

# Minutes/Proceedings

## San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council

Regular Meeting

Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office  
San Gabriel Valley Conference Room  
3369 Santa Anita Avenue  
El Monte, CA 91731

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Called to Order at 5:06 P.M.

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Council Members Present:

Bart Doyle, Chair  
Sid Tyler, Vice Chair  
Harry Baldwin  
Emile Bayle  
Bruce Heard  
Henry Lopez  
Sharon Martinez  
David Spence  
Rosie Vasquez

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Officers

Jack Gabig, General Manager  
Helen Ortiz, Community Relations Manager  
Michele Chau, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**Metro**

1. APPROVED June 8, 2004 Governance Council Minutes.
2. RECEIVED Public Comment.
3. Chair's Remarks – None.
4. RECEIVED an oral report on the Governance Council Strategic Initiatives by Jack Gabig, General Manager.

Mr. Gabig gave an overview of the Council retreat held on June 18 at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center. He commended the efforts of Teri Fisher, facilitator of the meeting, for her role in helping the Council identify its goals and strategic initiatives. Councilmembers clarified the role of the Council and discussed its plans for the next fiscal year. Staff received direction on altering the content and structure of meetings, and the types of information presented.

Mr. Gabig mentioned that the Council is still in the process of refining 5 key strategies. Councilmembers informally offered to provide leadership for each respective strategy, as shown below:

- 1) Building better trust with MTA Board and staff: Councilmembers Bayle, Vasquez, and Martinez.
- 2) Formulating a long-term transit plan: Councilmember Baldwin
- 3) Developing a business case for the MTA to request budgetary accountability: Councilmembers Bayle and Tyler
- 4) Increasing ridership and customer satisfaction: Councilmembers Bayle and Tyler
- 5) Emphasizing local marketing representation: Councilmember Spence

Mr. Gabig noted that staff is available to assist Councilmembers in reformulating and implementing initiatives as needed. He mentioned that Councilmembers intend to complete the work plans and execute them in a specific, quantifiable way.

Councilmember Spence commented that a five-city transportation consortium within the San Gabriel Valley that serves on SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments) has recently hired a consultant and that he would be happy to keep the Council abreast of positive developments in marketing and local transportation issues.

Chairman Doyle cautioned that the Sector may not be able to handle marketing issues on its own. Mr. Gabig added that difficulties in increasing marketing efforts may be an internal issue with the Communications Department and that the Sector can control allocation of resources but not the size of the budget.

Chairman Doyle reported that he met with the chairs of the other Sectors recently and that it was apparent that building increased trust with the MTA Board was a priority for all the Sectors. In addition, he stated that the agency needs to consider carefully full integration of the Gold Line with the bus system, especially since this directly impacts ridership. Chairman Doyle emphasized the importance of having the Sectors present a consistent message to the Board at the July 22 Regular Board meeting.

Chairman Doyle reviewed some of the highlights of the June 22 Meet and Confer meeting between the Councils and the CEO and Deputy CEO. He mentioned the need for further discussion on the issue of developing a business case for the MTA to give Sectors more financial control, and expressed disappointment in the lack of meaningful dialogue that took place. In addition, executive staff failed to provide an adequate response to Councilmember Tyler's query regarding the role of the Sectors and ways in which they can benefit the agency as a whole.

Councilmember Tyler asked if Sector chairs plan to meet a second time. Chairman Doyle responded that a meeting has been tentatively set for September.

5. RECEIVED report of the General Manager.

Jack Gabig, General Manager, presented an abbreviated report of key performance areas for the month of May. He stated that the Sector is tracking well in six of the nine performance indicators. The three areas in which the Sector would like to make improvements include monthly Worker's Compensation Costs, Complaints per 100,000 Boardings, and On-Time Performance.

Worker's Compensation Costs were \$769,000 for May, a significant increase over the previous month. Mr. Gabig explained that a major adjustment to reserves for pre-existing cases contributed to the spike in WC Costs, and that additional adjustments and actuarial work on cases will be performed in June. Complaints per 100,000 Boardings were 3.81 for May, which is above the monthly target of 3.25. On-Time Performance rating was 72%. The target is 80%. Mr. Gabig stated that the Sector is trending better in this category than in the past, but continues to fall short of the monthly goal.

Councilmember Tyler asked if Passenger Boardings for May remain below the target. Mr. Gabig responded in the affirmative, and explained that Boardings data continues to suffer from strike impacts.

