



**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 17, 2005**

SUBJECT: METRO CONNECTIONS

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE UPDATE ON THE METRO CONNECTIONS BUS
SERVICE RESTRUCTURING EFFORT**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Receive and file a report on the status of the bus service restructuring effort known as Metro Connections, which includes identification of a Conceptual Regional Service Plan and related Service Strategies.

ISSUE

This report is intended to provide the Board with an update on project efforts related to the Metro Connections bus service restructuring. It is anticipated that this effort will result in the implementation of an initial phase of restructured bus service during FY 06.

BACKGROUND

Last fall, Metro and the region's service providers initiated a countywide effort to develop a long-term strategy for the provision of bus service. A comprehensive restructuring of countywide bus service was last undertaken in 1980, and while incremental service changes have been implemented to upgrade service, they have not fully addressed the significant changes in the region and the resulting impact on transit needs. In addition to addressing existing transit needs, this restructuring effort provides the region with the opportunity to assess and plan for future transit needs in order to improve mobility, support economic development opportunities, maintain air quality improvements and enhance the quality of life for all residents, while effectively and efficiently deploying the County's transit resources. Metro Connections is focused on developing a transit strategy to best serve Los Angeles County in 2010.

Restructuring offers the opportunity to accomplish the following key service-related tasks:

1. ***Rethink bus service niche*** – Metro's current service role reflects 1980 operational conditions, not conditions faced today or anticipated in the future. Our

service role will be clarified to focus on what we do well and effectively, while allowing the region's other service providers to do what they do best. Metro's bus service niche might be best described as providing high capacity, regional and subregional connections on heavily traveled corridors.

2. ***More effectively deploy Metro's and other operators' constrained resources*** – Focusing service provision based on what each transit operator does well and effectively would allow Metro and the region to make the best use of constrained resources, while providing high quality customer service.
3. ***Leverage a higher benefit from Board-approved projects and programs*** – This restructuring effort provides Metro with the opportunity to integrate and maximize the benefit of the many bus service and other transit improvements – both planned and underway – to ensure that transit becomes an increasingly attractive alternative in meeting the region's growing travel needs. In addition, this restructuring effort attempts to create synergy between local and regional decisions by involving the region's transit operators and cities.
4. ***Better serve our customers*** – In the fall of 2004, focus groups were held with system users and non-users to identify how current Metro service is meeting their expectations and what future system and service improvements would best meet their needs. Both groups identified very similar operational and physical improvements necessary to better serve current riders and to attract new transit users.

Service Concept

The intent of Metro Connections bus service restructuring effort is to move the region's predominately Downtown Los Angeles-focused grid system to a hybrid "hub and spoke" or "center and corridor" service delivery, which will better reflect the region's multiple activity centers and destinations. In addition, restructuring seeks to identify how to more effectively utilize and integrate the varied strengths of each of the region's more than 80 service providers. This service delivery concept will use a network of community transit centers as the focal points of the regional transit system that will be connected by major travel corridors with transit speed and reliability improvements. Service attributes will include:

- High-speed, point-to-point regional service
- Higher use of the region's high-capacity, high-speed rail and transitway system
- Improved regional service coverage and connectivity
- Upgraded inter-community and local service
- Coordinated, convenient connections between services
- Provision of physical customer improvements and amenities

Study Effort

A four-phased bus service restructuring effort was initiated in the fall of 2003, with the first phase of restructured service to be implemented during FY 2006. The restructuring effort consists of the following four major activities:

- Phase 1 – Assess Needs
- Phase 2 – Develop Alternative Strategies
- Phase 3 – Identify Detailed Implementation Plans
- Phase 4 – Implement Service

The first study phase focused on identifying current and future transit service needs through outreach to the region's many stakeholders. This effort was completed in January 2004, and an overview of those initial outreach results was presented to the Board in February and June 2004. On-going stakeholder involvement is described below.

In the second phase, Development of Alternative Strategies efforts were divided into two tasks: 1) analysis and identification of community transit centers and travel corridors; and 2) utilization of the resulting information to develop a Regional Service Plan and related Service Strategies. The first effort has been completed and the results presented for review and comment through outreach to the subregional Councils of Government, Sector Service Governance Councils and study-related stakeholder working groups. Development of a Conceptual Regional Service Plan and related Service Strategies has been completed and stakeholder review initiated. In a parallel effort, development of Inter-community and Local Service Plans has been initiated through the sector-based Service Provider Working Groups.

