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**GATEWAY CITIES GOVERNANCE COUNCIL
September 14, 2006**

SUBJECT: PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO GATEWAY CITIES BUS LINES

**ACTION: APPROVE FINDINGS OF AUGUST 2006 PUBLIC HEARINGS AND
ADOPT REVISED SERVICE PROGRAM FOR DECEMBER 2006**

RECOMMENDATION

- A. Approve findings of Public Hearings conducted Thursday, August 10th for service changes proposed to become effective December 2006 or later (Attachment B);
- B. Adopt Part 1 of the Revised Service Program as outlined in this report (Attachment C); and
- C. Recommend Part 2 and 3 of the Revised Service Plan be adopted by the South Bay and San Gabriel Valley Sector Governance Councils, respectively.

ISSUE

The service changes under consideration are considered to be major modifications based on federal public hearing guidelines and MTA policy. As such, the governance council is required to conduct a public hearing, and to solicit and consider public input before these changes can be implemented. The Council is also required to consider the possible impacts from these proposals before approving them. Staff has prepared the necessary documentation in the report to satisfy this regulatory requirement.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Should the Council elect to not approve a staff recommendations, two alternative service strategies were developed by staff for the Council to consider in lieu of approving the staff recommendation. They include:

- 1) Maintain the status quo and do nothing; or
- 2) Adopt a different subset of the service proposals.

Neither option is recommended, however, because the proposed program is designed to improve service for most riders, and can be implemented within the current operating budget. Should the Council reject the staff recommendation, some planned improvements may need to be deferred or withdrawn in order to ensure a balanced budget.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Revised Service Plan can be implemented at no increase in operating cost. Resources saved from the restructuring of existing local services will be fully reinvested to establish the new limited-stop lines and to make other schedule related improvements to the locals.

BACKGROUND

Last month four of Metro's Sector Governance Councils conducted public hearings within their respective jurisdictions to receive input from the community on proposed major changes to Metro's bus service starting in December 2006 or later. A total of 20 existing bus lines are potentially affected by having their routes, schedules and/or stops modified to make them more effective. In addition, seven new services are proposed to be established, and a few existing lines or segments of lines are proposed to be cancelled. Collectively, the specific lines, and the proposed changes to them, are shown in the attached public hearing notice (Attachment A).

The four sector governance councils holding public hearings in August included Metro's Gateway Service Sector, South Bay Service Sector, San Fernando Valley Service Sector and the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector. At these hearings the public was invited to comment on any proposal under consideration regardless of the service sector that proposed the change. All were informed that comments received at these hearings would be forwarded to the respective sector governance council that manages the line, and that it would be taken into consideration by them as part of their final deliberations.

The Gateway Cities Governance Council conducted its public hearing on Thursday, August 10. The hearing was held at The Gas Company, located in the City of Downey, and started at 6 pm. Four bus lines currently managed by the Gateway Cities Sector are proposed to be modified in some way to make them more effective. This includes Lines 53, 55, 60 and 360. New rapid bus Line 760 is also proposed to be established. In addition to these services, five other bus lines serving the Gateway Cities area are also proposed to be changed. The latter group includes existing Lines 111, 115, 315 and new Line 715, managed by the South Bay Governance Council, and existing Line 751, managed by the San Gabriel Valley Council.

Legal notice of these hearings was first published in the Los Angeles Times on Sunday, July 2, 2006. Additional notice was subsequently published in other local, regional and foreign language newspapers system-wide. About 60,000 rider notices were distributed on the buses, trains and at customer service outlets informing riders about the changes under consideration. This information was also posted on MTA's main website and service sector websites.

The following sections of this report summarize the written and verbal testimony received by the public on these matters through the close of the public record, August 12, 2006. Staff has responded to each issue, and has recommended modifications to several proposals based on public input and other considerations. Details of the public comment along with staff's response are included in Attachment B.

Attachment C outlines the Revised Service Plan that resulted from the public review process. It also summarizes the potential impact riders may experience from the service modifications recommended in the Revised Service Plan.

RESULTS OF AUGUST, 2006 PUBLIC HEARINGS

Summary of Public Comment

Three members of the public attended the August 10 public hearing in the Gateway Cities Sector. Each person testified directly to the Governance Council on matters that were of concern to them. In addition, six others presented verbal testimony directly to other sector councils last month concerning proposals affecting the Gateway Sector.

In addition to the nine persons who provided verbal comments, 11 more persons submitted written statements commenting on the proposed changes to Gateway Cities lines by the close of the public record. Collectively, the written correspondence and the verbal statements from these 20 individuals generated 24 comments

The staff proposal to create new limited-stop Lines 350 and 355 by restructuring local Lines 53 and 55 generated eight public responses. Four of these, or half the comments, supported the staff proposal to establish new limited services over the route of these lines. Three other respondents opposed their creation, including the Southern California Transit Advocates, who questioned the need for the new limited-stop lines given their restricted times of operation, and impacts on the local service.

The staff proposal to create new Rapid Bus Line 760 by restructuring local/limited-stop Lines 60-360 generated 16 comments. Eight of these comments opposed the truncation of these lines at the Artesia Blue Line Station. Their primary concerns focused on transfer, fare and security issues since affected riders would be forced to transfer to Long Beach Transit in order to continue travel to destinations south of Artesia Blvd. They were concerned about safety, citing problems with security at the rail station at night. Most thought new Line 760 and the local service should continue south to serve the Long Beach Transit Mall like the 60 line does today.

