

GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Chair – Diane DuBois, MTA Director

March 3, 2010, 4:30 PM
Gateway Cities COG Offices
16401 Paramount Blvd.
Paramount, CA

Item No.	Description	Recommended Action
I.	Call to Order – Self Introductions	
II.	Pledge of Allegiance	
III.	Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2010	Approve
IV.	Reports:	
1.	MTA Board Highlights – Oral Report	Receive & File
2.	Long Range Transportation Plan - Strategic Element Additional Projects Update	Discussion/Action
3.	Proposed Gasoline Sales Tax Conversion	Discussion/Action
4.	Gateway Cities Service Sector Report By David Hershenson	Receive & File
5.	Update – I-5 JPA	Receive & File
6.	Update – I-710 EIR/EIS	Receive & File
7.	Update – SR 91/ I-605/I-405 Major Corridor Study	Receive & File
8.	Update – Orangeline Authority	Receive & File
9.	New Business/Date of Next Meeting	Receive & File
10.	Adjournment	

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT, IF YOU NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT THE COG OFFICE AT (562) 663-6850. NOTIFICATION 48 HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING WILL ENABLE THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TO MAKE REASONABLE ARRANGEMENT TO ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY TO THIS MEETING.

Item III

Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of February 3, 2010

**Transportation Committee Minutes of
February 3, 2010**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE GATEWAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Chair – MTA Director Diane DuBois
Gateway Cities Office, 16401 Paramount Blvd. , Paramount
February 3, 2010**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Diane DuBois at 4:40 p.m. Roll-call was taken by self-introduction.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane DuBois – Lakewood, Gordon Stiefenhagen – Norwalk, Stan Carroll – La Habra Heights, Ray Harris – Supervisor Knabe's Office, Ken Farfsing – Signal Hill, Gene Daniels – Paramount, Mohammad Mostahkami – South Gate, Dana Lee – Long Beach Transit.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Gil Hurtado – South Gate, Fred Latham – Santa Fe Springs, Eric Shen – Port of Long Beach

OTHERS PRESENT: Perla Hernandez – Office of Congresswoman Grace Napolitano, Karen Heit – Gateway Cities COG, Jerry Wood – Gateway Cities COG, David Hershenson, Michael Sieckert – MTA, Michael Kodama – OLDA, Yvette Kirrin – I5 JPA.

The minutes of January 6, 2010 were approved as presented. Director DuBois reordered the agenda to allow Lupe Valdez from Union Pacific Railroad (UP) to go first.

Ms. Valdez gave a presentation on the 3.5 mile train that came through Southern California on January 9-10 of last month. This intermodal train was three mile-long trains strung together. The "super train" had a container capacity of 618 trucks. The purpose of the experiment was for UP to test fuel consumption. The length was to test "distributive power", putting sets of locomotives within the length of the train, thereby reducing fuel consumption. Trains of this length are not going to be the norm as the length of train is determined by the length of sidings. The super train came through the Colton crossing, through the Alameda Corridor to the ICTF where it was broken apart. There were questions about the secrecy of the test and the stopping ability of the train. The super train stops quicker than a mile train as the 9 locomotives provided more stopping power. The train ran at 70 mph. There was a discussion about safety due to blocked crossings. The 3-mile train would clog the corridor, due to the lack of sufficient siding length.

Director DuBois gave an overview of the January MTA Agenda. She talked about the approval of funding for the I-5 construction mitigation program as well as approval of funding for the LOSSAN strategic plan implementation. Director DuBois sits on the LOSSAN Corridor JPA representing the MTA.

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She talked about the potential for the expansion of the Sustainability Committee to the Sustainability/SB 375 Committee to accomplish three goals: SB 375 efforts in the county will be lead by the MTA in transportation.

Gerry Alvarez, MTA project manager, gave a presentation about the progress on the Metro Gold Line Eastern Extension Phase II (MGLEE II) and the work since the selection of the two alignments: SR-60 and the Whittier Alignment. He reviewed the alignments and stations and reviewed the station locations and streets for the alignments. The Whittier alignment is slightly longer, with more stations and therefore is more expensive.

He discussed the aerial nature of the SR-60 (slightly above grade) and approximate costs - \$1.2 billion for SR-60 and \$2.2 billion for Whittier. This translates to \$260-270 million per mile for SR-60; \$230 million per mile for Whittier (two additional stations and longer). He reviewed the schedule: Notice of intent published and Scoping meetings are set, public scoping sessions are set. He discussed outreach with Chambers of Commerce along the alignments as well as sending notices out with elementary school children and using direct mail.