Center Analysis

A hierarchy of four community transit center types have been identified, each with its own mix of transit services, level of operational complexity, and fit with local land use and economic development goals and plans. These community-based transit centers will serve both as entry points to the region's transit system and to each community. Centers will be designed to be an integral part of the communities they serve, not as stand-alone facilities. Described in detail in Attachment A, the four center types are: Regional, Subregional, Community and On-Street.

Based on extensive stakeholder input, a total of 81 countywide centers were identified and evaluated. Proposed community transit centers were identified at an analytical scale of approximately a six-mile diameter encompassing key destinations, such as Downtown Long Beach or Pasadena, which allowed for the evaluation of future conditions throughout the region. A specific transit facility, or facilities, that would best serve transit needs within each center will be identified during a future study phase. The resulting 81 centers were then evaluated through a future year (2010) forecast analysis to identify population, employment and total number of daily trips. The center evaluation process also included consideration of: service coverage and connectivity, future transit system improvements, future land use and development plans, and community and stakeholder input.

This evaluation effort resulted in the identification of 19 Regional and 22 Subregional centers presented to the Board in November 2004. Outreach to the impacted cities and other operators, along with further operational analysis, has reduced the initially identified 19 Regional Centers to 17, while the number of proposed Subregional Centers has been expanded to 27, as listed in Attachment B and illustrated in Attachment C.

Two proposed Regional Centers – Koreatown (Wilshire/Western) and USC/Exposition/Harbor Transitway – were moved to the Subregional Center category primarily due to their long-term operational role and/or regional center spacing needs. The Koreatown (Wilshire/Western) Center currently serves as a Regional Center due to its role as terminus of the Metro Red Line. As the rail line is extended in the future, a majority of the transit service connections currently provided at this center would move west to the new terminus. While this area will continue to have a high level of transit and community activity, it will serve a Subregional Center role. In addition, this center is located extremely close to the Mid-Wilshire (Wilshire/Vermont) Regional Center, with their service areas overlapping. Ideally Regional Centers should add to regional service coverage and not duplicate service areas. The minimum Regional Center spacing is approximately five miles apart, with a more optimum spacing, depending on topography and land use patterns, of seven to ten miles apart. These two centers are less than 1.5 miles apart. The USC/Exposition/Harbor Transitway Center is forecast to have a high level of residential and employment density along with a significant number of daily trips, but based on existing land use patterns, this center is seen as serving more of a Subregional Center role, which may change in the future. In addition, it is located within 4.5 to 6.0 miles of three Regional Centers – Huntington Park/Vernon, Wilshire/Vermont and Union Station.

The number of proposed Subregional Centers was increased from 22 to 27 with the addition of Koreatown (Wilshire/Western) and USC/Exposition/Harbor Transitway along with the inclusion of the Imperial/Wilmington, Manchester (Florence/Vermont), Downtown Pomona and Baldwin Park Centers to provide better regional service coverage and connectivity. The proposed Third/Fairfax Subregional Center was revised to a Community Center due to Subregional Center spacing and local community fit concerns.

Public review and comment on the proposed Regional and Subregional Centers has been sought through outreach to the subregional Councils of Government, Sector Service Governance Councils, stakeholder groups and study-related working groups. There is general consensus on the location of the Regional Centers, with additional outreach and discussion required as the identification of specific facilities within each center is undertaken. The final set of Subregional Centers will evolve as more detailed Inter-community and Local Service planning is completed. The current list includes some pairs of possible Subregional Centers where there was not enough technical information to make a decision between two locations in the same vicinity, and the cities did not express a preference at this time. City and stakeholder outreach, along with the development of Inter-community and Local Service Plans, will provide the basis for making a final locational decision. The remaining centers will be served through the provision of a mix of Community Transit Centers and improved on-street bus facilities.

Corridor Analysis

Identification and analysis of future year (2010) travel activity for all trips by all modes was performed using the SCAG model for travel at three levels: county-to-county, subregion-to-regional center and regional center-to-regional center. This travel corridor analytical effort

was undertaken to identify future travel patterns and needs, fit of existing transit services with future needs and missing transit services (both service types and corridors).

