

**Metro**Los Angeles County  
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metro.net**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2007****SUBJECT: SAN FERNANDO VALLEY NORTH-SOUTH PROJECT****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file this update on the Canoga Transportation Corridor environmental clearance and the City of Los Angeles' effort on San Fernando Valley North-South bus speed improvements. Together these efforts compose the San Fernando Valley North-South project.

**ISSUE**

At its March 22, 2007 meeting, the Metro Board approved professional services contracts with Iteris, Inc. for the purpose of completing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Preliminary Engineering (PE), and with Consensus Planning Group (CPG) to complete the public outreach and community participation component for a Northern/Canoga Extension of the Metro Orange Line. This project proposes to extend the existing Metro Orange Line's westerly terminus at the Canoga Park-and-Ride four miles north to the Chatsworth Metrolink Station, with a possible two mile on-street extension to State Route (SR) 118. Attachment A shows the Canoga Transportation Corridor area boundaries.

At the same meeting, the Board authorized Metro to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to identify and complete PE on bus speed improvements on four north-south arterials in the eastern portion of the San Fernando Valley. These arterials are: Van Nuys, Lankershim, Sepulveda, and Reseda Boulevards.

This report updates the Metro Board on the status of both of these efforts.

## DISCUSSION

### **Canoga Transportation Corridor**

Conducting an Alternatives Analysis (AA) is the first step in the environmental clearance process. Over the past several months, the project team has been identifying a set of viable options for extending the Metro Orange Line. In addition to the required No-Build and Traffic Systems Management (TSM) alternatives, seven build alternatives were identified. **Attachments B1-9** illustrate the No-Build, TSM and the seven build alternatives. The build alternatives included Metro Rapid Service or a dedicated bus lane operating on Topanga Canyon, Canoga, or DeSoto with the seventh build alternative being a dedicated bus lane on the Metro-owned rail right of way (ROW) adjacent to Canoga Avenue. **Attachments B3-9** illustrates the project alternatives.

In late July, after sending 44,400 notices, project scoping meetings were held for both affected agencies and the public. A total of 168 people attended the three meetings to provide comments on the proposed alternatives as well as to propose other viable options for consideration by the project team.

The comments from the three meetings have been evaluated based on the established screening criteria which included, among others: Supports Mobility; Support Land Use & Development; Maximize Community Input; Minimize Community Impacts; and Cost-Effectiveness. Based on this analysis, the project team has narrowed the list of build alternatives from seven to the following two:

- A dedicated bus lane on Canoga Avenue (**Attachment B4**)
- A dedicated Busway on the Metro owned Canoga Rail ROW (**Attachment B5**)

The alternatives considered on DeSoto (**Attachments B6-7**) and Topanga Canyon (**Attachments B8-9**) proved to be less desirable, due to existing traffic congestion, and the built environment that would preclude the possibility of widening the roadway to accommodate a dedicated bus lane or a bike/pedestrian path.

The two Canoga alternatives, along with the No Build (**Attachment B1**) and TSM (**Attachment B2**), will be carried forward for a detailed analysis in the environmental document. It should be noted that if the busway were to continue to the Chatsworth Metrolink Station on either alternative, it is highly unlikely that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) would permit an at-grade crossing at Lassen. Therefore, a grade separation may need to be constructed. This potential grade separation was not included in Metro's initial project cost estimate (\$135 to \$165 million) presented to the Board in September 2006 and is anticipated to cost between \$25 and \$40 million.

With regards to the possible two-mile on-street extension to the SR-118, Topanga Canyon and De Soto were identified as the two options. The Topanga Canyon extension alternative was eliminated as no suitable park-and-ride locations could be identified as this area is zoned as public park land. Based on the screening criteria, the project team felt that the on-

street extension on De Soto to SR-118 should be carried forward for further environmental review.

### **San Fernando Valley North-South Bus Speed Improvements**

Metro has entered into the afore-mentioned MOU with LADOT to complete the North-South Bus Speed Improvements Analysis on Van Nuys, Sepulveda, Lankershim and Reseda Streets (Attachment C). This analysis will examine the feasibility of roadway widenings to accommodate dedicated peak period bus lanes, peak period parking restrictions, left turn signals/pockets, etc., with the sole purpose of improving bus travel times along these corridors.

Metro will continue to work with LADOT to identify the best locations for the bus speed improvements. An emphasis will be given to Van Nuys Boulevard, where density and bus ridership are the highest of the four corridors. Upon identifying the most promising improvements, and if no environmental review is required, the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering (BOE) will complete the PE for the identified bus speed improvements.

### **NEXT STEPS**

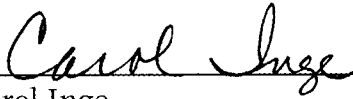
Over the next several months, the project team will conduct the environmental analysis for extending the Metro Orange Line to the Chatsworth Metrolink station, and possibly to SR 118. At appropriate times during the EIR preparation, the Metro Board will receive project updates. As currently scheduled, the draft EIR will be presented to the Metro Board in early 2008.

With regard to the LADOT's work, Metro has provided LADOT with information pertaining to bus speeds, routes, ridership and other relevant data as requested. Metro will continue to work with LADOT to ensure quality and cost-effective bus speed improvement projects are identified. This analysis, together with the PE, is currently scheduled for completion in Summer 2008, assuming no extensive environmental clearance is needed.

### **ATTACHMENT**

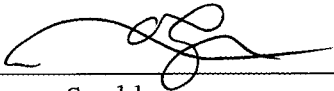
- A. Study Area Boundaries
- B. Illustrations of Alternatives
- C. LADOT's Study Area

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