MTA has updated the modeling for the LRTP and this has creating some changes with the ridership for both alignments. Ridership has jumped on both although a little higher proportionately for the SR-60. The ridership is now estimated at SR-60 - 18,000, and Whittier -20,000. The ridership gap has narrowed, Questions were raised about whether that is the influence of additional years or the influence of additional systems coming on line. Urban design workshops will begin through the communities with an administrative draft out in April of next year. The public comment period started last Monday – closing April 14th. Questions asked about Whittier accepting an aerial alignment (Whittier supports) Staff expected the public to lower costs by going at grade. Aerial structures over the I-605 would be 50 ft. in the air.

Concern was expressed about setting SGV and GC against one another for the project, there will be a winner and a loser. There was a suggestion made to look at existing open space and utility ROWs. Alvarez explained that the ridership didn't exist for the Whittier Narrows alignment (it was studied). Southern California Edison is not willing to share the utility easement, they need to preserve for their project.

Karen Heit, Transportation Deputy, gave an overview of the strategic plan request for new projects and the call from the COG to submit additional subregional projects. Committee members asked that the COG continue to remind cities to submit projects.

Perla Hernandez, Senior Transportation Deputy for Congresswoman Grace Napolitano discussed the participation of the SGV communities and business and the “grass roots” organization for Whittier. The House Transportation Committee will mark up transportation bill in March and April, needs COG help (probably will not pass as Senate

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doesn't wish to raise gas tax in an election year). Congressman Napolitano wants to bring Chair Oberstar out on a tour of projects in her district.

David Hershenson gave the Gateway Service Sector report and discussed the quarterly all sector council meet and confer meeting February 16, 2010 at the MTA. There might be discussion about managing sector councils.

Yvette Kirrin, I-5 JPA Executive Director, thanked Director DuBois for securing the funds for the I-5 construction mitigation. These activities are needed as Valley View Rosecrans and Carmenita are all going to be under construction at the same time. The I-5 JPA is seeking a federal earmark to keep the I-5 EIR moving forward.

Jerry Wood, COG Transportation Engineer, reported on the I-710 Project Committee and discussed the Public/Private/Partnership (3P) potential for the I-710. He reported on the MTA initiation of a 3P consultant to do the analysis for this piece of the project. Lastly, he reported on additional elements added to the EIR/EIS by the Project Committee that may cause some schedule slippage.

Mr. Wood reported that the 91/605/405 project is still waiting for the release of the feasibility study through the MTA.

Mike Kodama, Executive Director of OLDA, discussed the consultant SOQ submittals and the Washington DC trip as well as a presentation from Japan on new high speed rail technology.

Mohammed Mostahkami discussed the impossible task of getting the ARRA II. Looking at the possibility of swapping money with another project that could use ARRA money. Look at swapping Prop. IB money on the I-405, the problem is state money may be in trouble. Look at local money A&C and STPL. Perla Hernandez suggested that the COG and other cities reach out to other Congressional offices to move money. Use MTA as a clearinghouse for funding.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50.

IV. Reports

2. Long Range Transportation Plan – Strategic Element Additional Projects Update

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TO: Transportation Committee
FROM: Diane Dubois, MTA Director
BY: Karen Heit, Transportation Deputy
SUBJECT: Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Strategic Element Additional Projects Update

Background

At the February Transportation Committee, staff provided examples of candidate projects and requested that Gateway Cities submit additional projects for consideration:

Highway

- I-5 corridor I-605 -I-710
- Additional SR-91/I-605/I-405 solutions (including integration with Orange County)
- Extension of the I-710 Freight Movement Corridor beyond the I-5.

Transit

- Orangeline (OLDA) project extension beyond the West Santa Ana Branch ROW to Los Angeles Union Station
- Extension of the Metro Gold Line Eastern Extension from the Whittier terminus into Orange into Orange County (with OCTA).
- City of Long Beach eastern transit corridor connection to downtown and the Metro Blue Line.

COG staff circulated an email prior to this meeting to solicit additional candidate projects. Any projects will be presented for consideration at the Transportation Committee meeting

Issue

In January 2009, MTA staff requested that the subregions submit additional projects for consideration for inclusion into the 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan – Strategic Element. This element is the portion of the LRTP (unless new funding becomes available) beyond the current funding horizon of 2031. Inclusion in the LRTP as strategic element project is important as the projects can be evaluated in the regional

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model for air quality improvement and conformity, mobility benefit, and cost effectiveness. Strategic element projects are also given the benefit of being integrated into the countywide mobility plan for the purposes of long-range funds programming. MTA has requested that subregions submit projects for the strategic plan and prioritize project submittals. Projects are due to the MTA by March 25, 2010.

Recommended Action

Recommend the above prioritized list and any additional candidate projects to the COG Board for consideration for inclusion into the Strategic Element of the 2009 LRTP.

