Potential Savings assumes 3 of 12 vans no longer operated on weekdays, operating costs reduced by 25%

**Assumptions:**

West route 6.3 miles round-trip

East route 6.9 miles round-trip

Fixed Route Cost \$50.00

15 riders per revenue hour weekday

10 riders per revenue hour Saturday



**Table 5-4  
Proposed Schedule – La Mirada Fixed Route  
Weekday Service**

East Loop					West Loop				
Adelfa & Santa Gertrudes	Santa Gertrudes & Alicante	Beach & Imperial	Santa Gertrudes & Alicante	Adelfa & Santa Gertrudes	Adelfa & Santa Gertrudes	La Mirada & Foster	Imperial & Valley View	Rosecrans & La Mirada	Adelfa & Santa Gertrudes
6:00 AM	6:06 AM	6:17 AM	6:26 AM	6:29 AM	6:00 AM	6:07 AM	6:14 AM	6:23 AM	6:28 AM
6:30 AM	6:36 AM	6:47 AM	6:56 AM	6:59 AM	6:30 AM	6:37 AM	6:44 AM	6:53 AM	6:58 AM
7:00 AM	7:06 AM	7:17 AM	7:26 AM	7:29 AM	7:00 AM	7:07 AM	7:14 AM	7:23 AM	7:28 AM
7:30 AM	7:36 AM	7:47 AM	7:56 AM	7:59 AM	7:30 AM	7:37 AM	7:44 AM	7:53 AM	7:58 AM
8:00 AM	8:06 AM	8:17 AM	8:26 AM	8:29 AM	8:00 AM	8:07 AM	8:14 AM	8:23 AM	8:28 AM
8:30 AM	8:36 AM	8:47 AM	8:56 AM	8:59 AM	8:30 AM	8:37 AM	8:44 AM	8:53 AM	8:58 AM
9:00 AM	9:06 AM	9:17 AM	9:26 AM	9:29 AM	9:00 AM	9:07 AM	9:14 AM	9:23 AM	9:28 AM
9:30 AM	9:36 AM	9:47 AM	9:56 AM	9:59 AM	9:30 AM	9:37 AM	9:44 AM	9:53 AM	9:58 AM
10:00 AM	10:06 AM	10:17 AM	10:26 AM	10:29 AM	10:00 AM	10:07 AM	10:14 AM	10:23 AM	10:28 AM
10:30 AM	10:36 AM	10:47 AM	10:56 AM	10:59 AM	10:30 AM	10:37 AM	10:44 AM	10:53 AM	10:58 AM
11:00 AM	11:06 AM	11:17 AM	11:26 AM	11:29 AM	11:00 AM	11:07 AM	11:14 AM	11:23 AM	11:28 AM
11:30 AM	11:36 AM	11:47 AM	11:56 AM	11:59 AM	11:30 AM	11:37 AM	11:44 AM	11:53 AM	11:58 AM
12:00 PM	12:06 PM	12:17 PM	12:26 PM	12:29 PM	12:00 PM	12:07 PM	12:14 PM	12:23 PM	12:28 PM
12:30 PM	12:36 PM	12:47 PM	12:56 PM	12:59 PM	12:30 PM	12:37 PM	12:44 PM	12:53 PM	12:58 PM
1:00 PM	1:06 PM	1:17 PM	1:26 PM	1:29 PM	1:00 PM	1:07 PM	1:14 PM	1:23 PM	1:28 PM
1:30 PM	1:36 PM	1:47 PM	1:56 PM	1:59 PM	1:30 PM	1:37 PM	1:44 PM	1:53 PM	1:58 PM
2:00 PM	2:06 PM	2:17 PM	2:26 PM	2:29 PM	2:00 PM	2:07 PM	2:14 PM	2:23 PM	2:28 PM
2:30 PM	2:36 PM	2:47 PM	2:56 PM	2:59 PM	2:30 PM	2:37 PM	2:44 PM	2:53 PM	2:58 PM
3:00 PM	3:06 PM	3:17 PM	3:26 PM	3:29 PM	3:00 PM	3:07 PM	3:14 PM	3:23 PM	3:28 PM
3:30 PM	3:36 PM	3:47 PM	3:56 PM	3:59 PM	3:30 PM	3:37 PM	3:44 PM	3:53 PM	3:58 PM
4:00 PM	4:06 PM	4:17 PM	4:26 PM	4:29 PM	4:00 PM	4:07 PM	4:14 PM	4:23 PM	4:28 PM
4:30 PM	4:36 PM	4:47 PM	4:56 PM	4:59 PM	4:30 PM	4:37 PM	4:44 PM	4:53 PM	4:58 PM
5:00 PM	5:06 PM	5:17 PM	5:26 PM	5:29 PM	5:00 PM	5:07 PM	5:14 PM	5:23 PM	5:28 PM
5:30 PM	5:36 PM	5:47 PM	5:56 PM	5:59 PM	5:30 PM	5:37 PM	5:44 PM	5:53 PM	5:58 PM



### **5.3 Connectivity with the Regional Transit Network**

#### **5.3.1 Issues**

Local and subregional concerns have properly been the focus of this study, but one important role that local transit services can play is to provide connections to the regional transit network. Within the study area, these connections take place primarily at the I-105/I-605 Green Line station and at the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center. MTA has plans to extend the Green Line transit center, since all bus berths are occupied and the amount of parking at the park-and-ride lot continues to grow, and thus we have not developed extensive recommendations for this station. The focus groups and the roundtable with business leaders raised good ideas regarding service at the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center, in addition to existing plans for services.

#### **5.3.2 Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center**

The scope for this study specifically requested an assessment of the feasibility of expanding the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center. This section discusses recent efforts that have been undertaken parallel to this study.

##### *Background*

The Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is located east of Bloomfield Avenue on Imperial Highway on the southeast border of the cities of Norwalk and Santa Fe Springs, and is one of two intermodal transportation facilities in Norwalk. The Transportation Center was constructed in 1995, and is strategically located near three major freeways (I-5, SR-91 and I-605) and serves to facilitate access to and transfers between both bus and rail modes. The facility has 386 park-and-ride spaces for commuters, and bus boarding/alighting and layover facilities. Currently, parking at the facility is constrained on weekdays. However, Transportation Center improvements are underway which are designed to expand the parking availability on-site.

