

## Summary of Policy

The purpose of the Bus System Improvement Plan (BSIP) is to ensure a regional bus system will be operated within a cooperative environment that strikes a balance between service quality and cost. BSIP is a financially unconstrained business plan, which details improvements to the bus system in Los Angeles County. A three-tiered system of service is included in the BSIP: core regional service, community connectors and local services. This is to ensure all countywide transit operators are included in the planning process and implementation of BSIP.

The Bus System Improvement Plan 2020 Vision outlines an ideal bus system countywide. The program, which implements the vision, was created to improve service on overcrowded bus lines for the transit-dependent. It contains six elements: crowding relief and more frequent service, mobility improvements, security, pricing and fare collection, service quality improvements, and customer focus. Since the program uses Proposition C 40% Discretionary funds, recipients must spend their BSIP money on transit service expansion or improvements.

BSIP consists of two phases. The first is the five-year implementation, which addresses new initiatives and currently budgeted improvements that can occur within six months. The second phase incorporates the BSIP into the Long Range Transportation Plan (LTRP), and it involves a variety of strategies for making sustainable improvements to the bus system, which can be implemented over the next several years, consistent with the Short Range Transportation Plan.

## Historical Perspective

In September 1995, the Board reaffirmed its commitment to the bus system and requested staff to return with a Bus System Improvement Plan that would provide the framework to improve service to the transit dependent and expand mobility options throughout the county. Shortly thereafter, a working group that included staff, municipal operators, Access Services Inc., and local transit system operators presented this BSIP plan to the Board.

In an effort to deliver increased service in a timely manner, the working group collaborated with the Bus Operations Subcommittee (BOS) to solicit its recommendation in this undertaking. BOS recommended the use of the Formula Allocation Procedure for the distribution of funds. It also suggested thresholds to determine transit dependency and measurements for overcrowding improvements. BSIP fund recipients use a self-certification process to demonstrate the former. The latter is achieved by analyzing the impact on seating capacity and service reliability.

In December 1995, the Board approved the implementation of the BSIP and agreed to allocate annually \$12 million of Proposition C 40% Discretionary funds to participating Municipal Operators and the agency, beginning January 1, 1996. Later the funding was reduced to annual allocations of \$10.4 million to mitigate the impact of Foothill Transit becoming an “included” operator. Funding levels for BSIP have remained the same since 1996, except for FY2002, 2003 and 2004, when the Board approved CPI increases. In March 1996, the Board approved a BSIP that focused exclusively on agency operated services and included funding to reduce overcrowding.

# Bus System Improvement Plan

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In September 1997, the agency and its regional partners jointly created the Bus System Vision 2020. The 2020 Bus System Vision was designed to outline the implementation plan of for a countywide bus system. The plan also coordinates planning concepts such as Mobility Alliance and Smart Shuttle Programs with the ongoing service quality improvements like graffiti abatement and bus shelter installations.

Key elements of the 2020 Bus System Vision include the vision, goals and strategies. Tactics to implement the goals and strategies of the 2020 vision will be independently developed and administered by bus agencies. Programs and resources to implement the 2020 Bus System Vision were developed to be a component of the LTRP. As of 2001, BSIP has been incorporated into the LRTP. LRTP is the blueprint for implementing future transportation improvement for Los Angeles until 2025.

## Last Board Action

November 20, 1997 – Bus System Improvement Plan

The Board approved on consent calendar the Bus System Improvement Plan 2020 Vision:

- A. in concept, the strategies and tactics.
- B. continuation of work with the Municipal Operators. Access Services, Inc. (ASI) and the Local Transit System operators and return in 90 days for approval of the BSIP including performance indices.

## Attachment

2020 Bus System Vision

## See Related

Municipal Operator System Improvement Program

Formula Allocation Procedure

Formula Allocation Procedure – Special Provisions

Public Utilities Code § 99280 – 99299

Public Utilities Code § 99207, § 99207.5



## **Three-Tiered System**

Three types of services will be provided among the region's existing and future transit providers to meet the diverse travelling needs and geographic areas of the County.