Councilmember Bayle inquired about strategies for improving On-Time Performance.

Mr. Hillmer stated that the Sector will embrace multiple strategies, including determining whether schedule changes need to be made and examining cases where bus operators are either behind or ahead of schedule. He added that ATMS (Advanced Transit Management System) will allow for closer monitoring of specific lines and that the Mystery Shopper program will assist the Sector in evaluating On-Time Performance.

Mr. Gabig announced that Division 3 Transportation ranked 1<sup>st</sup> place for the sixth consecutive month and that Division 9 Transportation ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the "How You Doin'?" competition. May marks the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive month in which Division 9 scored in the top three. Most notably, Division 3 Transportation incurred zero New WC Claims/100 Employees. On the Maintenance side, Division 3 ranked 5<sup>th</sup> place and Division 9 ranked 7<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Gabig reported that service on Rapid Bus Line 751 was inaugurated on June 17 and that the agency received some press coverage during the dedication of this new Line.

He presented a slide showing bus operator Bill Underhill, a notable employee who has had zero chargeable accidents and an exceptional attendance record throughout his lengthy tenure with the agency.

Councilmember Tyler asked if there is a way to reward employees who exhibit outstanding performance, and whether there are ways to identify those employees who are not performing well.

Mr. Gabig responded that the Sector continues to pursue employee recognition programs in spite of bargaining unit issues and possible financial hurdles. With respect to operators who are not performing well, staff is undertaking an analysis of disciplinary action procedures used by the agency. He mentioned the need to coordinate with the other Service Sectors in identifying ways to improve operator performance.

Mr. Hillmer stated that ATMS and use of the new tracking system would allow the Sector to focus on those operators who tend to run behind or ahead of schedule. Councilmember Heard added that ATMS serves as a tool to help identify issues with performance, but does not represent the solution.

#### Financial Review:

Mr. Rosenberg provided a brief summary of financial information through the month of May. He reported that Total SGV Sector is \$1.8 million under budget based on a monthly budgeted amount of \$9.3 million (total month Actual for SGV Sector was \$7.5 million). Transportation is \$1.2 million under budget, Maintenance is \$400,000 under budget with a YTD variance of \$1.6 million under budget, Total Sector Office meets the budget exactly with an Actual of \$300,000 based on a monthly budgeted amount of \$300,000, Subtotal Sector Operations is \$1.6 million under budget with a YTD variance of \$5.4 million under budget, and Subtotal Other Sector Support is \$200,000 under budget.

Mr. Rosenberg reported that Transportation Labor is slightly over the monthly budget and that operator overtime has been more of an issue than in the past. Maintenance Labor, even adjusting for the strike, is slightly under budget (\$1.1 million under YTD). Sector Labor is \$180,000 over budget YTD as a result of transferred groups (within the Sector) budgeted in Transportation. Mr. Rosenberg stated that the overrun will be resolved in next year's budget. The significant Fringe Benefits costs in April were reversed for May, resulting in a \$2 million underrun.

Worker's Compensation Allocation remains \$1.4 million under budget for the year. Mr. Rosenberg stated that this underrun is likely to dissipate at year end.

Fuel Expense is \$565,000 over budget for the year, and Parts Expense is \$45,000 over budget for the year.

Councilmember Bayle asked for clarification on Cost per Revenue Service Hour. Mr. Rosenberg explained that this represents the total cost to operate the Sector for every revenue service hour run, or for every hour that passengers are boarding an agency-operated bus.

He stated that the Sector is under budget in this category for May due to the fact that the agency did not operate buses during the strike.

6. RECEIVED an oral report on Community Relations by Liz Armijo-Holbrook  
Community Relations Officer

Ms. Armijo-Holbrook reported participation in the following community outreach activities for June: a Neighborhood Block Party in Pasadena on June 5, a Rapid Bus opening in Boyle Heights on June 17, and a Seniors on the Move event at the Pasadena Senior Center on June 30. Upcoming events include a groundbreaking ceremony for the Gold Line Eastside Extension at the MWD Courtyard(near Union Station) and Belvedere Park on July 17 and the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Bus Roadeo at Santa Anita Park in Arcadia on July 31.

Ms. Armijo-Holbrook stated that she will email the Councilmembers with more information about the Bus Roadeo. She mentioned that there will be two community meetings on August 3 and 4 and a public hearing on August 10 to discuss service changes that will be implemented in December.