In 2010, SCAG projections show that 97 percent of the daily travel originating in Los Angeles County will remain within the county. The remaining three percent, or approximately two million daily trips generated by Los Angeles County residents, will travel primarily to Orange County (59 percent), second to San Bernardino County (21 percent), followed by Ventura (16 percent) and Riverside (four percent) counties. The most heavily-traveled county-to-county connection is the I-405 corridor followed by the SR-60, SR-91, I-5 and SR-57 corridors. For Los Angeles County residents traveling to other counties during the morning peak period, the SR-57, I-405 and SR-91 are the three most heavily utilized freeway corridors. County-to-county transit service is provided by Metrolink in five of the 12 connecting corridors and by various bus operators in six of the remaining corridors; no transit service is currently operated in the SR-126 corridor.

The resulting 2010 corridor travel activity information for all regional center-to-regional center trips is presented in Attachment D. The forecast travel activity between the regional centers varies and is shown at three levels – heavy, medium and moderate. The forecast information shows heavy demand between centers located within the central portion of the county and somewhat less demand to/from the centers located on the urban core edges. In order to clarify implications of these differences to ensure development of appropriate service plans, study efforts evaluated trip activity within a three-mile radius of each center along with more detailed county-to-county connections. Based on the identified travel patterns, two distinct types of centers – “urban core” and “edge” – were identified, each with different travel needs and implications for providing transit service.

Regional Centers located within the central portion of Los Angeles County have a strong, interdependent relationship with the other urban core Regional Centers. Evaluation of trip activity within a three-mile radius of the urban core centers showed a balance between the number of internal trips generated and served, and the number of external trips attracted and served. In the edge Regional Centers, a significantly high percentage of trips generated within a three-mile radius of each of the centers remains within the center’s service area. These centers also typically have a stronger relationship to adjacent county destinations, than to the Los Angeles County centers. For example, within the Long Beach Regional Center, 90 percent of the daily trip activity generated within this center’s service area remains within a three-mile radius of the center, and this center has a stronger travel relationship to Orange County than to the central portion of Los Angeles County.

These varied travel patterns have implications for future service development. Within the central portion of the county, high travel demand between the centers demonstrates the opportunity to successfully provide high-speed, point-to-point transit service. This direct service would better serve transit customers currently making those connections, while providing an opportunity to capture a larger share of that travel market by providing convenient, fast, direct transit service. Within the urban core, regional service improvements will need to be coupled with upgrading inter-community and local service to provide better connections to/from regional connections and within each community. For the edge centers, the service focus should be on ensuring that the regional connections are

made and then focusing on both upgrading inter-community and local service, which is key to better serving the high number of people who remain within each center's service area, and developing stronger county-to-county service connections.

Validation Efforts

The 2010 travel information used to identify the proposed system centers and travel corridors was validated through a comparison with two sources of current travel information: 1) approximately 300,000 Los Angeles County home-to-work trips documented through the 2000 Census; and 2) more than 280,000 trip itinerary requests documented by the Customer Service Center during September 2004.

Of the proposed 17 Regional Centers, fifteen were strongly validated by the documented current travel pattern and trip request information. The two centers that were not validated do not currently exist and represent centers to be developed with future transit system improvements – the East Los Angeles Gold Line (Atlantic/Pomona) Center and the West Los Angeles Exposition LRT Line (La Cienega) Center. More than 70 percent of the proposed Subregional Centers were validated by the current travel pattern and trip request information. The remaining centers represent future opportunities related either to a planned transit project (Orange, Gold and Exposition LRT lines) and/or a major mixed-use development project planned by a city.

The proposed connecting travel corridors were validated by customer trip requests, while the census information illustrated the many paths traveled daily by Los Angeles County residents. Many of the corridors demonstrated large numbers of people traveling that corridor every day, clearly illustrating the opportunity to develop a successful countywide point-to-point transit network.

