

Thursday, February 3, 2005

3:00-5:00 PM

MINUTES

Westside/Central Service Sector
Governance Council

Workshop for Metro Connections

La Cienega Tennis Center
325 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

Called to Order at 3:10 p.m.

Council Members present:

Carol Gross, Chair
Peter Capone-Newton, Vice Chair
Carlos Collard
Gregory Fischer
Stephanie Negriff
Joyce Perkins
Brad Robinson
Anny Semonco

Officers

David J. Armijo, General Manager
Michele Jackson, Council Secretary



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

Chair Gross introduced and welcomed the two newly appointed Council Members, Carlos Collard and Gregory Fischer.

1. APPROVED January 6, 2005 Minutes

2. RECEIVED General Manager's report

Dave Armijo announced that he would not be giving his usual report. Nancy Michaeli and Roy Gandara would be reporting on the status of Metro Connections. He continued by saying that the process is moving from conceptual to a much more detailed piece of work, and it is now time to get the Council fully involved. Staff is working to finalize the data previously requested by the Council Members.

3. WORKSHOP on Metro Connections

Nancy Michali presented the: a) challenges – 25 yr. old system, stagnant ridership, increasing costs and decreasing funding; b) future trends – shrinking transit share, higher and higher cost service and growing customer dissatisfaction; c) purpose of restructuring- rethink service delivery, bring all partners to the table, make the system great and increase ridership; d) service concept – direct, high-speed, point-to-point service, service provided by most appropriate operator, better feed the rail system, better use of funding and physical customer improvements; e) system planning process – 2010 information and analysis, involvement of all service providers and cities and extensive public involvement; and f) corridor and regional/sub regional center identification criteria – where people live/work, where they want to be and service coverage and connectivity.

Roy Gandara presented an overview of the Westside/Central Sector including all lines coming into the Sector and lines from all operators servicing the regional centers. Service Concepts are proposed for Metro Lines 20/21, 4/304, 434, 720 and 68 to eliminate duplication of service, improve on-time performance, reduce route length and increase travel speeds. Savings realized from these changes will be reallocated to improve service.

Council Member Capone Newton asked if origin and destination numbers were based on transit trips or all trips. Ms. Michaeli responded that they were based on all trips in L.A. County. Mr. Capone Newton also asked if transit times had been modeled from center to center. Ms. Michaeli responded that has not yet been done; but the plan is to compare with current service, as well as bus lane or car.

Council Member Semonco expressed reservations about Line 717, and requested a 24-hour email or voice mail number for complaints.

Council Member Negriff noted that the real challenge will be the number of transfers. She encouraged staff to develop options on how transfer mitigation will

occur. She also suggested setting goals for an average number of transfers you would want passengers to make for the project to be successful. She acknowledged that fare universality would facilitate the transfers, but if passengers are losing time making transfers, the intended goal will not be achieved. Ms. Negriff also requested an explanation of the criteria for and spacing of regional and sub regional nodes, noting that Pico-Rimpau is not really a "place". Ms. Michaeli responded that the regional centers are part of a high-speed, high-capacity network that exists. The sub regional centers are being added and moved around. In some cases they are only transfer points; in others there is significant development. A major, mixed-use development is planned for Pico Rimpau.

Council Member Robinson asked about a timeline for unfolding the process. Nancy Michaeli said the number one issue is determining the regional centers. The plan is to go to the Board in March to present a policy and plan framework and a system map.

Council Member Robinson requested a summary regarding each regional center in the Westside Sector.

Council Member Perkins echoed that request, noting that more information is needed in order to make informed decisions.

Responding to query as to when the service changes would come to the Council and when they would be implemented, Roy Gandara said the plan is to begin implementation with the December 2005 service changes. More meetings are planned with the Muni's and the results will come to the Council in the next 2-3 months with much greater detail.

Council Member Robinson requested a report at the next meeting describing which changes will be implemented and when.

Staff will provide reports on service changes in March and regional centers and UFS in April.

Chair Gross asked staff to contact planning staff for each city as well as the League and SCAG to find out what is on the various drawing boards so that they don't plan for "what is" only to have it change.

Council Member Semonco asked if it would be possible for MTA to coordinate connecting times with other operators.

Nancy Michaeli responded that is one of the major outcomes of Metro Connections.

Council Member Negriff noted that Big Blue Bus is currently coordinating with the Green Line.

Council Member Perkins inquired if there are design guidelines for the regional and sub regional stations. Ms. Michaeli noted that the Expo Line has a plan for improvements within a 5-mile radius. Generally, staff has decided what service

amenities will be provided at each location; each operator will be allowed to determine the rest.

Chair Gross inquired about the availability of restrooms at regional centers. Ms. Michaeli responded that there will be restrooms for the operators. Discussion is ongoing as to whether they will be made available to the public.

Chair Gross asked the status of formula allocation discussions. Dave Armijo indicated that could be discussed at the General Managers' meeting next week. Council Member Negriff reminded everyone that Metro Connections cannot move forward without this being worked out.

Dave Armijo commented on the current budget crisis, noting that there will be no new revenues. Only the savings from restructuring will be available to put back into the system.

4. Chair's Remarks – None

5. Received Public Comment:

Phil Aker, LADOT – reported that they are doing a needs assessment study and a lot of work on demographics. Current barriers to performance are lack of regional transit funding and an integrated fare.

Heather Burton, Culver City Bus, expressed support for the Metro Connections concept.

Paul Verdin, Holmby West Hollywood Property Owners Association, commented on redundancy of bus traffic in Westwood.

Jose Melendez spoke in support of the project.

Ken Ruben, Southern California Transit Advocates – Against Line 717 on Fairfax. Feels that transfer mitigation will be a problem for Wilshire Western for those not using an EZ pass.

Aleck Friedman, Friends of Expo – feels the new system will cause additional transfers for the elderly and disabled. Would like subway on Santa Monica between Bundy and Sepulveda.

Ken Barber – in favor of the EZ pass. Multiple transfers will make his trips too long. Lack of 24 hr. transit information can be dangerous.

Lionel Jones, Southern California Transit Advocates - What happens to overnight service into Santa Monica with the shortening of the 20/21 Line at Wilshire/Westwood? Having all buses go into Ackerman Loop creates more service duplication. Requested that Owl service be retained on Line 3/304. The Line is

shortened to Sepulveda and Santa Monica does not provide 24 hr. service. Agrees with changes to Line 434, and feels the line should be given to Santa Monica. Routing the Commerce section of Line 720 along Whittier to Alameda avoids downtown.

Staff responses to issues raised during public comment:

Not everyone will use the EZ pass. The senior sticker is \$12 vs. \$29 for the EZ pass.

Expect to retain Owl service on Line 20. There are approximately 250 on Line 21 in the morning and 150 boardings in the afternoon.

Have not spoken to Santa Monica about assuming Route 434.

Noted that the comment about Line 720 avoiding downtown is exactly the type of input they are seeking. Council Member Fischer suggested that the line could come in on 6th Street and go up Main.

Adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Michele Jackson, Council Secretary