7. RECEIVED report on FY05 Budget by Daniel Ramirez, Chief Administrative Analyst

Mr. Ramirez noted that comparison of the FY04 and FY05 budget will focus on the 6 areas of Labor, Non-Labor, Worker's Compensation, Non-SGV Support, Personnel, and Budget Ratios and Rates. He stated that the budget for Labor is 5.2% greater for FY05 than for FY04 and 12.7% greater for FY05 in the area of Non-Labor. In the areas of Worker's Compensation and Non-SGV Support, the FY05 budgeted amounts are 23.4% and 5.4% less than budgeted amounts for FY04, respectively. Within the area of Labor, the budget for Maintenance is up 1.1% compared with FY04, the budget for Transportation is up 4%, and the budget for Sector Office is up 19.7%. Mr. Ramirez explained that the Sector created a new cost center for Facilities Maintenance and that the FY05 budgeted amounts for this category will reside in the new cost center. In the area of Non-Labor, the budget for Maintenance is up 10.1% compared with FY04 due to an increase in Parts expense, the budget for Transportation is up 37.9% due to an increase in operator expense, and the budget for Sector Office is up 7.8% due to an increase in support for vehicle operations.

Mr. Ramirez stated that figures shown in the handout for Worker's Compensation are based on FY04 actuals, and that there is a significant decrease in FY05 budgeted amounts in the subcategories of Maintenance and Transportation compared with FY04. Councilmember Tyler stated that this indicates a substantial decrease in work-related injuries for the Sector. Mr. Rosenberg added that injuries are a leading indicator of what to expect in terms of WC costs and that the SGV Sector performed well in this category for FY04 compared with the other Sectors. Mr. Gabig noted that there has been a continued downward trend in WC Claims for the Sector.

Mr. Ramirez stated that the FY05 budget for Non-SGV Support, including allocated overhead and support departments, is 5.4% below that of the previous fiscal year. In response to Councilmember Tyler's query regarding the definition of a support department, Mr. Ramirez stated that support departments are not located within the headquarters and are designed to support almost exclusively a specific operation.

Mr. Ramirez stated that the total budget for Personnel is roughly 2.7% greater for FY05 than for FY04. He gave an overview of budget ratios and rates, including budgeted Cost per Revenue Service Hour, WC Cost per full-time employee, Fuel expense (per hub mile) and Parts expense (per hub mile).

Mr. Gabig noted that the agency is anticipating a significant increase in labor costs as it is still in the process of negotiating with the labor unions. He stated that the Sector is working with a tight budget and that the current budget does not account for changes in service. Mr. Gabig stated that the Sector intends to add 65 buses and increase the number of service hours to comply with service changes mandated by the Consent Decree.

8. RECEIVED an oral report on Proposed August 2004 Public Hearing by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager

Mr. Hillmer announced that he will contact each of the Councilmembers individually to discuss the proposed service changes to be implemented in December 2004. He stated that the Sector will reinvest savings from simplification of services back into the system. Information about proposed changes will be distributed to City Councilmembers and other public officials. Notices will also be placed on buses by July 26.

A public hearing on changes in the San Gabriel Valley will be held on August 10, 2004 at 6:00 P.M. in the Circadian Room at Pasadena City College.

The goal of the hearing is to obtain public input and suggestions on the potential service changes. Community meetings in El Monte and Boyle Heights will be held on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, respectively, prior to the public hearing.

Mr. Hillmer gave a brief summary of specific Lines that will be affected by the service changes. These include the following: Line 78-378 (LA-Arcadia via Las Tunas Dr., Main St., and Huntington Dr.), Line 170 (Cal State LA-El Monte via Hellman Ave.-Montebello Town Center-South El Monte), Line 267 (Temple City Blvd.-Del Mar Blvd.-Lincoln Ave.), Line 491 (Sierra Madre-Arcadia-El Monte-Los Angeles Express), Line 487 (Los Angeles-San Gabriel Blvd.-Sierra Madre Express), and Line 687 (Los Robles Shuttle).

Councilmember Heard inquired about the rationale for discontinuing the segment of Line 687 south of Glenarm St. Mr. Hillmer responded that the change will move the route from an area of low ridership to an area that has a higher level of ridership.

In addition, new shuttle Lines 670 (El Monte-Montebello Town Center) and 671 (Montebello Town Center-Cal State LA) will be established.