Conceptual Regional Service Plan and Service Strategies

The second effort in this study phase – utilizing the center and corridor analytical information to develop a Conceptual Regional Service Plan and related Service Strategies has been completed and is presented in Attachments E and F. Due to the significant regional investments in transportation system improvements, many of the travel corridors already have existing or planned high-speed, high capacity transit facilities, or signal priority and/or synchronization treatments. The Conceptual Regional Service Plan builds on those existing and planned investments and seeks to make higher use of them by upgrading feeder service through improved connections.

The proposed Service Strategies presented in Attachment F represent principles to be used in development, implementation and management of the Regional Service Plan and related Inter-community and Local Service Plans. The strategies are divided into six key categories: Service, Customer, Capital, Funding, Management and Implementation issues.

Implementation

It is anticipated that bus service restructuring improvements will be implemented over the next two to three years (FY 06-08). Service funding strategies will consider a range of options including: operating more effectively within current resources, reflecting the concurrent regional funding discussion among Metro and the municipal operators concerning the Formula Allocation Plan (FAP), and possible new funding sources. Capital improvements, which will include customer amenities, transit center facilities and speed and reliability improvements, will be initially identified as part of the Regional Service Plan process. Refinements to the capital plan will be made as the service plan becomes more detailed. These improvements are seen as being implemented over the next two to ten years (FY 06-15), with some associated improvements already reflected in currently planned or programmed projects. Funding options will reflect possible revisions to current funding programs, possible new funding sources, and leveraging other regional, city and private sector efforts.

Outreach Efforts

All efforts undertaken by this restructuring process have been and will continue to be based on extensive, on-going stakeholder involvement. To date more than 120 outreach efforts have been conducted with elected officials, legislative briefings, Subregional groups (Councils of Governments), City Council commissions and staffs, City of Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Groups as well as individual Neighborhood Councils or Council Committees, Service Sector Governance Councils, Metro Advisory Committees, business organizations, employee transportation coordinators, unions, service provider groups and stakeholder organizations. In addition, three groups have provided on-going input and coordination to ensure the success of restructuring planning and implementation efforts: 1) Downtown Los Angeles Transportation Working Group; 2) Metro Connections MUNI/LTSS Working Group; and 3) Metro Connections Service Provider Working Groups.

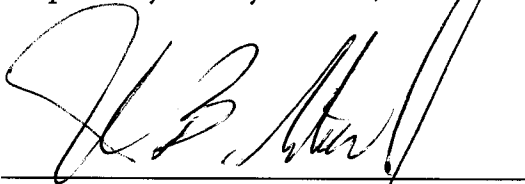
NEXT STEPS

Staff will seek stakeholder review and comment on the Conceptual Regional Service Plan and related Service Strategies. Based on input, development of detailed service and capital plans will be initiated. Concurrently, staff will continue development of sector-based Inter-community and Local Service Plans working closely with the region's service providers. Staff will return to the Board in June 2005 with proposed detailed service and capital plans and strategies for Board consideration and discussion.

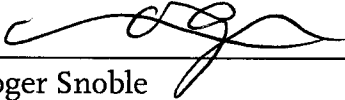
ATTACHMENTS

- A. Community Transit Center Types
- B. List of Regional and Subregional Centers
- C. System Centers Map
- D. Corridor Travel Activity
- E. Conceptual Regional Service Plan
- F. Proposed Service Strategies

Prepared by: Nancy Michali, Director of Service Performance and Analysis



John B. Catoe, Jr.
Deputy Chief Executive Officer



Roger Snoble
Chief Executive Officer

Community Transit Center Types

1. Regional Community Transit Center*
 - *Modes* – Serves Metro Rail and the interface of two or more Metro Rapid lines along with Metro Local, MUNI Operator, Other Service Provider and community-based services, as well as limited and express services as appropriate
 - *Configuration* – May include a combination of on- and off-street customer service and bus service/layover facilities; may include some off-street operational support facilities
 - *Access* – By full range of modes: rail and bus transfer, auto, drop-off, walking, bicycle and station car
 - *Parking* – May include shared or transit-only park-and-ride facilities
 - *Land Use* – May be located adjacent to transit-oriented retail and/or mixed-use development; may be integrated with on-site development
 - *Customer services and amenities* – potentially including:
 - Service identity
 - Customer protection (canopy, shelter or building element)
 - Service maps/timetables
 - Neighborhood area map/information
 - Ticket vending machines
 - Lighting, seating and phones
 - Bicycle racks/lockers
 - Sidewalk/intersection paving improvements (for improved pedestrian and ADA access and safety)
 - Communication system (such as VMS) to provide real-time travel, service problem and delay information
 - Closed-circuit television cameras monitored by security personnel and security speaker telephones in case of an emergency
 - Landscaping
 - Public art

* Addressed by several station/stop prototypes in the *Integrated Land Use/Transportation Policy within the City of Los Angeles* adopted in 1993 by Metro and the City of Los Angeles.