Norwalk Transit System (NTS) Routes 2, 3 and 4 and MTA Line 121 provides fixed-route bus service to local destinations, as well as, connecting service to the Metro Green Line. Metrolink commuter rail service (91 Line) operates between the Transportation Center and destinations in San Bernardino, Riverside and Los Angeles counties. The city of Santa Fe Springs also operates service during the morning and afternoon peak periods, which provide service to commuters to and from the Transportation Center to worksites in the city.

In addition to bus and rail transit services operated in the through the Transportation Center, the site serves as headquarters to the NTS administrative offices and vehicle storage and maintenance facility, as well as, the City's Public Services Department.

##### *Current Transportation Center Projects Underway*

The proximity of the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center offers the cities and other southeast communities opportunities for achieving improved local circulation and regional connectivity to Downtown Los Angeles and destinations in Orange County. Over the years, the cities of Norwalk and Santa Fe Springs have worked cooperatively to achieve maximum utilization of the facility through their efforts to improve safety and security, convenience, and to enhance the availability of transportation options for those using transit.



Currently, the cities' are undertaking a number of projects and plans designed to improve upon and expand the facility. The City of Santa Fe Springs in cooperation with the City of Norwalk, has secured federal funding through the I-5 Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to undertake the Transportation Center improvement projects outlined below:

- ◆ Transit security improvements including improved station lighting and other security measures
- ◆ Expansion of park-and ride facilities (up to 300 additional spaces)
- ◆ TSM and vehicle access improvements (e.g. signalization, striping, etc.)

In addition, to the facility improvement projects underway, the city of Norwalk will seek funding in the 2003 Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Call for Projects to improve and enhance pedestrian safety and access to the Transportation Center.

#### *Long-Term Planning Efforts*

The City of Norwalk, in cooperation with the City of Santa Fe Springs, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) Metrolink, and Los Angeles World Airports have formulated plans to develop a Station Master Plan for the Development of a Remote Flyaway and Baggage Check-In for the Los Angeles World Airports (LAX).

Center, consists of approximately 30-acres of mixed light industrial use located in the City of Santa Fe Springs. The site is bounded on the north by Imperial Highway on the south and west by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and on the east by Shoemaker Avenue. The site is comprised of six individually owned parcels.

The cities of Norwalk and Santa Fe Springs have considered plans to undertake development of the site utilizing a multi-phase approach. The first phase would include the redevelopment of the parcel immediately adjacent to the existing park and ride lot on the City of Santa Fe Springs side of the Transportation Center. The second phase would integrate the five remaining adjacent parcels into a multi-modal transportation facility, which could potentially include:

- ◆ local and regional bus services;
- ◆ taxi service;
- ◆ Metrolink commuter rail services;
- ◆ Amtrak passenger rail services;
- ◆ Greyhound bus services;
- ◆ Short and long term parking and shuttle service to the airport.

The proposed flyaway facility would be developed to provide remote baggage check-in, parking and airport shuttle service to those traveling from Southeast Los Angeles County and adjacent Orange County to LAX. Those individuals with originating flights departing from LAX would park or be dropped off at the flyaway facility, check their baggage, and be transported by shuttle to the airport in time for ticketing and departure. This community-based flyaway facility would eliminate the need to make lengthy automobile trips to the airport by those wishing to access LAX, thereby decreasing congestion and increasing mobility at the LAX and its environs.

The Master Plan will be used as the "blueprint" to develop the proposed flyaway facility in the City of Santa Fe Springs. The Master Plan will also study other transportation uses for the





facility (i.e. Amtrak passenger rail, Greyhound bus services, etc.). Recognizing that there are number of diverse planning and transportation-related issues that must be addressed prior to development of the proposed flyaway facility, the agencies propose to contract for the services of a consultant(s) to develop a comprehensive Station Master Plan.

The cities' believe that this project represents a significant opportunity to study the feasibility of developing a fully integrated, community based multi-modal facility that can potentially result in a reduction of single occupancy vehicle trips made to the airport.

#### *Expansion of Service Operations to the Transportation Center*

Norwalk in cooperation with the city of Whittier has secured Air Quality Management District (AQMD) Air Quality Investment Program funding for the Norwalk/Whittier Shuttle a new community-based rail feeder shuttle operating between the city of Whittier and the Transportation Center.

The operation of the Shuttle will be timed to meet four (4) AM peak and four (4) PM peak period Metrolink train trips. Morning peak period trips will originate from the Historic Whittier Depot, make a single stop to board passengers at the Santa Fe Springs (SFS) Plaza, and terminate at the Transportation Center in Norwalk. Afternoon peak period trips will meet arriving Metrolink trains, drop off passengers at the SFS Plaza and terminate at the Whittier Historic Depot.

It is anticipated that initial shuttle ridership will predominantly be current Metrolink riders. However, from its implementation the shuttle will be marketed as not only a peak hour connection to commuter rail service, but also as a new link to other transit bus and rail services operating nearby, such as:

- ◆ Norwalk Transit Routes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
- ◆ Whittier Transit fixed-route service
- ◆ Long Beach Transit Lines: 171/172
- ◆ MTA Lines: 121, 125, 127, 130, 270
- ◆ Metro Green Line rail service
- ◆ Metrolink Commuter rail service

Norwalk Transit System (NTS) will operate the project, and will also assume responsibility for administration, monitoring and reporting for the shuttle service. Norwalk and Whittier are working to commence shuttle operations in early 2003.

#### **5.3.3 Recommendations**

1. Expand the current Santa Fe Springs program that provides on-call shuttle service to business locations within the City.
2. Implement the proposed shuttle from Whittier to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center. This shuttle, which is already funded, will provide direct express or limited-stop service during peak hours.
3. Continue to explore the idea of an express regional connection from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center to LAX via I-105, and implement if feasible and if all parties agree.



4. As part of the proposed shuttle serving the unincorporated County area (noted above), consider at least a peak-hour connection to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center.
5. Establish limited-stop service on selected peak-hour trips for Norwalk Transit's Line 4. By stopping at only major intersections (e.g., Beach, La Mirada, Valley View, Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center, and the Green Line station), this service would encourage the use of transit to and from Metrolink and the Green Line. Limited-stop schedules would obviously be coordinated with train schedules.
6. Reopen discussions with Whittwood Mall regarding establishment of a transit center at this location. With new management, Whittwood Mall may be more receptive to this concept. This transit center could serve existing MTA, MBL, and Whittier Transit lines as well as extended OCTA, Foothill, and Norwalk Transit routes and the proposed County shuttle for the unincorporated area. To avoid overwhelming Mall management, we recommend that the City of Whittier make the initial contact and focus on existing routes and routes proposed in this study, with the potential to expand in the future. The City of Whittier, in conjunction with MTA and the Cities of Norwalk and Montebello, has initiated meetings and discussion with the new management regarding a transit center.

