


Metro

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 15, 2007**

SUBJECT: METRO RAPID EXPRESS SERVICE

ACTION: APPROVE METRO RAPID EXPRESS PILOT PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION

Approve implementation of Metro Rapid Express Pilot Program.

ISSUE

In November 2006, the Board approved implementation of a Wilshire Metro Rapid Express service in June 2007 as a pilot program. At the same meeting, the Board also approved a motion directing staff to return in February 2007 with recommendations for implementing up to four additional Metro Rapid Express corridors. Staff conducted an analysis to identify which existing and future Metro Rapid corridors are candidates for Metro Rapid Express service. Criteria were developed that show which of these corridors would benefit through increased service efficiency and effectiveness by the implementation of Metro Rapid Express service.

BACKGROUND

The Wilshire Metro Rapid Express service is designed to operate as a de facto extension of the Metro Purple Line, with limited stops at the Wilshire/Vermont and Wilshire/Western Red Line Stations, Fairfax Avenue, Beverly Drive in Beverly Hills, Westwood Boulevard, and 4th Street in Santa Monica. Service will operate during peak periods in both directions with a six-minute frequency in the peak direction. Staff estimates this will produce a 10% to 15% savings in travel time over the existing Wilshire Metro Rapid service.

At the Board's direction staff developed criteria to determine which current and future Metro Rapid Corridors would benefit from Express service. These include trip length, overall corridor speed, and stop activity characteristics. Based on these criteria, staff has identified four additional Metro Rapid corridors for possible Metro Rapid Express implementation. (Please see Attachment 1.)

Implementation Plan

Staff recommends implementing up to three additional Metro Rapid Express corridors. They are: 1) the Hawthorne Metro Rapid, 2) the Van Nuys Metro Rapid, and 3) the

Crenshaw Metro Rapid. The Ventura Metro Rapid is a candidate corridor which meets the Metro Rapid Express criteria, but staff does not recommend its implementation due to its close proximity to the Metro Orange Line.

Attachments 1 and 2 detail the service characteristics and proposed implementation dates of the three additional Metro Rapid Express corridors. Recommended frequencies are every 30 minutes during weekday peak-periods, with service in either peak direction or both directions, serving limited stops. This is similar to the approach used to implement the Metro Gold Line Express service.

Staff is recommending implementation of the Metro Rapid Hawthorne corridor in June 2007 as part of the Wilshire Metro Rapid Express pilot program. The pilot program will therefore include two different corridors allowing for comparison of service characteristics and a more accurate assessment of the potential for Rapid Express to improve public transportation. If the Metro Rapid Express pilot program is successful, staff will recommend implementation of other corridors in December 2007 or later. Success will be measured by ridership, especially new riders to Metro; reduced travel time over the existing Metro Rapid service in the corridor; and customer satisfaction as measured by a surveying effort.

Also, Board staff recently requested that staff evaluate beginning the Wilshire Metro Rapid Express Line in downtown Los Angeles instead of at the Wilshire/Vermont Red Line Station. A variety of factors will be evaluated for this extended alignment that include travel time savings, especially in relation to Purple Line travel times between downtown L.A. and Wilshire/Vermont; schedule reliability; cost; and origins and destinations of the new Metro Rapid Express customers. Staff will report back to the Board after the Wilshire Metro Rapid Express has been in operation with a recommendation.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are currently 16 Metro Rapid corridors in operation, with an additional 12 proposed for implementation by June 2008. Consistent with the Metro Rapid Service Warrants, Metro Rapid Express service is designed to increase service efficiency and effectiveness. Metro Connections has also identified Metro Rapid Express service as a means to improve transit service in certain corridors.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The alternative is to not implement additional Metro Rapid Express service on other Metro Rapid corridors. This is not recommended due to the fact that Metro Rapid Express service is expected to improve mobility, enhance the transit experience for our current customers and attract new riders by offering significantly improved travel times.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adoption of the recommended action will not impact Metro's FY 2007 or FY 2008 budgets, as the additional resources required will be made available through a reallocation of service.

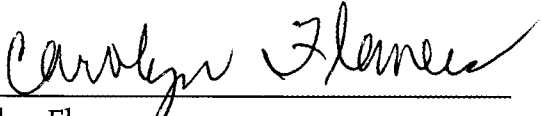
NEXT STEPS

After implementation, staff will monitor the performance of the Metro Rapid Express Pilot Program to make any necessary service adjustments, and report back to the Board with a recommendation as to whether the Metro Rapid Express Pilot Program should be approved for permanent implementation, and with plans for implementation of the additional two corridors.

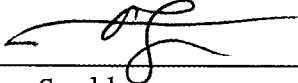
ATTACHMENTS

1. Metro Rapid Express Service Characteristics
2. Metro Rapid Express Proposed Stops

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ATTACHMENT 1

Metro Rapid Corridor	Existing Headway	Express Headway	Express Direction	Average Trip Length	Boardings	Productivity
Wilshire	2 to 4	6	Bi-Directional	5.9	48,110	59.0
Hawthorne	10 to 12	30	Peak Directional	5.0	9,200	45.4
Van Nuys	7 to 10	30	Peak Directional	6.0	11,700	54.5
Crenshaw	8 to 10	30	Bi-Directional	5.0	9,510	58.7
Ventura	4 to 10	N/A	N/A	6.9	8,580	44.6

Note: The 720 Express will operate with six-minute headways in the peak direction and greater than six minutes in the off-peak direction.

Sources: 1st Qtr. FY 07 Ridership Report and June 2006 4-24 Report

Metro Rapid Corridor	Proposed Stops	Implementation Date	Sector
Hawthorne	South Bay Transit Center Hawthorne Green Line Station King / Crenshaw King / Vermont 6th / Broadway Pataouras Transit Plaza	Jun-07	South Bay

Metro Rapid Corridor	Proposed Stops	Implementation Date	Sector
Crenshaw	South Bay Transit Center Crenshaw Green Line Station King / Crenshaw Wilshire / Crenshaw Wilshire / Western Red Line	Dec-07 or later*	South Bay

Metro Rapid Corridor	Proposed Stops	Implementation Date	Sector
Van Nuys	Van Nuys / Roscoe Van Nuys Metrolink Station Van Nuys Orange Line Station Van Nuys / Ventura Ventura / Sepulveda Le Conte / Westwood Wilshire / Westwood	Dec-07 or later*	San Fernando Valley

* Implementation of additional Rapid Express corridors is conditional on success of the pilot program.