2. Subregional Transit Center
 - *Modes* – Serves Metro Rail and/or the interface of two Metro Rapid lines along with Metro Local, MUNI Operator, Other Service Provider and community-based services, as well as limited and express services where appropriate
 - *Configuration* – May include a combination of on- and off-street customer service and bus service/layover facilities; may include some operational support facilities
 - *Access* – By full range of modes: rail and bus transfer, auto, drop-off, walking, bicycle and station car

- *Parking* – May include shared or transit-only park-and-ride facilities
- *Land Use* – May be located adjacent to transit-oriented retail and/or mixed-use development; may be integrated with on-site development
- *Customer services and amenities* – potentially including:
 - Service identity
 - Customer protection (canopy, shelter or building element)
 - Service maps/timetables
 - Neighborhood area map/information
 - Ticket vending machines
 - Lighting, seating and phones
 - Bicycle racks/lockers
 - Sidewalk/intersection paving improvements (for improved pedestrian and ADA access and safety)
 - Communication system (such as VMS) to provide real-time travel, service problem and delay information
 - Closed-circuit television cameras monitored by security personnel and security speaker telephones in case of an emergency
 - Landscaping
 - Public art

3. Community Transit Center

- *Modes* – Serves a high level of bus activity including Metro Rapid, Metro Local, MUNI Operator, Other Service Provider and community-based operations, as well as limited and express services where appropriate
- *Configuration* – On-street customer service; primarily on-street bus service and layover facilities
- *Access* – By bus transfer, drop-off, walking and bicycle
- *Parking* – May include shared park-and-ride opportunities in some locations
- *Land Use* – May be located adjacent to transit-oriented retail and/or mixed-use development
- *Customer services and amenities* – potentially including:
 - Service identity
 - Customer protection (canopy, shelter or building element)
 - Service maps/timetables
 - Neighborhood area map/information
 - Ticket vending machines
 - Lighting, seating and phones
 - Bicycle racks
 - Sidewalk/intersection paving improvements (for improved pedestrian and ADA access and safety)
 - Communication system (such as VMS) to provide real-time travel, service problem and delay information
 - Security speaker telephones in case of an emergency

4. On-street Transit Stop
- *Modes* – Stop may be used by a single or combination of services including Metro Rapid, Metro Local, MUNI Operator, Other Service Provider and community-based operations, as well as limited and express services where appropriate
 - *Configuration* – On-street customer service and bus layover facilities
 - *Access* – By bus transfer, drop-off, walking and bicycle
 - *Land Use* – May be located adjacent to transit-oriented retail and/or mixed-use development
 - *Customer services and amenities* – potentially including:
 - Service identity
 - Service maps/timetables
 - Lighting
 - Real-time travel information
 - Bicycle racks
 - Sidewalk/intersection paving improvements (for improved pedestrian and ADA access and safety)

Proposed Final List of Regional and Subregional Centers

Regional

East Los Angeles (Atlantic/Pomona)
El Monte
Glendale
Hollywood
Huntington Park/Vernon
LAX/Aviation
Long Beach (Downtown)
Mid-Wilshire (Wilshire/Vermont)
Norwalk (Green Line/I-605)
North Hollywood
Pasadena (Downtown)
Santa Monica
South Bay
Union Station
Warner Center
West Los Angeles/La Cienega
Westwood/UCLA