## **5.4 Regional Recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Issues**

The original SABRE study included several sound recommendations for changes to MTA regional bus service within this subregion. Several recommendations, including the transfer of the eastern segment of Line 125 to Norwalk Transit operation as Line 5, truncation of Line 18 at Garfield Avenue (replaced by MBL Line 40), transfer of Line 104 to MBL, and discontinuation of Line 466, have already been implemented. Other recommendations included route truncations and extensions and the establishment of new routes.

### **5.4.2 Recommendations**

1. Move forward with the recommended extension of Line 108 to Whittwood Mall, assuming that space is available at this location.
2. Truncate Line 111/113 at the Green Line Station when sufficient space is available, and begin a new shuttle between this location and Whittwood Mall.
3. Truncate Line 121 at the Green Line Station when sufficient space is available and if this allows cost savings or other changes to the route. As noted earlier, there is no room to add bus routes at the Green Line station. MTA also has not moved to implement this recommendation because truncating the route would not reduce peak bus requirements under the current schedule, but would merely add unproductive recovery time.
4. MTA should prioritize the new express routes proposed in the original study and begin implementation as appropriate. Although not a short-term recommendation, establishment of express bus routes between this subregion and Orange County after the HOV lane on I-5 is extended north received an enthusiastic response whenever it was raised during the public outreach.



## **5.5 How Recommendations Affect Particular Municipalities/Areas/Agencies**

This section summarizes recommendations by city/county/agency.

### **5.5.1 Unincorporated County Area**

1. New fixed-route shuttle connecting to shopping and medical areas, potentially to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center.
2. Additional vehicles to improve paratransit operation.

### **5.5.2 Norwalk**

1. New limited stop service on Route 4 during peak periods.
2. Expanded coordination with neighboring municipalities regarding demand responsive services.
3. Potential direct connection with LAX from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center.

### **5.5.3 La Mirada**

1. Potential establishment of fixed-route service within the City and connecting to major trip generators nearby.

### **5.5.4 Santa Fe Springs**

1. Expansion of shuttle services from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center serving area businesses.
2. Expanded coordination with Norwalk regarding demand responsive services.
3. Potential direct connection with LAX from the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center.

### **5.5.5 Whittier**

1. Transfer of operation of Whittier Transit System to one or both of the municipal systems serving the area (Montebello Bus Lines and Norwalk Transit).
2. Reinvestment of savings in other transit-eligible projects.
3. New express/limited stop shuttle to the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center.
4. Reopen discussions with Whittwood Mall regarding establishment of a transit center at this location.



### **5.5.6 Pico Rivera**

No specific recommendations are offered for Pico Rivera. Preliminary ideas for potential changes proved to be infeasible at this time.

### **5.5.7 All Cities/County**

1. Increased attention to and coordination of cross-jurisdictional demand responsive trips.

### **5.5.8 MTA**

No new recommendations have been developed for MTA services, since the previous SABRE study focused on MTA routes. This study endorses the previous recommendations, suggesting only that MTA prioritize the numerous new express routes proposed.

### **5.5.9 Norwalk Transit/Montebello Bus Lines**

1. Potential operation of Whittier Transit routes and/or the proposed shuttle route serving the unincorporated County area.
2. Limited stop service during peak periods on NTS Route 4.





## **Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study Chapter 6: Funding and Institutional Arrangements**

### **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter addresses funding and institutional arrangements for the Southeast subregion to support the service recommendations and to encourage continued coordination of transit planning and funding. Section 6.1 describes appropriate funding sources and recommends approaches to maximize transit funding in the Southeast. Section 6.2 considers service coordination among the various governmental entities. Section 6.3 develops proposed institutional arrangements for this subregion.

### **6.1 Funding**

There are several local, regional, state and federal transit and transportation-related sources of revenue that may be used to fund transportation programs, plans and projects. Each funding source has different eligibility requirements, funding availability, project selection criteria and project application and approval deadlines. The project team reviewed the following transit and transportation-related financial and funding source program documents and information:

- ◆ LACMTA Propositions A & C Local Return Guidelines
- ◆ LACMTA Funding Source Matrix (March 14, 2002)
- ◆ LACMTA Transit Operator Proposition A Formula Funding Guidelines
- ◆ SCAQMD AB2766 Discretionary Fund Guidelines
- ◆ SCAQMD Rule 2202 On-Road Motor Vehicle Mitigation Options Air Quality Investment Program (AQIP)
- ◆ California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Transportation Planning Program

The results of the study funding review are presented below.

#### **6.1.1 Propositions A and C Local Return Funding**

In 1980 and 1990, Propositions A and C, respectively, were passed by the voters of Los Angeles County. Both ordinances enacted a one-half cent sales and use tax to be used for the development and improvement of public transit, paratransit, and the related transportation infrastructure. Each Proposition includes provisions for the allocation of a percentage of the total sales tax receipts (Prop. A 25% and Prop. C 20%) to be returned to local jurisdictions within the County on a population-share basis. Each local jurisdiction within the study area receives an annual allocation of local return funds, which are currently expended for local transit projects. The funds are disbursed to cities by the County Auditor, while funds' administration and management is the responsibility of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA).



Cities must comply with the Local Return Program Guidelines developed by the LACMTA in order to expend Prop. A and C funds. The Guidelines specify types of projects that are eligible for both Prop. A and C funding, and projects that are exclusively eligible either for Prop. A or Prop. C funding.

