



PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 22, 2004

**SUBJECT: SAN FERNANDO METRO RAPIDWAY WARNER CENTER
PARK-AND-RIDE FACILITY**

**ACTION: APPROVE ADDENDUM/ MODIFIED INITIAL STUDY
PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY ACT**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Approve and certify the Addendum/Modified Initial Study to the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor to construct the proposed Warner Center Park-and-Ride facility;
- B. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination of the Addendum/Modified Initial Study with the Los Angeles County Clerk;
- C. Approve the development of a surface park-and-ride at the Boeing property located along the MTA right-of-way (Option B-1), extension of the Rapidway concept to serve the park-and-ride, and the acquisition of the Boeing site subject to Board approval of final terms; and
- D. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to direct the development of design/build contract documents for the preferred park-and-ride option.

ISSUE

In February 2002, the MTA Board adopted the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor (now Metro Rapidway) Final EIR and a year later approved the award of a design-build contract for its implementation. The approved project scope did not include park-and-ride at the Warner Center. As the western terminus of the Metro Rapidway, a park-and-ride facility at Warner Center was deemed necessary. The City of Los Angeles, however, was concerned about its compatibility with the Warner Center Specific Plan. Since then, the Council Office and City staff re-examined this issue and concluded that a park-and-ride facility would be compatible

with the Specific Plan. As a result, the MTA Board at its February 2003 meeting authorized the Chief Executive Officer to pursue development of a park-and-ride at Warner Center and to return to the Board with final terms and conditions for such a facility.

The addition of a park-and-ride lot at Warner Center required the preparation of an addendum to the Final EIR. Further, MTA staff identified three other possible minor modifications within the Metro Rapidway right-of-way: (1) possible substitution of rubberized asphalt concrete pavement for the currently planned portland cement concrete and/or regular asphalt at select busway segments; (2) adding a recycled water pipeline to irrigate landscaping along the busway and the bike path/pedestrian walkway; and, (3) incorporating a surfacing option to differentiate the bike path from the pedestrian walkway. These minor modifications are also examined in the Addendum/Modified Initial Study.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended action is consistent with MTA policy. In developing rail and transit lines, MTA has consistently provided park-and-ride lots where demand and opportunity to develop them exist to encourage transit use and enhance passenger convenience. The three other minor modifications within the planned Rapidway mitigate environmental impacts and enhance system maintenance and safety, all of which are consistent with MTA's policies.

OPTIONS

The Board could choose not to adopt and certify the Addendum/Modified Initial Study to the Metro Rapidway Final EIR. Staff is not recommending this option as the Addendum/Modified Initial Study is necessary to include the park-and-ride lot in the overall Project.

In addition, the Board could also choose not to approve a park-and-ride option as part of the Rapidway Project. Staff recommends including a park-and-ride lot as part of the Project as it would increase passenger convenience and encourage transit use.

The Board could also choose one of the other Boeing options. Staff is not recommending this, however. Option A would not be as convenient to riders requiring a long walk from the park-and-ride site to the bus stop. Option B-2 does not fit within the allotted budget.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The budget for the Rapidway Project includes \$16.5 million for a park-and-ride facility at the western terminus. This will accommodate the recommended park-and-ride facility (Option B-1) including construction and site acquisition.

DISCUSSION

In February 2003, the MTA Board adopted the Metro Rapidway Project budget for an environmentally cleared project consisting of a 14-mile busway with 13 stations. The Project as environmentally cleared included no parking for patrons at the western terminus of the Rapidway

near the Warner Center Transit Hub. The adopted budget included \$16.5 million allowance for new scope for a park-and-ride facility and related improvements at the Rapidway's western terminus in Warner Center. This allowance was planned for the design and construction costs and did not include real estate costs as the concept, at that time, was to add floors to a proposed private parking structure at a nearby shopping mall. Because the parking facility and related improvements were still in the conceptual planning stage, an accurate cost estimate and construction schedule were not available. At the time, the Board report noted that the opening of the park-and-ride might not coincide with the Revenue Operation Date of August 2005 for the Metro Rapidway Project.

Since that time, with the initial assessment of the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (DOT) and assistance from the City of Los Angeles Department of Planning staff, MTA identified and evaluated several potential park-and-ride sites. These included a parking easement on two levels of a planned parking structure at Topanga Canyon Shopping Plaza and possible acquisition of individual parcels including the Boeing property adjacent to the MTA right-of-way (ROW), the Valley Indoor Swapmeet site, a portion of the Blue Cross property along Canoga Avenue, and the Catalina Yachts located on Victory Boulevard and Variel Avenue.

After negotiations with the Topanga Canyon Shopping Plaza and an evaluation of the impacts of that location to the current Metro Rapidway route, staff concluded that the short-term savings in construction were significantly outweighed by the cost of parking replacement when the easement expired, the recurring operating costs of a longer route, and the distance of the shopping mall parking structure relative to the MTA ROW should a Metro Rapidway extension from Warner Center be developed. The other candidate sites were similarly evaluated using a set of criteria that included parcel size, availability, cost, constructability, feasibility of additional bus stop and passenger convenience, and impacts on approved route, project schedule, future transit extension and the environment. Based on these criteria, the Boeing site was deemed the most suitable.

