



**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
JANUARY 14, 2004**

SUBJECT: FIXED GUIDEWAY SYSTEM PLAN AND PRIORITIES

ACTION: ADOPT FIXED GUIDEWAY SYSTEM PLAN AND PRIORITIES

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Fixed Guideway System Plan Priorities in Attachment A.

ISSUE

At its June, 2003 meeting, the MTA Board directed staff to report back with a comprehensive rail program which prioritizes MTA's next phase of rail projects and includes an indication of the possibility of alternative technologies with comparative costs. This Board Report responds to that directive and expands the discussion to include all urban fixed guideway projects (e.g., busways and rail). In addition, having a clear vision of fixed guideway priorities will assist the MTA in effectively competing for increasingly scarce federal and state funding resources and provide direction for prioritizing MTA project development work.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended Fixed Guideway System Plan Priorities are consistent with the 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan elements and the 2003 Short Range Transportation Plan. One new project, a Metro Center connector, is recommended for priority consideration to address system connectivity issues. The recommended priority lists are expanded to go beyond the Short Range Plan time frame. This will help direct staff resources so that the highest priority projects will be ready for any new funding opportunities. This is consistent with MTA goals to seek new sources of funding to implement necessary transportation improvements since adopting clear priorities will help the MTA compete for such new funding.

OPTIONS

The MTA Board can change the projects and/or the priority order of the projects. Staff recommended the projects and priorities based on the 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan, ridership, and systemwide capacity needs.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adoption of the recommended action will not have any immediate impact on MTA's FY04 budget and this report does not authorize any new expenditure of funds. In the longer term, the recommended action may help the MTA to obtain additional new revenues needed to implement important capital projects by establishing a clear commitment to a prioritized list of fixed guideway projects. Ultimately, construction of most of the projects on the list will require significant new revenues than currently projected within the immediate future.

DISCUSSION

2001 Long Range Transportation Plan

In 2001, the MTA Board adopted a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) which, among other things, identified a series of fixed guideway rail and busway projects along with expenditure levels for bus fleet improvements, rail rehabilitation, Metrolink, Metro Rapid Bus lines and smaller transit capital projects. The LRTP also balanced the commitment to public transportation with other transportation needs such as highway, arterial, bikeway, pedestrian and other modal improvements. The LRTP was based on a comprehensive assessment of financial resources, performance objectives, and community outreach.

The LRTP divided fixed guideway projects into two major categories. The first category was the Recommended (funded) Plan. This included projects that the Board had already committed to (Baseline) and the next phase of projects fundable by 2025 based on projected revenues (Constrained Plan). The second major category was the Strategic (unfunded) Plan which listed six additional projects for consideration should significant new resources become available.

Recommended Fixed Guideway System Plan

Attachment A shows the MTA fixed guideway priorities. Baseline projects are shown at the top of the list as the highest priority. The next phase of projects are those from the Constrained element of the Long Range Transportation Plan. Priorities are shown with a separate indication of priorities for Federal New Start funds. The next group of projects is from the Strategic (unfunded) element of the Long Range plan. These strategic element projects are not listed in a proposed priority order except for the Metro Center Connector, Metro Red Line Extension and

the Pasadena Gold Line Extension, which are listed as priorities if the Murray Bill passes. One additional project is being recommended as part of this strategic group, a proposed Metro Center Connector. This project is a primarily at-grade light rail connector through downtown Los Angeles (alignment to be determined). This proposed connector could link service on the Metro Gold Line to service on the Metro Blue Line and the future Exposition Line. Patronage estimates on the future Exposition and Gold Line Eastside Extension coupled with existing ridership on the Metro Gold and Blue Lines will be better served by a direct light rail connection. This will improve safety and efficiency of rail operations by relieving constraints in the existing Blue Line tunnel where trains currently have to come in and turn back on the same track. Other rail system needs such as additional cars and maintenance yards are also included in this project listing. It should be noted that some systemwide maintenance yard needs would be addressed by the Gold Line extension from Sierra Madre Villa to Irwindale. As more information about these strategic projects is gathered through the Long Range Planning process or future environmental work, updated data and priorities will be provided to the Board for consideration.