To maintain eligibility and meet funding program requirements, local jurisdictions must annually (or as needed for new projects) submit a Project description form, an Annual Project Update and an Annual Expenditure Report by specified due dates. Each city must receive an approval notification from the LACMTA prior to expending funds. Eligible transit project expenditures under Prop. A and C include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Public transit services – operating
- ◆ Fixed-route services
- ◆ Paratransit services
- ◆ Recreational transit services
- ◆ Bus stop improvements and maintenance
- ◆ Public transit – capital
- ◆ Transit systems management (TSM)
- ◆ Transit security
- ◆ Fare subsidies
- ◆ Ridesharing
- ◆ Transit Marketing
- ◆ Park-and-Ride Lots
- ◆ Transit facilities
- ◆ Transportation Planning
- ◆ Synchronized Signalization

Each of the six local jurisdictions in the study area (Norwalk, Santa Fe Springs, Whittier, La Mirada, Pico Rivera and the Unincorporated County area) currently funds and operates fixed-route, dial-a-ride services, or both. Proposition A and C Local Return funds are the predominant sources of funding for expenses associated with the operation of community-based transit services and related projects for cities in the study area. Since Proposition A and C funds are allocated to local jurisdictions on the basis of population, each city receives varying amounts of funding each year based upon amount of sales taxes collected. Table 1 shows the Proposition A & C estimated allocations for each of the six local jurisdictions for Fiscal Year 2003.



**Table 6.1**  
**FY 2003 Proposition A and C Estimated Allocations\***

City	Proposition A Local Return	Proposition C Local Return
La Mirada	\$629,393	\$522,050
Norwalk	\$1,389,715	\$1,152,699
Pico Rivera	\$853,326	\$707,791
Santa Fe Springs	\$234,602	\$194,590
Whittier	\$1,125,785	\$933,783
Unincorporated L. A. County	\$13,285,786**	\$11,019,895**

\* FY03 MTA Funding Mark estimates

\*\* These figures represent FY 03 Prop. A and C estimated allocation for entire L. A. County Unincorporated area. Allocation shares for each supervisorial district are unavailable.

Each local jurisdiction has ongoing transit projects funded from either Proposition A or C that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ Project planning and administrative expenses
- ◆ Fixed-Route and shuttle services operations and maintenance
- ◆ Paratransit operations and maintenance
- ◆ Recreational/specialized transit services
- ◆ Capital expenses (transit vehicles, facilities, etc)
- ◆ Transit security and improvements
- ◆ Transportation system management improvements (i.e. signalization, etc)
- ◆ Bus pass subsidy/buydown programs

In addition, some cities have used Prop. A for fund exchanges with other local jurisdictions, and Prop. C for Capital Reserves and Streets and Roads expenditures.

Funding for ongoing projects requires the commitment of a significant amount of the cities' Prop. A and C funding allocations each year (not including prior year carryover). Therefore, cities in the study area should seek opportunities to leverage local funding through identification of additional external funding opportunities, and through coordination with other local jurisdictions.

### **6.1.2 AB2766 Local Funding**

This source of revenue is provided to cities and counties in the South Coast Basin through collection of the \$4 motor vehicle registration fee. Fees are collected by the State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and forty cents of every dollar collected is distributed quarterly by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The program is administered by the Mobile Source Reduction Committee (MSRC) to be used for local projects designed to reduce air pollution from mobile sources.

Relative to the recommended service alternatives and potential capital procurement needs, funds may be used to purchase alternatively fueled vehicles. Since funding allocation is contingent upon fees collected on a population share basis, the amount of funding received by



each city varies significantly, and could only minimally cover capital procurement costs. However, at city discretion, local AB2766 funding could be used to meet local match requirements of any one of a number of application-based capital funding programs.

### **6.1.3 Local, State and Federal Operating Subsidies for Public Transit Operators**

Three municipal transit operators in the study area (Norwalk, Montebello and La Mirada) receive local, state and federal subsidies to support operation of their transit system, in addition to Proposition A and C funds. These additional funding sources include:

- ◆ LACMTA Proposition A 40% Discretionary Program (95% of Prop. A 40%) Transit Operator Formula funds
- ◆ Proposition A and C Interest (in accordance with formula distribution policy set by MTA)
- ◆ Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds (Article 4)
- ◆ State Transit Assistance (STA)

These funding sources are programmed and allocated by MTA on an annual basis to a limited number of operators in Los Angeles County. These “Included” operators are required to report to State and Federal agencies on the productivity and financial status of their transit systems on a routine basis, and prepare Short Range Transit Plans. The data collection and reporting requirements for these operators is extensive, however, these operators are eligible to receive funding not available to cities operating transit service.

### **6.1.4 Application-Based Funding Sources**

Other cities operating in the study area currently receive and/or have received funding for operating and capital expenses from external application-based funding sources such as LACMTA, AQMD and other sources. The revenue sources detailed in Table 6-2 have been evaluated relative to the service recommendations specific to the study effort, and details of each funding source is presented below.