IV. Reports

3. Proposed Gasoline Sales Tax Conversion

Transportation Committee Agenda of
March 3, 2010

TO: Transportation Committee
FROM: Diane Dubois, MTA Director
BY: Karen Heit, Transportation Deputy
SUBJECT: Proposed Gasoline Sales Tax Conversion

Background

On January 8, 2010, Governor Schwarzenegger unveiled his proposed 2010-11 State Budget in which he outlined his proposals to address an 18 month, \$19.9 billion General Fund deficit. The Governor has declared a fiscal emergency and called the Legislature into Special Session to address the problem. The Governor is proposing to restructure transportation funding by eliminating all funding for public transit operations in California.

The Governor proposes to eliminate the sales tax on gasoline and the sales tax on diesel fuel and increase the gas tax by 10.8 cents per gallon, an amount lower than the sales tax. The proposal is offered as a tax cut to families since the ultimate tax on fuel would be reduced. Given the normal swings in gas prices, it is not clear if consumers will actually notice any reduction.

The sales tax on gas is allocated through Proposition 42 to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to cities and counties for street and road repair and to the Public Transportation Account (PTA). The Governor's proposal would replace the funding that flows to the STIP and to cities and counties but would eliminate any funding to the PTA. The proposal then makes funds available to the General Fund for debt service on transportation bonds and would result in a lower Proposition 98 funding level, ultimately reducing the General Fund obligation to the education budget,

Since, the proposed sales tax / gas tax swap eliminates the underlying PTA revenues, the Governor proposes no State Transit Assistance (STA) Program in 2010-11. This proposal is permanent as opposed to the 2009 Budget Act's elimination of the STA program through 2013.

The Governor's proposal puts approximately \$1.5 billion in transit funding at risk. This proposal is clearly designed to circumvent state law established in the California Transit Association's (CTA) litigation against the 2007-08 State Budget and as upheld by the California Supreme Court. This decision requires the spillover revenues to be deposited in the PTA and for those revenues to be spent on mass transportation purposes. The law requires the revenues to be spent on transit if those revenues materialize, however, state law cannot force those tax revenues to be collected. The Governor proposes eliminating the tax source so they would not have to be spent on transit.

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The spillover and sales tax on diesel fuel revenues that have accumulated in the PTA in the current fiscal year - amounting to \$945 million blocked from illegal expenditure by the CTA lawsuit - are proposed to be spent on state transit programs like intercity rail and Caltrans staff costs, as well as on transit bond debt service authorized under our court decision.

This situation is fluid and any new developments will be reported at the Committee meeting.

Issue

The California State Legislature is proposing to eliminate the gas tax and replace it with an excise tax on gasoline.

On February 22, the State Assembly passed ABX8 6, the transportation funding bill that includes the Senate Democrat budget "tax swap" proposal. The bill does make progress in restoring transit funding by providing a one-time shot of \$400 million to the State Transit Assistance (STA) program, increases the amount of sales tax on diesel to ensure a minimum of \$350 million annually and could grow up to \$400 million. This money is then split 75%/25% in favor of STA. The Senate proposal also provides authority to local metropolitan planning organizations to impose a fee related to SB 375. Specifically, the bill allows for SCAG to have the authority to impose the fee. The revenues generated could be used for transit, including transit operations, and pedestrian and bike improvements. The bill has headed to the Senate.

Attachment

Draft letter of opposition

Recommended Action

That the Committee discuss the issue and recommend an oppose position to the COG Board. A draft letter has been attached.

DRAFT LETTER OF OPPOSITION

Dear State Legislator:

The Board of Directors of the 27 cities of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments is writing to encourage you to oppose the current proposal to eliminate funding for public transit.

We are extremely alarmed by the State's efforts to dismantle State public transit funding programs that have been in existence for decades. Public transit is critical for improving air quality and reducing traffic congestion in Los Angeles County. The loss of State funds will only lead to reductions in service and fare increases, discouraging commuters to take public transit. In addition, eliminating public transit is major step back from the progress the State has made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We are disappointed that the state has chosen to withdraw support for public transit funding concurrent with the requirement that green house gas emission reductions are being mandated by the State with SB 375.

We especially oppose the recommendation to provide new fees while eliminating basic funding. These new fees are very uncertain and should not be offered in place of basic essential funds.

Public transit is critical to our economy. In Los Angeles County, commuters rely on public transportation for access to work and to school. The loss of State funds will lead to job losses and further damage our economy.

We urge you to ensure that any budget proposal that is adopted preserves the basic public transit funding programs. We understand the State faces significant fiscal problems but we ask that you not balance the budget on the back of mobility, economic recovery and the safety net that supports our economy.

Sincerely,

Gordon Stefenhagen, President
Gateway Cities Council of Governments