Rapid Bus-related proposals would impact Lines 85 (Cypress Ave.-Verdugo Rd.), 181 (Hollywood-Glendale-Pasadena via Yosemite Dr.), and 380 (Hollywood-Glendale-Pasadena Limited). New Lines 787 (Fairfax-Hollywood-Glendale-Pasadena Metro Rapid) and 685 (Eagle Rock via Glendale shuttle) will be established.

A detailed description of all proposed service changes is available on request from Records Management and on the [mta.net](http://mta.net) website under Board of Directors Information.

9. RECEIVED an oral report on new Rapid Bus Line 751 by Jon Hillmer, Service Development Manager

Metro Rapid Line 751 will serve Soto Street between Lincoln Heights and Lynwood and has the distinction of being the San Gabriel Valley Sector's first Metro Rapid Line. The 13-mile line will run from Avenue 26 and Figueroa Ave. in Cypress Park to the Metro Green Line Long Beach/I-105 Station, with alternating trips during peak hours terminating at Palm Place and Seville Ave. in South Gate. The Line will provide service in the following areas: Metro Gold Line Lincoln Heights/Cypress Park Station, Los Angeles County/USC Medical Center, the employment center of Vernon and Vernon City Hall, the Huntington



Park shopping district, the Metro Green Line Long Beach/I-105 Station, and the future Gold Line Eastside Extension station at Soto and 1<sup>st</sup> Streets. The Line will operate Monday through Saturday from 5 A.M. to 7 P.M. on weekdays and from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. on Saturday.

10. RECEIVED an oral report on Countywide Signal Priority Pilot Project by Steve Gota, SGV Area Team Project Manager

Mr. Gota reported that the Signal Priority Pilot Project began in January 1999 to break down barriers between jurisdictions with respect to deploying system technology. Project objectives include improving schedule reliability and bus travel times, minimizing delays, and ensuring system compatibility with National Architecture guidelines. Increasing schedule adherence would potentially cut down on operating costs by reducing the number of buses needed to operate at existing service levels. In addition, the agency hopes to develop thresholds of acceptability for the impact of bus signal priority on cross street traffic and other corridor characteristics, and demonstrate that signal priority traffic control software can work on different traffic controller equipment.

Mr. Gota stated that an 11.1 mile segment of the Crenshaw Corridor, stretching from Adams Blvd. to Redondo Beach Blvd., was selected as the pilot corridor after examining 30 different potential corridors. The Corridor consists of 54 signalized intersections, bus Line 710, and 22 Rapid bus stops. Three jurisdictional partners, the Advanced Transit Management System (ATMS), Metro Rapid, and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) Transit Signal Priority Program all play a role in bringing the project to fruition. Mr. Gota reviewed technical aspects of the project and showed slides of signal priority components, on-bus equipment, and intersection communications infrastructure.

Mr. Gota stated that in order to accelerate movement of the Rapid bus, the agency will focus on headway adherence, schedule adherence, and continuous signal priority. He presented a timeline showing events leading up to the debut of the system in February 2004, and reviewed the next steps the agency will take. He stated that an evaluation of the system revealed that the roundtrip running time of buses decreased by approximately 8%.

Councilmember Lopez asked how the speed of other vehicles affects the running time of buses.

Mr. Gota responded that the agency is analyzing cross-street traffic impacts and that minor adjustments in signal time are needed, including extending the amount of green light time while maintaining signal synchronization.

Councilmember Tyler asked if staff will measure any changes in ridership due to the presumed decrease in run time of buses.

Mr. Gota stated that this is difficult to determine and that the actual impact of signal priority on ridership is not yet available. He estimates that approximately 1/3 of bus travel time savings is a direct result of signal priority.

Mr. Gabig mentioned that every Rapid bus in L.A. County has signal priority. Councilmember Doyle stated that some areas of the County do not cooperate with signal priority, and asked how this affects the system.

Mr. Gota responded that signal priority is primarily coordinated through the L.A. County Department of Public Works, and that cross-jurisdiction of signalization is effective on the busiest lines of the system.

Councilmember Tyler asked if Rapid bus service negatively impacts ridership on other MTA bus lines.

Mr. Hillmer stated that he has observed that ridership along Soto St. has not been impacted; however, roughly 25% of new ridership in the Whittier/Wilshire Corridor may be due to passengers shifting from local to Rapid bus service.

Mr. Gabig mentioned that Rapid bus is cost-neutral and that implementation of this service does not add service, rather it results in the shifting of local and limited bus service.

11. Consideration of Items Not on the Posted Agenda – None.

ADJOURNED at 7:15 P.M.

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Michele Chau, Council Secretary