**Table 6-2  
Application-Based Funding Sources**

Funding Source / Description	Eligible Applicants	Eligible Uses	Evaluation Criteria	Estimated Annual Funding Amount	Duration of Funding / Timing of Submittals
Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) Prop. A Incentive Program (5% of Prop. A 40% Discretionary)	County of Los Angeles, cities and public transit operators. Private operators or others can only receive funds through sponsorship of an eligible operator.	Sub-regional Paratransit Programs, Special Transit Programs and Community Transit Programs; Program guidelines establish paratransit programs as the primary funding recipients	Varies by category of project. Paratransit funding is allocated in accordance with Subregional Paratransit Program requirements	Projected Revenues: FY03: \$10.9 mil FY04: \$11.3 mil FY05: \$11.8 mil FY06: \$12.4 mil FY07: \$13.0 mil	Three-year time limit to expend funds (funding subject to expenditure requirements outlined of the MTA Formula Allocation Procedure). Applications accepted every two years.
LACMTA Prop. C 25% Transit Related Highway Improvement (Funds allocated through MTA Call for Projects Application Process*)	County of Los Angeles, cities and public transit operators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HOV/Transitways</li> <li>Incident Management</li> <li>Park-n-Ride Facilities</li> <li>Signal Coordination / TSM</li> <li>Grade Separation</li> <li>Arterial Widening</li> <li>Interchanges</li> <li>Ridesharing</li> </ul>	Countywide transit-related streets and highways improvement Funds used for new or improved facilities that reduce congestion in accordance with Call for Projects Program priorities and funding objectives. The sponsoring agency must provide for ongoing maintenance and operation of the improvement(s).	Projected Revenues: FY03: \$141.7mil FY04: \$146.7 mil FY05: \$152.5mil FY06: \$160.2 mil FY07: \$168.2mil	Three-year time limit to expend funds (funding subject to expenditure requirements outlined of the MTA Formula Allocation Procedure). Applications accepted every two years.
LACMTA Prop. C 40% Discretionary (Funds allocated through MTA Call for Projects Application Process*)	County of Los Angeles, cities and public transit operators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Improvements</li> <li>System capacity – Expansion operating</li> <li>System capacity – Expansion capital</li> <li>Safety and Security Improvements</li> </ul>	Expansion and/or improvement of rail and bus services in L.A. County in accordance with Call for Projects Program priorities and funding objectives	Projected Revenues: FY03: \$226.7mil FY04: \$234.7 mil FY05: \$244.0mil FY06: \$256.2mil FY07: \$269.1mil	Three-year time limit to expend funds (funding subject to expenditure requirements outlined of the MTA Formula Allocation Procedure). Applications accepted every two years.
South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) AB 2766 Discretionary Fund Work Program – (30 cents of every dollar of annual \$4 DMV Motor Vehicle Registration fee goes into the Discretionary fund).	Local governments in the South Coast Air Basin, government agencies, private sector businesses and research institutions.	Projects that reduce mobile source emissions, Transportation Control Measures, Clean Fuel Vehicles, and Alternative Fuel Infrastructure.	Proposals for projects must offer significant measurable vehicle emissions reductions, be cost effective, and have significant, verified co-funding.	FY 2002-03 Work Program: \$14.95 mil	Funds allocated by the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Committee (MSRC) must be expended in two years. Applications are accepted in various project categories on an annual basis.
South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule 2202 On-Road Vehicle Mitigation Operations Air Quality Investment Program (AQIP)	Local governments in the South Coast Air Basin, government agencies, private sector businesses and research institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement of low or zero emission vehicles</li> <li>Creation or improvement of localized demand-responsive, mobility enhancing services such as shuttles, etc.</li> <li>Old vehicle scrapping</li> </ul>	Proposals should demonstrate that emission reductions/air quality improvements are real, surplus, quantifiable, and contain appropriate methodologies. The program objective is to reduce equivalent emissions to employers participating in AQIP that would be achieved if they met their emissions reductions target (ERT).	Funding awards contingent upon amount available in the Air Quality Investment account. Third Quarter Nov. 1, 2002 amount available for contracts: \$2,926,632	Funds awarded must be expended in two years. Multiple awards may be granted. Proposals are accepted on an ongoing basis and are disbursed quarterly.



Funding Source / Description	Eligible Applicants	Eligible Uses	Evaluation Criteria	Estimated Annual Funding Amount	Duration of Funding / Timing of Submittals
Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program (CMAQ)	Public Local jurisdictions, government agencies.	Program designed to fund projects that contribute to the attainment of national ambient air quality standards with a focus on ozone and carbon monoxide. Typical projects include: public transit improvements, high occupancy vehicle lanes, employer-based transportation management plans and incentives, shared-ride services and bicycle and pedestrian improvements.	MTA awards and allocates funds through Call for Projects Application Process. Projects must meet project evaluation criteria established by MTA. Projects must be consistent with a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that has been approved pursuant to the Clean Air Act. Funding may not be used for projects that result in construction of new capacity available to single occupant vehicles. Local match funding of 11.47% is required.	Projected Revenues: FY03 - \$130.9 mil FY04 - \$125.1 mil FY05 - \$112.8 mil	Three-year time limit to expend funds (federal fiscal years) including the year apportioned.
Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Standards Attainment Program	Local governments in the South Coast Air Basin, government agencies, private sector businesses and research institutions.	Discretionary state funding source allocated by the SCAQMD for procurement of on-road and off-road vehicles, including trucks, transit buses, marine, forklift, construction and other heavy duty vehicles.	Vehicles purchased must be clean fuel heavy-duty vehicles and infrastructure of the retrofitting of older diesel engines with newer fuel technologies.	Approximately \$26.4 million for Southern California in FY02, which includes \$7 mil for transit buses.	Funds awarded annually and must be expended in two years following obligation.
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Division of Transportation Planning (DOTP) Grants	Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, Cities and Counties. Native Tribal Governments, Non-Profit Organizations/Community Based Organizations, Transit Operators, Universities or Caltrans Districts may submit as co-applicants only (except for Partnership Planning grants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Justice</li> <li>• Community-Based Transportation Planning</li> <li>• Partnership Planning</li> <li>• Transit Technical Planning Assistance</li> <li>• Statewide Planning Studies</li> <li>• Transit Professionals Development</li> </ul>	Funds can be used for planning purposes only. Proposals must address grant-specific objectives outlined under each grant funding category including, but not limited to: Relieving gridlock in congested areas, increasing emphasis on special transportation needs, providing alternatives to highways, including connections between different modes of transportation.	Approximately \$8.5 million will be available for FY 2002/2003 in six funding categories.	Funds awarded annually. Project duration varies from one to two years.

Every two years, MTA solicits funding applications from local jurisdictions and public agencies in Los Angeles County under a number of modal categories. Applications received are evaluated and ranked by MTA staff. Staff recommendations are then reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and other committees as appropriate, and forwarded to the MTA Board for approval. The 2003 Call for Projects Draft final application and modal evaluation criteria have been distributed to eligible agencies and local jurisdictions. The current published schedule for submittal of funding applications is January 31, 2003.

Project eligibility, performance and productivity and monitoring and reporting requirements vary greatly with each revenue source listed in Table 6-2. In order to maximize local and external transit funding, cities must remain cognizant of the ongoing administrative cost of project implementation, management, monitoring and reporting.



Although all of the external sources of revenue detailed in Table 6-2 require some level of local match (required percentage of funds contributed by the applicant) these sources offer cities the opportunity to leverage and/or maximize their individual funding opportunities and/or work together with neighboring cities on jointly sponsored projects. Cities in the study area have already taken advantage of opportunities to work together on projects (e.g. Santa Fe Springs Tram operated by Norwalk Transit System, Whittier-Norwalk Shuttle (including L. A. County), Norwalk Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center).

### **6.1.5 Funding Recommendations**

1. Recognizing that there is a scarcity of available local funds and public subsidies for transit, a “mix” of transit funding sources must be used in order to fund recommended transit service alternatives. Local jurisdictions should work to leverage and maximize local funding allocations and other transit subsidies through coordination with other cities in the study area and by actively seeking external funding for transit projects.
2. Pursue opportunities for joint County, public, and private efforts to secure additional state and federal funds through Mobility 21.
3. A significant amount of local, state and federal funding is allocated through the MTA Call for Projects Funding application process. Local jurisdictions in the study area should work cooperatively with the MTA in the planning and development of projects to ensure MTA understanding of community-based priorities and support for projects.