Simultaneously, three park-and-ride development options were evaluated for the Boeing site:

- Option A: Rapidway route exits exclusive right-of-way (ROW) at Variel Avenue and continues on street along Victory Boulevard with surface park-and-ride along the MTA ROW north of Variel, on the Boeing site and on an MTA-owned parcel north of Vanowen.
- Option B: Extension of the Rapidway concept along the MTA ROW, including landscaping, bike and pedestrian ways, to the Boeing property with either (B-1) surface parking on the Boeing site, MTA ROW and property north of Vanowen or (B-2) parking structure on the Boeing site.

The number of parking spaces for each of these Boeing site alternatives and the parking construction cost (excluding site acquisition) are shown in the following table:

OPTION	# SPACES	EST. CONSTRUCTION COST (Excluding Real Estate Costs)
<u>A</u> : Variel Ave. along Victory Blvd.: at-grade parking on Boeing site, MTA ROW and property north of Vanowen	1,075	\$7,400,000
<u>B-1</u> : Variel Ave. through MTA ROW with at-grade parking on Boeing site, MTA ROW and property north of Vanowen	690	\$10,600,000
<u>B-2</u> : Variel Ave through MTA ROW with parking structure on Boeing site	944	\$22,900,000

The estimated costs above do not include site acquisition as the cost of the Boeing site will not be available until negotiations are completed. The above costs include the construction of the parking lot or structure as well as a new station with all amenities including two platforms, canopies and ticket vending machines. In addition, the costs of Option B-1 and B-2 include a 1,600-foot busway extension from Variel Avenue through the MTA ROW and the Boeing site. For Option A, additional real estate acquisition for a bus stop/station, not included in the current estimated cost, might be required if full station amenities were desired.

Option A provides the highest parking capacity and could be implemented within the current park-and-ride budget but it is the least convenient option for transit riders who would park at the Boeing site and walk a long distance to proposed bus stop locations along Canoga Avenue south of Victory Boulevard. Option B-1 provides the least parking capacity among the three options but would be very convenient to transit users as full stations would be located at the park-and-ride site and, like Option A, could be implemented within the current approved park-and-ride budget. Option B-2 provides the second highest parking capacity and offers the same convenience as Option B-1 but would require approximately \$6.4 million additional funds.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE AND RECOMMENDED MITIGATIONS UNDER CEQA

MTA staff and its consultant team prepared this Addendum/ Modified Initial Study to evaluate the environmental impacts of minor project modifications to the previously adopted San Fernando Valley East-West Corridor Project FEIR.

MTA is conducting the public review process concurrently with the January Board agenda preparation cycle. The Addendum/Modified Initial Study was filed with the County Clerk and was available for public review for a period of 30 days. The public comment period began officially on December 10, 2003 and ended on January 9, 2004. All comments from agencies or interested parties received during the comment period will be considered as part of MTA's determination on the Addendum/Modified Initial Study and the Metro Rapidway park-and-ride

facility at Warner Center. Another opportunity for the public to provide input will be at the January 29, 2004 Board Meeting.

On the basis of the data and analyses contained in the Addendum/Modified Initial Study, no potential adverse environmental effects from the proposed Metro Rapidway park-and-ride facility at Warner Center were identified. For each of the environmental categories, the Addendum/Modified Initial Study shows that either the impacts would not be potentially significant or the mitigation measures incorporated in the approved San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Final EIR reduce impacts to below significant or that the mitigation measures in the Addendum/Modified Initial Study would reduce impacts to less than significant. The same was true for the three minor modifications included in the Addendum. Based on the Addendum/ Modified Initial Study, MTA staff made the following findings:

1. None of the events listed in Section 21166 of the California Public Resources Code, or in Section 15162 of the State CEQA Guidelines, has occurred; therefore no subsequent or supplemental environmental impact report shall be required by MTA.
2. Only minor technical changes or additions are necessary to make the February 2002 Final EIR adequate under CEQA to cover the proposed modifications.
3. The changes to the 2002 Final EIR made by the Addendum/Modified Initial Study do not raise important new issues about significant effects on the environment.

NEXT STEPS

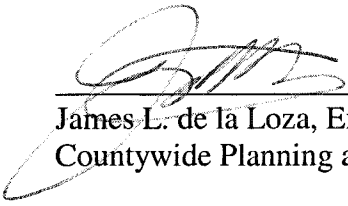
Any comments received from the public review period will be resolved prior to Board approval of the Addendum/Modified Initial Study. Responses, if needed, will be provided to the Board at the Committee meeting. MTA will file a Notice of Determination with the Los Angeles County Clerk.

Staff will take the approved park-and-ride option into the final design process and complete acquisition of the Boeing property subject to Board approval of the final terms. Other potential minor modifications included in the EIR will be evaluated by MTA staff for potential inclusion in the Metro Rapidway Project.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Park-and-Ride Option A
- B. Park-and-Ride Option B-1
- C. Park-and-Ride Option B-2

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