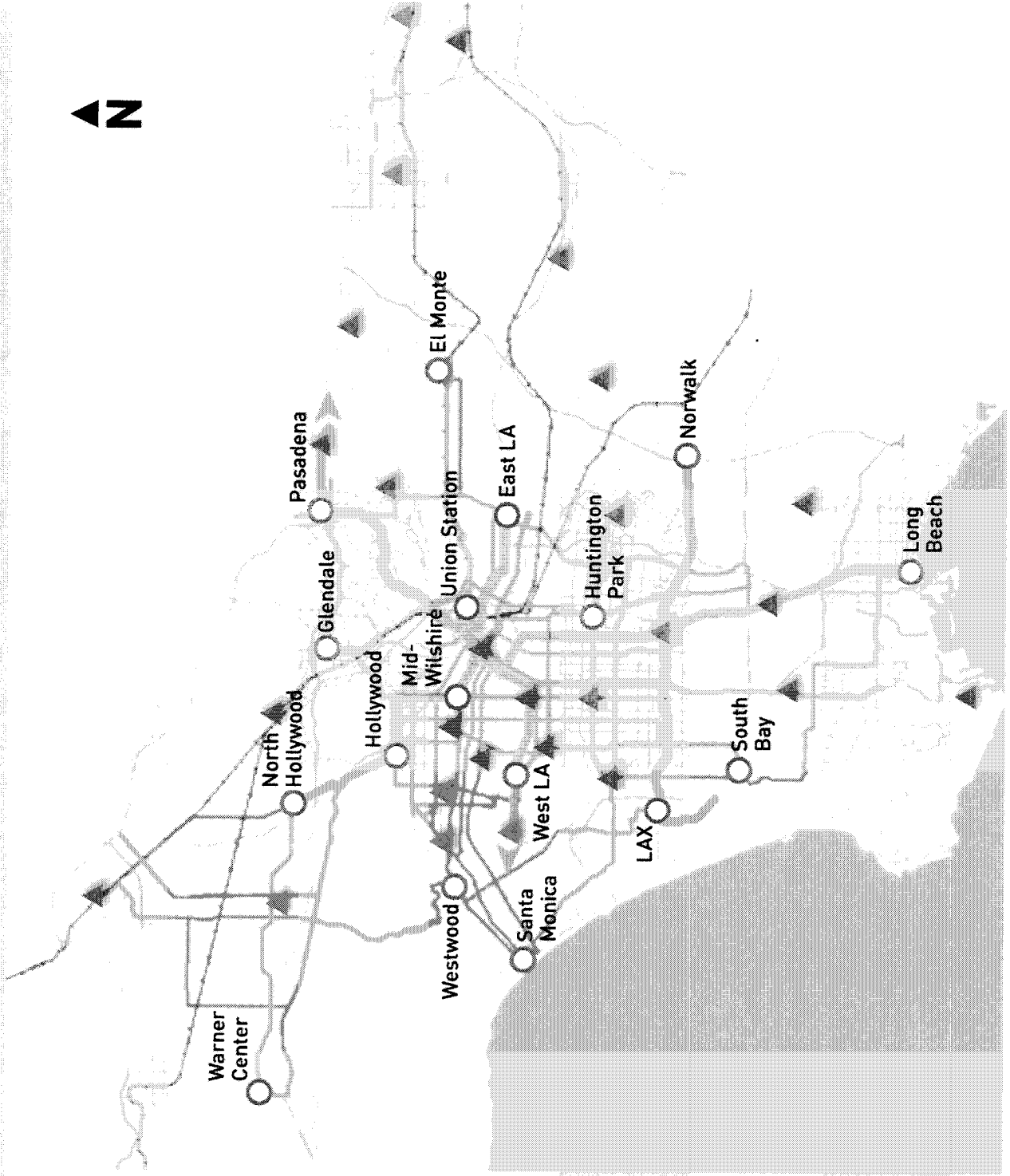
Subregional

7th/Metro Center
Alhambra/South Pasadena
Artesia/Compton (Blue Line)
Baldwin Park
Bell Gardens/Downey
Beverly Hills/Century City
Burbank
Carson/Artesia Transit Center
Claremont
Covina/Glendora
Crenshaw District
Culver City (interim)
East Pasadena – Sierra Madre Villa
Imperial/Wilmington (Blue and Green Lines)
Industry/Commerce or Puente Hills
Inglewood
Koreatown (Wilshire/Western)
Lakewood
Manchester (Florence/Vermont)
Mid-Cities (Pico/Rimpau)