### **6.2 Service Coordination**

Cities in the study area have responsibility for operation (either directly operated or contracted) and funding of their local transit services. Administration and management and/or operational oversight are also the responsibility of each local jurisdiction. In an effort to meet the local circulation needs of residents, transit services (with the exception of dial-a-ride services for elderly and disabled) are limited to operation within city boundaries. This approach to service operation may successfully address the need for local access and circulation, but generally fails to meet the overall travel needs and of the community and through travelers.

There are two categories of transit service project recommendations resulting from the Southeast study effort, as follows:

- ◆ Transit service projects designed to improve mobility for residents within the boundaries of their community (e.g. Dial-a-ride programs and local fixed-route circulators and shuttles); and
- ◆ Coordinated transit service projects involving two or more cities specifically designed to improve intercity mobility and regional connectivity for residents, employees, commuters and other travelers.

Both categories of projects should be viewed as equally important elements necessary to improve overall mobility in the study area. Cities in the Southeast subregion are operating community-based transit services, which provide a basic framework for development of coordinated, improved, and/or expanded services that serve to link Southeast communities and offer regional connectivity.



The need for development of services that operate between jurisdictions in the study area has been raised as an important study issue. Continued development and implementation of both city-specific transit projects and programs as well as, inter-jurisdictional projects and programs will serve to establish a more cohesive transportation framework by increasing available travel options and access to services for transit riders within the study area. If jointly operated services were to be implemented, there is a potential for cities to minimize the costs of planning, administration and operation dependent upon the type and level of service operated.

### **6.2.1 Service Coordination Recommendations**

1. Cities within the study area should view the gradual implementation and development of both city-specific and coordinated multi-jurisdictional transit projects as wholly interrelated and necessary to develop a cohesive transportation network in the Southeast.
2. Cities in the study area should continue to work beyond the study effort to cooperatively and collectively plan and implement community-based transit service alternatives identified in the study.
3. Service and funding coordination at the community level should include a “programmatic” localized planning process designed to identify, prioritize and develop funding mechanisms for transit services and projects consistent with local and regional needs. This coordinated approach to planning and development of community-based transit services will help to:
  - a. Sustain the current focus and awareness on community-based transit needs established during the study;
  - b. Ensure gradual yet consistent progress toward improving mobility in the study area;
  - c. Promote service equity and increased cooperation between jurisdictions and transit agencies;
  - d. Improve service connectivity and access to transit by riders;
  - e. Provide opportunities for cost sharing and maximization of available transit funding; and
  - f. Provide greater opportunities for local jurisdictions to actively participate in the transit planning and funding process by leveraging community influence and coordination.

### **6.3 Institutional Approaches to Service Coordination and Funding – Community-Based Funding Partnership**

The Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG) assists twenty-seven (27) cities in the Southeast area to develop and fund high-level transportation-related plans and programs. Five of the cities in the study area are members of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG). In addition, the LACMTA is moving forward with its efforts to establish a sector-based planning framework for the Southeast area. The LACMTA is working with the Gateway COG and Southeast cities to define sector governance parameters and geographic boundaries.

Community-based transit service alternatives and approaches analyzed in this report have been developed to be consistent with plans currently being considered for approval by the LACMTA.





### **6.3.1 Institutional Considerations**

In order to support the implementation of community-based transit service alternatives identified during the study, local jurisdictions in the study area should develop formalized institutional arrangements and/or agreements that facilitate coordination and cooperation, and ensures that local and regional transit needs in the study area addressed.

In consideration of changes to the transit planning and operating environment in the Southeast (i.e., LACMTA Southeast Sector activities), there are two institutional options that are being recommended to assist cities in the planning, development and funding of community-based transit services.

*Option 1:* Cooperative agreement/MOU between cities that designates a lead municipal transit operator and/or local jurisdiction responsible for administration of the agreement and other agreed upon responsibilities. The lead agency, study area cities and the Gateway COG would participate in a structured planning process each year leading to the development of community-based service projects, including but not limited to, prioritization of projects, identification of funding options and implementation of services. The LACMTA would participate as a non-voting “accepted” partner at the discretion of the cities. This approach will provide the basis for cooperative planning, development and funding of projects in the study area.

#### *Advantages of Option 1:*

- ◆ Simple cooperative agreement/MOU simplifies agreement approval process and can be easy to administer.
- ◆ MOU does not need to be comprehensive, can be limited in focus to accomplish only specific objectives (i.e. planning, prioritization of projects and funding).
- ◆ This option does not add additional bureaucracy at the outset, can be used as an initial mechanism for encouraging cooperation and coordination between cities and transit operators.

#### *Disadvantages of Option 1:*

- ◆ Consensus on selection and responsibilities of a lead transit operator/local jurisdiction may be difficult to achieve.

*Option 2:* Establishment of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) comprised of study area cities with a lead municipal transit operator/local jurisdiction responsible for administration and oversight of JPA activities and responsibilities discussed in Option 1.

#### *Advantages of Option 2:*

- ◆ A JPA is a recognized and accepted process to achieve cooperation and coordination between cities and agencies.
- ◆ The JPA can specify limited or far-reaching roles and responsibilities for lead municipal transit operator/local jurisdiction.



*Disadvantages of Option 2:*

- ◆ It may be difficult to gain approval and/or support of study area cities for a JPA.
- ◆ A JPA would add an additional layer of bureaucracy in the region.
- ◆ Consensus on selection and responsibilities of lead transit agency may be difficult to achieve.

The institutional approaches described in both options would enhance city participation in the development and implementation of community-based transit services, and would offer the cities increased opportunities to implement tailored transit services and to improve their understanding of the diverse and changing transit needs of each community.

**6.3.2 Institutional Recommendation**

1. Cities in the study area should establish a formalized institutional arrangement that is easy to administer and consistent with LACMTA current plans for the Southeast and other transit funding plans (i.e. programming of projects). The recommended option is a cooperative agreement based on an MOU among all parties, with the City of Norwalk designated as the lead agency as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee for this study. . This option is recommended for several reasons:
  - a. Simplicity
  - b. Ease of implementation
  - c. Flexibility
  - d. Effectiveness in achieving its goal
  - e. Ability to encompass the MTA Sector as an accepted partner

In the original goals for the study, we cited “achieving consensus” among the Cities, County, and participating agencies as a critical outcome of this study. An MOU-based process is in some ways a more formalized extension of the steering committee that has guided study progress to date. The process is sufficiently flexible to address the concerns of individual agency participants, and can also maximize funding opportunities for critical transit projects in the subregion.