- **Core Regional Service** - The core routes will serve the major activity centers within the region and will generally average 20,000 boardings per day. These bus routes will provide more standardized, direct service in major corridors and where possible, use freeway carpool/bus lanes to speed travel. A typical minimum service level of 15 minutes during the peak periods and mid day and 30 minutes during the evenings and late nights will be provided. Those services using the freeways will be, for the most part, targeted for peak period only; while those using surface streets will operate seven days, with extended service hours matching market demands. High capacity vehicles will be used to meet the demand for transit services in these corridors. Where possible, fares will be paid prior to boarding transit vehicles to facilitate the movement of passengers on and off the vehicle.
- **Community Connectors** - These bus lines will serve inter-community travel needs and link outlying areas to intermediate activity centers and the core regional service. The Community Connectors will generally average between 2,000 and 10,000 boardings per day and serve a variety of travel markets and destinations. Service will typically operate every 15 to 30 minutes with frequency and vehicle type matching demand. Selected lines serving activity centers such as colleges offering night classes, medical facilities and work sites with evening shifts will operate evening services accordingly.
- **Local Services** - These services will include shuttles, circulators, dial-a-ride, taxi cab scrip programs or other demand responsive, flexible destination operations. They will be designed for smaller markets and short distance trip-making. The Local services will play an important feeder/circulator role with respect to building system ridership. These services will be an important, cost-effective tool for improving market penetration and serving low-density areas.

## **Customer Information**

The regional bus system will be designed for easy use. Fares, schedule information, and route design will be simple and straight forward. A service identity program will be designed to help customers navigate the system. Vehicles and time tables will use coordinated themes to distinguish the type of service and service area. Service information will be readily available at transit stops, on the Internet, via the telephone, and at passenger information centers staffed by representatives of the various public and private operators servicing an area. Telephone wait times will be reduced.

## **Transit Stops/Centers**

Transit stops will be treated as an integral part of the system. All bus stops in the County will be clean, comfortable and easily accessible. Each bus stop will be an easily identified attractive environment, a safe and appealing front door to the transit system.

Transit Hubs, where a multitude of lines, operators, and/or modes (urban or commuter rail) interface, represent the most elaborate of the stops. To the maximum extent possible, the hubs will be surrounded by complementary land uses such as commercial and retail outlets. Wherever possible, transit centers will be incorporated into major commercial developments, as well as rail stations and other activity centers and have the highest level of passenger amenities. These centers will serve as key access and transfer points, maximizing travel speed and ease of transfers between lines and modes.

### **Passenger Safety**

Uniformed peace officers will patrol the entire system including vehicles, stops and transit hubs. Plain clothes peace officers will augment the uniformed officers. Greater use of flexible services, improved frequencies and coordinated schedules among operators and between bus lines reduce passenger wait-time at stops during evening hours and in remote areas.

### **Service Quality**

Service quality standards will be used to manage the operation of the system. These performance standards will cover such things as driver performance, fleet appearance, comfort, frequency of service, on-time performance and service reliability. Service delivery will be supervised to ensure efficiency.

Bus cleanliness standards will ensure that the Los Angeles area bus fleet will be the cleanest in the nation. Campaigns to ensure that all vehicles will be free of graffiti and window etching will continue. New programs will be tested and implemented.

### **Employee Safety**

The regional service operators will maintain a safe work environment. A number of programs will be in place to control worker compensation costs and to ensure that front-line employees receive prompt support when service disruptions occur. Measures providing incentives, controls and technology will be continued and strengthened to improve the work environment and operator safety will be a key priority.

### **Labor Relationships**

The service operators within the region will develop strong relationships with their front-line employees and labor groups. These relationships will be built on open lines of communication, win-win solutions that are customer-focused, and a mutual commitment to delivery of bus service that sets the standard for the industry and builds broad-based community support for public transit.

### **Accessibility**

Careful attention will be provided to the needs of individuals with disabilities and older adults. The fleet and system operation will be in full compliance with the letter and spirit of ADA regulations. Bus design and customer amenities will take into account age and disability.

## **Market Development**

MTA and its regional partners will make a continuous effort to identify our customers' preferences and needs and to reshape our services to meet them. There will be an entrepreneurial approach to developing new ridership markets. Regional research will be used to identify and prioritize unmet demand as well as emerging markets. Coordinated marketing programs will be employed to increase overall ridership and to target corridors with poor-performing services. Creative market development programs will be used to test the viability of potential markets. Marketing will be a key element of all major bus improvement within the region.

## **Air Quality**

Proven clean air vehicle technology will be employed within the region, allowing for economies of scale in procurement and maintenance. The high quality service that will be provided will attract discretionary riders thus reducing the number of vehicle trips.

## **Bus Service in the Year 2020**

The Los Angeles area bus system strives to be the best in the nation. Bus service will be heavily used by not only those dependent upon transit, but by those with mobility choices. The system will be among the cleanest, safest, most efficient, reliable, well-coordinated, and cost-effective in the nation.