Other projects that have previously been studied, or recently suggested, are listed last. The MTA Planning Department will collect more information about these projects, work with the Board to establish criteria and come back with proposed priorities in the future. Again, this could be done as a part of the upcoming Long Range Planning process.

Attachment B is a series of maps. The first map (Attachment B1) shows the recommended highest and high priority projects. These projects are further broken down by geographic area in a series of six maps (Attachments B2 through B7). These more detailed maps show how the existing and proposed fixed guideway system, when combined with the Metro Rapid provide extensive coverage to most of the developed portions of Los Angeles County. Attachment B8 adds fixed guideway projects/corridors that were listed in the Strategic (unfunded) element of the LRTP. The final map (Attachment B9) adds projects outside of the LRTP but which have been previously studied or recently suggested.

Attachment C provides a brief background of each project including where it was listed in the LRTP and its current status.

Fixed Guideway Technologies

Attachment D is a compilation of different busway and rail technologies that are used in different parts of the country or the world along with a rough comparison of their capacities and costs. In planning a transit corridor improvement, MTA staff considers these technologies in the initial screening process. The ultimate recommendation of technology is based on the available space in the corridor for tracks, roadways, columns, etc.; expected impacts from at-grade, aerial, and below grade projects; the capacity required to meet projected demand; cost; community input; and other factors.

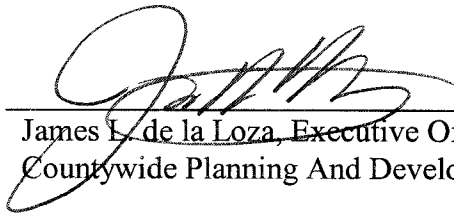
NEXT STEPS

If the recommended action is adopted, Staff will utilize the fixed guideway plan and priorities in future funding and planning efforts. Additional priorities and projects would be established as part of the next update of the Long Range Transportation Plan.

ATTACHMENT(S)

- A. Fixed Guideway Priorities
- B. Maps of the Fixed Guideway System
- C. Background on Urban Fixed Guideway System Planning
- D. Fixed Guideway Technologies

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Priority	Priority for New Starts Funds	Status	Source	Project	Estimated Ridership*	Ridership per mile	SRTP/LRTP Year Open
Highest Priority (Projects in Construction, Final Development)							
N/A		Const.	Baseline LRTP	San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway	22,000	1,600	2005
N/A		FFGA	Baseline LRTP	Eastside LRT Extension	23,000	3,800	2008
N/A		Approved	Baseline LRTP	Wilshire Metro Rapid BRT Upgrades	53,000	4,000	2009
High Priority (Long Range Transportation Plan Constrained Element)							
1	1	FEIS/EIR/PE	Baseline LRTP	Exposition LRT Downtown LA to Culver City	43,000	4,400	2012-2015
2	2	Draft EIS/EIR	CP-LRTP	Exposition LRT Culver City to Santa Monica	27,000	3,600	2020-2025
3 - 4		MIS	CP-LRTP	Crenshaw Transit Corridor	32,000	2,900	2015-2020
3 - 4		MIS	CP-LRTP	San Fernando Valley North South Corridor - Enhanced Transit Services	21,000- 39,000	1,200-2,200	2015-2020
N/A ¹		10yr old EIS/EIR	CP-LRTP	Metro Green Line Connection to LAX ¹	2,300	900	TBD
Strategic (Unfunded) Long Range Plan							
5 If funded by Murray Bill				Metro Center Connector & System Upgrades (LRT Vehicles, Facility Expansion & Upgrades)	17,100	7,700	2025+
6 - 7 If funded by Murray Bill	3	10yr old MIS	-----	Metro Red Line Wilshire Extension to Century City (Initial Phase to Fairfax Avenue) ²	19,500**	6,500**	2025+
6 - 7 If funded by Murray Bill	4	Draft EIS/EIR	SP-LRTP	Metro Gold Line Extension Sierra Madre Villa to Claremont ³	19,000***	900	2025+