**APPENDIX A  
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUP  
AGENDA**



**Appendix A  
SUPPLEMENTAL SOUTHEAST AREA BUS RESTRUCTURING STUDY  
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUP**

Thursday, June 20, 2002

**2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Betty Wilson Center  
(located adjacent to the Lake Center Athletic Park)  
11641 Florence Avenue  
Santa Fe Springs**

**AGENDA**

- I. Participant Introductions and Affiliations
- II. Study Purpose and Objectives of Roundtable Sessions

**DISCUSSION TOPICS AND QUESTIONS**

**Topic #1: General Awareness and Perceptions of Transit Services within the Community**

Q: How many of you have taken transit? If so, what service did you ride and what was your personal experience? If you have never taken transit, why not?

Q: What impact (positively or negatively), if any, has the availability of travel options within the community using transit had upon your personal day-to-day activities?

Q: Has your agency, business, institution or community group taken advantage of opportunities to participate in the planning process for the development of new, expanded or restructured community transit services? If so, what was/were the outcome(s)?

Q: What role, if any, does your agency, business, institution or community group envision for itself in the planning of transit services for the future?

**Topic #2 Impact and Importance of Transit within the Community**

Q: Is the availability of community-based travel options important to the viability of your business, agency or institution? If yes, how so?

Q: Does your business, agency or institution, take actions to encourage or promote the use of transit to your site by employees, customers or the public-at-large? If yes, what actions have been taken?





**Topic #3 Suggestions for Improvement of Services**

**Q: What factors from your perspective, need to be considered by cities and transit operators in developing viable transit service options within the community? (e.g.**

**Q: What current practices create a deterrent to regular transit use?**

**Q: How can the transit serve the community better? What steps should be taken by cities and transit operators to improve transit services?**



**APPENDIX B  
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUP  
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**



## **Appendix B**

### **SUPPLEMENTAL SOUTHEAST BUS RESTRUCTURING STUDY ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUP LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

1. Frances Jacobs – East L.A. Regional Center
2. Marie Quon-Hom – L.A. County Community Development Commission/Housing Authority  
City of Los Angeles
3. Nancy Mendez – City of Whittier
4. Karen Duncanwood – Whittier Accessibility Committee
5. Wendy Flores – Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital
6. Tom Summerfield – Cascade Pump Company
7. Kathleen Lohran – Whittier County Sheriff Community Advisory Council
8. Marlene Johnston – Whittwood Mall
9. Kirk Kain – SASSFA/Partners of Progress
10. Leah Monson - SASSFA
11. Ellen Blackman - MTA



**APPENDIX C**  
**FOCUS GROUP SCREENING INSTRUMENT**





Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview date & time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: _____	
Address: _____	
City: _____	Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____	Work Phone: _____

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_. We are conducting a short survey and would like to include your opinions. We are not selling anything and this will just take a few minutes.

1. First, into which of the following groups does your age fall? **[READ CHOICES]**

Under 18 .....	1	<b>TERM &amp;</b>
<b>TALLY</b>		
18 to 24 .....	2	}
25 to 34 .....	3	
35 to 44 .....	4	
		<b>SEE</b>
<b>QUOTAS</b>		
45 to 54 .....	5	}
55 to 64 .....	6	
65 or older .....	7	

2. Now, I'd like to ask you about the different types of transportation you use. Please tell me which of the following types of transportation you've used at least once in the past month. **[READ CHOICES]**

Automobile .....	1	
Local or regional bus line .....	2	<b>ASK Q3</b>
Train .....	3	
Commercial Airline .....	4	

3. Which local or regional bus line have you used? **[DO NOT READ CHOICES – FOR EACH MENTIONED, ASK: How many times in the last month did you ride the [NAME OF TRANSIT]**

		<u># Times</u>
MTA Bus .....	1	_____
Norwalk Transit .....	2	_____
Whittier Transit .....	3	_____
Santa Fe Springs Trolley .....	4	_____
Montebello Bus Lines .....	5	_____



**A MINIMUM OF 8 RESPONDENTS IN EACH GROUP MUST HAVE USED AT LEAST ONE OF THE ABOVE MASS TRANSIT LINES IN THE PAST MONTH**

Other.....6 \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Do you or any member of your household or immediate family work for: [READ CHOICES-- PAUSE FOR ANSWER AFTER EACH]**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
An advertising or public relations firm or department.....	1	X
A marketing research firm or department .....	2	X
A company whose business relates to the mass transit industry .....	3	X

**TERMINATE & TALLY IF YES TO ANY IN Q4**

**5. Have you ever taken part in a marketing research discussion group for which you were paid for your participation?**

Yes .....	1	
No .....	2	<b>SKIP TO Q7</b>

**6. When did you participate in this group discussion?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **TERMINATE & TALLY IF LESS THAN 6 MONTHS AGO**

**7. RECORD FROM VOICE – DO NOT ASK:**

Male .....	1
Female.....	2

On Thursday, June 13th\_ at (time), we will be conducting a group discussion with people like you. This group is for marketing research purposes only and you will be paid \$50 for your participation. The group session will last about 2 hours and at no time will any attempt be made to sell you anything. This discussion will be held at our offices in \_\_\_\_\_. We would very much like to include you in this--will you be able to attend?

**IF YES:**

We will be sending you a confirmation letter and directions. May I confirm the spelling of your name and address? **[FILL OUT NAME AND ADDRESS – BE SURE TO GET BOTH DAY AND EVENING PHONE NUMBERS]** If you have any questions, please call us at \_\_\_\_\_. We are looking forward to seeing you.

