



GATEWAY CITIES GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

APRIL 13, 2006

SUBJECT: LINE 270

ACTION: CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL OF RESTRUCTURING ALTERNATIVE

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Consider canceling Line 270 south of Rio Hondo College, and
- 2) Schedule a public hearing in July or August 2006 to receive public comment on this matter.

BACKGROUND

MTA Line 270 is a contract bus service operated by Southland Transit. The line is about 24 miles long end-to-end, and provides local service Monday thru Saturday. Cities served by this line include Monrovia, Irwindale, El Monte, South El Monte, Whittier, Santa Fe Springs, Downey and Norwalk. Attachment A illustrates the route of line.

Ridership is estimated to be 2,158 boardings on weekdays and 1,056 on Saturday. No service operates on Sunday. Based upon MTA's adopted Line Performance Index for this fiscal year, the line is ranked at 0.63 on the performance index. This ranking is just slightly above the minimum threshold for poor performing lines. An analysis of the line's ridership indicates that about 69% of its weekday riders have origins and destinations north of Rio Hondo College, making this portion of the route the more productive segment. By comparison, the route segment south of Rio Hondo College generates 31% of the boardings, and is the poorer performing segment.

One reason the southern segment does not perform as well as the north is portions of the route are duplicated by Montebello Transit and Norwalk Transit, which charge a lower fare than Metro. Another contributing factor may be due to the operation of new express Line 577X since this line now provides a significantly faster trip (i.e. 30" versus 75") than Line 270 between the El Monte Station and the Norwalk Green Line Station. Consequently, some local riders making this trip today may have shifted to the faster, express line. The latter point will be verified when more current ridership data is available.

Staff has developed four alternative service strategies to improve the effectiveness of the line. These alternatives are discussed below.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

A. Cancel Line Segment South of Rio Hondo College – Staff Recommendation (Public Hearing Required)

Under this option the entire segment of route south of the college would be discontinued due to low performance. Some portions of the line would be covered by existing service provided by MTA, Montebello Transit or Norwalk Transit. The resources saved from the elimination of this segment would be reinvested into other lines operating in the Gateway Cities Service area. This alternative would require the Council to hold a public hearing to obtain input from the community before the segment could be canceled.

B. Status Quo (No Public Hearing Required)

This alternative would essentially defer a decision on this line until a later date. The governance council may wish to consider this alternative because the line was just recently restructured in June 2005, and it may take 9-12 months for a meaningful growth in ridership to occur. Moreover, the most current ridership count for this line was taken only three months after the service change (October 2005). The current performance index for this line is 0.63, which is slightly above the marginal performing level of 0.60.

C. Break Line at Rio Hondo College & Operate Smaller Buses (Public Hearing Required)

Under this alternative the route would be split into two separate lines at the college. The southern route between Rio Hondo College and Norwalk would be operated with smaller buses, and the northern route between the college and Monrovia would be operated with the current 40' buses. The actual route of Line 270 would not change except for minor route adjustments needed at the college to provide connections between the north and south routes. By splitting the line and using different size buses on each segment, line performance would improve on each leg because resources would be better matched to actual demand. This proposal also has the advantage of breaking an unusually long line into two separate lines. The Council would need to hold a public hearing to obtain input from the public before approving this option.

D. Reroute Line South of Rio Hondo College (Public Hearing Required)

This alternative would reconfigure the current route between Rio Hondo College and Norwalk. This option would focus the improvement on the southern leg of the line by removing unnecessary service duplication with Norwalk and Montebello Transit, and serving new markets along Bloomfield Ave and Firestone Blvd. in order to improve the line's performance. This alternative would require the Council to hold a public hearing to obtain input from the public before approving this option. Attachment B illustrates the proposed reroute.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

If the governance council approves the cancellation of the southern leg of the Line 270, resources saved will be reinvested in other Gateway Cities services. Only Alternative C has a budget impact, which is estimated to add four revenue hours daily or 1,020 annualized revenue hours.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of the staff recommendation, Line 270 will be added to a list of lines to undergo public hearing later this summer. The Council will receive a complete report on these items at its scheduled meeting in June. The report will also recommend the Council conduct a hearing date in July or August to receive input from the community on these matters.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A: Line 270 Existing Route
 B: Line 270 Reroute Proposal (Alternative D)

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