In a written letter submitted by Long Beach Transit (LBT), the agency stated its willingness to work with MTA to help bring about a successful transition of service along the Long Beach Corridor, and agreed to a tentative implementation date of June 2007 to restructure its service providing the following issues can be resolved by then:

- 1) Additional operating funds/resources must be secured to meet the extra demand anticipated on LBT Lines 51/52;
- 2) A joint fare agreement should be explored to address transfers between LBT and MTA;
- 3) Further analysis of current ridership is necessary in order to verify and justify the need for more service after 8 pm; and
- 4) Concerns about security at the Artesia Blue Line Station at night must be resolved to its satisfaction.

REVISED SERVICE PLAN

Staff proposes to modify elements of the original service change program to address issues raised during the public review process, as well as other considerations. The Revised Service Plan, outlined in Attachment C, is divided into three parts. Part 1 lists the current staff recommendation for the five lines managed by the Gateway Cities Sector. The Gateway Cities Governance Council is requested to **approve** Part 1 of the Revised Service Plan, as proposed.

Parts 2 and 3 of the Revised Service Plan lists the current staff recommendation for five additional lines that operate portions of their routes in the Gateway Sector. However, these lines are managed by the South Bay and San Gabriel Valley sectors. The Gateway Cities Governance Council is requested to **recommend adoption** of Part 2 and 3 by the affected governance councils who manage these lines. It is important to point out that the current staff recommendations in Part 2 and Part 3 were jointly developed by staff from Gateway, South Bay and San Gabriel Valley to ensure future coordination.

The Revised Service Plan is summarized below. Route maps for lines to be modified under Part 1 are illustrated in Attachment D.

PART 1: LINES MANAGED BY GATEWAY CITIES SECTOR

- Line **53** **Original Proposal:** Restructure local line and establish new limited-stop Line 350 on weekdays. **Revised Proposal:** Approve as originally proposed.
- Line **55** **Original Proposal:** Restructure local line and establish new limited-stop Line 355 on weekdays. **Revised Proposal:** Approve as originally proposed.
- Line **60** **Original Proposal:** Restructure route in conjunction with implementation of new rapid Line 760 in December 2006 or later. **Revised Proposal:** Defer decision until Spring, 2007 to allow time for additional discussions with LBT.
- Line **360** **Original Proposal:** Proposal to cancel limited-stop service as part of operation of new rapid Line 760. **Revised Proposal:** Defer decision until Spring 2007 to allow time for additional discussions with LBT.
- Line **760** **Original Proposal:** Establish new Rapid Bus Line 760 between downtown LA and the Artesia Blue Line Station. **Revised Proposal:** Defer decision until Spring 2007 to allow time for additional discussions with LBT.

PART 2: LINES MANAGED BY SOUTH BAY SECTOR

- Line **111** **Original Proposal:** Cancel segment from 605-Station to Whittwood Mall and replace affected segment with new shuttle, or extension of existing line. **Revised Proposal:** Line 121 is recommended to replace service along the Line 111 segment entirely. In addition, Line 120-121 to operate as two separate lines with a common terminal at Imperial Station. Gateway Cities Sector to assume operation of Line 121, effective with the December Shakeup. Restructured Line 120-121 to be operated on experimental basis, pending the outcome of a public hearing next year to make it permanent.

Line 115/315 **Original Proposal:** Restructure service on Line 115 (including cancellation of Limited Line 315) as part of the implementation of new Rapid Line 715. **Revised Proposal:** To be reconsidered next year by South Bay Governance Council, pending resolution of technical and operational issues. Staff will provide Council with updates on this matter as they develop.

Line 715 **Original Proposal:** Establish new Rapid Line 715. **Revised Proposal:** To be reconsidered next year by South Bay Governance Council, pending resolution of technical and operational issues. Staff will provide Council with updates on this matter as they develop

PART 3: LINE MANAGED BY SAN GABRIEL VALLEY SECTOR

Line 751 **Original Proposal:** Shorten route in conjunction with implementation of new Rapid Line 760. **Revised Proposal:** To be reconsidered by San Gabriel Valley Governance Council in Spring 2007, due to the delay in implementing new Rapid Line 760.

IMPACT STATEMENT

Part 1 (lines managed by the Gateway Cities Sector) of the Revised Service Plan will not adversely impact the community or most riders of these lines. In fact, most riders are not affected by the changes and will continue their travel patterns like they do today. A minority of Line 53 and 55 riders may experience an added wait time of a few minutes since the local service will operate slightly less often than it does today. However, some riders could mitigate the added wait time entirely by planning their trips more carefully.

Riders of Lines 53 and 55 are not expected to experience any economic impacts from these changes since local service will continue to make all stops presently served. Moreover, riders are not required to walk any further than they do today to access bus service.

In considering the possible impacts associated with the Revised Service Program, new limited-stop Lines 350 and 355 will provide a faster trip along Compton and Central Ave corridors than is possible today. Hence, riders using the limited-stop lines will reduce their travel time overall. Collectively, these speed improvements will benefit most existing riders, and create incentives to attract new riders to use public transit.

NEXT STEPS

With approval from the Governance Council, staff will begin preparations to implement the recommended service changes on Sunday, December 17, 2006. Staff also plans to return to the Council early next year with final recommendations for Lines 60, 360 and new Rapid Line 760. Updates on the South Bay and San Gabriel Valley service proposals will also be forthcoming.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Official Public Hearing Notice

Attachment B: Summary Public Comment & Staff Response

Attachment C: Revised Service Plan & Passenger Impact Statement

Attachment D: Maps Lines 53-350 & Lines 55-355

Line 53 Map

Line 55 Map

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