**AGE QUOTAS – GET A GOOD MIX OF AGES WITH NO MORE THAN 1-2 PER GROUP IN THE 65+ AGE GROUP.**

**NOTE: BE CERTAIN THAT ALL RESPONDENTS ARE ARTICULATE AND RESPONSIVE. DO NOT RECRUIT ANYONE THAT:**

- HAS ANY DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING OR RESPONDING TO THE QUESTIONS
- GIVES ANY OTHER INDICATION HE/SHE MIGHT BE A DISRUPTIVE OR POOR RESPONDENT



**APPENDIX D  
FOCUS GROUP STRUCTURE**



**APPENDIX D  
FOCUS GROUP STRUCTURE  
SUPPLEMENTAL SOUTHEAST AREA BUS RESTRUCTURING STUDY**

**GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

Who we are  
Why we are here  
Not a transit sales pitch  
Outline of how we will proceed

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. How many of you have used transit to get around within the last month?
2. Tell us some of the reasons that you do use transit, or for those of you who do not, some of the reasons you don't.  
(Probe all participants for reasons and follow up)
3. I'd like to share some answers to these questions from transit surveys in other places and get your reactions (Ask all that have not been mentioned).

Convenience – goes where I want to go – vs. inconvenience  
Easy to get to vs. too far to walk (how far is not too far?)  
Does not operate when I need to travel (when? Evenings? Weekends?)  
Runs often vs. not frequent enough  
Safe/unsafe at bus stops  
Safe/unsafe on buses  
Can't stop off on my way  
Can't come and go as I please  
Easy to use vs. don't know how to use  
Understandable vs. don't know where to get information  
Variety of transit operators confusing – who do I ride with to get where I want to go  
Fast vs. takes too long  
Comfortable/not  
Clean/not  
Nice drivers/rude drivers  
Good value vs. costs too much  
Dependable vs. not (how not?)  
Like/dislike other passengers  
Have a car/like to drive vs. not  
Too long to wait (how long is good)  
Transfers easy vs. don't like to transfer

4. Now I'd like to ask you what it would take to persuade you to start using transit or to ride more often?  
(Probe all participants for possible enticements)





5. Here are some comments from a previous study in this area regarding desired transit improvements to transit. Please tell me if any of these apply to you (ask all that have not been mentioned):

Better on-time performance  
More buses  
More frequent service (how frequent)  
Better coordination within or among different transit systems  
Extended weekend and night service (which has priority)  
Better transfer connections  
Advance notice of route and schedule changes  
Cleaner buses  
More bus stop signs  
More bus shelters  
Nicer areas to wait for the bus  
A greater sense of safety  
More understandable bus schedules and maps  
Easier way to pay my fare

6. Do you ever ride transit elsewhere in the Los Angeles area or in another city when you travel?

(If anyone does...)

Do you like it? Is it better in some ways? Worse in some ways?

7. Do you have any final suggestions for improvements to transit in this area?



**APPENDIX E**  
**RIDER GROUPS RECRUITED FOR FOCUS GROUPS**



**APPENDIX E  
RIDER GROUPS RECRUITED**

**GROUP 1 – 5:30 P.M.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Date Recruited</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Bus Line</b>	<b>Trips</b>
1	Sharon Watkins	F	29-May	45-54	Auto		-
2	Kara Rodriguez	F	30-May	18-24	Auto-Bus	Other	2
3	Elida Botello	F	30-May	65+	Bus	Other	1
4	John Gonzalez	M	30-May	35-44	Auto-Bus	MTA	46
5	Frank McCaffer	M	30-May	18-24	Auto-Bus	Other	8
6	Evelyn Oliver	F	30-May	65+	Auto		-
7	Donna Rodgers	F	30-May	55-64	Auto-Air		-
8	Angelo Magallanes	M	30-May	18-24	Auto-Bus	Norwalk Transit	4
9	Anastacio Arias	M	1-June	25-34	Bus	Norwalk	4
10	Jim Hester	M	1-June	55-64	Bus	Whittier	1
11	Jessica Botello	F	1-June	35-44	Bus	Norwalk	4-5
12	Jonathon Retfield	M	3-June	25-34	Bus-Auto	MTA-Norwalk	20-30
13	Rosario Baltazar	F	8-June	25-34	Bus-Auto	MTA	20
14	Peter Osben	M	9-June	45-54	Bus	Norwalk	



## GROUP 2 – 7:30 P.M.

	Name	Sex	Date Recruited	Age	Transportation	Bus Line	Trips
1	Andy Baumler	M	29-May	18-24	Auto		-
2	John Kobular	M	29-May	25-34	Auto		-
3	Sandra Robles	F	29-May	45-54	Auto		-
4	Leon Robinson III	M	28-May	18-24	Bus	MTA-Norwalk	5
5	Jennifer Byrd	F	29-May	18-24	Auto		-
6	Devin Herbert	M	28-May	18-24	Auto		-
7	Lambert Talley	M	29-May	35-44	Auto-Bus-Train	MTA	1
8	Marcos Avila	M	1-June	45-54	Bus	Whittier	24
9	Denise Montoya	F	3-June	25-34	Bus	Norwalk-Mont	23
10	Eduardo Casillas	M	3-June	25-34	Auto-Bus-Train	MTA-Norwalk	28
11	Lori Vo	F	3-June	45-54	Auto-Bus-Train	MTA	4-6
12	Joel Contreras	M	3-June	35-44	Bus	MTA-Norwalk	17
13	Ronda Nighman	F	3-June	35-44	Bus	MTA-Mont	56
14	Carol Wildermuth	F	6-June	55-64	Bus	MTA	10





**APPENDIX F  
SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN  
UNINCORPORATED AREAS**



**Survey of Residents in Unincorporated Areas  
Supplemental Southeast Area Bus Restructuring Study**

Several public agencies have joined together in a study to determine transit needs in the Southeast area of Los Angeles County. You can help! Please complete this short questionnaire and mail or fax it to us at the address below. Thank you for your participation.

1. The following is a list of possible improvements for transit in your area. Please rank all of the following in order (1 is top priority)

- Add frequency to existing weekday routes
- Begin new routes to areas not well served
- Improve Saturday service
- Improve Sunday service
- Coordinate van services for senior citizens and persons with disabilities

2. The study is addressing various types as well as levels of transportation services. Please rank the following services according to your own priorities (1 is top priority)

- Regional local bus service (for travel to downtown LA and other areas of the County)
- Community local bus service (for travel within the Southeast area)
- Community circulators (for travel within your neighborhood)
- Van service for seniors and persons with disabilities

3. Are there areas, streets, or routes that need better transit service in your community? If so, where?

Please return this survey to:

2366 Nichols Canyon Road  
Los Angeles, CA 90046

Or fax it to:

(323) 851-6516

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