Monrovia/Duarte
Northeast Valley (Sylmar/San Fernando)
Pomona (Downtown)
San Pedro/Harbor
USC/Exposition/Harbor Transitway
Van Nuys
Whittier

System Centers

- Regional Centers
- ▲ Subregional Centers
- ▬ Metrolink
- ▬ Metro Rail
- ▬ Transitways
- ▬ Metro Rapid

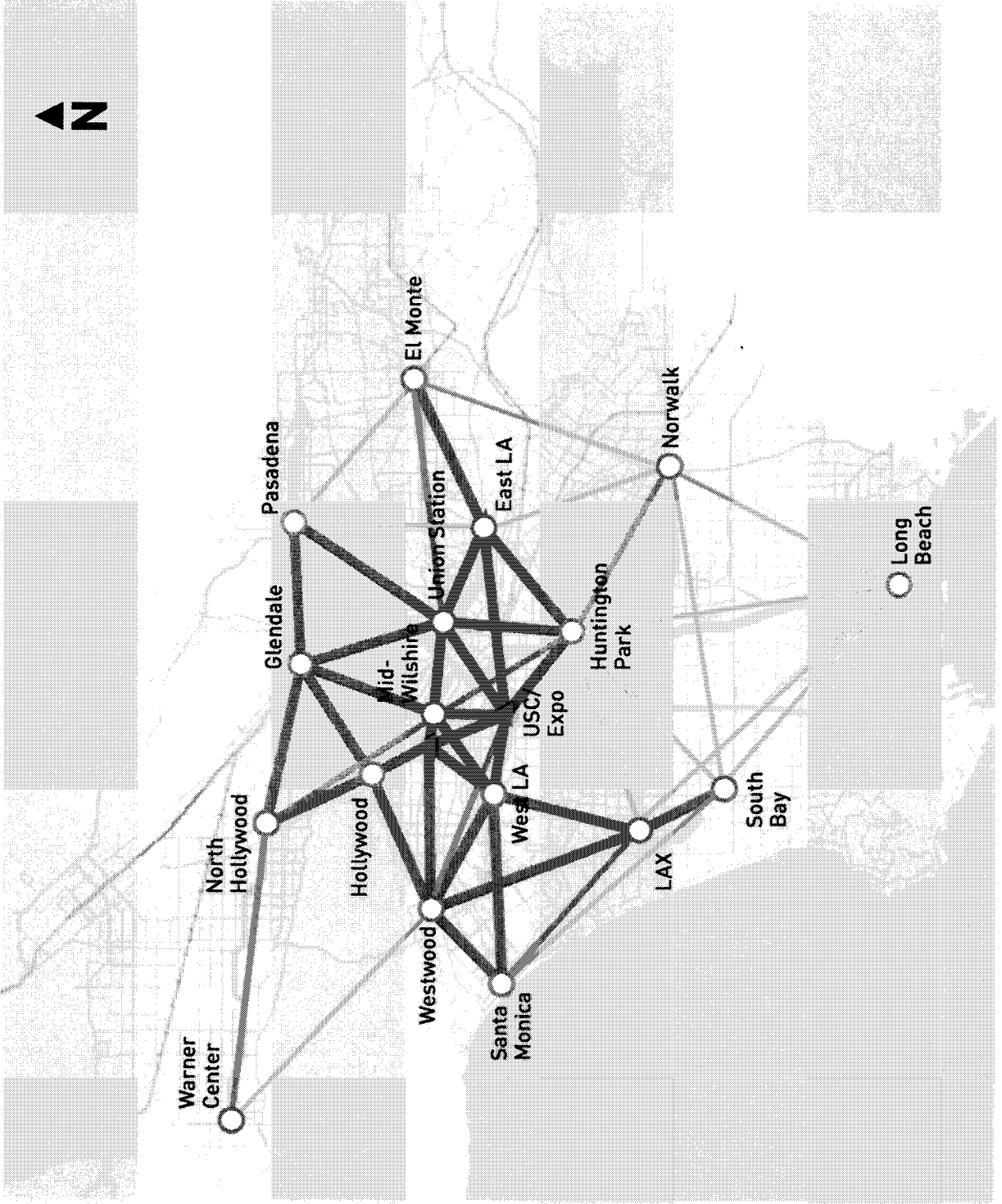


Corridor Travel Activity

Attachment D

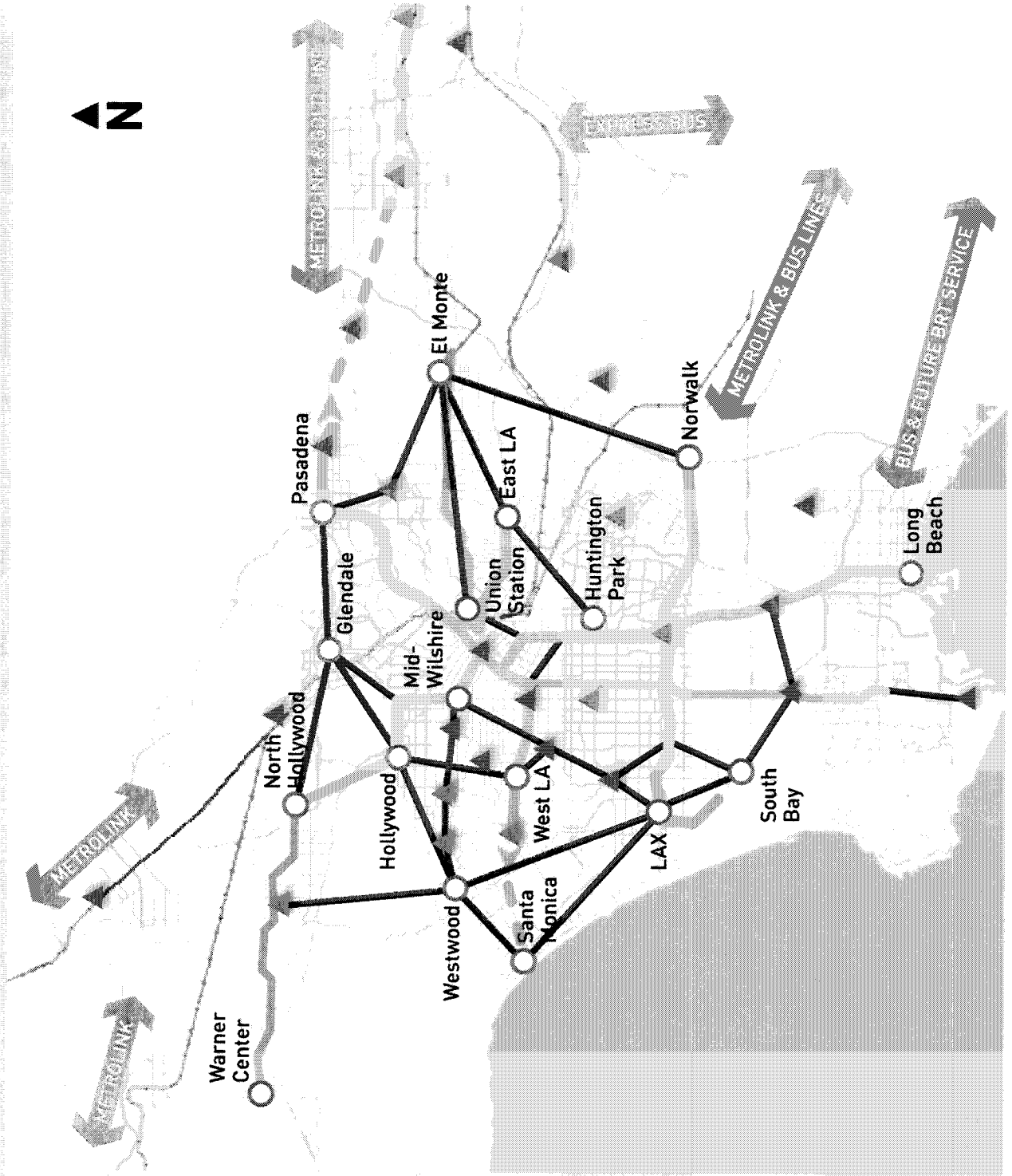
- Regional Centers
- ▲ Subregional Centers

- ▬ Major
- ▬ Medium
- ▬ Minor



Regional Service Plan

Attachment E



ATTACHMENT “F”

UNAVAILABLE AT TIME OF
PRINTING

